gré Stefan Zweig. Roth continued to work pro-
digiously as a novelist and journalist, after his
books were among the first burned in Nazi Ger-
many. A man on the brink (it was the news of
Ernst Toller’s suicide in New York that trig-
gered his own death), Roth depicted a continent
determined to bury its head in the sand, urg-
ing action, and seeing with remarkable clear-
sightedness the tragedy being played out and
getting worse.

The pieces collected here bristle with anger,
sarcasm and vitriolic condemnation of the general
blindness, snobility, even, to the ‘re-
mains of a European conscience’: they form a
heartbreaking lament for Austria, final bastion of
German language and music, and a howl of
despair at the errors of politicians and the ac-
commodating nature of a people wooed by de-
usions of ‘a greater Germany’. Hidden within
the ripar blows of his journalism are deeply
personal tragedies, such as the fate of his wife,
who, as a schizophrenic patient in a psychiatric
hospital, fell prey to Nazi euthanasia.

A momentary lull comes in two charming,
descriptive pieces, nostalgic for Hôtel Foy-
ot, his Parisian home, and appreciating a
bistro’s night denizens: the cabman’s wisdom has
a sincerity Roth misses in some Western
journalists’ continuing belief in ‘fairy-tales of
Gibraltar’. “It’s kind of an institution”, he
claims after a cabman offers, “conscience that
has been killed off. Authorization has taken its place.”

On the End of the World is an excellent addi-
tion to Roth’s oeuvre in English, deftly translat-
ed and with comprehensive notes by William
Stone; a typo on the book’s spine is regrettable.

The Thirty-Nine Steps
Chislett has produced a concise yet nuanced ac-
tivity in Spain, but as Chislett also observes, the
political term “liberal” was first coined to de-
elite in Spain, but as Chislett also observes, the
political term “liberal” was first coined to de-

C
oKing People is made up of two parts. The first
consists of purported biographies of five
female cookery writers who have shaped the
way that the English think about food. All
the usual suspects are here: Hannah Woolley and
Glassé, Eliza Acton, Isabella Beeton and Eliza-
abeth David. Their résumés are familiar too, since
David’s book assembled them from existing
scholarship. The book’s second part, meanwhile,
brings together recipes excerpted from their
work, interlaced with comments from Waugh,
who is herself a food writer. We have everything from Woolley’s thoughts on ‘Pig-Pye’ to David’s instructions for “Bar-
Saupcons at dawn doesn’t begin to describe the
tension that would have ensued had that really
been possible.

KATHRYN HUGHES

History

Robert Yarinton
TWO LAMENTABLE TRAGEDIES
Edited by Chiki Hanabusa
144pp. Manchester University Press. £45.
978 0 7109 9052 2

On August 23, 1594, the London innkeeper
Thomas Merry murdered a chandler, Robert
Beach, and his apprentice Thomas
Winchester, only to be apprehended shortly
afterwards and hanged alongside his sister Han-
apparent accomplice, Rachel. This “lament-
able” series of events constitutes one of the
Two Lamentable Tragedies depicted in the
1601 play by Robert Yarinton, which has re-
cently been added to the corpus of Malo-

THE NOVEL CURE

Reference Books

Susan Elderkin and Ella Berthoud
THE NOVEL CURE
An A to Z of literary remedies
978 0 85786 420 3

N ot sure which of the 170,267 books pub-
lished in Britain in 2012 to place on your
bedside table? “Consider booking a consulta-
tion with a bibliotherapist, who will analyse
your reading tastes, habits, and yearnings.”
This advice comes in The Novel Cure, an A to Z of literary remedies, written by two self-
styled ‘prescriptions for reading’. A book
that once would have stayed news you can use.
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