

A man who writes carelessly at once proves that he himself puts no great value on his own thoughts. For it is only by being convinced of the truth and importance of our thoughts that there arises in us the inspiration necessary for the inexhaustible patience to discover the clearest, finest, and most powerful expression for them; just as one puts holy relics or priceless works of art in silver or golden receptacles. It was for this reason that the old writers--whose thoughts, expressed in their own words, have lasted for thousands of years and hence bear the honoured title of classics--wrote with universal care. Plato, indeed, is said to have written the introduction to his *Republic* seven times with different modifications. On the other hand, the Germans are conspicuous above all other nations for neglect of style in writing, as they are for neglect of dress, both kinds of slovenliness which have their source in the German national character. Just as neglect of dress betrays contempt for the society in which a man moves, so does a hasty, careless, and bad style show shocking disrespect for the reader, who then rightly punishes it by not reading the book.

FOOTNOTES:

[5] Schopenhauer here gives an example of this bombastic style which would be of little interest to English readers.--TRANSLATOR.