

These are, however, comparatively minor points, as are too a few relatively unimportant slips due to some unfamiliarity with Catholicism. The essential fact is that Mr Aldington has written a most readable book where he succeeds in recreating Mistral's world. There we find all the harmony of a traditional and in many respect patriarchal way of life. There are numerous charming pen-pictures of that existence which now seems so remote, but none, I think, so delightful as some nine lines (p. 12) where are summed up, with an infinitely delicate touch, the age-old occupations of the people. That this evocation of the past may be somewhat idealized is probable, but if the Provence we see there is not, perhaps, quite that which Mistral really knew, it is indubitably that of which he dreamed and about which he wrote. Mr Aldington's flexible graceful prose is admirably adapted both to his subject and to his translations of Mistral's poetry: his easy colloquial style retains to the maximum point possible the 'feel' of the originals.

K. O'FLAHERTY

FOLKSONG—PLAINSONG: A Study in Origins and Musical Relationships. By G. B. Chambers. (Merlin Press; 18s.)

The main thesis of this book is that the wordless *jubilus* of plainsong derives not from simpler forms of chant but from secular folksong. The argument is based on writings of St John Chrysostom, St Isidore of Seville, St Jerome, St Augustine, Clement of Alexandria, Cassiodorus, etc., with buttresses provided by St Teresa of Avila, Richard Rolle and Rudolf Steiner!

The earlier writers seem to say, however, that the *jubilus* is like the wordless *melismata* of their contemporaries: this is not to say that the two are the same or are in any way necessarily connected. Indeed, there appears to be good evidence for believing that the early Jewish Christians brought melismatic melodies from the Jewish liturgy into the Christian church. No one would deny that folksong was an important factor in primitive chant, but most authorities would agree that the crucial time was earlier than the extraordinarily long and vague period from which Fr Chambers collects his 'evidence'. If the author had moved his theory into the early and even pre-Christian era it would have been more plausible. But he will not accept any connection between Jewish and early Christian music. Since he by no means considers or demolishes all the evidence for the connection his conclusions may seem rather a folky fantasy based purely on jumbles of literary texts and a simple error in logic.

E.T.