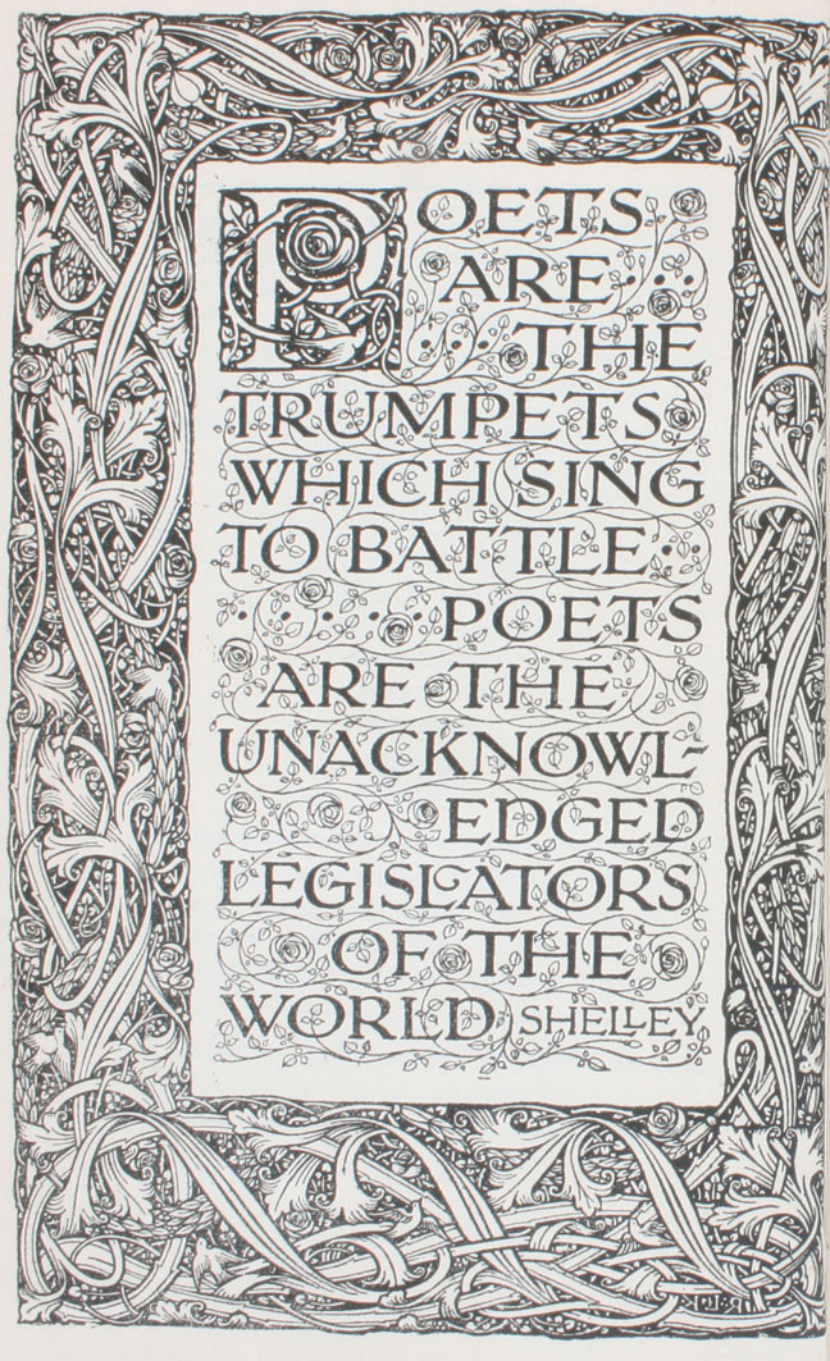
EVERYMAN,
I WILL GO WITH
THEE,
& BE THY GVIDE
IN THY MOST NEED
TO GO BY THY SIDE


1905


POETS ARE THE TRUMPETS WHICH SING TO BATTLE POETS ARE THE UNACKNOWLEDGED LEGISLATORS OF THE WORLD
SHELLEY

THE VISION OF DANTE ALIGHIERI or Hell Purgatory and Paradise Translated by the Rev H·F·Cary A·M·

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INTRODUCTION

MEDIÆVAL literature may be said to begin with the *Vulgate* of St. Jerome (405) and the *City of God* of St. Augustine (426). It ends with the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas (1265–1274) and the *Divina Commedia* of Dante Alighieri (1300–1321).

All the noblest thought and work of the ages that passed between the fall of the Roman Empire and the closing year of the thirteenth century, when Dante figures himself in allegorical fashion as having passed in ecstatic vision through the world beyond the grave, finds supreme artistic expression in his great poem. The intellectual subtleties of the schoolmen, the spiritual soarings of the mystics, the chivalrous worship of women that had been the gift of the troubadours of Provence to the sons of men, the philosophical devotion that the new poets of central Italy had reared upon it, the political dreams and theories of papal and imperial statesmen, builders of vast aerial fabrics of universal Roman Church and universal Roman Empire, have all shared in the making of it. Dante gives them fresh life; handling them with poetic passion, he endues them with unity of a new kind; these things, fused in his glowing imagination, become the harmonious accessories to his picture of man, his nature, his duties, his life, his destiny.

Dante was born at Florence in 1265, probably in the latter part of May, some eight months before the victory of Charles of Anjou over King Manfred at Benevento extinguished the power of the Empire in Italy and placed a French dynasty on the throne of Naples. His father, Alighiero di Bellincione Alighieri, came of an ancient but decadent and impoverished family, too unimportant to be officially ranked among the *grandi*, or magnates, who were excluded from the administration by the democratic rulers of the Republic. His mother, Monna Bella, died soon after his birth. In 1283, at the age of eighteen, he wrote the first of his poems that has been preserved to us: a sonnet in which he demands an explanation of a dream from "all the faithful of Love"; and, in consequence, found himself

recognised as a poet by the chief Italian poet then living, Guido di Cavalcante Cavalcanti, who became the first of all his friends. Study and manly exercise filled up the next few years of Dante's life. He served in the Florentine cavalry, "fighting valiantly on horseback in the front rank," at the battle of Campaldino on June 11, 1289, when the Aretines and other Tuscan Ghibellines were defeated by the forces of the Guelf league, of which Florence was the head. In June, 1290, Beatrice, the woman of the poet's romantic love and poetical homage, died; and, within the next few years, probably between 1292 and 1294, Dante gathered together the lyrics that he had written in her honour and connected them with a prose narrative, thus composing the *Vita Nuova*, the book of his "New Life," which he dedicated to Guido Cavalcanti, "my friend to whom I am writing this."

The *Vita Nuova*, in its exquisite mingling of poetry and prose, shows us how, at the very outset, Dante learned to make of the love of woman a pathway from earth to Heaven. It sets forth a creed of love, as ideal as human nature can well sustain. The lover finds all his beatitude in the words that praise his lady, the splendour of whose soul has reached even to the throne of God. All evil thoughts perish when she passes by; she ennobles all upon whom she looks; she is the mirror of the Divine Beauty, "a thing come from Heaven to earth to make manifest a miracle." "He seeth perfectly all salvation who seeth my lady." When she passes out of the world: "the delight of her beauty, departing itself from our view, became great spiritual loveliness, that spreads through Heaven a light of love that salutes the Angels, and makes even their high and noble intellects wonder." The pilgrim spirit, passing in ecstatic contemplation through the spheres, guided up by the new intelligence that love has infused, is overwhelmed by the sight of her glory in Paradise, where she "gloriously gazeth upon the countenance of Him who is blessed for ever and ever."

In the years that immediately followed the death of Beatrice, Dante fell into what he afterwards came to regard as a morally unworthy life. He became involved, too, in the politics of his native city, was called to play a prominent part therein, in the turbulent time that passed from 1295 to 1301; and bore himself manfully, but (as a fragment preserved from one of his lost letters admits) with some lack of prudence. In 1300, the year of the jubilee of Pope

Boniface VIII., the year when the predominant Guelf party in Florence split into the two factions of Bianchi and Neri, "Whites" and "Blacks," he sat for two months among the chief magistrates of the Republic, in which capacity he was compelled to send his dearest friend, Guido Cavalcanti, into the banishment which proved his death-warrant. When, in November, 1301, through the machinations of Pope Boniface and the treachery of Charles of Valois, the Neri triumphed, Dante was one of their first victims. After a preliminary condemnation, dated January 27, 1302, he was sentenced (together with fifteen other Florentine citizens) to be burned to death, if he should at any time come into the power of the Commune of Florence.

Already Dante seemed to himself to have found the key to the whole political riddle of the universe in the meaning of Roman history. He had become convinced that the Roman Empire of old was divinely ordained for the civilisation of the world and the promulgation of law, and that the Empire of his own day (for he does not distinguish between the two) was a divine institution no less than the Church, with authority proceeding directly from God for the establishment of universal peace and the renovation of mankind. In a famous passage at the beginning of the second book of the *De Monarchia*, he tells us how the realisation that the Roman People obtained the monarchy of the world by right came to him as a complete revelation, throwing light over the whole dark forest of mediæval politics, showing him the part he had to play, the doctrine he was to teach. And (he may well have asked himself, later on), although the imperial eagle was now held in the hand of a German prince, might not the Empire again become Italian, Roman once more in deed as it still was in name?

With the "vision splendid" of that old ideal love, albeit dimmed in one who had become a votary of the world and the flesh, and with this newly apprehended, world-embracing political faith, Dante went forth to exile, with the Republic's sentence of death upon his head. For a brief while, he made common cause with his fellow-exiles, even with the enemies of his native land, striving to win his way back to Florence by force of arms. Then, probably in 1303, disgusted with his associates, he turns from them with contempt, to make a party for himself. He begins, but leaves unfinished, two prose works: the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (*circa* 1304), "On Vernacular Eloquence," in which he

expounds the metrical form of the Italian lyric, and attempts to establish an ideal Italian language for the expression of the national idea; the *Convivio* (1306–1308), or "Banquet," in which he sets himself to bring the fruits of philosophical reasoning down to the reach of the unlearned, in the form of a commentary on his own wonderful *Canzoni*, a series of philosophical, didactic, and amatory odes.

Then he is dragged back into the turmoil of politics. For it seems that the Imperial Redeemer is at hand, now that the new Emperor, Henry of Luxemburg, has crossed the Alps (1310), and is coming to the Eternal City that sat widowed and alone, crying day and night for her spouse. We may read in the poet's letters how his spirit exulted in Henry, as in the heavenly directed regenerator of Christendom, the new Lamb of God who was to take away the sins of the world. And at the beginning of the *De Monarchia*, the treatise on the great question of Church and State, Papacy and Empire, which Dante probably wrote at this time in anticipation of Henry's coming, we find that all his previous work now appeared to him as nothing, that he seemed to himself still open to the charge of the buried talent —with the mission still unachieved of "keeping vigil for the good of the world." But, in less than three years from his coming to Italy, the Emperor had died in disgrace and failure (1313), and Dante was still a homeless wanderer, under proscription and ban, with a new condemnation pronounced against him by the magistrates of the Republic.

The alternations of impassioned hope, bitter disillusion, temporary despair, during the Emperor's unfortunate enterprise, had wrought a complete revulsion of the poet's being. Spiritual experiences, too, had been his—of the kind known only to man himself and to the higher powers to whom he holds himself responsible. It is as one who has lost the world, and gained his own soul, that Dante now turned to the completion of his *Divina Commedia*, to combine the charge he believed laid upon him, of "keeping vigil for the good of the world," with the promise he had made at the end of the *Vita Nuova*, to say of Beatrice "what had never been said of any woman."

Gradually, during those long, weary years of exile, wandering in poverty from city to city throughout Italy, and perchance beyond its confines, showing against his will the wounds that fortune had dealt him, the poet's own life-story had become merged into that of all humanity. As from a

celestial watch-tower of contemplation, he had seen the world a prey to anarchy and tyranny, abandoned to lust, pride, and avarice. He had watched the oppressors of the poor at their work; had seen the evil deeds of the kings, the priests abandoning the teaching of the Gospel to acquire wealth and temporal power, the moral corruption of high and low spreading like a black torrent over the land. And, in his cell of self-knowledge, he had traced a like process in his own heart; he had seen the fair promise of his "new life" fade away, and had found himself sunk in what he deemed a life of sin. His own conversion becomes but a symbol of that to which he would incite man in general. His return, in an agony of repentance, to the memory of Beatrice, the love of his youth, now become the type of Divine Philosophy, is symbolical of the renovation which he believes in store for the whole human race, if it will but hearken to his message.

The *Divina Commedia* was finished at Ravenna, shortly before Dante's death, which took place on September 14, 1321. The concluding cantos of the *Purgatorio* and the whole of the *Paradiso*, in particular, bear the imprint of those last years of Dante's life, when, secure in the friendship of Can Grande della Scala, the warrior lord of Verona, and under the protection of Guido Novello da Polenta, the pacific ruler of Ravenna, with friends and disciples gathering round him, the poet found a not uncongenial refuge in that ancient Romagnole city, amidst the monuments of Cæsars and the records in mosaic of primitive Christianity, where the church walls testified the glory of Justinian, and the music of the Pine Forest sounded in his ears.

The vision of the world beyond the grave was no new thing in mediæval literature; but it had never before been made the basis of a work of universal appeal and universal significance. Dante's true precursors are not the obscure dreamers of dreams: Tundal, Alberic of Monte Cassino, the Monk of Eynsham, and the like; who described imaginary journeys through Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. His inspiration on this side was purely Virgilian, and derived from the sixth book of the *Æneid*. Rather is he the poetic heir of Augustine's confession and spiritual reading of history; of Boëthius' philosophical passion and attempted reconciliation of man's freedom with God's foreknowledge; of Bernard's reforming zeal and contemplative fervour; of Richard of St. Victor in his mystical mounting upward of

the human soul to union with the Divine; of Thomas Aquinas, in his adopting the wisdom of Aristotle to give organic form to the truths of revelation. Only, as a poet, Dante transcends all these things; while, at the same time, he brings them down from the possession of the few, to be the common heritage of all who listen to his song.

The *Divina Commedia* is thus far more than a mere vision of the spirit world, however perfectly realised. In it Dante has condensed all the wisdom and devotion of his age, and summed up all the finest spirit of the ages that have gone before his own. He is the soul of mediæval Catholicism, painting his picture of the material universe in the form of an allegorical vision of the supernatural world. He is a man with a mission; fiercely, terribly in earnest, to reform the corruption of the Church, to give new life to the State, to heal the wounds of his country. The object of his poem is professedly to remove men from their state of misery, and to lead them to the state of felicity. "Not by the grace of riches, but by the grace of God," he writes to the Italian Cardinals, "I am what I am, and the zeal of His House hath eaten me up." A famous passage, at the opening of the third book of his *De Monarchia*, strikes the key-note of all his work. Taking confidence from the words of Daniel: "He shut the mouths of the lions, and they have not hurt me; for justice was found in me in His sight"; he declares that, since Truth appeals to him from her immutable throne, and the Philosopher bids him sacrifice friendship for her sake: "Putting on the breast-plate of faith, according to the admonition of Paul, in the heat of that coal which one of the Seraphims took from the celestial altar and laid upon the lips of Isaiah, I will enter upon the present contest, and by the arm of Him who delivered us from the powers of darkness in His blood, I will cast the wicked and the liar out of the lists in the sight of all the world."

For his poetical purpose, Dante goes back to the year of the papal jubilee, 1300, the year in which he had sat for two months in the chief magistracy of the Florentine Republic. He is in the position of a man who is now, at the end of his life, relating to the world a vision which was vouchsafed to him, nearly twenty years before, for seven days, beginning at sunrise on Good Friday, which, in 1300, fell upon April 8. Hence, everything that happened to him, or to his fellow-men, after April, 1300, is spoken of as future, by way of prophecy, beginning with the account, in the sixth canto

of the *Inferno*, of the faction fight between the Bianchi and Neri in Florence on the May Day of that year.

Coming to himself in the dark forest of political anarchy and alienation from God, the forest into which he has, as it were in slumber, strayed, Dante, representative of the human race, is guided by Virgil (who stands for Human Philosophy and natural reason), through Hell and Purgatory, to the state of temporal felicity figured in the Earthly Paradise. There, in the state of innocence regained by the purgatorial pains, a further revelation is given him of the past, present, and future of the Church and the Empire; thence he is guided by Beatrice herself, the type of the Divine Philosophy that includes the sacred science of Theology (of which the ultimate end is the contemplation of primal truth in man's celestial native land), through the nine moving spheres, into the spaceless, timeless Empyrean Heaven of Heavens. There Beatrice resumes her throne in the white and gold Rose of Paradise, and Bernard, type of the loving contemplation in which the eternal life of the soul consists, commends the poet to the Blessed Virgin, through whose intercession he obtains a foretaste of the Beatific Vision of the Divine Essence.

But this is merely the framework, within which the society of thirteenth-century Italy is pictured. And, out of the Italy of his day, the poet grasps but the essentials of human nature—for man is avowedly the subject of the *Divina Commedia*. While, taken literally, the theme is the state of souls after death, the subject in the allegorical sense (Dante tells us in the letter dedicating the *Paradiso* to Can Grande) is "man as by good or ill deserts, in the exercise of the freedom of his will, he becomes liable to the justice that rewards or punishes."

Understood as Dante would have it, the *Inferno* is one of the most appalling things in literature. No doubt, the poet held some belief as to the torments of the damned in another life, more or less similar to what he has here depicted. But, at the same time, there is an allegorical significance throughout. Dante's Hell is the wickedness and corruption of the life that he saw around him, revealed in its proper aspect. "We still have judgment here!" That word of Shakespeare's is not without bearing upon Dante's conception of tragedy. In the *Inferno*, the poet may naturally seem more concerned with what he believes concerning the judgment hereafter; but, at the same time,

he undoubtedly means the torments of his Hell to be taken, in part, as symbolical of the effects of sin in this life, when there is no repentance. Witte has admirably expressed this : " Hell itself is neither more nor less than the protraction of unrepented sin; the symbolical interpretation of the sinful life." With one apparent exception, there is no personal vindictiveness in Dante's treatment of sinners. Nothing is further from the truth than the assertion that he condemned his own private enemies, or his political opponents, to eternal infamy. He is the man, to adopt his own phrase, to whom Truth appeals from her immutable throne. There are no friends or foes at the bar of that dread tribunal. The robes of earthly pomp and power, of hypocrisy and false semblance, are stripped off; the whited sepulchres are forced to yield up their secrets. The torments of Dante's Hell are but the sins themselves, revealed in their essence, recognised by their results; the poet shows how the souls of the condemned have made their choice in this life, and how they work out their own damnation. Dante, in his allegory, is investigating the full realities of vice; in the light of reason, and under the guidance of human philosophy, he is anatomising sinner after sinner, laying bare the secret motives of remembered and forgotten tragedies; he is striving to answer Lear's question : " Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts?"

Apart from its allegory, the machinery of Dante's Hell is more or less that of mediæval tradition. It is otherwise with his Purgatory. There are few things in literature so wonderful, and in the highest sense original, as his conception of the mountain of Purgation, where, beneath the sun and stars, in the glory of sunrise and of sunset, man purges away the dross of the world, until he recovers his primal blessedness, his moral and intellectual liberty, in the Earthly Paradise. Throughout, in its pure spirituality, its radiant charity, its ineffable tenderness, the *Purgatorio* makes a direct and universal appeal to the heart and conscience. And, from the outset, the note of love is struck; the poet sees " the fair planet, which gives us strength to love, making the whole east radiant." For love is the informing spirit, the compelling law of the rest of Dante's poem; Love, not merely in our modern sense, which is practically restricted to the idealisation of one special passion, but in the sense in which it means the force that impels every creature, inanimate or animate, sensitive or rational,

to obey the highest dictates of its true nature. *Ordina quest' amore, O tu che m'ami*, wrote the Franciscan, Jacopone da Todi, speaking in the person of Christ: "Set this love in order, O thou that lovest Me." The whole of the *Purgatorio* is based upon the necessity of thus setting love in order, of ordering love rightly.

Shelley has well told us that the *Paradiso* is the story of "how all things are transfigured except Love." Love is the guide, the rule, the interpretation of Dante's mysticism. He shows us in the *Purgatorio* how, in rational beings, love is the seed of every virtue and of every vice, because love's natural tendency to good is the material upon which free will works for bliss or for bane. In the *Paradiso*, he conceives of the whole motion of the universe as one cosmic dance of love, beginning in the Seraphim, that highest Angelic order which knows most and therefore loves most, and continued through all nature. And, at the consummation of his vision, the poet beholds, by penetrative intuition into the Divine Light, how it is that Love thus binds the universe into one, to make it resemble the Supreme Unity:—

> "Nel suo profondo vidi che s'interna,
> legato con amore in un volume,
> ciò che per l'universo si squaderna":

"Within its depths I saw gathered up the scattered leaves of all the universe, bound by love into one volume."

In the relations between Dante and Beatrice, we have the secret of the poet's mysticism; for, as Father Tyrrell has beautifully said, "If love be mysticism, then we have the key to all mysticism within ourselves." Love, set in order by the purifying ascent of Purgatory, grows more and more perfected in Paradise, from sphere to sphere, until the crowning vision in the Empyrean Heaven of Heavens; where, with all desires set at rest, all wills made one with the Divine Will, the soul is absorbed in the Beatific Vision; all its powers of spiritual vision actualised, all its capacity of knowing and of loving realised to the full, in the possession of absolute Truth and absolute Beauty in union with the Divine Essence.

EDMUND G. GARDNER.

1908.

Henry Francis Cary was born in 1772 and died in 1844. His translation of the *Inferno* was first issued in 1805 and 1806, together with the Italian text. In 1814, he published the complete *Divina Commedia* in English alone, at his own expense. The work earned the enthusiastic and generous admiration of Coleridge. A revised edition appeared in 1819, and another in 1844, the year of the translator's death. Of the merits of the work, Dr. Richard Garnett writes in the *Dictionary of National Biography:* "Notwithstanding the competition of more exact versions of no mean poetical power, it has remained the translation which, on Dante's name being mentioned, occurs first to the mind. Cary's standard is lower, and his achievement less remarkable, than that of many of his successors, but he, at least, has made Dante an Englishman, and they have left him half an Italian. He has, nevertheless, shown remarkable tact in avoiding the almost inevitable imitation of the Miltonic style, and, renouncing the attempt to clothe Dante with a stateliness which does not belong to him, has in a great measure preserved his transparent simplicity and intense vividness." In the present edition, a very few slight corrections in the text of the translation are indicated in italics. Cary's scholarly and learned notes being partly out of date, partly not suited to the purposes of a purely popular issue, it has been thought advisable to substitute an almost entirely new commentary, for which (together with the Chronological Table) the writer of this Introduction is responsible.[1] He wishes to acknowledge a very special debt to the editors of the complete works of Dante in the *Temple Classics*, to Dr. Paget Toynbee's invaluable *Dante Dictionary*, and to the first volume of Dr. Moore's *Studies in Dante*.

The following are the works of Henry Francis Cary (1772–1844):—

Sonnets and Odes, 1788; Ode to General Kosciuszko, 1797; translation of the "Inferno," 1805; remainder of the "Commedia,"

[1] The references are to the *Temple Classics* and to the *Oxford Dante*. *Inf.* = *Inferno*, *Purg.* = *Purgatorio*, *Par.* = *Paradiso*, *V. N.* = *Vita Nuova*, *V. E.* = *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, *Mon.* = *De Monarchia*, *Conv.* = *Convivio*, *Epist.* = *Letters*. The *Temple Classics* translations of the Minor Works are usually quoted. In the case of the *Divina Commedia* itself, it has seemed better to avoid confusion by giving references to the cantos alone, as Cary's version does not always correspond, line for line, with the original text.

1814; new edition, 1819, and numerous re-issues, up to the present date; translation of "The Birds," 1824; translation of "Pindar," 1832.

Cary's earliest publication, while still a schoolboy, was an ode to Lord Heathfield on his defence of Gibraltar. He was a regular contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine* in his younger years, and in this periodical were published, after his death, his notices of the Italian Poets. In 1846 appeared "The Early French Poets; a series of Notices and Translations," and "Lives of English Poets from Johnson to Kirke White," these having previously been published in the *London Magazine*.

Cary's further works were editions of Pope, Milton, Cowper, Thomson, and Young.

A Memoir of him by his son was published in 1847.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

OF

THE CHIEF EVENTS IN DANTE'S LIFE

[1215. In consequence of the murder of Buondelmonte de' Buondelmonti, the Florentines become involved in the factions of Guelfs and Ghibellines. *Inf.* xxviii.; *Par.* xvi.

1249. With the aid of Frederick II., the Ghibellines expel the Guelfs from Florence. *Inf.* x.

1250. Death of the Emperor Frederick II. *Inf.* x.; *Conv.* iv. 3.

1251. The Guelfs return to Florence, and, shortly after, drive out the Ghibellines, changing the white lily on the standard of the Republic to red. *Par.* xvi.

1258. Further expulsion of Ghibelline nobles.

1260, September 4. The Florentine Guelfs are utterly defeated at the battle of Montaperti, by the Sienese and exiled Florentine Ghibellines, aided by the German troops of King Manfred. *Inf.* x. and xxxii. The Guelfs leave Florence, and a Ghibelline despotism is established.

1265. At the invitation of Clement IV., Charles of Anjou comes to Italy as the champion of the Church against the Ghibellines. *Purg.* vii. and xx.]

1265. Dante is born at Florence, between May 18 and June 17. *Par.* xxii.

1266 (February 26). Manfred is defeated and slain by Charles of Anjou at the battle of Benevento. *Purg.* iii. The Ghibellines are expelled from Florence, and the democratic Guelf predominance finally assured. *Inf.* x.

1268 (August). Conradin is defeated by Charles of Anjou at the battle of Tagliacozzo. *Inf.* xxviii. He is beheaded at Naples (October). *Purg.* xx.

1269 (June). Defeat of the Sienese Ghibellines under Provenzano Salvani at the battle of Colle in Valdelsa. *Purg.* xi. and xiii. Siena, hitherto the chief Ghibelline power in Tuscany, ultimately becomes Guelf.

1274 (May). Dante first meets Beatrice. *V. N.* § 2.

1278. Attempted reconciliation of Guelfs and Ghibellines in Florence.

1282. The "Sicilian Vespers." *Par.* viii.

1283. Dante writes his first extant sonnet. *V. N.* § 3.

1288. Overthrow of Count Ugolino at Pisa. *Inf.* xxxiii.

1289 (June 11). The battle of Campaldino. *Purg.* v.

1290 (June). Death of Beatrice. *V. N.* § 29; *Purg.* xxx.–xxxii. Between 1292 and 1294, Dante writes the *Vita Nuova*. Probably about 1296, he marries Gemma Donati.

1293. The democratic character of the Florentine government is

secured by the Ordinances of Justice, whereby nobles and magnates are more strictly excluded from office, and subjected to severe penalties for offences against the people.

1294. Abdication of Pope Celestine V. and election of Boniface VIII. *Inf.* iii., xix., xxvii.

1295. Dante enters public life. On July 6, he speaks in the General Council of the Commune, in support of modifications in the Ordinances of Justice.

1300. The Jubilee proclaimed (*Purg.* ii.). A papal conspiracy against the liberties of Florence discovered in April. The Guelfs having split into Bianchi and Neri, "Whites" and "Blacks," led by Vieri de' Cerchi and Corso Donati respectively, the factions come to blood on May 1 (*Inf.* vi.). On May 7, Dante goes on an embassy to San Gimignano. From June 15 to August 15, he sits by election in the chief magistracy of the Republic, as one of the Priors. Together with his colleagues, he resists the interference of the papal legate, Cardinal Matteo d'Acquasparta (*Par.* xii.), and banishes the leaders of both factions, including Guido Cavalcanti. Guido contracts a fatal malady at Sarzana, and, returning to Florence after Dante's term of office is concluded, dies at the end of August (*Inf.* x.)

1301. The Bianchi hold the government of Florence, and, in May, expel the Neri from Pistoia (*Inf.* xxiv.). On June 19, Dante, speaking in the Council of the Hundred, opposes the grant of money to the King of Naples and of soldiers to the Pope. On November 1, Charles of Valois, as papal peacemaker, enters Florence, and causes a state of anarchy, in which the Bianchi are overthrown and the Neri return in triumph (*Purg.* xx., xxiv.; *Par.* xvii.). Dante is said to have been absent at Rome on an embassy to the Pope—but this is questioned.

1302. Dante, with four others, sentenced to fine and banishment (January 27). Together with fifteen others, he is sentenced to be burned to death (March 10). Cf. *V. E.* i. 6, *Inf.* xv., *Par.* xvii., and *Canzone* xx. The whole faction of the Bianchi is expelled from Florence (April 4). Dante at first shares their fortunes; but, between June 8, 1302, and June 18, 1303, he breaks away from them in disgust, and takes refuge with Bartolommeo della Scala at Verona. *Par.* xvii.

1303 (October). Death of Boniface VIII. *Purg.* xx.

1304. Dante probably goes to Bologna, where he writes, but leaves unfinished, the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*. Cf. *V. E.* i. 9, 15; ii. 12.

1305. By the election of Clement V., the Papacy is translated from Rome to Avignon. *Inf.* xix.; *Purg.* xxxii.

1306. Expulsion of the Florentine exiles from Bologna (March). Dante at Padua (August), and with the Malaspina in the Lunigiana (October). Cf. *Purg.* viii. Between 1306 and 1308, he writes, but leaves unfinished, the *Convivio*. About 1307 or 1308, he is said to have gone to Paris.

1308 (November). Henry of Luxemburg elected Emperor, as Henry VII.

1309. Dante probably writes the *De Monarchia*.

1310. Dante's Letter to the Princes and Peoples of Italy (*Epist.* v.). Henry arrives in Italy in September.

1311. Henry takes the iron crown at Milan (January), in which city Dante probably pays him homage. From the Casentino, Dante writes letters to "the most wicked Florentines within" (March 31, *Epist.* vi.), and to the Emperor himself (April 16, *Epist.* vii.). On September 2, by the "reform" of Baldo d'Aguglione, he is for ever excepted from amnesty and excluded from Florence.

1312. The Emperor crowned in Rome (June 29). He unsuccessfully besieges Florence (September 19 to October 31).

1313 (August 24). The Emperor dies at Buonconvento, near Siena. *Par.* xxx.

1314. Death of Clement V. (April 20). *Inf.* xix.; *Par.* xxx. Dante writes his Letter to the Italian Cardinals (*Epist.* viii.), urging them to restore the Papacy to Rome.

1315. Dante probably at Lucca, under the protection of Uguccione della Faggiuola. Cf. *Purg.* xxiv. On August 29, Uguccione defeats the united armies of Naples and Florence at the battle of Montecatini. On November 6, the Florentine government, through the vicar of King Robert, renews the sentence of death against Dante, as a Ghibelline and a rebel; his two sons, Pietro and Jacopo, are included in the condemnation.

1316. Dante, in his Letter to a Florentine friend, refuses to return to Florence on dishonourable conditions (*Epist.* ix.). Probably towards the close of this year, he goes to Can Grande della Scala at Verona. *Par.* xvii.; *Epist.* x. 1.

1317. Dante settles at Ravenna.

1318–1320. Dante writes his Letter to Can Grande, dedicating the *Paradiso* to him (*Epist.* x.). He enters into a correspondence with Giovanni del Virgilio (*Eclogues* I. and II.), refusing the laurel crown at Bologna. At the end of 1319, he perhaps visits Piacenza, Mantua, and Verona, and at the last-named city (January 20, 1320) delivers a discourse concerning the relative position of earth and water on the globe's surface (*Quæstio de Aqua et Terra*, of which the authenticity is disputed).

1321. In July, Dante undertakes an embassy from Guido da Polenta to Venice. He dies at Ravenna on September 14. The manuscript of the last thirteen cantos of the *Divina Commedia*, left unpublished at his death, is found by his son Jacopo, and forwarded to Can Grande della Scala.

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THE VISION OF DANTE

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Hell

CANTO I

ARGUMENT

The writer, having lost his way in a gloomy forest, and being hindered by certain wild beasts from ascending a mountain, is met by Virgil, who promises to show him the punishments of Hell, and afterwards of Purgatory; and that he shall then be conducted by Beatrice into Paradise. He follows the Roman poet.

IN the midway [1] of this our mortal life,
I found me [2] in a gloomy wood, astray
Gone from the path direct: and e'en to tell,
It were no easy task, how savage wild
That forest, how robust and rough its growth,
Which to remember only, my dismay
Renews, in bitterness not far from death.
Yet, to discourse of what there good befel,
All else will I relate discover'd there.
How first I enter'd it I scarce can say,
Such sleepy dulness in that instant weigh'd
My senses down, when the true path I left;
But when a mountain's foot I reach'd, where closed
The valley that had pierced my heart with dread,
I look'd aloft, and saw his shoulders broad
Already vested with that planet's beam,
Who leads all wanderers safe through every way.[3]

1 "The days of our years are threescore years and ten" (Psalm xc. 10). In the *Convivio* (iv. 23), Dante compares human life to an arch, of which the highest point, "in those of perfect nature," is in the thirty-fifth year. The poem opens at sunrise on Good Friday in 1300, when the Poet was at the end of his thirty-fifth year.

2 *Mi ritrovai*, "I came to myself."

3 The wood is "the wood of error," spiritual alienation from God and political anarchy. The mountain is the "Holy Hill" of the Psalmist, the mountain of the Lord, to which only the innocent in hands and the clean of heart shall ascend. According to Ptolemaic astronomy, the sun is a planet; its beams here symbolise the Divine Light.

Then was a little respite to the fear,
That in my heart's recesses deep had lain
All of that night, so pitifully past:
And as a man, with difficult short breath,
Forespent with toiling, 'scaped from sea to shore,
Turns to the perilous wide waste, and stands
At gaze; e'en so my spirit, that yet fail'd,
Struggling with terror, turn'd to view the straits
That none hath past and lived. My weary frame
After short pause recomforted, again
I journey'd on over that lonely steep,
The hinder foot still firmer. Scarce the ascent
Began, when, lo! a panther, nimble, light,
And cover'd with a speckled skin, appear'd;
Nor, when it saw me, vanish'd; rather strove
To check my onward going; that oft-times,
With purpose to retrace my steps, I turn'd.

The hour was morning's prime, and on his way
Aloft the sun ascended with those stars,[1]
That with him rose when Love Divine first moved
Those its fair works: so that with joyous hope
All things conspired to fill me, the gay skin
Of that swift animal, the matin dawn,
And the sweet season. Soon that joy was chased,
And by new dread succeeded, when in view
A lion came, 'gainst me as it appear'd,
With his head held aloft and hunger-mad,
That e'en the air was fear-struck. A she-wolf
Was at his heels, who in her leanness seem'd
Full of all wants, and many a land hath made
Disconsolate ere now.[2] She with such fear
O'erwhelm'd me, at the sight of her appall'd,

[1] The sun was in Aries, as, according to mediæval tradition, it was when God first created the world.

[2] The panther (or leopard), lion, and she-wolf probably represent Lust, Pride, and Avarice. It was a commonplace of mediæval ethics that lust, pride, and avarice were the roots of all the sins of the world. The actual imagery of the three beasts was evidently suggested to Dante by the words of Jeremiah (v. 6): "A lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities." It was first suggested at the beginning of the nineteenth century that the panther, lion, and she-wolf stood for Florence, France, and Rome (the Temporal Power of the Papacy) respectively. This interpretation found general acceptance, but it is now almost entirely discredited.

That of the height all hope I lost. As one,
Who, with his gain elated, sees the time
When all unwares is gone, he inwardly
Mourns with heart-griping anguish; such was I,
Haunted by that fell beast, never at peace,
Who coming o'er against me, by degrees
Impell'd me where the sun in silence rests.
While to the lower space with backward step
I fell, my ken discern'd the form of one
Whose voice seem'd faint through long disuse of speech.
When him in that great desert I espied,
"Have mercy on me," cried I out aloud,
"Spirit! or living man! whate'er thou be."
He answer'd: "Now not man, man once I was,
And born of Lombard parents, Mantuans both
By country, when the power of Julius [1] yet
Was scarcely firm. At Rome my life was past,
Beneath the mild Augustus, in the time
Of fabled deities and false. A bard
Was I, and made Anchises' upright son
The subject of my song, who came from Troy,
When the flames prey'd on Ilium's haughty towers.[2]
But thou, say wherefore to such perils past
Return'st thou? wherefore not this pleasant mount
Ascendest, cause and source of all delight?"
"And art thou then that Virgil, that well-spring,
From which such copious floods of eloquence
Have issued?" I with front abash'd replied.
"Glory and light of all the tuneful train!
May it avail me, that I long with zeal
Have sought thy volume, and with love immense
Have conn'd it o'er. My master thou, and guide!
Thou he from whom alone I have derived
That style, which for its beauty into fame
Exalts me. See the beast, from whom I fled.
O save me from her, thou illustrious sage!
For every vein and pulse throughout my frame
She hath made tremble." He, soon as he saw
That I was weeping, answer'd, "Thou must needs

[1] Virgil was born at Mantua, B.C. 70. He is here the type of Human Philosophy, which leads man from moral unworthiness and guides him to temporal felicity.
[2] In the *Æneid*.

Another way pursue, if thou wouldst 'scape
From out that savage wilderness. This beast,
At whom thou criest, her way will suffer none
To pass, and no less hindrance makes than death:
So bad and so accursed in her kind,
That never sated is her ravenous will,
Still after food more craving than before.
To many an animal in wedlock vile
She fastens, and shall yet to many more,
Until that Greyhound come, who shall destroy
Her with sharp pain. He will not life support
By earth nor its base metals, but by love,
Wisdom, and virtue; and his land shall be
The land 'twixt either Feltro.[1] In his might
Shall safety to Italia's plains arise,
For whose fair realm, Camilla, virgin pure,
Nisus, Euryalus, and Turnus fell.[2]
He, with incessant chase, through every town
Shall worry, until he to Hell at length
Restore her, thence by envy first let loose.
I, for thy profit pondering, now devise
That thou mayst follow me; and I, thy guide,
Will lead thee hence through an eternal space,

1 This prophecy of the *Veltro*, or Greyhound, the coming Deliverer, is one of the insoluble problems of the *Divina Commedia*. The earliest commentators did not recognise any specific individual under this imagery, and took the word *feltro* not as the name of a place, *Feltro*, but as the material "felt," for which they suggested various far-fetched allegorical meanings. They supposed the prophecy to be derived from Virgil's fourth *Eclogue*, and to refer either to the second coming of Christ, or to the advent of some heroic personage, preferably an Emperor or a Pope, who should renovate the world and bring back the golden age. It was first suggested in 1477, more than 150 years after Dante's death, that Can Grande della Scala, whose birthplace, Verona, lies between Feltre in Venetia and Montefeltro in Romagna, is the person meant. "He shall not feed on earth nor pelf, but on wisdom and love and power; and his birthplace shall be between Feltro and Feltro. Of that humble Italy he shall be the salvation." In any case, the Deliverer, be he Can Grande or another, is to accomplish the ideals of the Poet's *De Monarchia*: to restore the imperial power, make Roman law obeyed throughout Italy, extirpate avarice, establish universal peace, and reform the world. This prophecy is repeated in other forms at intervals throughout the poem (*Purg.* xx., xxxiii., *Par.* xxvii.), though it may be doubted whether Dante had always the same solution in his mind.

2 Their deaths are described in the *Æneid*, ix. and xi.

Where thou shalt hear despairing shrieks, and see
Spirits of old tormented, who invoke
A second death;[1] and those next view, who dwell
Content in fire,[2] for that they hope to come,
Whene'er the time may be, among the blest,
Into whose regions if thou then desire
To ascend, a spirit worthier[3] than I
Must lead thee, in whose charge, when I depart,
Thou shalt be left: for that Almighty King,
Who reigns above, a rebel to His law
Adjudges me; and therefore hath decreed
That, to His city, none through me should come.
He in all parts hath sway; there rules, there holds
His citadel and throne. O happy those,
Whom there He chuses!" I to him in few:
"Bard! by that God, whom thou didst not adore,
I do beseech thee (that this ill and worse
I may escape) to lead me where thou said'st,
That I Saint Peter's gate[4] may view, and those
Who, as thou tell'st, are in such dismal plight."
Onward he moved, I close his steps pursued.

CANTO II

Argument

After the invocation, which poets are used to prefix to their works, he shows, that, on a consideration of his own strength, he doubted whether it sufficed for the journey proposed to him, but that, being comforted by Virgil, he at last took courage, and followed him as his guide and master.

Now was the day departing, and the air,
Imbrown'd with shadows, from their toils released
All animals on earth; and I alone
Prepared myself the conflict to sustain,
Both of sad pity, and that perilous road,
Which my unerring memory shall retrace.

[1] The souls in Hell. *Cf.* Rev. ix. 6.
[2] In Purgatory.
[3] Beatrice, type of Divine Philosophy; Virgil himself being consigned to the Limbo of the virtuous heathen, who "without hope live in desire."
[4] The gate of Purgatory. Cf. *Purg.* ix.

O Muses! O high genius! now vouchsafe
Your aid. O mind![1] that all I saw hast kept
Safe in a written record, here thy worth
And eminent endowments come to proof.
I thus began: "Bard! thou who art my guide,
Consider well, if virtue be in me
Sufficient, ere to this high enterprise
Thou trust me. Thou hast told that Silvius' sire,[2]
Yet clothed in corruptible flesh, among
The immortal tribes had entrance, and was there
Sensibly present. Yet if Heaven's great Lord,
Almighty foe to ill, such favour show'd
In contemplation of the high effect,
Both what and who from him should issue forth,
It seems in reason's judgment well deserved;
Sith he of Rome and of Rome's empire wide,
In Heaven's empyreal height was chosen sire:
Both which, if truth be spoken, were ordain'd
And stablish'd for the holy place, where sits
Who to great Peter's sacred chair succeeds.
He from this journey, in thy song renown'd,
Learn'd things, that to his victory gave rise
And to the papal robe.[3] In after-times
The Chosen Vessel also travel'd there,[4]
To bring us back assurance in that faith
Which is the entrance to salvation's way.
But I, why should I there presume? or who
Permits it? not Æneas I, nor Paul.
Myself I deem not worthy, and none else
Will deem me. I, if on this voyage then
I venture, fear it will in folly end.
Thou, who art wise, better my meaning know'st,
Than I can speak." As one, who unresolves

1 *O mente*, "O memory."

2 The account of the descent of Æneas, the father of Silvius, to the infernal regions in the sixth book of Virgil's *Æneid* was probably the original source of Dante's inspiration for the *Divina Commedia*.

3 According to Dante's theory, the victory of Æneas in Italy led to the foundation of Rome, which was divinely ordained as the seat of Pope and Emperor alike.

4 A mediæval legend, familiar in Dante's time, described the descent of St. Paul into Hell. Others take this as simply referring to the famous passage in the second epistle to the Corinthians (2 Cor. xii. 2), and understand the "immortal tribes" (*immortale secolo*) in a more general sense.

What he hath late resolved, and with new thoughts
Changes his purpose, from his first intent
Removed; e'en such was I on that dun coast,
Wasting in thought my enterprise, at first
So eagerly embraced. " If right thy words
I scan," replied that shade magnanimous,
" Thy soul is by vile fear assail'd, which oft
So overcasts a man, that he recoils
From noblest resolution, like a beast
At some false semblance in the twilight gloom.
That from this terror thou mayst free thyself,
I will instruct thee why I came, and what
I heard in that same instant, when for thee
Grief touch'd me first. I was among the tribe
Who rest suspended,[1] when a dame, so blest
And lovely I besought her to command,
Call'd me; her eyes were brighter than the star
Of day; and she, with gentle voice and soft,
Angelically tuned, her speech address'd:
' O courteous shade of Mantua! thou whose fame
' Yet lives, and shall live long as nature lasts!
' A friend, not of my fortune but myself,[2]
' On the wide desert in his road has met
' Hindrance so great, that he through fear has turn'd.
' Now much I dread lest he past help have stray'd,
' And I be risen too late for his relief,
' From what in heaven of him I heard. Speed now,
' And by thy eloquent persuasive tongue,
' And by all means for his deliverance meet,
' Assist him. So to me will comfort spring.
' I, who now bid thee on this errand forth,
' Am Beatrice;[3] from a place I come
' Revisited with joy. Love brought me thence,
' Who prompts my speech. When in my Master's sight
' I stand, thy praise to him I oft will tell.'
" She then was silent, and I thus began:
' O Lady! by whose influence alone
' Mankind excels whatever is contain'd

[1] In Limbo.

[2] *Amico mio e non della ventura* is better understood and translated: " My friend, and not the friend of fortune " (Carlyle).

[3] Beatrice, symbol of Divine Philosophy, but no less the real woman who, even from her throne in Paradise, is caring for her lover's salvation and watching over him. *Cf.* Christina Rossetti, *The Convent Threshold.*

'Within that heaven which hath the smallest orb,
'So thy command delights me, that to obey,
'If it were done already, would seem late.
'No need hast thou farther to speak thy will:
'Yet tell the reason, why thou art not loth
'To leave that ample space, where to return
'Thou burnest, for this centre here beneath.'
"She then: 'Since thou so deeply wouldst inquire,
'I will instruct thee briefly why no dread
'Hinders my entrance here. Those things alone
'Are to be fear'd whence evil may proceed;
'None else, for none are terrible beside.
'I am so framed by God, thanks to his grace!
'That any sufferance of your misery
'Touches me not, nor flame of that fierce fire
'Assails me. In high Heaven a blessed Dame[1]
'Resides, who mourns with such effectual grief
'That hindrance, which I send thee to remove,
'That God's stern judgment to her will inclines.
'To Lucia[2] calling, her she thus bespake:
"Now doth thy faithful servant need thy aid,
"And I commend him to thee." At her word
'Sped Lucia, of all cruelty the foe,
'And coming to the place, where I abode
'Seated with Rachel,[3] her of ancient days,
'She thus address'd me: "Thou true praise of God!
"Beatrice! why is not thy succour lent
"To him, who so much loved thee, as to leave
"For thy sake all the multitude admires?
"Dost thou not hear how pitiful his wail,
"Nor mark the death, which in the torrent flood,
"Swoln mightier than a sea, him struggling holds?"
'Ne'er among men did any with such speed
'Haste to their profit, flee from their annoy,
'As, when these words were spoken, I came here,
'Down from my blessed seat, trusting the force
'Of thy pure eloquence, which thee, and all
'Who well have mark'd it, into honour brings.'
"When she had ended, her bright beaming eyes
Tearful she turn'd aside; whereat I felt

[1] The Blessed Virgin Mary, symbol of Divine Mercy.
[2] Lucia or St. Lucy, the virgin martyr of Syracuse and Dante's patron saint, is here the symbol of Illuminating Grace.
[3] Rachel, type of Contemplation.

Redoubled zeal to serve thee. As she will'd,
Thus am I come: I saved thee from the beast,
Who thy near way across the goodly mount
Prevented. What is this comes o'er thee then?
Why, why dost thou hang back? why in thy breast
Harbour vile fear? why hast not courage there,
And noble daring; since three maids,[1] so blest,
Thy safety plan, e'en in the court of Heaven;
And so much certain good my words forebode?"
As florets, by the frosty air of night
Bent down and closed, when day has blanch'd their leaves,
Rise all unfolded on their spiry stems;
So was my fainting vigour new restored,
And to my heart such kindly courage ran,
That I as one undaunted soon replied:
"O full of pity she, who undertook
My succour! and thou kind, who didst perform
So soon her true behest! With such desire
Thou hast disposed me to renew my voyage,
That my first purpose fully is resumed.
Lead on: one only will is in us both.
Thou art my guide, my master thou, and lord."
So spake I; and when he had onward moved,
I enter'd on the deep and woody way.

CANTO III

Argument

Dante, following Virgil, comes to the gate of Hell; where, after having read the dreadful words that are written thereon, they both enter. Here, as he understands from Virgil, those were punished who had passed their time (for living it could not be called) in a state of apathy and indifference both to good and evil. Then pursuing their way, they arrive at the river Acheron; and there find the old ferryman Charon, who takes the spirits over to the opposite shore; which as soon as Dante reaches, he is seized with terror, and falls into a trance.

"Through me you pass into the city of woe:
Through me you pass into eternal pain:
Through me among the people lost for aye.

[1] Mary, Lucia, and Beatrice. Cf. *Par.* xxxii.

Justice the founder of my fabric moved:
To rear me was the task of Power divine,
Supremest Wisdom, and primeval Love.[1]
Before me things create were none, save things
Eternal,[2] and eternal I endure.
All hope abandon, ye who enter here."
Such characters, in colour dim, I mark'd
Over a portal's lofty arch inscribed.
Whereat I thus: "Master, these words import
Hard meaning." He as one prepared replied:
"Here thou must all distrust behind thee leave;
Here be vile fear extinguish'd. We are come
Where I have told thee we shall see the souls
To misery doom'd, who intellectual good
Have lost." And when his hand he had stretch'd forth
To mine, with pleasant looks, whence I was cheer'd,
Into that secret place he led me on.
Here sighs, with lamentations and loud moans,
Resounded through the air pierced by no star,
That e'en I wept at entering. Various tongues,
Horrible languages, outcries of woe,
Accents of anger, voices deep and hoarse,
With hands together smote that swell'd the sounds,
Made up a tumult, that for ever whirls
Round through that air with solid darkness stain'd,
Like to the sand that in the whirlwind flies.
I then, with error[3] yet encompast, cried:
"O master! what is this I hear? what race
Are these, who seem so overcome with woe?"
He thus to me: "This miserable fate
Suffer the wretched souls of those, who lived
Without or praise or blame, with that ill band
Of angels mix'd, who nor rebellious proved,
Nor yet were true to God, but for themselves
Were only. From his bounds Heaven drove them forth,
Not to impair his lustre; nor the depth
Of Hell receives them, lest the accursed tribe
Should glory thence with exultation vain."
I then: "Master! what doth aggrieve them thus,

[1] Power, Wisdom, and Love are the special attributes of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity: the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, respectively.
[2] Eternal things: primal matter, the Angels, and the Heavens.
[3] The right reading is *orror* (horror), not *error*.

That they lament so loud?" He straight replied:
"That will I tell thee briefly. These of death
No hope may entertain: and their blind life
So meanly passes, that all other lots
They envy. Fame of them the world hath none,
Nor suffers; Mercy and Justice scorn them both.
Speak not of them, but look, and pass them by."
And I, who straightway look'd, beheld a flag,
Which whirling ran around so rapidly,
That it no pause obtain'd: and following came
Such a long train of spirits, I should ne'er
Have thought that death so many had despoil'd.
When some of these I recognised, I saw
And knew the shade of him, who to base fear
Yielding, abjured his high estate.[1] Forthwith
I understood, for certain, this the tribe
Of those ill spirits both to God displeasing
And to His foes. These wretches, who ne'er lived,
Went on in nakedness, and sorely stung
By wasps and hornets, which bedew'd their cheeks
With blood, that, mix'd with tears, dropp'd to their feet,
And by disgustful worms was gather'd there.
Then looking further onwards, I beheld
A throng upon the shore of a great stream:
Whereat I thus: "Sir! grant me now to know
Whom here we view, and whence impell'd they seem
So eager to pass o'er, as I discern
Through the blear light?" He thus to me in few:
"This shalt thou know, soon as our steps arrive
Beside the woeful tide of Acheron."
Then with eyes downward cast, and fill'd with shame,
Fearing my words offensive to his ear,

[1] Although disputed from the fourteenth century down to the present day, there seems no reasonable doubt that this personage, *colui che fece per viltate il gran rifiuto*, "he who made from cowardice the great renunciation," is Pope Celestine V. The evidence of Jacopone da Todi, Fazio degli Uberti, and Petrarch seems conclusive on this point. Pietro da Morrone, an old and saintly hermit from the Abruzzi, was compelled by the Cardinals to accept the papal dignity in 1294, and assumed the title of Celestine V. Men looked to him as a possible reformer of the Church; but five months later, worn out and realising his utter helplessness, he abdicated. Benedetto Gaetani, who had probably urged him to this step, was elected to succeed him as Boniface VIII., and kept him closely imprisoned till his death in 1296. He was canonised in 1313.

Till we had reach'd the river, I from speech
Abstain'd. And lo! toward us in a bark
Comes on an old man, hoary white with eld,
Crying, "Woe to you, wicked spirits! hope not
Ever to see the sky again. I come
To take you to the other shore across,
Into eternal darkness, there to dwell
In fierce heat and in ice. And thou, who there
Standest, live spirit! get thee hence, and leave
These who are dead." But soon as he beheld
I left them not, "By other way," said he,
"By other haven shalt thou come to shore,
Not by this passage; thee a nimbler boat
Must carry." Then to him thus spake my guide:
"Charon! thyself torment not: so 'tis will'd,
Where will and power are one: ask thou no more."
Straightway in silence fell the shaggy cheeks
Of him, the boatman o'er the livid lake,
Around whose eyes glared wheeling flames. Meanwhile
Those spirits, faint and naked, colour changed,
And gnash'd their teeth, soon as the cruel words
They heard. God and their parents they blasphemed,
The human kind, the place, the time, and seed,
That did engender them and give them birth.
Then all together sorely wailing drew
To the curst strand, that every man must pass
Who fears not God. Charon, demoniac form,
With eyes of burning coal, collects them all,
Beckoning, and each, that lingers, with his oar
Strikes. As fall off the light autumnal leaves,
One still another following, till the bough
Strews all its honours on the earth beneath;
E'en in like manner Adam's evil brood
Cast themselves, one by one, down from the shore,
Each at a beck, as falcon at his call.
Thus go they over through the umber'd wave;
And ever they on the opposing bank
Be landed, on this side another throng
Still gathers. "Son," thus spake the courteous guide,
"Those who die subject to the wrath of God
All here together come from every clime,
And to o'erpass the river are not loth:
For so Heaven's justice goads them on, that fear
Is turn'd into desire. Hence ne'er hath past

Good spirit. If of thee Charon complain,
Now mayst thou know the import of his words."
This said, the gloomy region trembling shook
So terribly, that yet with clammy dews
Fear chills my brow. The sad earth gave a blast,
That, lightening, shot forth a vermilion flame,
Which all my senses conquer'd quite, and I
Down dropp'd, as one with sudden slumber seized.

CANTO IV

Argument

The Poet, being roused by a clap of thunder, and following his guide onwards, descends into Limbo, which is the first circle of Hell, where he finds the souls of those, who, although they have lived virtuously and have not to suffer for great sins, nevertheless, through lack of baptism, merit not the bliss of Paradise. Hence he is led on by Virgil to descend into the second circle.

Broke the deep slumber in my brain a crash
Of heavy thunder, that I shook myself,
As one by main force roused. Risen upright,
My rested eyes I moved around, and search'd,
With fixed ken, to know what place it was
Wherein I stood. For certain, on the brink
I found me of the lamentable vale,
The dread abyss, that joins a thundrous sound
Of plaints innumerable. Dark and deep,
And thick with clouds o'erspread, mine eye in vain
Explored its bottom, nor could aught discern.
"Now let us to the blind world there beneath
Descend;" the bard began, all pale of look:
"I go the first, and thou shalt follow next."
Then I, his alter'd hue perceiving, thus:
"How may I speed, if thou yieldest to dread,
Who still art wont to comfort me in doubt?"
He then: "The anguish of that race below
With pity stains my cheek, which thou for fear
Mistakest. Let us on. Our length of way
Urges to haste." Onward, this said, he moved;
And entering led me with him, on the bounds
Of the first circle that surrounds the abyss.
Here, as mine ear could note, no plaint was heard

Except of sighs, that made the eternal air
Tremble, not caused by tortures, but from grief
Felt by those multitudes, many and vast,
Of men, women, and infants. Then to me
The gentle guide: "Inquirest thou not what spirits
Are these which thou beholdest? Ere thou pass
Farther, I would thou know, that these of sin
Were blameless; and if aught they merited,
It profits not, since baptism was not theirs,
The portal to thy faith. If they before
The Gospel lived, they served not God aright;
And among such am I. For these defects,
And for no other evil, we are lost;
Only so far afflicted, that we live
Desiring without hope." Sore grief assail'd
My heart at hearing this, for well I knew
Suspended in that Limbo many a soul
Of mighty worth. "O tell me, sire revered!
Tell me, my master!" I began, through wish
Of full assurance in that holy faith
Which vanquishes all error; "say, did e'er
Any, or through his own or other's merit,
Come forth from thence, who afterward was blest?"
Piercing the secret purport of my speech,
He answer'd: "I was new to that estate,
When I beheld a puissant one [1] arrive
Amongst us, with victorious trophy crown'd.
He forth the shade of our first parent drew,
Abel his child, and Noah righteous man,
Of Moses lawgiver for faith approved,
Of patriarch Abraham, and David king,
Israel with his sire and with his sons,
Nor without Rachel whom so hard he won,
And others many more, whom He to bliss
Exalted. Before these, be thou assured,
No spirit of human kind was ever saved."
We, while he spake, ceased not our onward road,
Still passing through the wood; for so I name
Those spirits thick beset. We were not far
On this side from the summit, when I kenn'd

[1] The names of Christ and Mary are never uttered during Dante's passage through Hell; thus, here, the former is simply *un possente*, "a puissant one," and the latter was referred to as *donna gentil nel ciel*, "a noble lady in Heaven."

A flame, that o'er the darken'd hemisphere
Prevailing shined.[1] Yet we a little space
Were distant, not so far but I in part
Discover'd that a tribe in honour high
That place possess'd. "O thou, who every art
And science valuest! who are these, that boast
Such honour, separate from all the rest?"

He answer'd: "The renown of their great names,
That echoes through your world above, acquires
Favour in Heaven, which holds them thus advanced."
Meantime a voice I heard: "Honour the bard
Sublime![2] his shade returns, that left us late!"
No sooner ceased the sound, than I beheld
Four mighty spirits toward us bend their steps,
Of semblance neither sorrowful nor glad.

When thus my master kind began: "Mark him,
Who in his right hand bears that falchion keen,
The other three preceding, as their lord.
This is that Homer, of all bards supreme:
Flaccus the next, in satire's vein excelling;
The third is Naso; Lucan is the last.
Because they all that appellation own,
With which the voice singly accosted me,
Honouring they greet me thus, and well they judge."

So I beheld united the bright school
Of him the monarch of sublimest song,
That o'er the others like a eagle soars.[3]

When they together short discourse had held,
They turn'd to me, with salutation kind
Beckoning me; at the which my master smiled:
Nor was this all; but greater honour still
They gave me, for they made me of their tribe;
And I was sixth amid so learn'd a band.

[1] The light of mere human wisdom and genius.

[2] Virgil himself.

[3] Dante could have known little of Homer save his name, and a few isolated quotations which he found in the Latin translations of Aristotle and elsewhere. Dr. Moore points out that *satiro*, which Dante here applies to Horace, means "moralist" rather than "in satire's vein excelling," and that "the writings of Dante give little evidence of familiarity with his works, at any rate beyond the limits of the *Ars Poetica*." Ovid, on the other hand, is Dante's main mythological authority, especially in the *Metamorphoses*, which was known as the *Ovidio Maggiore*, while the *Pharsalia* of Lucan was one of his chief poetical guides in his conception of Roman History.

Far as the luminous beacon on we pass'd,
Speaking of matters, then befitting well
To speak, now fitter left untold. At foot
Of a magnificent castle we arrived,
Seven times with lofty walls begirt, and round
Defended by a pleasant stream. O'er this
As o'er dry land we pass'd. Next, through seven gates,
I with those sages enter'd, and we came
Into a mead with lively verdure fresh.[1]
There dwelt a race, who slow their eyes around
Majestically moved, and in their port
Bore eminent authority: they spake
Seldom, but all their words were tuneful sweet.
We to one side retired, into a place
Open and bright and lofty, whence each one
Stood manifest to view. Incontinent,
There on the green enamel of the plain
Were shown me the great spirits, by whose sight
I am exalted in my own esteem.
Electra there I saw accompanied
By many, among whom Hector I knew,
Anchises' pious son, and with hawk's eye
Cæsar all arm'd, and by Camilla there
Penthesilea. On the other side,
Old king Latinus seated by his child
Lavinia, and that Brutus I beheld
Who Tarquin chased, Lucretia, Cato's wife
Marcia, with Julia and Cornelia there;
And sole apart retired, the Soldan fierce.[2]

[1] The Castle of Fame is surrounded by the seven walls of the four moral and three intellectual virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance; wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. It is defended by the "pleasant stream" of eloquence, and entered by seven gates, which are probably the seven liberal arts of the Trivium and Quadrivium, in the mediæval system of education: Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric; Music, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Astronomy.

[2] The Soldan, Saladin (*d.* 1193), stands apart as the supreme representative of Mahometan nobility and magnificence. The others are types of the noble men and women of the Trojan and Roman race (the two being regarded by Dante as one), from Electra, the mother of Dardanus who was the ancestor of the royal house of Troy as also of Æneas, to Cæsar, his greatest descendant, and Julia, Cæsar's daughter. Penthesilea, the Amazonian Queen, slain by Achilles when fighting in defence of Troy, and Camilla, who aided Turnus against Æneas, are regarded as, in some sort, martyrs for the divinely ordained plan of the establishment of the Roman

Then when a little more I raised my brow,
I spied the master of the sapient throng,[1]
Seated amid the philosophic train.
Him all admire, all pay him reverence due.
There Socrates and Plato[2] both I mark'd
Nearest to him in rank, Democritus,
Who sets the world at chance, Diogenes,
With Heraclitus, and Empedocles,
And Anaxagoras, and Thales sage,
Zeno, and Dioscorides well read
In nature's secret lore. Orpheus I mark'd
And Linus, Tully and moral Seneca,
Euclid and Ptolemy, Hippocrates,
Galenus, Avicen, and him who made
That commentary vast, Averroes.[3]

Empire. Latinus, King of Latium, through his daughter Lavinia, the third wife of Æneas, is likewise the ancestor of the Roman People. Cf. *Mon.* ii. 3. Cornelia, daughter of Scipio Africanus and mother of the Gracchi, is mentioned again in the *Paradiso* (Canto xv.), as a type of noble womanhood.

[1] Aristotle (B.C. 384–322), the Philosopher by excellence, for Dante is the supreme exponent of scientific truth. Dr. Toynbee notes: "With the exception of the Bible, Aristotle's works are quoted by Dante more frequently than those of any other author." The Poet's boundless reverence for his authority is emphatically expressed in the *Convivio*, especially iii. 5 and iv. 6. He naturally knew him only in Latin translations.

[2] Of Plato (B.C. 428–348), Dante knew only the *Timæus*, in the Latin translation by Chalcidius.

[3] Democritus (*d.* B.C. 361) taught that the world was formed by the fortuitous coming together of atoms; Diogenes, the Cynic, died B.C. 323; Heraclitus (sixth century B.C.) originated the theory of the perpetual flux; Empedocles (fifth century B.C.) "taught that the universe exists by reason of the discord of the elements, and that if harmony were to take the place of this discord, a state of chaos would ensue" (Oelsner on *Inf.* xii. 42, 43); Anaxagoras (*d.* B.C. 428), the friend of Pericles and Euripides, "taught that a supreme intelligence was the cause of all things" (Toynbee); Thales of Miletus (seventh century B.C.), called the father of Greek philosophy, made water the first principle, as Heraclitus afterwards did fire; Zeno is not the Eleatic philosopher of that name, but Zeno of Cittium, the founder of Stoicism (circa 310 B.C.). Dioscorides was a Greek physician and author of a work on *Materia Medica*, especially in relation to botany, who lived about the middle of the first century of the Christian era. The mythological Greek poets, Orpheus and Linus, were probably regarded by Dante as historical personages no less than Cicero (*d.* B.C. 43) and Seneca (*d.* A.D. 65), whose writings so profoundly influenced the mediæval mind, or Euclid (circa 300 B.C.), the father of mathematical literature, and Claudius Ptolemæus (second cen-

Of all to speak at full were vain attempt;
For my wide theme so urges, that oft-times
My words fall short of what bechanced. In two
The six associates part. Another way
My sage guide leads me, from that air serene,
Into a climate ever vex'd with storms:
And to a part I come, where no light shines.

CANTO V

ARGUMENT

Coming into the second circle of Hell, Dante at the entrance beholds Minos the Infernal Judge, by whom he is admonished to beware how he enters those regions. Here he witnesses the punishment of carnal sinners, who are tost about ceaselessly in the dark air by the most furious winds. Amongst these, he meets with Francesca of Rimini, through pity at whose sad tale he falls fainting to the ground.

FROM the first circle I descended thus
Down to the second, which, a lesser space
Embracing, so much more of grief contains,
Provoking bitter moans. There Minos stands,
Grinning with ghastly feature:[1] he, of all
Who enter, strict examining the crimes,
Gives sentence, and dismisses them beneath,
According as he foldeth him around:
For when before him comes the ill-fated soul,
It all confesses; and that judge severe
Of sins, considering what place in Hell
Suits the transgression, with his tail so oft
Himself encircles, as degrees beneath

tury A.D.), the chief founder of the Ptolemaic system of astronomy which held sway until the advent of Copernicus in the sixteenth century. Hippocrates (*d.* circa 377 B.C.) and Galen (*d.* 200 A.D.) are the two most famous physicians of antiquity. Avicenna (*d.* 1037) and Averroës (*d.* circa 1200) were Arabian physicians and commentators on Aristotle; it was through a Latin translation of the work of Averroës, who was known as the Commentator by excellence, that the philosophy of Aristotle first gained its supremacy in the Middle Ages.

1 Minos, mythological lawgiver of Crete, the judge of the infernal regions in Virgil's *Æneid*, is here the symbol of the sinner's own guilty conscience.

He dooms it to descend. Before him stand
Alway a numerous throng; and in his turn
Each one to judgment passing, speaks, and hears
His fate, thence downward to his dwelling hurl'd.
"O thou! who to this residence of woe
Approachest!" when he saw me coming, cried
Minos, relinquishing his dread employ,
"Look how thou enter here; beware in whom
Thou place thy trust; let not the entrance broad
Deceive thee to thy harm." To him my guide:
"Wherefore exclaimest? Hinder not his way
By destiny appointed; so 'tis will'd,
Where will and power are one. Ask thou no more."
Now 'gin the rueful wailings to be heard.
Now am I come where many a plaining voice
Smites on mine ear. Into a place I came
Where light was silent all. Bellowing there groan'd
A noise, as of a sea in tempest torn
By warring winds. The stormy blast of Hell
With restless fury drives the spirits on,
Whirl'd round and dash'd amain with sore annoy.
When they arrive before the ruinous sweep,
There shrieks are heard, there lamentations, moans,
And blasphemies 'gainst the good Power in Heaven.
I understood, that to this torment sad
The carnal sinners are condemn'd, in whom
Reason by lust is sway'd. As in large troops
And multitudinous, when winter reigns,
The starlings on their wings are borne abroad;
So bears the tyrannous gust those evil souls.
On this side and on that, above, below,
It drives them: hope of rest to solace them
Is none, nor e'en of milder pang. As cranes,
Chanting their dolorous notes, traverse the sky,
Stretch'd out in long array; so I beheld
Spirits, who came loud wailing, hurried on
By their dire doom. Then I: "Instructor! who
Are these, by the black air so scourged?"—"The first
'Mong those, of whom thou question'st," he replied,
"O'er many tongues was empress. She in vice
Of luxury was so shameless, that she made
Liking be lawful by promulged decree,
To clear the blame she had herself incurr'd.
This is Semiramis, of whom 'tis writ,

That she succeeded Ninus her espoused;[1]
And held the land, which now the Soldan rules.
The next in amorous fury slew herself,
And to Sicheus' ashes broke her faith:[2]
Then follows Cleopatra, lustful queen."[3]
There mark'd I Helen,[4] for whose sake so long
The time was fraught with evil; there the great
Achilles, who with love fought to the end.[5]
Paris I saw, and Tristan[6]; and beside,
A thousand more he show'd me, and by name
Pointed them out, whom love bereaved of life.
When I had heard my sage instructor name
Those dames and knights of antique days, o'erpower'd
By pity, well-nigh in amaze my mind
Was lost; and I began: "Bard! willingly
I would address those two together coming,
Which seem so light before the wind." He thus:
"Note thou, when nearer they to us approach.
Then by that love which carries them along,
Entreat; and they will come." Soon as the wind
Sway'd them towards us, I thus framed my speech:
"O wearied spirits! come, and hold discourse
With us, if by none else restrain'd." As doves
By fond desire invited, on wide wings
And firm, to their sweet nest returning home,
Cleave the air, wafted by their will along;
Thus issued, from that troop where Dido ranks,
They, through the ill air speeding: with such force

[1] Semiramis was the mythical Queen of Assyria or Babylonia, which Dante apparently confuses with Babylon in Egypt.

[2] Dido, Queen of Carthage, broke faith with the memory of Sychæus, her husband, for the sake of Æneas, and, when deserted by the latter, killed herself.

[3] Cleopatra, the famous Queen of Egypt (*d.* B.C. 30), was the mistress successively of Julius Cæsar and Marcus Antonius.

[4] Helen of Troy:

"The face that launched a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium" (Marlowe).

[5] According to the later versions of the Trojan war, Achilles met his death at the hands of Paris through his passion for Polyxena, a daughter of Priam.

[6] Paris and Tristram, the famous lovers of the Homeric and Arthurian legend respectively, profoundly impressed the romantic imagination of the Middle Ages, and are frequently, as here, coupled together. Mr. Swinburne, in his Prelude to *Tristram of Lyonesse*, and again in *Four Songs of Four Seasons*, supposes that Iseult is here united with her lover.

My cry prevail'd, by strong affection urged.[1]
"O gracious creature and benign! who go'st
Visiting, through this element obscure,
Us, who the world with bloody stain imbrued;
If, for a friend, the King of all, we own'd,
Our prayer to him should for thy peace arise,
Since thou hast pity on our evil plight.
Of whatsoe'er to hear or to discourse
It pleases thee, that will we hear, of that
Freely with thee discourse, while e'er the wind,
As now, is mute. The land,[2] that gave me birth,
Is situate on the coast, where Po descends
To rest in ocean with his sequent streams.
"Love, that in gentle heart is quickly learnt,[3]
Entangled him by that fair form, from me
Ta'en in such cruel sort, as grieves me still:
Love, that denial takes from none beloved,
Caught me with pleasing him so passing well,
That, as thou seest, he yet deserts me not.
Love brought us to one death: Caïna[4] waits
The soul, who spilt our life." Such were their words;
At hearing which, downward I bent my looks,

[1] These two are Francesca da Rimini and Paolo Malatesta. Francesca, daughter of Guido Vecchio da Polenta, was married to Gianciotto Malatesta, one of the sons of Malatesta da Verrucchio, lord of Rimini. Gianciotto was a brave and able soldier, but apparently deformed, and Francesca fell in love with his younger brother Paolo, known as "il Bello" from his handsome person, who was himself a married man. The two were slain together by the outraged husband, about the year 1285. According to one version of the story, Francesca had been led to believe that Paolo, who acted as his brother's proxy in the marriage, was her intended husband. It is she alone who now speaks with Dante for both.

[2] Ravenna.

[3] Cary notes: "That the reader of the original may not be misled as to the exact sense of the word *s'apprende*, which I have rendered 'is learnt,' it may be right to apprise him that it signifies 'is caught,' and that it is a metaphor from a thing taking fire. Thus it is used by Guido Guinicelli, whom, indeed, our Poet seems here to have had in view:

"Fuoco d'Amore in gentil cor s'apprende,
Come vertute in pietra preziosa:

'The fire of love in gentle heart is caught,
As virtue in the precious stone.'"

[4] *Caina* is the first division of the ninth circle of Hell, in which the treacherous murderers of their kindred are punished. See below, Canto xxxii. Gianciotto died in 1304, and was therefore alive at the date of the vision.

And held them there so long, that the bard cried :
" What art thou pondering?" I in answer thus :
" Alas ! by what sweet thoughts, what fond desire,
Must they at length to that ill pass have reach'd !"
Then turning, I to them my speech address'd,
And thus began : " Francesca ! your sad fate
Even to tears my grief and pity moves.
But tell me ; in the time of your sweet sighs,
By what, and how Love granted, that ye knew
Your yet uncertain wishes?" She replied :
" No greater grief than to remember days
Of joy, when misery is at hand. That kens
Thy learn'd instructor.[1] Yet so eagerly
If thou art bent to know the primal root,
From whence our love gat being, I will do
As one, who weeps and tells his tale. One day,
For our delight we read of Lancelot,
How him love thrall'd. Alone we were, and no
Suspicion near us. Oft-times by that reading
Our eyes were drawn together, and the hue
Fled from our alter'd cheek. But at one point
Alone we fell. When of that smile we read,
The wished smile, so rapturously kiss'd
By one so deep in love, then he, who ne'er
From me shall separate, at once my lips
All trembling kiss'd. The book and writer both
Were love's purveyors. In its leaves that day
We read no more." [2] While thus one spirit spake,
The other wail'd so sorely, that heart-struck
I, through compassion fainting, seem'd not far
From death, and like a corse fell to the ground.

[1] The passage quoted is from Boëthius, *De Consolatione Philosophiæ;* but by " thy learned instructor," *il tuo dottore,* Francesca more probably means Virgil, who has had experience of this sad truth in Limbo.

[2] *Galeotto fu il libro, e chi lo scrisse,* literally " A Gallehault was the book, and he who wrote it." " Gallehault (not by any means to be confounded with Galahad) was the knight who acted as intermediary between Lancelot and Guenever, and who, having brought them together, urged the Queen to give Lancelot the kiss which was the beginning of their guilty love. From the part played by Gallehault on this occasion, his name came to be used, like that of ' Sir Pandarus of Troy,' as a synonym for a pandar. Hence Francesca's meaning is that the book and its author played the same part with Paolo and herself as they read the story together, that Gallehault did with Lancelot and Guenever in the

CANTO VI

Argument

On his recovery, the Poet finds himself in the third circle, where the gluttonous are punished. Their torment is to lie in the mire, under a continual and heavy storm of hail, snow, and discoloured water; Cerberus meanwhile barking over them with his threefold throat, and rending them piecemeal. One of these, who on earth was named Ciacco, foretells the divisions with which Florence is about to be distracted. Dante proposes a question to his guide, who solves it; and they proceed towards the fourth circle.

My sense reviving, that erewhile had droop'd
With pity for the kindred shades, whence grief
O'ercame me wholly, straight around I see
New torments, new tormented souls, which way
Soe'er I move, or turn, or bend my sight.
In the third circle I arrive, of showers
Ceaseless, accursed, heavy and cold, unchanged
For ever, both in kind and in degree.
Large hail, discolour'd water, sleety flaw
Through the dun midnight air stream'd down amain:
Stank all the land whereon that tempest fell.
Cerberus, cruel monster, fierce and strange,
Through his wide threefold throat, barks as a dog
Over the multitude immersed beneath.
His eyes glare crimson, black his unctuous beard,
His belly large, and claw'd the hands, with which
He tears the spirits, flays them, and their limbs
Piecemeal disparts.[1] Howling there spread, as curs,
Under the rainy deluge, with one side
The other screening, oft they roll them round,
A wretched, godless crew. When that great worm
Descried us, savage Cerberus, he oped
His jaws, and the fangs show'd us; not a limb

romance itself" (Paget Toynbee). The passage from the old French romance of *Lancelot du Lac*, in the form in which Dante (and, therefore, Francesca and Paolo) read it, with an English translation, will be found in Dr. Toynbee's *Dante Studies and Researches*. *Cf.* below, *Paradiso*, Canto xvi. Similarly, the immoral tendency of Boccaccio's *Decameron* gained for it the title of *Principe Galeotto*, "the prince of pandars."

1 Cerberus is a symbol of the effects of gluttony upon the soul; its votaries have subjected themselves to an eternally horrible nightmare.

Of him but trembled. Then my guide, his palms
Expanding on the ground, thence fill'd with earth
Raised them, and cast it in his ravenous maw.
E'en as a dog, that yelling bays for food
His keeper, when the morsel comes, lets fall
His fury, bent alone with eager haste
To swallow it; so dropp'd the loathsome cheeks
Of demon Cerberus, who thundering stuns
The spirits, that they for deafness wish in vain.
We, o'er the shades thrown prostrate by the brunt
Of the heavy tempest passing, set our feet
Upon their emptiness, that substance seem'd.
They all along the earth extended lay,
Save one, that sudden raised himself to sit,
Soon as that way he saw us pass. "O thou!"
He cried, "who through the infernal shades art led,
Own, if again thou know'st me. Thou wast framed
Or ere my frame was broken." I replied:
"The anguish thou endurest perchance so takes
Thy form from my remembrance, that it seems
As if I saw thee never. But inform
Me who thou art, that in a place so sad
Art set, and in such torment, that although
Other be greater, none disgusteth more."
He thus in answer to my words rejoin'd:
"Thy city, heap'd with envy to the brim,
Aye, that the measure overflows its bounds,
Held me in brighter days. Ye citizens
Were wont to name me Ciacco.[1] For the sin
Of gluttony, damned vice, beneath this rain,
E'en as thou seest, I with fatigue am worn:
Nor I sole spirit in this woe: all these
Have by like crime incurr'd like punishment."
No more he said, and I my speech resumed:
"Ciacco! thy dire affliction grieves me much,
Even to tears. But tell me, if thou know'st,
What shall at length befall the citizens
Of the divided city;[2] whether any

[1] A Florentine parasite, contemporary of Dante, otherwise known only by a story in Boccaccio, *Decameron*, ix. 8.

[2] Florence, which, at the date of the vision (1300), was divided by the factions of Bianchi and Neri, Whites and Blacks. From Boccaccio's story, it would seem that Ciacco sponged impartially upon the leaders of both parties.

Just one inhabit there: and tell the cause,
Whence jarring Discord hath assail'd it thus."
He then: "After long striving they will come
To blood; and the wild party from the woods
Will chase the other with much injury forth.
Then it behoves that this must fall, within
Three solar circles; and the other rise
By borrow'd force of one, who under shore
Now rests.[1] It shall a long space hold aloft
Its forehead, keeping under heavy weight
The other opprest, indignant at the load,
And grieving sore. The just are two in number,[2]
But they neglected. Avarice, envy, pride,
Three fatal sparks, have set the hearts of all
On fire." Here ceased the lamentable sound;
And I continued thus: "Still would I learn
More from thee, further parley still entreat.
Of Farinata and Tegghiaio say,
They who so well deserved; of Giacopo,
Arrigo, Mosca,[3] and the rest, who bent

[1] Ciacco utters this prophecy in the night between Good Friday (April 8) and Holy Saturday (April 9), 1300. The factions "came to blood" on May 1. In June, Dante being then one of the Priors or chief magistrates of the Republic, the heads of both factions were put under bounds. The leaders of the Bianchi, "the wild party from the woods," were recalled at the end of August (after the expiration of Dante's two months of office), and shortly afterwards succeeded in driving the Neri into exile. These latter, however, with the aid of Charles of Valois and Pope Boniface VIII. (it is uncertain which of the two is meant by "one who under shore now rests"), returned in November, 1301, and at the beginning of April, 1302, drove out the whole of the rival faction, burghers and nobles alike, from Florence. All this thus befell "within three solar circles," that is, within three years from the professed date of the vision.

[2] It is quite uncertain who these two are. Some take them as Dante himself and Guido Cavalcanti—which seems hardly probable, as far as Guido is concerned, seeing that he was deeply implicated in the factions. Others identify them with Barduccio and Giovanni da Vispignano, two devout and charitable Florentine laymen who died in 1331. Dante's son, Pietro Alighieri, takes the passage as a merely symbolical reference to natural law and positive law.

[3] Of these once famous Florentines, now among the damned, Farinata degli Uberti is in the sixth circle (Canto x.), Tegghiaio Aldobrandi and Jacopo Rusticucci in the seventh (Canto xvi.), and Mosca de' Lamberti in the eighth circle (Canto xxviii.). We hear no more of Arrigo, and it is uncertain to what family he belonged; he is usually supposed to have been one of Mosca's accomplices in

Their minds on working good. Oh! tell me where
They bide, and to their knowledge let me come.
For I am prest with keen desire to hear
If Heaven's sweet cup, or poisonous drug of Hell,
Be to their lip assign'd." He answer'd straight:
"These are yet blacker spirits. Various crimes
Have sunk them deeper in the dark abyss.
If thou so far descendest, thou mayst see them.
But to the pleasant world, when thou return'st,
Of me make mention, I entreat thee, there.
No more I tell thee, answer thee no more."
This said, his fixed eyes he turn'd askance,
A little eyed me, then bent down his head,
And 'midst his blind companions with it fell.
When thus my guide: "No more his bed he leaves,
Ere the last angel-trumpet blow. The Power
Adverse to these shall then in glory come,
Each one forthwith to his sad tomb repair,
Resume his fleshly vesture and his form,
And hear the eternal doom re-echoing rend
The vault." So pass'd we through that mixture foul
Of spirits and rain, with tardy steps; meanwhile
Touching, though slightly, on the life to come.
For thus I question'd: "Shall these tortures, Sir!
When the great sentence passes, be increased,
Or mitigated, or as now severe?"
He then: "Consult thy knowledge; that decides,
That, as each thing to more perfection grows,
It feels more sensibly both good and pain.
Though ne'er to true perfection may arrive
This race accurst, yet nearer then, than now,
They shall approach it." Compassing that path,
Circuitous we journey'd; and discourse,
Much more than I relate, between us pass'd:
Till at the point, whence the steps led below,
Arrived, there Plutus, the great foe, we found.

the murder of Buondelmonte, and therefore sharing his fate in the eighth circle among the "blacker spirits."

CANTO VII

Argument

In the present Canto, Dante describes his descent into the fourth circle, at the beginning of which he sees Plutus stationed. Here one like doom awaits the prodigal and the avaricious; which is, to meet in direful conflict, rolling great weights against each other with mutual upbraidings. From hence Virgil takes occasion to show how vain the goods that are committed into the charge of Fortune; and this moves our author to inquire what being that Fortune is, of whom he speaks: which question being resolved, they go down into the fifth circle, where they find the wrathful and gloomy tormented in the Stygian lake. Having made a compass round great part of this lake, they come at last to the base of a lofty tower.

"Ah me! O Satan! Satan!" loud exclaim'd
Plutus,[1] in accent hoarse of wild alarm:
And the kind sage, whom no event surprised,
To comfort me thus spake: "Let not thy fear
Harm thee, for power in him, be sure, is none
To hinder down this rock thy safe descent."
Then to that swoln lip turning, "Peace!" he cried,
"Curst wolf! thy fury inward on thyself
Prey, and consume thee! Through the dark profound,
Not without cause, he passes. So 'tis will'd
On high, there where the great Archangel pour'd
Heaven's vengeance on the first adulterer proud."[2]
As sails, full spread and bellying with the wind,
Drop suddenly collapsed, if the mast split;
So to the ground down dropp'd the cruel fiend.
Thus we, descending to the fourth steep ledge,
Gain'd on the dismal shore, that all the woe
Hems in of all the universe. Ah me!
Almighty Justice! in what store thou heap'st
New pains, new troubles, as I here beheld.
Wherefore doth fault of ours bring us to this?
E'en as a billow, on Charybdis rising,

[1] Dante probably identified Pluto, the ruler of the underworld, with Plutus, the personification of riches in classical mythology. The latter is "the great foe," because, according to St. Thomas Aquinas, "the sin of avarice, whereby the appetite of man is subjected even to exterior things, has in some sense a greater deformity than other sins."

[2] More literally, "the proud adultery"—in the sense in which "fornication" is frequently used in the Scriptures.

Against encounter'd billow dashing breaks;
Such is the dance this wretched race must lead,
Whom more than elsewhere numerous here I found.
From one side and the other, with loud voice,
Both roll'd on weights, by main force of their breasts,
Then smote together, and each one forthwith
Roll'd them back voluble, turning again;
Exclaiming these, "Why holdest thou so fast?"
Those answering, "And why castest thou away?"
So, still repeating their despiteful song,
They to the opposite point, on either hand,
Traversed the horrid circle; then arrived,
Both turn'd them round, and through the middle space
Conflicting met again. At sight whereof
I, stung with grief, thus spake: "O say, my guide!
What race is this? Were these, whose heads are shorn,
On our left hand, all separate to the Church?"

He straight replied: "In their first life, these all
In mind were so distorted, that they made,
According to due measure, of their wealth
No use. This clearly from their words collect,
Which they howl forth, at each extremity
Arriving of the circle, where their crime
Contrary in kind disparts them. To the Church
Were separate those, that with no hairy cowls
Are crown'd, both Popes and Cardinals, o'er whom
Avarice dominion absolute maintains."

I then: "'Mid such as these some needs must be,
Whom I shall recognise, that with the blot
Of these foul sins were stain'd." He answering thus:
"Vain thought conceivest thou. That ignoble life,
Which made them vile before, now makes them dark
And to all knowledge indiscernible.
For ever they shall meet in this rude shock:
These from the tomb with clenched grasp shall rise,
Those with close-shaven locks. That ill they gave,
And ill they kept, hath of the beauteous world
Deprived, and set them at this strife, which needs
No labour'd phrase of mine to set it off.
Now mayst thou see, my son! how brief, how vain,
The goods committed into Fortune's hands,
For which the human race keep such a coil!
Not all the gold that is beneath the moon,
Or ever hath been, of these toil-worn souls

Might purchase rest for one." I thus rejoin'd:
"My guide! of thee this also would I learn;
This Fortune, that thou speak'st of, what it is,
Whose talons grasp the blessings of the world."
He thus: "O beings blind! what ignorance
Besets you! Now my judgment hear and mark.
He, whose transcendent wisdom passes all,
The heavens creating, gave them ruling powers
To guide them; so that each part shines to each,
Their light in equal distribution pour'd.
By similar appointment he ordain'd,
Over the world's bright images to rule,
Superintendence of a guiding hand
And general minister,[1] which, at due time,
May change the empty vantages of life
From race to race, from one to other's blood,
Beyond prevention of man's wisest care:
Wherefore one nation rises into sway,
Another languishes, e'en as her will
Decrees, from us conceal'd, as in the grass
The serpent train. Against her nought avails
Your utmost wisdom. She with foresight plans,
Judges, and carries on her reign, as theirs
The other powers divine. Her changes know
None intermission: by necessity[2]
She is made swift, so frequent come who claim
Succession in her favours. This is she,
So execrated e'en by those whose debt
To her is rather praise: they wrongfully
With blame requite her, and with evil word;
But she is blessed, and for that recks not:
Amidst the other primal beings glad,
Rolls on her sphere, and in her bliss exults.
Now on our way pass we, to heavier woe
Descending: for each star[3] is falling now,
That mounted at our entrance, and forbids
Too long our tarrying." We the circle cross'd
To the next steep, arriving at a well,

[1] "Even as the Intelligences were created by God to regulate the Heavens, so a power was ordained by Him to guide the destinies of man on earth; and this power is Fortune" (Oelsner).

[2] This passage was regarded as tainted with heresy, in that it seemed to deny to man the possession of free-will.

[3] That is, it is past midnight on Good Friday, and we are now in the early hours of Holy Saturday (April 9).

That boiling pours itself down to a foss
Sluiced from its source. Far murkier was the wave
Than sablest grain: and we in company
Of the inky waters, journeying by their side,
Enter'd, though by a different track, beneath.
Into a lake, the Stygian named, expands
The dismal stream, when it hath reach'd the foot
Of the grey wither'd cliffs. Intent I stood
To gaze, and in the marish sunk descried
A miry tribe, all naked, and with looks
Betokening rage. They with their hands alone
Struck not, but with the head, the breast, the feet,
Cutting each other piecemeal with their fangs.
The good instructor spake: "Now seest thou, son!
The souls of those, whom anger overcame.
This, too, for certain know, that underneath
The water dwells a multitude, whose sighs
Into these bubbles make the surface heave,
As thine eye tells thee wheresoe'er it turn.
Fix'd in the slime, they say: 'Sad once were we,
'In the sweet air made gladsome by the sun,
'Carrying a foul and lazy mist within:
'Now in these murky settlings are we sad.'
Such dolorous strain they gurgle in their throats,
But word distinct can utter none." Our route
Thus compass'd we, a segment widely stretch'd
Between the dry embankment and the core
Of the loath'd pool, turning meanwhile our eyes
Downward on those who gulp'd its muddy lees;
Nor stopp'd, till to a tower's low base we came.

CANTO VIII

Argument

A signal having been made from the tower, Phlegyas, the ferryman of the lake, speedily crosses it, and conveys Virgil and Dante to the other side. On their passage, they meet with Filippo Argenti, whose fury and torment are described. They then arrive at the city of Dis, the entrance whereto is denied, and the portals closed against them by many Demons.

My theme pursuing,[1] I relate, that ere
We reach'd the lofty turret's base, our eyes

[1] By the opening words of this canto, *io dico seguitando*, "my

Its height ascended, where we mark'd uphung
Two cressets,[1] and another saw from far
Return the signal, so remote, that scarce
The eye could catch its beam. I, turning round
To the deep source of knowledge, thus inquired:
"Say what this means; and what, that other light
In answer set: what agency doth this?"
"There on the filthy waters," he replied,
"E'en now what next awaits us mayst thou see,
If the marsh-gender'd fog conceal it not."
Never was arrow from the cord dismiss'd,
That ran its way so nimbly through the air,
As a small bark, that through the waves I spied
Toward us coming, under the sole sway
Of one that ferried it, who cried aloud:
"Art thou arrived, fell spirit?"—"Phlegyas,
Phlegyas,[2]
This time thou criest in vain," my lord replied;
"No longer shalt thou have us, but while o'er
The slimy pool we pass." As one who hears
Of some great wrong he hath sustain'd, whereat
Inly he pines; so Phlegyas inly pined
In his fierce ire. My guide, descending, stepp'd

theme pursuing, I relate," there hangs a tale. Boccaccio states that, when Dante's exile fell upon him, he had already composed the first seven cantos of the *Inferno;* the manuscript, left behind him in his house at Florence, was discovered (apparently some years later), and forwarded to the Poet, who was then staying with the Marquis Moroello Malaspina, at whose instigation he resumed the work, and followed on with the words that open this canto: "where the joining on of the interrupted work can be quite clearly recognised." This story seems invalidated by the prophecy uttered by Ciacco, in Canto vi., which clearly refers to events that happened after Dante's exile; but, at the same time, it must be noted that the seven previous cantos differ considerably in tone from what is to follow, and seem even to indicate a different scheme of the *Inferno* from what Dante ultimately adopted. It appears thus just possible that there may be some foundation for Boccaccio's statement (which is almost universally rejected at the present day), and that Dante may have rewritten these cantos so as to bring them up to date.

[1] Beacon-lights.

[2] Phlegyas, to avenge his daughter Coronis who had been ravished by Apollo, set fire to the god's temple at Delphi, for which he was condemned to Tartarus. The part he plays here was evidently suggested to Dante by the *Æneid*, vi. 618–620, where he is made to utter a fearful warning against scorning the supernal powers.

Into the skiff, and bade me enter next,
Close at his side; nor, till my entrance, seem'd
The vessel freighted. Soon as both embark'd,
Cutting the waves, goes on the ancient prow,
More deeply than with others it is wont.
While we our course o'er the dead channel held,
One drench'd in mire before me came, and said:
"Who art thou, that thus comest ere thine hour?"
I answer'd: "Though I come, I tarry not:
But who art thou, that art become so foul?"
"One, as thou seest, who mourn:" he straight replied.
To which I thus: "In mourning and in woe,
Curst spirit! tarry thou. I know thee well,
E'en thus in filth disguised."[1] Then stretch'd he forth
Hands to the bark; whereof my teacher sage
Aware, thrusting him back: "Away! down there
To the other dogs!" then, with his arms my neck
Encircling, kiss'd my cheek, and spake: "O soul,
Justly disdainful! blest was she in whom
Thou wast conceived. He in the world was one
For arrogance noted: to his memory
No virtue lends its lustre; even so
Here is his shadow furious. There above,
How many now hold themselves mighty kings,
Who here like swine shall wallow in the mire,
Leaving behind them horrible dispraise."
I then: "Master! him fain would I behold
Whelm'd in these dregs, before we quit the lake."
He thus: "Or ever to thy view the shore
Be offer'd, satisfied shall be that wish,
Which well deserves completion." Scarce his words
Were ended, when I saw the miry tribes
Set on him with such violence, that yet
For that render I thanks to God, and praise.
"To Filippo Argenti!" cried they all:
And on himself the moody Florentine

[1] This is Filippo Argenti, who figures together with Ciacco in Boccaccio's *Decameron*, ix. 8. He was a Florentine noble, notorious for his furious temper and overbearing conduct, and is said to have been a personal enemy of Dante's—which latter fact, however, is not needed to explain the Poet's detestation of this kind of man.

Turn'd his avenging fangs. Him here we left,
Nor speak I of him more. But on mine ear
Sudden a sound of lamentation smote,
Whereat mine eye unbarr'd I sent abroad.
And thus the good instructor: "Now, my son,
Draws near the city, that of Dis is named,
With its grave denizens, a mighty throng."
I thus: "The minarets already, Sir!
There, certes, in the valley I descry,
Gleaming vermilion, as if they from fire
Had issued." He replied: "Eternal fire,
That inward burns, shows them with ruddy flame
Illumed; as in this nether Hell thou seest."
We came within the fosses deep, that moat
This region comfortless. The walls appear'd
As they were framed of iron. We had made
Wide circuit, ere a place we reach'd, where loud
The mariner cried vehement: "Go forth:
The entrance is here." Upon the gates I spied
More than a thousand, who of old from Heaven
Were shower'd. With ireful gestures, "Who is this,"
They cried, "that, without death first felt, goes through
The regions of the dead?" My sapient guide
Made sign that he for secret parley wish'd;
Whereat their angry scorn abating, thus
They spake: "Come thou alone; and let him go,
Who hath so hardily enter'd this realm.
Alone return he by his witless way;
If well he know it, let him prove. For thee,
Here shalt thou tarry, who through clime so dark
Hast been his escort." Now bethink thee, reader!
What cheer was mine at sound of those curst words.
I did believe I never should return.
"O my loved guide! who more than seven times
Security hast render'd me, and drawn
From peril deep, whereto I stood exposed,
Desert me not," I cried, "in this extreme.
And, if our onward going be denied,
Together trace we back our steps with speed."
My liege, who thither had conducted me,
Replied: "Fear not: for of our passage none
Hath power to disappoint us, by such high

Authority permitted. But do thou
Expect me here; meanwhile, thy wearied spirit
Comfort, and feed with kindly hope, assured
I will not leave thee in this lower world."
This said, departs the sire benevolent
And quits me. Hesitating I remain
At war, 'twixt will and will not, in my thoughts.
I could not hear what terms he offer'd them,
But they conferr'd not long, for all at once
Pellmell rush'd back within. Closed were the gates,
By those our adversaries, on the breast
Of my liege lord: excluded, he return'd
To me with tardy steps. Upon the ground
His eyes were bent, and from his brow erased
All confidence, while thus in sighs he spake:
"Who hath denied me these abodes of woe?"
Then thus to me: "That I am anger'd, think
No ground of terror: in this trial I
Shall vanquish, use what arts they may within
For hindrance. This their insolence, not new,[1]
Erewhile at gate less secret they display'd,
Which still is without bolt; upon its arch
Thou saw'st the deadly scroll: and even now,
On this side of its entrance, down the steep,
Passing the circles, unescorted, comes
One whose strong might can open us this land."

CANTO IX

Argument

After some hindrances, and having seen the hellish furies and other monsters, the Poet, by the help of an Angel, enters the city of Dis, wherein he discovers that the heretics are punished in tombs burning with intense fire: and he, together with Virgil, passes onwards between the sepulchres and the walls of the city.

The hue, which coward dread on my pale cheeks
Imprinted when I saw my guide turn back,

[1] "Virgil assures our Poet that these evil spirits had formerly shown the same insolence when our Saviour descended into Hell. They attempted to prevent him from entering at the gate, over which Dante had read the fatal inscription: 'That gate which,' says the Roman poet, 'an Angel has just passed, by whose aid we shall overcome this opposition, and gain admittance into the city'" (Cary).

Chased that from his which newly they had worn,
And inwardly restrain'd it. He, as one
Who listens, stood attentive: for his eye
Not far could lead him through the sable air,
And the thick-gathering cloud. "It yet behoves
We win this fight;" thus he began: "if not,
Such aid to us is offer'd.—Oh! how long
Me seems it, ere the promised help arrive."
I noted, how the sequel of his words
Cloked their beginning; for the last he spake
Agreed not with the first. But not the less
My fear was at his saying; sith I drew
To import worse, perchance, than that he held,
His mutilated speech. "Doth ever any
Into this rueful concave's extreme depth
Descend, out of the first degree, whose pain
Is deprivation merely of sweet hope?"
Thus I inquiring. "Rarely," he replied,
"It chances, that among us any makes
This journey, which I wend. Erewhile, 'tis true,
Once came I here beneath, conjured by fell
Erichtho, sorceress, who compell'd the shades
Back to their bodies. No long space my flesh
Was naked of me, when within these walls
She made me enter, to draw forth a spirit
From out of Judas' circle.[1] Lowest place
Is that of all, obscurest, and removed
Farthest from Heaven's all-circling orb. The road
Full well I know: thou therefore rest secure.
That lake, the noisome stench exhaling, round
The city of grief encompasses, which now
We may not enter without rage." Yet more
He added: but I hold it not in mind,
For that mine eye toward the lofty tower
Had drawn me wholly, to its burning top;
Where, in an instant, I beheld uprisen
At once three hellish furies stain'd with blood:
In limb and motion feminine they seem'd;
Around them greenest hydras twisting roll'd

[1] Erichtho was a Thessalian sorceress mentioned by Lucan (*Phars.* vi. 507–826) as conjuring up a spirit for Sextus Pompeius. It is uncertain whether the story of her having compelled the soul of Virgil to fetch up a spirit from the lowest region of Hell (the *Giudecca*) is some mediæval legend that has not come down to us, or a mere invention of Dante's own.

Their volumes; adders and cerastes crept
Instead of hair, and their fierce temples bound.
He, knowing well the miserable hags
Who tend the queen of endless woe, thus spake:
"Mark thou each dire Erynnis. To the left,
This is Megæra; on the right hand, she
Who wails, Alecto; and Tisiphone
I' th' midst." This said, in silence he remain'd.
Their breast they each one clawing tore; themselves
Smote with their palms, and such thrill clamour raised
That to the bard I clung, suspicion-bound.
"Hasten Medusa: so to adamant
Him shall we change;" all looking down exclaim'd:
"E'en when by Theseus' might assail'd, we took
No ill revenge." "Turn thyself round, and keep
Thy countenance hid; for if the Gorgon dire
Be shown, and thou shouldst view it, thy return
Upwards would be for ever lost." This said,
Himself, my gentle master, turn'd me round;
Nor trusted he my hands, but with his own
He also hid me. Ye of intellect
Sound and entire, mark well the lore [1] conceal'd
Under close texture of the mystic strain.
And now there came o'er the perturbed waves
Loud-crashing, terrible, a sound that made
Either shore tremble, as if of a wind
Impetuous, from conflicting vapours sprung,
That, 'gainst some forest driving all his might,
Plucks off the branches, beats them down, and hurls
Afar; then, onward passing, proudly sweeps
His whirlwind rage, while beasts and shepherds fly.

[1] The Erinyes or Furies are symbols of hopeless remorse, and Medusa of the despair which renders repentance impossible. According to Isidore of Seville, "The commission of a grievous sin is death; but to despair is to go down into Hell." Human Philosophy, personified in Virgil, can guard Dante from this, but he can do no more without celestial aid. "A critical point in the journey has been reached, and for the first time we are brought into contact with beings over whom the mere recital of God's command has no power. These are resolved to use any means to hinder Dante's progress; that is, the advance of the soul towards true penitence. One of the most effectual means to this end is to call up the recollection of past sins (the Furies), and cause the soul to persist in sin by urging to despair of God's mercy, indicated here by the Gorgon, who turns men to stone" (A. J. Butler).

Mine eyes he loosed, and spake: "And now direct
Thy visual nerve along that ancient foam,
There, thickest where the smoke ascends." As frogs,
Before their foe the serpent, through the wave
Ply swiftly all, till at the ground each one
Lies on a heap; more than a thousand spirits
Destroy'd, so saw I fleeing before one
Who pass'd with unwet feet the Stygian sound.
He, from his face removing the gross air,
Oft his left hand forth stretch'd, and seem'd alone
By that annoyance wearied. I perceived
That he was sent from Heaven; and to my guide
Turn'd me, who signal made, that I should stand
Quiet, and bend to him. Ah me! how full
Of noble anger seem'd he. To the gate
He came, and with his wand touch'd it, whereat
Open without impediment it flew.[1]
"Outcasts of heaven! O abject race, and scorn'd!"
Began he, on the horrid grunsel standing,
"Whence doth this wild excess of insolence
Lodge in you? wherefore kick you 'gainst that will
Ne'er frustrate of its end, and which so oft
Hath laid on you enforcement of your pangs?
What profits, at the Fates to butt the horn?
Your Cerberus,[2] if ye remember, hence
Bears still, peel'd of their hair, his throat and maw."
This said, he turn'd back o'er the filthy way,
And syllable to us spake none; but wore
The semblance of a man by other care
Beset, and keenly prest, than thought of him
Who in his presence stands. Then we our steps
Toward that territory moved, secure
After the hallow'd words. We, unopposed,
There enter'd; and, my mind eager to learn
What state a fortress like to that might hold,
I, soon as enter'd, throw mine eye around,
And see, on every part, wide-stretching space,
Replete with bitter pain and torment ill.

[1] This "messenger of God" is clearly an Angel. The theories of old and new commentators that he is Mercury or Æneas may be disregarded.

[2] "Cerberus is feigned to have been dragged by Hercules, bound with a threefold chain, of which, says the Angel, he still bears the marks" (Cary).

As where Rhone stagnates on the plains of Arles,
Or as at Pola, near Quarnaro's gulf,
That closes Italy and laves her bounds,
The place is all thick spread with sepulchres;[1]
So was it here, save what in horror here
Excell'd: for 'midst the graves were scatter'd flames,
Wherewith intensely all throughout they burn'd,
That iron for no craft there hotter needs.
Their lids all hung suspended; and beneath,
From them forth issued lamentable moans,
Such as the sad and tortured well might raise.
I thus: "Master! say who are these, interr'd
Within these vaults, of whom distinct we hear
The dolorous sighs." He answer thus return'd:
"The arch-heretics are here, accompanied
By every sect their followers; and much more,
Than thou believest, the tombs are freighted: like
With like is buried; and the monuments
Are different in degrees of heat." This said,
He to the right hand turning, on we pass'd
Betwixt the afflicted and the ramparts high.

CANTO X

Argument

Dante, having obtained permission from his guide, holds discourse with Farinata degli Uberti and Cavalcante Cavalcanti, who lie in their fiery tombs, that are yet open, and not to be closed up till after the last judgment. Farinata predicts the Poet's exile from Florence; and shows him that the condemned have knowledge of future things, but are ignorant of what is at present passing, unless it be revealed by some new comer from earth.

Now by a secret pathway we proceed,
Between the walls, that hem the region round,
And the tormented souls: my master first,
I close behind his steps. "Virtue supreme!"
I thus began: "who through these ample orbs
In circuit lead'st me, even as thou will'st;
Speak thou, and satisfy my wish. May those,

[1] At Arles in Provence, according to the Carlovingian legend, were the tombs of Charlemagne's warriors who had fallen in battle against the Saracens. Numbers of Slavonians were said to have been brought down to the sea for burial at Pola in Istria.

Who lie within these sepulchres, be seen?
Already all the lids are raised, and none
O'er them keeps watch." He thus in answer spake:
"They shall be closed all, what-time they here
From Josaphat [1] return'd shall come, and bring
Their bodies, which above they now have left.
The cemetery on this part obtain,
With Epicurus, all his followers,
Who with the body make the spirit die.[2]
Here therefore satisfaction shall be soon,
Both to the question ask'd, and to the wish
Which thou conceal'st in silence." I replied:
"I keep not, guide beloved! from thee my heart
Secreted, but to shun vain length of words;
A lesson erewhile taught me by thyself."
"O Tuscan! thou, who through the city of fire
Alive art passing, so discreet of speech:
Here, please thee, stay awhile. Thy utterance
Declares the place of thy nativity
To be that noble land, with which perchance
I too severely dealt." Sudden that sound
Forth issued from a vault, whereat, in fear,
I somewhat closer to my leader's side
Approaching, he thus spake: "What dost thou?
Turn:
Lo! Farinata [3] there, who hath himself

[1] *Cf.* Joel iii. 2.

[2] The heretics of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, known as the Catari and Paterini, were supposed to deny the resurrection of the body, and even to question the immortality of the soul. This was probably, to some extent, a misrepresentation of their enemies; but there was undoubtedly much sheer materialism rampant, especially among the adherents of the Emperor Frederick II. and the Ghibellines in general, who opposed the Popes in the spiritual field as well as in the political. We shall, however, find Dante including Cavalcante de' Cavalcanti, who was a staunch Guelf, in the number of these neo-Epicureans.

[3] Farinata degli Uberti, the head of the chief Florentine house that adhered to the Ghibellines, was instrumental in bringing about the annihilation of the Florentine Guelfs and their allies at the battle of Montaperti, on September 4, 1260. At a council held by the victorious Ghibellines at Empoli, it was proposed by the Sienese and Pisan representatives that Florence should be razed to the ground, and the city was only saved by the vigorous opposition of Farinata himself. Nevertheless, after the final triumph of the Guelfs in 1266, the Uberti were always and for ever excluded from all amnesties, and doomed to perpetual banishment. Such was the hatred with which the whole family was

Uplifted: from his girdle upwards, all
Exposed, behold him." On his face was mine
Already fix'd: his breast and forehead there
Erecting, seem'd as in high scorn he held
E'en Hell. Between the sepulchres, to him
My guide thrust me, with fearless hands and prompt;
This warning added: "See thy words be clear."
He, soon as I there stood at the tomb's foot,
Eyed me a space; then in disdainful mood
Address'd me: "Say what ancestors were thine."
I, willing to obey him, straight reveal'd
The whole, nor kept back aught: whence he, his brow
Somewhat uplifting, cried: "Fiercely were they
Adverse to me, my party, and the blood
From whence I sprang: twice,[1] therefore, I abroad
Scatter'd them." "Though driven out, yet they each time
From all parts," answer'd I, "return'd; an art
Which yours have shown they are not skill'd to learn."
Then, peering forth from the unclosed jaw,
Rose from his side a shade,[2] high as the chin,
Leaning, methought, upon its knees upraised.
It look'd around, as eager to explore
If there were other with me; but perceiving
That fond imagination quench'd, with tears
Thus spake: "If thou through this blind prison go'st,
Led by thy lofty genius and profound,
Where is my son? and wherefore not with thee?"
I straight replied: "Not of myself I come;
By him, who there expects me, through this clime
Conducted, whom perchance Guido thy son
Had in contempt." [3] Already had his words

regarded that, when Arnolfo di Cambio founded the great Palazzo Vecchio, he was forbidden to build any part of the house of the Republic on the spot where the dwellings of these "rebels" had once stood. Farinata died in 1264, or thereabouts. His great-grandson, Fazio degli Uberti, was one of the most important Italian poets of the fourteenth century.

[1] He refers to the expulsion of the Guelfs from Florence in 1249 and 1260.

[2] Cavalcante de' Cavalcanti, the father of Dante's friend Guido. Although a Guelf, he belonged to the Florentine sect of the neo-Epicureans, and is said to have believed that the soul perished with the body.

[3] Guido Cavalcanti, whom Dante in the *Vita Nuova* calls "the

And mode of punishment read me his name,
Whence I so fully answered. He at once
Exclaim'd, up starting, " How ! said'st thou, he *had*?
No longer lives he? Strikes not on his eye
The blessed daylight?" Then, of some delay
I made ere my reply, aware, down fell
Supine, nor after forth appear'd he more.
Meanwhile the other, great of soul, near whom
I yet was station'd, changed not countenance stern,
Nor moved the neck, nor bent his ribbed side.
" And if," continuing the first discourse,
" They in this art," he cried, " small skill have shown;
That doth torment me more e'en than this bed.
But not yet fifty times shall be relumed
Her aspect, who reigns here queen of this realm,[1]
Ere thou shalt know the full weight of that art.
So to the pleasant world mayst thou return,

first of my friends," was about ten years older than the Poet. In his youth, he was married to Farinata's daughter Beatrice—one of the political unions arranged with a view of reconciling the Guelfs and Ghibellines in Florence. As a poet, he stands second only to Dante among the Italians of the late thirteenth century (contemporaneous, of course, with the *Vita Nuova* rather than with the *Divina Commedia*); several of his best compositions are translated by Rossetti in his *Early Italian Poets*. A singularly attractive picture of his character is given us by his contemporaries, Dino Compagni and Giovanni Villani, while one of the best stories of the *Decameron* (vi. 9) shows that he had the reputation of being a sceptic in religion. Personal hostility towards Corso Donati led him to adhere to the Bianchi, and he was one of the leaders of the faction who were exiled in June, 1300 (two months after the assumed date of the vision), when Dante was one of the Priors of the Republic. Put under bounds at Sarzana, he contracted a fatal illness; returning to Florence in the latter part of August, after Dante's term of office had expired, he died almost immediately, and was buried on August 29. There is a whole literature on the meaning of Guido's alleged contempt for Virgil. According to one interpretation, it means that he esteemed philosophy more than poetry, or the vernacular more than Latin; according to another, he, being inclined to scepticism, rejected the allegorical Virgil, the type of human philosophy leading to repentance and to faith; according to yet another view, he had not grasped the conception of the divine ordination in the establishment of the Roman Empire, and its right to universal sway, which Dante had first learned from the *Æneid*.

[1] Time in Hell is reckoned by the moon, since there " the sun is silent." Fifty months shall not pass before Dante learns by personal experience the difficulty of an exile winning his way back to Florence.

As thou shalt tell me why, in all their laws,
Against my kin this people is so fell."
"The slaughter and great havoc," I replied,
"That colour'd Arbia's flood with crimson stain—
To these impute, that in our hallow'd dome
Such orisons ascend."[1] Sighing he shook
The head, then thus resumed: "In that affray
I stood not singly, nor without just cause,
Assuredly, should with the rest have stirr'd;
But singly there I stood, when, by consent
Of all, Florence had to the ground been razed,
The one who openly forbade the deed."
"So may thy lineage find at last repose,"
I thus adjured him, "as thou solve this knot,
Which now involves my mind. If right I hear,
Ye seem to view beforehand that which time
Leads with him, of the present uninform'd."
"We view,[2] as one who hath an evil sight,"
He answer'd, "plainly, objects far remote;
So much of his large splendour yet imparts
The Almighty Ruler: but when they approach,
Or actually exist, our intellect
Then wholly fails; nor of your human state,
Except what others bring us, know we aught.
Hence therefore mayst thou understand, that all
Our knowledge in that instant shall expire,
When on futurity the portals close."
Then conscious of my fault, and by remorse
Smitten, I added thus: "Now shalt thou say
To him there fallen, that his offspring still
Is to the living join'd;[3] and bid him know,
That if from answer, silent, I abstain'd,

[1] The Arbia, a small river near the battlefield of Montaperti, ran red with the blood of the slaughtered Guelfs. Farinata's share in bringing about their overthrow outweighed all remembrance of how he had saved their city from destruction. The "orisons" probably refer to the fact that the decrees excluding the Uberti for ever from amnesty, after the final triumph of the Guelfs in 1266, were signed in church.

[2] Cary aptly quotes Sir Thomas Browne's *Urn-Burial:* "The departed spirits know things past and to come; yet are ignorant of things present. Agamemnon foretells what should happen unto Ulysses; yet ignorantly inquires what is become of his own son."

[3] That is, at the assumed date of the vision, April, 1300—which Dante never forgets although he is actually writing many years later.

'Twas that my thought was occupied, intent
Upon that error, which thy help hath solved."
But now my master summoning me back
I heard, and with more eager haste besought
The spirit to inform me, who with him
Partook his lot. He answer thus return'd:
"More than a thousand with me here are laid.
Within is Frederick,[1] second of that name,
And the Lord Cardinal;[2] and of the rest
I speak not." He, this said, from sight withdrew.
But I my steps toward the ancient bard
Reverting, ruminated on the words
Betokening me such ill. Onward he moved,
And thus, in going, question'd: "Whence the amaze
That holds thy senses wrapt?" I satisfied
The inquiry, and the sage enjoin'd me straight:
"Let thy safe memory store what thou hast heard
To thee importing harm; and note thou this,"
With his raised finger bidding me take heed,
"When thou shalt stand before her gracious beam,[3]
Whose bright eye all surveys, she of thy life
The future tenour will to thee unfold."
Forthwith he to the left hand turn'd his feet:
We left the wall, and towards the middle space
Went by a path that to a valley strikes,
Which e'en thus high exhaled its noisome steam.

CANTO XI

ARGUMENT

Dante arrives at the verge of a rocky precipice which encloses the seventh circle, where he sees the sepulchre of Anastasius the Heretic; behind the lid of which pausing a little, to make himself capable by degrees of enduring the fetid smell that

[1] The Emperor Frederick II., "the wonder of the world" (1194–1250). His reputation as a sensualist and an unbeliever was probably well deserved; but Dante elsewhere (*V. E.* i. 12) describes him as an "illustrious hero," extolling the "nobility and righteousness" of his character.

[2] Cardinal Ottaviano degli Ubaldini, who died in 1273, was known to his contemporaries as "the Cardinal" by excellence. There was a legend that he had said: "If there is a soul, I have lost mine a thousand times for the Ghibellines."

[3] Beatrice. Cf. *Par.* xvii.

steamed upward from the abyss, he is instructed by Virgil concerning the manner in which the three following circles are disposed, and what description of sinners is punished in each. He then inquires the reason why the carnal, the gluttonous, the avaricious and prodigal, the wrathful and gloomy, suffer not their punishments within the city of Dis. He next asks how the crime of usury is an offence against God; and at length the two Poets go towards the place from whence a passage leads down to the seventh circle.

UPON the utmost verge of a high bank,
By craggy rocks environ'd round, we came,
Where woes beneath, more cruel yet, were stow'd:
And here, to shun the horrible excess
Of fetid exhalation upward cast
From the profound abyss, behind the lid
Of a great monument we stood retired,
Whereon this scroll I mark'd: "I have in charge
Pope Anastasius,[1] whom Photinus drew
From the right path."—"Ere our descent, behoves
We make delay, that somewhat first the sense,
To the dire breath accustom'd, afterward
Regard it not." My master thus; to whom
Answering I spake: "Some compensation find,
That the time pass not wholly lost." He then:
"Lo! how my thoughts e'en to thy wishes tend.
My son! within these rocks," he thus began,[2]

[1] Pope Anastasius II. (496–498) was supposed by mediæval writers to have been led by Photinus, a deacon of Thessalonica, into adopting the heresy of Acacius, who denied the divine birth of Christ. The legend may, perhaps, have originated in some confusion between the Pope and his contemporary, the Emperor, of the same name—but, in any case, the misunderstanding is not due to Dante.

[2] The rest of this canto is an explanation of the moral topography, or ethical system, of the Poet's Hell. Dante combines the dictum of Cicero (*De Officiis*, i. 13) that injury is done by violence or by fraud, with Aristotle's threefold division of things to be morally shunned (*Nicomachean Ethics*, vii. 1) into incontinence, malice, and brutishness or bestiality. He equates the Ciceronian violence with the Aristotelian bestiality, and the Ciceronian fraud with the Aristotelian malice. Incontinence, being less guilty, is relegated to the five circles of upper Hell. The sixth circle, that of the Heretics, occupies an intermediate position—and may be regarded, like those of the neutrals and virtuous heathens, as standing outside of the general ethical scheme of the *Inferno*. The lower Hell, which Dante is about to enter, is composed of three great circles, each divided into a number of subdivisions, and each separated by a chasm from the one above: the seventh circle of Violence and Bestiality; the eighth circle of

" Are three close circles in gradation placed,
As these which now thou leavest. Each one is full
Of spirits accurst; but that the sight alone
Hereafter may suffice thee, listen how
And for what cause in durance they abide.
" Of all malicious act abhorr'd in Heaven,
The end is injury; and all such end
Either by force or fraud works other's woe.
But fraud, because of man peculiar evil,
To God is more displeasing; and beneath,
The fraudulent are therefore doom'd to endure
Severer pang. The violent occupy
All the first circle; and because, to force,
Three persons are obnoxious, in three rounds,
Each within other separate, is it framed.
To God, his neighbour, and himself, by man
Force may be offer'd; to himself I say,
And his possessions, as thou soon shalt hear
At full. Death, violent death, and painful wounds
Upon his neighbour he inflicts; and wastes,
By devastation, pillage, and the flames,
His substance. Slayers, and each one that smites
In malice, plunderers, and all robbers, hence
The torment undergo of the first round,
In different herds. Man can do violence
To himself and his own blessings: and for this,
He, in the second round must aye deplore
With unavailing penitence his crime,
Whoe'er deprives himself of life and light,
In reckless lavishment his talent wastes,
And sorrows there where he should dwell in joy.
To God may force be offer'd, in the heart
Denying and blaspheming His high power,
And Nature with her kindly law contemning.
And thence the inmost round marks with its seal
Sodom, and Cahors,[1] and all such as speak
Contemptuously of the Godhead in their hearts.
" Fraud, that in every conscience leaves a sting,

Malice or Fraud simple; the ninth circle of Malice or Fraud intensified, or aggravated, as Treachery. For the whole of this subject, the reader may be referred to Mr. Wicksteed's Appendix V. in the English edition of Witte's *Essays on Dante*.

[1] Cahors in Guyenne is synonymous with usury, as Sodom with unnatural vice.

May be by man employ'd on one, whose trust
He wins, or on another who withholds
Strict confidence. Seems as the latter way
Broke but the bond of love which Nature makes.
Whence in the second circle have their nest,
Dissimulation, witchcraft, flatteries,
Theft, falsehood, simony, all who seduce
To lust, or set their honesty at pawn,[1]
With such vile scum as these. The other way
Forgets both Nature's general love, and that
Which thereto added afterward gives birth
To special faith. Whence in the lesser circle,
Point of the universe, dread seat of Dis,
The traitor is eternally consumed."
I thus: "Instructor, clearly thy discourse
Proceeds, distinguishing the hideous chasm
And its inhabitants with skill exact.
But tell me this: they of the dull, fat pool,
Whom the rain beats, or whom the tempest drives,
Or who with tongues so fierce conflicting meet,
Wherefore within the city fire-illumed
Are not these punish'd, if God's wrath be on them?
And if it be not, wherefore in such guise
Are they condemn'd?" He answer thus return'd:
"Wherefore in dotage wanders thus thy mind,
Not so accustom'd? or what other thoughts
Possess it? Dwell not in thy memory
The words, wherein thy ethic page describes
Three dispositions adverse to Heaven's will,
Incontinence, malice, and mad brutishness,
And how incontinence the least offends
God, and least guilt incurs? If well thou note
This judgment, and remember who they are,
Without these walls to vain repentance doom'd,
Thou shalt discern why they apart are placed
From these fell spirits, and less wreakful pours
Justice Divine on them its vengeance down."
"O sun! who healest all imperfect sight,
Thou so content'st me, when thou solvest my doubt,
That ignorance not less than knowledge charms.

[1] "All who . . . set their honesty at pawn." The Italian word is *baratti*, "barrators," which is equivalent to the modern American word "boodlers": those guilty of corrupt practices in public life.

Yet somewhat turn thee back," I in these words
Continued, " where thou said'st, that usury
Offends celestial Goodness; and this knot
Perplex'd unravel." He thus made reply:
" Philosophy, to an attentive ear,
Clearly points out, not in one part alone,
How imitative Nature takes her course
From the celestial Mind, and from its art:
And where her laws [1] the Stagirite unfolds,
Not many leaves scann'd o'er, observing well
Thou shalt discover, that your art on her
Obsequious follows, as the learner treads
In his instructor's step; so that your art
Deserves the name of second in descent
From God. These two, if thou recall to mind
Creation's holy book,[2] from the beginning
Were the right source of life and excellence
To human kind. But in another path
The usurer walks; and Nature in herself
And in her follower thus he sets at nought,
Placing elsewhere his hope.[3] But follow now
My steps on forward journey bent; for now
The Pisces play with undulating glance
Along the horizon, and the Wain [4] lies all
O'er the north-west; and onward there a space
Is our steep passage down the rocky height."

1 Aristotle (*Physics*, ii. 2): " Art mimics nature."

2 Genesis ii. 15, iii. 19.

3 " The usurer, trusting in the produce of his wealth lent out on usury, despises nature directly, because he does not avail himself of her means for maintaining or enriching himself; and indirectly, because he does not avail himself of the means which art, the follower and imitator of nature, would afford him for the same purpose " (Cary). Usury was regarded as a deadly sin in the Middle Ages, and even later. In the fifth Lateran Council, held under Leo X., usury is defined as " the attempt to draw profit and increment, without labour, without cost, and without risk, out of the use of a thing that does not fructify." For the modern Catholic view of the question, *cf.* Rickaby, *Moral Philosophy*, pp. 255–263.

4 That is, it is about two hours before sunrise on the second day of Dante's ecstatic journey, *i. e.* Saturday, April 9.

CANTO XII

ARGUMENT

Descending by a very rugged way into the seventh circle, where the violent are punished, Dante and his leader find it guarded by the Minotaur; whose fury being pacified by Virgil, they step downwards from crag to crag; till, drawing near the bottom, they descry a river of blood, wherein are tormented such as have committed violence against their neighbour. At these, when they strive to emerge from the blood, a troop of Centaurs, running along the side of the river, aim their arrows; and three of their band opposing our travellers at the foot of the steep, Virgil prevails so far, that one consents to carry them both across the stream; and on their passage, Dante is informed by him of the course of the river, and of those that are punished therein.

THE place, where to descend the precipice
We came, was rough as Alp; and on its verge
Such object lay, as every eye would shun.
As is that ruin, which Adice's stream
On this side Trento struck, shouldering the wave,
Or loosed by earthquake or for lack of prop;
For from the mountain's summit, whence it moved
To the low level, so the headlong rock
Is shiver'd, that some passage it might give
To him who from above would pass; e'en such
Into the chasm was that descent: and there
At point of the disparted ridge lay stretch'd
The infamy of Crete,[1] detested brood
Of the feigned heifer: and at sight of us
It gnaw'd itself, as one with rage distract.
To him my guide exclaim'd: "Perchance thou deem'st
The king of Athens here, who, in the world
Above, thy death contrived. Monster! avaunt!
He comes not tutor'd by thy sister's art,
But to behold your torments is he come."
Like to a bull, that with impetuous spring
Darts, at the moment when the fatal blow
Hath struck him, but unable to proceed
Plunges on either side; so saw I plunge

[1] The Minotaur, a monster with a man's body and a bull's head, was the offspring of Pasiphaë ("the feigned heifer"), wife of Minos of Crete. It was slain by Theseus, King of Athens, with the aid of Ariadne, the daughter of Pasiphaë by Minos.

The Minotaur;[1] whereat the sage exclaim'd:
"Run to the passage! while he storms, 'tis well
That thou descend." Thus down our road we took
Through those dilapidated crags, that oft
Moved underneath my feet, to weight like theirs
Unused. I pondering went, and thus he spake:
"Perhaps thy thoughts are of this ruin'd steep,
Guarded by the brute violence, which I
Have vanquish'd now. Know then, that when I erst
Hither descended to the nether Hell,
This rock was not yet fallen. But past doubt
(If well I mark), not long ere He arrived,
Who carried off from Dis the mighty spoil
Of the highest circle, then through all its bounds
Such trembling seized the deep concave and foul,
I thought the universe was thrill'd with love,
Whereby, there are who deem, the world hath oft
Been into chaos turn'd:[2] and in that point,
Here, and elsewhere, that old rock toppled down.
But fix thine eyes beneath: the river of blood
Approaches, in the which all those are steep'd,
Who have by violence injured." O blind lust!
O foolish wrath! who so dost goad us on
In the brief life, and in the eternal then
Thus miserably o'erwhelm us. I beheld
An ample foss, that in a bow was bent,
As circling all the plain; for so my guide
Had told. Between it and the rampart's base,
On trail ran Centaurs, with keen arrows arm'd,
As to the chase they on the earth were wont.[3]

[1] The monster is here the type of violence and bestiality. Mr. Wicksteed notes, in evidence of the identification of violence with bestiality or brutishness, that all the guardians and tormentors of this seventh circle are either beasts or forms of mingled man and animal.

[2] Virgil's journey into the Giudecca at the bidding of Erichtho (see notes on Canto ix.) was before the descent of Christ into Hell—which was preceded by the earthquake recorded in the Gospel, at the moment of His death upon the Cross, when "the earth did quake, and the rocks rent" (Matt. xxvii. 51).

[3] The Centaurs are represented in Greek art as monstrous beings with a man's head, trunk, and arms, and the body and four legs of a horse. According to the early commentators, they here stand in the allegorical sense for the mercenary soldiers of the tyrants, the instruments of their own oppression thus becoming their chastisement.

At seeing us descend they each one stood;
And issuing from the troop, three sped with bows
And missile weapons chosen first; of whom
One cried from far: "Say, to what pain ye come
Condemn'd, who down this steep have journey'd. Speak
From whence ye stand, or else the bow I draw."
To whom my guide: "Our answer shall be made
To Chiron, there, when nearer him we come.
Ill was thy mind, thus ever quick and rash."
Then me he touch'd, and spake: "Nessus is this,
Who for the fair Deïanira died,
And wrought himself revenge for his own fate.
He in the midst, that on his breast looks down,
Is the great Chiron who Achilles nursed;
That other, Pholus, prone to wrath."[1] Around
The foss these go by thousands, aiming shafts
At whatsoever spirit dares emerge
From out the blood, more than his guilt allows.
We to those beasts, that rapid strode along,
Drew near; when Chiron took an arrow forth,
And with the notch push'd back his shaggy beard
To the cheek-bone, then, his great mouth to view
Exposing, to his fellows thus exclaim'd:
"Are ye aware, that he who comes behind
Moves what he touches? The feet of the dead
Are not so wont." My trusty guide, who now
Stood near his breast, where the two natures join,
Thus made reply: "He is indeed alive,
And solitary so must needs by me
Be shown the gloomy vale, thereto induced

[1] Chiron, unlike the other Centaurs, is represented as wise and just; he was the master of Achilles, Jason, Asclepius, and other Greek heroes. "We are all monsters, that is, a composition of Man and Beast, wherein we must endeavour to be as the Poets fancy that wise man Chiron, that is, to have the Region of Man above that of Beast, and Sense to sit but at the feet of Reason" (Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*). Nessus was the Centaur who, when mortally wounded by Hercules in his attempt to carry off Deïanira, gave the latter a garment steeped in his blood, telling her that by its means she would preserve her husband's affections—the result being the death of Hercules, as Nessus had intended. The Centaur Pholus entertained Hercules, and was accidentally killed by one of his arrows. Dr. Toynbee suggests that Dante's description of him as *pien d'ira*, "full of anger," is probably a recollection of *Georgics*, ii. 455, 456, where Virgil speaks of the Centaurs as *furentes*.

By strict necessity, not by delight.
She left her joyful harpings in the sky,
Who this new office to my care consign'd.
He is no robber, no dark spirit I.
But by that virtue, which empowers my step
To tread so wild a path, grant us, I pray,
One of thy band, whom we may trust secure,
Who to the ford may lead us, and convey
Across, him mounted on his back; for he
Is not a spirit that may walk the air."
Then on his right breast turning, Chiron thus
To Nessus spake: "Return, and be their guide.
And if ye chance to cross another troop,
Command them keep aloof." Onward we moved,
The faithful escort by our side, along
The border of the crimson-seething flood,
Whence, from those steep'd within, loud shrieks arose.
Some there I mark'd, as high as to their brow
Immersed, of whom the mighty Centaur thus:
"These are the souls of tyrants, who were given
To blood and rapine. Here they wail aloud
Their merciless wrongs. Here Alexander dwells,
And Dionysius fell, who many a year
Of woe wrought for fair Sicily.[1] That brow,
Whereon the hair so jetty clustering hangs,
Is Azzolino; that with flaxen locks
Obizzo of Este, in the world destroy'd
By his foul step-son."[2] To the bard revered

[1] It is disputed whether this Alexander is Alexander the Great of Macedon (*d.* B.C. 323), or Alexander of Pheræ (*d.* B.C. 359), the Thessalian tyrant who was killed by his own wife. The Dionysius is the elder of that name, tyrant of Syracuse (*d.* B.C. 367).

[2] Azzolino, or Ezzelino III. da Romano, the most horrible tyrant of Italian history, whom men called the son of a devil, made himself lord of Verona, Vicenza, Padua, and other cities in north-eastern Lombardy, and was imperial vicar under Frederick II. After an appalling career of atrocity, a crusade was proclaimed against him by Pope Alexander IV., and, in 1259, he was defeated at Cassano on the Adda, wounded, and taken prisoner. A few days later, he tore the bandages from his wounds, and so died. Cf. *Par.* ix. Obizzo II. of Este, fourth Marquis of Ferrara, was the grandson of Azzo VII., called Azzo Novello, who had led the Guelf crusaders against Ezzelino. Dying in 1293, he was said to have been murdered by his son and successor, Azzo VIII., whom Dante calls his "step-son," to emphasise the unnatural wickedness of his deed—which, for the rest, is highly doubtful historically. Cf. below, Canto xviii. and *Purg.* v. In

I turn'd me round, and thus he spake: "Let him
Be to thee now first leader, me but next
To him in rank." Then further on a space
The Centaur paused, near some, who at the throat
Were extant from the wave; and, showing us
A spirit by itself apart retired,
Exclaim'd: "He [1] in God's bosom smote the heart,
Which yet is honour'd on the bank of Thames."

A race I next espied who held the head,
And even all the bust, above the stream.
'Midst these I many a face remember'd well.
Thus shallow more and more the blood became,
So that at last it but imbrued the feet;
And there our passage lay athwart the foss.

"As ever on this side the boiling wave
Thou seest diminishing," the Centaur said,
"So on the other, be thou well assured,
It lower still and lower sinks its bed,
Till in that part it re-uniting join,
Where 'tis the lot of tyranny to mourn.
There Heaven's stern justice lays chastising hand
On Attila, who was the scourge of earth,
On Sextus and on Pyrrhus, and extracts
Tears ever by the seething flood unlock'd
From the Rinieri, of Corneto this,
Pazzo the other named, who fill'd the ways
With violence and war." [2] This said, he turn'd,
And quitting us, alone repass'd the ford.

any case, a typical Guelf and a typical Ghibelline tyrant are here condemned side by side.

[1] Guy de Montfort, in 1271, murdered his cousin Henry, son of Richard, Earl of Cornwall, and nephew to King Henry III. of England, in the church of San Silvestro at Viterbo. His intention was to avenge his father, Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, who had fallen at the battle of Evesham in 1265. The heart of the murdered prince was brought to London in a gold casket.

[2] Attila, the famous King of the Huns, known as "the scourge of God" (*d.* A.D. 453); Sextus Pompeius (*d.* B.C. 35), son of Pompey the Great, who ravaged the coasts of Italy with a pirate fleet. It is doubtful whether Pyrrhus, the son of Achilles (of whose cruelty at Troy Dante had read in the *Æneid*), or Pyrrhus, King of Epirus (*d.* B.C. 272), is the person indicated. Rinier da Corneto and Rinier Pazzo were famous chiefs of highwaymen in Dante's youth.

CANTO XIII

ARGUMENT

Still in the seventh circle, Dante enters its second compartment, which contains both those who have done violence on their own persons and those who have violently consumed their goods; the first changed into rough and knotted trees whereon the harpies build their nests, the latter chased and torn by black female mastiffs. Among the former, Piero delle Vigne is one who tells him the cause of his having committed suicide, and moreover in what manner the souls are transformed into those trunks. Of the latter crew, he recognises Lano, a Sienese, and Giacomo, a Paduan: and lastly, a Florentine, who had hung himself from his own roof, speaks to him of the calamities of his countrymen.

ERE Nessus yet had reach'd the other bank,
We enter'd on a forest, where no track
Of steps had worn a way. Not verdant there
The foliage, but of dusky hue; not light
The boughs and tapering, but with knares deform'd
And matted thick: fruits there were none, but thorns
Instead, with venom fill'd. Less sharp than these,
Less intricate the brakes, wherein abide
Those animals, that hate the cultured fields,
Betwixt Corneto and Cecina's stream.[1]
Here the brute Harpies make their nest, the same
Who from the Strophades the Trojan band
Drove with dire boding of their future woe.[2]
Broad are their pennons, of the human form
Their neck and countenance, arm'd with talons keen
The feet, and the huge belly fledged with wings.
These sit and wail on the drear mystic wood.
The kind instructor in these words began:
"Ere farther thou proceed, know thou art now
I' th' second round, and shalt be, till thou come
Upon the horrid sand: look therefore well
Around thee, and such things thou shalt behold,

[1] The district known as the Tuscan Maremma.

[2] Virgil (*Æneid*, iii. 192–267) describes how Æneas and his companions were driven from the Strophades, islands in the Ionian Sea, by the Harpies, who polluted their banquet. Celæno, the chief of these monsters, foretold that the Trojans would be reduced by starvation to eat their own tables. They, and the black mastiffs further on, are here to be taken as symbols of remorse.

As would my speech discredit." On all sides
I heard sad plainings breathe, and none could see
From whom they might have issued. In amaze
Fast bound I stood. He, as it seem'd, believed
That I had thought so many voices came
From some amid those thickets close conceal'd,
And thus his speech resumed: "If thou lop off
A single twig from one of those ill plants,
The thought thou hast conceived shall vanish quite."
Thereat a little stretching forth my hand,
From a great wilding gather'd I a branch,
And straight the trunk exclaim'd: "Why pluck'st thou me?"
Then, as the dark blood trickled down its side,
These words it added: "Wherefore tear'st me thus?
Is there no touch of mercy in thy breast?
Men once were we, that now are rooted here.
Thy hand might well have spared us, had we been
The souls of serpents." As a brand yet green,
That burning at one end from the other sends
A groaning sound, and hisses with the wind
That forces out its way, so burst at once
Forth from the broken splinter words and blood.
I, letting fall the bough, remain'd as one
Assail'd by terror; and the sage replied:
"If he, O injured spirit! could have believed
What he hath seen but in my verse described,[1]
He never against thee had stretch'd his hand.
But I, because the thing surpass'd belief,
Prompted him to this deed, which even now
Myself I rue. But tell him, who thou wast;
That, for this wrong to do thee some amends,
In the upper world (for thither to return
Is granted him) thy fame he may revive."
"That pleasant word of thine," the trunk replied,
"Hath so inveigled me, that I from speech
Cannot refrain, wherein if I indulge
A little longer, in the snare detain'd,
Count it not grievous. I it was, who held
Both keys to Frederick's heart, and turn'd the wards,
Opening and shutting, with a skill so sweet,

[1] *i.e.* the story of Polydorus at the beginning of the third book of the *Æneid*, from which this episode is manifestly copied.

That besides me, into his inmost breast
Scarce any other could admittance find.[1]
The faith I bore to my high charge was such,
It cost me the life-blood that warm'd my veins.
The harlot,[2] who ne'er turn'd her gloating eyes
From Cæsar's household, common vice and pest
Of courts, 'gainst me inflamed the minds of all;
And to Augustus they so spread the flame,
That my glad honours changed to bitter woes.
My soul, disdainful and disgusted, sought
Refuge in death from scorn, and I became,
Just as I was, unjust toward myself.
By the new roots, which fix this stem, I swear,
That never faith I broke to my liege lord,
Who merited such honour; and of you,
If any to the world indeed return,
Clear he from wrong my memory, that lies
Yet prostrate under envy's cruel blow."
First somewhat pausing, till the mournful words
Were ended, then to me the bard began:
"Lose not the time; but speak, and of him ask,
If more thou wish to learn." Whence I replied:
"Question thou him again of whatsoe'er
Will, as thou think'st, content me; for no power
Have I to ask, such pity is at my heart."
He thus resumed: "So may he do for thee
Freely what thou entreatest, as thou yet
Be pleased, imprison'd spirit! to declare,
How in these gnarled joints the soul is tied;
And whether any ever from such frame
Be loosen'd, if thou canst, that also tell."
Thereat the trunk breathed hard, and the wind soon
Changed into sounds articulate like these:
"Briefly ye shall be answer'd. When departs
The fierce soul from the body, by itself

[1] This is Piero delle Vigne of Capua, a man of humble birth, who ultimately became the chief minister and most trusted adviser of the Emperor Frederick II. He was also a poet, and is said to have composed the first Italian sonnet. After serving the Emperor with the utmost fidelity, he was falsely accused of treason and condemned to lose his eyes; after which, in 1249, he committed suicide in prison. One of his descendants was the famous Friar Raymund, the confessor of St. Catherine of Siena and master-general of the Dominicans at the end of the fourteenth century.

[2] Envy.

Thence torn asunder, to the seventh gulf
By Minos doom'd, into the wood it falls,
No place assign'd, but wheresoever chance
Hurls it; there sprouting, as a grain of spelt,
It rises to a sapling, growing thence
A savage plant. The Harpies, on its leaves
Then feeding, cause both pain, and for the pain
A vent to grief. We, as the rest, shall come
For our own spoils, yet not so that with them
We may again be clad; for what a man
Takes from himself it is not just he have.
Here we perforce shall drag them; and throughout
The dismal glade our bodies shall be hung,
Each on the wild thorn of his wretched shade."[1]
Attentive yet to listen to the trunk
We stood, expecting further speech, when us
A noise surprised; as when a man perceives
The wild boar and the hunt approach his place
Of station'd watch, who of the beasts and boughs
Loud rustling round him hears. And lo! there came
Two naked,[2] torn with briers, in headlong flight,
That they before them broke each fan o' th' wood.
"Haste now," the foremost cried, "now haste thee, death!"
The other, as seem'd, impatient of delay,
Exclaiming, "Lano! not so bent for speed
Thy sinews, in the lists of Toppo's field."
And then, for that perchance no longer breath
Sufficed him, of himself and of a bush
One group he made. Behind them was the wood
Full of black female mastiffs, gaunt and fleet,
As greyhounds that have newly slipt the leash.
On him, who squatted down, they stuck their fangs,
And having rent him piecemeal bore away

[1] These lines concerning the fate of the suicides roused some controversy, shortly after Dante's death, and were regarded as heretical as being contrary to the doctrine of the resurrection of the body.

[2] Lano Maconi, a nobleman of Siena, having squandered all his patrimony, let himself be killed at the battle of Pieve del Toppo, where the Sienese were defeated by the Aretines in 1288. *Cf.* below, Canto xxix. Jacomo da Sant' Andrea was a wealthy Paduan noble, who ran through a great fortune in the most insane pranks. He is said to have been one of the victims of Ezzelino's tyranny.

The tortured limbs. My guide then seized my hand,
And led me to the thicket, which in vain
Mourn'd through its bleeding wounds: "O Giacomo
Of Sant' Andrea! what avails it thee,"
It cried, "that of me thou hast made thy screen?
For thy ill life, what blame on me recoils?"
When o'er it he had paused, my master spake:
"Say who wast thou,[1] that at so many points
Breathest out with blood thy lamentable speech?"
He answer'd: "O ye spirits! arrived in time
To spy the shameful havoc that from me
My leaves hath sever'd thus, gather them up,
And at the foot of their sad parent-tree
Carefully lay them. In that city I dwelt,
Who for the Baptist her first patron changed,
Whence he for this shall cease not with his art
To work her woe: and if there still remain'd not
On Arno's passage some faint glimpse of him,
Those citizens, who rear'd once more her walls
Upon the ashes left by Attila,
Had labour'd without profit of their toil.[2]
I slung the fatal noose from my own roof."

[1] This unnamed Florentine suicide is probably either Lotto degli Agli, a judge who hanged himself after giving a false sentence for money, or Rocco de' Mozzi, who ended his life in the same way when bankrupt.

[2] According to tradition, Mars was the patron of the Florentines in pagan days, and his temple, with a highly venerated statue, stood on the site of the present Baptistery. On the advent of Christianity, Florence took the Baptist for her patron instead, and the statue was removed from the temple and set upon a tower by the side of the Arno, the citizens believing that, unless it were duly reverenced, great misfortunes would fall upon the State. The perpetual factions that kept the city divided were ascribed to its influence (cf. *Par.* xvi.). When, according to the legend, Florence was destroyed by the Goths (Dante confuses Attila with Totila, who sent a force to attack the city, but was repulsed), the statue fell into the Arno, where it remained all the time that the city lay in ruins. It was held that Florence could not be rebuilt until this image was found again, and accordingly it was drawn out of the Arno and set upon a pillar at the head of the Ponte Vecchio, when the city was restored (according to legend) by Charlemagne. Thus it became "that maimed stone which guards the bridge" (*Par.* xvi.), and remained in that position until the great flood of 1333 carried away bridge and statue alike.

CANTO XIV

ARGUMENT

They arrive at the beginning of the third of those compartments into which this seventh circle is divided. It is a plain of dry and hot sand, where three kinds of violence are punished; namely, against God, against Nature, and against Art; and those who have thus sinned, are tormented by flakes of fire, which are eternally showering down upon them. Among the violent against God is found Capaneus, whose blasphemies they hear. Next, turning to the left along the forest of self-slayers, and having journeyed a little onwards, they meet with a streamlet of blood that issues from the forest and traverses the sandy plain. Here Virgil speaks to our Poet of a huge ancient statue that stands within Mount Ida in Crete, from a fissure in which statue there is a dripping of tears, from which the said streamlet, together with the three other infernal rivers, is formed.

Soon as the charity of native land
Wrought in my bosom, I the scatter'd leaves
Collected, and to him restored, who now
Was hoarse with utterance. To the limit thence
We came, which from the third the second round
Divides, and where of justice is display'd
Contrivance horrible. Things then first seen
Clearlier to manifest, I tell how next
A plain we reach'd, that from its sterile bed
Each plant repell'd. The mournful wood waves round
Its garland on all sides, as round the wood
Spreads the sad foss. There, on the very edge,
Our steps we stay'd. It was an area wide
Of arid sand and thick, resembling most
The soil that erst by Cato's foot [1] was trod.
Vengeance of Heaven! Oh! how shouldst thou be fear'd
By all, who read what here mine eyes beheld.
Of naked spirits many a flock I saw,
All weeping piteously, to different laws
Subjected; for on the earth some lay supine,
Some crouching close were seated, others paced
Incessantly around; the latter tribe
More numerous, those fewer who beneath
The torment lay, but louder in their grief.

[1] Cato of Utica, who marched through the Libyan desert in B.C. 47, as described by Lucan in Bk. ix. of the *Pharsalia*.

O'er all the sand fell slowly wafting down
Dilated flakes of fire, as flakes of snow
On Alpine summit, when the wind is hush'd.
As, in the torrid Indian clime, the son
Of Ammon [1] saw, upon his warrior band
Descending, solid flames, that to the ground
Came down; whence he bethought him with his troop
To trample on the soil; for easier thus
The vapour was extinguish'd, while alone:
So fell the eternal fiery flood, wherewith
The marle glow'd underneath, as under *steel*
The *tinder*, doubly to augment the pain.
Unceasing was the play of wretched hands,
Now this, now that way glancing, to shake off
The heat, still falling fresh. I thus began:
"Instructor! thou who all things overcomest,
Except the hardy demons that rush'd forth
To stop our entrance at the gate, say who
Is yon huge spirit, that, as seems, heeds not
The burning, but lies writhen in proud scorn,
As by the sultry tempest immatured?"
Straight he himself, who was aware I ask'd
My guide of him, exclaim'd: "Such as I was
When living, dead such now I am. If Jove
Weary his workman out, from whom in ire
He snatch'd the lightnings, that at my last day
Transfix'd me; if the rest he weary out,
At their black smithy labouring by turns,
In Mongibello,[2] while he cries aloud,
'Help, help, good Mulciber!' as erst he cried
In the Phlegræan warfare;[3] and the bolts

[1] Dante has simply *Alessandro*, "Alexander." Dr. Oelsner notes: "These details are taken from an apocryphal letter, very popular in the Middle Ages, in which Alexander is supposed to send an account of the marvels of India to Aristotle. The original narrative says that the soldiers trampled on the snow, and that they warded off the flames, which subsequently descended from the sky, by means of their garments. The discrepancy we note in Dante occurs already in a version of the episode given by Albertus Magnus in his *De Meteoris*, which must, accordingly, have been Dante's immediate source."

[2] Mount Ætna, within which Vulcan (Mulciber) and the Cyclopes forged Jove's thunderbolts.

[3] Phlegra, variously localised, is the scene of the struggle between the gods and the giants.

Launch he, full aim'd at me, with all his might;
He never should enjoy a sweet revenge."
Then thus my guide, in accent higher raised
Than I before had heard him: "Capaneus!
Thou art more punish'd, in that this thy pride
Lives yet unquench'd: no torment, save thy rage,
Were to thy fury pain proportion'd full."
Next turning round to me, with milder lip
He spake: "This of the seven kings was one,[1]
Who girt the Theban walls with siege, and held,
As still he seems to hold, God in disdain,
And sets His high omnipotence at nought.
But, as I told him, his despiteful mood
Is ornament well suits the breast that wears it.
Follow me now; and look thou set not yet
Thy foot in the hot sand, but to the wood
Keep ever close." Silently on we pass'd
To where there gushes from the forest's bound
A little brook, whose crimson'd wave yet lifts
My hair with horror. As the rill, that runs
From Bulicame,[2] to be portion'd out
Among the sinful women; so ran this
Down through the sand; its bottom and each bank
Stone-built, and either margin at its side,
Whereon I straight perceived our passage lay.
"Of all that I have shown thee, since that gate
We enter'd first, whose threshold is to none
Denied, nought else so worthy of regard,
As is this river, has thine eye discern'd,
O'er which the flaming volley all is quench'd."
So spake my guide; and I him thence besought,
That having given me appetite to know,
The food he too would give, that hunger craved.
"In midst of ocean," forthwith he began,
"A desolate country lies, which Crete is named;
Under whose monarch,[3] in old times, the world
Lived pure and chaste. A mountain rises there,

1 Capaneus was one of the "seven against Thebes," and boasted that all the wrath of Jupiter should not protect the city from him; for which he was struck by lightning as he scaled the wall. He is taken here as the typical blasphemer.

2 *Il Bulicame* is a warm sulphurous spring, still in use and frequented, about two miles outside the Porta Faul of Viterbo.

3 Saturn, under whose sway the world enjoyed the Golden Age.

Call'd Ida, joyous once with leaves and streams,
Deserted now like a forbidden thing.
It was the spot which Rhea, Saturn's spouse,
Chose for the secret cradle of her son;[1]
And better to conceal him, drown'd in shouts
His infant cries. Within the mount, upright
An ancient form [2] there stands, and huge, that turns
His shoulders towards Damiata; and at Rome,
As in his mirror, looks. Of finest gold
His head is shaped, pure silver are the breast
And arms, thence to the middle is of brass,
And downward all beneath well-tempered steel,
Save the right foot of potter's clay, on which
Than on the other more erect he stands.
Each part, except the gold, is rent throughout;
And from the fissure tears distil, which join'd
Penetrate to that cave. They in their course,
Thus far precipitated down the rock,
From Acheron, and Styx, and Phlegethon;
Then by this straiten'd channel passing hence
Beneath, e'en to the lowest depth of all,
Form there Cocytus, of whose lake (thyself
Shalt see it) I here give thee no account." [3]
Then I to him: "If from our world this sluice
Be thus derived; wherefore to us but now
Appears it at this edge?" He straight replied:
"The place, thou know'st, is round; and though great part

[1] Jupiter.

[2] *Un gran veglio*, "a great old man." This image, which is a combination of Daniel's vision (ii. 31–35) with Ovid's description of the four ages (*Metam.* i.), symbolises the history of the human race. It has its back to Egypt, as representing the civilisation and monarchies of the past, and looks towards Rome, which stands for the modern world of thought and action under the Empire. The four metals represent the Golden, Silver, Bronze, and Iron Ages. The feet are probably the secular and spiritual authority, respectively. "Dante differs from Daniel in making the brass terminate with the trunk, in order no doubt to emphasise his theory of the dual organisation of Church and Empire; the right leg with the foot of baked earth, on which the image rests most, being the symbol of the ecclesiastical power, corrupted and weakened by the acquisition of the temporal power from Constantine, but at the same time that to which mankind chiefly looked for support and guidance" (Toynbee).

[3] The infernal rivers are produced by the tears and sins of all human generations since the Golden Age, and flow from rock to rock down the circles of Hell, back to Lucifer at the earth's core.

Thou have already past, still to the left
Descending to the nethermost, not yet
Hast thou the circuit made of the whole orb.
Wherefore, if aught of new to us appear,
It needs not bring up wonder in thy looks."
Then I again inquired: "Where flow the streams
Of Phlegethon and Lethe? for of one
Thou tell'st not; and the other, of that shower,
Thou say'st, is form'd." He answer thus return'd:
"Doubtless thy questions all well pleased I hear.
Yet the red seething wave might have resolved
One thou proposest. Lethe thou shalt see,
But not within this hollow, in the place
Whither, to lave themselves, the spirits go,
Whose blame hath been by penitence removed." [1]
He added: "Time is now we quit the wood.
Look thou my steps pursue: the margins give
Safe passage, unimpeded by the flames;
For over them all vapour is extinct."

CANTO XV

Argument

Taking their way upon one of the mounds by which the streamlet, spoken of in the last Canto, was embanked, and having gone so far that they could no longer have discerned the forest if they had turned round to look for it, they meet a troop of spirits that come along the sand by the side of the pier. These are they who have done violence to Nature; and amongst them Dante distinguishes Brunetto Latini, who had been formerly his master; with whom, turning a little backward, he holds a discourse which occupies the remainder of this Canto.

One of the solid margins bears us now
Envelop'd in the mist, that, from the stream
Arising, hovers o'er, and saves from fire
Both piers and water. As the Flemings rear
Their mound, 'twixt Ghent and Bruges, to chase back
The ocean, fearing his tumultuous tide
That drives toward them; or the Paduans theirs
Along the Brenta, to defend their towns

[1] This red stream is Phlegethon, but Lethe, which takes away the memory of sin, he will not see until he has passed through Purgatory.

And castles, ere the genial warmth be felt
On Chiarentana's [1] top; such were the mounds,
So framed, though not in height or bulk to these
Made equal, by the master, whosoe'er
He was, that raised them here. We from the wood
Were now so far removed, that turning round
I might not have discern'd it, when we met
A troop of spirits, who came beside the pier.
They each one eyed us, as at eventide
One eyes another under a new moon;
And toward us sharpen'd their sight, as keen
As an old tailor at his needle's eye.
Thus narrowly explored by all the tribe,
I was agnized of one, who by the skirt
Caught me, and cried, "What wonder have we here?"
And I, when he to me outstretch'd his arm,
Intently fix'd my ken on his parch'd looks,
That, although smirch'd with fire, they hinder'd not
But I remember'd him; and towards his face
My hand inclining, answer'd: "Ser Brunetto! [2]
And are ye here?" He thus to me: "My son!
Oh let it not displease thee, if Brunetto
Latini but a little space with thee
Turn back, and leave his fellows to proceed."
I thus to him replied: "Much as I can,
I thereto pray thee; and if thou be willing

[1] Cary has mistranslated this line, *anzi che Chiarentana il caldo senta*, which simply means "Before Chiarentana feels the heat." Chiarentana is the duchy of Carinthia, which included the Val Sugana where the Brenta rises. The melting of the snows of its mountains cause the river to overflow and flood the Paduan country.

[2] Brunetto Latini, philosopher and politician, was born at Florence about 1210, and died in 1294. An ardent Guelf, he took an active part in Florentine politics, and was influential in the counsels of the Republic. He introduced the art of oratory and the systematic study of political science into Florentine public life. His chief works are *Li Livres dou Trésor*, a kind of encyclopedia written in French prose, which "treats of all things that pertain to mortals," and the *Tesoretto*, an allegorical didactic poem in Italian, which opens (like the *Divina Commedia*) with the poet finding himself astray in a wood. It is noticeable that in the *Tesoretto* he speaks strongly against the sin for which he is here condemned to Hell. Dante doubtless was profoundly influenced by him in his early life (as this Canto amply shows), but there is no foundation for the story that Brunetto had been actually his master.

That I here seat me with thee, I consent;
His leave, with whom I journey, first obtain'd."
"O son!" said he, "whoever of this throng
One instant stops, lies then a hundred years,
No fan to ventilate him, when the fire
Smites sorest. Pass thou therefore on. I close
Will at thy garments walk, and then rejoin
My troop, who go mourning their endless doom."
I dared not from the path descend to tread
On equal ground with him, but held my head
Bent down, as one who walks in reverent guise.
"What chance or destiny," thus he began,
"Ere the last day, conducts thee here below?
And who is this that shows to thee the way?"
"There up aloft," I answer'd, "in the life
Serene, I wander'd in a valley lost,
Before mine age had to its fulness reach'd.
But yester-morn I left it: then once more
Into that vale returning, him I met;
And by this path homeward he leads me back."
"If thou," he answer'd, "follow but thy star,
Thou canst not miss at last a glorious haven;
Unless in fairer days my judgment err'd.
And if my fate so early had not chanced,
Seeing the Heavens thus bounteous to thee, I
Had gladly given thee comfort in thy work.
But that ungrateful and malignant race,
Who in old times came down from Fesole,[1]
Ay and still smack of their rough mountain-flint,
Will for thy good deeds show thee enmity.
Nor wonder; for amongst ill-savour'd crabs
It suits not the sweet fig-tree lay her fruit.
Old fame reports them in the world for blind,
Covetous, envious, proud. Look to it well:
Take heed thou cleanse thee of their ways. For thee,
Thy fortune hath such honour in reserve,

[1] According to Florentine tradition, the city of Florence was founded by Cæsar after the destruction of Fiesole, and peopled partly by Romans, partly by the Fiesolans—whence came the perpetual factions. "It is not to be wondered," writes Villani, "that the Florentines are always at war and strife among themselves, being born and descended from two peoples so contrary and hostile and different in habits, as were the noble Romans in their virtue and the rude Fiesolans fierce in war."

That thou by either party [1] shalt be craved
With hunger keen: but be the fresh herb far
From the goat's tooth. The herd of Fesole
May of themselves make litter, not touch the plant,
If any such yet spring on their rank bed,
In which the holy seed revives, transmitted
From those true Romans, who still there remain'd,
When it was made the nest of so much ill."
"Were all my wish fulfill'd," I straight replied,
"Thou from the confines of man's nature yet
Hadst not been driven forth; for in my mind
Is fix'd, and now strikes full upon my heart,
The dear, benign, paternal image, such
As thine was, when so lately thou didst teach me
The way for man to win eternity:
And how I prized the lesson, it behoves,
That, long as life endures, my tongue should speak.
What of my fate thou tell'st, that write I down;
And, with another text [2] to comment on,
For her I keep it, the celestial dame,
Who will know all, if I to her arrive.
This only would I have thee clearly note:
That, so my conscience have no plea against me,
Do Fortune as she list, I stand prepared.
Not new or strange such earnest to mine ear.
Speed Fortune then her wheel, as likes her best;
The clown his mattock; all things have their course."
Thereat my sapient guide upon his right
Turn'd himself back, then look'd at me, and spake:
"He listens to good purpose who takes note."
I not the less still on my way proceed,
Discoursing with Brunetto, and inquire
Who are most known and chief among his tribe.
"To know of some is well;" he thus replied,
"But of the rest silence may best beseem.
Time would not serve us for report so long.
In brief I tell thee, that all these were clerks,
Men of great learning and no less renown,
By one same sin polluted in the world.

[1] Both the Neri and the Bianchi. Dante does not mean to identify one party with the Romans and the other with the Fiesolans; both alike smack of "the herd of Fiesole," and it is for the holy seed of the true Romans to keep clear of both factions.

[2] What Farinata had said to him.

With them is Priscian;[1] and Accorso's son,
Francesco,[2] herds among that wretched throng:
And, if the wish of so impure a blotch
Possess'd thee, him thou also mightst have seen,
Who by the servants' Servant was transferr'd
From Arno's seat to Bacchiglione, where
His ill-strain'd nerves he left.[3] I more would add,
But must from further speech and onward way
Alike desist; for yonder I behold
A mist new-risen on the sandy plain.
A company, with whom I may not sort,
Approaches. I commend my *Treasure* to thee,[4]
Wherein I yet survive; my sole request."
This said, he turn'd, and seem'd as one of those
Who o'er Verona's champain try their speed
For the green mantle;[5] and of them he seem'd,
Not he who loses but who gains the prize.

CANTO XVI

ARGUMENT

Journeying along the pier, which crosses the sand, they are now so near the end of it as to hear the noise of the stream falling into the eighth circle, when they meet the spirits of three military men; who judging Dante, from his dress, to be a countryman of theirs, entreat him to stop. He complies, and speaks with them. The two Poets then reach the place where the water descends, being the termination of this third compartment in the seventh circle; and here Virgil having thrown down into the hollow a cord, wherewith Dante was girt, they behold at that signal a monstrous and horrible figure come swimming up to them.

Now came I where the water's din was heard,
As down it fell into the other round,

[1] A famous Latin grammarian of the beginning of the sixth century A.D.

[2] Francesco d'Accorso (1225–1293), a famous lawyer and professor of Bologna. His father, Accorso da Bagnolo, a Florentine by birth, who died at Bologna in 1260, was equally renowned as a jurist.

[3] Andrea de' Mozzi, made Bishop of Florence (on the Arno) in 1287, was in 1295 transferred by Boniface VIII. (*servus servorum* is one of the papal titles) to the see of Vicenza (on the Bacchiglione), where he died in the following year.

[4] His *Livres dou Trésor*.

[5] A green mantle, or *palio*, was the prize given at the annual foot-race at Verona.

Resounding like the hum of swarming bees:
When forth together issued from a troop,
That pass'd beneath the fierce tormenting storm,
Three spirits, running swift. They towards us came,
And each one cried aloud, "Oh! do thou stay,
Whom, by the fashion of thy garb, we deem
To be some inmate of our evil land."
Ah me! what wounds I mark'd upon their limbs,
Recent and old, inflicted by the flames.
E'en the remembrance of them grieves me yet.
Attentive to their cry, my teacher paused,
And turn'd to me his visage, and then spake:
"Wait now: our courtesy these merit well:
And were 't not for the nature of the place,
Whence glide the fiery darts, I should have said,
That haste had better suited thee than them."
They, when we stopp'd, resumed their ancient wail,
And, soon as they had reach'd us, all the three
Whirl'd round together in one restless wheel.
As naked champions, smear'd with slippery oil,
Are wont, intent, to watch their place of hold
And vantage, ere in closer strife they meet;
Thus each one, as he wheel'd, his countenance
At me directed, so that opposite
The neck moved ever to the twinkling feet.
"If woe of this unsound and dreary waste,"
Thus one began, "added to our sad cheer
Thus peel'd with flame, do call forth scorn on us
And our entreaties, let our great renown
Incline thee to inform us who thou art,
That dost imprint, with living feet unharm'd,
The soil of Hell. He, in whose track thou seest
My steps pursuing, naked though he be
And reft of all, was of more high estate
Than thou believest; grandchild of the chaste
Gualdrada, him they Guidoguerra call'd,
Who in his lifetime many a noble act
Achieved, both by his wisdom and his sword.[1]

[1] Gualdrada de' Ravignani, the beautiful and virtuous daughter of Bellincion Berti (see *Par.* xv. and xvi.), was the ancestress of the Conti Guidi, the great feudal nobles of the Casentino. This particular Guido Guerra (the name was borne by several members of his family) was the son of Gualdrada's fourth son, Count Marcovaldo of Dovadola. Alike in war and in peace, he was a

The other, next to me that beats the sand,
Is Aldobrandi,[1] name deserving well,
In the upper world, of honour; and myself,
Who in this torment do partake with them,
Am Rusticucci,[2] whom, past doubt, my wife,
Of savage temper, more than aught beside
Hath to this evil brought." If from the fire
I had been shelter'd, down amidst them straight
I then had cast me; nor my guide, I deem,
Would have restrain'd my going: but that fear
Of the dire burning vanquish'd the desire,
Which made me eager of their wish'd embrace.
I then began: "Not scorn, but grief much more,
Such as long time alone can cure, your doom
Fix'd deep within me, soon as this my lord
Spake words, whose tenor taught me to expect
That such a race, as ye are, was at hand.
I am a countryman of yours, who still
Affectionate have utter'd, and have heard
Your deeds and names renown'd. Leaving the gall,
For the sweet fruit I go, that a sure guide
Hath promised to me. But behoves that far
As to the centre first I downward tend."
"So may long space thy spirit guide thy limbs,"
He answer straight return'd; "and so thy fame
Shine bright when thou art gone, as thou shalt tell,
If courtesy and valour, as they wont,
Dwell in our city, or have vanish'd clean:
For one amidst us late condemn'd to wail,
Borsiere,[3] yonder walking with his peers,

leading spirit among the Guelfs of Tuscany from 1250 until his death in 1272, and played a distinguished part at the battle of Benevento. Zingarelli has recently shown that he is probably the person to whom Brunetto Latini dedicated his *Tesoretto*.

[1] Tegghiaio Aldobrandi, a noble Florentine Guelf, who, together with Guido Guerra, vainly attempted to dissuade his countrymen from the disastrous enterprise that ended in the defeat of Montaperti. He bore himself with much valour at the battle, and was among the Guelfs who took refuge at Lucca (1260).

[2] Jacopo Rusticucci, a Florentine burgher of some political importance among the Guelfs, was driven into immoral practices by an unhappy marriage. He was living in 1254.

[3] Guglielmo Borsiere appears to have been a retired purse-maker of Florence, who managed to get into aristocratic society. There is a story about him in the *Decameron* (i. 8). He seems to have lived at a somewhat later epoch than his associates in this Canto and as here indicated died shortly before 1300.

Grieves us no little by the news he brings."
"An upstart multitude and sudden gains,
Pride and excess, O Florence! have in thee
Engender'd, so that now in tears thou mourn'st!"
Thus cried I, with my face upraised, and they
All three, who for an answer took my words,
Look'd at each other, as men look when truth
Comes to their ear. "If at so little cost,"
They all at once rejoin'd, "thou satisfy
Others who question thee, O happy thou!
Gifted with words so apt to speak thy thought.
Wherefore, if thou escape this darksome clime,
Returning to behold the radiant stars,
When thou with pleasure shalt retrace the past,
See that of us thou speak among mankind."
This said, they broke the circle, and so swift
Fled, that as pinions seem'd their nimble feet.
Not in so short a time might one have said
"Amen," as they had vanish'd. Straight my guide
Pursued his track. I follow'd: and small space
Had we past onward, when the water's sound
Was now so near at hand, that we had scarce
Heard one another's speech for the loud din.
E'en as the river, that first holds its course
Unmingled, from the Mount of Vesulo,
On the left side of Apennine, toward
The east, which Acquacheta higher up
They call, ere it descend into the vale,
At Forlì, by that name no longer known,[1]
Rebellows o'er Saint Benedict, roll'd on
From the Alpine summit down a precipice,
Where space enough to lodge a thousand spreads;[2]

[1] The Acquacheta, a small river rising in the Apennines above the monastery of San Benedetto, takes the name of the Montone at Forlì, whence it flows into the Adriatic. At the time in which Dante wrote, it was the first river that, rising between the source of the Po (Monte Viso, "the Mount of Vesulo," in Piedmont) and the Apennines, "holds its course unmingled" (more literally, "has a path of its own"), that is, does not join the Po before flowing into the sea.

[2] "Either because the abbey was capable of containing more than those who occupied it, or because (says Landino) the lords of that territory (the Conti Guidi), as Boccaccio related on the authority of the abbot, had intended to build a castle near the waterfall, and to collect within its walls the population of the neighbouring villages" (Cary).

Thus downward from a craggy steep we found
That this dark wave resounded, roaring loud,
So that the ear its clamour soon had stunn'd.
I had a cord that braced my girdle round,
Wherewith I erst had thought fast bound to take
The painted leopard.[1] This when I had all
Unloosen'd from me (so my master bade)
I gather'd up, and stretch'd it forth to him.
Then to the right he turn'd, and from the brink
Standing few paces distant, cast it down
Into the deep abyss. "And somewhat strange,"
Thus to myself I spake, "signal so strange
Betokens, which my guide with earnest eye
Thus follows." Ah! what caution must men use
With those who look not at the deed alone,
But spy into the thoughts with subtle skill.
"Quickly shall come," he said, "what I expect;
Thine eye discover quickly that, whereof
Thy thought is dreaming." Ever to that truth,
Which but the semblance of a falsehood wears,
A man, if possible, should bar his lip;
Since, although blameless, he incurs reproach.
But silence here were vain; and by these notes,
Which now I sing, reader, I swear to thee,
So may they favour find to latest times!
That through the gross and murky air I spied
A shape come swimming up, that might have quell'd
The stoutest heart with wonder; in such guise
As one returns, who hath been down to loose
An anchor grappled fast against some rock,
Or to aught else that in the salt wave lies,
Who, upward springing, close draws in his feet.

[1] *Cf.* Isaiah xi. 5. The cord is frequently taken as the well-known symbol of the Franciscan order, to which Dante is said to have been associated as a tertiary. "It is thrown down the gulf to allure Geryon to them with the expectation of carrying down one who had cloaked his iniquities under the garb of penitence and self-mortification" (Cary). This interpretation is open to question, and it may be noted that the wearing of a cord of this kind, "to take the painted leopard," that is, as an incentive to purity of heart and body, was not peculiar to the Franciscans. Whether the Franciscan cord or another, the casting it aside may simply mean that, after the fearful examples he has just seen, the Poet no longer needs any such material warning or guard against temptations of lust.

CANTO XVII

Argument

The monster Geryon is described; to whom while Virgil is speaking in order that he may carry them both down to the next circle, Dante, by permission, goes a little further along the edge of the void, to descry the third species of sinners contained in this compartment, namely, those who have done violence to Art; and then returning to his master, they both descend, seated on the back of Geryon.

"Lo! the fell monster[1] with the deadly sting,
Who passes mountains, breaks through fenced walls
And firm embattled spears, and with his filth
Taints all the world." Thus me my guide address'd,
And beckon'd him, that he should come to shore,
Near to the stony causeway's utmost edge.
Forthwith that image vile of Fraud appear'd,
His head and upper part exposed on land,
But laid not on the shore his bestial train.
His face the semblance of a just man's wore,
So kind and gracious was its outward cheer;
The rest was serpent all: two shaggy claws
Reach'd to the arm-pits; and the back and breast,
And either side, were painted o'er with nodes
And orbits. Colours variegated more
Nor Turks nor Tartars e'er on cloth of state
With interchangeable embroidery wove,
Nor spread Arachne o'er her curious loom.
As oft-times a light skiff, moor'd to the shore,
Stands part in water, part upon the land;
Or, as where dwells the greedy German boor,
The beaver settles, watching for his prey;
So on the rim, that fenced the sand with rock,
Sat perch'd the fiend of evil. In the void
Glancing, his tail upturn'd its venomous fork,
With sting like scorpion's arm'd. Then thus my guide:
"Now need our way must turn few steps apart,
Far as to that ill beast, who couches there."

[1] Geryon, type of fraud or malice, as the Minotaur had been of violence and bestiality, is here compounded of the mythological monster killed by Hercules and the angel of the bottomless pit in the ninth chapter of Revelations. Mediæval writers attributed to the classical Geryon the practice of treacherously murdering his guests.

Thereat, toward the right our downward course
We shaped, and, better to escape the flame
And burning marle, ten paces on the verge
Proceeded. Soon as we to him arrive,
A little farther on mine eye beholds
A tribe of spirits,[1] seated on the sand
Near to the void. Forthwith my master spake:
"That to the full thy knowledge may extend
Of all this round contains, go now, and mark
The mien these wear: but hold not long discourse.
Till thou returnest, I with him meantime
Will parley, that to us he may vouchsafe
The aid of his strong shoulders." Thus alone,
Yet forward on the extremity I paced
Of that seventh circle, where the mournful tribe
Were seated. At the eyes forth gush'd their pangs.
Against the vapours and the torrid soil
Alternately their shifting hands they plied.
Thus use the dogs in summer still to ply
Their jaws and feet by turns, when bitten sore
By gnats, or flies, or gadflies swarming round.
Noting the visages of some, who lay
Beneath the pelting of that dolorous fire,
One of them all I knew not; but perceived
That, pendent from his neck, each bore a pouch
With colours and with emblems various mark'd,
On which it seem'd as if their eye did feed.
And when, amongst them, looking round I came,
A yellow purse I saw with azure wrought,
That wore a lion's countenance and port.[2]
Then, still my sight pursuing its career,
Another I beheld, than blood more red,
A goose display of whiter wing than curd.[3]
And one, who bore a fat and azure swine
Pictured on his white scrip,[4] address'd me thus:

[1] The usurers. *Cf.* above, Canto xi. Each is to be identified only by the purse, emblazoned with the armorial bearings that he has degraded by his unlawful gains. It is noteworthy that Dante's usurers are all Gentiles and nobles.

[2] Lion azure on field or was the arms of the Gianfigliazzi of Florence, who were Black Guelfs.

[3] A goose argent upon field gules was the arms of the Ubbriachi, Florentine Ghibellines.

[4] An azure sow upon an argent field was the arms of the Scrovigni of Padua. Rinaldo degli Scrovigni is the soul that now

" What dost thou in this deep? Go now and know,
Since yet thou livest, that my neighbour here
Vitaliano [1] on my left shall sit.
A Paduan with these Florentines am I.
Oft-times they thunder in mine ears, exclaiming,
' Oh! haste that noble knight, he who the pouch
' With the three goats [2] will bring.' " This said, he writhed
The mouth, and loll'd the tongue out, like an ox
That licks his nostrils. I, lest longer stay
He ill might brook, who bade me stay not long,
Backward my steps from those sad spirits turn'd.
My guide already seated on the haunch
Of the fierce animal I found; and thus
He me encouraged. " Be thou stout: be bold.
Down such a steep flight must we now descend.
Mount thou before: for, that no power the tail
May have to harm thee, I will be i' th' midst."
As one, who hath an ague fit so near,
His nails already are turn'd blue, and he
Quivers all o'er, if he but eye the shade;
Such was my cheer at hearing of his words.
But shame soon interposed her threat,[3] who makes
The servant bold in presence of his lord.
I settled me upon those shoulders huge,
And would have said, but that the words to aid
My purpose came not, " Look thou clasp me firm."
But he whose succour then not first I proved,
Soon as I mounted, in his arms aloft,
Embracing, held me up; and thus he spake:
" Geryon! now move thee: be thy wheeling gyres
Of ample circuit, easy thy descent.

addresses Dante. He is said to have been the father of that Enrico degli Scrovigni who had the Madonna of the Arena built at Padua (circa 1303), and was painted by Giotto, offering up the model of the chapel, in the latter's fresco of the Last Judgment.

[1] A Paduan usurer still living in 1300; it seems doubtful whether Vitaliano del Dente, as formerly held, or Vitaliano di Jacopo Vitaliani, as more recently suggested, is the person meant.

[2] Cary in a note rightly corrects " goats " to " beaks " (*tre becchi*). The knight, whose company these shades of usurers are anticipating in Hell, and who was still living in 1300, is Giovanni Buiamonte, of the Florentine family of the Bicchi, whose arms were three eagles' beaks or on field azure.

[3] Cary read: *Ma vergogna mi fe le sue minacce.* The right reading of the line is: *Ma vergogna mi fer le sue minacce;* " but his reproofs aroused shame in me."

Think on the unusual burden thou sustain'st."
As a small vessel, backening out from land,
Her station quits; so thence the monster loosed,
And, when he felt himself at large, turn'd round
There, where the breast had been, his forked tail.
Thus, like an eel, outstretch'd at length he steer'd,
Gathering the air up with retractile claws.
Not greater was the dread, when Phaëton
The reins let drop at random, whence high heaven,
Whereof signs yet appear, was wrapt in flames;[1]
Nor when ill-fated Icarus perceived,
By liquefaction of the scalded wax,
The trusted pennons loosen'd from his loins,
His sire exclaiming loud, "Ill way thou keep'st;"[2]
Than was my dread, when round me on each part
The air I viewed, and other object none,
Save the fell beast. He, slowly sailing, wheels
His downward motion, unobserved of me,
But that the wind, arising to my face,
Breathes on me from below. Now on our right
I heard the cataract beneath us leap
With hideous crash; whence bending down to explore,
New terror I conceived at the steep plunge;
For flames I saw, and wailings smote mine ear:
So that, all trembling, close I crouch'd my limbs,
And then distinguish'd, unperceived before,
By the dread torments that on every side
Drew nearer, how our downward course we wound.
As falcon, that hath long been on the wing,
But lure nor bird hath seen, while in despair
The falconer cries, "Ah me! thou stoop'st to earth,"
Wearied descends, whence nimbly he arose
In many an airy wheel, and lighting sits

[1] Phaëton, son of Apollo and Clymene, demanded in proof of his divine parentage to be allowed to drive the chariot of the sun for one day. The result was that he lost control of the chargers, scorched a portion of the Heavens (of which the signs were supposed to be still visible in the Milky Way, *Convivio*, ii. 15), and would have burnt up the earth had not Jupiter struck him dead with his thunderbolt. Cf. *Par.* xvii.

[2] Dædalus, the typical craftsman of mythology, made wings for himself and his son Icarus to escape from the labyrinth at Gnosus, which he himself had originally constructed for the Minotaur. Icarus flew too near the sun, and, the wax of the wings melting, fell into the sea and was drowned. Cf. *Par.* viii.

At distance from his lord in angry mood;
So Geryon lighting places us on foot
Low down at base of the deep-furrow'd rock,
And, of his burden there discharged, forthwith
Sprang forward, like an arrow from the string.

CANTO XVIII

Argument

The Poet describes the situation and form of the eighth circle, divided into ten gulfs, which contain as many different descriptions of fraudulent sinners; but in the present Canto he treats only of two sorts: the first is of those who, either for their own pleasure, or for that of another, have seduced any woman from her duty; and these are scourged of demons in the first gulf: the other sort is of flatterers, who in the second gulf are condemned to remain immersed in filth.

There is a place within the depths of Hell
Call'd Malebolge, all of rock dark-stain'd
With hue ferruginous, e'en as the steep
That round it circling winds. Right in the midst
Of that abominable region yawns
A spacious gulf profound, whereof the frame
Due time shall tell.[1] The circle, that remains,
Throughout its round, between the gulf and base
Of the high craggy banks, successive forms
Ten bastions, in its hollow bottom raised.
As where, to guard the walls, full many a foss
Begirds some stately castle, sure defence[2]
Affording to the space within; so here
Were model'd these: and as like fortresses,
E'en from their threshold to the brink without,
Are flank'd with bridges; from the rock's low base
Thus flinty paths advanced, that 'cross the moles
And dikes struck onward far as to the gulf,
That in one bound collected cuts them off.
Such was the place, wherein we found ourselves

[1] The gulf or gigantic well at the bottom of which is the ninth circle, the frozen river which holds the traitors.

[2] Cary reads: *La parte dov' e' son rendon sicura.* The more generally accepted reading of this line is: *La parte dov' ei son rende figura.* Carlyle translates: "As is the form that ground presents, where to defend the walls successive ditches begird a castle: such image these made here."

From Geryon's back dislodged. The bard to left
Held on his way, and I behind him moved.
On our right hand new misery I saw,
New pains, new executioners of wrath,
That swarming peopled the first chasm. Below
Were naked sinners. Hitherward they came,
Meeting our faces, from the middle point;
With us beyond,[1] but with a larger stride.
E'en thus the Romans, when the year returns
Of Jubilee, with better speed to rid
The thronging multitudes, their means devise
For such as pass the bridge; that on one side
All front toward the Castle, and approach
Saint Peter's fane, on the other towards the Mount.[2]
Each diverse way, along the grisly rock,
Horn'd demons I beheld, with lashes huge,
That on their back unmercifully smote.
Ah! how they made them bound at the first stripe!
None for the second waited, nor the third.
Meantime, as on I pass'd, one met my sight,
Whom soon as view'd, "Of him," cried I, "not yet
Mine eye hath had his fill." I therefore stay'd
My feet to scan him, and the teacher kind
Paused with me, and consented I should walk
Backward a space; and the tormented spirit,
Who thought to hide him, bent his visage down,
But it avail'd him nought; for I exclaim'd:
"Thou who dost cast thine eye upon the ground,
Unless thy features do belie thee much,
Venedico[3] art thou. But what brings thee

[1] "Beyond the middle point they tended the same way with us, but their pace was quicker than ours" (Cary).

[2] The first jubilee was instituted by Boniface VIII., to last from Christmas, 1299, to Christmas, 1300. Because of the great press of pilgrims passing over the Ponte Sant' Angelo, to and from St. Peter's, they were compelled to keep to their proper side of the bridge; those going faced Castello Sant' Angelo, those returning faced Monte Giordano. Cf. *Purg.* ii.

[3] Venedico de' Caccianimici, whom Dante had known in life, was one of the chief Guelfs of Bologna and an adherent of the Marquis Obizzo II. d' Este of Ferrara (*cf.* above, Canto xii.). To win the favour of the Marquis, he assisted him in the seduction of his own sister, Ghisola or Ghisolabella, who afterwards married Niccolò da Fontana of Ferrara. Venedico was banished from Bologna in 1289, and it was as an exile (perhaps in Florence) that Dante met him.

Into this bitter seasoning?" He replied:
"Unwillingly I answer to thy words.
But thy clear speech, that to my mind recalls
The world I once inhabited, constrains me.
Know then 't was I who led fair Ghisola
To do the Marquis' will, however fame
The shameful tale have bruited. Nor alone,
Bologna hither sendeth me to mourn;
Rather with us the place is so o'erthrong'd,
That not so many tongues this day are taught,
Betwixt the Reno and Savena's stream,
To answer *Sipa* [1] in their country's phrase.
And if of that securer proof thou need,
Remember but our craving thirst for gold."
Him speaking thus, a demon with his thong
Struck and exclaim'd, "Away, corrupter! here
Women are none for sale." Forthwith I join'd
My escort, and few paces thence we came
To where a rock forth issued from the bank.
That easily ascended, to the right
Upon its splinter turning, we depart
From those eternal barriers. When arrived
Where, underneath, the gaping arch lets pass
The scourged souls: "Pause here," the teacher said,
"And let these others miserable now
Strike on thy ken; faces not yet beheld,
For that together they with us have walk'd."
From the old bridge we eyed the pack, who came
From the other side toward us, like the rest,
Excoriate from the lash. My gentle guide,
By me unquestion'd, thus his speech resumed:
"Behold that lofty shade, who this way tends,
And seems too woe-begone to drop a tear.
How yet the regal aspect he retains!
Jason is he, whose skill and prowess won
The ram from Colchis. To the Lemnian isle
His passage thither led him, when those bold
And pitiless women had slain all their males.
There he with tokens and fair witching words
Hypsipyle beguiled, a virgin young,
Who first had all the rest herself beguiled.
Impregnated, he left her there forlorn:

[1] Bologna lies between the Savena and the Reno. *Sipa* (for *sia*) is the equivalent to *sì* (yes) in the Bolognese dialect.

Such is the guilt condemns him to this pain;
Here, too, Medea's injuries are avenged.[1]
All bear him company, who like deceit
To his have practised. And thus much to know
Of the first vale suffice thee, and of those
Whom its keen torments urge." Now had we come
Where, crossing the next pier, the straiten'd path
Bestrides its shoulders to another arch.

Hence, in the second chasm we heard the ghosts,
Who gibber in low melancholy sounds,
With wide-stretch'd nostrils snort, and on themselves
Smite with their palms. Upon the banks a scurf,
From the foul steam condensed, encrusting hung,
That held sharp combat with the sight and smell.

So hollow is the depth, that from no part,
Save on the summit of the rocky span,
Could I distinguish aught. Thus far we came;
And thence I saw, within the foss below,
A crowd immersed in ordure, that appear'd
Draff of the human body. There beneath
Searching with eye inquisitive, I mark'd
One with his head so grimed, 'twere hard to deem
If he were clerk or layman. Loud he cried:
"Why greedily thus bendest more on me,
Than on these other filthy ones, thy ken?"

"Because, if true my memory," I replied,
"I heretofore have seen thee with dry locks;
And thou Alessio[2] art, of Lucca sprung.
Therefore than all the rest I scan thee more."

Then beating on his brain, these words he spake:
"Me thus low down my flatteries have sunk,
Wherewith I ne'er enough could glut my tongue."

My leader thus: "A little farther stretch
Thy face, that thou the visage well mayst note
Of that besotted, sluttish courtezan,
Who there doth rend her with defiled nails,
Now crouching down, now risen on her feet.
Thaïs[3] is this, the harlot, whose false lip

[1] Jason seduced Hypsipyle, the daughter of Thoas, King of Lemnos, who had saved her father by deceiving the other Lemnian women who wished to slay all their menfolk; and he afterwards treacherously deserted Medea.

[2] Alessio degli Interminelli, a nobleman of Lucca notorious for his adulation of the great. He was still living in 1295.

[3] Thaïs, a character in the *Eunuchus* of Terence. Thraso,

Answer'd her doting paramour that ask'd,
'Thankest me much?'—'Say rather, wondrously.'
And, seeing this, here satiate be our view."

CANTO XIX

Argument

They come to the third gulf, wherein are punished those who have been guilty of simony. These are fixed with the head downwards in certain apertures, so that no more of them than the legs appears without, and on the soles of their feet are seen burning flames. Dante is taken down by his guide into the bottom of the gulf; and there finds Pope Nicholas the Fifth, whose evil deeds, together with those of other pontiffs, are bitterly reprehended. Virgil then carries him up again to the arch, which affords them a passage over the following gulf.

Woe to thee, Simon Magus! woe to you,
His wretched followers! who the things of God,
Which should be wedded unto goodness, them,
Rapacious as ye are, do prostitute
For gold and silver in adultery.[1]
Now must the trumpet sound for you, since yours
Is the third chasm. Upon the following vault
We now had mounted, where the rock impends
Directly o'er the centre of the foss.
Wisdom Supreme! how wonderful the art,
Which Thou dost manifest in Heaven, in earth,
And in the evil world, how just a meed
Allotting by Thy virtue unto all.
I saw the livid stone, throughout the sides
And in its bottom full of apertures,
All equal in their width, and circular each.
Nor ample less nor larger they appear'd

having sent a slave-girl as a present to Thaïs by the parasite Gnatho, asks the latter how she received the gift: *Magnas vero agere gratias Thaïs mihi?* ("Did Thaïs really return me great thanks?"); to which Gnatho answers: *Ingentes* ("Wondrous thanks"). Dante, who probably had not read Terence, found the quotation in Cicero's *De Amicitia*, where the substitution of *ingentes* for *magnas* is given as an example of adulatory exaggeration, and jumped to the conclusion that the words were spoken by Thaïs herself.

[1] Simony, the sin of making traffic of sacred things, is derived from the name of Simon the sorcerer (Acts viii.), who "thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money."

Than, in Saint John's fair dome of me beloved,
Those framed to hold the pure baptismal streams,
One of the which I brake, some few years past,
To save a whelming infant: and be this
A seal to undeceive whoever doubts
The motive of my deed.[1] From out the mouth
Of every one emerged a sinner's feet,
And of the legs high upward as the calf.
The rest beneath was hid. On either foot
The soles were burning; whence the flexile joints
Glanced with such violent motion, as had snapt
Asunder cords or twisted withs. As flame,
Feeding on unctuous matter, glides along
The surface, scarcely touching where it moves;
So here, from heel to point, glided the flames.
"Master! say who is he, than all the rest
Glancing in fiercer agony, on whom
A ruddier flame doth prey?" I thus inquired.
"If thou be willing," he replied, "that I
Carry thee down, where least the slope bank falls,
He of himself shall tell thee, and his wrongs."
I then: "As pleases thee, to me is best.
Thou art my lord; and know'st that ne'er I quit
Thy will: what silence hides, that knowest thou."
Thereat on the fourth pier we came, we turn'd,
And on our left descended to the depth,
A narrow strait, and perforated close.
Nor from his side my leader set me down,
Till to his orifice he brought, whose limb
Quivering express'd his pang. "Whoe'er thou art,
Sad spirit! thus reversed, and as a stake
Driven in the soil," I in these words began;
"If thou be able, utter forth thy voice."
There stood I like the friar, that doth shrive
A wretch for murder doom'd, who, e'en when fix'd,[2]
Calleth him back, whence death awhile delays.

[1] The ancient font, which stood in the centre of the Baptistery of Florence, appears to have had round holes or *pozzetti* in its outer wall, in which the priests stood to baptize. Dante broke one of these to save a boy (said to have been Antonio, the son of Baldinaccio de' Cavicciuoli) who had either tumbled into the font or climbed head-foremost into one of the *pozzetti*. The Poet implies that his enemies accused him of sacrilege in consequence.

[2] Certain criminals were buried alive, with the head downwards, the process being known as *propagginazione*.

He shouted: "Ha! already standest there?
Already standest there, O Boniface![1]
By many a year the writing play'd me false.
So early dost thou surfeit with the wealth,
For which thou fearedst not in guile to take
The lovely lady,[2] and then mangle her?"
I felt as those who, piercing not the drift
Of answer made them, stand as if exposed
In mockery, nor know what to reply;
When Virgil thus admonish'd: "Tell him quick,
'I am not he, not he whom thou believest.'"
And I, as was enjoin'd me, straight replied.
That heard, the spirit all did wrench his feet,
And, sighing, next in woeful accent spake:
"What then of me requirest? If to know
So much imports thee, who I am, that thou
Hast therefore down the bank descended, learn
That in the mighty mantle I was robed,
And of a she-bear was indeed the son,[3]
So eager to advance my whelps, that there
My having in my purse above I stow'd,
And here myself. Under my head are dragg'd
The rest, my predecessors in the guilt
Of simony. Stretch'd at their length, they lie
Along an opening in the rock. 'Midst them
I also low shall fall, soon as he comes,
For whom I took thee, when so hastily
I question'd. But already longer time
Hath past, since my soles kindled, and I thus
Upturn'd have stood, than is his doom to stand
Planted with fiery feet. For after him,
One yet of deeds more ugly shall arrive,
From forth the west, a shepherd without law,[4]

[1] The speaker is Nicholas III. (Giovanni Guatani Orsini), who was Pope from 1277 to 1280. His mistaking Dante for Boniface VIII., the Pope at the epoch of the vision (he died in 1303), who is coming to take his place, is an intensely dramatic touch.

[2] The Church, which Boniface was supposed to have wrested by fraud from her lawful spouse, Celestine V. (*Cf.* above, Canto iii.)

[3] The Bear was the badge of the Orsini.

[4] Clement V. (Bertrand de Goth), who had previously been Archbishop of Bordeaux. Elected Pope in 1305, he removed the Papacy to Avignon, and made it subservient to the King of France, by whose favour he was supposed to have obtained the tiara. He

Fated to cover both his form and mine.
He a new Jason shall be call'd, of whom
In Maccabees we read; and favour such
As to that priest his king indulgent show'd,
Shall be of France's monarch shown to him." [1]
I know not if I here too far presumed,
But in this strain I answer'd: "Tell me now,
What treasures from Saint Peter at the first
Our Lord demanded, when he put the keys
Into his charge? Surely He ask'd no more
But 'Follow me!' Nor Peter, nor the rest,
Or gold or silver of Matthias took,
When lots were cast upon the forfeit place
Of the condemned soul.[2] Abide thou then;
Thy punishment of right is merited:
And look thou well to that ill-gotten coin,
Which against Charles [3] thy hardihood inspired.
If reverence of the keys restrain'd me not,
Which thou in happier time didst hold, I yet
Severer speech might use. Your avarice
O'ercasts the world with mourning, under foot
Treading the good, and raising bad men up.
Of shepherds like to you, the Evangelist
Was ware, when her, who sits upon the waves,

died in 1314. Nicholas III., therefore, has to wait twenty-three years in Hell for Boniface VIII., who in his turn will have to wait only eleven years for Clement V. Cf. *Purg.* xxxii. and *Par.* xxx. The Pope who came between Boniface and Clement, Benedict XI., a Dominican friar of holy life and enlightened policy, reigned only a few months (Oct. 22, 1303, to July 7, 1304), and is nowhere mentioned in the *Divina Commedia*.

1 "But after the death of Seleucus, when Antiochus, called Epiphanes, took the kingdom, Jason, the brother of Onias, laboured underhand to be high priest, promising unto the king, by intercession, three hundred and threescore talents of silver, and of another revenue eighty talents" (2 Maccabees iv. 7, 8). According to Giovanni Villani (viii. 80), a somewhat analogous bargain had been struck between King Philip the Fourth of France (Philip the Fair) and Pope Clement, previous to the latter's elevation; but the story is now rejected by serious historians.

2 See Acts i. 15–26.

3 The elder Charles of Anjou, King of Naples and Sicily. According to Villani (vii. 54), Charles refused to accept one of the Pope's nieces as wife for a nephew of his, upon which Nicholas deprived him of the office of Senator of Rome, and accepted money from the Eastern Emperor, Michael Palæologus, with which he stirred up the troubles which (after his own death) resulted in the Sicilian Vespers (1282).

With kings in filthy whoredom he beheld;[1]
She who with seven heads tower'd at her birth,
And from ten horns her proof of glory drew,
Long as her spouse in virtue took delight.
Of gold and silver ye have made your god,
Differing wherein from the idolater,
But that he worships one, a hundred ye?
Ah, Constantine! to how much ill gave birth,
Not thy conversion, but that plenteous dower
Which the first wealthy Father gain'd from thee."[2]
Meanwhile, as thus I sung, he, whether wrath
Or conscience smote him, violent upsprang
Spinning on either sole. I do believe
My teacher well was pleased, with so composed
A lip he listen'd ever to the sound
Of the true words I utter'd. In both arms
He caught, and, to his bosom lifting me,
Upward retraced the way of his descent.
Nor weary of his weight, he press'd me close,
Till to the summit of the rock we came,
Our passage from the fourth to the fifth pier.
His cherish'd burden there gently he placed
Upon the rugged rock and steep, a path
Not easy for the clambering goat to mount.
Thence to my view another vale appear'd.

CANTO XX

Argument

The Poet relates the punishment of such as presumed, while living, to predict future events. It is to have their faces reversed and set the contrary way on their limbs, so that, being deprived of the power to see before them, they are constrained ever to walk backwards. Among these Virgil points out to him

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1 *Cf.* Revelations xvii. 1–3.

2 The Donation of Constantine represented that Emperor as withdrawing from the west in order to leave the Pope in absolute possession of Rome. This document, from which the temporal power of the Papacy was supposed to be derived, was a forgery of the early Middle Ages. In the *De Monarchia* (iii. 10), Dante urges that the donation, if really made, was invalid, because Constantine had no power to alienate the imperial dignity, nor the Church power to receive it. He refers to the matter elsewhere. Cf. *Mon.* ii. 13; *Par.* xx.

Amphiaraüs, Tiresias, Aruns, and Manto (from the mention of whom he takes occasion to speak of the origin of Mantua), together with several others, who had practised the arts of divination and astrology.

And now the verse proceeds to torments new,
Fit argument of this the twentieth strain
Of the first song, whose awful theme records
The spirits whelm'd in woe. Earnest I look'd
Into the depth, that open'd to my view,
Moisten'd with tears of anguish, and beheld
A tribe, that came along the hollow vale,
In silence weeping: such their step as walk
Quires, chanting solemn litanies, on earth.
As on them more direct mine eye descends,
Each wondrously seem'd to be reversed
At the neck-bone, so that the countenance
Was from the reins averted; and because
None might before him look, they were compell'd
To advance with backward gait. Thus one perhaps
Hath been by force of palsy clean transposed,
But I ne'er saw it nor believe it so.
Now, reader! think within thyself, so God
Fruit of thy reading give thee! how I long
Could keep my visage dry, when I beheld
Near me our form distorted in such guise,
That on the hinder parts fallen from the face
The tears down-streaming roll'd. Against a rock
I leant and wept, so that my guide exclaim'd:
"What, and art thou, too, witless as the rest?
Here pity most doth show herself alive,
When she is dead. What guilt exceedeth his,
Who with Heaven's judgment in his passion strives?
Raise up thy head, raise up, and see the man
Before whose eyes earth gaped in Thebes, when all
Cried out 'Amphiaraüs, whither rushest?
Why leavest thou the war?'[1] He not the less
Fell ruining far as to Minos down,
Whose grapple none eludes. Lo! how he makes
The breast his shoulders; and who once too far
Before him wish'd to see, now backward looks,

[1] Amphiaraüs, prophet and warrior of Argos, was one of the seven against Thebes, where he was swallowed up by the earth. See below, *Purg.* xii. and *Par.* iv.

And treads reverse his path. Tiresias [1] note,
Who semblance changed, when woman he became
Of male, through every limb transform'd; and then
Once more behoved him with his rod to strike
The two entwining serpents, ere the plumes,
That mark'd the better sex, might shoot again.
"Aruns,[2] with rere his belly facing, comes.
On Luni's mountains 'midst the marbles white,
Where delves Carrara's hind, who wons beneath,
A cavern was his dwelling, whence the stars
And main-sea wide in boundless view he held.
"The next, whose loosen'd tresses overspread
Her bosom, which thou seest not (for each hair
On that side grows) was Manto,[3] she who search'd
Through many regions, and at length her seat
Fix'd in my native land: whence a short space
My words detain thy audience. When her sire
From life departed, and in servitude
The city dedicate to Bacchus mourn'd,[4]
Long time she went a wanderer through the world.
Aloft in Italy's delightful land
A lake there lies, at foot of that proud Alp
That o'er the Tyrol locks Germania in,
Its name Benacus, from whose ample breast
A thousand springs, methinks, and more, between
Camonica and Garda, issuing forth,
Water the Apennine. There is a spot
At midway of that lake, where he who bears
Of Trento's flock the pastoral staff, with him
Of Brescia, and the Veronese, might each
Passing that way his benediction give.[5]

1 Tiresias, the blind soothsayer of Thebes. According to Ovid (*Metam.* iii.), he was changed into a woman because he separated two serpents with his staff; seven years later, he struck the same two serpents, and became a man again.

2 An Etruscan soothsayer mentioned in Lucan's *Pharsalia* (i. 584–638).

3 Cf. *Purg.* xxii. Manto, the daughter of Tiresias, is here represented as the founder of Mantua; it is curious that Dante should thus make Virgil give an account of the origin of his native city which differs from that given in the *Æneid* (x. 198–200), where we are told that Mantua was founded by Ocnus, son of the prophetess Manto and the Tuscan river (the Tiber).

4 Thebes, the native city of Bacchus, was subjected to the tyrannical rule of Creon.

5 Mr. Vernon renders this passage: "Up above in beautiful

A garrison of goodly site and strong,
Peschiera stands, to awe with front opposed
The Bergamese and Brescian, whence the shore
More slope each way descends. There, whatsoe'er
Benacus' bosom holds not, tumbling o'er
Down falls, and winds a river flood beneath
Through the green pastures. Soon as in his course
The stream makes head, Benacus then no more
They call the name, but Mincius, till at last
Reaching Governo,[1] into Po he falls.
Not far his course hath run, when a wide flat
It finds, which overstretching as a marsh
It covers, pestilent in summer oft.
Hence journeying, the savage maiden saw
Midst of the fen a territory waste
And naked of inhabitants. To shun
All human converse, here she with her slaves,
Plying her arts, remain'd, and lived, and left
Her body tenantless. Thenceforth the tribes,
Who round were scatter'd, gathering to that place,
Assembled; for its strength was great, enclosed
On all parts by the fen. On those dead bones
They rear'd themselves a city, for her sake
Calling it Mantua, who first chose the spot,
Nor ask'd another omen for the name;
Wherein more numerous the people dwelt,
Ere Casalodi's madness by deceit
Was wrong'd of Pinamonte.[2] If thou hear
Henceforth another origin assign'd
Of that my country, I forewarn thee now,

Italy there is a lake lying at the foot of that Alpine chain which shuts in Germany above the Tyrol, and it is called Benacus (*i. e.* the Lake of Garda). Through a thousand springs and more, I believe, between Garda (the village) and Val Camonica, (Mount) Apennino is laved by the water which settles in the said lake. There in the midst of it is a spot where (each one of three Bishops), the Pastor of Trent, and he of Brescia, and he of Verona, might, if he travelled that way, make the sign of the Cross (*i. e.* might give his episcopal benediction in his own diocese)." The Apennine here is not the chain of the Apennines, but a single mountain called *Apennino*, on the western shore of the Lago di Garda.

[1] Governolo, a small town near where the Mincio flows into the Po.

[2] Pinamonte de' Buonaccorsi treacherously drove out Alberto da Casalodi from Mantua in 1272, and made himself lord of the city.

That falsehood none beguile thee of the truth."
I answer'd, "Teacher, I conclude thy words
So certain, that all else shall be to me
As embers lacking life. But now of these,
Who here proceed, instruct me, if thou see
Any that merit more especial note.
For thereon is my mind alone intent."
He straight replied: "That spirit, from whose cheek
The beard sweeps o'er his shoulders brown, what time
Græcia was emptied of her males, that scarce
The cradles were supplied, the seer was he
In Aulis, who with Calchas gave the sign
When first to cut the cable. Him they named
Eurypylus: so sings my tragic strain,[1]
In which majestic measure well thou know'st,
Who know'st it all. That other, round the loins
So slender of his shape, was Michael Scot,[2]
Practised in every slight of magic wile.
"Guido Bonatti[3] see: Asdente[4] mark,
Who now were willing he had tended still
The thread and cordwain, and too late repents.
"See next the wretches, who the needle left,
The shuttle and the spindle, and became
Diviners: baneful witcheries they wrought
With images and herbs. But onward now:
For now doth Cain with fork of thorns confine
On either hemisphere, touching the wave
Beneath the towers of Seville. Yesternight
The moon was round.[5] Thou mayst remember well:

1 *Æneid*, ii. 114 *et seq.* The augur Eurypylus, sent by the Greeks to question the oracle, brought back the reply that, as they had come to Troy by the sacrifice of Iphigeneia, so they must obtain their safe return by another human sacrifice. Such at least is the story told to the Trojans by the treacherous Sinon. *Cf.* below, Canto xxx.

2 Michael Scott of Balwearie, the famous astrologer.

3 Guido Bonatti, an astrologer of Forlì, in the service of Guido da Montefeltro. (See below, Canto xxvii.)

4 Asdente ("the toothless"), whose real name was Benvenuto, was a shoemaker of Parma who attempted to foretell the future. He died about 1284. Dante refers to him again in the *Convivio* (iv. 16). The testimony of Asdente's contemporary and fellow-citizen, Fra Salimbene, seems to show that the Poet has treated the cobbler with somewhat less than his usual justice.

5 Cain with the thorns is equivalent to "the Man in the Moon." Cf. *Par.* ii. "The Pillars of Hercules were regarded by Dante

For she good service did thee in the gloom
Of the deep wood." This said, both onward moved.

CANTO XXI

ARGUMENT

Still in the eighth circle, which bears the name of Malebolge, they look down from the bridge that passes over its fifth gulf, upon the barterers or public peculators. These are plunged in a lake of boiling pitch, and guarded by Demons, to whom Virgil, leaving Dante apart, presents himself; and license being obtained to pass onward, both pursue their way.

THUS we from bridge to bridge, with other talk,
The which my drama cares not to rehearse,
Pass'd on; and to the summit reaching, stood
To view another gap, within the round
Of Malebolge, other bootless pangs.
Marvellous darkness shadow'd o'er the place.
In the Venetians' arsenal as boils
Through wintry months tenacious pitch, to smear
Their unsound vessels; for the inclement time
Seafaring men restrains, and in that while
His bark one builds anew, another stops
The ribs of his that hath made many a voyage,
One hammers at the prow, one at the poop,
This shapeth oars, that other cables twirls,
The mizen one repairs and mainsail rent;
So, not by force of fire but art divine,
Boil'd here a glutinous thick mass, that round
Limed all the shore beneath. I that beheld,
But therein nought distinguish'd, save the bubbles
Raised by the boiling, and one mighty swell
Heave, and by turns subsiding fall. While there
I fix'd my ken below, "Mark! mark!" my guide
Exclaiming, drew me towards him from the place
Wherein I stood. I turn'd myself, as one

and his contemporaries as the extreme western limit of the world, and he designates this boundary variously as Spain, Gades, the Iberus, Morocco, or Seville, as here (see *Par.* xxvii.). During the night preceding Good Friday, the moon (which guided Dante's steps in the dark wood, see above, Canto i.) was at full. The Poet is now describing the setting of the moon (or rising of the sun) on the Saturday morning" (Oelsner).

Impatient to behold that which beheld
He needs must shun, whom sudden fear unmans,
That he his flight delays not for the view.
Behind me I discern'd a devil black,
That running up advanced along the rock.
Ah! what fierce cruelty his look bespake;
In act how bitter did he seem, with wings
Buoyant outstretch'd and feet of nimblest tread.
His shoulder, proudly eminent and sharp,
Was with a sinner charged; by either haunch
He held him, the foot's sinew griping fast.
"Ye of our bridge!" he cried, "keen-talon'd fiends!
Lo! one of Santa Zita's elders.[1] Him
Whelm ye beneath, while I return for more.
That land hath store of such. All men are there,
Except Bonturo, barterers: of 'no'
For lucre there an 'ay' is quickly made."
Him dashing down, o'er the rough rock he turn'd;
Nor ever after thief a mastiff loosed
Sped with like eager haste. That other sank,
And forthwith writhing to the surface rose;
But those dark demons, shrouded by the bridge,
Cried, "Here the hallow'd visage saves not: here
Is other swimming than in Serchio's wave:[2]
Wherefore, if thou desire we rend thee not,
Take heed thou mount not o'er the pitch." This said,

1 The "elders" or "ancients" (*anziani*) were the chief magistrates of Lucca, of which city Santa Zita is the patron saint. This particular Lucchese is evidently one who died in April, 1300, and has been conjecturally identified with a certain Martino Bottaio. The exception of Bonturo Dati, the leader of the democratic party in Lucca (who was still alive at the date of the vision), from the general condemnation is ironical, and meant to imply that he was the worst offender of the lot. *Barattieri*, or barterers, are those guilty of corrupt practices and peculation in public offices. Mr. Vernon notes that the great length of this episode, as told by Dante and illustrated by his early commentators, shows the great importance that they attached to this sin and to its punishment. It will be remembered that a false accusation of barratry was one of the pretexts for Dante's banishment and the sentence of death passed against him; and it is noteworthy that, although he escapes spotless and scathless, this is the only place in the *Inferno* in which Dante represents himself as experiencing serious personal danger.

2 The Serchio is the river that flows by Lucca. The "hallowed image," *santo volto*, is a Crucifix, of which the face of Christ is said to have been carved by Nicodemus and finished by Angels, which is still highly venerated in the Cathedral of Lucca.

They grappled him with more than hundred hooks,
And shouted: "Cover'd thou must sport thee here;
So, if thou canst, in secret mayst thou filch."
E'en thus the cook bestirs him, with his grooms,
To thrust the flesh into the caldron down
With flesh-hooks, that it float not on the top.

Me then my guide bespake: "Lest they descry
That thou art here, behind a craggy rock
Bend low and screen thee: and whate'er of force
Be offer'd me, or insult, fear thou not;
For I am well advised, who have been erst
In the like fray." Beyond the bridge's head
Therewith he pass'd; and reaching the sixth pier,
Behoved him then a forehead terror-proof.

With storm and fury, as when dogs rush forth
Upon the poor man's back, who suddenly
From whence he standeth makes his suit; so rush'd
Those from beneath the arch, and against him
Their weapons all they pointed. He, aloud:
"Be none of you outrageous: ere your tine
Dare seize me, come forth from amongst you one,
Who having heard my words, decide he then
If he shall tear these limbs." They shouted loud,
"Go, Malacoda!" Whereat one advanced,
The others standing firm, and as he came,
"What may this turn avail him?" he exclaim'd.

"Believest thou, Malacoda! I had come
Thus far from all your skirmishing secure,"
My teacher answer'd, "without Will Divine
And destiny propitious? Pass we then;
For so Heaven's pleasure is, that I should lead
Another through this savage wilderness."

Forthwith so fell his pride, that he let drop
The instrument of torture at his feet,
And to the rest exclaim'd: "We have no power
To strike him." Then to me my guide: "O thou!
Who on the bridge among the crags dost sit
Low crouching, safely now to me return."

I rose, and towards him moved with speed; the fiends
Meantime all forward drew: me terror seized,
Lest they should break the compact they had made.
Thus issuing from Caprona, once I saw
Th' infantry, dreading lest his covenant

The foe should break; [1] so close he hemm'd them round.
I to my leader's side adhered, mine eyes
With fixt and motionless observance bent
On their unkindly visage. They their hooks
Protruding, one the other thus bespake:
"Wilt thou I touch him on the hip?" To whom
Was answer'd: "Even so; nor miss thy aim."
But he, who was in conference with my guide,
Turn'd rapid round; and thus the demon spake:
"Stay, stay thee, Scarmiglione!" Then to us
He added: "Further footing to your step
This rock affords not, shiver'd to the base
Of the sixth arch. But would ye still proceed,
Up by this cavern go: not distant far,
Another rock will yield you passage safe.
Yesterday, later by five hours than now,
Twelve hundred threescore years and six had fill'd
The circuit of their course, since here the way
Was broken.[2] Thitherward I straight dispatch
Certain of these my scouts, who shall espy
If any on the surface bask. With them
Go ye: for ye shall find them nothing fell.
Come, Alichino, forth," with that he cried,
"And Calcabrina, and Cagnazzo thou!
The troop of ten let Barbariccia lead.
With Libicocco, Draghignazzo haste,
Fang'd Ciriatto, Graffiacane fierce,
And Farfarello, and mad Rubicant.[3]
Search ye around the bubbling tar. For these,
In safety lead them, where the other crag
Uninterrupted traverses the dens."
I then: "O master! what a sight is there.
Ah! without escort, journey we alone,

[1] Dante was present, either as a spectator or (as seems more probable) as a volunteer in the Florentine army, when the Pisan garrison of Caprona was compelled to capitulate to the Florentines and Lucchese in August, 1289.

[2] "This passage fixes the era of Dante's descent at Good Friday, in the year 1300 (34 years from our blessed Lord's incarnation being added to 1266), and at the 35th year of our Poet's age" (Cary).

[3] It has been supposed that these *Malebranche*, "evil-claws," or "keen-talon'd fiends," with their extraordinary names, represent Dante's enemies among his fellow-citizens, who had sought to take his honour and his life, and had succeeded in working his temporal ruin, by their false accusations of barratry.

Which, if thou know the way, I covet not.
Unless thy prudence fail thee, dost not mark
How they do gnarl upon us, and their scowl
Threatens us present tortures?" He replied:
"I charge thee, fear not: let them, as they will,
Gnarl on: 'tis but in token of their spite
Against the souls who mourn in torment steep'd."
To leftward o'er the pier they turn'd; but each
Had first between his teeth prest close the tongue,
Toward their leader for a signal looking,
Which he with sound obscene triumphant gave.

CANTO XXII

ARGUMENT

Virgil and Dante proceed, accompanied by the Demons, and see other sinners of the same description in the same gulf. The device of Ciampolo, one of these, to escape from the Demons, who had laid hold on him.

It hath been heretofore my chance to see
Horsemen with martial order shifting camp,
To onset sallying, or in muster ranged,
Or in retreat sometimes outstretch'd for flight:
Light-armed squadrons and fleet foragers
Scouring thy plains, Arezzo! have I seen,
And clashing tournaments, and tilting jousts,
Now with the sound of trumpets, now of bells,
Tabors, or signals made from castled heights,
And with inventions multiform, our own,
Or introduced from foreign land; but ne'er
To such a strange recorder I beheld
In evolution moving, horse nor foot,
Nor ship, that tack'd by sign from land or star.
With the ten demons on our way we went;
Ah, fearful company! but in the church
With saints, with gluttons at the tavern's mess.
Still earnest on the pitch I gazed, to mark
All things whate'er the chasm contain'd, and those
Who burn'd within. As dolphins that, in sign
To mariners, heave high their arched backs,
That thence forewarn'd they may advise to save
Their threaten'd vessel; so, at intervals,

To ease the pain, his back some sinner show'd,
Then hid more nimbly than the lightning-glance.
E'en as the frogs, that of a watery moat
Stand at the brink, with the jaws only out,
Their feet and of the trunk all else conceal'd,
Thus on each part the sinners stood; but soon
As Barbariccia was at hand, so they
Drew back under the wave. I saw, and yet
My heart doth stagger, one, that waited thus,
As it befals that oft one frog remains,
While the next springs away: and Graffiacan,
Who of the fiends was nearest, grappling seized
His clotted locks, and dragg'd him sprawling up,
That he appear'd to me an otter. Each
Already by their names I knew, so well
When they were chosen I observ'd, and mark'd
How one the other call'd. "O Rubicant!
See that his hide thou with thy talons flay,"
Shouted together all the cursed crew.
Then I: "Inform thee, Master! if thou may,
What wretched soul is this, on whom their hands
His foes have laid." My leader to his side
Approach'd, and whence he came inquired; to whom
Was answer'd thus: "Born in Navarre's domain,
My mother placed me in a lord's retinue;
For she had borne me to a losel vile,
A spendthrift of his substance and himself.
The good king Thibault after that I served:[1]
To peculating here my thoughts were turn'd,
Whereof I give account in this dire heat."
Straight Ciriatto, from whose mouth a tusk
Issued on either side, as from a boar,
Ripp'd him with one of these. 'Twixt evil claws
The mouse had fallen: but Barbariccia cried,
Seizing him with both arms: "Stand thou apart,
While I do fix him on my prong transpierced."
Then added, turning to my guide his face,
"Inquire of him, if more thou wish to learn,
Ere he again be rent." My leader thus:
"Then tell us of the partners in thy guilt;

1 Thibaut II., King of Navarre (1253–1270), son of the poet-king, Thibaut I., mentioned by Dante in the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*. Nothing is known of this dishonest servant of his, whose name is said to have been Ciampolo.

Knowest thou any sprung of Latian land
Under the tar?"—" I parted," he replied,
" But now from one, who sojourn'd not far thence:
So were I under shelter now with him,
Nor hook nor talon then should scare me more."
" Too long we suffer," Libicocco cried;
Then, darting forth a prong, seized on his arm,
And mangled bore away the sinewy part.
Him Draghignazzo by his thighs beneath
Would next have caught; whence angrily their chief,
Turning on all sides round, with threatening brow
Restrain'd them. When their strife a little ceased,
Of him, who yet was gazing on his wound,
My teacher thus without delay inquired:
" Who was the spirit, from whom by evil hap
Parting, as thou hast told, thou camest to shore?"—
" It was the friar Gomita," he rejoin'd,
" He of Gallura, vessel of all guile,
Who had his master's enemies in hand,
And used them so that they commend him well.
Money he took, and them at large dismiss'd;
So he reports; and in each other charge
Committed to his keeping play'd the part
Of barterer to the height. With him doth herd
The chief of Logodoro, Michel Zanche;
Sardinia is a theme whereof their tongue
Is never weary.[1] Out! alas! behold
That other, how he grins. More would I say,
But tremble lest he mean to maul me sore."
Their captain then to Farfarello turning,
Who roll'd his moony eyes in act to strike,
Rebuked him thus: " Off, cursed bird! avaunt!"
" If ye desire to see or hear," he thus
Quaking with dread resumed, " or Tuscan spirits
Or Lombard, I will cause them to appear.
Meantime let these ill talons bate their fury,

[1] Sardinia was divided into four districts or jurisdictions: Cagliari, Logodoro, Gallura and Arborea, each governed by a judge. Friar Gomita was the chancellor of Nino Visconti, judge of Gallura (see *Purg.* viii.), who finally hanged him for conniving at the escape of prisoners under his charge, by whom he had been bribed. Michele Zanche, vicar of King Enzio (son of Frederick II.), carried on similar corrupt practices in the district of Logodoro until, about 1290, he was murdered by his son-in-law, Branca d'Oria. (See below, Canto xxxiii.)

So that no vengeance they may fear from them;
And I, remaining in this self-same place,
Will, for myself but one, make seven appear,
When my shrill whistle shall be heard: for so
Our custom is to call each other up."
Cagnazzo at that word deriding grinn'd,
Then wagg'd the head and spake: "Hear his device,
Mischievous as he is, to plunge him down."
Whereto he thus, who fail'd not in rich store
Of nice-wove toils: "Mischief, forsooth, extreme!
Meant only to procure myself more woe." [1]
No longer Alichino then refrain'd,
But thus, the rest gainsaying, him bespake:
"If thou do cast thee down, I not on foot
Will chase thee, but above the pitch will beat
My plumes. Quit we the vantage ground, and let
The bank be as a shield; that we may see,
If singly thou prevail against us all."
Now, reader, of new sport expect to hear.
They each one turn'd his eyes to the other shore,
He first, who was the hardest to persuade.
The spirit of Navarre chose well his time,
Planted his feet on land, and at one leap
Escaping, disappointed their resolve.
Them quick resentment stung, but him the most,
Who was the cause of failure: in pursuit
He therefore sped, exclaiming, "Thou art caught."
But little it avail'd; terror outstripp'd
His following flight; the other plunged beneath,
And he with upward pinion raised his breast:
E'en thus the water-fowl, when she perceives
The falcon near, dives instant down, while he
Enraged and spent retires. That mockery
In Calcabrina fury stirr'd, who flew
After him, with desire of strife inflamed;
And, for the barterer had 'scaped, so turn'd
His talons on his comrade. O'er the dyke
In grapple close they join'd; but the other proved
A goshawk able to rend well his foe;
And in the boiling lake both fell. The heat
Was umpire [2] soon between them; but in vain

[1] The right reading of this line is: *Quand'io procuro a' miei maggior tristizia;* "when I procure more woe for my companions."
[2] Cary read *schermidor*, but the right reading is *sghermitor*, the

To lift themselves they strove, so fast were glued
Their pennons. Barbariccia, as the rest,
That chance lamenting, four in flight dispatch'd
From the other coast, with all their weapons arm'd.
They, to their post on each side speedily
Descending, stretch'd their hooks toward the fiends,
Who flounder'd, inly burning from their scars:
And we departing left them to that broil.

CANTO XXIII

Argument

The enraged Demons pursue Dante, but he is preserved from them by Virgil. On reaching the sixth gulf, he beholds the punishment of the hypocrites; which is, to pace continually round the gulf under the pressure of cloaks and hoods, that are gilt on the outside, but leaden within. He is addressed by two of these, Catalano and Loderingo, knights of Saint Mary, otherwise called Joyous Friars, of Bologna. Caïaphas is seen fixed to a cross on the ground, and lies so stretched along the way, that all tread on him in passing.

In silence and in solitude we went,
One first, the other following his steps,
As minor friars journeying on their road.
The present fray had turn'd my thoughts to muse
Upon old Æsop's fable,[1] where he told
What fate unto the mouse and frog befel;
For language hath not sounds more like in sense,
Than are these chances, if the origin
And end of each be heedfully compared.
And as one thought bursts from another forth,
So afterward from that another sprang,
Which added doubly to my former fear.
For thus I reason'd: "These through us have been
So foil'd, with loss and mockery so complete,
As needs must sting them sore. If anger then
Be to their evil will conjoin'd, more fell

contrary of what grapples: "The heat at once made them ungrapple."

[1] A frog offered to carry a mouse across a stream, with the intention of drowning him, and was himself devoured by a kite. The fable, in various forms, is found in the mediæval collection of such stories, but not in the original Æsop.

They shall pursue us, than the savage hound
Snatches the leveret panting 'twixt his jaws."
Already I perceived my hair stand all
On end with terror, and look'd eager back.
"Teacher," I thus began, "if speedily
Thyself and me thou hide not, much I dread
Those evil talons. Even now behind
They urge us: quick imagination works
So forcibly, that I already feel them."
He answer'd: "Were I form'd of leaded glass,
I should not sooner draw unto myself
Thy outward image, than I now imprint
That from within. This moment came thy thoughts
Presented before mine, with similar act
And countenance similar, so that from both
I one design have framed. If the right coast
Incline so much, that we may thence descend
Into the other chasm, we shall escape
Secure from this imagined pursuit."
He had not spoke his purpose to the end,
When I from far beheld them with spread wings
Approach to take us. Suddenly my guide
Caught me, even as a mother that from sleep
Is by the noise aroused, and near her sees
The climbing fires, who snatches up her babe
And flies ne'er pausing, careful more of him
Than of herself, that but a single vest
Clings round her limbs. Down from the jutting beach
Supine he cast him to that pendent rock,
Which closes on one part the other chasm.
Never ran water with such hurrying pace
Adown the tube to turn a land-mill's wheel,
When nearest it approaches to the spokes,
As then along that edge my master ran,
Carrying me in his bosom, as a child,
Not a companion. Scarcely had his feet
Reach'd to the lowest of the bed beneath,
When over us the steep they reach'd: but fear
In him was none; for that high Providence,
Which placed them ministers of the fifth foss,
Power of departing thence took from them all.
There in the depth we saw a painted tribe,
Who paced with tardy steps around, and wept,
Faint in appearance and o'ercome with toil.

Cloaks had they on, with hoods, that fell low down
Before their eyes, in fashion like to those
Worn by the monks in Cologne. Their outside
Was overlaid with gold, dazzling to view,
But leaden all within, and of such weight
That Frederick's [1] compared to these were straw.
Oh, everlasting wearisome attire!
We yet once more with them together turn'd
To leftward, on their dismal moan intent.
But, by the weight opprest, so slowly came
The fainting people, that our company
Was changed at every movement of the step.
Whence I my guide address'd: "See that thou find
Some spirit, whose name may by his deeds be known;
And to that end look round thee as thou go'st."
Then one, who understood the Tuscan voice,
Cried after us aloud: "Hold in your feet,
Ye who so swiftly speed through the dusk air.
Perchance from me thou shalt obtain thy wish."
Whereat my leader, turning, me bespake:
"Pause, and then onward at their pace proceed."
I staid, and saw two spirits in whose look
Impatient eagerness of mind was mark'd
To overtake me; but the load they bare
And narrow path retarded their approach.
Soon as arrived, they with an eye askance
Perused me, but spake not: then turning, each
To other thus conferring said: "This one
Seems, by the action of his throat, alive;
And, be they dead, what privilege allows
They walk unmantled by the cumbrous stole?"
Then thus to me: "Tuscan, who visitest
The college of the mourning hypocrites,
Disdain not to instruct us who thou art."
"By Arno's pleasant stream," I thus replied,
"In the great city I was bred and grew,
And wear the body I have ever worn.
But who are ye, from whom such mighty grief,
As now I witness, courseth down your cheeks?
What torment breaks forth in this bitter woe?"
"Our *mantles* gleaming bright with orange hue,"
One of them answer'd, "are so leaden gross,

[1] The Emperor Frederick II. is supposed to have wrapped traitors in a cloak of lead, which was then melted over a fire.

That with their weight they make the balances
To crack beneath them. Joyous Friars we were,
Bologna's natives; Catalano I,
He Loderingo named; and by thy land
Together taken, as men used to take
A single and indifferent arbiter,
To reconcile their strifes. How there we sped,
Gardingo's vicinage can best declare." [1]
"O friars!" I began, "your miseries—"
But there brake off, for one had caught mine eye,
Fix'd to a cross with three stakes on the ground:
He, when he saw me, writhed himself, throughout
Distorted, ruffling with deep sighs his beard.
And Catalano, who thereof was 'ware,
Thus spake: "That pierced spirit, whom intent
Thou view'st, was he who gave the Pharisees
Counsel, that it were fitting for one man
To suffer for the people. He doth lie
Transverse; nor any passes, but him first
Behoves make feeling trial how each weighs.
In straits like this along the foss are placed
The father of his consort,[2] and the rest
Partakers in that council, seed of ill
And sorrow to the Jews." I noted then,
How Virgil gazed with wonder upon him,
Thus abjectly extended on the cross
In banishment eternal. To the friar
He next his words address'd: "We pray ye tell,
If so be lawful, whether on our right
Lies any opening in the rock, whereby
We both may issue hence, without constraint

[1] The *Frati Gaudenti*, or "jovial friars," was the name applied in derision to a military religious order known as the *Cavalieri di S. Maria*, which was founded to mediate between rival factions and to protect the weak. Their two chief founders, Catalano de' Catalani, a Guelf, and Loderingo degli Andalò, a Ghibelline, were summoned from Bologna in 1266, to act together as Podestàs of Florence and reform the government impartially. They were accused of hypocrisy and corruption, and driven from the city—the district known as the *Gardingo* (the present Piazza di Firenze) being destroyed in the tumult that arose. Catalano died in 1285. They were probably innocent of the charges brought against them, which, however, Dante and Giovanni Villani seem to have accepted without hesitation.

[2] Caiaphas and Annas (John xi. and xviii.). Note the dramatic touch of Virgil's wonder at the sight.

On the Dark Angels, that compell'd they come
To lead us from this depth." He thus replied:
"Nearer than thou dost hope, there is a rock
From the great circle moving, which o'ersteps
Each vale of horror, save that here his cope
Is shatter'd. By the ruin ye may mount:
For on the side it slants, and most the height
Rises below." With head bent down awhile
My leader stood; then spake: "He warn'd us ill,[1]
Who yonder hangs the sinners on his hook."
To whom the friar: "At Bologna erst
I many vices of the Devil heard;
Among the rest was said, 'He is a liar,
And the father of lies!'" When he had spoke,
My leader with large strides proceeded on,
Somewhat disturb'd with anger in his look.
I therefore left the spirits heavy laden,
And, following, his beloved footsteps mark'd.

CANTO XXIV

Argument

Under the escort of his faithful master, Dante, not without difficulty, makes his way out of the sixth gulf; and, in the seventh, sees the robbers tormented by venomous and pestilent serpents. The soul of Vanni Fucci, who had pillaged the sacristy of Saint James in Pistoia, predicts some calamities that impended over that city, and over the Florentines.

In the year's early nonage,[2] when the sun
Tempers his tresses in Aquarius' urn,
And now towards equal day the nights recede;
Whenas the rime upon the earth puts on
Her dazzling sister's image, but not long
Her milder sway endures; then riseth up
The village hind, whom fails his wintry store,
And looking out beholds the plain around
All whiten'd; whence impatiently he smites
His thighs, and to his hut returning in,

[1] Malacoda had told him that they would find a safe passage.

[2] "At the latter part of January, when the sun enters into Aquarius, and the equinox is drawing near, when the hoar-frosts in the morning often wear the appearance of snow, but are melted by the rising sun" (Cary).

There paces to and fro, wailing his lot,
As a discomfited and helpless man;
Then comes he forth again, and feels new hope
Spring in his bosom, finding e'en thus soon
The world hath changed its countenance, grasps his crook,
And forth to pasture drives his little flock:
So me my guide dishearten'd, when I saw
His troubled forehead; and so speedily
That ill was cured; for at the fallen bridge
Arriving, towards me with a look as sweet,
He turn'd him back, as that I first beheld
At the steep mountain's foot. Regarding well
The ruin, and some counsel first maintain'd
With his own thought, he open'd wide his arm
And took me up. As one, who, while he works,
Computes his labour's issue, that he seems
Still to foresee the effect; so lifting me
Up to the summit of one peak, he fix'd
His eye upon another. "Grapple that,"
Said he, "but first make proof, if it be such
As will sustain thee." For one *cloak'd* with lead
This were no journey. Scarcely he, though light,
And I, though onward push'd from crag to crag,
Could mount. And if the precinct of this coast
Were not less ample than the last, for him
I know not, but my strength had surely fail'd.
But Malebolge all toward the mouth
Inclining of the nethermost abyss,
The site of every valley hence requires
That one side upward slope, the other fall.
At length the point from whence the utmost stone
Juts down, we reach'd; soon as to that arrived,
So was the breath exhausted from my lungs,
I could no farther, but did seat me there.
"Now needs thy best of man;" so spake my guide:
"For not on downy plumes, nor under shade
Of canopy reposing, fame is won;
Without which whosoe'er consumes his days
Leaveth such vestige of himself on earth,
As smoke in air or foam upon the wave.
Thou therefore rise: vanquish thy weariness
By the mind's effort, in each struggle form'd
To vanquish, if she suffer not the weight
Of her corporeal frame to crush her down.

A longer ladder yet remains to scale:
From these to have escaped sufficeth not;
If well thou note me, profit by my words."
I straightway rose, and show'd myself less spent
Than I in truth did feel me. "On," I cried,
"For I am stout and fearless." Up the rock
Our way we held, more rugged than before,
Narrower, and steeper far to climb. From talk
I ceased not, as we journey'd, so to seem
Least faint; whereat a voice from the other foss
Did issue forth, for utterance suited ill.
Though on the arch that crosses there I stood,
What were the words I knew not, but who spake
Seem'd moved in anger. Down I stoop'd to look;
But my quick eye might reach not to the depth
For shrouding darkness; wherefore thus I spake:
"To the next circle, teacher, bend thy steps,
And from the wall dismount we; for as hence
I hear and understand not, so I see
Beneath, and nought discern."—"I answer not,"
Said he, "but by the deed. To fair request
Silent performance maketh best return."
We from the bridge's head descended, where
To the eighth mound it joins; and then, the chasm
Opening to view, I saw a crowd within
Of serpents terrible, so strange of shape
And hideous, that remembrance in my veins
Yet shrinks the vital current. Of her sands
Let Lybia vaunt no more: if Jaculus,
Pareas and Chelyder be her brood,
Cenchris and Amphisbæna, plagues so dire
Or in such numbers swarming ne'er she show'd,
Not with all Ethiopia, and whate'er
Above the Erythræan sea is spawn'd.[1]
Amid this dread exuberance of woe
Ran naked spirits wing'd with horrid fear,
Nor hope had they of crevice where to hide,
Or heliotrope [2] to charm them out of view.
With serpents were their hands behind them bound,

[1] As Dr. Moore points out, Dante has borrowed these serpents from Lucan's description of the plagues of Libya, in the ninth book of the *Pharsalia*.

[2] Heliotrope, a kind of chalcedony, was supposed to make its wearer invisible.

Which through their reins infix'd the tail and head,
Twisted in folds before. And lo! on one
Near to our side, darted an adder up,
And, where the neck is on the shoulders tied,
Transpierced him. Far more quickly than e'er pen
Wrote O or I, he kindled, burn'd, and changed
To ashes all, pour'd out upon the earth.
When there dissolved he lay, the dust again
Uproll'd spontaneous, and the self-same form
Instant resumed. So mighty sages tell,
The Arabian Phœnix, when five hundred years
Have well-nigh circled, dies, and springs forthwith
Renascent: blade nor herb throughout his life
He tastes, but tears of frankincense alone
And odorous amomum: swaths of nard
And myrrh his funeral shroud. As one that falls,
He knows not how, by force demoniac dragg'd
To earth, or through obstruction fettering up
In chains invisible the powers of man,
Who, risen from his trance, gazeth around,
Bewilder'd with the monstrous agony
He hath endured, and wildly staring sighs;
So stood aghast the sinner when he rose.

Oh! how severe God's judgment, that deals out
Such blows in stormy vengeance. Who he was,
My teacher next inquired; and thus in few
He answer'd: "Vanni Fucci [1] am I call'd,
Not long since rained down from Tuscany
To this dire gullet. Me the bestial life
And not the human pleased, mule that I was,
Who in Pistoia found my worthy den."

I then to Virgil: "Bid him stir not hence;
And ask what crime did thrust him hither: once
A man I knew him, choleric and bloody."

The sinner heard and feign'd not, but towards me
His mind directing and his face, wherein
Was dismal shame depictured, thus he spake:
"It grieves me more to have been caught by thee
In this sad plight, which thou beholdest, than
When I was taken from the other life.

[1] Vanni Fucci, an illegitimate scion of a noble family in Pistoia and a turbulent Black Guelf, was concerned in the plundering of the church of San Zeno in Pistoia in 1293, for which crime several innocent men were put to torture, and one hanged.

I have no power permitted to deny
What thou inquirest. I am doom'd thus low
To dwell, for that the sacristy by me
Was rifled of its goodly ornaments,
And with the guilt another falsely charged.
But that thou mayst not joy to see me thus,
So as thou e'er shalt 'scape this darksome realm,
Open thine ears and hear what I forebode.
Reft of the Neri first Pistoia pines;
Then Florence changeth citizens and laws;
From Valdimagra, drawn by wrathful Mars,
A vapour rises, wrapt in turbid mists,
And sharp and eager driveth on the storm
With arrowy hurtling o'er Piceno's field,
Whence suddenly the cloud shall burst, and strike
Each helpless Bianco prostrate to the ground.[1]
This have I told, that grief may rend thy heart."

CANTO XXV

Argument

The sacrilegious Fucci vents his fury in blasphemy, is seized by serpents, and flying is pursued by Cacus in the form of a Centaur, who is described with a swarm of serpents on his haunch, and a dragon on his shoulders breathing forth fire. Our Poet then meets with the spirits of three of his countrymen, two of whom undergo a marvellous transformation in his presence.

When he had spoke, the sinner raised his hands
Pointed in mockery, and cried: "Take them, God!
I level them at thee." From that day forth

[1] Vanni Fucci thus foretells the impending ruin of the White faction. In May, 1301, the Bianchi, who were then predominant in Florence, procured the expulsion of the Neri from Pistoia. For this Dante himself (as the first sentence against him shows) was one of those held personally responsible. In November, the Neri entered Florence with the aid of Charles of Valois, and, in April, 1302, made the city "change citizens and laws," by driving out the Bianchi in their turn. Pistoia now became the last rallying point of the Bianchi in Tuscany, until their hopes were finally shattered by the victories of Moroello Malaspina, the lord of the valley of the Macra (Valdimagra). Campo Piceno, "Piceno's field," here means the neighbourhood of Pistoia; but it is doubtful whether Dante refers to Malaspina's taking of Serravalle in 1302, or his final reduction of Pistoia in 1306.

The serpents were my friends; for round his neck
One of them rolling twisted, as it said,
"Be silent, tongue!" Another, to his arms
Upgliding, tied them, riveting itself
So close, it took from them the power to move.
Pistoia! ah, Pistoia! why dost doubt
To turn thee into ashes, cumbering earth
No longer, since in evil act so far
Thou hast outdone thy seed?[1] I did not mark,
Through all the gloomy circles of the abyss,
Spirit, that swell'd so proudly 'gainst his God;
Not him,[2] who headlong fell from Thebes. He fled,
Nor utter'd more; and after him there came
A Centaur full of fury, shouting, "Where,
Where is the caitiff?" On Maremma's marsh
Swarm not the serpent tribe, as on his haunch
They swarm'd, to where the human face begins.
Behind his head, upon the shoulders, lay
With open wings a dragon, breathing fire
On whomsoe'er he met. To me my guide:
"Cacus[3] is this, who underneath the rock
Of Aventine spread oft a lake of blood.
He, from his brethren parted, here must tread
A different journey, for his fraudful theft
Of the great herd that near him stall'd; whence found
His felon deeds their end, beneath the mace
Of stout Alcides, that perchance laid on
A hundred blows, and not the tenth was felt."
While yet he spake, the Centaur sped away:
And under us three spirits came, of whom
Nor I nor he was ware, till they exclaim'd,
"Say who are ye!"[4] We then brake off discourse,

[1] Pistoia is said to have been founded by the refugees from the army of Catiline.

[2] Capaneus. *Cf.* above, Canto xiv.

[3] A predatory monster who lived on the Aventine, and was slain by Hercules for stealing the cattle which the latter had taken from Geryon. Dante (probably misled by Virgil, *Æneid*, viii. 194, describing him as *semihomo*) makes Cacus a Centaur, separated in Hell from the other Centaurs because he used fraud while they employed violence.

[4] The extraordinary transformation scene that follows is acted by the souls of five Florentines of noble birth who lived by thieving: Agnello Brunelleschi, Buoso degli Abati, and Puccio de' Galigai, nicknamed Sciancalto (the "lame"); Cianfa de' Donati and Francesco, or Guercio, de' Cavalcanti. The first three appear in

Intent on these alone. I knew them not:
But, as it chanceth oft, befel that one
Had need to name another. "Where," said he,
"Doth Cianfa lurk?" I, for a sign my guide
Should stand attentive, placed against my lips
The finger lifted. If, O reader! now
Thou be not apt to credit what I tell,
No marvel; for myself do scarce allow
The witness of mine eyes. But as I look'd
Toward them, lo! a serpent with six feet
Springs forth on one, and fastens full upon him:
His midmost grasp'd the belly, a forefoot
Seized on each arm (while deep in either cheek
He flesh'd his fangs); the hinder on the thighs
Were spread, 'twixt which the tail inserted curl'd
Upon the reins behind. Ivy ne'er clasp'd
A dodder'd oak, as round the other's limbs
The hideous monster intertwined his own.
Then, as they both had been of burning wax,
Each melted into other, mingling hues,
That which was either now was seen no more.
Thus up the shrinking paper, ere it burns,
A brown tint glides, not turning yet to black,
And the clean white expires. The other two
Look'd on, exclaiming, "Ah! how dost thou change,
Agnello! See! Thou art nor double now,
Nor only one." The two heads now became
One, and two figures blended in one form
Appear'd, where both were lost. Of the four lengths
Two arms were made: the belly and the chest,
The thighs and legs, into such members changed
As never eye hath seen. Of former shape
All trace was vanish'd. Two, yet neither, seem'd
That image miscreate, and so pass'd on
With tardy steps. As underneath the scourge
Of the fierce dog-star that lays bare the fields,
Shifting from brake to brake the lizard seems

human form; then Cianfa comes as a serpent with six feet, fastens upon Agnello, and forms one monstrous shape with him; lastly Cavalcanti, in the form of "an adder all on fire," robs Buoso of his human shape, while the latter becomes a serpent instead. Puccio alone remains unchanged. The whole fantastic horror seems to mean that those who robbed others in the world are now unable to keep even the bare appearance of humanity for themselves.

A flash of lightning, if he thwart the road;
So toward the entrails of the other two
Approaching seemed an adder all on fire,
As the dark pepper-grain livid and swart.
In that part, whence our life is nourish'd first,
One he transpierced; then down before him fell
Stretch'd out. The pierced spirit look'd on him,
But spake not; yea, stood motionless and yawn'd,
As if by sleep or feverous fit assail'd.
He eyed the serpent, and the serpent him;
One from the wound, the other from the mouth
Breathed a thick smoke, whose vapoury columns join'd.
Lucan in mute attention now may hear,
Nor thy disastrous fate, Sabellus, tell,
Nor thine, Nasidius.[1] Ovid now be mute.
What if in warbling fiction he record
Cadmus and Arethusa, to a snake
Him changed, and her into a fountain clear,
I envy not; for never face to face
Two natures thus transmuted did he sing,
Wherein both shapes were ready to assume
The other's substance. They in mutual guise
So answer'd that the serpent split his train
Divided to a fork, and the pierced spirit
Drew close his steps together, legs and thighs
Compacted, that no sign of juncture soon
Was visible: the tail, disparted, took
The figure which the spirit lost; its skin
Softening, his indurated to a rind.
The shoulders next I mark'd, that entering join'd
The monster's arm-pits, whose two shorter feet
So lengthen'd, as the others dwindling shrunk.
The feet behind then twisting up became
That part that man conceals, which in the wretch
Was cleft in twain. While both the shadowy smoke
With a new colour veils, and generates
The excrescent pile on one, peeling it off
From the other body, lo! upon his feet
One upright rose, and prone the other fell.

[1] In the ninth book of the *Pharsalia*, Lucan describes the appalling effects of serpent's bites upon Sabellus and Nasidius, two of Cato's soldiers, in the Libyan desert. The stories of Cadmus, who was changed into a serpent, and Arethusa, who became a fountain, are told by Ovid, *Metam.* iv. and v.

Nor yet their glaring and malignant lamps
Were shifted, though each feature changed beneath.
Of him who stood erect, the mounting face
Retreated towards the temples, and what there
Superfluous matter came, shot out in ears
From the smooth cheeks; the rest, not backward dragg'd,
Of its excess did shape the nose; and swell'd
Into due size protuberant the lips.
He, on the earth who lay, meanwhile extends
His sharpen'd visage, and draws down the ears
Into the head, as doth the slug his horns.
His tongue, continuous before and apt
For utterance, severs; and the other's fork
Closing unites; that done, the smoke was laid.
The soul, transform'd into the brute, glides off,
Hissing along the vale, and after him
The other talking sputters; but soon turn'd
His new-grown shoulders on him, and in few
Thus to another spake: "Along this path
Crawling, as I have done, speed Buoso now!"
So saw I fluctuate in successive change
The unsteady ballast of the seventh hold: [1]
And here if aught my pen have swerved, events
So strange may be its warrant. O'er mine eyes
Confusion hung, and on my thoughts amaze.
Yet scaped they not so covertly, but well
I mark'd Sciancato: he alone it was
Of the three first that came, who changed not: thou
The other's fate, Gaville! still dost rue.[2]

CANTO XXVI

Argument

Remounting by the steps, down which they had descended to the seventh gulf, they go forward to the arch that stretches over the eighth, and from thence behold numberless flames wherein are punished the evil counsellors, each flame containing a sinner—save one, in which were Diomede and Ulysses, the latter of whom relates the manner of his death.

Florence, exult! for thou so mightily
Hast thriven, that o'er land and sea thy wings

1 The changing inmates of the seventh ring of Malebolge.
2 Francesco de' Cavalcanti was killed at Gaville, a village in the Valdarno, in revenge for which a number of the inhabitants were murdered by his kinsmen.

Thou beatest, and thy name spreads over Hell.
Among the plunderers, such the three I found,
Thy citizens; whence shame to me thy son,
And no proud honour to thyself redounds.
But if our minds, when dreaming near the dawn,
Are of the truth presageful, thou ere long
Shalt feel what Prato [1] (not to say the rest)
Would fain might come upon thee; and that chance
Were in good time, if it befel thee now.
Would so it were, since it must needs befal!
For as time wears me, I shall grieve the more.
We from the depth departed; and my guide
Remounting scaled the flinty steps, which late
We downward traced, and drew me up the steep.
Pursuing thus our solitary way
Among the crags and splinters of the rock,
Sped not our feet without the help of hands.
Then sorrow seized me, which e'en now revives,
As my thought turns again to what I saw,
And, more than I am wont,[2] I reign and curb
The powers of nature in me, lest they run
Where Virtue guides not; that, if aught of good
My gentle star or something better gave me,
I envy not myself the precious boon.
As in that season, when the sun least veils
His face that lightens all, what time the fly
Gives way to the shrill gnat, the peasant then,
Upon some cliff reclined, beneath him sees
Fire-flies innumerous spangling o'er the vale,

[1] Commentators differ as to whether *Prato* here means the Tuscan town of that name, which was subject to Florence and had sometimes been harshly treated by her, or the Cardinal Niccolò da Prato, legate of Pope Benedict XI., who in June, 1304, being unable to effect a reconciliation between the factions, laid Florence under an interdict and excommunicated the citizens. A letter to this Cardinal is included among Dante's Latin works, but it is very doubtful if it was really written by him.

[2] "'When I reflect on the punishment allotted to those who do not give sincere and upright advice to others, I am more anxious than ever not to abuse to so bad a purpose those talents, whatever they may be, which Nature, or rather Providence, has conferred on me.' It is probable that this declaration was the result of real feeling in the mind of Dante, whose political character would have given great weight to any opinion or party he had espoused, and to whom indigence and exile might have offered strong temptations to deviate from that line of conduct which a strict sense of duty prescribed" (Cary).

Vineyard or tilth, where his day-labour lies;
With flames so numberless throughout its space
Shone the eighth chasm, apparent, when the depth
Was to my view exposed. As he, whose wrongs [1]
The bears avenged, at its departure saw
Elijah's chariot, when the steeds erect
Raised their steep flight for heaven; his eyes, meanwhile,
Straining pursued them, till the flame alone,
Upsoaring like a misty speck, he kenn'd:
E'en thus along the gulf moves every flame,
A sinner so enfolded close in each,
That none exhibits token of the theft.
Upon the bridge I forward bent to look,
And grasp'd a flinty mass, or else had fallen,
Though push'd not from the height. The guide, who mark'd
How I did gaze attentive, thus began:
"Within these ardours are the spirits, each
Swath'd in confining fire."—"Master! thy word,"
I answer'd, "hath assured me; yet I deem'd
Already of the truth, already wish'd
To ask thee who is in yon fire, that comes
So parted at the summit, as it seem'd
Ascending from that funeral pile where lay
The Theban brothers." [2] He replied: "Within,
Ulysses there and Diomede endure
Their penal tortures, thus to vengeance now
Together hasting, as erewhile to wrath.
These in the flame with ceaseless groans deplore
The ambush of the horse, that open'd wide
A portal for that goodly seed to pass,
Which sow'd imperial Rome; nor less the guile
Lament they, whence, of her Achilles 'reft,
Deïdamia yet in death complains.
And there is rued the stratagem that Troy
Of her Palladium spoil'd." [3]—"If they have power

[1] Elisha. 2 Kings ii. 24.

[2] Eteocles and Polynices, sons of King Œdipus of Thebes, the brothers whose quarrel led to the war of the seven against Thebes. They slew each other, and, when their bodies were being consumed together on the funeral pile, the flame itself divided in token of their inextinguishable hatred.

[3] Dante is naturally on the side of the Trojans, whom he regards as the ancestors of the Roman People. Ulysses and Diomede prevailed upon Achilles to desert Deidamia and go to Troy; they

Of utterance from within these sparks," said I,
" O Master! think my prayer a thousand-fold
In repetition urged, that thou vouchsafe
To pause till here the horned flame arrive.
See, how toward it with desire I bend."
He thus: " Thy prayer is worthy of much praise,
And I accept it therefore; but do thou
Thy tongue refrain: to question them be mine;
For I divine thy wish; and they perchance,
For they were Greeks,[1] might shun discourse with thee."
When there the flame had come, where time and place
Seem'd fitting to my guide, he thus began:
" O ye, who dwell two spirits in one fire!
If, living, I of you did merit aught,
Whate'er the measure were of that desert,
When in the world my lofty strain I pour'd,
Move ye not on, till one of you unfold
In what clime death o'ertook him self-destroy'd."
Of the old flame forthwith the greater horn
Began to roll, murmuring, as a fire
That labours with the wind; then to and fro
Wagging the top, as a tongue uttering sounds,
Threw out its voice, and spake: " When I escaped
From Circe, who beyond a circling year
Had held me near Caieta[2] by her charms,
Ere thus Æneas yet had named the shore;
Nor fondness for my son, nor reverence
Of my old father, nor return of love,
That should have crown'd Penelope with joy,
Could overcome in me the zeal I had
To explore the world, and search the ways of life,
Man's evil and his virtue. Forth I sail'd
Into the deep illimitable main,
With but one bark, and the small faithful band
That yet cleaved to me. As Iberia far,

stole the Palladium, the image of Pallas, upon which the safety of Troy depended; and finally invented the ambush of the wooden horse, by which Troy was taken, and Æneas compelled to seek his fortune in Italy, whereby the Roman Empire was founded.

1 " There can be no doubt that Dante was ignorant of Greek, and that his knowledge of everything relating to Greece was derived from intermediate Latin sources, principally Virgil. Perhaps this is the meaning these verses are intended to convey " (Oelsner).

2 The modern Gaeta.

Far as Marocco, either shore I saw,
And the Sardinian and each isle beside
Which round that ocean bathes. Tardy with age
Were I and my companions, when we came
To the strait pass, where Hercules ordain'd
The boundaries not to be o'erstepp'd by man.[1]
The walls of Seville to my right I left,
On the other hand already Ceuta past.
'O brothers!' I began, 'who to the west
'Through perils without number now have reach'd;
'To this the short remaining watch, that yet
'Our senses have to wake, refuse not proof
'Of the unpeopled world, following the track
'Of Phœbus. Call to mind from whence ye sprang:
'Ye were not form'd to live the lives of brutes,
'But virtue to pursue and knowledge high.'
With these few words I sharpen'd for the voyage
The mind of my associates, that I then
Could scarcely have withheld them. To the dawn
Our poop we turn'd, and for the witless flight
Made our oars wings, still gaining on the left.
Each star of the other pole night now beheld,
And ours so low, that from the ocean floor
It rose not. Five times re-illumed, as oft
Vanish'd the light from underneath the moon,
Since the deep way we enter'd, when from far
Appear'd a mountain dim,[2] loftiest methought
Of all I e'er beheld. Joy seized us straight;
But soon to mourning changed. From the new land
A whirlwind sprung, and at her foremost side
Did strike the vessel. Thrice it whirl'd her round
With all the waves; the fourth time lifted up
The poop, and sank the prow: so fate decreed:
And over us the booming billow closed."

[1] The "columns of Hercules," Gibraltar and Mount Abyla, were held to be the western limit of the inhabited world.

[2] The mountain of Purgatory, to which a pagan soul could not attain without some ray of divine light. This last voyage of Ulysses, so finely imitated by Tennyson, seems to be entirely Dante's own invention.

CANTO XXVII

Argument

The Poet, treating of the same punishment as in the last Canto, relates that he turned towards a flame in which was the Count Guido da Montefeltro, whose inquiries respecting the state of Romagna he answers; and Guido is thereby induced to declare who he is, and why condemned to that torment.

Now upward rose the flame, and still'd its light
To speak no more, and now pass'd on with leave
From the mild poet gain'd; when following came
Another, from whose top a sound confused,
Forth issuing, drew our eyes that way to look.
As the Sicilian bull, that rightfully
His cries first echoed who had shaped its mould,
Did so rebellow, with the voice of him
Tormented, that the brazen monster seem'd
Pierced through with pain;[1] thus, while no way they found,
Nor avenue immediate through the flame,
Into its language turn'd the dismal words:
But soon as they had won their passage forth,
Up from the point, which vibrating obey'd
Their motion at the tongue, these sounds were heard:
"O thou! to whom I now direct my voice,
That lately didst exclaim in Lombard phrase,
'Depart thou; I solicit thee no more;'
Though somewhat tardy I perchance arrive,
Let it not irk thee here to pause awhile,
And with me parley: lo! it irks not me,
And yet I burn. If but e'en now thou fall
Into this blind world, from that pleasant land
Of Latium, whence I draw my sum of guilt,
Tell me if those who in Romagna dwell
Have peace or war. For of the mountains there[2]
Was I, betwixt Urbino and the height
Whence Tiber first unlocks his mighty flood."
Leaning I listen'd yet with heedful ear,

[1] Perillus invented a brazen bull for the tyrant Phalaris, in which prisoners were roasted to death, their cries making a sound like the monster's bellowing. The craftsman himself was made the first victim of his device.

[2] Montefeltro lies between Urbino and Monte Coronaro, at the foot of which the Tiber rises.

When, as he touch'd my side, the leader thus:
"Speak thou: he is a Latian." My reply
Was ready, and I spake without delay:
"O spirit! who art hidden here below,
Never was thy Romagna without war
In her proud tyrants' bosoms, nor is now:
But open war there left I none. The state
Ravenna hath maintain'd this many a year,
Is stedfast. There Polenta's eagle broods;
And in his broad circumference of plume
O'ershadows Cervia.[1] The green talons grasp
The land,[2] that stood erewhile the proof so long,
And piled in bloody heap the host of France.
"The old mastiff of Verrucchio and the young,
That tore Montagna in their wrath, still make,
Where they are wont, an augre of their fangs.[3]
"Lamone's city, and Santerno's, range
Under the lion of the snowy lair,
Inconstant partisan, that changeth sides,
Or ever summer yields to winter's frost.[4]
And she, whose flank is wash'd of Savio's wave,
As 'twixt the level and the steep she lies,
Lives so 'twixt tyrant power and liberty.[5]
"Now tell us, I entreat thee, who art thou:
Be not more hard than others. In the world,
So may thy name still rear its forehead high."
Then roar'd awhile the fire, its sharpen'd point
On either side waved, and thus breathed at last:
"If I did think my answer were to one
Who ever could return unto the world,

1 Ravenna and Cervia, in 1300, were ruled by Guido Vecchio da Polenta, father of Francesca da Rimini and grandfather of Guido Novello (Dante's friend), whose arms were an eagle, half argent on an azure field, half gules on field or.

2 Forlì, which endured a long siege from the French soldiery of Pope Martin IV., who were finally routed with great slaughter by Guido da Montefeltro himself, was held in 1300 by Sinibaldo degli Ordelaffi, whose arms were a lion rampant vert on a field or.

3 Rimini was still ruled by Malatesta da Verrucchio ("the old mastiff") and his son Malatestino, ferocious Guelfs, who had murdered the Ghibelline Montagna de' Parcitati in 1295.

4 Faenza and Imola, on the Lamone and Santerno respectively, were governed by Maghinardo Pagano da Susinana (cf. *Purg.* xiv.), whose arms were a lion azure on a field argent, and who fought for Guelf or Ghibelline according to circumstances.

5 Cesena on the Savio, lying between the plain and the mountain, alternated between tyranny and freedom.

This flame should rest unshaken. But since ne'er,
If true be told me, any from this depth
Has found his upward way, I answer thee,
Nor fear lest infamy record the words.
"A man of arms [1] at first, I clothed me then
In good Saint Francis' girdle, hoping so
To have made amends. And certainly my hope
Had fail'd not, but that he, whom curses light on,
The High Priest, again seduced me into sin.
And how, and wherefore, listen while I tell.
Long as this spirit moved the bones and pulp
My mother gave me, less my deeds bespake
The nature of the lion than the fox.
All ways of winding subtlety I knew,
And with such art conducted, that the sound
Reach'd the world's limit. Soon as to that part
Of life I found me come, when each behoves
To lower sails [2] and gather in the lines;
That, which before had pleased me, then I rued,
And to repentance and confession turn'd,
Wretch that I was; and well it had bested me.
The chief of the new Pharisees [3] meantime,
Waging his warfare near the Lateran,
Not with the Saracens or Jews (his foes
All Christians were, nor against Acre one
Had fought,[4] nor traffick'd in the Soldan's land),
He his great charge nor sacred ministry

1 Guido da Montefeltro, one of the greatest Ghibelline captains of the latter half of the thirteenth century and lord of Urbino, became a Franciscan friar in 1296. According to the story accepted by Dante, Pope Boniface VIII. summoned him from his convent to consult him as to the reduction of Palestrina, which was held by the Colonna who were in arms against the Church. Finding the place impregnable, Guido, after obtaining the Pope's absolution in advance, advised him to make large promises and then break them—by which means Boniface induced the defenders to surrender, and then razed the fortress to the ground.

2 In the *Convivio* (iv. 28), Dante calls Guido "our most noble Latin," citing him and Lancelot as two supreme examples of men who surrendered themselves to God in old age: "In truth, these noble ones lowered the sails of the activities of the world; for, in their advanced age, they gave themselves to religious orders, putting aside every mundane delight and activity" (Wicksteed's translation).

3 Boniface VIII.

4 Acre, the last possession of the Christians in the Holy Land, was taken by the Saracens in 1291.

In himself reverenced, nor in me that cord
Which used to mark with leanness whom it girded.
As, in Soracte, Constantine besought,[1]
To cure his leprosy, Sylvester's aid;
So me, to cure the fever of his pride,
This man besought: my counsel to that end
He ask'd; and I was silent; for his words
Seem'd drunken: but forthwith he thus resumed:
'From thy heart banish fear: of all offence
'I hitherto absolve thee. In return,
'Teach me my purpose so to execute,
'That Penestrino[2] cumber earth no more.
'Heaven, as thou knowest, I have power to shut
'And open: and the keys are therefore twain,
'The which my predecessor[3] meanly prized.'
"Then, yielding to the forceful arguments,
Of silence as more perilous I deem'd,
And answer'd: 'Father! since thou washest me
'Clear of that guilt wherein I now must fall,
'Large promise with performance scant, be sure,
'Shall make thee triumph in thy lofty seat.'
"When I was number'd with the dead, then came
Saint Francis for me; but a cherub dark
He met, who cried, 'Wrong me not; he is mine,
'And must below to join the wretched crew,
'For the deceitful counsel which he gave.
'E'er since I watch'd him, hovering at his hair.
'No power can the impenitent absolve;
'Nor to repent and will at once consist,
'By contradiction absolute forbid.'
Oh misery! how I shook myself, when he
Seized me, and cried, 'Thou haply thought'st me not
'A disputant in logic so exact!'
To Minos down he bore me; and the judge
Twined eight times round his callous back the tail,
Which biting with excess of rage, he spake:
'This is a guilty soul, that in the fire
'Must vanish.' Hence, perdition-doom'd, I rove
A prey to rankling sorrow, in this garb."[4]

1 According to the legend, Constantine sent for St. Sylvester, who was in hiding on Mount Soracte, to heal him of leprosy.
2 Palestrina.
3 Celestine V. See above, Canto. iii.
4 Guido died in 1298. There is a designed and tragic contrast

When he had thus fulfill'd his words, the flame
In dolour parted, beating to and fro,
And writhing its sharp horn. We onward went,
I and my leader, up along the rock,
Far as another arch, that overhangs
The foss, wherein the penalty is paid
Of those who load them with committed sin.

CANTO XXVIII

ARGUMENT

They arrive in the ninth gulf, where the sowers of scandal and schismatics [1] are seen with their limbs miserably maimed or divided in different ways. Among these the Poet finds Mahomet, Piero da Medicina, Curio, Mosca, and Bertrand de Born.

WHO, e'en in words unfetter'd, might at full
Tell of the wounds and blood that now I saw,
Though he repeated oft the tale? No tongue
So vast a theme could equal, speech and thought
Both impotent alike. If in one band
Collected, stood the people all, who e'er
Pour'd on Apulia's happy soil [2] their blood,
Slain by the Trojans,[3] and in that long war
When of the rings the measured booty made
A pile so high, as Rome's historian writes
Who errs not;[4] with the multitude, that felt
The griding force of Guiscard's Norman steel,[5]

between the account of his death and that of his son, Buonconte da Montefeltro, in *Purg.* v.

[1] Cary has "schismatics and heretics," of which the latter are clearly not to be included in this circle.

[2] *La fortunata terra* probably means "fateful," rather than "happy" land.

[3] The wars of the Romans against the Samnites. Dante regards the former as practically one people with the Trojans, their ancestors.

[4] Livy. The allusion is to the Punic wars. Livy records that, after the battle of Cannæ (B.C. 216), Hannibal showed the Carthaginian senate three bushels of golden rings taken from the bodies of the slain Romans. Dante mentions this again in the *Convivio*, iv. 5.

[5] Robert Guiscard (*Par.* xviii.), the Norman, carried on sanguinary wars against the Saracens and Greeks in Southern Italy and Sicily. He obtained the title of Duke of Apulia from Pope

And those the rest, whose bones are gather'd yet
At Ceperano, there where treachery
Branded the Apulian name, or where beyond
Thy walls, O Tagliacozzo, without arms
The old Alardo conquer'd;[1] and his limbs
One were to show transpierced, another his
Clean lopt away; a spectacle like this
Were but a thing of nought, to the hideous sight
Of the ninth chasm. A rundlet, that hath lost
Its middle or side stave, gapes not so wide
As one I mark'd torn from the chin throughout
Down to the hinder passage: 'twixt the legs
Dangling his entrails hung, the midriff lay
Open to view, and wretched ventricle,
That turns the englutted aliment to dross.
Whilst eagerly I fix on him my gaze,
He eyed me, with his hands laid his breast bare,
And cried, "Now mark how I do rip me: lo!
How is Mohammed mangled:[2] before me
Walks Ali weeping, from the chin his face
Cleft to the forelock;[3] and the others all,
Whom here thou seest, while they lived, did sow
Scandal and schism, and therefore thus are rent.
A fiend is here behind, who with his sword
Hacks us thus cruelly, slivering again
Each of this ream, when we have compast round
The dismal way; for first our gashes close
Ere we repass before him. But, say who
Art thou, that standest musing on the rock,
Haply so lingering to delay the pain
Sentenced upon thy crimes."—"Him death not yet,"
My guide rejoin'd, "hath overta'en, nor sin
Conducts to torment; but, that he may make
Full trial of your state, I who am dead

Nicholas II. in 1059, and died in 1085, having rescued Gregory VII. and sacked Rome in the previous year.

[1] At Ceperano, in 1266, the Apulian barons betrayed the pass to Charles of Anjou, in consequence of which Manfred was defeated and slain at Benevento (cf. *Purg.* iii.). In 1268, Charles, by means of a stratagem suggested to him by Erard de Valéry (Alardo), crushed the army of Conradin at the battle of Tagliacozzo.

[2] Dante regards Mahomet as "a mere Sectarian who had taken up Christianity and perverted its meaning" (Carlyle).

[3] Mahomet's son-in-law and fourth successor.

Must through the depths of Hell, from orb to orb,
Conduct him. Trust my words; for they are true."
More than a hundred spirits, when that they heard,
Stood in the foss to mark me, through amaze
Forgetful of their pangs. "Thou, who perchance
Shalt shortly view the sun, this warning thou
Bear to Dolcino:[1] bid him, if he wish not
Here soon to follow me, that with good store
Of food he arm him, lest imprisoning snows
Yield him a victim to Novara's power;
No easy conquest else:" with foot upraised
For stepping, spake Mohammed, on the ground
Then fix'd it to depart. Another shade,
Pierced in the throat, his nostrils mutilate
E'en from beneath the eyebrows, and one ear
Lopt off, who, with the rest, through wonder stood
Gazing, before the rest advanced, and bared
His wind-pipe, that without was all o'ersmear'd
With crimson stain. "O thou!" said he, "whom sin
Condemns not, and whom erst (unless too near
Resemblance do deceive me) I aloft
Have seen on Latian ground, call thou to mind
Piero of Medicina,[2] if again
Returning, thou behold'st the pleasant land
That from Vercelli slopes to Marcabò;[3]
And there instruct the twain, whom Fano boasts
Her worthiest sons, Guido and Angelo,
That if 'tis given us here to scan aright
The future, they out of life's tenement
Shall be cast forth, and whelm'd under the waves

1 Fra Dolcino, the head of the sect of the Apostolic Brethren, a native of Novara. A crusade having been proclaimed against him in 1305, he took refuge in the mountains between Novara and Vercelli; but, together with his followers, was reduced by cold and starvation. In 1307 he was burned alive at Vercelli. To what extent he is to be regarded as a reformer, or as a fanatical corruptor of morals, seems still uncertain. Dante evidently accepted the hostile version of his career.

2 Piero de' Biancucci of Medicina, a town between Bologna and Imola, was a nobleman who, when exiled from Bologna in 1287, spent his time in sowing discord among the potentates of Romagna. Dante is said to have met Piero in the house of his family at Medicina.

3 The city of Vercelli in Piedmont, on the Sesia, and the castle of Marcabò near Ravenna, at the mouth of the Po, are here given as the limits of the plain of Lombardy.

Near to Cattolica, through perfidy
Of a fell tyrant. 'Twixt the Cyprian isle
And Balearic, ne'er hath Neptune seen
An injury so foul, by pirates done,
Or Argive crew of old. That one-eyed traitor [1]
(Whose realm, there is a spirit here were fain
His eye had still lack'd sight of) them shall bring
To conference with him, then so shape his end,
That they shall need not 'gainst Focara's [2] wind
Offer up vow nor prayer." I answering thus:
"Declare, as thou dost wish that I above
May carry tidings of thee, who is he,
In whom that sight doth wake such sad remembrance."
Forthwith he laid his hand on the cheek-bone
Of one, his fellow-spirit, and his jaws
Expanding, cried: "Lo! this is he I wot of:
He speaks not for himself: the outcast this,
Who overwhelm'd the doubt in Cæsar's mind,[3]
Affirming that delay to men prepared
Was ever harmful." Oh! how terrified
Methought was Curio, from whose throat was cut
The tongue, which spake that hardy word. Then one,
Maim'd of each hand, uplifted in the gloom
The bleeding stumps, that they with gory spots
Sullied his face, and cried: "Remember thee
Of Mosca too; I who, alas! exclaim'd,
'The deed once done, there is an end,' [4] that proved

[1] Malatestino Malatesta, the "one-eyed traitor," the "young mastiff" of Canto xxvii., in order to get possession of Fano, invited the two chief nobles of the city, Guido del Cassero and Angelo da Carignano, to meet him at La Cattolica, between Fano and Rimini. At his orders their ship was intercepted off the coast, and they were both flung into the sea and drowned, Fano being annexed to Rimini. This tragedy, here announced in prophetical form, is said to have happened in 1313.

[2] A headland between Fano and La Cattolica, round which a dangerous wind blows. It was here, apparently, that Malatestino's galley met the other ship.

[3] According to Lucan (*Phars.* i.), Curio, with "his venal tongue," advised Cæsar to cross the Rubicon, thus beginning the civil war.

[4] *Capo ha cosa fatta.* When, in 1215, the Amidei were consulting as to what vengeance should be taken upon Buondelmonte de' Buondelmonti, who had broken his engagement with a maiden of their house in order to marry the daughter of Gualdrada Donati, "Mosca de' Lamberti spoke the evil word: *cosa fatta capo ha* ('a thing done has an end'); to wit, that he should

A seed of sorrow to the Tuscan race."
I added: "Ay, and death to thine own tribe."
Whence, heaping woe on woe, he hurried off,
As one grief-stung to madness. But I there
Still linger'd to behold the troop, and saw
Thing, such as I may fear without more proof
To tell of, but that conscience makes me firm,
The boon companion, who her strong breastplate
Buckles on him, that feels no guilt within,
And bids him on and fear not. Without doubt
I saw, and yet it seems to pass before me,
A headless trunk, that even as the rest
Of the sad flock paced onward. By the hair
It bore the sever'd member, lantern-wise
Pendent in hand, which look'd at us, and said,
"Woe's me!" The spirit lighted thus himself;
And two there were in one, and one in two.
How that may be, he knows who ordereth so.
When at the bridge's foot direct he stood,
His arm aloft he rear'd, thrusting the head
Full in our view, that nearer we might hear
The words, which thus it utter'd: "Now behold
This grievous torment, thou, who breathing go'st
To spy the dead: behold, if any else
Be terrible as this. And, that on earth
Thou mayst bear tidings of me, know that I
Am Bertrand, he of Born, who gave king John [1]
The counsel mischievous. Father and son
I set at mutual war. For Absalom

be slain; and so was it done" (Villani, v. 38). This was regarded as the beginning of the Guelf and Ghibelline factions in Florence. *Cf.* above, Canto vi., and below, *Par.* xvi. The Lamberti themselves were practically wiped out of existence by the dissensions that Mosca had thus originated.

[1] There are two alternative readings: *il Re Giovanni* ("King John"), here adopted by Cary; and *il re giovane* ("the Young King"), which is the one generally accepted at the present day. The person meant is Prince Henry (whom it is scarcely possible that Dante could have confused with John), the son of Henry II. of England, called the "Young King" because twice crowned in his father's lifetime. Bertran de Born, Lord of Hautefort, is said to have encouraged Henry to rebel against his father. Bertran died, about 1215, as a Cistercian monk. He was one of the most distinguished of the Provençal troubadours, and composed a striking poem on the death of the "Young English King" (1183), which is still preserved.

And David more did not Ahitophel,
Spurring them on maliciously to strife.
For parting those so closely knit, my brain
Parted, alas! I carry from its source,
That in this trunk inhabits. Thus the law
Of retribution fiercely works in me."

CANTO XXIX

ARGUMENT

Dante, at the desire of Virgil, proceeds onward to the bridge that crosses the tenth gulf, from whence he hears the cries of the alchemists and forgers, who are tormented therein; but not being able to discern any thing on account of the darkness, they descend the rock, that bounds this the last of the compartments in which the eighth circle is divided, and then behold the spirits who are afflicted by divers plagues and diseases. Two of them, namely, Griffolino of Arezzo and Capocchio of Siena, are introduced speaking.

So were mine eyes inebriate with the view
Of the vast multitude, whom various wounds
Disfigured, that they long'd to stay and weep.
But Virgil roused me: "What yet gazest on?
Wherefore doth fasten yet thy sight below
Among the maim'd and miserable shades?
Thou hast not shown in any chasm beside
This weakness. Know, if thou wouldst number them,
That two-and-twenty miles the valley winds
Its circuit, and already is the moon
Beneath our feet:[1] the time permitted now
Is short; and more, not seen, remains to see."
"If thou," I straight replied, "hadst weigh'd the cause,
For which I look'd, thou hadst perchance excused
The tarrying still." My leader part pursued
His way, the while I follow'd, answering him,
And adding thus: "Within that cave I deem,
Whereon so fixedly I held my ken,
There is a spirit dwells, one of my blood,
Wailing the crime that costs him now so dear."

1 That is, it was about one o'clock in the afternoon of Holy Saturday.

Then spake my master: "Let thy soul no more
Afflict itself for him. Direct elsewhere
Its thought, and leave him. At the bridge's foot
I mark'd how he did point with menacing look
At thee, and heard him by the others named
Geri of Bello.[1] Thou so wholly then
Wert busied with his spirit, who once ruled
The towers of Hautefort, that thou lookedst not
That way, ere he was gone."—"O guide beloved!
His violent death yet unavenged," said I,
"By any, who are partners in his shame,
Made him contemptuous; therefore, as I think,
He pass'd me speechless by; and, doing so,
Hath made me more compassionate his fate."
So we discoursed to where the rock first show'd
The other valley, had more light been there,
E'en to the lowest depth. Soon as we came
O'er the last cloister in the dismal rounds
Of Malebolge, and the brotherhood
Were to our view exposed, then many a dart
Of sore lament assail'd me, headed all
With points of thrilling pity, that I closed
Both ears against the volley with mine hands.
As were the torment, if each lazar-house
Of Valdichiana, in the sultry time
'Twixt July and September, with the isle
Sardinia and Maremma's pestilent fen,[2]
Had heap'd their maladies all in one foss
Together; such was here the torment: dire
The stench, as issuing steams from fester'd limbs.
We on the utmost shore of the long rock
Descended still to leftward. Then my sight
Was livelier to explore the depth, wherein
The minister of the most mighty Lord,
All-searching Justice, dooms to punishment
The forgers noted on her dread record.

[1] Geri del Bello Alighieri, a first cousin of Dante's father, was killed by one of the Sacchetti for sowing discord in that family. The date of his death is unknown, but it had not been avenged at the epoch of the vision (1300), though later on (thirty years after the event, according to Benvenuto da Imola) Geri's nephews (sons of Messer Cione del Bello Alighieri) killed one of the Sacchetti in his own house. The Alighieri and Sacchetti were finally reconciled in 1342.

[2] Three regions notoriously unhealthy in the heat.

More rueful was it not methinks to see
The nation in Ægina droop, what time
Each living thing, e'en to the little worm,
All fell, so full of malice was the air
(And afterward, as bards of yore have told,
The ancient people were restored anew
From seed of emmets),[1] than was here to see
The spirits, that languish'd through the murky vale,
Up-piled on many a stack. Confused they lay,
One o'er the belly, o'er the shoulders one
Roll'd of another; sideling crawl'd a third
Along the dismal pathway. Step by step
We journey'd on, in silence looking round,
And listening those diseased, who strove in vain
To lift their forms. Then two I mark'd, that sat
Propt 'gainst each other, as two brazen pans
Set to retain the heat. From head to foot,
A tetter bark'd them round. Nor saw I e'er
Groom currying so fast, for whom his lord
Impatient waited, or himself perchance
Tired with long watching, as of these each one
Plied quickly his keen nails, through furiousness
Of ne'er abated pruriency. The crust
Came drawn from underneath in flakes, like scales
Scraped from the bream, or fish of broader mail.

"O thou! who with thy fingers rendest off
Thy coat of proof," thus spake my guide to one,
"And sometimes makest tearing pincers of them,
Tell me if any born of Latian land
Be among these within: so may thy nails
Serve thee for everlasting to this toil."

"Both are of Latium," weeping he replied,
"Whom tortured thus thou seest: but who art thou
That hast inquired of us?" To whom my guide:
"One that descend with this man, who yet lives,
From rock to rock, and show him hell's abyss."

Then started they asunder, and each turn'd
Trembling toward us, with the rest, whose ear
Those words redounding struck. To me my liege
Address'd him: "Speak to them whate'er thou list."

And I therewith began: "So may no time

[1] According to Ovid (*Metam.* vii.), when the inhabitants of Ægina were destroyed by a pestilence, Jupiter restored the population by turning ants into men, who were called the Myrmidons.

Filch your remembrance from the thoughts of men
In the upper world, but after many suns
Survive it, as ye tell me, who ye are,
And of what race ye come. Your punishment,
Unseemly and disgustful in its kind,
Deter you not from opening thus much to me."
"Arezzo was my dwelling," [1] answer'd one,
"And me Albero of Siena brought,
To die by fire: but that, for which I died,
Leads me not here. True is, in sport I told him,
That I had learn'd to wing my flight in air;
And he, admiring much, as he was void
Of wisdom, will'd me to declare to him
The secret of mine art: and only hence,
Because I made him not a Dædalus,
Prevail'd on one supposed his sire to burn me.
But Minos to this chasm, last of the ten,
For that I practised alchemy on earth,
Has doom'd me. Him no subterfuge eludes."
Then to the bard I spake: "Was ever race
Light as Siena's? Sure not France herself
Can show a tribe so frivolous and vain."
The other leprous spirit heard my words,
And thus return'd: [2] "Be Stricca from this charge

1 Griffolino of Arezzo, an alchemyst, obtained money from a Sienese named Albero, on the pretext that he would teach him to fly. Albero, finding himself duped, denounced him as a magician to the Bishop of Siena, who was either his patron or his father, with the result that Griffolino was burned alive.

2 These exceptions from the general condemnation of the vanity of the Sienese are, of course, ironical. The persons mentioned—Stricca (whose family name is uncertain), Niccolò (either a Salimbeni or a Buonsignori), who invented a new way of using cloves in cookery, Caccia de' Cacciaconti of Asciano, and Bartolommeo de' Folcacchieri (whose nickname, Abbagliato, implies the reverse of wisdom)—were members of the *brigata spendereccia*, or "spendthrift club," an association of prodigal young Sienese nobles who ran through their fortunes in an incredibly short time. Lano de' Maconi (see above, Canto xiii.) is said also to have been a member. It is still a matter of dispute whether this *brigata spendereccia* is, or is not, to be identified with the *brigata nobile e cortese*, "the blithe and lordly fellowship," in honour of which Folgore da San Gimignano wrote a series of sonnets (translated by Rossetti, *Early Italian Poets*), and whether the Niccolò mentioned in this Canto is the Niccolò di Nisi, "whose praise in Siena springs from lip to lip," to whom Folgore's work is dedicated.

Exempted, he who knew so temperately
To lay out fortune's gifts; and Niccolò,
Who first the spice's costly luxury
Discover'd in that garden, where such seed
Roots deepest in the soil; and be that troop
Exempted, with whom Caccia of Asciano
Lavish'd his vineyards and wide-spreading woods,
And his rare wisdom Abbagliato show'd
A spectacle for all. That thou mayst know
Who seconds thee against the Sienese
Thus gladly, bend this way thy sharpen'd sight,
That well my face may answer to thy ken;
So shalt thou see I am Capocchio's ghost,[1]
Who forged transmuted metals by the power
Of alchemy; and if I scan thee right,
Thou needs must well remember how I aped
Creative nature by my subtle art."

CANTO XXX

Argument

In the same gulf, other kinds of impostors, as those who have counterfeited the persons of others, or debased the current coin, or deceived by speech under false pretences, are described as suffering various diseases. Sinon of Troy and Adamo of Brescia mutually reproach each other with their several impostures.

What time resentment burn'd in Juno's breast
For Semele against the Theban blood,
As more than once in dire mischance was rued;
Such fatal frenzy seized on Athamas,[2]
That he his spouse beholding with a babe
Laden on either arm, "Spread out," he cried,
"The meshes, that I take the lioness
And the young lions at the pass:" then forth

1 Capocchio was a Florentine alchemyst, personally known to Dante, who was burned alive at Siena in 1293.

2 To avenge herself upon Semele and Ino, the daughters of Cadmus, Juno brought many misfortunes upon the royal family of Thebes. Among other things, she sent a madness upon Athamas, the lover of Ino, in which he took the latter and their little boys, Learchus and Melicertes, for a lioness and her cubs. The story is told by Ovid, *Metam.* iv.

Stretch'd he his merciless talons, grasping one,
One helpless innocent, Learchus named,
Whom swinging down he dash'd upon a rock;
And with her other burden, self-destroy'd,
The hapless mother plunged. And when the pride
Of all presuming Troy fell from its height,
By fortune overwhelm'd, and the old king
With his realm perish'd; then did Hecuba,
A wretch forlorn and captive, when she saw
Polyxena first slaughter'd, and her son,
Her Polydorus, on the wild sea-beach
Next met the mourner's view, then reft of sense
Did she run barking even as a dog;[1]
Such mighty power had grief to wrench her soul.
But ne'er the Furies, or of Thebes, or Troy,
With such fell cruelty were seen, their goads
Infixing in the limbs of man or beast,
As now two pale and naked ghosts I saw,
That gnarling wildly scamper'd, like the swine
Excluded from his stye. One reach'd Capocchio,
And in the neck-joint sticking deep his fangs,
Dragg'd him, that, o'er the solid pavement rubb'd
His belly stretch'd out prone. The other shape,
He of Arezzo, there left trembling, spake:
"That sprite of air is Schicchi; in like mood
Of random mischief vents he still his spite."
To whom I answering: "Oh! as thou dost hope
The other may not flesh its jaws on thee,
Be patient to inform us, who it is,
Ere it speed hence."—"That is the ancient soul
Of wretched Myrrha," he replied, "who burn'd
With most unholy flame for her own sire,
And a false shape assuming, so perform'd
The deed of sin; e'en as the other there,
That onward passes, dared to counterfeit
Donati's features, to feign'd testament
The seal affixing, that himself might gain,
For his own share, the lady of the herd."[2]

[1] Hecuba, Priam's widow, seeing her daughter sacrificed and finding her son murdered, went mad.

[2] Gianni Schicchi de' Cavalcanti, a Florentine famous for his mimicry, at the instigation of Simone Donati, personated the latter's father, Buoso, just deceased, and dictated a will in Simone's favour, in which Gianni himself received a beautiful mare, known as the

When vanish'd the two furious shades, on whom
Mine eye was held, I turn'd it back to view
The other cursed spirits. One I saw
In fashion like a lute, had but the groin
Been sever'd where it meets the forked part.
Swoln dropsy, disproportioning the limbs
With ill-converted moisture, that the paunch
Suits not the visage, open'd wide his lips,
Gasping as in the hectic man for drought,
One towards the chin, the other upward curl'd.
"O ye! who in this world of misery,
Wherefore I know not, are exempt from pain,"
Thus he began, "attentively regard
Adamo's woe. When living, full supply
Ne'er lack'd me of what most I coveted;
One drop of water now, alas! I crave.
The rills, that glitter down the grassy slopes
Of Casentino, making fresh and soft
The banks whereby they glide to Arno's stream,
Stand ever in my view; and not in vain;
For more the pictured semblance dries me up,
Much more than the disease, which makes the flesh
Desert these shrivel'd cheeks. So from the place,
Where I transgress'd, stern justice urging me,
Takes means to quicken more my labouring sighs.
There is Romena, where I falsified
The metal with the Baptist's form imprest,
For which on earth I left my body burnt.
But if I here might see the sorrowing soul
Of Guido, Alessandro, or their brother,
For Branda's limpid spring I would not change
The welcome sight. One is e'en now within,
If truly the mad spirits tell, that round
Are wandering. But wherein besteads me that?
My limbs are fetter'd. Were I but so light,
That I each hundred years might move one inch,
I had set forth already on this path,
Seeking him out amidst the shapeless crew,
Although eleven miles it wind, not less
Than half of one across. They brought me down
Among this tribe; induced by them, I stamp'd

donna della torma, "the lady of the herd." Myrrha (Ovid, *Metam.* x.), daughter of King Cinyras of Cyprus, disguised herself for a viler motive.

The florens with three carats of alloy." [1]
" Who are that abject pair," I next inquired,
" That closely bounding thee upon thy right
Lie smoking, like a hand in winter steep'd
In the chill stream?"—" When to this gulf I dropp'd,"
He answer'd, " here I found them; since that hour
They have not turn'd, nor ever shall, I ween,
Till time hath run his course. One is that dame,
The false accuser of the Hebrew youth;
Sinon the other, that false Greek from Troy.[2]
Sharp fever drains the reeky moistness out,
In such a cloud upsteam'd." When that he heard,
One, gall'd perchance to be so darkly named,
With clench'd hand smote him on the braced paunch,
That like a drum resounded: but forthwith
Adamo smote him on the face, the blow
Returning with his arm, that seem'd as hard.
" Though my o'erweighty limbs have ta'en from me
The power to move," said he, " I have an arm
At liberty for such employ." To whom
Was answer'd: " When thou wentest to the fire,
Thou hadst it not so ready at command;
Then readier when it coin'd the impostor gold."
And thus the dropsied: " Ay, now speak'st thou true:
But there thou gavest not such true testimony,
When thou wast question'd of the truth, at Troy."
" If I spake false, thou falsely stamp'dst the coin,"
Said Sinon; " I am here for but one fault,
And thou for more than any imp beside."
" Remember," he replied, " O perjured one!
The horse remember, that did teem with death;
And all the world be witness to thy guilt."

[1] Maestro Adamo of Brescia, at the instigation of the Conti Guidi of Romena (Guido, Alessandro, and Aghinolfo), counterfeited the golden florins of Florence. For this, in 1281, he was burned alive on the Consuma, the pass which leads out of the Casentino towards Florence, while his aristocratic employers escaped scot-free. Fonte Branda, " Branda's limpid spring," is here not the famous fountain of Siena, but a spring of the same name, near the castle of Romena and in the vicinity of the spot where Adamo met his doom. The one of the three brothers who is " e'en now within," that is, already dead, is Count Guido. The other two were still alive in 1300.

[2] Potiphar's wife, who falsely accused Joseph, and the Greek Sinon, whose treacherous tale induced the Trojans to receive the wooden horse within their walls.

"To thine," return'd the Greek, "witness the thirst
Whence thy tongue cracks, witness the fluid mound
Rear'd by thy belly up before thine eyes,
A mass corrupt." To whom the coiner thus:
"Thy mouth gapes wide as ever to let pass
Its evil saying. Me if thirst assails,
Yet I am stuft with moisture. Thou art parch'd:
Pains rack thy head: no urging wouldst thou need
To make thee lap Narcissus' mirror up."
I was all fix'd to listen, when my guide
Admonish'd: "Now beware. A little more,
And I do quarrel with thee." I perceived
How angrily he spake, and towards him turn'd
With shame so poignant, as remember'd yet
Confounds me. As a man that dreams of harm
Befallen him, dreaming wishes it a dream,
And that which is, desires as if it were not;
Such then was I, who, wanting power to speak,
Wish'd to excuse myself, and all the while
Excused me, though unweeting that I did.
"More grievous fault than thine has been, less shame,"
My master cried, "might expiate. Therefore cast
All sorrow from thy soul; and if again
Chance bring thee, where like conference is held,
Think I am ever at thy side. To hear
Such wrangling is a joy for vulgar minds."

CANTO XXXI

ARGUMENT

The poets, following the sound of a loud horn, are led by it to the ninth circle, in which there are four rounds, one enclosed within the other, and containing as many sorts of Traitors; but the present Canto shows only that the circle is encompassed with Giants, one of whom, Antæus, takes them both in his arms and places them at the bottom of the circle.

THE very tongue, whose keen reproof before
Had wounded me, that either cheek was stain'd,
Now minister'd my cure. So have I heard,
Achilles' and his father's javelin caused
Pain first, and then the boon of health restored.

Turning our back upon the vale of woe,
We cross'd the encircled mound in silence. There
Was less than day and less than night, that far
Mine eye advanced not: but I heard a horn
Sounded so loud, the peal it rang had made
The thunder feeble. Following its course
The adverse way, my strained eyes were bent
On that one spot. So terrible a blast
Orlando blew not, when that dismal rout
O'erthrew the host of Charlemain, and quench'd
His saintly warfare.[1] Thitherward not long
My head was raised, when many a lofty tower
Methought I spied. "Master," said I, "what land
Is this?" He answer'd straight: "Too long a space
Of intervening darkness has thine eye
To traverse: thou hast therefore widely err'd
In thy imagining. Thither arrived
Thou well shalt see, how distance can delude
The sense. A little therefore urge thee on."
Then tenderly he caught me by the hand;
"Yet know," said he, "ere farther we advance,
That it less strange may seem, these are not towers,
But giants. In the pit they stand immersed,
Each from his navel downward, round the bank."
As when a fog disperseth gradually,
Our vision traces what the mist involves
Condensed in air; so piercing through the gross
And gloomy atmosphere, as more and more
We near'd toward the brink, mine error fled
And fear came o'er me. As with circling round
Of turrets, Montereggion[2] crowns his walls;
E'en thus the shore, encompassing the abyss,
Was turreted with giants, half their length
Uprearing, horrible, whom Jove from Heaven
Yet threatens, when his muttering thunder rolls.
Of one already I descried the face,

[1] When the rear-guard of Charlemagne's army was attacked by the Saracens at Roncesvalles, Orlando blew a terrible blast of his horn to summon the Emperor to his aid; but Ganellon treacherously persuaded the latter that there was no need for him to turn back. The result was that Orlando and all his chivalry were slain. *Cf.* below, Canto xxxii., and *Par.* xviii.

[2] A castle between Siena and San Gimignano. The turrets to which Dante refers can still in part be seen.

Shoulders, and breast, and of the belly huge
Great part, and both arms down along his ribs.[1]
All-teeming Nature, when her plastic hand
Left framing of these monsters, did display
Past doubt her wisdom, taking from mad War
Such slaves to do his bidding; and if she
Repent her not of the elephant and whale,
Who ponders well confesses her therein
Wiser and more discreet; for when brute force
And evil will are back'd with subtlety,
Resistance none avails. His visage seem'd
In length and bulk, as doth the pine[2] that tops
Saint Peter's Roman fane; and the other bones
Of like proportion, so that from above
The bank, which girdled him below, such height
Arose his stature, that three Friezelanders
Had striven in vain to reach but to his hair.
Full thirty ample palms was he exposed
Downward from whence a man his garment loops.
"Raphel baï ameth, sabì almì:"[3]
So shouted his fierce lips, which sweeter hymns
Became not; and my guide address'd him thus:
"O senseless spirit! let thy horn for thee
Interpret: therewith vent thy rage, if rage
Or other passion wring thee. Search thy neck,
There shalt thou find the belt that binds it on.
Spirit confused! lo, on thy mighty breast
Where hangs the baldrick!" Then to me he spake:
"He doth accuse himself. Nimrod is this,
Through whose ill counsel in the world no more
One tongue prevails. But pass we on, nor waste
Our words; for so each language is to him,
As his to others, understood by none."
Then to the leftward turning sped we forth,
And at a sling's throw found another shade
Far fiercer and more huge. I cannot say

[1] Nimrod (Genesis x., xi.), the supposed builder of the Tower of Babel, is represented by St. Augustine and Orosius as a giant. Cf. *Purg.* xii.

[2] The bronze pine-cone, once on the top of the Mausoleum of Adrian and now in the Vatican gardens, in Dante's time stood in front of St. Peter's. It is between seven and eight feet high.

[3] Words meant to be unintelligible, suggesting the confusion of languages at the building of the Tower of Babel (Gen. xi.).

What master hand had girt him; but he held
Behind the right arm fetter'd, and before,
The other, with a chain, that fasten'd him
From the neck down; and five times round his form
Apparent met the wreathed links. "This proud one
Would of his strength against almighty Jove
Make trial," said my guide: "whence he is thus
Requited: Ephialtes him they call.
Great was his prowess, when the giants brought
Fear on the gods: those arms, which then he plied,
Now moves he never." Forthwith I return'd:
"Fain would I, if 't were possible, mine eyes,
Of Briareus immeasurable, gain'd
Experience next."[1] He answer'd: "Thou shalt see
Not far from hence Antæus, who both speaks
And is unfetter'd, who shall place us there
Where guilt is at its depth. Far onward stands
Whom thou wouldst fain behold, in chains, and made
Like to this spirit, save that in his looks
More fell he seems." By violent earthquake rock'd
Ne'er shook a tower, so reeling to its base,
As Ephialtes. More than ever then
I dreaded death; nor than the terror more
Had needed, if I had not seen the cords
That held him fast. We, straightway journeying on,
Came to Antæus, who, five ells complete
Without the head, forth issued from the cave.[2]
"O thou, who in the fortunate vale, that made
Great Scipio heir of glory, when his sword
Drove back the troop of Hannibal in flight,
Who thence of old didst carry for thy spoil
An hundred lions; and if thou hadst fought
In the high conflict on thy brethren's side,
Seems as men yet believed, that through thine arm
The sons of earth had conquer'd; now vouchsafe
To place us down beneath, where numbing cold
Locks up Cocytus. Force not that we crave
Or Tityus' help or Typhon's.[3] Here is one

[1] Ephialtes and Briareus were two of the giants who made war upon the gods of Olympus.

[2] Antæus, a giant of Libya, did not join in the war against the gods, and is therefore unfettered. He was ultimately killed by Hercules (Alcides). Dante's account of him, in Virgil's address, is based upon Lucan, *Phars.* iv.

[3] Tityus and Typhon (Typhœus), two giants cast down to

Can give what in this realm ye covet. Stoop
Therefore, nor scornfully distort thy lip.
He in the upper world can yet bestow
Renown on thee; for he doth live, and looks
For life yet longer, if before the time
Grace call him not unto herself." Thus spake
The teacher. He in haste forth stretch'd his hands,
And caught my guide. Alcides whilom felt
That grapple, straiten'd sore. Soon as my guide
Had felt it, he bespake me thus: "This way,
That I may clasp thee;" then so caught me up,
That we were both one burden. As appears
The tower of Carisenda,[1] from beneath
Where it doth lean, if chance a passing cloud
So sail across, that opposite it hangs;
Such then Antæus seem'd, as at mine ease
I mark'd him stooping. I were fain at times
To have past another way. Yet in the abyss,
That Lucifer with Judas low ingulfs,
Lightly he placed us; nor, there leaning, stay'd;
But rose, as in a bark the stately mast.

CANTO XXXII

Argument

This Canto treats of the first, and, in part, of the second of those rounds, into which the ninth and last, or frozen circle, is divided. In the former, called Caïna, Dante finds Camiccione de' Pazzi, who gives him an account of other sinners who are there punished; and in the next, named Antenora, he hears in like manner from Bocca degli Abati who his fellow-sufferers are.

Could I command rough rhymes and hoarse, to suit
That hole of sorrow o'er which every rock
His firm abutment rears, then might the vein
Of fancy rise full springing: but not mine
Such measures, and with faltering awe I touch

Tartarus by Jupiter. Dr. Toynbee notes that "in coupling these two, Dante evidently had in mind a passage where Lucan mentions them together, and implies that Antæus was mightier than they (*Phars.* iv. 593–597)."

[1] The Carisenda (or Garisenda) is one of the leaning towers of Bologna, the other being known as the Torre Asinelli.

The mighty theme; for to describe the depth
Of all the universe, is no emprize
To jest with, and demands a tongue not used
To infant babbling. But let them assist
My song, the tuneful maidens,[1] by whose aid
Amphion wall'd in Thebes; so with the truth
My speech shall best accord. Oh ill-starr'd folk,
Beyond all others wretched! who abide
In such a mansion, as scarce thought finds words
To speak of, better had ye here on earth
Been flocks, or mountain goats. As down we stood
In the dark pit beneath the giants' feet,
But lower far than they, and I did gaze
Still on the lofty battlement, a voice
Bespake me thus: "Look how thou walkest. Take
Good heed, thy soles do tread not on the heads
Of thy poor brethren." Thereupon I turn'd,
And saw before and underneath my feet
A lake,[2] whose frozen surface liker seem'd
To glass than water. Not so thick a veil
In winter e'er hath Austrian Danube spread
O'er his still course, nor Tanais far remote
Under the chilling sky. Roll'd o'er that mass
Had Tabernich or Pietrapana[3] fallen,
Not e'en its rim had creak'd. As peeps the frog
Croaking above the wave, what time in dreams
The village gleaner oft pursues her toil,
So, to where modest shame appears, thus low
Blue pinch'd and shrined in ice the spirits stood,
Moving their teeth in shrill note like the stork.
His face each downward held; their mouth the cold,
Their eyes express'd the dolour of their heart.

[1] The Muses.

[2] The infernal river Cocytus is here frozen into a lake of ice, in which the souls of traitors are embedded. There are four divisions: (i) *Caïna*, called from Cain, in which are the treacherous murderers of their own kindred; (ii) *Antenora*, called from Antenor, who (without any Homeric or Virgilian warrant) was supposed to have betrayed Troy to the Greeks, which contains traitors to their native land; (iii) *Tolomea*, so named from Ptolemy, the murderer of Simon Maccabæus, the region of those who did murder under cover of hospitality; (iv) *Giudecca*, the place of Judas, in which are traitors to their lords and benefactors.

[3] Two mountains, one in Slavonia, the other in the district known as the Garfagnana, between Tuscany and the former duchy of Modena. The Tanais is the river Don.

A space I look'd around, then at my feet
Saw two so strictly join'd, that of their head
The very hairs were mingled. "Tell me ye,
Whose bosoms thus together press," said I,
"Who are ye?" At that sound their necks they bent;
And when their looks were lifted up to me,
Straightway their eyes, before all moist within,
Distill'd upon their lips, and the frost bound
The tears betwixt those orbs, and held them there.
Plank unto plank hath never cramp closed up
So stoutly. Whence, like two enraged goats,
They clash'd together: them such fury seized.
And one, from whom the cold both ears had reft,
Exclaim'd, still looking downward: "Why on us
Dost speculate so long? If thou wouldst know
Who are these two,[1] the valley, whence his wave
Bisenzio slopes, did for its master own
Their sire Alberto, and next him themselves.
They from one body issued: and throughout
Caïna thou mayst search, nor find a shade
More worthy in congealment to be fix'd;
Not him,[2] whose breast and shadow Arthur's hand
At that one blow dissever'd; not Focaccia;[3]
No, not this spirit, whose o'erjutting head
Obstructs my onward view: he bore the name
Of Mascheroni:[4] Tuscan if thou be,
Well knowest who he was. And to cut short

[1] Alessandro and Napoleone degli Alberti, sons of Count Alberto degli Alberti of Mangona, whose possessions lay in the valleys of the Sieve and Bisenzio, quarrelled over the inheritance and killed each other. The exact date is uncertain, but it was shortly after 1282. They are evidently the *fratei miseri lassi*, alluded to above, which should be rendered "the weary wretched brothers," and not "thy poor brethren," as Cary does.

[2] Mordred, nephew and son of King Arthur. In his last battle, Arthur ran Mordred through with his lance, and, at the same time, received his own death-wound from his hands. According to the old French romance, when Arthur drew back his lance, a ray of the sun passed through the wound.

[3] Focaccia de' Cancellieri of Pistoia, whose treacherous murder of two of his kinsmen began the disastrous feuds of the Bianchi and Neri, which spread thence to Florence. Here he is, perhaps, damned by anticipation, as he was probably still living at the epoch of the vision.

[4] Sassol Mascheroni, of the Toschi family of Florence, murdered a child, the only son of his rich uncle, to obtain the latter's inheritance.

All further question, in my form behold
What once was Camiccione. I await
Carlino here my kinsman, whose deep guilt
Shall wash out mine."[1] A thousand visages
Then mark'd I, which the keen and eager cold
Had shaped into a doggish grin;[2] whence creeps
A shivering horror o'er me, at the thought
Of those frore shallows. While we journey'd on
Toward the middle, at whose point unites
All heavy substance, and I trembling went
Through that eternal chilness, I know not
If will it were, or destiny, or chance,
But, passing 'midst the heads, my foot did strike
With violent blow against the face of one.
"Wherefore dost bruise me?" weeping he exclaim'd;
"Unless thy errand be some fresh revenge
For Montaperto, wherefore troublest me?"
I thus: "Instructor, now await me here,
That I through him may rid me of my doubt:
Thenceforth what haste thou wilt." The teacher paused;
And to that shade I spake, who bitterly
Still cursed me in his wrath. "What art thou, speak,
That railest thus on others?" He replied:
"Now who art thou, that smiting others' cheeks,
Through Antenora roamest, with such force
As were past sufferance, wert thou living still?"
"And I am living, to thy joy perchance,"
Was my reply, "if fame be dear to thee,
That with the rest I may thy name enrol."
"The contrary of what I covet most,"
Said he, "thou tender'st: hence! nor vex me more.
Ill knowest thou to flatter in this vale."
Then seizing on his hinder scalp I cried:
"Name thee, or not a hair shall tarry here."
"Rend all away," he answer'd, "yet for that
I will not tell, nor show thee, who I am,
Though at my head thou pluck a thousand times."

[1] Camiccione de' Pazzi, the speaker, one of the Pazzi of Valdarno, murdered his kinsman, Ubertino. Carlino de' Pazzi, still living, is a deeper traitor, because his treason will be against his country; in 1302, he surrendered the castle of Piantravigne in Valdarno to the Neri, whereby many Bianchi were slain or taken.

[2] These are the souls in Antenora, Guelf and Ghibelline traitors alike.

Now I had grasp'd his tresses, and stript off
More than one tuft, he barking, with his eyes
Drawn in and downward, when another cried,
"What ails thee, Bocca?[1] Sound not loud enough
Thy chattering teeth, but thou must bark outright?
What devil wrings thee?"—"Now," said I, "be dumb,
Accursed traitor! To thy shame, of thee
True tidings will I bear."—"Off!" he replied;
"Tell what thou list: but, as thou scape from hence,
To speak of him whose tongue hath been so glib,
Forget not: here he wails the Frenchman's gold.
'Him of Duera,'[2] thou canst say, 'I mark'd,
'Where the starved sinners pine.' If thou be ask'd
What other shade was with them, at thy side
Is Beccaria,[3] whose red gorge distain'd
The biting axe of Florence. Further on,
If I misdeem not, Soldanieri[4] bides,
With Ganellon,[5] and Tribaldello, him
Who oped Faenza when the people slept."[6]
We now had left him, passing on our way,
When I beheld two spirits by the ice
Pent in one hollow, that the head of one
Was cowl unto the other; and as bread
Is raven'd up through hunger, the uppermost
Did so apply his fangs to the other's brain,

[1] Bocca degli Abati, who, though a Ghibelline, was in the ranks of the Guelfs at the battle of Montaperti (1260), treacherously struck off the hand of the knight who carried the banner of the Florentine Republic, and thereby caused the overthrow and slaughter of his own countrymen. It is just possible that he was a kinsman of Dante's mother.

[2] Buoso da Duera, a Ghibelline of Cremona, had been ordered by Manfred to oppose the advance of Charles of Anjou (1265); he allowed the latter to enter Parma at his will, in consideration, it was said, of a huge bribe.

[3] Tesauro de' Beccheria, Abbot of Vallombrosa and papal legate, was beheaded by the Florentine Guelfs in 1258, on a charge of plotting with the Ghibellines.

[4] Gianni Soldanieri, a Ghibelline noble who apparently went over to the Guelf democracy with a view to self-aggrandisement (1266).

[5] Ganellon, the typical traitor of the Carlovingian legend. *Cf.* above, Canto xxxi.

[6] Tebaldello, or Tribaldello de' Zambrasi, in 1280, treacherously opened the gates of Faenza to the Bolognese Guelfs (the Geremei), to enable them to slaughter their enemies, the Ghibelline Lambertazzi, who had taken shelter in that city.

Where the spine joins it. Not more furiously
On Menalippus' temples Tydeus [1] gnaw'd,
Than on that skull and on its garbage he.
"O thou! who show'st so beastly sign of hate
'Gainst him thou prey'st on, let me hear," said I,
"The cause, on such condition, that if right
Warrant thy grievance, knowing who ye are,
And what the colour of his sinning was,
I may repay thee in the world above,
If that, wherewith I speak, be moist so long."

CANTO XXXIII

Argument

The Poet is told by Count Ugolino de' Gherardeschi of the cruel manner in which he and his children were famished in the tower at Pisa, by command of the Archbishop Ruggieri. He next discourses of the third round, called Ptolomea, wherein those are punished who have betrayed others under the semblance of kindness; and among these he finds the Friar Alberigo de' Manfredi, who tells him of one whose soul was already tormented in that place, though his body appeared still to be alive upon the earth, being yielded up to the governance of a fiend.

His jaws uplifting from their fell repast,
That sinner wiped them on the hairs o' the head,
Which he behind had mangled, then began:
"Thy will obeying, I call up afresh
Sorrow past cure; which, but to think of, wrings
My heart, or ere I tell on 't. But if words,
That I may utter, shall prove seed to bear
Fruit of eternal infamy to him,
The traitor whom I gnaw at, thou at once
Shalt see me speak and weep. Who thou mayst be
I know not, nor how here below art come:
But Florentine thou seemest of a truth,
When I do hear thee. Know, I was on earth
Count Ugolino,[2] and the Archbishop he

[1] Tydeus (the father of Diomede), in the war of the seven against Thebes, when mortally wounded, gnawed the skull of Menalippus, who had given him his wound, and whom he himself had slain.

[2] Giovanni Villani tells us that, in 1288, Pisa was divided into three factions, each striving for predominance. The Guelfs had split into two, one led by Count Ugolino della Gherardesca, the other by

Ruggieri. Why I neighbour him so close,
Now list. That through effect of his ill thoughts
In him my trust reposing, I was ta'en
And after murder'd, need is not I tell.
What therefore thou canst not have heard, that is,
How cruel was the murder, shalt thou hear,
And know if he have wrong'd me. A small grate
Within that mew, which for my sake the name
Of famine bears, where others yet must pine,
Already through its opening several moons
Had shown me, when I slept the evil sleep
That from the future tore the curtain off.
This one, methought, as master of the sport,
Rode forth to chase the gaunt wolf, and his whelps,
Unto the mountain which forbids the sight
Of Lucca to the Pisan. With lean brachs
Inquisitive and keen, before him ranged
Lanfranchi with Sismondi and Gualandi.
After short course the father and the sons
Seem'd tired and lagging, and methought I saw
The sharp tusks gore their sides. When I awoke,
Before the dawn, amid their sleep I heard
My sons (for they were with me) weep and ask
For bread. Right cruel art thou, if no pang
Thou feel at thinking what my heart foretold;
And if not now, why use thy tears to flow?

his grandson, Nino Visconti (see *Purg.* viii.); while the head of the Ghibellines was the Archbishop of Pisa, Ruggieri degli Ubaldini (nephew of the Cardinal, for whom see above, Canto x.), who was supported by the Lanfranchi, Sismondi, Gualandi, and other families. Count Ugolino had already acquired a sinister reputation by his surrender of certain castles to the Florentines and Lucchese after the defeat of the Pisans by the Genoese at Meloria, in 1284, as also for his questionable conduct in that naval battle. He now united with the Archbishop to expel Nino and his party, and thereby obtained the chief control of the State. Finding the Guelfs thus weakened and himself used as a mere tool, the Archbishop stirred up the populace against Ugolino on the grounds of his former treasons. The Count was seized, with his two sons and two grandsons (Gaddo, Uguccione, Nino, called Brigata, and Anselmuccio, or "Little Anselm"), and imprisoned in the Torre dei Gualandi. This was in July, 1288. In the following March, 1289, Guido da Montefeltro having been appointed captain of Pisa, the keys were thrown into the Arno, and the prisoners left to starve to death—even the spiritual consolation of a priest being denied them. The tower was thereafter called the "Torre della Fame," or "Tower of Famine."

Now had they waken'd; and the hour drew near
When they were wont to bring us food; the mind
Of each misgave him through his dream, and I
Heard, at its outlet underneath, lock'd up
The horrible tower: whence, uttering not a word,
I look'd upon the visage of my sons.
I wept not: so all stone I felt within.
They wept: and one, my little Anselm, cried,
'Thou lookest so! Father, what ails thee?' Yet
I shed no tear, nor answer'd all that day
Nor the next night, until another sun
Came out upon the world. When a faint beam
Had to our doleful prison made its way,
And in four countenances I descried
The image of my own, on either hand
Through agony I bit; and they, who thought
I did it through desire of feeding, rose
O' the sudden, and cried, 'Father, we should grieve
'Far less, if thou wouldst eat of us: thou gavest
'These weeds of miserable flesh we wear;
'And do thou strip them off from us again.'
Then, not to make them sadder, I kept down
My spirit in stillness. That day and the next
We all were silent. Ah, obdurate earth!
Why open'dst not upon us? When we came
To the fourth day, then Gaddo at my feet
Outstretch'd did fling him, crying, 'Hast no help
'For me, my father!' There he died; and e'en
Plainly as thou seest me, saw I the three
Fall one by one 'twixt the fifth day and sixth:
Whence I betook me, now grown blind, to grope
Over them all, and for three days aloud
Call'd on them who were dead. Then, fasting got
The mastery of grief."[1] Thus having spoke,
Once more upon the wretched skull his teeth
He fasten'd like a mastiff's 'gainst the bone,
Firm and unyielding. Oh, thou Pisa! shame
Of all the people, who their dwelling make
In that fair region, where the Italian voice
Is heard; since that thy neighbours are so slack
To punish, from their deep foundations rise

[1] Sorrow for his children could not slay him, but starvation did the work.

Capraia and Gorgona,[1] and dam up
The mouth of Arno; that each soul in thee
May perish in the waters. What if fame
Reported that thy castles were betray'd
By Ugolino, yet no right hadst thou
To stretch his children on the rack. For them,
Brigata, Uguccione, and the pair
Of gentle ones, of whom my song hath told,
Their tender years, thou modern Thebes, did make
Uncapable of guilt. Onward we pass'd,
Where others, skarf'd in rugged folds of ice,
Not on their feet were turn'd, but each reversed.

There, very weeping suffers not to weep;
For, at their eyes, grief, seeking passage, finds
Impediment, and rolling inward turns
For increase of sharp anguish: the first tears
Hang cluster'd, and like crystal vizors show,
Under the socket brimming all the cup.

Now though the cold had from my face dislodged
Each feeling, as 't were callous, yet me seem'd
Some breath of wind I felt. "Whence cometh this,"
Said I, "my Master? Is not here below
All vapour quench'd?" "Thou shalt be speedily,"
He answer'd, "where thine eyes shall tell thee whence,
The cause descrying of this airy shower."

Then cried out one, in the chill crust who mourn'd:
"O souls! so cruel, that the farthest post
Hath been assign'd you,[2] from this face remove
The harden'd veil; that I may vent the grief
Impregnate at my heart, some little space,
Ere it congeal again." I thus replied:
"Say who thou wast, if thou wouldst have mine aid;
And if I extricate thee not, far down
As to the lowest ice may I descend."
"The friar Alberigo," answer'd he,
"Am I, who from the evil garden pluck'd
Its fruitage, and am here repaid, the date
More luscious for my fig."—"Hah!" I exclaim'd,
"Art thou too dead?"—"How in the world aloft
It fareth with my body," answer'd he,
"I am right ignorant. Such privilege

[1] Islands off the Tuscan coast near Livorno.

[2] Not knowing that Dante is a living man, the spirit supposes that he and his companion are doomed to an even lower place in Hell than his own.

Hath Ptolomea,[1] that oft-times the soul
Drops hither, ere by Atropos divorced.
And that thou mayst wipe out more willingly
The glazed tear-drops that o'erlay mine eyes,
Know that the soul, that moment she betrays,
As I did, yields her body to a fiend
Who after moves and governs it at will,
Till all its time be rounded: headlong she
Falls to this cistern. And perchance above
Doth yet appear the body of a ghost,
Who here behind me winters. Him thou know'st,
If thou but newly art arrived below.
The years are many that have past away,
Since to this fastness Branca Doria came."
"Now," answer'd I, "methinks thou mockest me;
For Branca Doria never yet hath died,
But doth all natural functions of a man,
Eats, drinks, and sleeps, and putteth raiment on."
He thus: "Not yet unto that upper foss
By th' evil talons guarded, where the pitch
Tenacious boils, had Michel Zanche reach'd,
When this one left a demon in his stead
In his own body, and of one his kin,
Who with him treachery wrought. But now put forth
Thy hand, and ope mine eyes." I oped them not.
Ill manners were best courtesy to him.
Ah Genoese! men perverse in every way,
With every foulness stain'd, why from the earth
Are ye not cancel'd? Such an one of yours
I with Romagna's darkest spirit[2] found,

1 "Dante assigns to Tolomea the grim 'privilege' (perhaps suggested by Psalm lv. 15, 'Let them go down quick into hell,' and Luke xxii. 3) of receiving damned souls while those to whom they belong are still alive upon earth, their bodies meanwhile being tenanted by fiends from hell" (Toynbee). Alberigo de' Manfredi of Faenza (of which town his family were rulers), one of the *frati gaudenti*, or "jovial friars," to avenge a blow received from his brother Manfred, invited the latter and his son to a banquet. His call for the dessert, "Bring the fruit," was the signal at which his hired murderers rushed in and stabbed his two guests to death. The *male frutta*, "evil fruit," of Frate Alberigo became proverbial. This was in 1285. Branca d'Oria of Genoa, about 1290, invited his father-in-law, Michele Zanche (see above, Canto xxii.), to a banquet, at which he murdered him with the aid of a nephew (the kinsman referred to in the text). Both Alberigo and Branca were still living in 1300, the date of the vision.

2 Frate Alberigo.

As, for his doings, even now in soul
Is in Cocytus plunged, and yet doth seem
In body still alive upon the earth.

CANTO XXXIV

Argument

In the fourth and last round of the ninth circle, those who have betrayed their benefactors are wholly covered with ice. And in the midst is Lucifer, at whose back Dante and Virgil ascend, till by a secret path they reach the surface of the other hemisphere of the earth, and once more obtain sight of the stars.

"The banners of Hell's Monarch do come forth
Toward us;[1] therefore look," so spake my guide,
"If thou discern him." As, when breathes a cloud
Heavy and dense, or when the shades of night
Fall on our hemisphere, seems view'd from far
A windmill, which the blast stirs briskly round;
Such was the fabric then methought I saw.
To shield me from the wind, forthwith I drew
Behind my guide: no covert else was there.
Now came I (and with fear I bid my strain
Record the marvel) where the souls were all
Whelm'd underneath, transparent, as through glass
Pellucid the frail stem. Some prone were laid;
Others stood upright, this upon the soles,
That on his head, a third with face to feet
Arch'd like a bow. When to the point we came,
Whereat my guide was pleased that I should see
The creature eminent in beauty once,
He from before me stepp'd and made me pause.
"Lo!" he exclaim'd, "lo Dis;[2] and lo the place,
Where thou hast need to arm thy heart with strength."
How frozen and how faint I then became,
Ask me not, reader! for I write it not;
Since words would fail to tell thee of my state.
I was not dead nor living. Think thyself,
If quick conception work in thee at all,
How I did feel. That Emperor, who sways
The realm of sorrow, at mid breast from the ice

[1] *Vexilla regis prodeunt inferni*, a parody of the opening line of a hymn by Fortunatus which is still sung in procession in Catholic churches on the morning of Good Friday.
[2] Here identified with Lucifer.

Stood forth; and I in stature am more like
A giant, than the giants are his arms.
Mark now how great that whole must be, which suits
With such a part. If he were beautiful
As he is hideous now, and yet did dare
To scowl upon his Maker, well from him
May all our misery flow. Oh what a sight!
How passing strange it seem'd, when I did spy
Upon his head three faces: one in front
Of hue vermilion, the other two with this
Midway each shoulder join'd and at the crest;
The right 'twixt wan and yellow seem'd; the left
To look on, such as come from whence old Nile
Stoops to the lowlands.[1] Under each shot forth
Two mighty wings, enormous as became
A bird so vast. Sails never such I saw
Outstretch'd on the wide sea. No plumes had they,
But were in texture like a bat; and these
He flapp'd i' th' air, that from him issued still
Three winds, wherewith Cocytus to its depth
Was frozen.[2] At six eyes he wept: the tears
Adown three chins distill'd with bloody foam.
At every mouth his teeth a sinner champ'd,
Bruised as with ponderous engine; so that three
Were in this guise tormented. But far more
Than from that gnawing, was the foremost pang'd
By the fierce rending, whence oft-times the back
Was stript of all its skin. "That upper spirit,
Who hath worst punishment," so spake my guide,
"Is Judas, he that hath his head within
And plies the feet without. Of th' other two,
Whose heads are under, from the murky jaw
Who hangs, is Brutus: lo! how he doth writhe
And speaks not. The other, Cassius, that appears
So large of limb.[3] But night now re-ascends;
And it is time for parting.[4] All is seen."

[1] Lucifer's three faces (yellow, black, and red) are an infernal antithesis to the attributes of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity; impotence, ignorance, and hatred are contrasted with Power, Wisdom, and Love.

[2] The three winds produced by his wings are lust, pride, and avarice.

[3] The three arch-traitors: Judas Iscariot, who betrayed the Divine Founder of the Church; Brutus and Cassius, who murdered the imperial founder of the Empire.

[4] The night of Easter-Eve on earth.

I clipp'd him round the neck; for so he bade:
And noting time and place, he, when the wings
Enough were oped, caught fast the shaggy sides,
And down from pile to pile descending stepp'd
Between the thick fell and the jagged ice.
Soon as he reach'd the point, whereat the thigh
Upon the swelling of the haunches turns,
My leader there, with pain and struggling hard,
Turn'd round his head where his feet stood before,
And grappled at the fell as one who mounts;
That into Hell methought we turn'd again.
"Expect that by such stairs as these," thus spake
The teacher, panting like a man forespent,
"We must depart from evil so extreme:"
Then at a rocky opening issued forth,
And placed me on the brink to sit, next join'd
With wary step my side. I raised mine eyes,
Believing that I Lucifer should see
Where he was lately left, but saw him now
With legs held upward. Let the grosser sort,
Who see not what the point was I had past,
Bethink them if sore toil oppress'd me then.
"Arise," my master cried, "upon thy feet.
The way is long, and much uncouth the road;
And now within one hour and half of noon
The sun returns."[1] It was no palace-hall
Lofty and luminous wherein we stood,
But natural dungeon where ill-footing was
And scant supply of light. "Ere from the abyss
I separate," thus when risen I began:
"My guide! vouchsafe few words to set me free
From error's thraldom. Where is now the ice?
How standeth he in posture thus reversed?
And how from eve to morn in space so brief
Hath the sun made his transit?" He in few
Thus answering spake: "Thou deemest thou art still
On the other side the centre, where I grasp'd
The abhorred worm that boreth through the world.
Thou wast on the other side, so long as I
Descended; when I turn'd, thou didst o'erpass

[1] The Italian is: *E già il sole a mezza terza riede;* "And already the sun returns to middle tierce." "*Tierce* was the first of the four canonical divisions of the day, and would, at the equinox, last from six till nine; *middle tierce* is therefore equivalent to half-past seven" (Oelsner).

That point,[1] to which from every part is dragg'd
All heavy substance. Thou art now arrived
Under the hemisphere opposed to that,
Which the great continent doth overspread,
And underneath whose canopy expired
The Man, that was born sinless and so lived.
Thy feet are planted on the smallest sphere,
Whose other aspect is Judecca. Morn
Here rises, when there evening sets: and he,
Whose shaggy pile we scaled, yet standeth fix'd,
As at the first. On this part he fell down
From Heaven; and th' earth, here prominent before,
Through fear of him did veil her with the sea,
And to our hemisphere retired. Perchance,
To shun him, was the vacant space left here,
By what of firm land on this side appears,
That sprang aloof."[2] There is a place beneath,
From Belzebub as distant, as extends
The vaulted tomb; discover'd not by sight,
But by the sound of brooklet, that descends
This way along the hollow of a rock,
Which, as it winds with no precipitous course,
The wave hath eaten. By that hidden way
My guide and I did enter, to return
To the fair world: and heedless of repose
We climb'd, he first, I following his steps,
Till on our view the beautiful lights of Heaven
Dawn'd through a circular opening in the cave:
Thence issuing we again beheld the stars.

1 The centre of the universe.

2 Dante has turned completely round (symbolical of his conversion from sin), and now finds himself in a chasm left at Lucifer's fall, below the southern hemisphere—the hemisphere, supposed covered with water, opposite to that which man inhabits. I follow Dr. Moore in taking the morning which Dante is now to see as the morning of Easter Day in the southern hemisphere, which is twelve hours behind the time of its antipodes. The Mountain of Purgatory, the only land in the southern hemisphere, to which Dante now comes, was formed when Lucifer fell by the earth rushing up to escape him. It is the exact antipodes of Jerusalem and Mount Calvary. The "brooklet" (*ruscelletto*), which trickles down from Purgatory into Hell, is Lethe, which takes away all memory of sin and evil from the purified soul.

THE VISION OF DANTE

Purgatory

CANTO I

ARGUMENT

The Poet describes the delight he experienced at issuing a little before dawn from the infernal regions, into the pure air that surrounds the isle of Purgatory; and then relates how, turning to the right, he beheld four stars never seen before but by our first parents, and met on his left the shade of Cato of Utica, who, having warned him and Virgil what is needful to be done before they proceed on their way through Purgatory, disappears; and the two poets go towards the shore, where Virgil cleanses Dante's face with the dew, and girds him with a reed, as Cato had commanded.

O'ER better waves to speed her rapid course
The light bark of my genius lifts the sail,
Well pleased to leave so cruel sea behind;
And of that second region will I sing,
In which the human spirit from sinful blot
Is purged, and for ascent to Heaven prepares.
Here, O ye hallow'd Nine! for in your train
I follow, here the deaden'd strain revive;[1]
Nor let Calliope refuse to sound
A somewhat higher song, of that loud tone
Which when the wretched birds of chattering note
Had heard, they of forgiveness lost all hope.[2]
Sweet hue of eastern sapphire, that was spread
O'er the serene aspect of the pure air,
High up as the first circle,[3] to mine eyes
Unwonted joy renew'd, soon as I 'scaped

[1] *Risurga*, "rise again." Dante has been a day and a night in the passage upwards from the centre of the earth, and it is not yet daybreak on Easter Sunday; "in the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week."

[2] The Pierides, nine daughters of King Pierus of Emathia, challenged the nine Muses to a contest, and were changed into magpies (Ovid, *Metam.* v.). Calliope is the muse of epic poetry.

[3] Either the moon or the ninth sphere (*primum mobile*).

Forth from the atmosphere of deadly gloom,
That had mine eyes and bosom fill'd with grief.
The radiant planet, that to love invites,
Made all the orient laugh, and veil'd beneath
The Pisces' light, that in [her] escort came.[1]
To the right hand I turn'd, and fix'd my mind
On the other pole attentive, where I saw
Four stars ne'er seen before save by the ken
Of our first parents.[2] Heaven of their rays
Seem'd joyous. O thou northern site! bereft
Indeed, and widow'd, since of these deprived.
As from this view I had desisted, straight
Turning a little towards the other pole,
There from whence now the wain had disappear'd,
I saw an old man standing by my side
Alone, so worthy of reverence in his look,
That ne'er from son to father more was owed.
Low down his beard, and mix'd with hoary white,
Descended, like his locks, which, parting, fell
Upon his breast in double fold. The beams
Of those four luminaries on his face
So brightly shone, and with such radiance clear
Deck'd it, that I beheld him as the sun.[3]
"Say who are ye, that stemming the blind stream,
Forth from the eternal prison-house have fled?"

1 "Venus was not actually in Pisces in the spring of 1300, but Dante is probably following a tradition as to the position of all the planets at the moment of Creation (cf. *Inf.* i.). In the representation of the Creation in the Collegiate Church at San Gimignano, Venus is depicted as being in Pisces" (Oelsner).

2 The Southern Cross, of which the four stars here symbolise the Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance. Since the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Earthly Paradise, the southern hemisphere has been uninhabited, according to the cosmography adopted by Dante.

3 Cato of Utica (B.C. 95—B.C. 46). He is represented playing a similar part in the *Æneid*, viii. 670. In the allegorical sense, the light of the four mystical stars so shines upon his face that he seems illuminated with the light of the sun of Divine Grace. Cato, "the severest champion of true liberty," "to kindle the love of liberty in the world, gave proof of how dear he held her by preferring to depart from life a free man, rather than remain alive bereft of liberty" (*Mon.* ii. 5). He was one of those who "saw and believed that this end of human life lies only in rigid virtue" (*Conv.* iv. 6). He is, therefore, the example man must keep before his eyes in the search for moral liberty that Purgatory symbolises.

He spoke and moved those venerable plumes.
"Who hath conducted, or with lantern sure
Lights you emerging from the depth of night,
That makes the infernal valley ever black?
Are the firm statutes of the dread abyss
Broken, or in high Heaven new laws ordain'd,
That thus, condemn'd, ye to my caves approach?"
My guide, then laying hold on me, by words
And intimations given with hand and head,
Made my bent knees and eye submissive pay
Due reverence; then thus to him replied:
"Not of myself I come; a Dame from Heaven
Descending, him besought me in my charge
To bring. But since thy will implies, that more
Our true condition I unfold at large,
Mine is not to deny thee thy request.
This mortal ne'er hath seen the farthest gloom;[1]
But erring by his folly had approach'd
So near, that little space was left to turn.
Then, as before I told, I was dispatch'd
To work his rescue; and no way remain'd
Save this which I have ta'en. I have display'd
Before him all the regions of the bad;
And purpose now those spirits to display,
That under thy command are purged from sin.
How I have brought him would be long to say.
From high descends the virtue, by whose aid
I to thy sight and hearing him have led.
Now may our coming please thee. In the search
Of liberty he journeys: that how dear,
They know who for her sake have life refused.
Thou knowest, to whom death for her was sweet
In Utica, where thou didst leave those weeds,
That in the last great day will shine so bright.
For us the eternal edicts are unmoved:
He breathes, and I of Minos am not bound,
Abiding in that circle, where the eyes
Of thy chaste Marcia beam, who still in look
Prays thee, O hallow'd spirit! to own her thine.[2]

[1] *L'ultima sera*, "his last evening"—death in sin and consequent damnation.

[2] Cato's wife Marcia is, like Virgil himself, in Limbo (see above, *Inf.* iv.). In the *Convivio* (iv. 28), Dante makes the relations of Cato and Marcia an allegory of those between God and the human soul.

Then by her love we implore thee, let us pass
Through thy seven regions; for which, best thanks
I for thy favour will to her return,
If mention there below thou not disdain."
"Marcia so pleasing in my sight was found,"
He then to him rejoin'd, "while I was there,
That all she ask'd me I was fain to grant.
Now that beyond the accursed stream she dwells,
She may no longer move me, by that law,
Which was ordain'd me, when I issued thence.
Not so, if Dame from Heaven, as thou sayst,
Moves and directs thee; then no flattery needs.
Enough for me that in her name thou ask.
Go therefore now: and with a slender reed
See that thou duly gird him, and his face
Lave, till all sordid stain thou wipe from thence.
For not with eye, by any cloud obscured,
Would it be seemly before him to come,
Who stands the foremost minister in Heaven.
This islet all around, there far beneath,
Where the wave beats it, on the oozy bed
Produces store of reeds. No other plant,
Cover'd with leaves, or harden'd in its stalk,
There lives, not bending to the water's sway.[1]
After, this way return not; but the sun
Will show you, that now rises, where to take
The mountain in its easiest ascent."
He disappear'd; and I myself upraised
Speechless, and to my guide retiring close,
Toward him turn'd mine eyes. He thus began:
"My son! observant thou my steps pursue.
We must retreat to rereward; for that way
The champain to its low extreme declines."
The dawn had chased the matin hour of prime,
Which fled before it, so that from afar
I spied the trembling of the ocean stream.[2]
We traversed the deserted plain, as one
Who, wander'd from his track, thinks every step
Trodden in vain till he regain the path.
When we had come, where yet the tender dew
Strove with the sun, and in a place where fresh

1 The rush or reed is a symbol of humility.
2 *Conobbi il tremolar della marina:* Cary hardly renders the beauty of this famous line.

The wind breathed o'er it, while it slowly dried;
Both hands extended on the watery grass
My master placed, in graceful act and kind.
Whence I of his intent before apprized,
Stretch'd out to him my cheeks suffused with tears.
There to my visage he anew restored
That hue which the dun shades of Hell conceal'd.
Then on the solitary shore arrived,
That never sailing on its waters saw
Man that could after measure back his course,
He girt me in such manner as had pleased
Him who instructed; and O strange to tell!
As he selected every humble plant,
Wherever one was pluck'd, another there
Resembling, straightway in its place arose.

CANTO II

Argument

They behold a vessel under conduct of an Angel, coming over the waves with spirits to Purgatory, among whom, when the passengers have landed, Dante recognises his friend Casella; but, while they are entertained by him with a song, they hear Cato exclaiming against their negligent loitering, and at that rebuke hasten forwards to the mountain.

Now had the sun to that horizon reach'd,
That covers, with the most exalted point
Of its meridian circle, Salem's walls;
And night, that opposite to him her orb
Rounds, from the stream of Ganges issued forth,
Holding the scales, that from her hands are dropt
When she reigns highest: so that where I was,
Aurora's white and vermeil-tinctured cheek
To orange turn'd as she in age increased.[1]
Meanwhile we linger'd by the water's brink,
Like men, who, musing on their road, in thought
Journey, while motionless the body rests.

[1] "It is sunset at Jerusalem; and midnight on the Ganges, *i. e.* in India (when the sun is in Aries, the night is in the opposite sign of Libra, or the Scales; and Libra falls from the hand of night at the time of the autumn equinox, when the sun enters the constellation, and the nights become longer than the days): it is therefore sunrise in Purgatory" (T. C. editors).

When lo! as, near upon the hour of dawn,
Through the thick vapours Mars with fiery beam
Glares down in west, over the ocean floor;
So seem'd, what once again I hope to view,
A light, so swiftly coming through the sea,
No winged course might equal its career.
From which when for a space I had withdrawn
Mine eyes, to make inquiry of my guide,
Again I look'd, and saw it grown in size
And brightness: then on either side appear'd
Something, but what I knew not, of bright hue,
And by degrees from underneath it came
Another. My preceptor silent yet
Stood, while the brightness, that we first discern'd,
Open'd the form of wings: then when he knew
The pilot, cried aloud, "Down, down; bend low
Thy knees; behold God's Angel: fold thy hands:
Now shalt thou see true ministers indeed.
Lo! how all human means he sets at nought;
So that nor oar he needs, nor other sail
Except his wings, between such distant shores.[1]
Lo! how straight up to Heaven he holds them rear'd,
Winnowing the air with those eternal plumes,
That not like mortal hairs fall off or change."
As more and more toward us came, more bright
Appear'd the bird of God, nor could the eye
Endure his splendour near: I mine bent down.
He drove ashore in a small bark so swift
And light, that in its course no wave it drank.
The heavenly steersman at the prow was seen,
Visibly written Blessed in his looks.
Within, a hundred spirits and more there sat.
"In exitu Israel de Ægypto,"
All with one voice together sang, with what
In the remainder of that hymn is writ.[2]
Then soon as with the sign of holy cross
He bless'd them, they at once leap'd out on land:
He, swiftly as he came, return'd. The crew,
There left, appear'd astounded with the place,
Gazing around, as one who sees new sights.

[1] The Angel of Faith.
[2] Dante tells us elsewhere (*Epist.* x. 7) that this psalm mystically signifies the passing of the holy soul from the bondage of this corruption to the liberty of eternal glory.

From every side the sun darted his beams,
And with his arrowy radiance from mid heaven
Had chased the Capricorn,[1] when that strange tribe,
Lifting their eyes toward us: "If ye know,
Declare what path will lead us to the mount."
Them Virgil answer'd: "Ye suppose, perchance,
Us well acquainted with this place; but here,
We, as yourselves, are strangers. Not long erst
We came, before you but a little space,
By other road so rough and hard, that now
The ascent will seem to us as play." The spirits,
Who from my breathing had perceived I lived,
Grew pale with wonder. As the multitude
Flock round a herald sent with olive branch,
To hear what news he brings, and in their haste
Tread one another down; e'en so at sight
Of me those happy spirits were fix'd, each one
Forgetful of its errand to depart
Where, cleansed from sin, it might be made all fair.
Then one I saw darting before the rest
With such fond ardour to embrace me, I
To do the like was moved. O shadows vain!
Except in outward semblance: thrice my hands
I clasp'd behind it, they as oft return'd
Empty into my breast again. Surprise
I need must think was painted in my looks,
For that the shadow smiled and backward drew.
To follow it I hasten'd, but with voice
Of sweetness it enjoin'd me to desist.
Then who it was I knew, and pray'd of it,
To talk with me it would a little pause.
It answer'd: "Thee as in my mortal frame
I loved, so loosed from it I love thee still,
And therefore pause: but why walkest thou here?"
"Not without purpose once more to return,
Thou find'st me, my Casella, where I am,
Journeying this way;" I said: "but how of thee
Hath so much time been lost?" He answer'd straight:
"No outrage hath been done to me, if he,
Who when and whom he chooses takes, hath oft
Denied me passage here; since of just will
His will he makes. These three months past indeed,
He, whoso chose to enter, with free leave
Hath taken; whence I wandering by the shore

[1] The light of the rising sun has quenched that of the Capricorn.

Where Tiber's wave grows salt, of him gain'd kind
Admittance, at that river's mouth, toward which
His wings are pointed; for there always throng
All such as not to Acheron descend."[1]
Then I: "If new law taketh not from thee
Memory or custom of love-tuned song,
That whilom all my cares had power to 'swage;
Please thee therewith a little to console
My spirit, that encumber'd with its frame,
Travelling so far, of pain is overcome."
"Love, that discourses in my thoughts,"[2] he then
Began in such soft accents, that within
The sweetness thrills me yet. My gentle guide,
And all who came with him, so well were pleased,
That seem'd nought else might in their thoughts have room.
Fast fix'd in mute attention to his notes
We stood, when lo! that old man venerable
Exclaiming, "How is this, ye tardy spirits?
What negligence detains you loitering here?
Run to the mountain to cast off those scales,
That from your eyes the sight of God conceal."
As a wild flock of pigeons, to their food
Collected, blade or tares, without their pride
Accustom'd, and in still and quiet sort,
If aught alarm them, suddenly desert
Their meal, assail'd by more important care
So I that new-come troop beheld, the song
Deserting, hasten to the mountain's side,
As one who goes, yet, where he tends, knows not.
Nor with less hurried step did we depart.

1 Casella was a Florentine musician and an intimate friend of Dante's, some of whose lyrics he set to music. He died between 1282 and 1300. Dante's surprise at seeing him only just arrive implies, perhaps, that he had already been dead for some while at the latter date. The souls of the redeemed who are to be detained in Purgatory gather at the mouth of Tiber (Rome being the "portal of salvation"), as the lost do on the shore of Acheron, waiting for the Angel to take them in his boat. For three months, that is, since the proclamation of the papal jubilee (it began on Christmas Day, 1299, but the bull granting the plenary indulgence was published on February 22, 1300), he has freely taken all comers who have died in a "state of grace."

2 *Amor che nella mente mi ragiona*, the opening line of the second *canzone* of Dante's *Convivio*, which was probably one of those set to music by Casella.

CANTO III

ARGUMENT

Our Poet, perceiving no shadow except that cast by his own body, is fearful that Virgil has deserted him; but he is freed from that error, and both arrive together at the foot of the mountain: on finding it too steep to climb, they inquire the way from a troop of spirits that are coming towards them, and are by them shown which is the easiest ascent. Manfredi, king of Naples, who is one of these spirits, bids Dante inform his daughter Costanza, Queen of Aragon, of the manner in which he had died.

THEM sudden flight had scatter'd o'er the plain,
Turn'd towards the mountain, whither reason's voice
Drives us: I, to my faithful company
Adhering, left it not. For how, of him
Deprived, might I have sped? or who, beside,
Would o'er the mountainous tract have led my steps?
He, with the bitter pang of self-remorse,
Seem'd smitten. O clear conscience, and upright!
How doth a little failing wound thee sore.
Soon as his feet desisted (slackening pace)
From haste, that mars all decency of act,
My mind, that in itself before was wrapt,
Its thought expanded, as with joy restored;
And full against the steep ascent I set
My face, where highest to Heaven its top o'erflows.[1]
The sun, that flared behind, with ruddy beam
Before my form was broken; for in me
His rays resistance met. I turn'd aside
With fear of being left, when I beheld
Only before myself the ground obscured.
When thus my solace, turning him around,
Bespake me kindly: "Why distrustest thou?
Believest not I am with thee, thy sure guide?
It now is evening there, where buried lies
The body in which I cast a shade, removed
To Naples[2] from Brundusium's wall. Nor thou
Marvel, if before me no shadow fall,
More than that in the skyey element

[1] Or, as Mr. Okey translates: "which rises highest heavenward from the waters."

[2] Augustus ordered the body of Virgil to be transferred from Brundusium (Brindisi) to Naples.

One ray obstructs not other. To endure
Torments of heat and cold extreme, like frames
That virtue hath disposed, which, how it works,
Wills not to us should be reveal'd. Insane,
Who hopes our reason may that space explore,
Which holds three Persons in one Substance knit.
Seek not the wherefore, race of human kind;
Could ye have seen the whole, no need had been
For Mary to bring forth. Moreover, ye
Have seen such men desiring fruitlessly;
To whose desires, repose would have been given,
That now but serve them for eternal grief.
I speak of Plato, and the Stagirite,
And others many more." [1] And then he bent
Downwards his forehead, and in troubled mood
Broke off his speech. Meanwhile we had arrived
Far as the mountain's foot, and there the rock
Found of so steep ascent, that nimblest steps
To climb it had been vain. The most remote,
Most wild, untrodden path, in all the tract
'Twixt Lerice and Terbia, were to this
A ladder easy and open of access.
"Who knows on which hand now the steep declines?"
My master said, and paused; "so that he may
Ascend, who journeys without aid of wing?"
And while, with looks directed to the ground,
The meaning of the pathway he explored,
And I gazed upward round the stony height;
On the left hand appear'd to us a troop
Of spirits, that toward us moved their steps;
Yet moving seem'd not, they so slow approach'd.
I thus my guide address'd: "Upraise thine eyes:
Lo! that way some, of whom thou mayst obtain
Counsel, if of thyself thou find'st it not."
Straightway he look'd, and with free speech replied:
"Let us tend thither: they but softly come.
And thou be firm in hope, my son beloved."
Now was that crowd from us distant as far,
(When we some thousand steps, I say, had past),
As at a throw the nervous arm could fling;
When all drew backward on the massy crags

[1] The souls in Limbo, including the speaker himself.

Of the steep bank, and firmly stood unmoved,
As one, who walks in doubt, might stand to look.
"O spirits perfect! O already chosen!"
Virgil to them began: "by that blest peace,
Which, as I deem, is for you all prepared,
Instruct us where the mountain low declines,
So that attempt to mount it be not vain.
For who knows most, him loss of time most grieves."
As sheep,[1] that step from forth their fold, by one,
Or pairs, or three at once; meanwhile the rest
Stand fearfully, bending the eye and nose
To ground, and what the foremost does, that do
The others, gathering round her if she stops,
Simple and quiet, nor the cause discern;
So saw I moving to advance the first,
Who of that fortunate crew were at the head,
Of modest mien, and graceful in their gait.
When they before me had beheld the light
From my right side fall broken on the ground,
So that the shadow reach'd the cave; they stopp'd,
And somewhat back retired: the same did all
Who follow'd, though unweeting of the cause.
"Unask'd of you, yet freely I confess,
This is a human body which ye see.
That the sun's light is broken on the ground,
Marvel not: but believe, that not without
Virtue derived from Heaven, we to climb
Over this wall aspire." So them bespake
My master; and that virtuous tribe rejoin'd:
"Turn, and before you there the entrance lies;"
Making a signal to us with bent hands.
Then of them one began. "Whoe'er thou art
Who journey'st thus this way, thy visage turn;
Think if me elsewhere thou hast ever seen."
I towards him turn'd, and with fix'd eye beheld.
Comely and fair, and gentle of aspect
He seem'd, but on one brow a gash was mark'd.
When humbly I disclaim'd to have beheld
Him ever: "Now behold!" he said, and show'd

[1] These are the souls of those who died excommunicate, under the ban of the Church, but had time to repent of their sins: "sheep without a shepherd—for they are the souls of such as died in contumacy against the Church, and they must dree their rebellion against the chief Shepherd by thirty times as long a space of shepherdless wandering" (Wicksteed).

High on his breast a wound: then smiling spake.
"I am Manfredi, grandson to the Queen
Costanza:[1] whence I pray thee, when return'd,
To my fair daughter go, the parent glad
Of Aragonia and Sicilia's pride;
And of the truth inform her, if of me
Aught else be told. When by two mortal blows
My frame was shatter'd, I betook myself
Weeping to Him, who of free will forgives.
My sins were horrible: but so wide arms
Hath goodness infinite, that it receives
All who turn to it. Had this text divine
Been of Cosenza's shepherd better scann'd,
Who then by Clement on my hunt was set,
Yet at the bridge's head my bones had lain,
Near Benevento, by the heavy mole
Protected; but the rain now drenches them,
And the wind drives, out of the kingdom's bounds,
Far as the stream of Verde, where, with lights
Extinguish'd, he removed them from their bed.
Yet by their curse we are not so destroy'd,
But that the eternal Love may turn, while hope
Retains her verdant blossom. True it is,
That such one as in contumacy dies
Against the holy Church, though he repent,

[1] Manfred, grandson of the Empress Constance (*Par.* iii.), because a natural son of Frederick II. (*Inf.* x.), is described elsewhere by Dante as *benegenitus*, "well-begotten" (*V. E.* i. 12). After the death of the Emperor (1250) and his son Conrad (1254), Manfred usurped the crown of Sicily from the latter's little son Conradin, and became the head of the Ghibelline party in Italy. For a short while it seemed as though he might have united the whole nation under one crown. Excommunicated by three Popes in succession, he was finally defeated by Charles of Anjou, in February, 1266, on the plain of Grandella, near Benevento, and fell in the thickest of the battle. He was refused Christian burial, as having died under the Church's ban, but each French soldier laid a stone upon his body, thus raising the "heavy mole" mentioned by Dante. It was said that the Bishop of Cosenza, at the bidding of Clement IV., had the body disinterred, and carried across the Verde (the river Garigliano), the boundary of the kingdom of Naples, that, even in death, he might not rest in the realm that he was held to have usurped from the Church. Manfred was a prince of charm and culture, a poet and a patron of letters; his private life was immoral and irreligious. His Guelf contemporaries accuse him of parricide, fratricide, and incest; the latter accusation alone seems to have been true.

Must wander thirty-fold for all the time
In his presumption past; if such decree
Be not by prayers of good men shorter made.
Look therefore if thou canst advance my bliss;
Revealing to my good Costanza,[1] how
Thou hast beheld me, and beside, the terms
Laid on me of that interdict; for here
By means of those below much profit comes."

CANTO IV

Argument

Dante and Virgil ascend the mountain of Purgatory, by a steep and narrow path pent in on each side by rock, till they reach a part of it that opens into a ledge or cornice. There seating themselves, and turning to the east, Dante wonders at seeing the sun on their left, the cause of which is explained to him by Virgil; and while they continue their discourse, a voice addresses them, at which they turn, and find several spirits behind the rock, and amongst the rest one named Belacqua, who had been known to our Poet on earth, and who tells that he is doomed to linger there on account of his having delayed his repentance to the last.

When by sensations of delight or pain,
That any of our faculties hath seized,
Entire the soul collects herself, it seems
She is intent upon that power alone;
And thus the error is disproved, which holds
The soul not singly lighted in the breast.
And therefore whenas aught is heard or seen,
That firmly keeps the soul toward it turn'd,
Time passes, and a man perceives it not.
For that, whereby we hearken, is one power;
Another that, which the whole spirit hath:
This is as it were bound, while that is free.[2]

[1] Manfred's daughter Costanza married King Peter III. of Aragon, who avenged his death by conquering Sicily from Charles of Anjou in 1282. By him she was the mother of James and Frederick, who were kings of Aragon and Sicily respectively in 1300, and are described above as "Aragonia and Sicilia's pride."

[2] The doctrine ascribed to Plato that there were diverse souls with distinct organs in one and the same body had been disproved by St. Thomas Aquinas. "In the eagerness of his attention to Manfred's tale, Dante takes no note of the passing time, and

This found I true by proof, hearing that spirit,
And wondering; for full fifty steps aloft
The sun had measured,[1] unobserved of me,
When we arrived where all with one accord
The spirits shouted, "Here is what ye ask."
A larger aperture oft-times is stopt,
With forked stake of thorn by villager,
When the ripe grape imbrowns, than was the path,
By which my guide, and I behind him close,
Ascended solitary, when that troop
Departing left us. On Sanleo's road
Who journeys, or to Noli low descends,
Or mounts Bismantua's[2] height, must use his feet;
But here a man had need to fly, I mean
With the swift wing and plumes of high desire,
Conducted by his aid, who gave me hope,
And with light furnish'd to direct my way.
We through the broken rock ascended, close
Pent on each side, while underneath the ground
Ask'd help of hands and feet. When we arrived
Near on the highest ridge of the steep bank,
Where the plain level open'd, I exclaim'd,
"O Master! say, which way can we proceed."
He answer'd, "Let no step of thine recede.
Behind me gain the mountain, till to us
Some practised guide appear." That eminence
Was lofty, that no eye might reach its point;
And the side proudly rising, more than line[3]
From the mid quadrant to the centre drawn.
I, wearied, thus began: "Parent beloved!
Turn and behold how I remain alone,
If thou stay not."—"My son!" he straight replied,
"Thus far put forth thy strength;" and to a track

thereby furnishes a practical refutation of the Platonic doctrine of the plurality of souls; for if the soul that presides over hearing were one, and the soul that notes the passage of time another, then the completest absorption of the former could not so involve the latter as to prevent it from exercising its own special function" (Wicksteed).

[1] That is, it is now three hours and twenty minutes after sunrise, fifteen degrees being reckoned to the hour.

[2] These are three steep ascents: San Leo near Urbino, Noli on the Riviera, and Bismantova in the district of Reggio in Emilia.

[3] "It was much nearer to being perpendicular than horizontal" (Cary).

Pointed, that, on this side projecting, round
Circles the hill. His words so spurr'd me on,
That I, behind him, clambering, forced myself,
Till my feet press'd the circuit plain beneath.
There both together seated, turn'd we round
To eastward, whence was our ascent: and oft
Many beside have with delight look'd back.
First on the nether shores I turn'd mine eyes,
Then raised them to the sun, and wondering mark'd
That from the left it smote us. Soon perceived
That poet sage, how at the car of light
Amazed I stood, where 'twixt us and the north
Its course it enter'd. Whence he thus to me:
"Were Leda's offspring now in company
Of that broad mirror, that high up and low
Imparts his light beneath, thou mightst behold
The ruddy Zodiac nearer to the Bears
Wheel, if its ancient course it not forsook.
How that may be, if thou wouldst think; within
Pondering, imagine Sion with this mount
Placed on the earth, so that to both be one
Horizon, and two hemispheres apart,
Where lies the path that Phaëton ill knew
To guide his erring chariot: thou wilt see
How of necessity by this, on one,
He passes, while by that on the other side;[1]
If with clear view thine intellect attend."
"Of truth, kind teacher!" I exclaim'd, "so clear
Aught saw I never, as I now discern,
Where seem'd my ken to fail, that the mid orb
Of the supernal motion (which in terms
Of art is call'd the Equator, and remains
Still 'twixt the sun and winter) for the cause
Thou hast assign'd, from hence toward the north
Departs, when those, who in the Hebrew land
Were dwellers, saw it towards the warmer part.
But if it please thee, I would gladly know,

1 "Dante is amazed to find that the sun is north of the equator and strikes on his left shoulder. Virgil explains that this is because they are in the southern hemisphere, at the antipodes of Jerusalem. Were the sun in Gemini instead of Aries, he would be further to the north yet" (Wicksteed). The path along which Phaëton failed to guide his chariot is the ecliptic, the course of the sun.

How far we have to journey: for the hill
Mounts higher, than this sight of mine can mount."
He thus to me: "Such is this steep ascent,
That it is ever difficult at first,
But more a man proceeds, less evil grows.
When pleasant it shall seem to thee, so much
That upward going shall be easy to thee
As in a vessel to go down the tide,
Then of this path thou wilt have reach'd the end.
There hope to rest thee from thy toil. No more
I answer, and thus far for certain know."
As he his words had spoken, near to us
A voice there sounded: "Yet ye first perchance
May to repose you by constraint be led."
At sound thereof each turn'd; and on the left
A huge stone we beheld, of which nor I
Not he before was ware. Thither we drew;
And there were some, who in the shady place
Behind the rock were standing, as a man
Through idleness might stand.[1] Among them one,
Who seem'd to be much wearied, sat him down,
And with his arms did fold his knees about,
Holding his face between them downward bent.
"Sweet Sir!" I cried, "behold that man who shows
Himself more idle than if laziness
Were sister to him." Straight he turn'd to us,
And, o'er the thigh lifting his face, observed,
Then in these accents spake: "Up then, proceed,
Thou valiant one." Straight who it was I knew;
Nor could the pain I felt (for want of breath
Still somewhat urged me) hinder my approach.
And when I came to him, he scarce his head
Uplifted, saying, "Well hast thou discern'd,
How from the left the sun his chariot leads?"
His lazy acts and broken words my lips
To laughter somewhat moved; when I began:
"Belacqua,[2] now for thee I grieve no more.
But tell, why thou art seated upright there.

[1] These are the souls of those who postponed repentance through indolence, and now, unless aided by the prayers of the living, have to postpone their purgation for a similar period.

[2] A Florentine maker of musical instruments, described as "an excellent master of harps and lutes, but a most indolent man in the affairs of the world as well as in those of the soul." He was evidently an intimate friend of Dante's.

Waitest thou escort to conduct thee hence?
Or blame I only thine accustom'd ways?"
Then he: "My brother! of what use to mount,
When, to my suffering, would not let me pass
The bird of God,[1] who at the portal sits?
Behoves so long that Heaven first bear me round
Without its limits, as in life it bore;
Because I, to the end, repentant sighs
Delay'd; if prayer do not aid me first,
That riseth up from heart which lives in grace.
What other kind avails, not heard in Heaven?"
Before me now the poet, up the mount
Ascending, cried: "Haste thee: for see the sun
Has touch'd the point meridian; and the night
Now covers with her foot Morocco's shore."[2]

CANTO V

Argument

They meet with others, who had deferred their repentance till they were overtaken by a violent death, when sufficient space being allowed them, they were then saved; and amongst these, Giacopo del Cassero, Buonconte da Montefeltro, and Pia, a lady of Siena.

Now had I left those spirits, and pursued
The steps of my conductor; when behind,
Pointing the finger at me, one exclaim'd:
"See, how it seems as if the light not shone
From the left hand of him beneath, and he,
As living, seems to be led on."[3] Mine eyes
I at that sound reverting, saw them gaze,
Through wonder, first at me; and then at me
And the light broken underneath, by turns.
"Why are thy thoughts thus riveted," my guide
Exclaim'd, "that thou hast slack'd thy pace? or how
Imports it thee, what thing is whisper'd here?
Come after me, and to their babblings leave
The crowd. Be as a tower, that, firmly set,
Shakes not its top for any blast that blows.

[1] The Angel at the gate of Purgatory.
[2] It is sunset at Spain, and therefore noon in Purgatory.
[3] The souls are astonished at Dante's shadow, which shows he is a living man.

He, in whose bosom thought on thought shoots out,
Still of his aim is wide, in that the one
Sicklies and wastes to nought the other's strength."
What other could I answer, save "I come"?
I said it, somewhat with that colour tinged,
Which oft-times pardon meriteth for man.
Meanwhile traverse along the hill there came,
A little way before us, some who sang
The "Miserere" in responsive strains.
When they perceived that through my body I
Gave way not for the rays to pass, their song
Straight to a long and hoarse exclaim they changed;
And two of them, in guise of messengers,
Ran on to meet us, and inquiring ask'd:
"Of your condition we would gladly learn."
To them my guide: "Ye may return, and bear
Tidings to them who sent you, that his frame
Is real flesh. If, as I deem, to view
His shade they paused, enough is answer'd them:
Him let them honour: they may prize him well."
Ne'er saw I fiery vapours [1] with such speed
Cut through the serene air at fall of night,
Nor August's clouds athwart the setting sun,
That upward these did not in shorter space
Return; and, there arriving, with the rest
Wheel back on us, as with loose rein a troop.
"Many," exclaim'd the bard, "are these, who throng
Around us: to petition thee, they come.
Go therefore on, and listen as thou go'st."
"O spirit! who go'st on to blessedness,
With the same limbs that clad thee at thy birth,"
Shouting they came: "a little rest thy step.
Look if thou any one amongst our tribe
Hast e'er beheld, that tidings of him there [2]
Thou mayst report. Ah, wherefore go'st thou on?
Ah, wherefore tarriest thou not? We all
By violence died, and to our latest hour
Were sinners, but then warn'd by light from Heaven;
So that, repenting and forgiving, we
Did issue out of life at peace with God,
Who, with desire to see Him, fills our heart."

1 Falling stars or summer lightning.
2 Upon the earth.

Then I: "The visages of all I scan,
Yet none of ye remember. But if aught
That I can do may please you, gentle spirits!
Speak, and I will perform it; by that peace,
Which, on the steps of guide so excellent
Following, from world to world, intent I seek."
In answer he began: "None here distrusts
Thy kindness, though not promised with an oath;
So as the will fail not for want of power.
Whence I, who sole before the others speak,
Entreat thee, if thou ever see that land
Which lies between Romagna and the realm
Of Charles,[1] that of thy courtesy thou pray
Those who inhabit Fano, that for me
Their adorations duly be put up,
By which I may purge off my grievous sins.
From thence I came. But the deep passages,
Whence issued out the blood wherein I dwelt,
Upon my bosom in Antenor's land
Were made, where to be more secure I thought.
The author of the deed was Este's prince,
Who, more than right could warrant, with his wrath
Pursued me. Had I towards Mira fled,
When overta'en at Oriaco, still
Might I have breathed. But to the marsh I sped;
And in the mire and rushes tangled there
Fell, and beheld my life-blood float the plain."[2]
Then said another: "Ah! so may the wish,
That takes thee o'er the mountain, be fulfill'd,
As thou shalt graciously give aid to mine.
Of Montefeltro I; Buonconte I:
Giovanna nor none else have care for me;
Sorrowing with these I therefore go."[3] I thus:

[1] The March of Ancona, between Romagna and Apulia, the kingdom of Charles II. of Anjou.

[2] The speaker is Jacopo del Cassero, a nobleman of Fano (in the March of Ancona), who in 1298 was murdered by order of the Marquis of Ferrara (Azzo VIII. d'Este, cf. *Inf.* xii. notes) at Oriaco. Oriaco is near the river Brenta, in the district of Padua, which is here called "Antenor's land," because tradition ascribed its foundation to the Trojan traitor so named.

[3] Buonconte da Montefeltro, the son of Guido, commanded the Ghibelline cavalry at the battle of Campaldino (June 11, 1289), when Dante was "fighting valiantly on horseback in the front rank" of the other side. It is not known to what family his

" From Campaldino's field what force or chance
Drew thee, that ne'er thy sepulture was known?"
" Oh!" answer'd he, " at Casentino's foot
A stream there courseth, named Archiano, sprung
In Apennine above the hermit's seat.
E'en where its name is cancel'd,[1] there came I,
Pierced in the throat, fleeing away on foot,
And bloodying the plain. Here sight and speech
Fail'd me; and, finishing with Mary's name,
I fell, and tenantless my flesh remain'd.
I will report the truth; which thou again
Tell to the living. Me God's Angel took,[2]
Whilst he of Hell exclaim'd: 'O thou from Heaven!
'Say wherefore hast thou robb'd me? Thou of him
'The eternal portion bear'st with thee away,
'For one poor tear that he deprives me of.
'But of the other, other rule I make.'
" Thou know'st how in the atmosphere collects
That vapour dank, returning into water
Soon as it mounts where cold condenses it.
That evil will, which in his intellect
Still follows evil, came;[3] and raised the wind
And smoky mist, by virtue of the power
Given by his nature. Thence the valley, soon
As day was spent, he cover'd o'er with cloud,
From Pratomagno to the mountain range;[4]
And stretch'd the sky above; so that the air
Impregnate changed to water. Fell the rain;
And to the fosses came all that the land

wife Giovanna belonged. Buonconte's body having never been found, the Poet invents this wonderful and exquisite story of his death in the rout.

[1] Where it falls into the Arno near Bibbiena. The Archiano, a small stream in the Casentino, rises above the hermitage of Camaldoli, and joins the Arno about an hour's walk from the battlefield.

[2] Here is a designed and most tragic contrast with the death of Buonconte's father, Guido da Montefeltro, in *Inf.* xxvii. Similarly, St. Catherine of Siena writes that " whoso holds Mary in due reverence, be he a just man or a sinner, shall never be taken or devoured by the infernal demon."

[3] Mr. Okey translates it better: " He [the demon] united that evil will, which seeks ill only, with intellect."

[4] He spread a mist over the whole valley of the Casentino, from the mountain of Pratomagno on the west to the main chain of the Apennines on the east. This is a phenomenon that every one who has stayed in that district will have witnessed.

Contain'd not; and, as mightiest streams are wont,
To the great river, with such headlong sweep,
Rush'd, that nought stay'd its course. My stiffen'd frame,
Laid at his mouth, the fell Archiano found,
And dash'd it into Arno; from my breast
Loosening the cross, that of myself I made
When overcome with pain. He hurl'd me on,
Along the banks and bottom of his course;
Then in his muddy spoils encircling wrapt."
"Ah! when thou to the world shalt be return'd,
And rested after thy long road," so spake
Next the third spirit; "then remember me.
I once was Pia. Siena gave me life;
Maremma took it from me. That he knows,
Who me with jewel'd ring had first espoused." [1]

CANTO VI

Argument

Many besides, who are in like case with those spoken of in the last Canto, beseech our Poet to obtain for them the prayers of their friends, when he shall be returned to this world. This moves him to express a doubt to his guide, how the dead can be profited by the prayers of the living; for the solution of which doubt he is referred to Beatrice. Afterwards he meets with Sordello the Mantuan, whose affection, shown to Virgil his countryman, leads Dante to break forth into an invective against the unnatural divisions with which Italy, and more especially Florence, was distracted.

When from their game of dice men separate,
He who hath lost remains in sadness fix'd,
Revolving in his mind what luckless throws
He cast: but, meanwhile, all the company
Go with the other; one before him runs,
And one behind his mantle twitches, one
Fast by his side bids him remember him.

[1] These lines tell us that Pia was a lady of Siena who was murdered by her husband in the Maremma. She was probably a member of the Tolomei family, married to Count Paganello de' Pannocchieschi, one of the potent feudal lords of the Sienese contado. There are several alternative readings and interpretations of the last two lines of this Canto; but Cary's translation adroitly avoids the question—which is not of any vital importance.

He stops not; and each one, to whom his hand
Is stretch'd, well knows he bids him stand aside;
And thus he from the press defends himself.
E'en such was I in that close-crowding throng;
And turning so my face around to all,
And promising, I 'scaped from it with pains.
Here of Arezzo him I saw, who fell
By Ghino's cruel arm;[1] and him beside,
Who in his chase was swallow'd by the stream.[2]
Here Frederic Novello,[3] with his hand
Stretch'd forth, entreated; and of Pisa he,
Who put the good Marzucco to such proof
Of constancy.[4] Count Orso[5] I beheld;
And from its frame a soul dismiss'd for spite
And envy, as it said, but for no crime;
I speak of Peter de la Brosse: and here,
While she yet lives, that Lady of Brabant,
Let her beware; lest for so false a deed
She herd with worse than these.[6] When I was freed
From all those spirits, who pray'd for others' prayers
To hasten on their state of blessedness;
Straight I began: "O thou, my luminary!
It seems expressly in thy text denied,
That Heaven's supreme decree can ever bend
To supplication;[7] yet with this design

[1] Benincasa of Arezzo, a judge, was murdered at Rome by Ghino di Tacco, a notorious bandit whose brother he had sentenced to death.

[2] Guccio, or Cione, de' Tarlati, an Aretine who was drowned in the Arno. It is doubtful whether he was chasing his enemies, or being chased by them.

[3] Federigo Novello, one of the Ghibelline Conti Guidi of Battifolle, and grandson of Count Ugolino della Gherardesca, was murdered in 1289 by the Bostoli, a Guelf family of Arezzo.

[4] Marzucco degli Scornigiani was a Pisan noble who became a Franciscan friar. When his son Farinata, whom Dante sees here, was murdered by his personal enemies, or put to death by Count Ugolino (accounts differ as to the exact details), Marzucco showed his constancy by forgiving his slayers.

[5] The sons of Counts Napoleone and Alessandro degli Alberti (*Inf.* xxxii.) continued their fathers' feud, and this Count Orso, the son of Napoleone, was killed by his cousin Alberto, the son of Alessandro.

[6] Pierre de la Brosse, chamberlain of King Philip III. of France, was hanged in 1278 in consequence of a false accusation brought against him by the queen, Mary of Brabant, whom he had previously accused of the murder of her step-son.

[7] Virgil, *Æn.* vi. 376, had written: *Desine fata deûm flecti*

Do these entreat. Can then their hope be vain?
Or is thy saying not to me reveal'd?"
He thus to me: "Both what I write is plain,
And these deceived not in their hope; if well
Thy mind consider, that the sacred height
Of judgment doth not stoop, because love's flame
In a short moment all fulfils, which he,
Who sojourns here, in right should satisfy.
Besides, when I this point concluded thus,
By praying no defect could be supplied;
Because the prayer had none access to God.
Yet in this deep suspicion rest thou not
Contented, unless she assure thee so,
Who betwixt truth and mind infuses light:
I know not if thou take me right; I mean
Beatrice.[1] Her thou shalt behold above,
Upon this mountain's crown, fair seat of joy."
Then I: "Sir! let us mend our speed; for now
I tire not as before: and lo! the hill
Stretches its shadow far." He answer'd thus:
"Our progress with this day shall be as much
As we may now dispatch; but otherwise
Than thou supposest is the truth. For there
Thou canst not be, ere thou once more behold
Him back returning, who behind the steep
Is now so hidden, that, as erst, his beam
Thou dost not break. But lo! a spirit there
Stands solitary, and toward us looks:
It will instruct us in the speediest way."
We soon approach'd it. O thou Lombard spirit!
How didst thou stand, in high abstracted mood,
Scarce moving with slow dignity thine eyes.
It spoke not aught, but let us onward pass,
Eyeing us as a lion on his watch.
But Virgil, with entreaty mild, advanced,
Requesting it to show the best ascent.
It answer to his question none return'd;

sperare precando: "Cease to hope that the decrees of the Gods can yield to prayer."

1 "Virgil explains, firstly, that no bending of the divine will is involved in the granting of prayer; secondly, that his rebuke was uttered to souls not in grace; and, finally, that the complete solution of such questions is not for him (Virgil), but for Beatrice" (Wicksteed). It is a question for theology, rather than for human philosophy, to decide.

But of our country and our kind of life
Demanded. When my courteous guide began,
"Mantua," the shadow, in itself absorb'd,
Rose towards us from the place in which it stood,
And cried, "Mantuan! I am thy countryman,
Sordello."[1] Each the other then embraced.
Ah, slavish Italy! thou inn of grief!
Vessel without a pilot in loud storm!
Lady no longer of fair provinces,
But brothel-house impure! this gentle spirit,
Even from the pleasant sound of his dear land
Was prompt to greet a fellow citizen
With such glad cheer: while now thy living ones
In thee abide not without war; and one
Malicious gnaws another; ay, of those
Whom the same wall and the same moat contains.
Seek, wretched one! around thy sea-coasts wide;
Then homeward to thy bosom turn; and mark,
If any part of thee sweet peace enjoy.
What boots it, that thy reins Justinian's hand[2]
Refitted, if thy saddle be unprest?
Nought doth he now but aggravate thy shame.
[Ah, people! *that* obedient still shouldst live,
And in the saddle let thy Cæsar sit,
If well thou marked'st that which God commands,

[1] Elsewhere (*V. E.* i. 15), Dante writes: "Sordello, he who was so distinguished by his eloquence, not only in poetry, but in every other form of utterance, forsook his native dialect." Sordello of Goito, in the Mantuan district, was born about the year 1200, and was one of the Italian poets of the thirteenth century who wrote in Provençal. He carried on an adulterous intrigue with Cunizza da Romano (*Par.* ix.), the sister of Ezzelino and wife of Count Ricciardo di San Bonifazio, in consequence of which he was obliged to seek refuge in Provence in 1229. He returned to Italy in 1265, as one of the knights in the army of Charles of Anjou, by whom he was invested with a number of fiefs in the conquered kingdom of Naples. He apparently died a violent death, some time after June, 1269. His finest poem (still preserved) is a lament on the death of Blacatz, a Provençal baron, in which he rebukes the kings and princes of Europe, and exhorts them to eat the dead man's heart, and thereby be inspired to valiant deeds. It was, perhaps, this poem that led Dante to assign to Sordello, in the following Canto, the part of pointing out and passing judgment upon these same princes or their successors.

[2] Justinian, the law-giver of the Roman Empire (cf. *Par.* vi.). In Dante's conception, the Empire is essentially the power divinely ordained to enforce the observance of Roman Law.

Look how that beast to felness hath relapsed,
From having lost correction of the spur,
Since to the bridle thou hast set thine hand.] [1]
O German Albert! who abandon'st her
That is grown savage and unmanageable,
When thou shouldst clasp her flanks with forked heels.
Just judgment from the stars fall on thy blood;
And be it strange and manifest to all;
Such as may strike thy successor with dread;
For that thy sire and thou have suffer'd thus,
Through greediness of yonder realms detain'd,
The garden of the empire to run waste.[2]
Come, see the Capulets and Montagues,
The Filippeschi and Monaldi,[3] man
Who carest for nought! those sunk in grief, and these
With dire suspicion rack'd. Come, cruel one!
Come, and behold the oppression of the nobles,
And mark their injuries; and thou mayst see
What safety Santafiore can supply.[4]
Come and behold thy Rome, who calls on thee,
Desolate widow, day and night with moans,
"My Cæsar, why dost thou desert my side?" [5]

[1] I have been compelled to change the punctuation, and in consequence the entire construction of the lines enclosed in brackets, as Cary has misunderstood the Poet's meaning. They are addressed to the clergy, rebuking them for their usurpation of the secular power that pertains only to the Emperor.

[2] Albert of Hapsburg, who is here apostrophized, was King of the Romans and Emperor-elect at the date of the vision, but, like his father Rudolf (see below, Canto vii.), was too much absorbed in his German politics to attend to Italian affairs. The "just judgment" invoked by Dante refers to Albert's murder by his nephew John, on May 1, 1308. Henry of Luxemburg was elected to succeed him in November.

[3] It is doubtful whether the point of this appeal is that these noble families are oppressed by the Guelf democracy, or that they are factious against each other. The Cappelletti were either Ghibellines of Verona (as the countrymen of Shakespeare are bound to maintain) or Guelfs of Cremona (which seems more probable); the Montecchi ("Montagues") were Ghibellines of Verona; the Monaldi and Filippeschi were Guelf and Ghibelline families of Orvieto.

[4] Santafiore was the chief stronghold of the Aldobrandeschi, a Ghibelline feudal family in the Sienese contado, who held what corresponds to the present province of Grosseto. They were in continual war with the Guelf commune of Siena, which strove to deprive them of their jurisdiction. *Cf.* below, Canto xi.

[5] *Cf.* Dante's letter to the Italian Cardinals (*Epist.* viii. 2, 10).

Come, and behold what love among thy people:
And if no pity touches thee for us,
Come, and blush for thine own report. For me,
If it be lawful, O Almighty Power!
Who wast on earth for our sakes crucified,
Are Thy just eyes turn'd elsewhere? or is this
A preparation, in the wondrous depth
Of Thy sage counsel made, for some good end,
Entirely from our reach of thought cut off?
So are the Italian cities all o'erthrong'd
With tyrants, and a great Marcellus [1] made
Of every petty factious villager.

My Florence! thou mayst well remain unmoved
At this digression, which affects not thee:
Thanks to thy people, who so wisely speed.[2]
Many have justice in their heart, that long
Waiteth for counsel to direct the bow,
Or ere it dart unto its aim: but thine
Have it on their lip's edge. Many refuse
To bear the common burdens: readier thine
Answer uncall'd, and cry, "Behold I stoop!"

Make thyself glad, for thou hast reason now,
Thou wealthy! thou at peace! thou wisdom-fraught!
Facts best will witness if I speak the truth.
Athens and Lacedæmon, who of old
Enacted laws, for civil arts renown'd,
Made little progress in improving life
Towards thee, who usest such nice subtlety,
That to the middle of November scarce
Reaches the thread thou in October weavest.
How many times within thy memory,
Customs, and laws, and coins, and offices
Have been by thee renew'd, and people changed.

If thou remember'st well and canst see clear,
Thou wilt perceive thyself like a sick wretch,
Who finds no rest upon her down, but oft
Shifting her side, short respite seeks from pain.

1 M. Claudius Marcellus, Roman consul, who opposed Cæsar, is here taken as a type of opponents of the Empire.

2 "From the reproaches thus launched against the Italians, Florence is sarcastically excepted, till the sarcasm breaks down in a wail of reproachful pity" (Wicksteed).

CANTO VII

ARGUMENT

The approach of night hindering further ascent, Sordello conducts our Poet apart to an eminence, from whence they behold a pleasant recess, in form of a flowery valley, scooped out of the mountain; where are many famous spirits, and among them the Emperor Rodolph, Ottocar king of Bohemia, Philip III. of France, Henry of Navarre, Peter III. of Aragon, Charles I. of Naples, Henry III. of England, and William, Marquis of Montferrat.

AFTER their courteous greetings joyfully
Seven times exchanged, Sordello backward drew,
Exclaiming, "Who are ye?"—"Before this mount
By spirits worthy of ascent to God
Was sought, my bones had by Octavius' care
Been buried. I am Virgil; for no sin
Deprived of Heaven, except for lack of faith."
So answer'd him in few my gentle guide.
As one, who aught before him suddenly
Beholding, whence his wonder riseth, cries,
"It is, yet is not," wavering in belief;
Such he appear'd; then downward bent his eyes,
And, drawing near with reverential step,
Caught him, where one of mean estate might clasp
His lord. "Glory of Latium!" he exclaim'd,
"In whom our tongue its utmost power display'd;
Boast of my honour'd birth-place! what desert
Of mine, what favour, rather, undeserved,
Shows thee to me? If I to hear that voice
Am worthy, say if from below thou comest,
And from what cloister's pale."—"Through every orb
Of that sad region," he replied, "thus far
Am I arrived, by heavenly influence led:
And with such aid I come. Not for my doing,
But for not doing, have I lost the sight
Of that high Sun, whom thou desirest, and who
By me too late was known. There is a place
There underneath, not made by torments sad,
But by dun shades alone; where mourning's voice
Sounds not of anguish sharp, but breathes in sighs.
There I with little innocents abide,
Who by death's fangs were bitten, ere exempt

From human taint. There I with those abide,
Who the three holy virtues [1] put not on,
But understood the rest, and without blame
Follow'd them all. But, if thou know'st, and canst,
Direct us how we soonest may arrive,
Where Purgatory its true beginning takes."
He answer'd thus: "We have no certain place
Assign'd us: upwards I may go, or round.
Far as I can, I join thee for thy guide.
But thou beholdest now how day declines;
And upwards to proceed by night, our power
Excels: therefore it may be well to choose
A place of pleasant sojourn. To the right
Some spirits sit apart retired. If thou
Consentest, I to these will lead thy steps:
And thou wilt know them, not without delight."
"How chances this?" was answer'd: "whoso wish'd
To ascend by night, would he be thence debarr'd
By other, or through his own weakness fail?"
The good Sordello then, along the ground
Trailing his finger, spoke: "Only this line [2]
Thou shalt not overpass, soon as the sun
Hath disappear'd; not that aught else impedes
Thy going upwards, save the shades of night.
These, with the want of power, perplex the will.
With them thou haply mightst return beneath,
Or to and fro around the mountain's side
Wander, while day is in the horizon shut."
My master straight, as wondering at his speech,
Exclaim'd: "Then lead us quickly, where thou sayst
That, while we stay, we may enjoy delight."
A little space we were removed from thence,
When I perceived the mountain hollow'd out,
Even as large valleys hollow'd out on earth.
"That way," the escorting spirit cried, "we go,
Where in a bosom the high bank recedes:
And thou await renewal of the day."
Betwixt the steep and plain, a crooked path
Led us traverse into the ridge's side,
Where more than half the sloping edge expires.

1 The three Theological Virtues: Faith, Hope, and Charity.
2 Cary aptly quotes John xii. 35: "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth."

Refulgent gold, and silver thrice refined,
And scarlet grain and ceruse, Indian wood
Of lucid dye serene, fresh emeralds
But newly broken, by the herbs and flowers
Placed in that fair recess, in colour all
Had been surpass'd, as great surpasses less.
Nor nature only there lavish'd her hues,
But of the sweetness of a thousand smells
A rare and undistinguish'd fragrance made.[1]
"Salve Regina,"[2] on the grass and flowers,
Here chanting, I beheld those spirits sit,
Who not beyond the valley could be seen.
"Before the westering sun sink to his bed,"
Began the Mantuan, who our steps had turn'd,
"'Mid those, desire not that I lead ye on.
For from this eminence ye shall discern
Better the acts and visages of all,
Than, in the nether vale, among them mix'd.
He, who sits high above the rest, and seems
To have neglected that he should have done,
And to the others' song moves not his lip,
The Emperor Rodolph call, who might have heal'd
The wounds whereof fair Italy hath died,
So that by others she revives but slowly.
He, who with kindly visage comforts him,
Sway'd in that country, where the water springs,
That Moldaw's river to the Elbe, and Elbe
Rolls to the ocean: Ottocar his name:
Who in his swaddling clothes was of more worth
Than Winceslaus his son, a bearded man,
Pamper'd with rank luxuriousness and ease.[3]

[1] "In a little lap or dell of the mountain they find the pensive souls of kings and rulers who had neglected their higher functions for selfish ease or selfish war. Now they are surrounded by every soothing beauty of nature; but relief from the serious cares of life, which erst they sought unduly, is now an anguish to them, and their yearning goes forth to the active purgation of the seven terraces of torment above them" (Wicksteed).

[2] *Salve Regina, mater misericordiæ*, the beginning of one of the Church's antiphons to the Blessed Virgin.

[3] The deadliest enemies on earth are now comforting each other, and singing the praises of the Queen of Mercy together. Rudolf of Hapsburg (nominally Emperor from 1272 till his death in 1292) found his most strenuous opponent in this Ottocar, King of Bohemia, whom he finally defeated and killed in the battle of Marchfield near Vienna in 1278. For Ottocar's son Wenceslaus,

And that one with the nose deprest, who close
In counsel seems with him of gentle look,
Flying expired, withering the lily's flower.
Look there, how he doth knock against his breast.
The other ye behold, who for his cheek
Makes of one hand a couch, with frequent sighs.
They are the father and the father-in-law
Of Gallia's bane: his vicious life they know
And foul; thence comes the grief that rends them thus.[1]
"He, so robust of limb, who measure keeps
In song with him of feature prominent,
With every virtue bore his girdle braced.
And if that stripling, who behind him sits,
King after him had lived, his virtue then
From vessel to like vessel had been pour'd;
Which may not of the other heirs be said.
By James and Frederick his realms are held;[2]
Neither the better heritage obtains.
Rarely into the branches of the tree
Doth human worth mount up: and so ordains
He who bestows it, that as His free gift
It may be call'd. To Charles my words apply
No less than to his brother in the song;
Which Pouille and Provence now with grief confess.
So much that plant degenerates from its seed,

whom Rudolf allowed to succeed to the Bohemian crown (annexing the rest of his dominions), and who was reigning at the epoch of the vision, see *Par.* xix.

[1] Philip III. of France (1270–1285), the "small-nosed king," died at Perpignan, whither he had retreated from Gerona after the destruction of his fleet by the navy of Peter III. of Aragon. Henry I. of Navarre, "the Fat" (brother of the king mentioned in *Inf.* xxii.), died in 1274. "Gallia's bane," Philip IV. of France, son of Philip III., married Henry's daughter Joan, whose son, Louis X., united the two crowns.

[2] Peter III. of Aragon, "so robust of limb," conquered Sicily (1282) from Charles I. of Anjou, the brother of St. Louis, who had won the crown of Naples and Sicily by the overthrow of Manfred (1266) and the judicial murder of Conradin (1268). Peter's claim to Sicily was due to his being the husband of Manfred's daughter Costanza (*cf.* above, Canto iii.). Charles is here indicated by his prominent nose. The two rivals both died in 1285. Peter was succeeded as King of Aragon by his son, Alfonso III., the "stripling" who attends him here (died 1291). At the epoch of the vision, Aragon and Sicily were ruled by Peter's second and third sons, James and Frederick respectively, whom Dante here and elsewhere regards as degenerate (*Par.* xix., xx.; *Conv.* iv. 6).

As, more than Beatrix and Margaret,
Costanza still boasts of her valorous spouse.[1]
" Behold the king of simple life and plain,
Harry of England, sitting there alone:
He through his branches better issue spreads.[2]
" That one, who, on the ground, beneath the rest,
Sits lowest, yet his gaze directs aloft,
Is William, that brave Marquis,[3] for whose cause,
The deed of Alexandria and his war
Makes Montferrat and Canavese weep."

CANTO VIII

ARGUMENT

Two Angels, with flaming swords broken at the points, descend to keep watch over the valley, into which Virgil and Dante entering by desire of Sordello, our Poet meets with joy the spirit of Nino, the judge of Gallura, one who was well known to him. Meantime three exceedingly bright stars appear near the pole, and a serpent creeps subtly into the valley, but flees at hearing the approach of those angelic guards. Lastly, Conrad Malaspina predicts to our Poet his future banishment.

Now was the hour that wakens fond desire
In men at sea, and melts their thoughtful heart

[1] Charles II. of Anjou succeeded his father as King of Naples (Pouille or Apulia) and Count of Provence. This Charles is as inferior to Charles I. as Costanza's husband Peter is superior to the latter, who was the husband successively of Beatrice of Provence and Margaret of Burgundy. Others take Margaret as Beatrice's sister, the eldest daughter of Count Raymond Berenger (cf. *Par.* vi.), and wife of Louis IX. of France; in which case the passage would mean that Charles II. is as inferior to Charles I. as Peter is superior to both Charles I. and St. Louis.

[2] Unlike these other kings, Henry III. of England (1216–1272) is surpassed by his son, Edward I. (1272–1307).

[3] William Longsword, Marquis of Monferrato, was one of the most powerful nobles and strenuous warriors in northern Italy in the second half of the thirteenth century. In addition to his ancestral marquisate, he ruled Tortona, Pavia, and Vercelli. He was at length taken prisoner by the people of Alessandria, who had risen against him, and imprisoned in an iron cage till his death, in 1292. The correct translation is: "William the Marquis, through whom Alessandria and its war make Monferrato and the Canavese weep;" the allusion being to the ensuing war between the Marquis John of Monferrato, William's son, and the Alessandrians, in which the territory of the former (which included the district known as the Canavese) suffered heavily.

Who in the morn have bid sweet friends farewell,
And pilgrim newly on his road with love
Thrills, if he hear the vesper bell from far,
That seems to mourn for the expiring day:
When I, no longer taking heed to hear,
Began, with wonder, from those spirits to mark
One risen from its seat, which with its hand
Audience implored. Both palms it join'd and raised,
Fixing its stedfast gaze toward the east,
As telling God, "I care for nought beside."
"Te Lucis Ante," [1] so devoutly then
Came from its lip, and in so soft a strain,
That all my sense in ravishment was lost.
And the rest after, softly and devout,
Follow'd through all the hymn, with upward gaze
Directed to the bright supernal wheels.
Here, reader! for the truth make thine eyes keen:
For of so subtle texture is this veil,
That thou with ease mayst pass it through unmark'd.[2]
I saw that gentle band silently next
Look up, as if in expectation held,
Pale and in lowly guise; and, from on high,
I saw, forth issuing descend beneath,
Two Angels, with two flame-illumined swords,
Broken and mutilated of their points.
Green as the tender leaves but newly born,
Their vesture was, the which, by wings as green
Beaten, they drew behind them, fann'd in air.[3]
A little over us one took his stand;
The other lighted on the opposing hill;
So that the troop were in the midst contain'd.
Well I descried the whiteness on their heads;

[1] *Te lucis ante terminum* is the first verse of the Church's evening hymn, which is sung at Compline.

[2] Cf. *Inf.* ix. Dante wishes to call the attention of the reader to the allegorical meaning of the coming of the serpent and its repulse by the Angels. Souls in Purgatory have not the intrinsic impossibility of sinning that is possessed by the Blessed of Paradise, but are kept absolutely free from any sin by the Divine Providence. In the allegorical sense, the meaning is that the way to moral and intellectual freedom is a hard one, and temptations to fall back in despair are many. The Tempter would draw man back from regaining the Earthly Paradise, from which he has once caused his expulsion.

[3] The Angels of Hope, with the swords of justice tempered with mercy.

But in their visages the dazzled eye
Was lost, as faculty that by too much
Is overpower'd. "From Mary's bosom both
Are come," exclaim'd Sordello, "as a guard
Over the vale, 'gainst him who hither tends,
The serpent." Whence, not knowing by which path
He came, I turn'd me round; and closely press'd,
All frozen, to my leader's trusted side.
Sordello paused not: "To the valley now
(For it is time) let us descend; and hold
Converse with those great shadows: haply much
Their sight may please ye." Only three steps down
Methinks I measured, ere I was beneath,
And noted one who look'd as with desire
To know me. Time was now that air grew dim;
Yet not so dim, that, 'twixt his eyes and mine,
It clear'd not up what was conceal'd before.
Mutually towards each other we advanced.
Nino, thou courteous judge![1] what joy I felt,
When I perceived thou wert not with the bad.
No salutation kind on either part
Was left unsaid. He then inquired: "How long,
Since thou arrived'st at the mountain's foot,
Over the distant waves?"—"Oh!" answer'd I,
"Through the sad seats of woe this morn I came;
And still in my first life, thus journeying on,
The other strive to gain." Soon as they heard
My words, he and Sordello backward drew,
As suddenly amazed. To Virgil one,
The other to a spirit turn'd, who near
Was seated, crying: "Conrad![2] up with speed:
Come, see what of His grace high God hath will'd."
Then turning round to me: "By that rare mark
Of honour, which thou owest to Him, who hides
So deeply His first cause it hath no ford;
When thou shalt be beyond the vast of waves,
Tell my Giovanna, that for me she call
There, where reply to innocence is made.
Her mother, I believe, loves me no more;

[1] Nino Visconti, judge of Gallura in Sardinia, a noble of Pisa (cf. *Inf.* xxxiii., notes). He was so ardent a Guelf that at his death in Sardinia, in 1296, he directed that his heart should be taken to Lucca in order that it might be buried in Guelf soil.
[2] Corrado Malaspina.

Since she has changed the white and wimpled folds,
Which she is doom'd once more with grief to wish.
By her it easily may be perceived,
How long in woman lasts the flame of love,
If sight and touch do not relume it oft.
For her so fair a burial will not make
The viper, which calls Milan to the field,
As had been made by shrill Gallura's bird." [1]
He spoke, and in his visage took the stamp
Of that right zeal, which with due temperature
Glows in the bosom. My insatiate eyes
Meanwhile to Heaven had travel'd, even there
Where the bright stars are slowest, as a wheel
Nearest the axle; when my guide inquired:
"What there aloft, my son, has caught thy gaze?"
I answered: "The three torches, with which here
The pole is all on fire." [2] He then to me:
"The four resplendent stars, thou saw'st this morn,
Are there beneath; and these, risen in their stead."
While yet he spoke, Sordello to himself
Drew him, and cried: "Lo there our enemy!"
And with his hand pointed that way to look.
Along the side, where barrier none arose
Around the little vale, a serpent lay,
Such haply as gave Eve the bitter food.
Between the grass and flowers, the evil snake
Came on, reverting oft his lifted head;
And, as a beast that smooths its polish'd coat,
Licking his back. I saw not, nor can tell,
How those celestial falcons from their seat
Moved, but in motion each one well descried.
Hearing the air cut by their verdant plumes,

1 Nino married Beatrice d'Este, daughter of the Marquis Obizzo II. of Ferrara (cf. *Inf.* xii.), by whom he had this daughter, Giovanna, who afterwards married Riccardo da Cammino of Treviso. After Nino's death, Beatrice married Galeazzo Visconti of Milan. The Milanese Visconti were in no way connected with the Visconti of Pisa; the arms of one family were a viper, of the other a cock, as here indicated. The arrangements for Beatrice's marriage to Galeazzo were in progress at the assumed date of the vision (April); but the wedding actually took place at the end of June (1300).

2 These stars symbolise Faith, Hope, and Charity; but, the end of the poem being practical, the soul can only continue the ascent when the other four, that symbolise Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance, are in the sky.

The serpent fled; and, to their stations, back
The Angels up return'd with equal flight.
The spirit, (who to Nino, when he call'd,
Had come,) from viewing me with fixed ken,
Through all that conflict, loosen'd not his sight.
"So may the lamp,[1] which leads thee up on high,
Find, in thy free resolve, of wax so much,
As may suffice thee to the enamel'd height,"
It thus began: "If any certain news
Of Valdimagra and the neighbour part
Thou know'st, tell me, who once was mighty there.
They call'd me Conrad Malaspina; not
That old one; but from him I sprang.[2] The love
I bore my people is now here refined."
"In your domains," I answer'd, "ne'er was I.
But, through all Europe, where do those men dwell,
To whom their glory is not manifest?
The fame, that honours your illustrious house,
Proclaims the nobles, and proclaims the land;
So that he knows it, who was never there.
I swear to you, so may my upward route
Prosper, your honour'd nation[3] not impairs
The value of her coffer and her sword.
Nature and use give her such privilege,
That while the world is twisted from his course
By a bad head,[4] she only walks aright,
And has the evil way in scorn." He then:
"Now pass thee on: seven times the tired sun
Revisits not the couch, which with four feet
The forked Aries covers, ere that kind
Opinion shall be nail'd into thy brain
With stronger nails than other's speech can drive;
If the sure course of judgment be not stay'd."[5]

[1] The light of Divine Grace.

[2] This Corrado Malaspina, "the Younger," was the grandson of another Corrado, "the Elder," who was married to an illegitimate daughter of the Emperor Frederick II., and died about 1225. The Malaspina were lords of Valdimagra in Lunigiana. Cf. *Inf.* xxiv. The younger Conrad died some five or six years before the date of the vision. He is mentioned in the *Decameron* (ii. 6).

[3] *Vostra gentre onrata*, "your honoured family."

[4] Probably Pope Boniface VIII. is meant.

[5] In less than seven years (the sun being now in Aries), Dante will have personal experience of the noble qualities of the Malaspina. In the autumn of 1306, Dante was the guest of a cousin

CANTO IX

Argument

Dante is carried up the mountain, asleep and dreaming, by Lucia; and, on wakening, finds himself, two hours after sunrise, with Virgil, near the gate of Purgatory, through which they are admitted by the Angel deputed by Saint Peter to keep it.

Now the fair consort of Tithonus old,
Arisen from her mate's beloved arms,
Look'd palely o'er the eastern cliff; her brow,
Lucent with jewels, glitter'd, set in sign
Of that chill animal,[1] who with his train
Smites fearful nations: and where then we were,
Two steps of her ascent the night had past;
And now the third was closing up its wing,
When I, who had so much of Adam with me,
Sank down upon the grass, o'ercome with sleep,
There where all five[2] were seated. In that hour,
When near the dawn the swallow her sad lay,
Remembering haply ancient grief,[3] renews;
And when our minds, more wanderers from the flesh,
And less by thought restrain'd, are, as 't were, full
Of holy divination in their dreams;
Then, in a vision, did I seem to view
A golden-feather'd eagle[4] in the sky,
With open wings, and hovering for descent;
And I was in that place, methought, from whence

of Corrado's, the Marquis Franceschino Malaspina, at Sarzana. A letter ascribed to Dante (*Epist.* iii.) is addressed to another cousin, Moroello Malaspina (cf. *Inf.* xxiv.), to whom it is said that the Poet intended to dedicate the *Purgatorio*.

1 The constellation of Scorpio, in which the moon now was. "Of the six hours in which the night rises, two were gone, and the third had just passed the summit of its course. The lunar aurora was therefore on the horizon. By a somewhat odd analogy she is called the 'mistress' of Tithonus, because she is a spurious aurora, and the genuine Aurora was the 'wife' of Tithonus" (Oelsner). *La concubina di Titone antico* should be rendered "the mistress of old Tithonus," not "fair consort," as Cary gives it.

2 Virgil, Dante, Sordello, Nino, and Corrado.

3 See below, Canto xvii. notes.

4 The eagle is the symbol alike of Divine Grace and of baptismal regeneration.