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ANSWER
OF
GASTON L. FEUARDENT
TO
L. P. DI CESNOLA.

THE ACCUSATIONS OF DISHONESTY CONTAINED IN A COMMUNICATION
ADDRESSED TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE METROPOLITAN
MUSEUM OF ART, AS PUBLISHED IN THE NEW YORK
"WORLD," OF JANUARY 9TH, 1881,

MAINLY ANSWERED BY

Di Cesnola's own letters.

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NEW YORK, May 7th, 1881.

Mr. L. P. di Cesnola, in a communication addressed to the Executive Committee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, as published in the New York *World* of January 9th, 1881, made an attack upon my character, and impeached the honesty of my dealings with him in reference to his Collection before it was sent to the United States.

The following extracts from letters written by Mr. di Cesnola, during the period covered by his statement, completely refute and falsify the recital of events contained in that communication, as well as the charges against my integrity.

The original letters, accounts and receipts herein quoted, are in the custody of my Attorneys, Messrs. Oudin & Oakley, No. 60 Liberty Street, New York City.

Allow me to add, that an inquiry addressed to the authorities of the British Museum, with regard to the offers made to them of the Collection, and their reception of these offers, will also show how far patriotism influenced Mr. di Cesnola in the sale of the Collection to his adopted country.

GASTON L. FEUARDENT.

L. P. di Cesnola's letter to the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the Metropolitan Museum, as published in the "World," January 9th, 1881.

Messrs. Rollin & Feuardent then wrote to me that if I would send my late discoveries to London, to Gaston L. Feuardent, they had been assured by him that the British Museum would purchase them.

They proposed an arrangement with me, by which they were to advance all the money necessary for the packing, freight, insurance, etc., and to exhibit the collection at their branch office in London for one whole year. If, within that time, they sold the collection, they were to receive 10 per cent. commission with the refunding of all advances, and 5 per cent. interest on the same. *If, at the end of the year, the collection was not sold, I must refund all the advances with interest, the charges of exhibition, etc., in order to retake possession of my collection; and, failing these conditions, the collection would become their property.*

This offer of Messrs. Rollin & Feuardent I accepted. Without having time to make a *Catalogue*, I finished packing the objects and sent them to London.

After some months had elapsed I heard from Gaston L. Feuardent, who depreciated their value, telling me that he had shown them to the British Museum authorities, who were unwilling to purchase them as

Translation of Extracts from L. P. di Cesnola's letters, and comments.

[TO MR. FEUARDENT.]

ISLAND OF CYPRUS,

LARNACA, November 29, 1871.

* * * Then we are in accord regarding the sale of my collection, as you write to me in your last letter, but one, i. e.: *if we do not agree upon the price that you will offer me for all the collection, I shall be perfectly at liberty to sell it elsewhere as a whole, or at public auction, either through your mediation or through that of Messrs. Sotheby, or other persons, provided that I repay you the money you have advanced to me, with interest at 6 per cent. The use of your rooms for the exhibition of my collection is given to me free for 12 or 18 months.* * * * *

[TO GASTON L. FEUARDENT.]

LARNACA, Nov. 24, 1871.

You will find here enclosed the bill of lading of the last expedition, of which I sent you yesterday the *Catalogue*.

[The collection was unpacked and exhibited in my house, situated exactly opposite the gate entrance of the British Museum. The authorities of the Museum were constantly calling at my place, and were en-

Cesnola in the "World," January 9th, 1881 :

a whole, according to my conditions, which were that the Golgoi sculptures, at least, should be kept together and called the Cesnola Collection.

The stipulated year was fast slipping by. Mr. Feuardent's depreciation of the collection convinced me that he was making no effort to sell the collection.

If the year should elapse, my known inability to refund the advances would place my collection at his mercy.

I at once applied for a leave of absence, and went to London. On my arrival there, *scarcely three months of the stipulated year remained.* Calling at his place of business, I was surprised to find that he had never exhibited the objects as had been agreed.

The entire collection was in great disorder on the floors of his rooms; *he even pretended not to know what portions of the dismembered statues belonged to each other!*

The whole represented a comparatively valueless mass of fragments. *In this condition neither the British Museum authorities, nor any one else, could judge of the real value of the collection,* and I was not at all surprised at their declining to buy the whole as I insisted. A competent dealer or agent would have prepared the collection for proper exhibition as agreed upon.

I at once took the matter in hand, employing twenty workmen at my own expense, and in less than a month the collection was in condition to be shown.

Cesnola in his letters, and comments :

tirely acquainted with the collection. This fact is easily proven by the well-known publication of Messrs. Newton, Colvin and others.—G. L. F.]

[The last expedition of boxes from Cyprus reached London on March 18, 1872, as certified by the receipt for money paid.—G. L. F.]

[That this was not the case, see Cesnola's letter below, dated London, Sept. 26, 1872, which shows that he had other sources from which to obtain funds; that he was at liberty to sell to others and at public auction, and that the only limit as to time was that our gallery in London was to be at his disposal "*free* for 12 or 18 months;" and for the actual liberal conditions of our arrangement, see Cesnola's letter above, dated Nov. 29, 1871.]

[To-day I am convinced of the improper reunion of these portions of the dismembered statues, as seen now in the Museum in Central Park.—G. L. F.]

[This was not the appearance of the collection, for in general the statuary had already been restored in Cyprus.. See descriptions in Doell.—G. L. F.]

[The only alteration in the arrangement of the collection was the addition of an exhibition room upstairs, which addition was necessitated by new specimens Mr. di Cesnola brought over with him.—G. L. F.]

Cesnola in the "World," January 9th, 1881:

Cesnola in his letters, and comments:

[TO GASTON L. FEUARDENT.]

London, September 26, 1872.

I inform you confidentially that the Trustees of the British Museum intend to purchase all that they need from my collection in order to establish a room in the Museum exclusively devoted to Cypriote objects; and that depends principally on Mr. Newton and Dr. Birch, who will visit the collection at your place almost immediately, for the budget of the Museum is being prepared and it must be decided by the 15th of October. I shall be ready, Monday morning, without fail, at your house, to begin to put in order the room up-stairs with the small objects and heads, etc., if it is agreeable to you. I will expect you without fail Saturday to see my little collection, which is here at my place and which, by itself, will make *your room up-stairs* appear a jewel of objects. * * * I told your father it was my intention to sell that collection in order to have ready funds in my hands. * * * He prayed me to join it with the rest of the collection and as to the money I might want, that he would arrange that matter. I want £400 to meet engagements made in Cyprus, etc. * * * Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson and Co. will advance me that sum if I remit the collection to them to make a sale; *they have done that with me on other occasions.*

*And now only two months remained in which my collection must be sold or I must lose it. * * **

[TO F. FEUARDENT.]

LANGHAM HOTEL,

London, Sept. 2, 1872.

This was the situation when one of your trustees, Mr. William T. Blodgett, arrived in London, heard from me how matter stood, saw the collection, *informed himself of its real value*, and telegraphed to your

* * * Evidently my collection is going to be bought by public subscription, and it appears that the signatures of several rich New Yorkers have been obtained;

Cesnola in the "World," January 9th, 1881:

President, Mr. John Taylor Johnson, who by cable purchased it for \$50,000.

*The whole transaction was so quiet that when I told Mr. Feuardent to make out his bill, which I was ready to pay, he was thunder-struck! At first he thought I was joking, but when I told him that the collection was sold to the New York Museum, and showed him the telegram, he exhibited and expressed disappointment and anger. * * **

Cesnola in his letters, and comments:

and the sum raised amounts to forty-five thousand dollars. This news I have from a brother of my wife; but not a word yet from the persons who are at the head of the movement. If I receive more positive news I shall communicate it to you. * * * * *

LONDON, Sept. 26, 1872.

We must hurry to put in order the collection, inasmuch as the Americans desire to visit it as soon as possible. * * * * *

[TO GASTON L. FEUARDENT.]

LONDON, Oct. 9, 1872.

On my return home I have found a letter from Mr. Blodgett, who has arrived and who desires to visit my collection immediately, as he must leave for New York the 12th instant. At 10 o'clock to-morrow morning he will be here at my house and then I believe that we will go directly to your house. I shall try, however, to make him delay this visit to your house until the afternoon, if that is possible for me, in order to give time to our men to furnish in a hurry *the shelves up-stairs*. * * * * *

[My bill amounted to £1,559 5 1. Including in the items:
 Money loaned to Mr. di Cesnola, 1871-1872, . . . £1279 16 0
 Interest on the same, . . . 53 0 0
 Money paid to Mr. di Cesnola's own shipping agents for freight and cartage of the collection from Turkey to Liverpool, and then to my house, £156 0 0.

He presented his bill against the collection, *amounting to from \$12,000 to \$13,000*. I regarded this as an exorbitant amount (*including such charges as £363 for carting the objects from the London dock to his house*), but I was too glad to get rid of him, and Mr. Junius Morgan gave him his check for the amount of his bill. * * *

THIS IS THE ONLY CHARGE FOR FREIGHT OR CARTAGE.—The copy of my bill, as well as the original receipts for the sums paid by me, are in the hands of my attorneys in New York.

Cesnola in the "World," Janu-
ary 9th, 1881 :

Cesnola in his letters, and com-
ments :

In leaving London, Mr. di Cesnola expressed to me his gratefulness for my kindness, etc., and gave me, as compensation for my trouble, the sum of £200. [See the following letter.—G. L. F.]

[To F. FEUARDENT.]

ISLAND OF CYPRUS,
LARNACA, March 1st, 1875.

* * * Before my return to Cyprus, they have elected me un-animously a Trustee of the Museum; and on my return to New York, *if I can help you, you can rely on me.* It is more than probable that *I will accept the directorship of the said Museum,* although Mrs. Di Cesnola prefers the diplomatic career. We shall see.
* * * You are mistaken in regard to the sale that I have made to the New York Museum; your son has done nothing absolutely, *not on account of unwillingness,* but because the thing was combined by me directly without his intervention and by telegraph. *However I have given him five thousand francs commission, and we were contented with each other.*

* * * I had, as you are aware, great desire that it should come to America, and had authorized my friends here to offer it to an American purchaser at a price vastly less than I demanded for it in Europe. * * * * *

[The very reverse is the truth: *With the telegram of Mr. Johnston in my pocket, by demand of Mr. di Cesnola,* I made a last attempt to induce Mr. Newton, of the British Museum, to purchase the collection, offering him credit for the payment. The ambition of Mr. di Cesnola was to see his collection in the British Museum, and my constant efforts were to try to sell the collection in Europe, in order to get my commission on the sale. In regard to the price demanded for the collection in Europe, it was £10,000. As this first collection has cost the New York Museum

Cesnola in the "World," January 9th, 1881 :

Cesnola in his letters, and comments :

the sum of \$64,360, *I fail to see the vast reduction.* Mr. di Cesnola's ways of proceeding in regard to his *second collection*, while it was in London, will enlighten the American people on this question. —G. L. F.]

[TO GASTON L. FEUARDENT.]

December 26, 1872.

I had no further acquaintance with Mr. Feuardent until in 1877, when I came to New York, and learned that he had opened a shop here as a dealer in antiques.

Dear Sir:—I pray you to take for Mr.—— a subscription to the Athenæum and also one for me to be sent to Fifth Avenue Hotel. Do me the favor to collect all that may be written regarding my discoveries, to cut the articles and forward to me two copies. * * * For all these little expenses I pray you to open against me a current account, which I will pay when it will be of some importance.

[TO GASTON L. FEUARDENT.]

WASHINGTON, January 22, 1873.

Dear Sir:—After a very long and bad passage we have arrived in New York. Here is my address at N. Y. * * * I pray you to be so kind as to send a banknote of £5 to Turin. * * * I will repay you on my return to Europe. * * * Present my respects to Mrs. Feuardent, and if I can be of any service to you, command me freely, and believe me "Tout à vous."

[TO GASTON L. FEUARDENT.]

FIFTH AVENUE HOTEL,

NEW YORK, Feb. 12, 1873.

Dear Sir—Should you receive from Turin *six* dozen of gloves for

Cesnola in the "World," January 9th, 1881 :

Cesnola in his letters, and comments :

me during the month of March or April, I pray you to be so kind as to pay the amount of the bill that you will receive with the gloves, after having made sure that the *six* dozen in reality exist, and to debit me with the amount, which I will pay on your demand with the other small sums that I will owe as soon as you receive the gloves. I pray you to write two lines to Mr. Cyrus W. Field, Buckingham Palace Hotel, asking him to be kind enough to bring them to me on his return to America.

« Donnez-moi de vos bonnes nouvelles, présentez mes hommages « à votre dame, saluez M. Whelan « et croyez-moi,

« Tout à vous,

« L. P. DI CESNOLA. »

[To F. FEUARDENT.]

ISLAND OF CYPRUS,

LARNACA, March 1st, 1875.

* * * Now let me tell you that I have written *seven* letters, at least, to your son Gaston, who is a charming young man (*sic*) and whom I like very much. * * * I owe him a few hundred francs for a few small commissions. * * * Write to me oftener, and if I find Cypriote medals either in my excavations or in the hands of peasants, I will remember you. * * *

[To GASTON L. FEUARDENT.]

LONDON, January 7, 1877.

Dear Sir : To-day only I received your amiable letter. * * * I am happy to learn that your residence in New York is agreeable to you. I thank you for your wishes on be-

Cesnola in the "World," January 9th, 1881:

After my established connection with the Museum as secretary and trustee, he called on me and informed me that he had come here hoping to be appointed agent and expert of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, for the purchase of antiquities. I was surprised at the coolness of this application to me. Of course I declined to attempt any influence on the Board in his favor; and after he had made repeated calls at my house on the same errand, I was forced to decline seeing him.

Cesnola in his letters, and comments:

half of my wife also. I have already engaged my passage on the *Germanic*. * * * Receive, dear sir, the assurance of my perfect consideration.

[I "opened my shop in New York for the sale of antiques" not in 1877, but *only on February 1st, 1879*.—G. L. F.]

[I have never asked M. di Cesnola any favor of any sort. I have never demanded from him any service of any kind. I have called only three times at M. di Cesnola's house. The first time on January 1st, 1878, to answer politely a card with the words "At home," received from Mrs. di Cesnola. The second also in 1878, to speak about his book "Cyprus," then just published; and the third time to get a permission to use electrotypes from the book "Cyprus" for a pamphlet published by the American Numismatic and Archæological Society. Since that, M. di Cesnola has paid me several friendly visits. The last one, I believe, was on February 17th, 1879, when he met at my place Mr. Sheldon, the art editor of the *Evening Post*.]

The following is an Editorial article, which was published in the *New York Times* of May 14th, 1881 :

Even the Trustees of the Metropolitan Museum of Art must see by this time that the policy of "silent contempt," adopted by them in regard to the charges against their Director, can only have the result of making themselves contemptible. The very circumstantial indictment by Mr. Feuardent, bearing on the treatment of one somewhat celebrated "antique," and indirectly impugning the genuineness of many others, which we publish to-day, is certainly not one which can be met by a policy of silence, contemptuous or otherwise. It amounts to a charge against "Gen." di Cesnola of obtaining money by false pretenses, and, coming from a perfectly responsible source, must have one or two results. If accepted as proved, or, what

amounts to the same thing in this case, passed without challenge, it must place di Cesnola in the category of imposters, and must discredit every enterprise with which he is prominently identified. If it be capable of disproof, it should subject its author to prosecution in the courts. One or other of these alternatives the Trustees and their Director must accept. The testimony against the honesty of the methods pursued in the Museum is cumulative, convincing, apparently unanswerable. This latest contribution to it owes some of its gravity to preceding proofs of sophistication and falsehood, but if it stood alone it is none the less an accusation under which no honest man or body of men would care to rest for an hour.

The following is the letter referred to in the above article :

A COMPOSITE STATUE.

SUGGESTIVE VARIATIONS ON A WELL-KNOWN THEME.

To the Editor of the *New York Times* :

The great success the "Fifteen Puzzle" has met with in this country induces me to present to the public a little variation on the same theme, and which may interest the persons who follow the controversy now pending regarding the "antiques" of the Metropolitan Museum.

I believe that the persons who possess my card No. 2, and those who have Cesnola's "Cyprus," will find this new game to be at the same time, instructive, amusing, and very puzzling. It is about the statuette No. 213 in the Museum catalogue, the No. 39 of my charges, described in "Cyprus," page 154, recently illustrated on my card No. 2, and quite recently, also, brought back for exhibition at the Museum. Directions for the different moves of the "Museum Fifteen Puzzle:"

I. Cut off the head of the statue, (photograph), place it in front of the trunk, and compare the proportions of the two pieces.

II. Compare the relative height of the two shoulders and that of the two armpits, and see that the left shoulder ought to be higher than the right one.

III. Compare the relative height of the bracelets, after seeing their exact position on each arm, and see that the left shoulder ought to be higher than the other.

IV. Compare the outlines and curves of both sides of the chest and waist, and see that the deepest curve is on the side where the shoulder is drawn up, thus showing that the left hip is pressed up.

V. Compare the shape of both hips, and see that the left one is pressed up.

VI. See that the trunk and the belt are drawn to the left of the figure.

VII. Compare the outlines of the body over the belt with that of the lower part of the body, and see that the lower part belongs to a larger figure.

VIII. See the evident tendency of the left upper part of the body to be drawn up at the shoulder, pressed up at the hip, and the waist drawn to the left side.

IX. See that although the upper part of the body shows a marked contortion toward the left in an upward direction, the lower part of the body does not indicate any sign in that direction.

X. See that the central axis of the upper body and the ornaments of the belt do not correspond with that of the lower body and the ornaments of the apron.

XI. See by comparison of the height of the two armpits, that the right shoulder has been remade too high.

XII. See that the right arm has been made too long and too thick from the elbow downward.

XIII. See that the work of the right hand does not agree with the work on the other parts of the figure.

XIV. Remark a piece of stone remaining under the left elbow.

XV. See the break across the body at the height of the belt.

SOLUTION OF THE PUZZLE.

I. The head belongs to one statue of larger dimensions than the rest of the figure.

II. The trunk belongs to another statue—that of an archer in a *kneeling* posture, with his *right* knee on the ground and his *left* bent forward; he carried a quiver suspended to the left shoulder and attached to the piece of stone under the left elbow.

III. The lower part of the body belongs to still another statue: a *standing* figure of larger size than to which the trunk belongs.

IV. The right arm from the elbow downward belongs to still another statue of still larger proportion and of poorer style.

The above remarks only relate to the making up of this chameleonic collection in Cyprus; they are quite independent of the charges of "cutting," "building up" and "cutting off" already published by me, and that of alterations on the same statuette since my charges were made public. I beg to state that the same may be said and proved of more than one-third of the Cypriote statuary in the Museum.

GASTON L. FEUARDENT.