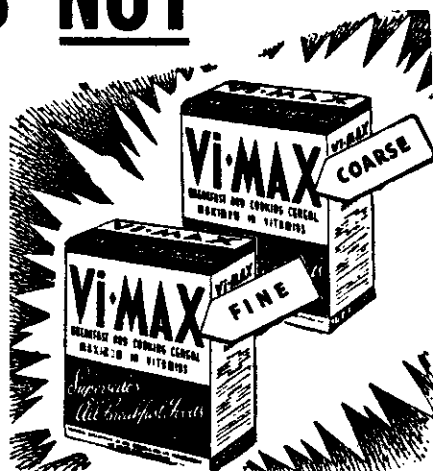


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## BOOK REVIEWS (Cont'd.)

ted by R. G. Howarth, Professor Brereton's admirer, pupil and friend. Anyone interested in the Elizabethan stage should be grateful to Mr. Howarth.

For someone like myself, who has read the Elizabethans with an over-all enthusiasm but who has not had the leisure or the fortitude to delve deeply, a proper assessment of this book in regard to its place in Elizabethan criticism is a fairly tough proposition. It would be presumptuous even to attempt to enter the labyrinthine ways of Shakespearean controversy, for instance, when all one is equipped to do is to stand at the entrance, peering in. The best approach must be that of the ordinary reader picking up the book for information, rather than that of the expert, girding up his loins for one fight more.

As an ordinary reader, then, I found the book intensely interesting. The essay on Richard II has made me re-read the play with a sharpened insight. The notes at the back, notably "Nathaniel's accident," illuminate lines and passages which have hitherto proved obscure or unintelligible. The "gall and ashes" of John Marston become at least understandable. But it is the two essays on Marlowe that I found particularly engrossing—Marlowe, who in his short six years of writing "vitalised English blank verse, raised the English chronicle play to the dignity of tragedy, and gave English tragedy a spiritual significance which proved it akin to the masterpieces of Aeschylus."

Professor Brereton's study of Marlowe's dramatic art in *Tamburlaine* follows cause and effect to its logical artistic conclusion and makes us want to try again what has hitherto proved an exhausting and, quite frankly, defeating *tour de force*. "The Case of Francis Ingram" is an extremely witty reconstruction of a crime which has intrigued us for centuries. Written with a chuckle and with obvious enjoyment, an alternative title could have been "Who Killed Kit Marlowe?"

The short chapter on the Elizabethan playhouse does not tell us much more than we know already, but it is done in a manner which, to quote Mr. Howarth, is a "simple exposition of a complicated subject." The illustrations and designs of Allen W. Gerard make it more simple still.

## LARGE CANVAS

**HUMAN RELATIONS.** By Rom Landau.  
Faber and Faber. English price, 16/-.

MR. LANDAU sets himself a large task when he takes as the thesis of his book the entire subject of the relationship between human creatures and its potentialities. Unfortunately, the author falls short of his aim—probably because he attempts too much. Although the style is attractive and easy, the manner is too discursive. The author touches upon life, death and all that comes between, from the parental influences to art, from art to pubs, from pubs to fashions, from fashions to worship of the dead; and every piece is interesting, and, at times entertaining also.

Then, from the objective viewpoint, he changes his approach for the subjective one and presents some problems of

personal adjustment. These problems are intensive, and Mr. Landau tells us what they are in few words, all nicely to the point. Yet there is anti-climax to the author's promise to provide his own solution to all problems. For when he advances one, it is the age-old Biblical "Love God—and one another." One prefers to find that in the Bible.

—B.L.C

## A CAPEK OMNIBUS

**THREE NOVELS.** By Karel Capek. Allen and Unwin. English price, 12/6.

THE publishing trade in England would appear to be in a healthy state in that it can continue to reprint Karel Capek's novels. *Three Novels*, an omnibus volume translated by M. and R. Weatherall, contains *Hordubal*, *An Ordinary Life* and *Meteor*. The first, a story of Slav peasants, has a certain strength which arises from the author's straightforward treatment of his subject. *Meteor* is a rather forced fantasy, and *An Ordinary Life* would appear to strengthen the case of those who hold that Capek's literary achievements lay in his work as a dramatist and essayist.

—J.R.C

## DETECTIVE FICTION

**THE DEPARTMENT OF DEAD ENDS.** By Roy Vickers. Faber and Faber. English price, 9/6.

JELLYRY QUEEN describes "The Rubber Trumpet," the first of these stories of Scotland Yard, as a classic of its kind. The author, who appears to be an expert in the pathology of crime, specialises in the "inverted" type of tale invented by R. Austin Freeman, in which the reader is told at the beginning who committed the crime, and then has to spot the clues on which a conviction is made.

—P.J.W.



H. C. D. SOMERSET, who will chair the ZB Book Review session on July 17. The books to be discussed are "The English Country Parson," by William Addison (J. H. E. Schroder), "Crusts and Crusades," by the Rt. Hon. W. M. Hughes (O. N. Gillespie), "The Lambs," by Katharine Anthony (Professor Ian Gordon), and "The Triple Challenge," by Francis Williams (Dr. A. M. Finlay).

N.Z. LISTENER, JULY 8, 1949.