

310 Ser d Street, S.E.
Washington 3, D. C.
26 August 1954

Professor E. R. Vincent
President, Corpus Christi College
Cambridge, England

Dear Vincent:

Just as soon as it was possible for me to start gathering together some material for you after I got home I did so and I send you herewith some items which I hope may be helpful in connection with your forthcoming talk at the 6th Triennial Congress of the International Federation for Modern Languages and Literatures.

In connection with the microfilm of a few pages from the "Russian Word Count" by Josselson, I call your attention especially to pages 13-15, as these may be quite pertinent to your problem. I have, of course, had to omit all of the detailed tabular material that followed these first 41 pages of the Josselson work, which runs to 275 pages.

I refer you also to an article which you will undoubtedly be able to locate at Cambridge and which describes a collating machine that has proved to be extensively helpful in connection with Studies of the Shakespeare First Folio: Hinman, Charlton, "Variant readings in the First Folio of Shakespeare." Shakespeare Quarterly, Vol. IV, July 1953, No. 3, pp. 279-288.

With reference to the microfilm matter from a magazine (Astounding Fiction), these articles may not be at all helpful but I feel sure that they will interest you. The name of the author, Coupling, is really a pseudonym for Dr. Pierce, a member of the staff of the Bell Telephone Laboratories and a scientist of eminence.

One of the interesting examples of the manner in which a newly-invented tool may operate to open up fresh lines in theoretical research and in advancing new techniques for the solution of old problems is provided by the new electronic computers. One of these fresh lines is in connection with the use of computer-like machines for automatic translation from one language to another. The material I have on this is too bulky to send you, but if you think that this might be useful in connection with your talk, I feel sure that you can get all that you will need from Dr. A. Don Booth or Dr. R. H. Richens, of the University of London. They have been associated with the work on mechanical translation at that institution, which is one of the five large centers for such studies, the others being in the United States.

I promised to send you, as a gift, a copy of Sacco's work on cryptography but I seem to have lost track of my extra copy. I will have to consult my records; I think I know where it is and will get it to you as soon as practicable.

I discovered that others (for example, Booth, in Some Acrostic Signatures of Francis Bacon) had also noted the secondary acrostic in Boccaccio's Amorosa Visione. It consists of the five letters of the name "Maria", formed by taking the initial letter of the first, third, fifth, seventh, and ninth lines of the first sonnetto formed by the letters of the primary acrostic. I would be inclined to believe that somewhere he also hid either her real family name (d'Aquino) or his pet name Fiammetta. When I get the time I am going to do a little hunting. That chap is really amazing considering how long ago he wrote his Amorosa. Do you know whether he put any acrostics in any of his other things?

I hope this letter and its material will reach you in time to be of some service. I shall be much interested in knowing what you did in the way of modernizing your presentation. Perhaps you will send me a copy of it.

With cordial greetings to Mrs. Vincent and to you, I am

Sincerely,

WILLIAM F. FRIEDMAN