

Review

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a Concordance. The work, which has been compiled and printed with very great accuracy (we had noted a few misprints, but found them included in the *Corrigenda* at the end of the volume), cannot fail to be of great value to Dantists, especially to those who are desirous of making a study of Dante's Latinity, an interesting subject to which too little attention has as yet been paid. We trust that the energies and resources of the American Dante Society are not yet exhausted. Much yet remains to be done. For instance, a general subject index to the whole of Dante's works, Italian and Latin, is sorely needed. Such a work could well be produced by the system of collaboration which has worked so successfully in the case of this and of the previous Concordance; and it would be a fitting crown to the labours of the devoted band of American scholars to whom students of Dante all the world over are already so deeply indebted.

The Petrarch Concordance, which appears to be due to the single-handed labours of Mr Kenneth McKenzie, is uniform in appearance and arrangement with the volume just noticed, and so far as we have been able to judge, it is not inferior in accuracy. There being no standard edition of Petrarch's *Rime*, Mr McKenzie had to make his own selection from among the various available texts. He decided in favour of that of Salvo-Cozzo for the *Canzoniere*, and that of Carl Appel for the *Trionfi*, probably in the circumstances the best choice he could have made. The work, which has evidently been a labour of love, has been carefully planned, but it is not free from objectionable features. The most noticeable of these are the preference given to obsolete spellings over the recognised modern standard orthography (*e.g. dilecto* for *diletto*, *gratia* for *grazia*, *philosopho* for *filosofo*, and so on); and the disconcerting discrepancies in a great number of instances between the word-forms in the headings, and those in the actual quotations (thus, under *Enone* one finds, not that word, but *Oenone*; under *Eracilito*, *Heraclito*; under *Teseo*, *Theseo*; under *profitto*, *profecto*; under *inesorabile*, *inexorable*; etc., etc.). Such anomalies, which have no apparent *raison d'être*, and are peculiarly out of place in a work of this kind, cannot fail to be a hindrance to rapid reference, which is the first *desideratum* in a concordance. It is regrettable that the usefulness of a valuable and laborious piece of work should have been diminished by perversities of this description.

PAGET TOYNBEE.

BURNHAM, BUCKS.

*El Romancero Español*. Conferencias dadas en la Columbia University de New York. Por RAMÓN MENÉNDEZ PIDAL. New York: The Hispanic Society of America. 1910. 131 pp.

The first lecture is entitled *El Romancero, sus orígenes y carácter*; the second, *El Romancero, su transmisión a la época moderna*.

In the first, D. Ramón Menéndez Pidal to some extent repeats what

he has explained at greater length in his work on the *Infantes de Lara*, and while there is much that is additional and fresh, there is not quite the same interest of discovery which marks the second lecture. This is a document in the history of ballad poetry such as many students have desired without much hope that it would ever be possible. What it records is the discovery of Castilian ballad poetry in living oral tradition, both at home in the peninsula and abroad in the colonies, and especially among the Spanish Jews of Morocco and the Levant. It is like the story of Scott's raids into Liddesdale for the *Border Minstrelsy*, or like E. T. Kristensen's recovery of the old Danish ballads in the tradition of West Jutland. Only, in these recent Spanish acquisitions the fields are much wider, and the story consequently more exciting. All at once, apparently, in Chile and Peru, in Tangier, Rhodes and Adrianople, in Castile itself, the *romances* which had escaped notice began to be heard, and in a very short time, beginning about 1900, a great number of oral ballads were added to the contents of the *Romancero*.

These new-found *romances* are mostly not of the type which is commonly regarded as proper to Castile, and which is so well described in the first of these two lectures—the ballad which is a fragment of an earlier epic, concerned with the history of Castile and with a Castilian hero—e.g. Fernán González, or the Infantes de Lara, or the Cid. Those Castilian heroic ballads are unlike the popular ballads which are most widely diffused in other countries—the ballads of which Mr Andrew Lang wrote so well and whose motives he understood so thoroughly—ballads like *May Colvin*, *Binnorie*, *Babylon*, *Le Roi Renaud*, *La Biche Blanche*. The strange thing about Castile was that its own strong heroic tradition seemed to have discouraged the simpler kind of lyrical ballad which is happily common in other parts of Spain; according to the studies so admirably summarised and explained by Gaston Paris in dealing with the ballads of Piedmont. The ballads of the North of Italy are part of a stock belonging also to France, to Catalonia, to Portugal—but with this the Castilian *romancero* had little to do. The other nations could not be expected to trouble themselves about the house of Lara or the Cid, and, till quite lately, it looked as if the popular tradition of France and Piedmont, Catalonia and Portugal, had been rejected in Castile through the predominance there of another, viz. the epic fashion of popular poetry. It is true that there were some Castilian versions corresponding to the vague and unhistorical ballad themes of other countries—romances with no trace of the epic:

; Quién hubiese tal ventura sobre las aguas del mar  
Como hubo el conde Arnaldos, la mañana de San Juan!

But there was not in Castilian anything like the plenty of such things to be found elsewhere, e.g. in the *Romancerillo catalan* of Milá y Fontanals. The reason appeared to be obvious and convenient. Catalonia had no epic, and so for its ballad poetry it had to live on the common stock, which is generally allowed to be French, and which has

no peculiar national quality but passes easily from one dialect to another. Castile had its *cantares de gesta*, and the *romances* which are descended from the *cantares* kept out the other sort of popular ballad. This is clear and rational; but it turns out to be not exactly true. The same things were repeated in Castile as in the neighbouring countries, along with the *romances* which were the property of Castile alone.

The account given by Sr. Menéndez Pidal of his own discoveries ought to be known to every lover of ballads, particularly his story of the children's songs which he heard in Montevideo, and the ballads sung by the washerwoman at Osma in May 1900. This last passage is one of remarkable beauty, and its value for history is not small.

‘En Mayo de 1900 hacía yo una larga excursión por las orillas del Duero, para estudiar la geografía del Cantar de Mio Cid. Acabada la indagación en Osma, y deteniendome allí un día más para presenciar el eclipse solar que iba á sobrevenir, ocurriósele á mi mujer (era aquel nuestro viaje de recién casados) recitar el romance del Conde Sol á una lavandera con quien hablábamos. La buena mujer nos dijo que lo sabía ella también, con otros muchos que eran el repertorio de su canto acompañado del batir la ropa en el río; y en seguida, complaciente, se puso á cantarnos uno, con una voz dulce y una sonada que á nuestros oídos era tan “apacible y agradable” como aquellas que oía el historiador Mariana con los romances del cerco de Zamora. El romance que cantaba nos era desconocido, por eso más interesante; y á medida que avanzaba, mi mujer creía reconocer en él un relato casi histórico, un eco tardío de aquel “dolor tribulación y desventura” que, al decir de los cronistas, causó en toda España la muerte del príncipe Don Juan, hijo de los Reyes Católicos. Y en efecto, estudiado después, aquel era un romance histórico del siglo xv, desconocido á todas las colecciones antiguas y modernas de España. Era preciso, en las pocas horas que nos quedaban de estancia en Osma, anotar aquella música y copiar aquellos romances, primer tributo que Castilla pagaba al romancero tradicional moderno; y ayudados del maestro de capilla de la catedral, haciendo á la buena mujer repetir sus cantos, se nos pasaron las horas sin tiempo apenas para contemplar el eclipse que entonces ocurría, y que habiéndonos retenido allí, ya poco significaba para nosotros.’ (pp. 100, 101.)

It is pleasant to consider whether this is more like Cervantes or like Scott: and how Scott would have enjoyed it.

The most remarkable thing in these new discoveries is what regards the ballads of the Spanish Jews in exile. The Jews were expelled by Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492; they have not only kept the Castilian language but also the Castilian ballads, including some which have been lost to the popular tradition at home: ‘Notable es que Los Infantes de Lara, el Cid y Portocarrero sean cantados en Rodas, en Orán, y en Tánger, cuando no lo son ya en Burgos ó en Andalucía.’

One problem is left, as to which we would gladly have more information from a student who has given us so much. This is nothing less than the old question of the minstrel and his relation to ballad poetry. Is one to make a sharp distinction between the epic recited by a minstrel or *juglar* and the choral ballad? Is the Castilian *romance* of the strictly Castilian order to be regarded as a ballad along with the lyrical choral ballads such as girls sing at their play? Those new discoveries which are described in this book are not only texts of ballads, they are tunes also, and a crowd of facts about the way in which ballads are sung. In Spain the ancient fashion of the *carole* has

not died out; apart from the children's games there are 'las danzas corales de los labradores' (p. 104). There are two separate types of lyrical ballad in Castile. One is descended from the early epics (*cantares de gesta*) and like the *cantares* belonged first of all to the minstrels—at any rate, depended on the minstrels for publication and currency. The other is of the choral fashion common throughout most countries in the middle ages—the true popular ballad, sung by dancers. The distinction seems to be a sound one. But the choral ballad easily may do without the chorus and the dance; it is remembered afterwards by women at their work, and it is touching to find in this book how the ballads in Spain are used for their ancient purpose by 'the spinsters and the knitters in the sun,' and by the washerwomen at the river. The epic recitation of the minstrel and the choral ballad of the dance may come to resemble one another more and more through this sort of popular tradition. Yet originally they are distinct, and deal in different kinds of story. So it may be said, and it seems probable. The value of this distinction, however, is not great if it is left abstract, and there is much to be done in detail before the character of the wonderful ballad poetry of Spain can be thoroughly understood in all its varieties.

The book has waited too long for this inadequate review, which yet may call the attention of some northern students to these new treasures of poetry and of learning.

W. P. KER.

LONDON.

*Il Milione di Marco Polo.* A cura di DANTE OLIVIERI. (*Scrittori d' Italia*, xxx.) Bari: G. Laterza e Figli. 8vo. 317 pp.

*Le Novelle di Matteo Bandello.* A cura di GIOACHINO BROGNOLIGO. (Same Series, ii, v, ix, xvii, xxiii) 424, 446, 486, 496 and 382 pp.

*Le Scelta delle Lettere Familiari di Giuseppe Baretti.* A cura di LUIGI PICCIONI. (Same Series, xxvi) 460 pp.

*Opere di Giovanni Berchet.* A cura di EGIDIO BELLORINI. (Same Series, xviii, xxvii) 438 and 254 pp.

There is certainly no falling off either in the rate of publication or in the quality of the volumes of this series. In a previous notice attention was called to the high standard of printing and editing of this collection. The magnitude of the undertaking, far from damping the enthusiasm of the editor and of the publishers, seems to act as a stimulant to increasing industry and daring. Not only works of first-rate importance in Italian literature are reprinted, but also a number of writings which are often overlooked or forgotten; so that when the whole collection is complete we shall have a truly representative series. Remembering former disappointments, we should perhaps have preferred to see the undertaking begin on a less ambitious scale, and grow steadily as it gained in favour, to greater comprehensiveness. There