

Tutte le Opere di Dante Alighieri by E. Moore; Paget Toynbee

Review by: Lonsdale Ragg

The Modern Language Review, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Oct., 1905), pp. 73-75

Published by: [Modern Humanities Research Association](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3712801>

Accessed: 28/06/2014 10:16

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Modern Humanities Research Association is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Modern Language Review*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

Kittredge, as general editors of the series, guarantee careful and trustworthy work.

Side by side with similar workmanlike editions, we should like to see the text pure and simple of these Romances printed cheaply in an easily intelligible form for the general reader. So far from nullifying the circulation of the more learned edition, such reprints would whet the appetite of the reader to proceed to a closer study of the original poem. For, if we disagree with Professor Mead in any point, it is with his somewhat derogatory dismissal of the *Squyr of Lowe Degre* as of small literary value. Naturally one does not turn to the old Romances for 'high seriousness'; but they are life, sometimes crude, sometimes surprisingly modern, always naively true and real.

The Squyr of Lowe Degre is preserved in two forms: the first consists of two fragments attributed to Wynkyn de Worde (Britwell Library), comprising only 180 lines; the second is a single copy, in the British Museum, of an edition by William Copland. There is also, it is true, a short version in the Percy Folio; but this is a hundred years later than Copland's. The first of these we have been unable to collate; but a comparison of the Copland text with Professor Mead's gives us every reason to estimate the accuracy of his work very highly. We note a slight carelessness in unrecorded variations between capital and lower-case letters; 'v' for 'u' throughout; and a very few minor errors. In line 78, a close inspection suggests that the second 'l' of 'gentell'—very much blurred as Professor Mead remarks—is not a letter at all, but a 'space-up.' In the colophon, the last letter of 'degr[e]' is broken right out.

These, however, are details, and do not in the least detract from the merits of the careful work lavished on the edition. The Notes and the Introduction err, if at all, in the direction of redundancy of illustration, but are amazingly full of information. We wish some one would identify, once for all, the trees and birds that occur in the Romances, especially the bird that is spelled 'wode-wale' or 'wit-wall' or anything between the two. Percy, Phillips, Ritson, Hazlitt, Murray, Child, Hales and Furnivall have between them collected information to indicate that the bird is (i) a woodpecker, (ii) a 'kind of thrush,' (iii) a woodlark, (iv) a redbreast, (v) a golden ouzle (?), (vi) a greenfinch, (vii) a nuthatch.

F. SIDGWICK.

Tutte le Opere di Dante Alighieri. Nuovamente rivedute nel testo dal Dr E. MOORE, con indice dei nomi propri e delle cose notabile compilato dal Dr PAGET TOYNBEE. Terza edizione più estesamente riveduta. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1904. 8vo. xii + 490 pp.

The second edition of the Oxford Dante, which appeared 1897, was comparatively unimportant, being marked by no new features, and differing from the first merely in the correction of certain misprints and errors of punctuation. Of the third edition the same cannot be said.

The diligent labours of Dr Moore and Dr Toynbee with the help, for the *Quaestio*, of Dr Shadwell, have brought the text and the index in almost every respect abreast of modern research. There are perhaps only two points in which a fourth edition may be expected to shew material improvement, and both are connected with the *Canzoniere*. The reviewer in the *Bulletino* of the Italian Dante Society points out, and no doubt with reason, that this section of the Oxford book, even with the addition of the Forese-Dante *Tenzzone*, remains incomplete—‘rimangono fuori tante altre rime di sicura appartenenza al poeta, sparsamente edite’ (*Bull.* xii. 48). The second point is the text itself; we are still waiting for a critical edition from Italy.

The addition to the *Canzoniere* of the three pairs of sonnets which form the so-called *Tenzzone* between Dante and Forese Donati has been very cleverly managed, so that the paging remains the same as that of the two earlier editions. The *Tenzzone* (if we except certain small but not unimportant additions in Dr Toynbee’s index) is the only really new element in the book; but it represents the very least part of the labour that has been expended upon this edition. For the text of the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* Dr Moore (or rather Dr Toynbee) has now availed himself of the results of Prof. Rajna’s labours, published already a year before the second edition of the Oxford Dante was issued. Rajna’s text has, however, been modified here and there in favour of the best ms. authority; and the Oxford editor has not adopted Rajna’s archaic orthography.

The text of the *Convivio*, though less radically reformed, has been considerably ameliorated by the indefatigable editor, who has consulted all known MSS. of any value on points where the received text seemed most dubious or corrupt. Dr Moore has thus accomplished for the *Convivio* what he did ten years earlier for the *Divina Commedia*. The *Eclogae* have had the benefit of the critical editions of Wicksteed and Gardner in England and Albini in Italy. Finally, the text of the *Quaestio* has been revised throughout by Dr Shadwell, the vindicator of the authenticity of that treatise. The index also has been revised and improved by its original compiler, Dr Toynbee, who besides his special work upon the *Eloquentia*, has collaborated with Dr Moore in the revision of the entire work. It is noticeable that here in the index, as in the case of the *Canzoniere*, additions have been made without disturbing the original paging. Thus, under *Muse* on p. 469 an additional reference to *Ecl.* ii. 65—6 has been inserted; and lower down the double reference to ‘Musō Phrygius’ and ‘Musato, Albertino’: and again on p. 475 there are additional references under *Polenta* to ‘Guido Novello’ and ‘Guido Vecchio’: but in spite of such additions the total number of pages remains the same. The case here is obviously on a different footing from that of the text itself, where for purposes of reference uniformity between the successive editions is desirable, especially when the text has become a standard one abroad as well as in England. And we are inclined to think that the index-matter would be more convenient for use if it were more generously spaced and spread

over a larger number of pages. Some of the minor alterations in the index are referable to alterations in the text: thus 'Rex Navarrae' is now read in the *Eloquentia* in place of 'Navarriae': and the result is, naturally, not merely the omission of a single letter in the index, but the transposition of two items. In small things, as in great, no labour has been spared. The learned scholars, with Dr Moore at their head, who have accomplished this revision are to be congratulated on their success, and still more is the generation of English Dantists to be congratulated who will enter into their labours. The 'Oxford Dante' provides at once an inspiring monument of learning and critical acumen, and a sound basis for future work.

LONSDALE RAGG.

MINOR NOTICES.

La Critica Letteraria nel Rinascimento. Da J. E. SPINGARN. Traduzione italiana del Dr ANTONIO FUSCO, con correzioni e aggiunte dell'autore e prefazione di B. CROCE. Bari: Laterza, 1905. 8vo. xii + 358 pp.

We congratulate Mr Spingarn on the appearance of this Italian edition of his *History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance* (New York, 1899) from the pen of Dr Antonio Fusco. The author has availed himself of the opportunity to make some valuable additions, notably in the references to the works on criticism which have appeared since the publication of the English text, and in the extensive bibliography at the end. The most important alteration in the text is the expansion of the last paragraph (p. 310) into a 'Conclusion' of eighteen pages, based on the author's article on the *Origins of Modern Criticism*, which appeared in *Modern Philology* (Chicago), in April, 1904. It is clear that Mr Spingarn's study of the subject is deepening, with great profit to his readers and credit to himself; and we may expect, from certain hints in his new 'Avvertenza,' some further additions when his American and English public call for a reprint.

Signor Croce has written a Preface which would have been more acceptable had it been less polemical and personal. It is little more than a counter reply to Mr Saintsbury's retort in the third volume of his *History of Criticism* (pp. 141—145) on the philosopher's part in critical discussion. There is perhaps some Humanistic appropriateness in this give and take by two eminent critics, who are after all not in such serious opposition as would appear; but the more personal elements in the *querelle* might have been reserved for the Reviews. What was wanted from Signor Croce's most competent pen was not a fighting tract supporting Mr Spingarn's attacks on the *History of Criticism*, but an introduction to the Italian reader, pointing out the excellence of this pioneer attempt to interpret and place the half-forgotten theories of the Italian critics of the sixteenth century.