

ferent ink and was probably written July 13, which is the date of posting.

MARY PARKINSON.

Albany, N. Y., April 26.

Norwich Vermont July 9th, 1824

My dear Sir

I received your very kind letter the day we returned from the march. I now set down to express my Obligations to you for it & to answer your enquiries. You desire me to give you an account of the school which I will do as correctly as I can—the academy is under the sole direction of Captain Partridge who has under him 3 professors & 1 french master. There is one particular concerning these professors which is not at all favourable, The Captain pretends in his Catalogue to have 9 professors, but when you come here they are all gone—The branches which are taught here are Mathematics, Philosophy, Military Science, Ethicks, Belles lettres, Practical Geometry, Topography, Greek, Latin, French, & Music—Fencing is likewise taught; also Geography & history—The exercises of each day at this time of the year are as follows—at half past 4 A. M. the reveille drum beats, when we all attend roll call soon after which, the officer of the day (whom Captain appoints every evening for the ensuing day) inspects all the rooms sees that all the beds are made, rooms swept, & none on bed & reports all those whose beds are not made, whose rooms are not swept or who are on bed—at six o'clock, we go to breakfast at our boarding houses at 7 o'clock we attend prayers in the building after which the studies and recitations commence and continue till 1 o'clock when we go to dinner; at 2 o'clock we have another roll call, when the studies commence again—during the afternoon as well as in the morning the officer of the day inspects twice—at 6 o'clock we have a drill & at 7 we sup at half past 8 we have a roll call in the lecture room at 9 the inspector sees that all are in their rooms, & reports all who are out—At 10 he inspects again when all are required to be in bed—There are some things which do not appear well at all; such as the Captain's taking students who have been dismissed from other seminaries also tho' he has one regulation that all the Cadets shall attend Church he pretty well fills up the remainder of the time with duty which is not of a religious kind—As I suppose you would desire to know something about our march, I will give you a short description of it. We left this place June 9th & in two days reached Rutland distant 44 miles Sunday night marched to Castleton 10 miles Monday morning marched to Whitehall 14 miles Tuesday left Whitehall in steamboat & reached Burlington 80 miles Wednesday afternoon left Burlington & reached Plattsburgh in steamboat Monday afternoon left Plattsburgh & reached Vergennes 20 miles below Burlington left Vergennes reached Middlebury 11 miles Wednesday Friday left Middlebury & reached this Sunday morning 10 o'clock having marched 65 miles in 20 hours—I marched all the way, the distance of the whole route was 300 mile of which we marched 170 & of which I carried my musket 60.—I must not forget however that I asked twice to ride on the baggage waggons though I was not permitted to—Give my kind remembrance to all my friends in Albany

And believe me
Your very affecte friend

Theodore Sedgwick Jun

Harmanus Bleecker, Esqr

P.S. Please let no person see this

THE PENSIONS FOR VOLUNTEER OFFICERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I never open the *Nation* without a feeling of regret at the tone of its attack upon those who are laboring for increased appropriations for those old soldiers who are, like myself, drawing very near the end of life. I belong both to the Loyal Legion

and the Grand Army, and the more I look into it, the more I learn how large a proportion of the survivors need help increasingly in their old age. This has been shown over and over again by printed figures, and, although it may be sometimes overrated, it much oftener is understated. So long a time has passed since the war that, out of the 131 major-generals of the volunteers, only two are living, and of the 446 brigadier-generals, only 19 are living; and of the more than 3,000 surviving colonels of regiments, there are less than 200 to be affected by this legislation. Of these I am one.

Younger men can hardly realize how many of these were driven out of the field by wounds or their consequences, as I myself was, in a way for which my pension of \$240 a year gives no adequate compensation. My richer relatives, who also served, were no better off after the war was ended, and business successes alone saved them. You also do not, perhaps, realize that the officers sacrificed much more in proportion than the privates did; for the officers must pay their own bills as they went along, while the privates were publicly rationed. Even this did not save them from impoverishment. I will not bore you with further particulars, but I belong to the relief committee of my own branch of the G. A. R., and it has just been necessary to issue a new appeal to the public to keep the old soldiers out of the poor-house.

COLONEL OF INFANTRY.

Boston, May 1.

HOUDON'S DIANA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In your issue of April 14, giving a list of the prices obtained for paintings and art objects at the Yerkes sale, you made no mention of Houdon's Diana in bronze, purchased by Duveen Bros. for \$51,000.

The history of this statue is full of interest, and, being by Houdon, the celebrated sculptor of Washington, should enlist the sympathies of your American readers.

The marble original dates from 1780, and went to the Empress Catharine of Russia. It is in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg to-day, and, tested by the value of the bronze, would command an enormous figure. Of the bronze statues there are but three: (1) the one, dated 1782, just sold in New York, which until 1902 was in Paris, having been disposed of at the sale of "Bagatelle" after the death of Sir Richard Wallace; (2) that in the Louvre, dated 1790, this was purchased by the French government at the sale of Houdon's effects in 1828, and was obtained for the modest sum of 4,000 francs; (3) that in the Museum of Tours, thought to have been cast in 1839 by Corbonnaeu from a terracotta or plaster figure executed by Houdon in 1776.

A curious fact is that exhibition was denied the statue at the Salon from motives of academic modesty. We are apt to think of Frenchmen and French art from a different standpoint. It was, therefore, exhibited at Houdon's studio and attracted universal notice and admiration.

Houdon's world-famous seated statue of Voltaire was executed in 1778, so that his Diana is the work of his genius at its fullest power. He was then thirty-seven

years of age, and came to this country about seven years later (1785) to model his statue of Washington, and to create the marvellous bust pronounced by contemporaries to be the best resemblance of that great man. Glibert Stuart, it may be recalled, considered Houdon's bust the best likeness of Washington and his own celebrated portrait next to it in resemblance.

EDWARD BIDDLE.

Philadelphia, April 27.

A CORRECTED TITLE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The Japanese printers of my "Buddhist and Christian Gospels now first compared from the Originals" (Tokio, 1905); reversed the second clause and put it after the subsidiary title, viz., "Gospel Parallels from Pali Texts," by which my translations were already known to readers of the *Open Court* of Chicago. This blunder has been perpetuated on the government catalogue cards and in numerous reviews, though it is pointed out in my list of errata.

If librarians and readers will apply to me I can supply them with a correct printed slip to paste immediately under the words "Buddhist and Christian Gospels."

Of course this only applies to the Tokio edition.

As a life-long librarian, I consider it right to catalogue the title of a book as the author wrote it, at least when, as in the present case, it is made clear in the list of errata. ALBERT J. EDMUNDS.

Philadelphia, April 26.

Literature.

A DISPUTED WORK OF DANTE.

Dante: Quæstio de Aqua et Terra. Edited and translated by Charles Lancelot Shadwell, D.C.L., Provost of Oriel College. New York: Henry Frowde.

The "Quæstio de Aqua et Terra," a short physical treatise on the relative levels of earth and water on the surface of the globe, which claims to be the work of Dante, was first published at Venice* in 1508, by one Benedetto Moncetti, a friar of the Augustinian Order of some note, who a few years later published a treatise (admittedly genuine) of Egidio Colonna, a contemporary of Dante, which he dedicated to Henry VIII of England. The claim of the "Quæstio" to be from the hand of Dante was almost universally admitted until about five and twenty years ago, when the late Professor Bartoli devoted several pages of the fifth volume of his "Storia della Letteratura Italiana" to an attempt to prove that it was a clumsy and impudent forgery of the sixteenth century. Bartoli's lead was followed by Dr. Scartazzini. In his volume on Dante's life and works, publish-

*The book is exceedingly rare, only seven copies being known, one of which is in the Fiske Collection in the Cornell University Library.

ed in 1869, Scartazzini had had no doubts as to the genuineness of "this little tractate of the supreme poet"; he described it as worthy of a place in the annals of natural philosophy, and pleased himself with the picture of Dante busied with arid and prosaic scholastic disputations in the midst of his poetical labors. But writing in 1890 (in his "Prolegomeni della Divina Commedia") a few years after the publication of Bartoli's opinion, he roundly declared that to admit the "Quæstio" to be a work of Dante would be tantamount to admitting a miracle; while in his "Enciclopedia Dantesca" (1898) he was even more emphatic:

Bartoli gave the *coup de grâce* to the treatise by proving to demonstration that it was the work of a forger. Nobody at this time of day with the smallest smattering of science believes for a moment in its authenticity. The question may now be regarded as settled once and for all.

A like skeptical attitude was adopted by other Italian critics. In 1892 an elaborate article was published in the *Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana* by Professors Luzio and Renier, in which the theory of a forgery was fully accepted, and it was further sought to show that the probable forger was Moncetti himself, the original editor and publisher of the treatise. Professor Gaspary, on the other hand, maintained that for a sixteenth-century forger to produce a composition so essentially Dantesque both in thought and diction, would be "miracolo troppo grande." The first to make a serious attempt to stem the tide of skepticism was Prof. Filippo Angelitti of Palermo, who in a work, "Sulla Data del Viaggio dantesco," published in 1897, declared himself convinced, mainly for scientific reasons, that the ground-work at any rate of the treatise was genuine, and that Moncetti was quite incapable of forging it.

Meanwhile the attention of the Oxford Dante Society had been drawn to the subject by a remarkable paper on the "Quæstio" by Dr. Shadwell, the present Provost of Oriel. Dr. Shadwell pointed out that the text is in many places obviously corrupt (in itself a strong argument against its being a forgery), and he proposed a number of emendations which were subsequently introduced into the text in the third edition of the Oxford Dante. Dr. Shadwell also established the most important point, that the *editio princeps* was undoubtedly printed from an early manuscript. He showed that certain of the errors in the text were manifestly due to the ignorance of the printers, who wrongly expanded the contractions in the "copy" from which they worked. Only on this supposition could such blunders as *ecentrica* for *concentrica*, *sed* for *secundum*, and the like—blunders easily intelligible to any one who has had experience of manuscripts—be

satisfactorily accounted for. Dr. Shadwell's arguments led Dr. Moore, the editor of the Oxford Dante (whose previous skepticism, as evidenced in the preface to the first edition of that work, had already been shaken), to reexamine the whole question, with the result that in 1899 he published (in the second series of his "Studies in Dante") a weighty article in which he dealt effectively with the principal objections urged against the genuineness of the treatise, and succeeded in shifting the balance of opinion once more in favor of Dante's authorship. This article called forth a reply from Giuseppe Boffito of Turin, who in two papers, published in the transactions of the Accademia Reale delle Scienze di Torino in 1902 and 1903, sketched the history of the whole question, and restated the objections to the treatise at great length and with great learning, without, however, carrying conviction to the minds of those he set out to persuade. The case for the defence has been taken up again within the last two or three years by an able advocate in the person of Dr. Vincenzo Biagi, who in an exhaustive volume on the "Quæstio," published at Modena in 1907, has developed the lines of inquiry initiated by Dr. Shadwell and Dr. Moore. Dr. Biagi shows conclusively, what had already been maintained by Angelitti, that, if the work be a forgery, Moncetti at any rate could not possibly have been the forger; and he proves, almost beyond a doubt, that the treatise must have been printed, not from a transcript by Moncetti, but directly from a manuscript of the fourteenth century.

In the present unpretending little volume (consisting of less than eighty pages), Dr. Shadwell has embodied the essential results of his labors on the text and contents of the treatise, which, together with those of Dr. Moore, had the effect, as already stated, of reawakening the interest both of Dantists and of men of science in the subject. Dr. Shadwell reprints his revised text (which in default of any manuscript is necessarily based on the *editio princeps*), with an *apparatus criticus*, in which are recorded the readings of the original text wherever he has departed from it. This text is a conservative one; in fact in several instances he has been able to dispense with emendations previously proposed by himself and others, and to adhere to the reading of the *princeps*. Some of the apparently corrupt passages have been rendered intelligible by the simple expedient of altering the punctuation.

Dr. Shadwell's text is accompanied by a translation which we have no hesitation in describing as a masterpiece of its kind. The harsh scholastic Latin of the original is rendered in terse and vigorous English, which brings out the author's meaning with admirable pre-

cision, while for the first time the logical terms are represented by their correct equivalents, a point in respect of which previous translators had lamentably failed. The sequence of the arguments, which at times, is somewhat difficult to follow, is indicated by notes on the margin, which enable the reader to distinguish clearly whether Dante is speaking in *propria persona* or by the mouth of his opponent. In the footnotes, which are all too scanty, attention is drawn to sundry interesting correspondences of thought and expression between the "Quæstio" and certain of the undisputed works of Dante. Comparisons of this kind have proved of the highest value. Not only have they furnished the critic with many strong arguments in favor of Dante's authorship of the treatise, but they sometimes also have supplied the clue to the correct meaning of the writer's phraseology. To give a single instance—the phrase "ad apparentiam magis quam ad veritatem" (section i, ll. 4-5) is usually rendered "according to appearance rather than truth." Dr. Shadwell, whose intimacy, as a translator of the "Commedia," with Dante's vocabulary here stands him in good stead, translates "rather for display than for the discovery of the truth," a rendering which he justifies by references to "l'amor dell'apparenza" in "Paradiso" xxix, 87, and "per apparer ciascun s'ingegna" in line 94 of the same canto.

We much regret that Dr. Shadwell has not thought it necessary to provide an introduction. Presumably, though we are not told so, he held himself absolved by the fact that recent writers on the subject, notably Boffito and Biagi, who, with several others, are mentioned in the brief preface, have dealt with it so exhaustively from every point of view as to render any further discussion superfluous. Nevertheless, a statement of the case from Dr. Shadwell himself would have been welcome, especially in view of the fact that he was the pioneer who first opened at least one important line of inquiry. It is generally admitted that if, to quote the words of the preface, "the claim of the 'Quæstio de Aqua et Terra' to be reckoned a genuine work of Dante may now be considered established," it is in a large measure to his patient investigations and scholarly labors that this result is due.

CURRENT FICTION.

The Magada. By W. M. Ardagh. New York: John Lane Co.

The Canary Islands in the days of the Spanish conquest, just before the discovery of America, form the background of this story. Perhaps they might be said to form its subject, for at times, it is not certain whether Mr. Ardagh intended an historical romance