DUECENTO AND TRECENTO

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I. DANTE

BACKGROUND AND GENERAL CRITICISM

The new Storia d'Italia, vol. I, Il Medioevo, by G. Arnaldi, C. Violante, P. Lamanna, E. Cristiani, N. Valeri, Turin, UTET, 725 pp., is rev., critically, in RSI, lxxi, 4, where a certain lack of co-ordination is noted, though the undertaking of a new history of Italy by a group of young scholars is welcomed. E. Fiumi, 'Fioritura e decadenza dell'economia fiorentina' (see YWML, xx, 239) is concluded in ASI, cxvii, 4.

S. Santangelo, Dante e i trovatori provenzali, receives a second revd. ed., Catania, Univ. degli Studi, 231 pp. An attempt to trace the stages of Dante's poetic development is made by F. Montanari in L'esperienza poetica di Dante, Florence, Le Monnier, 209 pp., rev. NA, cxiv, 7. The thesis of the book is that Dante never denies anything of his previous experience, but uses and perfects it in his later poetry. Much of the argument appears dubious and biased, however, though a number of illuminating points are made. Montanari notes, for instance, Dante's interest in king Hezekiah who, like Dante in the dark wood, was reprieved 'in the midst of his days'. Further revs of C. T. Davis, Dante and the Idea of Rome (see YWML, xix, 245; xx, 245) are given in Sp, xxxiv, 1, RR, i, 1 and JEH, ix (1958), 2. S. A. Chimenz, 'Classicità e Medioevo nello spirito di Dante', in NA, xciv, 6, is rather too inclined to generalization regarding the spirit of classical antiquity, of the Middle Ages and of Dante himself. J. A. Mazzeo, whose studies on Dante's thought and its philosophical background are always interesting and profound, writes on 'Dante and Epicurus'—the difference between the attitudes expressed in the Convivio and the Inferno—in CL, x, 106-20, and on 'Light metaphysics, Dante's Convivio and the Letter to Can Grande', in Trad, xiv, 191-229.

A coll. of Dante studies is publ. by S. Santangelo in Saggi danteschi, Padua, CEDAM, 163 pp. Those included are: 'Dante Alighieri e Dante da Maiano', 'La composizione della Vita
Duecento and Trecento


P. Conte publ. a lecture on Dante nel mondo di oggi e i problemi metodologici della critica dantesca, Turin, S.E.I. A. M. Manna, La raccolta dantesca della biblioteca universitaria di Napoli, Florence, Olschki, 2 vols.

PARTICULAR WORKS

‘Divina Commedia’

(a) In General

C. S. Singleton, Dante Studies 2. Journey to Beatrice (see YWML, xx, 244) is rev. MLN, lxxv, 1, 1960. A. Nemetz has a not very clear art. on ‘Literalness and sensus litteralis’ in Sp, xxxiv, 1. A background art. of particular interest is Gina Fasoli, ‘Momenti di storia nella Divina Commedia’, Con, xxvii, 6. The writer considers the sources and extent of Dante’s knowledge of historical and contemporary events, and also his deliberate suppression of certain historical facts in the Commedia. A bit over-emphatic, perhaps, regarding the influence of Ovid, is R. Palgen, ‘Dante e Ovidio’, in Con, xxvii, 3. S. Battaglia, ‘La tradizione di Ovidio nel medioevo’, FiR, vi, 2.

There is a useful illustr. reprint by E. H. Wilkins of his 1927 art. on ‘Dante and the mosaics of his Bel San Giovanni’ in The Invention of the Sonnet and Other Studies, Rome, ‘Storia e Letteratura’. Prof. Wilkins points out, plausibly, the way in which some of these mosaics may have influenced Dante when he wrote the Commedia. Other Dante studies in the book include ‘Reminiscence and anticipation in the Divina Commedia’ (1951), ‘Gradual approach in the Divina Commedia’ (new) and ‘Cantos, regions and transitions in the Divina Commedia’ (new).

In ‘Trecento Illustrators of the Divina Commedia’, ARDC, lxxvii, 1–38, Dorothy Hughes Gillerman gives a very full and interesting account of MSS. of Florence, Bologna, Naples and Lombardy, though a reader could wish for more illustrations.

(b) ‘Inferno’

The following studies of particular cantos are worth noting: L. Pietrobono on canto ii, M. Marti on canto vii, and B. Nardi on canto xxxiv, all publ. Turin. S. E. I. Nardi’s study especially,