

THE INDEPENDENT
10 MAY 1924

REVIEW of *WRITTEN IN FRIENDSHIP*

WRITTEN IN FRIENDSHIP. By Gerald Cumberland, Author of *Set Down in Malice*. New York: Brentano's.

Between the people of whom Mr. Cumberland has "written in friendship" and those of whom he has "set down" his opinions "in malice"—one would choose to be of the latter—for then at least one would be prepared for the "rapier thrusts" as his publishers describe Mr. Cumberland's criticisms. But the recipients of his rapier thrusts are rather like the pigeons at a big shoot at Monte Carlo—poor defenseless birds flying before the pinging criticisms of Mr. Cumberland's excellent and wide-spreading gun.

At least they are celebrities or quite nearly so and they are very numerous—literally scores of them, ranging from W. B. Yeats through Mrs. Asquith to, at the end, a gentleman names Aleister Crowley. So for people who love personalities there is much matter in this book; moreover Mr. Cumberland confesses to an acquaintance, sometimes a friendship, with the majority of his victims. With some he has dined at least once, others have been presented to him, and finally, Mr. Cumberland is a master shot. That fact is evidenced on almost every page.

There are, however, intervening pages where in the presence of a superior personality, as in his pages on Miss Rebecca West, Miss Sheila Kaye Smith, and John Galsworthy, Mr. Cumberland forgets himself sufficiently to have his sincerity get the better of his virtuosity.

F. D. W. G.