

up to accept the beliefs of the Church, it is not difficult to see how his poetic sensibility distilled from them this world-view which is at once profoundly disturbing and utterly convincing and satisfying.

All this Mr Traversi lays before us in some detail. We see the view of life growing as play after play reaches the prompter's corner, and it is perhaps only towards the end when we discern the 'incarnational' significance of the last plays, particularly *The Tempest* and *A Winter's Tale*, that we may perhaps think we have seen the whole truth about this man's world. Perhaps too that was how it happened with Shakespeare himself; he had, of course, always believed in the Incarnation, presumably it had always, with one part of himself, made sense of life for him. But was it perhaps only when it came to life under his pen in these last plays that he was able to go beyond belief and see with the whole of his being how the world should be transformed? Certainly that is the legacy he has left to us, and we must be grateful to Mr Traversi for so unfolding it before us.

GERARD MEATH, O.P.

PRACTICAL PLAINSONG. By Dom Aldhelm Dean. (Burns and Oates; 8s. 6d.)

Inevitably one compares this publication with the *Grammar of Plainsong*, that little classic which has served as the basis for the teaching of plainchant in this country for over fifty years. Less concise than the *Grammar*, Dom Aldhelm's book follows a similar pattern although the introductory first section gives a much fuller historical account of the chant and an attempt to place it in some kind of theological setting. The section on rhythm is also much fuller and gives a clear exposition of the familiar thesis of the independence of ictus and word accent; for Dom Aldhelm, like the Abbess of Stanbrook, adopts the orthodox Solesmes interpretation of the chant which, despite a few recent sporadic attacks, has proved itself to be, both musically and historically, the most authentic and satisfactory interpretation of the manuscript evidence. A few more hints on how to set about the very difficult business of teaching the chant to schools and congregations might have been expected from a manual of 'practical' plainsong, although there is a short, valuable section on chironomy which should prove a great help in this direction. For this is a book which will be widely used by choirmasters and teachers.

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