

of his imagination. For with few exceptions, his letters are not especially interesting, and only occasionally, as in the case of his comments on Renan, does one pause to re-read a passage: '.... The Church.... has assumed an influence even over those who were supposed to combat and deny it.... The strides.... made (in the Catholic sense) from Voltaire to Renan are tremendous. Renan is.... still an anti-Christian, but one who has been Christianised; *Graeca capta*, or rather, *Christianismus captus ferum victorem fecit*.' Yet, apart from such exceptions, what stands out is the apparent disparity between the breadth of his work and the narrowness of his life. Something of a hypochondriac, confined for much of the day to his bed, one is amazed at the range of his writing. It poses a problem which seems without human solution; and, advisedly, one uses the word 'human'. For imagination is the link between the seen and unseen world—the eye of the soul; and if to mention such a matter in the case of Proust strains the credulity of the modern pundits, it is but another example of that divorce which has taken place not only between literary biography and fact, but between the conception of art as merely a psychological outpouring and a flowering of the spirit. In redressing the balance, these letters may well prove to be an indirect God-given gift.

NEVILLE BRAYBROOKE.

THE CREATIVE CRAFTSMAN. By John Farleigh. (Bell; 21s.)

Education has nowhere got more completely out of hand than in its tendency for teachers to teach first and foremost in the interests of teachers. And nowhere has this dangerous aberration been more apparent than in the so-called art schools which have almost wholly replaced the old apprenticeship to master craftsmen by classes designed to subserve industrialism or create more teachers. *The Creative Craftsman* is a long step back in the right direction. Mr John Farleigh has interviewed thirteen thriving workshops; questioned their owners on their way of life and how they came by it; and discussed the prospects of any young people embarking on similar careers.

The difference between craftsmanship and most contemporary jobs is its stress on personal responsibility. Its risks and rewards are wholly unlike those of the proletariat and you cannot educate for both on the same lines. Morally there is no doubt which throws up the more valuable citizen or—all things being anything like equal—the more valuable work. If you hark back and imagine Leonardo going to a polytechnic instead of to Verrochio's workshop you will listen more tolerantly to Mr Farleigh's plea for early apprenticeship to master craftsmen and for grants to approved workshops rather than to art schools. Thirteen men and women substantiate his findings. There are two potters, two goldsmiths, two calligraphers, two embroideresses,

a book-binder, a wood-worker, a printer, a textile designer and a couple of musical instrument makers. (One could well have spared one embroideress and one calligrapher for a weaver and a tombstone-maker). The most beautiful work and the best expositions of their craft are provided by the two potters, Bernard Leach and Dora Billington; and by Carl Dolmetsch and Leslie Ward, whose prime object in making their exquisite musical instruments is to recapture music for the family and bring back 'an age when people made their own music and their own entertainment.' On this happy and Catholic note one may take reluctant leave of one of the most exhilarating comments on art and society uttered since the days of Morris.

H.P.E.

THE MEANING OF BEAUTY. By Eric Newton. (Longmans; 15s.)

MASTERS OF PAINTING SERIES. Gainsborough; Chardin, Eugene Delacroix; Jan Vermeer. Edited by Eric Newton. (Longmans; 10s. 6d. each.)

Mr Newton, in two minds about Beauty, should be read with two minds or not at all. Forget the title, leave philosophy to philosophers (as the author for all his rough handling of St Thomas really prefers) and there is much to be enjoyably learnt from his lively commentary on the development of taste, history of art, and pictures old and new.

Yet the two minds must come together as Mr Newton strips down the 'Mystical Marriage of St Catherine' by Veronese layer by layer like an onion. (He has a novel and illuminating analysis of picture-making in terms of an onion.) Alas, an onion has a centre, and this chapter fades too easily before we are left with an empty canvas or—Beauty.

Neither thrown out nor introduced, Beauty haunts the book. It is perhaps time Beauty were consulted about Art by someone of Mr Newton's critical knowledge. Most other oracles have been consulted, but she is not much mentioned nowadays. A word forgotten means a lost concept and territory of human knowledge, or that in the fashion of the time, a new world has been coined. Similarly the unaddressed person soon drifts from the company. Here Beauty is not called back, nor her grave shown us, nor, if unrecognised among us, is she pointed out.

Neither can Mr Newton leave philosophy alone, but what is meant as a definition of Beauty turns out to be a definition of the Good or, less excusably, of Truth, or even ethics. He concludes that definition is useless because 'it does not throw light on the object but only isolates it'. Light enough, one feels, in a world in which morality and art are so confused.

In the 'Masters of Painting Series', however, all is well. Here are