

Holy Ghost. This readily crumbles into its parallel: the reverence turns to hatred and contempt, the artist is a long-haired and lecherous outsider, different to society and essentially at enmity with it. There is a limited analogy here with anti-clericalism.

In the other tradition he is thought of just as someone who makes things. He may make wheels for farm carts, working in a long and utterly unchanging tradition; or he may be the highly paid servant of a prince, building and beautifying palaces. In either case he is the most inside of all insiders. Society revolves around him, and he gives expression to its values. Today this sort of artist works, among other places, in advertising.

The Wittkowers' book is a documented history up to about the end of the eighteenth century. Most of the material in fact refers to the period of the Renaissance. It is a mass of quotations, and in that sense a valuable reference book. But valuable what for? Artists make things which are in some sense alive, autonomously alive: this is why they interest us. The chronicling even of artists' lives (much of the material is very extraordinary) can be curiously dead. Gossip at all levels must justify itself. One is left at the end of this book with a lingering and unsolved problem: why should so much 'fascinating' material be so joyless to read?

The central problem, the quest for the artist's 'personality', remains unchanged. A few facile psychological theories have been exploded; we know a little more about what the artist is not. But since the theories exploded have themselves been inflated in the same world of American art scholarship, they often seem already eccentric and irrelevant. 'Inflated' is perhaps the right word: too much money chasing too few ideas.

JULIAN DAVID

MADAME DE CHANTAL, *Portrait of a Saint*, by Elisabeth Stopp; Faber and Faber; 35s.

In this model biography Dr Stopp relates the story of Saint Jane Francis Frémyot de Chantal from her earliest childhood, recording how at the age of five she broke in upon an after-dinner discussion between her father and a Huguenot friend, saying that if the latter persisted in denying the Real Presence he was calling Jesus Christ a liar. Amused by her precocity he offered her some sweets which she promptly threw into the fire, adding that that was what happened to those who called our Lord a liar. This startling example of her faith was evidently an earnest of what was to be throughout her life her outstanding virtue. Such was the phrase used by her friend St Vincent de Paul in the deposition he made at the process of her canonization. It was also he declared the virtue against which she was tempted all her life, without however losing her peace and tranquillity of mind, in spite of her state of inner darkness.

The two events in her life which are probably best remembered are the death of her husband the Baron de Chantal whilst hunting, and the strange leave-

taking of her family when her son threw himself prostrate across the threshold in an effort to persuade her to remain at home. Dr Stopp puts both happenings in a clearer perspective. De Chantal's death was a sheer accident. He had gone out deer-stalking with his cousin Monsieur d'Anlezy and while they were crawling through some undergrowth, at some little distance from each other, d'Anlezy's weapon went off, and the scattered shot embedded itself deeply in the baron's body. Some writers have stated that d'Anlezy aimed at his companion, mistaking his fawn coloured cloak for a deer, but it seems more probable that the accident occurred through the shoulder-strap of his arquebus catching on a branch. For over a week the wounded man lay in considerable pain, manifesting however the most complete resignation to God's will, a state of soul that his wife felt herself unable to imitate. Moreover he gave her a lesson in forgiveness by refusing to listen to any of her words in blame of poor d'Anlezy, and by adding a clause to his will disinheriting any member of his family who should attempt to avenge his death. It was not until his death that Jane brought herself to utter her *fiat*, but her final acceptance of her crushing loss set her feet on the road to high sanctity.

As to that other event, the painful leave-taking of her family, it should be borne in mind that she was not abandoning her children. Her eldest daughter had recently married, she was taking the other girl to Annecy with her where she could finish her education under her eyes, and her fourteen year old boy was due to leave for Paris also to complete his studies, so that in any case he would have been separated from her. His action therefore in forcing her to step over his prostrate body on the threshold was, says Dr Stopp, nothing but a piece of showmanship for which his mother could quite justifiably have boxed his ears. This is in accord with the testimony of an eyewitness, Charlotte de Brichard, who had lived for some time with the family and later joined Jane in the Order of the Visitation, the institution of which was the joint work of St Jane and St Francis de Sales, whose lives were so closely woven together, and whose partnership in the great work occupies the major portion of this outstanding biography.

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Shorter Notices

JOHN SOUTHWORTH: Priest and Martyr, by E. E. Reynolds; Burns & Oates; 7s. 6d.

In all probability but for the Titus Oates plot Blessed John Southworth would have been the last martyr under the penal laws. He suffered death under Cromwell on 28 June 1654, in the early days of the Commonwealth, before Cromwell felt himself strong enough to disregard his Council. After that date