

Donna Maria, reckless, marvels that nature could err in creating a knight with the spirit of a woman, and a woman with the spirit of a valorous knight. Had he not better turn lackey, and withdraw? Idly did the Duke urge that he feared not his own death, but lacked the constancy to endure hers, which surely would follow. Could he be so cruel to her own beauty, thus exposing it to the risk of mouldering away, untimely, in the darkness and silence of the tomb? Nay but, rejoined Donna Maria, or the chronicler supplying speech exactly characteristic of the times, nay, but one moment of his absence was more death-dealing than a thousand deaths which might come through her delights. "If I die with you I shall nevermore be separated from you." He must prove himself faithless or loyal. Either he is base and cowardly, or he obeys her wish and command and he bows humbly in token of submission. "Since you wish to die, I shall die with you; such is your wish, so be it."

So far the chronicle, which is confirmed by the depositions, and romances at most when it tells of the trap laid by Don Carlo. There was no need to give out falsely that he was going a-hunting, and would not return that evening. The chase was other, and quite at hand, in an adjoining apartment of that palace still existing, and known as the San Severs, in the Piazza San Domenico. What ensued? An example of Renaissance "energy;" an orgy of passion and blood-lust, comparable with those that enthralled Shelley and Stendhal, and the Elizabethans before them. Let a reference to the accounts furnished by the maid-servant and the valet, in the present volume, suffice. On the morrow, the bodies of the hapless lovers lay exposed in the hall, and the whole city flocked to the sight. Much ink was shed in the way of lamentation by poets and rhymesters, from Tasso downward. But the fury of the lord Duke Carlo had not been sated with a double crime. Fleeing to Gesualdo for safety, he spies his second child in the cradle. And, bending over it, his jealous eye detects the hated lineaments of the Duke. Up with brat and cradle by silken ropes attached to the four corners of the ceiling. Round and round they span till the babe, breathless, "yielded its innocent soul to God." Which further atrocity did not sleep in the popular ear, and served to heighten vision. Every night the phantom of Donna Maria glided and moaned about the precincts. A generation later, we have a chronicle of divers disasters that had befallen illustrious Neapolitan families. And herein we learn how black misfortune dogged Don Carlo and his line; how it pleased God to destroy, both in possessions and in honor, this princely house descended from the ancient Norman kings. And the palace in Naples, wrecked in the earthquake of 1688, was restored only to gain in sinister repute. In the eighteenth century it harbored a Prince of San Severs who dabbled in science, presumably illicit, since infernal lights were often seen to flash through the windows. Nay, in recent times, a part of the building suddenly collapsed, with loss of life. Behold the working of a fatal curse.



But to return to Don Carlo. Straightway informing the Spanish Viceroy, and advised to get beyond the reach of angry relatives, he had fortified himself in his castle of Gesualdo, cutting down all forests and thickets that might shelter approach. He became frenzied, or so the rumor ran; and used avarice and tyranny upon his vassals. But, presently, matters smoothed themselves out. He was in exile for little more than the three years which Plato assigned as sufficient punishment for the murder of husband or wife. Once again he is wholly preoccupied with music and its charms, and none the less able to marry Donna Eleonora d'Este. But then, to be of the Court of the Estes, and in Ferrara was a joy and a marvel; a foretaste of paradise ever kept in tune by musicians specially appointed, and the largest musical library in the world. Don Carlo could fleet away the time felicitously. Ferrara was a joy and a marvel; a foretaste of paradise for cultured mortals. Profit and delight here blended themselves in due proportion. Could the heart of man desire sweeter discourse on beauty and virtue, fairer occasion for athletic accomplishment, than here offered? Through fragrant gardens and groves, when not engaged in the livesome disport of masks and feasting. And remember that Don Carlo was no mere dilettante whose published music gained the homage that waits upon wealth and posi-

tion. Milton, sending home a chest of choice music, duly included the Prince of Venosa. Gesualdo, the musician, is a figure of importance in musical history; of paramount importance, Mr. Philip Heseltine insists. He holds proud place among the men whose music was the crowning glory of the Renaissance. (Or should one not rather say that his were the times when music was arrogating supreme rank among the arts?) At all events, standing a little aloof from the great tradition which gave England her William Byrd and Italy her Palestrina, through Luca Marenzio, the madrigalist, he joins hands with both. He is of the fine flower of the daringly imaginative, experimental composers. Sacrificing none of the older polyphonous methods, he invested them with wealth of chromaticism and the new harmonic resources derived from it. He has audacious passages that seem to foreshadow the methods of today. Small wonder that, of late, French and German and English theorists are busy with him. Here is somewhat of that realism, impressionism, tone-painting, experiment in sound-for-sound's sake, which nowadays we are supposed to desire and require. But the interested reader should consult Mr. Heseltine's enthusiastic chapter for himself.



Mr. Cecil Gray, dealing with the biography, knows, but fails to emphasize, the distinction between the Renaissance and its period of gradual decay. After 1530, Italy is other than it was. The blighting hand of Spain lies upon it. History henceforth can but record creeping paralysis, social putrefaction. There was, indeed, governmental and moral reform of a sort. The Council of Trent had sat. Outward decorum was observed; hypocrisy reigned. This very crime of Don Carlo bears witness that the times had changed. It lacks the Renaissance virtuosity, the brilliant and economical adaptation of means to an end. The hired *bravi* are clumsy; the gun-shots and sword-thrusts too lavish and ghastly. This work of the shambles is due to the Spanish point of honor. Spanish jealousy prompts, not the Renaissance need of a *bella vendetta*, the need to spoil the triumph of others. In Renaissance days, the brother and father, of the woman, as well as the husband, would have felt constrained to exact penalties. Now the popular sympathy is with the hapless lovers, with Mars and Venus, while "impious assassin" is the politest style used concerning Don Carlo, the outraged Vulcan. These are the times of Vittoria Accoramboni; of the Duchess of Palliano and many another case. Elizabethan dramatists, like Webster and Tourneur, were astounded and fascinated. Could such things be? Horror haunted them like a nightmare: horror only to be rid away by the creation of stage monsters, of ferocious beasts safely to be seen behind the cage-bars of art. Only Shakespeare, and Massinger in some degree, could maintain the large mind. While John Ford—was he not of the true Renaissance, that Renaissance so blind to moral evil as to show almost innocent? Be all which as it may, together with the modern problem of a-morality. Another aspect offers. De Quincey, in his "Murder as a Fine Art," achieved the hard task of prolonged irony. And Mr. Cecil Gray, in a special chapter, performs a clever fantasia after De Quincey's method; plays a dexterous game of grim wit.

And what of Don Carlo himself? Anatole France has sketched him for us. But it is a composite figure of the imagination, even as the Elizabethan dramatists fused various incidents to shape out their hero or heroine. We learn from a chronicle that he kept a dozen young men in readiness to flagellate him thrice a day, for that a horde of demons gave him no peace. But Campanella the philosopher, citing the case, assigns to flagellation the virtue of curing costiveness. Physical explanations are always to hand when souls are plagued. Did conscience prick Don Carlo? We have the evidence of a painting which hangs in the chapel of that monastery he caused to be built, by way of expiation, in Gesualdo. The Redeemer is throned aloft for judgment, and pardons the contrite Prince who humbly kneels in the corner. His maternal uncle, Saint Carlo Borromeo, with an arm flung about him, protects, presents. The Blessed Virgin, the Archangel Michael, Saint Francis and Saint Domenic, the Magdalene and Saint Catherine of Sienna, all with divers gestures supplicate for him, or exhort him to trust the Divine mercy. Moreover, in the center, is the murdered child, happy with an angel on either side. While below, and now hidden by the altar, are—Donna Maria and the

Duke of Andria, burning in eternal flames. One is left with a newer puzzle. So repentant, and so vindictive still?

On Mr. Cecil Gray the portrait of the Prince, in the original or in the reproduction given, makes a disagreeable impression. He discerns the sure signs of perversity and degeneration. That is seeing too clearly, perchance, through the varnish and tarnish of the years. Michelet, altogether ardent to discover character in portraits, should be a warning to us. At any rate, one more method of investigation remains. Mr. Philip Heseltine affords us specimens of the madrigals. And, having heard them by the help of vocal friends, he finds in them the vivid and passionate expression of a strange personality; detects violent contrasts and changes of mood, deeply dramatized emotion, together with much elegance and suavity. Rehearsing them over for oneself with an imaginary choir, one can fairly agree with Mr. Heseltine, and specially note a stressed poignancy. But again one asks whether the musician is not conditioned by his times and his talent rather than by his remorse or his whole character.

The Spiritual Life

RUYSBROECK THE ADMIRABLE. By A. WAUTIER D'AYGALLIERS. Translated by FRED ROTHWELL. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1925. \$5.

HERETICS, SAINTS, AND MARTYRS. By FREDERIC PALMER. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1925. \$2.50.

THE GREAT PARTNERSHIP. By JOHN ARCHIBALD MACCALLUM. New York: George H. Doran Co. 1925. \$2.

Reviewed by RUFUS M. JONES
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IT looks at last as though we were on the way toward a real religion of life, a type of religion which could with sincerity be called *spiritual* rather than doctrinal or ecclesiastical. Many preachers have caught the idea and are interpreting it with insight and power, but the hope of its spread and triumph rests more solidly on the written than on the spoken word. Each annual output of books includes a very large number which propagate vitally and impressively this every-day, out-doors type of religion, which is primarily concerned with life and truth. "History," wrote Michelet, "deals with the soul, original thought, fruitful initiative, heroism of action, and creation. It shows that a soul weighs infinitely more than a kingdom, an empire, a state system—sometimes more than the human race itself." Another scholar has said: "The only thing that makes history worth writing is the spectacle of a soul superior to the peril that confronts it." "Tell us of the soul, tell us of the soul," was the cry of the Italian students in the fourteenth century. When will our students insist on hearing something about the vital issues of our own humanity,—something as convincing about the soul as is the theory of atoms about the world of matter?

The first book in my list is a single contribution to the growing stream of constructive mystical literature. If we were to make a list of the four greatest mystics in the history of the Christian Church most of us who are experts in this field would put Ruysbroeck in the tiny list. We should disagree over many names but we should almost certainly agree to include him. He has had great interpreters of his messages but he has seldom received such a scholarly and well-balanced estimate of his position in the long line of spiritual torch bearers as from M. D'Aygalers, nor has he had from anyone a clearer or sounder study of the influences that shaped his life and thought. This book is a masterly piece of work upon a figure in every way worthy of the love and learning here bestowed.

The introductory chapters resent the background and prepare the frame for the portrait. There is one on "Society in the Fourteenth Century" which will not arouse in the reader such desire to go back to that century for his social and economic life. Then comes an excellent study of the Church in that century with its struggles and its politics and its problems,—a chapter which gives some of the reasons why such a powerful wave of mysticism swept over Europe during that hundred years. The third chapter deals with deviation from piety in the period under consideration, and this once more leads up to the renaissance of enthusiasm and mysticism. The fourth chapter introduces the hero of the book,—a real hero though he never fought a battle,

stormed a city, or broke a maiden's heart. He has always borne the name of the little Flemish market-town of Ruysbroeck, where he was born on the banks of the Senne, near the forest of Soignes, in 1393.

Jan, as the child was called—the Flemish for John—had his roots deep in the sub-soil piety of a genuinely religious family and was spiritually nurtured for a life of devotion. He himself speaks of "the May month of his spiritual life" as the early preparation for a rich, ripe age of spiritual fecundity. The story of his conversion is vividly told and then follows the interesting account of his "spiritual refuge" in the forest of Groenendael—Green Woods—where with a little band of pious friends he devoted himself to *living, thinking, meditating, and writing*. "You can be as holy as you wish to be," he told two students from Paris, and as his supreme wish was to be holy his life attained a rare and wonderful beauty and fragrance.

The second part of the volume deals with the philosophical sources of Ruysbroeck's doctrine and with its interpretation. It is a first-class piece of work. In fact the book is indispensable to anyone who is desirous of understanding the significance of fourteenth century mysticism. One of the most important chapters is one which deals with Neoplatonism—chapter xii. It compares favorably with the best recent studies on the subject. I personally disagree with the writer in his view that Plotinus reveals in his philosophy a strong oriental influence, but that is a minor point. The main lines of the article are admirable and adequate. The book finishes with an important section on Ruysbroeck's originality and influence. We come away from the study of this lonely hermit in his green forest six hundred years ago deeply moved by his radiant personality, his depth of soul, his conviction that he had found God, and his beautiful literary style, and we wish that our age with its speed and skill and successes could produce such lives.



In his small, compact book on "Heretics, Saints, and Martyrs," Frederic Palmer of Harvard Divinity School has done an excellent piece of research and of interpretation. The book opens with a fresh study of the Anabaptists. The reader will find here an interesting account of one of the great movements of modern history told, in the main, impartially and with clear insight. Angelus Silesius, an important seventeenth century mystic and poet, is presented with unusual skill and ability. I know of nothing dealing with this interesting character which compares with it in value. Joachim of Floris, the prophet of the Eternal Gospel, is another of his figures. So, too, is Isaac Watts, whose hymns everybody sings, though almost nobody knows much about the saint's early life. Then there are two of the noblest saints in the calendar, Perpetua and Felicitas, Montanist martyrs in North Africa. And, finally, a strange heretic, Mani, the founder of Manichæism which played a long rôle in Christian history, has his story told. It is a good book for present reading and for a place on the library shelf.



"The Great Partnership," by Dr. MacCallum, is a book, not out of the fourteenth century, and not about remote saints and heretics, but out of the living stuff of our present age and about the life and religion of the times in which our problems lie. It is a good, live, vigorous, robust, pactical, and convincing message for today. It is spiritual and ethical rather than primarily mystical, though again and again the author emphasizes the importance of first-hand experience. The book contains many passages of beauty, it has many fine illustrations, it shows a wide range of reading with happy quotations, but still more important is it to note that the *thinking* revealed in all the chapters is sound and deep and honest. It is not a piece of loose-jointed homiletics; it has strong fibre and is well woven into a continuous presentation of its central theme, that we are linked with God in a great co-partnership. God has faith in us; He needs us; we need Him; He is Father, Worker, Friend, Comforter; He is Grace, Peace, Joy; He is Life, Power, Light, Truth, Law, and Purpose. All these aspects are unfolded with freshness and power, and we are carried forward from the beginning to the end with interest and with a sense of reality of what we are reading. I am glad to recommend such a gospel of health and vigor, and I am glad that those who are not fortunate enough to hear it preached every Sunday can nevertheless *read* it every day in the week.

What is Good Writing?

BETTER WRITING. By HENRY S. CANBY.
New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1926.

Reviewed by GRANT C. KNIGHT
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I BELIEVE that I speak for a phalanx of teachers of advanced composition in colleges when I say that most texts constructed for use in our courses leave us unmoved. We have become so familiar with the table of contents which advertises such matters as Unity, Emphasis, Coherence, Sentence and Paragraph Structure, Diction and Style, Choice of Subject, and all the other items of the stereotyped inventory that in despair at conducting students to a *doloroso passo* as sorrowful to us as to them we have often given up altogether instruction from books and have relied upon informal classroom discussions. A book which performs this function for us, however, and performs it wisely, pointedly, and inspiringly, is now before me; it is Henry S. Canby's "Better Writing."

"Better Writing" is preëminently a friendly text. Friendly inasmuch as it is willing to take pains to interest us, friendly in its occasional sharpness of reproof, in its point-blank declaration of our un-



BUNNY GANDLE

Winning drawing by Alexander King which was awarded the prize offered by its publishers for the best pictorial interpretation of the hero of "Gandle Follows His Nose," by Heywood Broun (Boni & Liveright)

fitness if we are unfit, in its readiness to encourage. It is, indeed, an excellent model of what Dr. Canby calls good manners in writing. From the moment when we note that instead of handling the small stones of fossilized instruction it is going to tap skilfully such unusual specimens as Crooked Guideposts, Beauty Rash, Faulty Brakes, and Rickets, to the final summarizing chapter we remain good-humoredly attentive. It does not flaunt novelty for novelty's sake, but it does recognize the pedagogic value of emptying new wine into old bottles. And—to suit our new figure—Dr. Canby's wine has a taking sparkle; his words are selected carefully, often inevitably, but with no taste of pedantry. Every page gives pleasure by its alert phrasing, its thrust of antiseptic epigram, its scrupulous avoidance of the *cliché*, its competent organization, and this, as all teachers and students know, is a rare experience to derive from a textbook. It is as though the author were conscious that in selecting a title so ambitious as "Better Writing" he was assuming the responsibility of illustrating his theories and practicing his advice, a responsibility which he carries easily.

"Better Writing" is, nevertheless, not too comfortable in its dilation upon the penman's craft. Its variety has a spice to burn sensitive tongues. There are warnings against sentimentality that will leave not a few of even the most modern collegians something to think about; there are diagnoses of "disabilities and diseases" which will set every aspiring writer to studying his symptoms; and there is above all an insistence upon the combination of mental strength and mental quickness which may cause all of us to pause in self-examination. This last point,

it seems to me as I look back upon the work of my students, is especially to be pondered by the ambitious in fiction or verse. "The clearest mind, the best interpreted experience, the most sensitive perception," says Dr. Canby in explaining the control which comes from mental hardness, "will never make a good writer if either the intellect or the emotions betray him when he begins to write." Perhaps there is nothing that the present-day novice in writing needs more badly to learn.

Chapter X, entitled Who Should and Who Should Not Write: Simple Tests in the Choice of a Vocation, is directed toward the student outside as well as the student inside college and is so decisive that I wish the author had been bold enough to make it Chapter I. These are the tests he proposes to would-be men of letters: Have you the desire, not merely the vague wish, to write? Will your determination carry you through the subsequent drudgery? Are you fond of words for their own sakes? Can you invent? Were you born with an ear for rhythms? Ultimately, have you succeeded or failed in your attempts? Although we may quarrel with this order of climax it would be difficult successfully to impeach the validity of the implied standards and judgments and a better series of tests would be far to seek.

Pedagogically, "Better Writing" is sound. It maintains what too few authors and teachers have said, that composition is not the tracing of symbols upon paper but an energetic process that goes on in the mind; it repeats strongly that correct thinking is the base of all good writing. It passes lightly over such so-called mechanics as spelling, punctuation, and paragraphing—things which, of course, should be taught in secondary schools but which must also be reviewed by most freshmen in colleges—and concentrates upon the importance of equipment other than technical: experience, imaginative interpretation, vital expression. Lastly, if I may be so revolutionary as to use an old-fashioned term in closing, it exemplifies in thought, style, and tone the precepts it has laid down, and these virtues, to which must be added the lively spirit which pervades the pages, make it the best current text on composition for college sophomores and juniors.

Loeb Classics

LOEB CLASSICAL LIBRARY: DIOGENES LAERTIUS, LIVES OF EMINENT PHILOSOPHERS, 2 vols., R. D. HICKS; PLATO, vol. v., W. R. M. LAMB; vol. vi., H. N. FOWLER; DIO'S ROMAN HISTORY, vol. viii., E. CARY; SENECA, EPISTULAE MORALES, vol. iii., R. M. GUMMERE; AESCHYLUS, vol. ii., H. WEIR SMYTH; TACITUS, HISTORIES, I-III, CLIFFORD H. MOORE.

Reviewed by J. M. CORNFORD
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WHEN Solon was told that it was of no use to weep for the son he had lost, he replied: "That is just why I am weeping—because it is of no use."

The "Lives of Eminent Philosophers" contains a fair number of repartees as poignant as this, and a much larger number which, though less poignant, have the lucid finality of French *esprit*. Indeed French is the only language into which they could be worthily rendered. It is significant that the Greek word for a wise man (*sophos*) meant a man of *esprit*, as well as a man of skill in art or craftsmanship. The innumerable anecdotes in these biographies consist chiefly of epigrammatic sayings. Unfortunately they are not, in general, characteristic of their supposed authors; in fact, many are ascribed to more than one philosopher. When Anaxagoras was told that he was condemned for impiety and that his sons were dead, "his comment on the sentence was, 'Long ago nature condemned both my judges and myself to death; and on his sons, 'I knew that my children were born to die.' Some, however, tell this story of Solon, and others of Xenophon."

The compiler of the "Lives" makes no attempt to fasten the anecdote upon one of the claimants rather than another. His chief merit is that he was uncritical by modern standards. He copied out what he found in older handbooks of the same sort, without disguising the fact, as we do when we write articles for encyclopædias. Hence, happily for us, we can often trace the source he drew upon at fourth or fifth hand. The reader who is in search of historical facts may put his trust in the judicious