

Register 22nd May 1/15.

WRITINGS AND WRITERS.

A STUDY IN STYLES.

[By Professor H. Darnley Naylor.]

What is style? The answer is easy if we mean what is the style of A or B. No one can confuse Ruskin, Macaulay, and Carlyle. Few would fail to differentiate between the pompous periods of Gibbon and the short, clear sentences of Froude. So in other languages. Who cannot recognise the rhetorical tricks of Cicero, the neatly balanced phrasing of Livy, and the pungent epigram of Tacitus? I was musing upon such platitudes as I read examination papers in a cosy armchair by a cosy fire, when, suddenly, I found myself in Tartarus. I should have preferred Elysium, but one cannot expect an Authors' Club in so select a quarter. The ghosts of literary heroes stood round me, and I was begging them to give me specimens of their art. This they were agreeable to do if I would suggest a topic. I thought for a brief moment, and answered, "Tell me in your own words this incident:—

"The King of France and ten thousand men
Drew their swords and put them up
again."

"I ought to say," I added, "that the king and his men mounted a hill in order to perform the manœuvre."

There was a pause. Then Livy began as follows, reading from one of Bohn's cribs:—"It is agreed among all that the king of the Gauls when, at early dawn, he had, surrounded by 10,000 men, mounted the adverse hill, the signal having been given, ordered his men to draw their swords, each for himself, and having sheathed them to return back once again into the more level plain."

"Miserably inadequate!" cried Cicero. "Listen to this," and he read his version, which, also, like Livy's, was after the manner of Bohn. "O thing perverse and preposterous! Turn over with yourselves, conscript fathers, a sight most ludicrous, most contemptible, most worthy of the derision of all mortals upon the globe of the earth. For what [shall I say]? Turn over, I say, with yourselves this king of the Gauls, who, the God of Faith help me, surrounded as he was by a crowded bodyguard of more [than] 10,000 men, displayed such universal cowardice and hesitation of mind that after he had ordered so large a multitude of soldiers to draw each for himself his sword, he seems to have been able to do nothing else than return whence he had come to the lower places of the plain. O leader most despicable! O soldiers most to be pitied! But enough of this."

At these last words so hearty a cheer was given by the listening ghosts that Cicero, taking it for a compliment, sat down.

Then through the gloom there broke the sound of a voice unmusical but insistent. It was the voice of Socrates. "My dear Cicero," it said, "but what doing were the soldiers worthy of pity? Is it not the case that he who does his duty is happy? Please answer me if you will be so kind." "It seems so," said Cicero. "And these soldiers, if they did according to the story, were doing also their duty?" "Yes," answered Cicero, but very unwillingly, for he was obvious being eager to speak many things as well. "Were they not therefore also happy?" "It runs a risk of being so." "But let us consider the matter thus—for what is the function of the soldier? Shall we be right in saying that his function is to do what is just?" "We shall." "And that which is just is also fitting?" "For how not?" "And that which is fitting is to remain quiet and do nothing, if the general so orders?" "True." "Therefore it is fitting for the soldier to do nothing?" "It seems so." "Therefore it is just for the soldier to do nothing?" "Yes." "And since he is just he is also happy?" "Certainly." "But what of a politician—is he not also just when he does nothing?" "Agreed." "Therefore when he does nothing, he does that which is fitting, and that which is of advantage both privately for himself and publicly for the citizens?" . . . No answer. "And shall we not say the same" . . . But the voice had suddenly ceased. There was a scuffle, and then a dead silence. I realized that the murder of B.C. 300 had been repeated.

At last Herodotus spoke. With modest bearing and simplicity of manner he asked leave to read his version from a slightly better translation. It ran thus:—"And then a thing most worthy of narration happened. This I tell even as it was told to me by the priests of Memphis; but whether it is true, I venture not to say. However that be, they told me even this how a certain King of the Galatai, having gathered about him a bodyguard of 10,000 infantry, bade them ascend a certain hill. Now this hill, so they said, was many cubits in height, as much as 200 cubits (this I can believe, having seen such myself); up this hill, then, he bade them mount, and thereupon there happened a thing less to be believed; for when they had come unto the top of that hill, they were overcome with such weariness that first the King and then the soldiers [did] nothing else than, having drawn their swords, return thither whence they had first set out. And to me hearing it the thing seemed most foolish, but that which I heard I have set down, and may the gods pardon me if I have said aught amiss."

And now I was startled by a sound between a growl and a roar. It was Thomas Carlyle, who declaimed as follows:—"Poor Francis, and what dost thou do? Tragico-foolish enough that mounting to the Height of Folly, or, shall we call it rather, Down-mounting to the Abyss of Uttermost Contempt—one of the vast Inanities or Insanities, if you will, of this stupidest and miserablest of worlds. Alas, too, poor soldiers! What a change that return! We have marched to please thee, Francis. We have unsheathed sword for nought. We have come back shamed, blushing toto corpore, veritable faineants, and for thy sake. And much to the same purpose. So on that Wednesday (July 24 as the records have it) they went up and came down, while all the world shook with Olympian laughter, not without tears—of shame. Up and down—truly the oddest, surprisingest vacillation of fate's scalepans."

Here Thomas Babington Macaulay interposed. "My dear Mr. Carlyle, must we not show more clarity of diction, more smoothness of style, more elegance of trope, more vividness of description? Some local details, some exactitude in reference to time and place—all these things are surely essential to historic narrative. May I venture to put it somewhat thus:—"The castle stood booming forth the hour of mid-day when the intrepid king, accompanied by a bodyguard of 10,000 warriors, marched slowly in the direction of Mons Sacre. It was one of those lovely summer days which, with universal consent, have given France the merited appellation of *La Belle*. Nature was all smiles; but her smiles ill accorded with the scowling faces of the army. There were not wanting voices which, in low tones, murmured—'First up; then down; then dinner.' The stomach, it has been well said, is but a laboratory of disaffection, and the most superficial observer must have noted the glances, half of contempt, half of disgust, that flashed like the friminations of the pregnant thundercloud from the eyes of a discomposed and ill-fed soldiery. Not a sound was heard save the panting of horses and men. At last the highest slopes were surmounted and the goal of their endeavour was reached. The joyous trumpet blared its signal. It echoed again and again throughout the wooded valleys of *La Gruyere*. But, before the nearest reverberation had time to die away, every sword in that vast army flashed from its scabbard, and, while the distant echoes still murmured upon the breeze, flashed back again. At once the signal for return was given, and with blithe and cheerful gait the soldiers, conscious of a simple duty well performed, conscious too of the call of elementary appetites, made good speed toward the frowning castle walls. It is true that the soldier is distinguished rather by ardent spirits than by austere asceticism. But in circumstances such as these the human heart is transformed, sublimed, transfigured. Never had an army marched with so much elan and with such purposeful energy. Twenty minutes had scarcely elapsed between the first departure of the cavalcade and the moment when the mighty doors thundered behind the last horseman. All the guns sent forth a voice of gladness and the mortars throughout the town made answer. The health of His Majesty was drunk with huzzas and volleys of musketry."

But what with the booming of T.B.'s voice and the roar of the cannon, I awoke, and found myself with 20 papers still to be looked through. A glance at the first of these demonstrated that accuracy is even more needful than style, and I went off to my resting bed to dream of false concord and outraged syntax.

Register 24th May 15

Mr. J. Nangle, Director of the Technical Education Branch, Department of Public Instruction, New South Wales, will this afternoon confer with the Council of the Institutes Association of South Australia with reference to educational classes for institutes.

Register 24th May 15

UNIVERSITIES OF MELBOURNE,
ADELAIDE, TASMANIA, QUEENSLAND,
AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

—o—
THEORY OF MUSIC.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PASS LIST.

—Grade I.—

Honours.—Patrick, Elsie Furneaux (private tuition).

—Grade II.—

Pass.—Alexander, Mary (Convent of Mercy, Angas street).

—Grade III.—

Honours.—Horan, Philomena (St. Dominic's Priory, North Adelaide); Johncock, Mabel Emily (Miss A. G. Webb, Clare); Ward, Evelyn (Convent of Mercy, Angas street). Pass.—Glynn, Elsie (St. Dominic's Priory, North Adelaide); Lee, Nellie Margaret (Miss A. G. Webb, Clare); McMahon, Ellen Elizabeth (Dominican Convent, Franklin street).

—Grade IV.—

Honours.—Daly, Eileen Mary (Loretto Convent, Norwood); Leslie, Jean, (Convent of Mercy, Angas street); Morris, Eileen (Convent of Mercy, Mount Gambier). Pass.—Finney, Malsie Evelyn (Miss Sprod); Gleeson, Susa (St. Joseph's Convent, Quorn); Tillet, Myrtle Woodcroft (Miss Dabborough); Webb, Dorix Jean (Miss F. E. Collins).

—Grade V.—

Pass.—Burgess, Jack (Miss F. E. Collins); Coeling, Linda Rose (Mrs. Singyard); Daw, Jessie (Dominican Convent, Kapunda); Fairchild, Amelia Dorothy (Miss R. M. Hooper); Gidons, Marjorie (St. Dominic's Priory, North Adelaide); Ham, Kathleen (Miss Elsie V. Willmore, L.A.B.); Hill, William Leo George (Miss Norma Telsseire); Johnson, Hilda Vera Adelaide (Convent of Mercy, Mount Gambier); McPherson, Effie (Convent of Mercy, Mount Gambier); Schubert, Zelma Marguerite (Miss Elsie V. Willmore, L.A.B.); Wicklein, Alma Mary (Miss N. Milligan, A.T.C.L.).

Mail May 25/15

THE SECOND VETERAN.



LOOKS DOWN FROM THE RIPE OLD
AGE OF 83.



DR. JEFFERIS DESCRIBES THE KAISER
AS HE SAW HIM.



of piety are completely nullified by avowed hatred which emanates from the political life. After all, the world is governed wisely and powerfully by means of love. Love is the final law, and when a nation proclaims that hate is its final law then that nation is doomed. In this connection I have been struck with the attitude of Russia. Ever since the battle of Waterloo Russia, in spite of the paternalistic despotism of its Government, has been really striving for a federation of nations which I think is one of the most hopeful signs of the whole thing."

Belgium Will be Restored.

"Do you think Belgium will ever be completely restored?"

"Belgium will undoubtedly be released from the pressure of Prussian tyranny. The absurd edict of the Kaiser that Be-

AT. (C. H.)