

liant gentian-dark eyes, a fine aquiline nose, a proud bosom'.

In the course of this lengthy novel, which covers some fifty years after the French Revolution, Julie de Montcalm endures many vicissitudes. Suffering, nobly borne, causes the poor girl to look thin and almost 'brittle', or, as an English officer 'who twirled his drooping moustachios' said of her, 'like a slender aristocratic ghost in wonderful clothes'. Suffering also changes the hero who, unable to marry Julie because of both families' hostility, seeks to become a priest and comes to look like 'a distinguished ghost in his long black cassock and flowing cloak'.

Reduced to half its length, this novel might have been a charming romance. As it is, there is too much in it. And the reader has often to endure many pages of biased and sometimes misleading history which has nothing to do with the plot. There are passages which are regrettable, and too frequently the authoress obtrudes herself on the reader's attention.

One could desire more accuracy in the use of words. Can even a duchess sweep a 'dazzling' curtsy? May one describe her gowns as 'wonderful'? Should a lady have 'a wee shut-eye' in front of the fire? And could Julie really be 'soporific'?

Those who have enjoyed Miss Trouncer's previous novels and biographies will be delighted by her latest work. Others may reflect on the paper shortage.

K. M.

ENGLISH HOME-LIFE, 1500-1800. By Christina Hole. (Batsford; 15s.)

This is among the more successful of Messrs. Batsford's books. Miss Hole has set herself with great success to give a picture of the ordinary home-life in the English countryside between 1500 and 1800. Such a book might easily be scrappy and disjointed; instead it is a closely-knit and coherent account. To cover three centuries in less than two hundred pages inevitably involves compression, yet the narrative flows, steady and unhurried, to its conclusion. The illustrations, as might be expected, are admirable. In the last chapter, 'To Church on Sunday', which describes the religion of eighteenth-century England, full justice is done to the very genuine strength of religion in Hanoverian England. At the same time to say that 'most people went regularly to church on Sunday and received Holy Communion two or three times in the year' is most certainly not true of all rural parishes in that period. Also Miss Hole is wrong in supposing that the Methodist movement in Wales was the result of the labours of Wesley and Whitfield in England. It had an earlier and separate origin.

T. CHARLES-EDWARDS.