an ontological ground. As cosmic correspondence provides a way in which we can know God, so the process of artistic creation becomes one of discovering what is already there in God's book of nature. Since poets perform functions analogous to the creative deity, poets reproduce the cosmos. In contrast to Plato, who regards poetry as an imitation of imitation at third remove from reality, Pythagorus sees poetry as a golden world, a super-reality. No poet has ever given the poet a more exalted role. Only a very few today could possibly believe Pythagorean poetics, but to this reader at least, living in an era of shallow neopositivism and the dominant desiccated Anglo-American linguistic philosophy, there is more than a touch of nostalgia for the sweet harmony whose musicians were Sidney, Spenser and Shakespeare.

The book is well indexed and has fully annotated bibliographies and notes at the end of each chapter. These are invaluable. Taken alone, the notes are in fact rich readings. As far as I can see, Heninger has missed very little. The book is lavishly illustrated and beautifully printed. At today's inflated book prices the volume is an extremely good buy.

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Petrarch's "Bucolicum Carmen." Translated and annotated by Thomas G. Bergin with illustrations by Deane Keller. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1974. Pp. xvii, 252. \$15.

This is a useful book for student and researcher alike. With Latin and English on facing pages, it presents us with the first complete English translation of the twelve eclogues which Petrarch began to compose in 1346 and finally issued in revised form in 1357. The poems are chiefly patterned (in form and subject material) on Vergil's *Eclogues*, but while they have by no means the literary merit of their predecessors, for a number of reasons dealt with by the translator in his introduction (p. xiii ff.), yet they are of historical and biographical value as documents of Petrarch's personal experiences and of early Italian humanistic thought, tastes, and to some extent preoccupations. Notes in Petrarch's own correspondence and other commentaries composed by scholars like Benvenuto da Imola (see also *Il Bucolicum carmen e i suoi commenti inediti*, ed. Antonio Avena, 1906) make it possible to identify the events and personalities which are conventionally disguised in classical allusions and references.

It is Professor Bergin's aim "simply to present a translation and not a critical analysis of the *Carmen*" (p. xiv) and the result is a version which takes its place beside the five existing translations of this work (four in Italian and one in French) and which is a worthy addition to his own previous translations of selected works of Petrarch. It is appropriate that the first translation into English should be into hexameters, and by using his considerable creative powers and skill in versification, Professor Bergin has almost always succeeded in communicating to the reader a feeling of the original style of the poems and the literary tastes of the period. The translator has adopted the Latin text established by A. Avena in 1906 and has corrected a few omissions and misprints and has made some minor changes in Avena's punctuation. It is unfortunate, however, that he has chosen to preserve such orthographical oddities as *abijt* or *curvj* (Ec. III 34, p. 32). The choice of language in the

translation is accurate and closely approximates the diction of the original, so that in proper combination with the dactylic rhythm, a sense of authenticity is communicated to the reader—never an easy task for a “creative” translator. Even so, it is sometimes difficult to escape the comic in any presentation of pastoral poetry to the modern reader, as for example in *Eclogue* III 9 where Daphne speaks:

So let it be. But take care, keep your greedy hands
where they should be.

Again the translator cautions us about the serious risk that in any translation into English dactyls, the rhythm may become tedious, but except, perhaps, for the tenth eclogue, which includes a lengthy catalogue of ancient writers, his effort is worth the risk.

Professor Bergin adds an introduction of ten pages which is brief and expository with ample references to more complete studies of the problems arising from a closer examination of the *Carmen*. The book then concludes with a section of notes containing a brief introduction to the theme and content of each poem along with brief explanations of the topical references. While the book adds few critical comments to our estimation of Petrarch's contribution to literature, yet it will afford the English-speaking reader a reasonable access and introduction to an unfamiliar aspect of Petrarch's poetic composition.

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J. Kelley Sowards. *Desiderius Erasmus*. Twayne's World Authors Series, 353. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1975. Pp. 152.

The author's purpose was “to present to modern readers a brief survey of Erasmus as a man of letters.” Format, content and approach had to fit the norm established for a series subtitled “A Survey of the World's Literature.” Operating within set limits, the author could not have produced this lively and balanced account without a remarkable degree of familiarity with Erasmus's works. Also the book has greatly benefited from the fact that he is by training an historian. Although he rightly disclaims any intention of presenting a “comprehensive biography,” he achieves a happy synthesis between topical and chronological approaches and reinforces his presentation of Erasmus's writings with well-selected points of biographical, political and religious history. The result is a self-contained study ideal for serious students with little or no previous knowledge of Erasmus and his times.

This is not to say that scholars possessing some previous acquaintance with Erasmus should ignore it. Through his penetrating study of the *Julius exclusus*, published with an English translation (Indiana University Press, 1968), Dr. Sowards had earlier established himself as one of the handful of specialists whose judgment on any particular question concerning Erasmus must receive careful consideration. The present volume has given him an opportunity to add many new accents to ongoing scholarly discussions. In a general way, his view of Erasmus seems to me somewhat more indebted to an interpretative tradition reaching back from Huizinga to Voltaire than was the case with the recent biography by R. H. Bainton. Although he parallels Bainton in underlining that “biblical scholarship . . . consumed most of the time and energy of Erasmus,” he does not, I think, impress upon his