

Correspondence

of a translation. But an exception may be made in favour of Cary's Dante. If no poet ever was liable to lose more in translation, none was ever so carefully translated. . . . If I could only read English, and had to choose, for a library narrowed by poverty, between Cary's Dante and our own original Milton, I should choose Cary without an instant's pause."

R. W. KING.



CORRESPONDENCE

DANTE AND *IL GRAN RIFIUTO*

To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS, SIR,

Readers of the very valuable article on "Dante and St. Peter Celestine," contributed by Mr. Makepeace to the August number of BLACKFRIARS (1921), may be interested in a pronouncement of Mazzini on this subject, unpublished until Mrs. Hamilton King recorded it in her *Letters and Recollections of Mazzini*. "Once," says Mrs. King, "when the mysterious allusion (*Inferno*, III, 59-60), *colui Che fece per viltate il gran rifiuto*, was being discussed among friends, Mazzini exclaimed, "*Il gran rifiuto!* Why, of course this refers to Pontius Pilate. Whom else could it mean? There is but one man in history to whom these words could apply." The edition of Dante which bears the name of Ugo Foscolo was, in great part, the work of Mazzini, who, as Mrs. King reminds us, had the most intense admiration for Dante.

"Vidi e conobbi," says the poet; but is it by any means necessary to suppose that Dante's recognition of this coward, now a shade, involved former acquaintance with him? Surely Pontius Pilate might well have been known!

EMILY HICKEY,