

In the Harvard copy of Professor Norton's catalogue of the Fiske Petrarch Collection in the library of Cornell University, there is preserved a letter from the late Professor Fiske. Norton had offered Fiske his copy of the Venetian folio of Petrarch—Bevilaqua's—of 1503. Pardonable satisfaction may be detected in his reply: "I already possess an excellent copy." The possessor of folios is not unfamiliar with this note of satisfaction; owner or not, one feels a stirring of pride in the knowledge that there are folios in the country, should one care to study them.

The letter continues: "The Villa Forini [he was about to sail for Italy and Florence in July, 1883] will at least not lose its Scandinavian attractions, as I also take with me my Icelandic collection, the gathering of which, instead of being, as is my Petrarch collection, a whimsey of my old age, has been the work of many years. I hope to do some work with both these collections, but the danger is that I may fall between two very attractive stools."

The letter is a poignant reminder of fruitful days at the Villa Forini. Professor Fiske gathered about him students and professors, silent scribes and talkative counts. He arranged comforts for his American guests at which Browning might have cavilled as being un-Italian. But no change was made in the smoking-room at the top of the house. There old-fashioned frescoes in the slender strips of wall were left undisturbed and undiscerned between open spaces of purple haze beyond Fiesole. Ashes of American cigars might fall unheeded on the cement floor, where painted lizards flattened on painted stones. Char treuse from without the Porta Romana gave pungency to talk about folios and manuscript, or, long remembered, mingled in flavor with the story of how Professor Rendell Har-

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\* SOME LOVE SONGS OF PETRARCH. Translated and annotated, with a Biographical Introduction, by William Dudley Foulke, LL.D. New York: Oxford University Press.

ris, in an eastern monastery, secured the rare Codex over "another glass of Rosoglio."

Fears that the Icelandic and Italian Collections would be left in Europe were finally dispelled; and now the catalogues of the Fiske-Cornell libraries may be had, and the books are available within twenty-four hours, more or less. If we have appropriated so much of Italy, we are now also assimilating it. Petrarch's Latin works refuse to stay in folios: Columbia and the University of Chicago have revealed, most readably, some of the treasures first used in English by Chaucer. Yale has given us the Concordance to the Italian poems. Sooner or later we may learn all that Petrarch himself wished us to know, without changing spectacles over the solid printed page, or halting to expand the Latin of incunabula.

No labor is involved in reading the latest American book about Petrarch. In "Some Love Songs of Petrarch," Dr. William Dudley Foulke continues the long tradition of the English poets. If Chaucer made no sonnet of his "Song of Troilus," he showed that Italian verse may be fitted to English. Yet even he, with his wealth of rhyme, most of it now lost to us, felt that it was impracticable to attempt complete imitation of Italian rhymes, every one of which had a feminine ending. Five masculine rhymes come first in the "Song of Troilus," then seven feminines, then masculines until the final couplet. In Dr. Foulke's version feminine rhymes appear now and then, oftener in other forms than the sonnet. Shakespearean are forty-six of his sonnets, and a Petrarchan sestet appears in each of the other five. The object, then, has been to render the substance faithfully in the more flexible English form; and in the cases selected for comparison this has been effectively done. Petrarch's *enjambements* are at times preserved; in the fourteenth ode and in the "Hymn to the Virgin" one is reminded of the melody of Dryden. Monosyllables, the bane of the translator, have been avoided where possible. How could one escape them in turning such a rugged sestet as this?

"Poi che se' sgombro della maggior salma  
L'altre puoi giuso agrevolmente porre,  
Salendo quasi un pellegrino scarco.  
Ben vedi omai siccome a morte corre  
Ogni cosa creata, e quanto all' alma  
Bisogna ir leve al periglioso varco."

This is translated, with a courageous subjunctive, as follows:

"For, when delivered of thy heaviest load  
From what remains thou canst be quickly free,

And like a pilgrim to thy new abode  
Rise all unburdened. Thou canst clearly see  
How all things move to death. Well may we  
pray

The soul go light upon its perilous way."

Yet the technique of the English sonnet, so challenging since Milton and Wordsworth, invites no tricks of the translator. The verse is never careless, nor is it mechanical or labored. With the diction Saxon and idiomatic, and the style simple and severe, the reader will not be surprised to find lines of dignity and elevation, less Asiatic than Petrarch, less Italianate than older English translations. The introductory sonnet to Petrarch betrays restraint, and an artistic sense of the sonnet's limitations. It is gratifying to record the classical spirit of this little volume when romantic, not to say untutored, freedom in verse invites public favor.

A judicious Introduction and biographical sketch informs the reader without obtruding the quarrels of critics, French and Italian. An appendix, reviewing the attempts made to identify Laura, will stir the dullest of students or the most unliterary of psychologists. The "Epistle to Posterity" is printed, and a convenient list of Petrarch's works. The book must be welcome to all whose care it is to make a *revue* of literature stimulating, and devote a few precious hours to Petrarch and his influence. The general reader will be grateful for a fresh appraisal of the poet and the man. It is a useful complement to Professor Robinson's version of the "Letters" and his volume on Petrarch. Dr. Foulke, it may be urged, should not confine his verse to translation.

One note—to return to the folios—may be added. The "six folio editions of his *Epistles* and other prose works—printed at Basle and Venice between 1494 and 1500" (p. 121) have not all been identified. Fiske thought that the Deventer of 1494, the Basle of 1494 and 5, and the Venetian of 1496 never existed.

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