

Dear Sir: the 12 inst.
Yours of yesterday

is read.

You have quite mis-
conceived the intent of the passage
~~to which~~
you refer quote. I had no
thought ~~of~~ of guaranteeing my
own work as anything like per-
fect. I have for many years
made it a habit to mark
words used in a wrong sig-
^{in whatever work found, except}
nificance. I meant only to claim
newspapers.
critical accuracy in ~~and~~ detecting
misapplication of words, especially vari-
ations from radical significations. I
supposed, from the work exhibited of me

by our dictionary-makers that this
was neither an immodest nor
an unfounded claim.

Of course, one having this in
~~the very highest~~ quality in any
degree may slip in its applica-
tion, especially when his
work passes through both a
~~stenographer's~~ typewriter
typewriter's and a compositor's
hands. In the same way, I pride
myself on being an unusually
accurate speller and a fairly well-
skilled in punctuation, but I am

(+)

In like manner, I am a very good judge of a graceful walk and carriage, but I have no sort of doubt that you get along much better on two ~~both~~ legs than I am able to do on three. It does not seem to me that a claim of ability to detect error, is at all akin to the assertion of power to achieve excellence.

a notoriously bad proof-reader of my own work, because I read it as I wrote it or as I meant to write it, passing over the most apparent errors both of orthography and punctuation. In another's work, I do not do this because I do not know the thought except as I read.

(X) In the case you cite, I should say that three words had been omitted, to wit, "the absence of" after ~~was~~ "verbal inaccuracy". I have not seen the article as published, but should presume the

(*) I think the passage has in it, however,
an ~~and~~ decided instance, of the very
"inaccuracy," to which I referred.

The term "merit" is used where "capa-
bility" ^{might} ~~would~~ better have expressed
the thought — "merit" applying more to
the work and "capability" to the worker.

After all, the highest literary excellence
can only be found in connection
with that instinct for verbal ~~construction~~ ^{significa-}
tion which we find only in the few
unapproachable ones before whom
we all bow in reverent wonder
no matter what their syntactical
errors may be. So the statement is not actually
erroneous, in this aspect.

context would make this clear.

(*) I am sorry you felt offended -
offended at the tone of my re-
mark as I have never meant
to claim either for my work
or my knowledge of the American
Negro anything more ~~than the~~
~~same~~ nor even as much
as the same care and at-
tention might give to another.

Very respectfully
Wm. D. Boyce