

BLACKFRIARS

exceptionnelle; comme pour ceux des graduels, il faut y voir jusqu'à un certain point une concession à la vanité des chanteurs désireux de faire preuve de virtuosité.

The author has performed a feat of condensation; authorities medieval and modern are constantly cited; a bibliography is moreover contained in the foreword. The book will be extremely valuable, not only to the student of plainsong, but still more to anyone interested in the secular poetry and music of the middle ages.

L.S.G.V.

THE GRAIL

The performance of *Everyman* by the members of the Grail at the Albert Hall was a very interesting experiment in religious propaganda and a very interesting attempt at something new in religious art, but whether on either count it was entirely satisfactory is not so certain. The grouping and colouring was generally effective, the singing magnificent in itself, though the free flow of the plainchant melodies was hampered by a conductor, and an organist whose stridency was both painful and unnecessary where there was such a weight of beautifully produced voices which one longed to hear unaccompanied.

As a performance, it was not quite drama, nor ballet, nor mime. The equation of liturgical music with expressive group movement was perhaps most successful in the *Attende Domine*, with its slow advances and prostrations. The *Media Vita* required more than a long crocodile of girls in lovely colours walking slowly round the arena and repeating gestures coincident with the words—reaching up for *Sancte Deus* and sweeping down for *juste irasceris*, and so on. And the *In Paradisum* lost much through the repeated quivering above their heads of the two palms carried by each white-robed angel, a gesture dreadfully reminiscent, as was borne in on me later, of a Micky Mouse effect. In both these episodes the effect was more that of massed drill than anything else.

The *Everyman* part of the performance was in many ways beautiful and undeniably impressive if one had a knowledge of Catholic doctrine, liturgical music and the text of the play, but to one lacking these qualifications it is not quite easy to see what it could do to arouse or teach. The strong dramatic quality of *Everyman* was not very evident under the system of group parts and group speaking. Six *Everymans*, all young persons in pink, were rather distracting, with their six Good Deeds in lovely white and six *Knowledges* in tall green dunce's hats. The dance of Death, black and skeleton like and many

NOTICES

times multiplied, was the most effective in dramatic gesture, but Rachmaninoff's Prelude went oddly after the *Dies Irae*.

One could not help wondering whether the Grail Movement might not do as much through smaller performances of a similar kind, using mass grouping only for a Chorus and letting the parts be taken in the ordinary way. The work and expense involved by these large performances must be very great, and it does not seem quite clear in what way it is really rewarding. We should like to see them do a mime and dance performance of *Everyman* to the accompaniment of Sir Walford Davies' beautiful setting of it. This would give ample scope for new effects and for the devotion and enthusiasm which is the most remarkable feature of a Grail performance, while it would be much simpler to produce.

M.A.B.

NOTICES

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES. By the Rev. Cuthbert Lattey, S.J. (Longmans: 5/6 wrapper, 6/6 boards.)

In this, the second, half of the second volume in the *Westminster Version*, Fr. Lattey, in his introduction, translation and notes, provides very useful help for the better understanding of the Acts of the Apostles. Useful tables are also added at the end, among them one giving an approximate chronology for the chief events of the New Testament, in which we were interested to find A.D. 30 set down as the date of the Crucifixion. Fr. Lattey is an adherent of the 'South-Galatian theory,' but refers us for a defence of it to the by no means satisfactory treatment of the subject in the Introduction to the Epistle to the Galatians in the same series.

L.W.

PHILOSOPHIA S. BONAVENTURAE TEXTIBUS EX EIUS OPERIBUS SELECTIS ILLUSTRATA. Edidit Bernhardus Rosenmüller. (Münster: Aschendorff; RM. 1.10.)

This volume in the series of *Opuscula et Textus* edited by Grabmann and Pelster is devoted to the Philosophy of St. Bonaventure, and the editor has chosen passages that will illustrate those philosophical principles of the Saint which are characteristic of Augustinianism. He has also taken care that the passages chosen shall be long enough to give an idea of the Saint's manner of reasoning and of dealing with difficulties. Students will find the volume a useful introduction to the subject. The text used is taken from the Quaracchi edition of the Saint's works.

L.W.