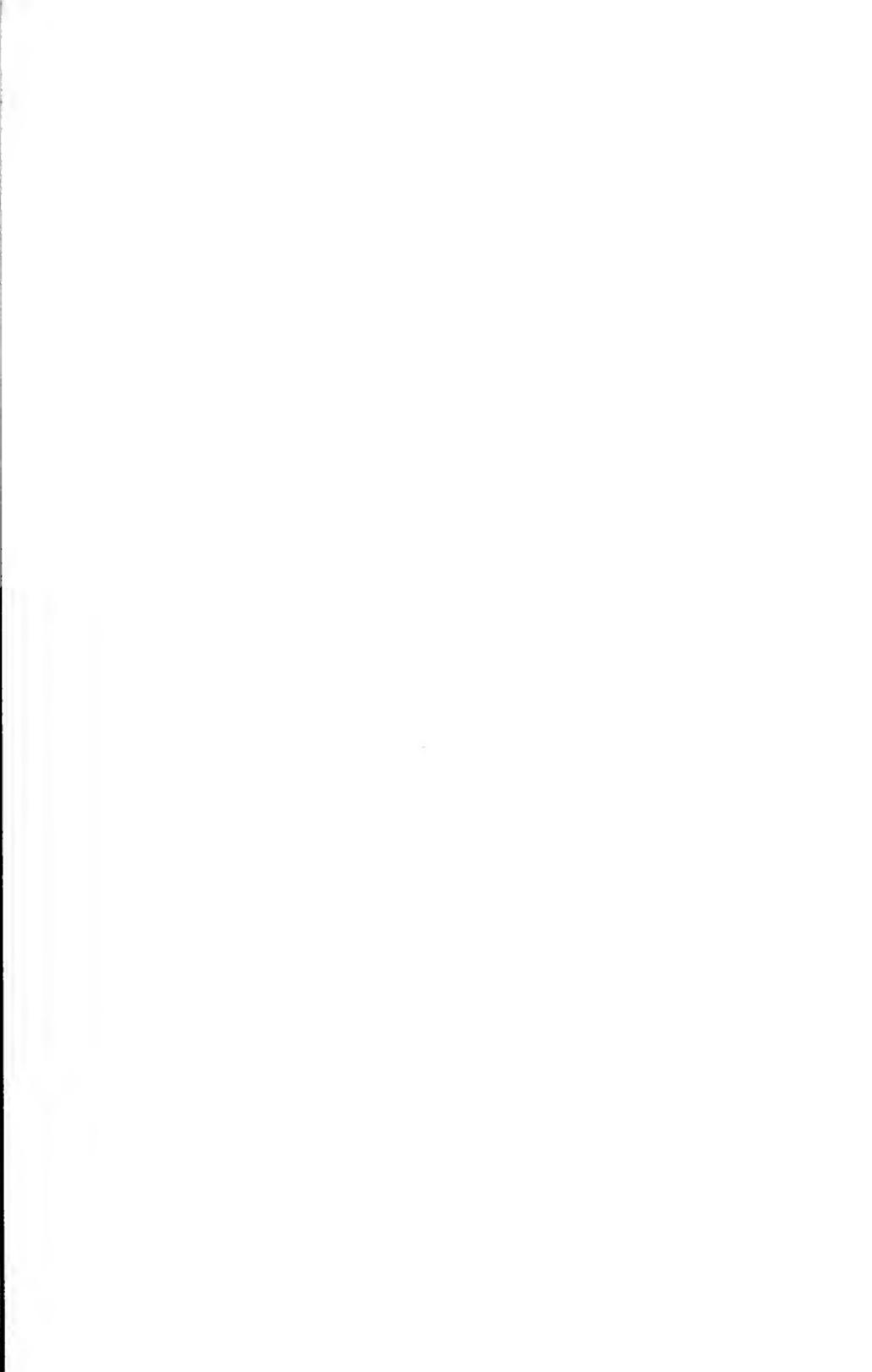
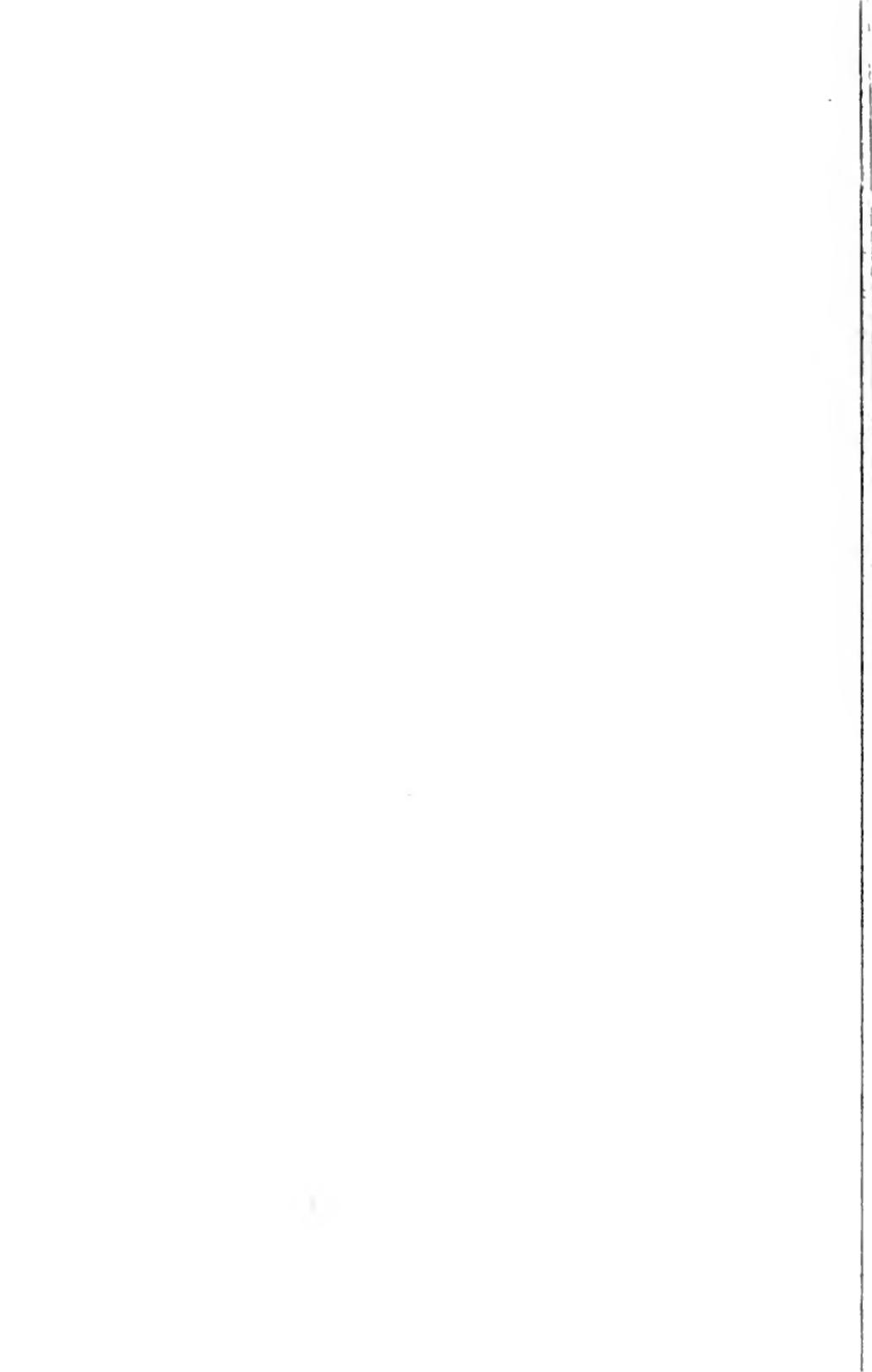


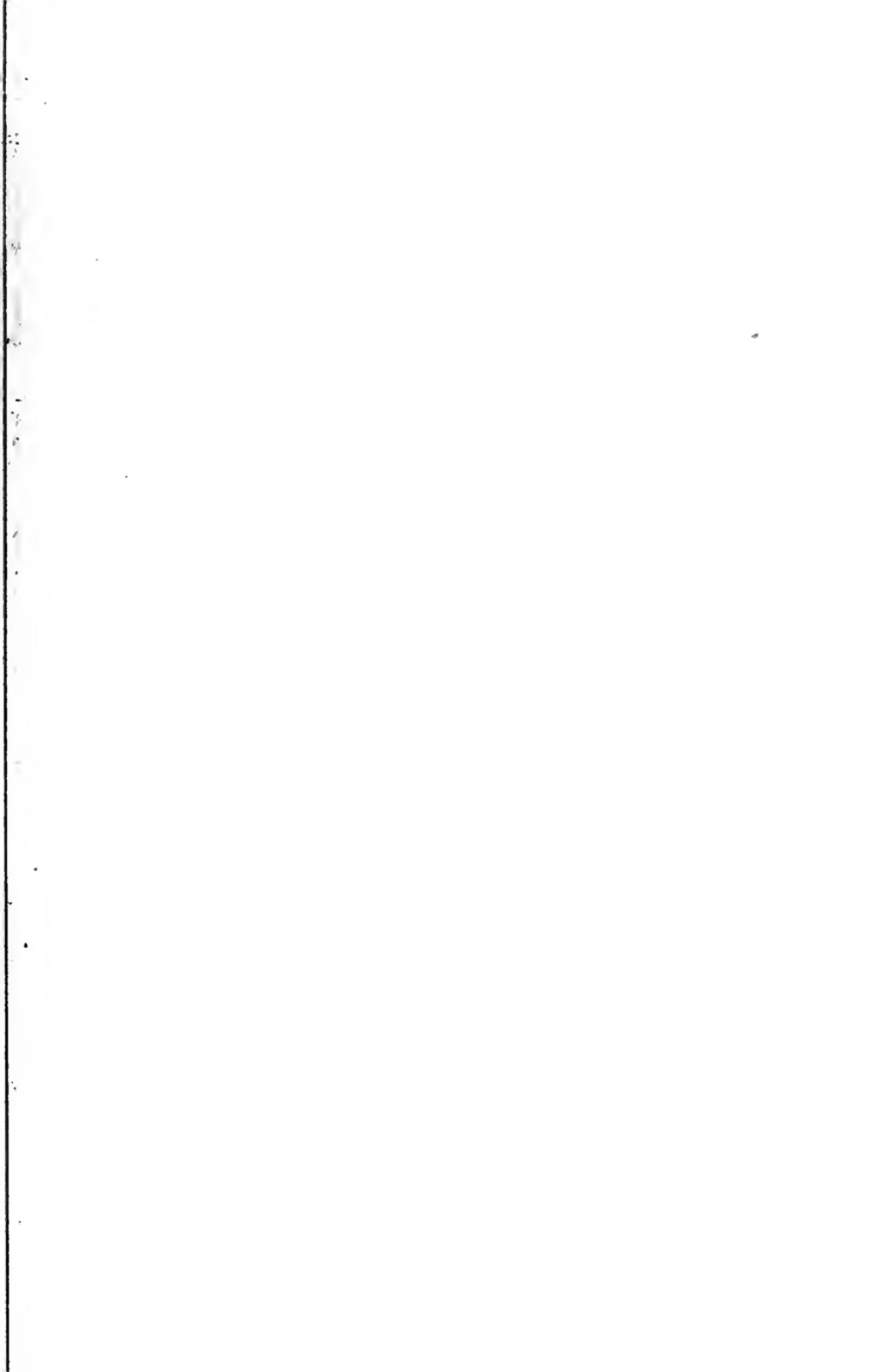
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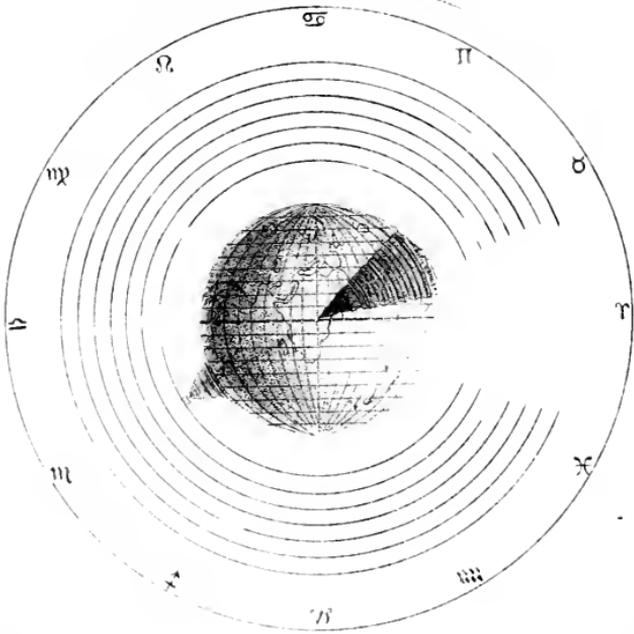
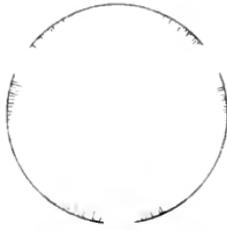
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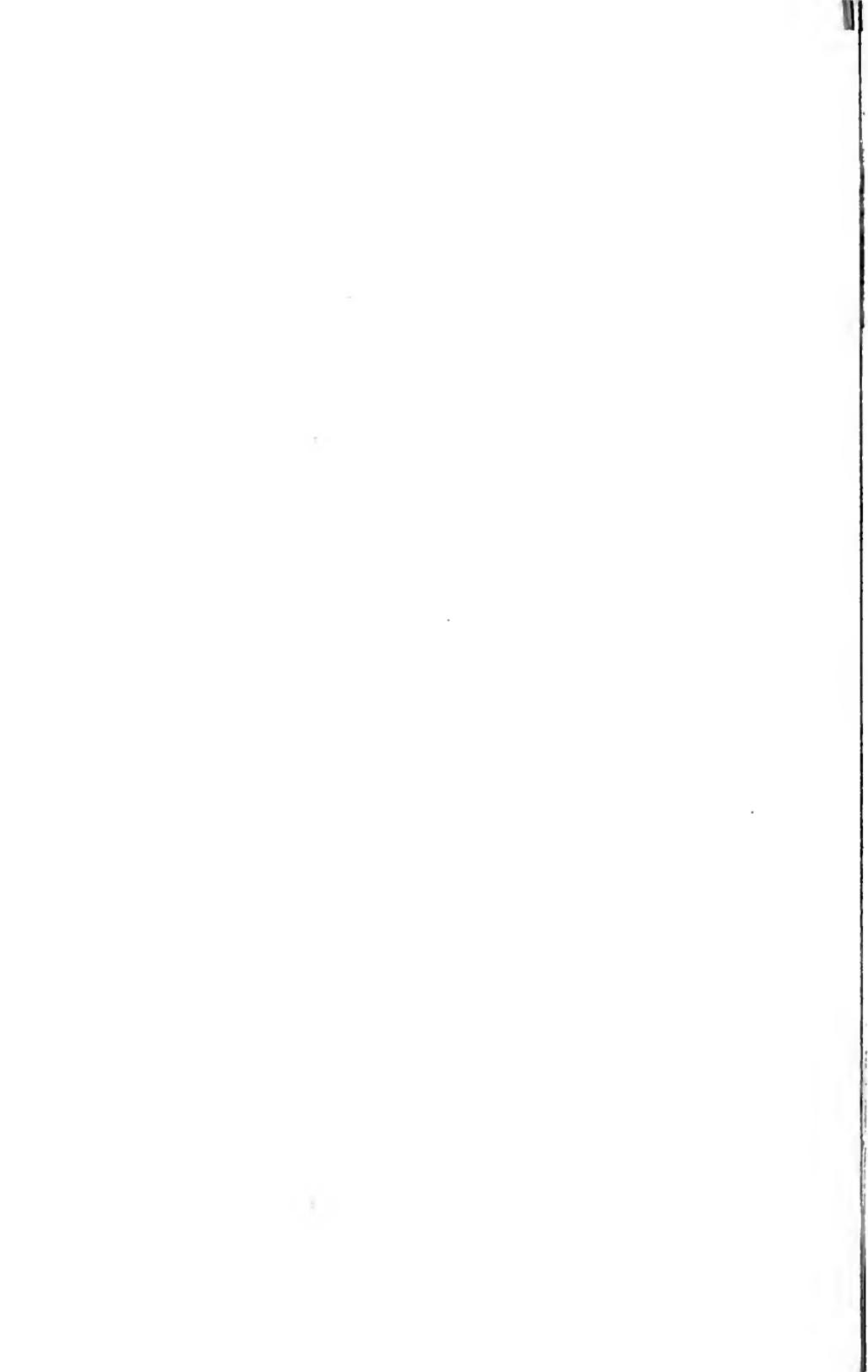






TRIA JUNCTA IN UNO.

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LI  
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THE TRILOGY;  
OR  
DANTE'S THREE VISIONS.

I N F E R N O,  
OR  
THE VISION OF HELL:

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH,  
IN THE METRE AND TRIPLE RHYME OF THE ORIGINAL;

WITH  
NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY  
THE REV. JOHN WESLEY THOMAS.



LONDON:  
HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.  
1859.

“ O Muse, o alto ingegno, or m' aiutate  
O Mente, che scrivesti ciò ch' io vidi,  
Qui si parrà la tua nobilitate.”—INFERNO, ii. 7—9.

444<sup>5</sup>  
18/11/79

TO THOSE  
WHO, FROM ADMIRATION OF DANTE,  
OR  
DESIRE TO STUDY  
HIS IMMORTAL POEM,  
HAVE ENCOURAGED THE PRESENT PUBLICATION.  
THIS VERSION OF THE  
**INFERN**O  
IS RESPECTFULLY  
AND GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED BY  
THE TRANSLATOR.

DANTE, WITH THEE AND VIRGIL, NOT FORLORN,  
I ENTER'D ON THE DARK AND DANGEROUS ROAD,  
WITH THEE SECURE THE ETERNAL CIRCLES TROD,  
WHERE SHINES NO RAY OF HOPE, NO LIGHT OF MORN:  
DEEP—DEEPER STILL—THROUGH UTTER DARKNESS BORN,  
AND HOLDING CONVERSE WITH THE SPIRITS BOW'D  
BY THE FIERCE RAIN; WITH TYRANTS BATHED IN BLOOD:  
THE FIERY-TOMB'D, AND THOSE BY DEMONS TORN:  
I'VE WEPT FRANCESCA'S AND HER LOVER'S DOOM;  
HAVE GRIEVED FOR UGOLINO'S CHILDREN SLAIN;  
SEEN, SHUDDERING, PTOLOMEA'S LIVING GAIN;  
AND PLUNGED INTO COCYTUS' FROZEN GLOOM;  
THEN IN THY TRACK FORSOOK THE REALM OF PAIN.  
O'ERJOY'D TO SEE THE RADIANT STARS AGAIN.

## PREFACE.

---

THE Translation of DANTE now published was commenced several years ago, before its author had seen any other. And as his ardent admiration of the *Divina Commedia* first prompted the undertaking, so the increasing pleasure which he felt as he proceeded induced him to continue it, though often at wide intervals and with manifold interruptions. After he had made considerable progress, and published some portions of the work in a local journal, he met with Cary's version, to whose valuable notes he acknowledges himself to be much indebted. This was the only one to which he had access, till after he had completed his translation of the *Inferno*. His aim has been,—

1st. To give *the sense* correctly. But as this, however important, is only part of a translator's duty, it has also been his endeavour,—

2d. To unite with a version almost literal the *form*, the *beauty*, and the *spirit* of the original; and thus to do justice to the great Florentine Poet, by affording to English readers an opportunity of appreciating and enjoying his immortal work. In

examining the translations of DANTE which have come within his reach, he finds that the ground he had taken has not been preoccupied; the plan he worked on has not been anticipated; and the idea which he has attempted to realise has not hitherto been appropriated. Boyd's translation is a loose and rambling paraphrase, the very opposite in style to the terse and energetic lines of DANTE; and is now seldom seen, or heard of. Pollock's costly and splendid volume, so richly ornamented by the engraver's art, is, like Cary's, in blank verse, which can give the reader no idea of DANTE's music. Wright's, though rhymed, has not the same *kind* of rhyme as the original,—that continuous and interchanging harmony which must appear so suitable to DANTE's great theme,—like a chime on the bells of eternity. Carlyle's is avowedly a mere prose version, accompanying the Italian text. Dayman's, Brooksbank's, and Cayley's, as they are the latest, so they are the only ones we have met with, in which the triple rhyme of the original has been adopted, and unquestionably they have their separate excellencies, as well as faults. Yet notwithstanding the competing claims of these widely differing translations, the author of the present version found that his own had so little in common with any other, that he deems himself justified in presenting it to the public. How far he has been successful in accomplishing what he originally proposed, it is now for others to decide.

Another feature of the present publication is the attempted illustration of the *Divina Commedia* by copious *Notes*, the result of many years' reading, observation, and reflection. These notes, indeed, are

seldom exegetical, nothing having been left for explanation in them which could be made clear in the translation: but as the genius of DANTE found materials for his great poem in the learning, philosophy, religion, policy, and popular traditions of his time, a reference to these for the elucidation of the text may be regarded as desirable and important. Hence, besides original remarks and criticisms, the notes contain such passages of the Classics, the Scriptures, and the Christian Fathers, as are alluded to by DANTE; quotations from the Mediæval writers of all classes; and many specimens of the Popular Mythology, so long prevalent in Europe, and not yet wholly extinct. *For want of such illustration, many parts of DANTE have hitherto remained obscure.*

Next to the great writers of Hebrew, Greek, and Roman antiquity, there is perhaps no author, beyond the limits of our own literature, who has a higher claim to our attention and admiration than DANTE. Born in the thirteenth century, and reaching the prime of life when Florence, his native city, was foremost in civilization, commerce, arts, and freedom, he made his poem the mirror of his life, and mind, and times. He is one of the few master-spirits who have created the national Poetry of their country. Endowed with transcendent genius, he also possessed an extraordinary command of language, and the rare talent of uniting brevity of expression with fulness of meaning. In the variety of the characters and scenes which he has delineated, some remarkable for their beauty and pathos, and others for their terrible grandeur and sublimity, DANTE has not often been surpassed; but in the art of completing his pictures

by a few bold touches, he has never been equalled. Like Chaucer, whom he preceded, he painted to the life the manners of his countrymen in the age in which he lived : and like Milton, he boldly plunged into the dark, infernal abyss ; and then uprose, as on the wings of Seraphim, with reverential awe, to gaze on the splendours of the eternal Throne. His mind, like that of Milton, found its congenial element in the profoundest and sublimest mysteries of the spiritual world ; and yet, like Milton, he was one of the sternest and most active politicians of his country, at a most important and eventful era. The result was nearly the same to both : each of these divinely gifted men, on the overthrow of the party to which his conscientious opinions and his patriotism had attached him, shared in its ruin ; and DANTE solaced his exile and dependance, as Milton did his obscurity and poverty, by the composition of his immortal work.

It would be curious and interesting to trace the extent to which the literature of subsequent times has been influenced by the writings of DANTE : but it will be sufficient here to remark, that while in our own country both Chaucer and Milton regarded him with admiration, they have occasionally borrowed his thoughts, and sometimes formally quoted his expressions. Instances of their obligation to him will occur as we proceed, and will be pointed out in the course of the Notes. Nor should it ever be forgotten by those who enjoy the inestimable blessings of Scriptural Truth, and of Civil and Religious Liberty, that DANTE, though trained in the Church of Rome, and preceding Wickliff by a

few years and Luther by two centuries, was a determined enemy to the corruptions of the Papacy, so far as the light which he possessed enabled him to discern them. The vices of particular Popes, Cardinals, and other Ecclesiastical Dignitaries, he lashed with great severity ; and exposed their avarice, cruelty, sensuality, and other enormities, with unsparing hand. And if to a great extent his theological opinions coincided with the doctrines of the Church in which he was brought up, yet in many of his sentiments he approximates to a purer standard of belief. It is not surprising therefore that one of his less popular and celebrated productions, "*De Monarchiá*," should have been placed by the Inquisition in the Catalogue of Heretical and Forbidden books ; the wonder is, that the *Divina Commedia* escaped a similar doom. Its publication, however, had taken place at a time when Rome, "inflated by a thousand years of power," and "fearless of change," would not, in her elevation and splendour, deign to waste a thought on the poetical effusions of an exile. When her alarm was at length awakened, and her dream of self-complacent confidence disturbed, by the rude shock of opinions hostile to her supremacy, her attention was for a long time occupied by these more open and direct attacks : and when she had invented her *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*,<sup>1</sup> and established throughout her dominions the bondage of the Pen and Press,

<sup>1</sup> We leave it in the *Latin* of its original : for as its *yoke* would never suit the necks of our Island-population, so its *burden* is one which our old, free, vernacular, SAXON-ENGLISH would scorn to bear !

DANTE'S Great Poem had become so generally known, and had taken so strong a hold of the public mind in Italy, as to preclude the possibility of its suppression. As a poet of the highest order, DANTE has always been read and admired by his countrymen, who glory in the lustre of that genius which has brought such renown to the land which it illumined. But he is equally worthy the high esteem and reverential study of British Protestants, as an illustrious *Precursor of the Reformation*.

PENRITH; *April*, 1859.

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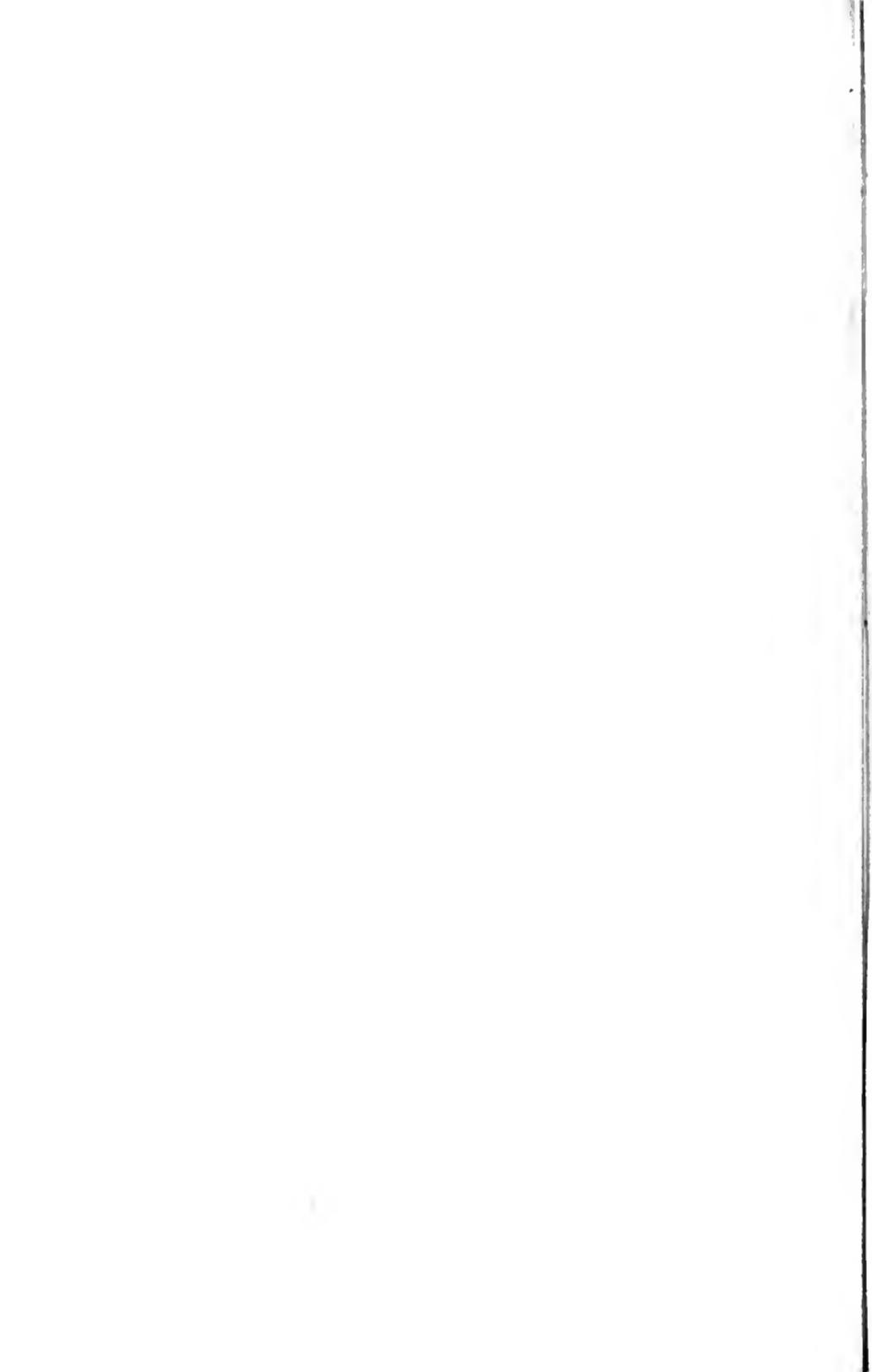
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ON THE  
TITLE OF THIS TRANSLATION.

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ALTHOUGH DANTE calls his poem a Comedy (*Commedia*), and Virgil's *Aeneid* a Tragedy, he does not use these terms in the sense we attach to them. The general title prefixed to the *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso* has varied; and in some editions they have been without any. The first edition with the title of *Divina Commedia* is said to have been the one printed at Venice in 1516. It had been felt that the word *Commedia* was of itself insufficient and unsuitable, and that, whatever might have been its meaning in DANTE's time, it had acquired a sense which rendered it a most improper and untrue designation of his poem; and hence, for about three centuries, it has usually been designated *La Divina Commedia*, a title which Dante himself never used or sanctioned.

Among the ancient Greeks the word κῶμος meant a Bacchanalian revel, an after-supper frolic in the streets, with singing and dancing; κωμῳδός, one of a party so engaged; and κωμῳδία (Comedy) a comic poem, a song of the κῶμος; then, a satirical and mocking drama, like that of Aristophanes; and lastly, a dramatic and humorous representation of middle or low life, as in the later Greek comedies not now extant, which Plautus and Terence have copied or imitated. The modern Comedy did not exist in DANTE's time, and was unknown in Italy for more than two centuries afterwards. It was invented in France by the society of *Clercs de la Basoche* (Clerks of the Revels), and its first representation on the stage was in 1450. This was more than a century before the rise of the Spanish and Italian theatre. In Italy the word *Commedia* has been further degraded, and even brutalized; for it is there applied to the gambols of monkeys and the clumsy antics of dancing bears. In the Apennines it is customary for the male inhabitants to leave their native mountains for a time, and exhibit these feats of animal agility in the streets

and fairs of Italian or foreign cities, towns, and villages. If you ask the wives and children of such persons, "Where is your husband?" or "What is become of your father?" the answer will almost invariably be, "*E pel mondo con la Commedia.*" "He is wandering about the world with the Comedy." With us the word *Comic* always conveys the idea of something ludicrous or laughable. DANTE'S poem, like the Trilogy of Æschylus, has nothing comic about it, but much that is tragic and terrible. In his time the stately Latin was the language of literature; while he composed his poem in Italian, which was hardly thought fit for any literary purpose. And as he called the *Æneid* a Tragedy ("*Tragedia,*" *Inferno*, xx. 113), when he wished to exalt the style of Virgil, so, through that modesty by which the most elevated minds are ever characterised, he designates his own work a Comedy, because it was written in a more humble and popular style, and in the vulgar tongue; and because, contrary to the custom of Tragedy, it begins with sorrow and ends with joy.

Among the Greeks, the word *Τριλογία* (Trilogy) signified a threefold literary composition; a Triple Drama, or three dramatic poems connected by the unity of their subject. Thus the three dramas of Æschylus, entitled *Prometheus Fire-bringing*, *Prometheus bound*, and *Prometheus unbound*, of which the second only has been preserved, were called a Trilogy; and offer the nearest parallel that we are acquainted with to the *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso* of DANTE, which, although composed in the form of a narrative, are largely interspersed with action and dialogue. For these reasons, as well as to distinguish our translation from its predecessors, we have entitled it THE TRILOGY. If it be objected, that this title can only be given with propriety to a work strictly dramatic, the same objection will apply with equal or greater force to the word Comedy. In all other respects, our title appears to be much the most suitable, and the nearest approach that can be made in a *single word* to the *proper* meaning of the original title, and to a *true* description of the poem.

## EXPLANATION OF THE FRONTISPIECE.

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MANY passages of the Trilogy will be better understood by a reference to our pictorial design in the Frontispiece, which presents to the eye, as far as orbs or spheres can be represented on a plane surface, the ancient system of the Universe, together with the three divisions of the Invisible World, as adapted thereto by DANTE. The ancient theory, of which Ptolemy was the most able expounder (see *Inferno*, iv. 142, and note),—that theory which in the seventeenth century the Inquisition vainly endeavoured to defend against the New Philosophy, the Telescope, and “the Starry Galileo,”<sup>1</sup> regarded the Earth as fixed immoveably in the centre of the universe, its habitable part confined to one temperate zone in the northern hemisphere, the dry land an oblong surface, four hundred days’ journey in length and two hundred in breadth, encompassed by the ocean and covered with the solid crystal of the firmament.

According to DANTE, Jerusalem, indicated by the Red Cross, was in the middle of the great dry land (*Ezek.* v. 5), which was not supposed to extend far beyond the equator, while almost the whole of the southern hemisphere was covered with water. The

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<sup>1</sup> Galileo, having in the early part of the seventeenth century, published his demonstration of the Earth’s diurnal and annual motions, according to the Copernican theory, was twice brought before the Inquisition, and imprisoned by its authority, threatened with the penalties of a relapsed heretic, and only escaped the stake and flames by renouncing on his knees before the Father Inquisitors a doctrine which he could not cease to hold, and which is now universally received. The Roman *Index* of 1704 contains a sweeping condemnation of *all* books which teach that doctrine; but in that of 1835 it is omitted. Thus Truth is mightier than even Papal Infallibility, whose claims have been sadly disturbed by the light of Modern Astronomy, as “the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.”

obverse was at that time as much unknown as that of the moon is to us at present. Immediately below the dry land is DANTE'S *Inferno*, the dark valley (*valle buia*), HELL. It is represented by our poet as a circular cavern, in shape like an inverted cone, the broadest part nearest the surface, and tapering as it goes deeper, with its apex at the centre of the earth;—a pit immense, obscure, the sides of which are hollowed out into nine successive circles, or circular galleries, divided from each other by steep descents, and more and more contracted the lower they are placed, like the rows of an amphitheatre. The three lowest circles are again subdivided into three, ten, and four chasms or circlets respectively; the darkness and misery which the successive circles and circlets include increasing in proportion to their depth, so as to correspond with the different degrees of guilt and depravity of which their inmates have been convicted: and the central point is occupied by the Arch-apostate Satan.

At the antipodes of Jerusalem, and surrounded by the ocean, is DANTE'S Mount of *Purgatory*. Beyond, and in immediate contact with the Earth is the Atmosphere, surrounded by ten concentric orbs or heavens, represented in our diagram by ten circles. The first is that of the *Moon*, the nearest and smallest (*Inf.* ii. 75); the second, *Mercury*; the third, *Venus*; the fourth, the *Sun*, which in the Ptolemaic system was considered as one of the planet revolving round the stable and central Earth (*Inf.* i. 17); fifth, *Mars*; sixth, *Jupiter*; seventh, *Saturn*; eighth, the *Fixed Stars*; ninth, the *Primum Mobile*, so called because it was supposed to move all the eight orbs which it included, so as to give them (we do not exactly comprehend *how*) their diurnal motion round the Earth. It is also called the Crystalline, because it was supposed to be perfectly transparent: but this could be no distinction; for if the inferior orbs or heavens were not equally transparent, how could the fixed stars be seen through seven of them by the inhabitants of our Earth? Tenth, and beyond all the others, the *Empyrean*, or Empyrean heaven, so called from the Greek *εἰς*, *in*, or *with*, and *πῦρ*, *fire*; as if one should say, "The heaven of flame," or "luminous heaven;" because, as flame ascends and purifies, it was conceived to be the highest and the purest of the heavens. It was also supposed to be immoveable, and the peculiar seat of the Divine Majesty.

These ten heavens are the scenes of DANTE'S *Paradise*.

Although Milton lived when the system of the Universe was better understood than in DANTE'S time, and had himself conversed with Galileo in Italy, then "a prisoner to the Inquisition;"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He says, "There it was that I found and visited the famous

and though evidently inclined to prefer the Copernican system, he has avoided committing himself to its truth (see *Paradise Lost*, viii. 15—178). Of the comparative merits of the two systems he speaks doubtfully, and in such a way as not to offend the advocates of the Ptolemaic theory, from which he has often borrowed ideas and expressions. Thus he says of God ;—

“ Now had the Almighty Father from above,  
From the pure empyrean where he sits  
High throned above all height bent down his eye.”

*Paradise Lost*, iii. 56.

Of the Messiah he speaks thus ;—

“ He on the wings of cherub rode sublime  
On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned  
Illustrious far and wide.”—vi. 771.

“ Under his burning wheels  
The steadfast empyrean shook throughout,  
All but the throne itself of God.”—832.

After the Messiah's return, and welcome by the angelic host, he has the following ;—

“ So sung they, and the empyrean rung  
With halleluias.”—vii. 633.

Of the visible universe he sings ;—

“ Witness this new-made world, another heaven,  
From heaven gate not far, founded in view  
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea ;  
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars  
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world  
Of destined habitation.”—vii. 617.

And in his invocation he thus apostrophises Urania ;—

“ Upled by thee  
Into the heaven of heavens I have presumed,  
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,  
Thy tempering ; with like safety guided down,  
Return me to my native element . . . .  
Within the visible diurnal sphere,  
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole.”—vii. 12.

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Galileo, grown old, a prisoner to the Inquisition.”—MILTON'S *Areopagitica*, 48. *Prose Works*, p. 112. Ed. 1833. Has this interview ever engaged the artist's attention? What a subject for a picture—The Meeting of Milton and Galileo !

A SKETCH  
OF THE  
LIFE AND TIMES OF DANTE.

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THE condition of Italy in the age of DANTE was lamentable in the extreme. Its Christianity had been corrupted and debased by error and superstition; the Papal supremacy had been established, and exerted a withering influence on public and private virtue and happiness; tradition and human inventions were substituted for the authority of the New Testament; and vice and crime were fostered and encouraged by the system of priestly absolution, and by the sale of indulgences, first invented in the eleventh century by Urban II. as a recompense for those who in person engaged in the meritorious enterprise of conquering the Holy Land. Hence resulted a state of morals more gross and depraved than can well be conceived in our happier and more enlightened age and country. These evils were augmented by the violence of party spirit. The factions of the Pope and Emperor, under the name of Guelfs and Ghibelines, carried on an embittered contest throughout the numerous towns and cities of Italy, and the states into which it was divided. The Guelfs, at one time the friends of liberty and opponents of imperial despotism, had surrendered themselves as the blind instruments of the Papacy; and while fighting, as they supposed, the battles of freedom, were unconsciously preparing for themselves the yoke of a degrading bondage. The court of Rome was not sufficiently strong to unite Italy under one government, yet it was too powerful for submission to the German emperors. The Popes therefore maintained their political ascendancy by encouraging the antipathies and animosities of the two factions; and when their cause appeared to decline, they sought foreign support: hence Italy became the theatre of bloody and desolating wars, and her interests were sacrificed in promoting the selfish designs of avarice and ambition.

Yet in that age of darkness and degeneracy, the influence of the Christian religion, though counteracted, was not extinguished; Conscience, though often perverted, was not wholly dormant; and the love of truth, although discountenanced by authority, was not wholly suppressed. Many good and patriotic men arose, who mourned the degeneracy of the times, and endeavoured to stem the torrent of corruption. Among these there is no one who holds a more distinguished place than DANTE ALIGHIERI.

DANTE was born at Florence, A.D. 1265. His baptismal name, like the name imposed on some Hebrew patriarch at his birth, seemed prophetic of his destiny. DURANTE—afterwards shortened to that by which he is more generally known—signifies enduring: it was an augury of his woes, and of his immortality. A much-enduring man while he lived, his name survives, after the lapse of more than five centuries; and will doubtless *endure* to the latest ages. His great-grandfather, Cacciaguida Elisei, married a lady of the Aldighieri or Alighieri family, of Ferrara, whose children assumed the arms and name of their mother. Cacciaguida accompanied the Emperor Conrad III. in his crusade to the Holy Land, was made a knight, and died in battle. A.D. 1147. In the *Paradiso*, xv. xvi. xvii., Cacciaguida relates to Dante his adventures, with an interesting account of the state of Florence and the primitive manners of its citizens in his time, before the breaking out of the great feud between the Guelfs and Ghibelines. It was about the year 1200, or a little later, that these famous names were adopted by the two leading parties which divided the cities of Lombardy, the Guelfs adhering to the Papal side, the Ghibelines to that of the Emperor. These names were derived from Germany, where they had been the rallying words of faction for more than half a century before they were transferred to the more genial soil of Italy. The Guelfs took their name from a very ancient family, that of Welf or Guelph, several of whom in the tenth and eleventh centuries had been Dukes of Bavaria. The name of Ghibeline is derived from Waiblingen or Wibelung, a village in Franconia, belonging to the Emperor Conrad II., surnamed the *Salic*, from whom through females the Suabian emperors derived their descent. At the election of the Emperor Lothaire in 1125, the Suabian family was disappointed of the imperial crown, which they had regarded as almost their hereditary right; and this occasioned hostility between that family and the house of Guelf, which was nearly related to Lothaire. About the end of the twelfth century, the Marquises of Este, belonging to the younger branch of the Guelfs, began to be considered the heads of the Church party in their neighbourhood. The protracted struggle between the Church and the Empire, by which Western Europe was distracted, came to its crisis during the reign of the celebrated Emperor Frederick II. After his death the distinctions of Guelf

and Ghibeline became destitute of all rational meaning. The most odious crimes were perpetrated, and the utmost miseries endured, for an echo and a shade that mocked the deluded enthusiasts of faction. For no Guelf objected to the nominal but undefined sovereignty of the Empire; and beyond a name the Ghibelines were little disposed to carry it. But the virulent hatreds which had been excited by these words grew continually more and more implacable; and to the indulgence of their vindictive passions the Republics of Italy sacrificed not only their material prosperity, but their civil and political welfare; surrendering their liberty to native tyrants and foreign invaders, thus preparing the way for ages of ignominy and servitude.

Yet these Italian states had been the birth-place and the cradle of European science, arts, laws, literature, and civilization. At the present time, few are aware how much we are indebted to their influence and example. At a time when throughout the rest of Europe little was to be found but poverty and barbarism, the general aspect of Italy was one of marvellous prosperity. The *Contado*, or open country appertaining to each city, was cultivated by an active and industrious race of peasants, enriched by their labour, and not fearing to display their wealth in their dress, cattle, and instruments of husbandry. The proprietors, inhabitants of towns, advanced them capital, shared the harvest, and alone paid the land-tax. They undertook the immense labour, from which the Italian soil has derived so much fertility, of constructing embankments to preserve the plains from the inundation of rivers (see *Inferno*, xv. 7—9). The *Naviglio Grande* of Milan, which spreads the clear waters of the Ticino over the finest part of Lombardy, was begun in 1179, resumed in 1257, and completed a few years afterwards. Men who meditated, and applied the fruits of their study to the arts, already practised in Lombardy and Tuscany that scientific agriculture which became a model to other nations. Even at this day, after the lapse of five centuries, the districts formerly free and always cultivated with intelligence, may be easily distinguished from those half-wild parts of the country which had remained in subjection to feudal lords.

At a time when the inhabitants of London and Paris could not stir out of their houses without plunging deep into the mud, the cities of Italy, surrounded with thick walls, terraced, and guarded by towers, were for the most part paved with broad flag-stones. Over the rivers were thrown stone bridges of a bold and elegant architecture. The palaces of the magistracy united strength with grandeur. The most admirable of those in Florence, the *Palazzo Vecchio* (Old Palace), was built in 1298. The Loggia, in the same city, the Church of Santa Croce, that of Santa Maria Fiore, with its dome, so admired by Michael Angelo, were all begun by Arnolfo before A.D. 1300. The prodigies of this first-born of

the fine arts were quickly multiplied. While kings and princes in England, France, and Germany, in the construction of their castles, appeared only to think of shelter and defence, the public monuments of Italy were characterized by pure taste, grandeur of conception, and boldness of execution, which finally reached even private dwellings. It was natural that sculpture should follow. In 1300, the year of DANTE'S vision, Andrea di Pisa cast the admirable brass gates of the Baptistry belonging to the Duomo at Florence, which Michael Angelo pronounced "worthy to be the gates of Heaven." DANTE'S attachment to this building is evident from his calling it "il mio bel San Giovanni" ("my beautiful St. John")! In the same age, and about the same time, the art of painting was revived by Cimabue and his greater disciple Giotto, and that of music by Casella: the study of history, philosophy, and morals, received increased attention; and Italy, ennobled by freedom, enlightened nations till then sunk in darkness. But it was in Florence that the love of liberty was the most pervading and persistent, and her judicial institutions were the first in Italy that effectually guarded the welfare of the citizens: it was here that the cultivation of the mind was carried furthest, and here that its enlightenment soonest appeared in the improvement of legislation.

But to return to DANTE: while he was yet a child, his father Aldighiero Alighieri died. But his mother, being left in affluence, and entertaining the highest hopes of her son, chose for his instructors the ablest and most celebrated men of Florence. One of these was Brunetto Latini, an eminent scholar, who had done more than any of his contemporaries towards the production of a native literature. The early indications of DANTE'S genius appeared in a noble and contemplative disposition; and the first years of his youth were characterized by that enthusiasm for study which distinguished him in every subsequent period of his eventful life. He became intimate with Guido Cavalcanti, a young scholar of great reputation, excellent manners, poetic and literary ability, and an inquisitive and philosophical turn of mind. From the writings of DANTE it is evident that he had read extensively and deeply, and was imbued with all the learning of his time. Among his intimate associates were Casella the distinguished musician, and Giotto the painter, by whose pencil the grave and interesting features of our poet have been transmitted to posterity. It was in the ninth year of his age that he became the subject of a romantic passion for a young lady a few months older than himself. We all know that early attachments are often the purest, and the most lasting in their influence. The boyish passion of DANTE for Beatrice Portinari was an event which left an indelible impression on his mind and character, and with his

own he has linked her name in the immortality of his great poem. At a festival given on the first of May 1274, according to annual custom, to the young people of the city, by her father, Folco Portarini, a man of great wealth and beneficence, DANTE first beheld this queen of love and beauty; and the vision which then took possession of his mind never departed. Under its influence he composed the earliest of his known productions, *La Vita Nuova*, a series of short poems, intermixed with prose, in which, with a delicacy equal to that of Petrarch, he celebrated the object of his early love, who, after several years of declining health, died at the age of twenty-five; perhaps without being aware of that admiration with which she had inspired the youthful poet, and which was to exalt her name to the stars. Had she become his wife, the world would probably not have known the angelic Beatrice of the poet's imagination, his guide through Paradise; nor is it likely that such an alliance would have been sufficient to avert from him the effects of his country's injustice—that exile which, though it could not crush his spirit, embittered his feelings and consumed so large a portion of his life.

It is believed that in pursuit of learning DANTE visited both Oxford and Paris, as well as the celebrated Italian universities, Padua and Bologna. Giovanni Villani, his contemporary, the Latin poems of Boccaccio, and the express declarations of Serravalle, bishop of Fermo, are the authorities appealed to for this opinion. Previous to entering on the duties of active life, and in conformity with a custom of the republic which required it of all who aspired to the honours of magistracy, DANTE enrolled himself in one of the companies into which the whole body of the citizens were divided—the company devoted to medicine and surgery. The party of the Guelfs, to which DANTE was attached, was at that time predominant, having some years before, with the assistance of the Pope and Charles of Anjou, driven away the Ghibelines from Florence. But in the neighbouring city of Arezzo just the contrary process had occurred, and the Ghibelines, with the Bishop at their head, being the stronger party, had driven the Guelfs out of that city. The names of Guelf and Ghibeline had by this time lost much of their original significance; but the parties distinguished by them were not the less ready to fight in every part of Italy, not for the supremacy of Pope or Emperor, but for their own. And such was the lust of dominion which animated the wealthier families, that after either of these parties had expelled its rival, the leaders of the party that remained in possession began to quarrel among themselves, and not unfrequently some of them courted the aid of the expelled and rival faction against their colleagues. The usual fate of the losing party was exile and confiscation; and in case of opposition

to this decree, torture and death : and the houses of the offenders were sometimes set on fire, or razed to the ground. The Guelfs of Arezzo having been, as just stated, expelled from their city, applied to the Guelfs of Florence for assistance. This led to a war, in which the Ghibelines of Arezzo were defeated, and their bishop slain, at Campoldino, June 1289. In this action DANTE was himself engaged (*Inferno*, xxii. 5), and in the victory gained by his countrymen distinguished himself by his bravery. Soon after his return to Florence he married Gemma Donati, of a powerful Guelf family, and became a candidate for civic honours and offices. Accordingly, in 1300, and the thirty-second year of his age, he was elected chief magistrate, or first of the Priori of Florence.

But how precarious is all earthly felicity, even when we seem to have attained the summit of our hopes ! In this very year, the year in which DANTE'S Vision of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, is dated, an outrage in Pistoia (*Inferno*, xxiv. 143, note) gave rise to the two factions of the Bianchi and Neri (Whites and Blacks) in the Guelf party, when the Bianca party having expelled the Neri, the latter betook themselves to Florence for aid, and the former also endeavoured to secure partizans there. This was the origin of these two opposing factions in Florence, the two principal families taking opposite sides—the Donati, with whom DANTE was allied by marriage, taking part with the Neri, and their rivals, the Cerehi, with the Bianchi. With the latter DANTE appears to have united himself, induced by personal friendship and the claims of justice, the Bianchi having from the first shown themselves less overbearing than their antagonists, and being, in fact, the injured party. DANTE, in his new office, finding the two factions irreconcilable, and mutually betaking themselves to arms, and that the danger of general anarchy was imminent, counselled his co-magistrates to call in the multitude to their protection and assistance, and the chiefs of both factions were banished for a time. Some of the Bianchi, however, soon after returned to Florence, and DANTE was accused of having connived at it, chiefly out of friendship for Guido Cavalcanti, who had suffered from the unwholesome climate of his place of exile, and died soon after his return. The Neri represented to Boniface VIII. that the Bianchi kept up a correspondence with the Ghibelines of Arezzo, Pisa, and other places, and that if they obtained the ascendancy in Florence they would make common cause with the Colonnas, the pope's personal enemies. Through these representations, aided by bribes at the Roman court, Boniface was induced to give his support to the Neri, and he sent Charles de Valois, brother of Philip le Bel, under the plausible title of "peace-maker." Charles entered Florence in

September 1301, with 1200 armed men. Affecting impartiality at first, he let all the Neri return to Florence, followed by their armed peasantry. New magistrates (priori) were appointed, all favourable to the Neri, and the Bianchi were openly attacked in the streets. A general proscription of their party took place, with the connivance of the peace-maker. The Bianchi were murdered in the streets, others tortured in the hope of extorting money from them, and their houses were plundered and burnt. DANTE'S house was plundered. He himself was at Rome, whither he had been sent by the Bianchi to counteract, if possible, the suggestions of their adversaries. On hearing of the proscription, he hastily left Rome, and joined his fugitive friends at Arezzo. In January 1302, a sentence was passed condemning him to two years' exile and a fine of 8000 florins; in case of non-payment his property to be sequestered. By a second sentence, dated March of the same year, he and others were condemned as *barrattieri* (that is, guilty of malversation, peculation, and usury,) *to be burnt alive!* The sentence was grounded merely on "publica fama," which in this case meant the report of his enemies. In the last century this curious document was found in the Florentine archives, and has been transcribed by Tiraboschi, *Storia della Letteratura*, tom. v. part 2, cap. 2.

DANTE now commenced his wanderings, intent on exciting the Ghibelines of Italy against his enemies and the oppressors of his country. He repaired first to Verona, which was then ruled by the powerful family of La Scala, leaders of the Ghibelines. But he soon after returned to Tuscany, where the Bianchi and Ghibelines, now united, were gathering their strength in the neighbourhood of Arezzo. The death of Boniface VIII. in September, 1303, inspired them with fresh hopes. Benedict XI., the new pope, a man of mild and conciliatory temper, sent Cardinal di Prato to endeavour to restore peace in Tuscany, but the cardinal was opposed by the ruling faction in Florence, who frightened him out of the city, which he left a prey to anarchy, during which, in June 1304, a fire broke out and destroyed 1900 houses. The Bianchi and Ghibelines endeavoured to avail themselves of the confusion by surprising the town, and some of them actually entered one of the gates; but they were not well supported by their companions without, and the attempt entirely failed.

DANTE also endeavoured to obtain a revocation of his sentence, by writing to his countrymen a very pathetic letter, beginning with the words, "Popule mi, quid feci tibi?" ("My people, what have I done to thee?") but all was to no purpose. The family of Adimari, who had obtained possession of his estate, opposed with all their influence an act of justice which would have deprived

them of their newly won spoil. DANTE describes them as "the over-insolent race who play the dragon after him who flees, but are gentle as a lamb to him who shows his teeth, or purse."—*Paradiso*, xvi. 115. How the illustrious exile yearned for a return to his native country will further appear from the following passage in his *Convito*. Excusing himself for some harshness and obscurity in the style of that work, he exclaims:—"Ah! would that it had pleased the Dispenser of all things, that this excuse had never been needed; that neither others had done me wrong, nor myself undergone undeservedly the penalty of exile and poverty. For it pleased the citizens of the fairest and most renowned daughter of Rome—Florence—to cast me out of her most sweet bosom, where I was born and bred, and passed half of the life of man; and in which, with her good leave, I still desire with all my heart to finish the days allotted to me, and repose my weary spirit; and so I have wandered in almost every place to which our language extends, a stranger, almost a beggar, exposing, against my will, the wounds given me by fortune, too often imputed unjustly to the sufferer's fault. Truly, I have been a ship without sail and without rudder, driven about towards different ports and shores by the harsh wind that springs out of dolorous poverty; and hence I have appeared vile in the eyes of many, who perhaps by some better report would have conceived a better opinion of me; and in whose sight not only has my person become thus debased, but an unworthy opinion created of everything I did, or which I had to do."

In 1306 DANTE took up his abode at Padua, and the year following was hospitably entertained at Sinigiana by the Marquis Morello Malaspina. He thence went to Gubbio, and staid some time with Busone, for whom he had a strong attachment. After leaving his friend Busone, he returned to Veroua, attracted by the amiable and enlightened character of its princes, Can Francisco and Alboino Scagligeri, who jointly exercised the sovereign authority. The former had the title of *Il Grande* (The Great), on account of his exploits in a war against the Paduans; but both he and his brother were celebrated throughout Italy for the splendour of their court, their patronage of literature, and their hospitality to the necessitous and the deserving. But although with men of their character DANTE was sure to meet with all the attention and respect which his virtues and talents deserved, it appears that he was either too reserved in his manners, or too satirical in his remarks, to be long on good terms with some of the nobles of their court. One day, when Can Grande was amusing himself by listening to the court fool, or jester, he asked his guest why it was that so many of the nobles had a much greater regard for the fool than for him? To which DANTE replied, "Because they are

by nature much more like him than me, and therefore they naturally prefer his society to mine."

While at Verona doubtless he read or showed his poem, in part at least, to his friend and benefactor, to whom he had previously mentioned it in his epistolary correspondence. There is a letter of his to Can Grande still extant, in which he alludes to and describes it. It is also probable that the substance of it had become generally known in that neighbourhood. The people of Verona, it is said, when they saw him in the streets would sometimes whisper to each other, "*Ecco vi l' uom che è stato all' Inferno!*" ("See there the man who has been in Hell!")

The emperor Albert dying in May, 1308, the candidates for the imperial crown were Charles of Anjou and Henry prince of Luxembourg. DANTE was roused by a gleam of hope which now shone on his path. Should the former be elected, the ruin of the Bianchi and their adherents would be decided beyond reversal; but should Henry succeed, they might fairly expect the most favourable change in their condition. DANTE therefore now repeated, with tenfold force, his appeals to the people of Florence, to various princes, and to the court of Rome, asking their consideration of his unjust persecution, and urging the claims of the Duke of Luxembourg to the imperial crown with marvellous vigour and courage. He also wrote to Henry himself, exhorting him to persevere in his pursuit, and assuring him of the loyal affection with which he expected his elevation to the imperial throne. To be ready at the earliest summons of the new emperor, he took up his abode at the little town of Foscanella, and from thence dispatched another letter to the same august personage. To his great joy the accession of Henry was at length proclaimed, and the imperial army was shortly after on its way to Florence. But "put not your trust in princes, neither in any son of man." The emperor took little interest in the success of the expedition, and displayed less energy in its prosecution. Learning that the city was better defended than he had expected, he halted before he got within sight of the walls, and then drew off his army, to pursue measures more in accordance with his plan of policy. The last glimmer of hope was now fast expiring, and in the following year, 1313, was totally extinguished by Henry's untimely death. None had been more sanguine than DANTE in the expectation of better times, or done so much to hasten their advent. To encourage the partizans of Henry and make converts to his cause, besides the letters alluded to, he had written his famous treatise *De monarchiá*. His disappointment, therefore, on the death of that emperor was great in proportion.

Leaving Verona the same year, he took refuge at Ravenna, the lordship of Guido Novella da Polenta, a nobleman of singular

liberality, the father of the unfortunate Francesca di Rimini, whose story is the most pathetic in the whole of the *Divina Commedia*. The fame of DANTE was already widely spread; the share he had taken in public affairs recommended him to many, his long exile acquired him the sympathy of more, and the noble talents which he had exhibited had procured for him the admiration of all, except his implacable fellow-citizens. The generous and accomplished Guido felt himself honoured by the presence of such a guest, his love of literature made him rejoice in such a companion, and the intimacy thus formed and cemented was advantageous to both. Guido enjoyed the society of the greatest man that Italy had produced in modern times, and DANTE, after a life of wandering and anxiety, like a tempest-beaten vessel that has reached the haven, was happy enough to realise at length a season of repose.

It is said that about the year 1316 he had still a chance of restoration. It was suggested to him by a friend, who was probably a clergyman, that he might return, provided he acknowledged his guilt and asked for absolution. His answer was characteristic of his mind: "No, father, it is not this way that shall lead me back to my country. But I shall return with hasty steps, if you or any other can open to me a way that shall not derogate from the fame and honour of DANTE: but if by no such way Florence can be entered, then to Florence I never shall return. Shall not I everywhere enjoy the sight of the sun and stars? May I not seek and contemplate truth anywhere under heaven, without rendering myself inglorious, nay infamous to the people and commonwealth of Florence? Bread, I hope, will not fail me." It is impossible to withhold our admiration from such nobility of mind. He refused to demean himself, even to escape the bitterness of dependence on strangers, and the anguish of irrevocable exile. The memory of his wrongs had infused into his mind an enduring bitterness against Florence; yet amidst all his eloquent and indignant appeals and denunciations, we recognise throughout his life-long struggle a deep and ardent love to his ungrateful country which refused to turn itself to hatred.

But the public career of DANTE had not yet terminated. His friend and patron was at war with Venice, and the contest was likely to prove inimical to the interests of his people and government. He therefore determined to open negotiations with the Venetian state, and if possible to procure peace. No one could be better qualified either by talents or experience for conducting such a business, than his guest; and DANTE was accordingly sent to Venice. But his efforts were fruitless; for such was the opposition of the Venetians to an accommodation, that they refused even to admit the ambassador to an audience. The feelings of

DANTE were deeply wounded by this failure, and all the endeavours of his kind and affectionate benefactor to remove every painful impression from his mind proved unavailing. From this period an unconquerable sadness oppressed his spirits, and his weak frame gave way under its pressure. He died at Ravenna, in September 1321, at the age of fifty-seven, and was buried there, with every mark of distinction and honour, in the church of the Franciscans, under a plain tomb. In the following century a noble monument was raised over his remains by Bernardo Bembo, father of the cardinal, a Venetian senator, and podesta of Ravenna, which has several times been repaired or reconstructed.

“Ungrateful Florence! DANTE sleeps afar;  
 Like Scipio buried by the upbraiding shore.  
 Thy factions in their worse than civil war,  
 Proscribed the bard whose name for evermore  
 Their children’s children would in vain adore  
 With the remorse of ages. . . . .  
 Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,  
 Fortress of falling empire, honour’d sleeps  
 The immortal exile.”

The family of DANTE consisted of five sons, and a daughter named Beatrice, after the object of his early and undying attachment. Three of his sons died young; the other two inherited a portion of their father’s talents, and it is to their filial piety that the world is indebted for the preservation of his great poem in its original integrity. One of them, Jacopo, wrote the earliest comment on it, which extended, however, no further than the *Inferno*; the other, Pietro, a few years after, produced another, on the whole of the *Commedia*. About forty years after the sentence of confiscation which deprived the poet of his property, it was restored to his family by the chiefs of the Florentine republic. Nor was this the only act of tardy justice which sprang from their late remorse for the reproach and suffering which he had been compelled to endure. Like the Hebrew scribes and rulers, who killed the prophets, and then built and adorned their sepulchres, they eagerly desired to bring home the remains of their illustrious countryman, and proposed to erect a splendid mausoleum to receive them. But the people of Ravenna resisted all their supplications: and Michael Angelo, whose frescos in the Sistine Chapel represent to the eye some of the scenes which DANTE had portrayed with the pen,<sup>1</sup> was in vain employed by the Pope, some centuries later, to renew the entreaty for their transfer.

<sup>1</sup> The following is a sonnet of Michael Angelo, almost literally translated:—

The Florentines, however, though disappointed in these attempts, determined, as far as possible, to redeem their credit by doing honour to the memory of DANTE, whose poems, long before the invention of printing, had become widely dispersed, and whose name had become illustrious throughout Italy and the civilised world. In August, 1373, they established a public lectureship, with an annual salary of 100 gold florins, increased in 1457 to 300, for the exposition and illustration of his great poem. The first lecturer appointed was Boccaccio, who fulfilled the office till his death, which occurred about two years after. His comment contains the substance of his lectures, and goes no further than the 17th line of Canto xvii. The chair was successively occupied by the most learned men of Florence, and the example was followed by the institution and endowment of other lectureships for the same object in most of the great cities of Italy.

As the productions of DANTE'S genius were so greatly influenced by the early poetry of France, a brief account thereof may here be necessary. The birth of the Romance language in Gaul preceded that of Italy, and was divided into two dialects—the Romance Provençal of the south, and the Romance Wallon, spoken by the people who settled north of the Loire, and with which the old Norman French is nearly identical. The Provençal, which was the earliest of the European dialects that sprung from the decay of the Latin, was the language of the Troubadours. These were the instructors of Europe in the rules of modern versification. Rhyme, which they had borrowed from the Arabians, was copied from them by the other nations of the West. They visited every court; their language was adopted by nobles and kings; and all the historians of Italy have recognised their powerful influence on

“ON DANTE.

“From earth he to the abysses dark went down,  
 Both hells he saw, then mounted to the skies,  
 By the great living thought inspired to rise,  
 Whence the true light he to our world made known.  
 Star of sublimest worth, whose rays have shown  
 The eternal mysteries to our dim eyes,  
 And had at last for his reward the prize  
 The worthiest oft receive—an ill world's frown.  
 That city's ingrate people were so blind  
 To DANTE'S works and to his high design,  
 The just alone could there no safety find.  
 Yet were I such as he, and his fate mine!  
 For his harsh exile, with his virtue join'd,  
 The happiest lot on earth would I resign!”

the literature of that country. At the beginning of the twelfth century it was not believed that Italian was capable of becoming a polished language. Sordello of Mantua was the first who wrote ballads; but, though a Lombard, he adopted in his compositions the Provençal language, and was followed therein by his countrymen. The first lisplings of the Italian muse, in the writings of Guitone of Arezzo, and Guido de' Cavalcanti, were but humble imitations of Provençal lyrics; and it was from the midst of these, renowned in their day, that DANTE arose; to hide their ineffectual beams by the superior splendour of his genius, as the stars of the night wax pale at the dawn, and vanish when the sun has risen on the earth.

But besides the songs of the Troubadours, the tales of the Trouveres,<sup>1</sup> whose genius was epic, and who recited in the Romance Wallon dialect, the exploits of Arthur and Charlemagne, were equally popular in Italy. With them originated the poems and romances of chivalry, and the poetical narration of allegorical visions. Many French knights had assisted the Spaniards in their wars against the Moors, and these brought back with them, on the conquest of Toledo, in 1085, ten years before the preaching of the crusade, that spirit of chivalry which had originated among the Spaniards from their intercourse with the Arabians. So great a hold had these tales of chivalry taken of the popular feeling in Italy, that in the thirteenth century, every Florentine believed Charlemagne to be, beyond question or doubt, the second founder of Florence, after it had been, as tradition reported, laid waste by Atilla when he had invaded Italy. Of the allegorical poems which the Trouveres bequeathed to posterity, the most celebrated, and probably the most ancient, is the *Romance of the Rose*, imitated by Chaucer, and of which Guillaume de Lorris, who invented that style of composition, was the author. Not only has DANTE alluded to the Romances of Chivalry, (*Inferno*, Canto v. 128, &c.) for which the Trouveres were so famous, but their spirit, (as remarked by Sismondi), may be recognised in the majestic allegories of the great poet, who, although he has infinitely surpassed it, has yet taken the *Romance of the Rose* for his model.

The *Divina Commedia* is one of the very, very few great works which have appeared at such rare intervals in the history of mankind, which have stood the test of ages, and are secure of immortality. It is unique in its character—a narrative largely interspersed with dialogue, description, and discussion—a vision

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<sup>1</sup> Both names have the same meaning: Troubadour in Provençal and Trouvere in Wallon (the *Langue d'oc* and *Langue d'oïl*) signify *Finders* or *Inventors*.

of Hades, or the intermediate state of human souls between death and the resurrection. Its beauties are scattered with a lavish hand, while scenes of exquisite pathos, and others of the highest sublimity, are presented to the mind, as we walk or soar with the poet amidst the terrors and the splendours of eternity. For sublimity he is only surpassed by the Hebrew Prophets, by Homer, and by our own Milton; yet even his tremendous descriptions of Infernal misery are varied ever and anon with images of beauty and calm delight, which take us by surprise, and are the more welcome and pleasing from the very contrast with the scenes of suffering, the timeless gloom, and the air for ever shaken, from which we have just escaped and into which we again must pass, with so dread a feeling of reality. It is as if we trod "over the burning marle," and then suddenly entered the shelter of some sylvan glade, and listened to the murmur of the brook that wandered past its verge. As instances, we may refer to the Limbo of the Unbaptized (*Inferno*, iv. 106—120) with its enamelled meadow of bright verdure; and to Master Adamo's recollection, amidst his thirst, of the brooks of Casentino, and their fresh green banks. (*Inferno*, xxx. 60, &c.)

But while the *Trilogy* abounds with vivid painting and apt similitude, it chiefly excels in describing the deep workings of the human heart. This mastery over the passions is shown alike in the despair which petrifies Ugolino, as the wretched parent sees one by one his offspring droop and die with famine; in the self-devotion of Francesca, and her love, unquenched by misery and death; in the melting influence of the evening bell, swinging in the distant tower; in the despair of the lost on the shore of Acheron, who curse their country, their parents, and their birth; in the milder sorrows of the repentant in Purgatory, through toil and torture, from darkness up to light; and in the Poet's communion with Beatrice, with whom he ascends to the realm of blessedness. But the *Trilogy* has another merit, besides that which belongs to it as a magnificent production of genius; it affords us the means of realising, in the most vivid and satisfactory manner, the character of the age in which it was produced. DANTE was in a very remarkable degree the Poet of his time: he has portrayed its creed, its philosophy, and its superstition. The faint and fading forms derived from old tradition, and which linger still in the popular mind, furnished him with materials for his work. He heard, read, saw, and availed himself of the thoughts of others, his predecessors and contemporaries. But he had the genius which reveals to the popular mind its own grandeur, which it knew not before. For the form of his poem, there were suggestions and precedents, classical, popular, and monastic. The descent of Ulysses into Hell is described by Homer, and that of Æneas by

Virgil. Many visions of the other world had been related by the monkish writers before the time of DANTE, some of which will be referred to in our notes. A very singular instance of the manner in which it was attempted to impress the popular mind with the scenes to which they related, occurred at Florence about two years after DANTE's exile. On the occasion of a public festival, under the auspices of the clergy, to celebrate the entrance of the papal legate, a dramatic representation of infernal torments, in the true spirit of the old Mysteries, was exhibited in the bed of the Arno, which was converted into the gulf of perdition, where all the horrors invented by the prolific imagination of the monks were concentrated. But in the midst of the proceedings the bridge gave way beneath the congregated multitude of spectators; and the shrieks and groans of fictitious sufferers, were suddenly superseded by those of real ones. This catastrophe, though it could hardly have been witnessed by DANTE in person, must, when reported to him, have made a deep impression on his mind.

The *Trilogy* affords also an illustrious example of self-portraiture. Like a polished mirror it reflects the mind, and character, and life of its author. If no other memorial of him existed, the impression left by its perusal would present him before us, in all the dignity and melancholy of his disposition, and temper, and aspect. We should know how much he had been wronged, and how much he had felt: we should learn that, as a lover and a patriot, he had never been surpassed in the strength and tenderness of his devotion, and that in both characters, and in the very flower of his age, he had sustained the blight of his early hopes. For with all the fire and sublimity of his genius, his personal experience and feelings form the ground-work of his poem, and furnish its most glowing materials. There is nothing in it that can properly be considered akin to wit or humour. He never appeals to the feeling of ridicule, unless we may except the names of the Malebranche, and an incident or two in connexion with them. The Poet was too much in earnest for jocularity, and he made his poem serious as the grave, and the world beyond it. But his power of sarcasm and invective was wonderful—terrible. Witness his imprecation against Pisa for its heartless cruelty to the innocent children of Count Ugolino; his reproof of the Emperor Albert in Purgatory, for having permitted the continuance of Italian anarchy; and the reproach with which he thunderstrikes Pope Nicholas IV. and the Simonists, in Hell. He was a man of strict integrity, and of pure morals; a sincere and religious man. His anti-papal spirit is the more remarkable, considering the age in which he lived. The whole of western Europe was in communion with the Church of Rome, and implicitly received her dogmas; the only known exceptions being a few obscure and persecuted

peasants and others in Italy and the south of France, against whom a crusade had been proclaimed with seeming success, and for whose extirpation the Inquisition had been permanently established. Yet even then, DANTE dared to expose the moral and political corruption of the Papacy and its rulers, comparing them to Her who sitteth upon many waters, committing whoredom with the kings of the earth, as told by John in the *Apocalypse*. (*Inferno*, xix. 106—111.)

That some parts of the *Trilogy* are to be understood in a figurative sense, he himself has told us. Thus also Milton has introduced into *his* poem the allegory of Death and Sin: but as we do not on that account regard *Paradise Lost* as an allegory, no more can we think that the whole of the *Trilogy* is an allegory, the sense of which is esoteric; or a political mystification, like the jocular narratives of Rabelais. DANTE was too bold and plain spoken, to have recourse to such a stratagem against whatever adversaries he wished to attack. It is indeed probable that in the opening of his poem, the panther, the lion, and the wolf, are intended as emblems of the Neri of Florence and their allies: but he soon drops all metaphor, inveighing against them in the plainest and most bitter terms, in open and undisguised warfare.

DANTE'S *Convito* is a learned comment on three of his own Canzoni. His treatise *De Monarchiâ* was written to prove the independence of the Civil Power. It is worthy of perusal for the strength and freedom of its arguments. Perhaps for this reason, and as the only mode of refutation in his power, Pope John XXII. had it publicly burnt a few years after the death of DANTE. The last production to be noticed, is his work *De Vulgari Eloquentiâ*, in which he examines the nature of language in general, and of the Italian language in particular, which had so recently sprung into existence amidst the confusion of the times. In this treatise, which he did not live to complete, he reckons up fourteen or fifteen dialects, which were spoken in different parts of Italy, all of which were debased by impure modes of expression. But the "noble principal and courtly idiom was that which belonged to every city and yet seemed to belong to none." DANTE was the true father of modern European poetry; his name is the foremost in the literature of the middle ages; and he wrote in the infancy of that language which he assisted to create. We cannot better conclude this brief sketch than with an extract from Hallam's *Middle Ages*.—

"The great characteristic of DANTE is elevation of sentiment, to which his compressed diction, and the emphatic cadences of his measure, admirably correspond. We read him, not as an amusing poet, but as a master of moral wisdom, with reverence and awe. Fresh from the deep and serious, though somewhat

barren studies of philosophy, and schooled in the severer discipline of experience, he has made of his poem a mirror of his mind and life, and the register of his solitudes and sorrows, and of the speculations in which he sought to escape their recollection. The banished magistrate of Florence, the disciple of Brunetto Latini, the statesman accustomed to trace the ever-varying fluctuations of Italian faction, is ever before our eyes. For this reason, even the prodigal display of erudition, which in an epic poem would be entirely misplaced, increases the respect we feel for the poet, though it does not tend to the reader's gratification. Except Milton, he is much the most learned of all the great poets, and relatively to his age, far more learned than Milton. In one so highly endowed by nature, and so consummate by instruction, we may well sympathise with a resentment which exile and poverty rendered perpetually fresh. The heart of DANTE was naturally sensible, and even tender; his poetry is full of comparisons from rural life, and the sincerity of his early passion for Beatrice pierces through the veil of allegory which surrounds her. But the memory of his injuries pursues him into the immensity of eternal light, and in the company of saints and angels his unforgiving spirit darkens at the name of Florence.

“This great poem was received in Italy with that enthusiastic admiration which attaches itself to works of genius only in ages too rude to listen to the envy of competitors, or the fastidiousness of critics. Almost every library in Italy contains manuscript copies of the *Divina Commedia*, and an account of those who have abridged or commented on it would fill a volume. Its appearance made an epoch in the intellectual history of modern nations, and banished the discouraging suspicion, which long ages of lethargy had tended to excite, that nature had exhausted her fertility in the great poets of Greece and Rome.”

What mighty wrongs, what griefs, great bard, could turn  
 Thy love of Florence to indignant ire,  
 Which, long pent up within thy breast like fire,  
 At last flash'd forth to make the guilty mourn;  
 And in thy verse through distant ages burn?  
 The pangs of hope deferr'd, the vain desire  
 Of lingering exile, tuned the poet's lyre,  
 While for his native soil his bowels yearn.  
 O ingrate people! thy sublimest son  
 Thy malice doom'd in misery to pine.  
 Too late shalt thou repent what thou hast done;  
 For he who enter'd, by the Power Divine,  
 The gates of Paradise like banish'd John,  
 Was not permitted to re-enter thine.

ON THE  
RELIGIOUS OPINIONS OF DANTE.

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THE Anti-papal spirit which breathes and burns in the writings of DANTE is a remarkable and very significant fact in his history. It was a symptom and a result of that reaction against Rome which followed her usurpation of supreme power, and her triumph over the rights of conscience and the liberties of mankind. Scarcely had she congratulated herself on her hard-won victory, and begun to dream of universal empire, when a strong opposition against her claims was commenced, which was carried on through the whole period of the middle ages, until it resulted in the Reformation. Those doctrines of the Gospel which she had gradually discarded, and then branded as heretical, were never wholly lost sight of, even when, to a casual observer, they seemed to have died out of the world's memory. The light of Divine truth had never been wholly quenched, although it was long shrouded in obscurity. The Paulicians of the East, in the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, adhered to the religion of the New Testament,<sup>1</sup> rejected

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<sup>1</sup> To justify the horrid cruelties inflicted on them, their enemies described them as Manicheans, though Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who wrote in the ninth century, tells us, that they "expressed the utmost abhorrence of Manes and his doctrine." (MOSHEIM, *Ecc. Hist.*, cent. ix. ch. v.) But their attachment to the New Testament is itself inconsistent with the truth of such an accusation. It is one which the self-styled orthodox, during the middle ages, frequently brought against those who differed from them; and, in general, with equal injustice. Exceptional instances of individual extravagance may have served to give it plausibility. A volume has just been published by "a Cambridge Master of Arts," which represents it

the worship of images, the veneration of relics, and the invocation of saints (practices which had begun to prevail), and recognised only the One Mediator between God and man. They are said to have derived their distinctive appellation from St. Paul, in consequence of their attachment to, and admiration of his writings; though some ascribe it to a less ancient leader of the name, but with less probability. In Italy the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome was resisted, even after it had been submitted to by most of the Churches throughout the West. The church of Milan, and the diocese belonging to it, long remained independent of Rome, and practised the Ambrosian liturgy, which was much more simple and primitive than the Roman ritual. It was not till the eleventh century that the Pope succeeded in establishing his authority at Milan, and inducing the bishops of that see to accept the archiepiscopal pallium from Rome. When first proposed, it excited the liveliest indignation, and was resisted as a "papal aggression;" the Milanese and their clergy maintaining that the Ambrosian Church, according to the most ancient customs and constitutions, was free and independent; and that it could not without ignominy submit to a foreign yoke, by admitting the *novel* claim of the Papal supremacy. In the early part of the ninth century, Claudius, bishop of Turin, a bold iconoclast, and zealous advocate of the truth, withstood the spread of idolatry, and checked its progress. It has been admitted by papal writers that in the valleys of Piedmont, which belonged to his diocese, his opinions were long preserved. He was an admirer of St. Augustin's writings; and to the boasted merit of pilgrimages and other monkish observances, which were then called Good Works, he opposed the doctrine of Divine Grace. The Waldenses from an early period, and for many ages, maintained the faith of Christ in the Alpine *valleys*, from which their name was taken; and though few, in comparison of their numerous enemies, defended their liberties in their mountain fastnesses, often victorious and never desponding, notwithstanding the dreadful persecutions which were carried on against them from age to age, by the agents and abettors of the papal tyranny.

In the south of France, although the spirit of poetry which had been there awakened was, for the most part, worldly, light, and frivolous, it was not entirely so. In that part of the country

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as "infinitely more likely that the devil has existed from eternity as an evil spirit, than that having been once good he fell from heaven." The very essence of Manicheism this; yet surely it would be unjust on this account to impugn the theological orthodoxy of the whole university.

there dwelt a people who in the purity of their faith and morals resembled the Waldenses, with whom they were sometimes identified by their enemies. Their creed, and conduct, and sufferings for the truth, have been hymned by more than one Provençal harp. A remarkable poem in the Provençal tongue has come down to us, and is entitled *La Nobla Leyczon* ("The Noble Lesson"); it contains what may be called their confession of faith, which affords proof how much they have been calumniated. Its date is thus given in the course of the poem, "Eleven hundred years are passed since it was written thus, 'For we are in the last time.'" From this poem it appears that these poor people were already exposed to obloquy and persecution, because their simple faith and inoffensive manners were a standing protest against the error, superstition, and immorality around them. The following is an extract, literally rendered: "If there is any one who loves God and reverences Jesus Christ, who will not curse, nor swear, nor lie, nor cheat, nor steal, nor commit adultery, nor take revenge on his enemies, they call him a Vaudois, and exclaim, Let him be punished!" or, according to some copies, "Let him be put to death!"<sup>1</sup> And when at length, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, a *Crusade* against the Albigenses was published by Innocent III., and pardons and paradise (besides plunder) were promised to all the faithful who should assist in their extermination;—when three hundred thousand warriors appeared in arms at the summons, to prosecute this *Holy War*, and cities were taken and razed, the country wasted with fire and sword, and whole hecatombs of human beings offered as a burnt sacrifice to the grim idol of Papal authority;<sup>2</sup>—the expiring muse of the Provençal

<sup>1</sup> See MUSTON'S *Israel of the Alps*, vol. i. p. 28, note.

<sup>2</sup> On the 22d of July 1209, Beziers was taken by assault; and fifteen thousand inhabitants, according to the narrative which the Abbot of the Cistercians transmitted to the Pope, or sixty thousand, according to other contemporary writers, were put to the sword. An old Provençal historian says, "They murdered more people than was ever known in the world. For they spared neither young nor old, nor infants at the breast. They killed and murdered all of them; which being seen by the said people of the city, they that were able retreated into the great church of St. Nazarius, both men and women. The chaplains thereof, when they retreated, caused the bells to ring, until every body was dead. One only escaped, for all the rest were slain; and when the city had been pillaged it was set on fire. No living thing was left, which was a cruel vengeance, seeing that the said Viscount was neither a heretic, nor of their sect."—SISMONDI, *Lit. S. Europe*, ch. vi. Arnold, the abbot above mentioned, when asked, before

Troubadours, while the cry of blood went up to heaven, hurled her indignant defiance against the cruel and persecuting power which had thus accomplished the ruin of a nation, a literature, and a language. "Immoral, unfaithful city, Rome," exclaims Guillen Figueiras, "thy seat is fixed in the depths of hell and perdition. Without reason, thou hast destroyed a whole people. Thou despisest God and the saints—falsehood and infamy dwell in thy bosom." And then, addressing the Pope himself, he says, "Outwardly thou art a lamb, but inwardly a devouring wolf, and a crowned serpent. Go, Sirvente,<sup>1</sup> and tell the false priest, that whoever submits to his dominion is *dead*."<sup>2</sup>

In Italy there were, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, considerable numbers of a sect very nearly allied to, if not identical with, the Vaudois or Waldenses of Piedmont, and the Albigenses of the south of France. They were sometimes called *Patarini*, (a word of doubtful origin,) at other times *Cathari* (Puritans), or *Gazzari*, probably from their practising a stricter morality than their neighbours. They appear to have been, generally, persons in the lower walks of life. "They were a plain, unassuming, industrious race of Christians," Milner says, "condemning by their doctrine and manners the whole apparatus of the reigning idolatry and superstition, placing their religion in the faith and love of Christ, and retaining a supreme regard for the Divine word."—*Church Hist.* Cent. xii. ch. iii. Throughout the whole of the twelfth century they continued to be the objects of the most violent persecution. The people, who in their ignorance and fanaticism were but too ready to molest and destroy them, were often stirred up to madness against them by the exhortations of the clergy. Galdinus Bishop of Milan, who during the eight or nine years of his episcopacy had publicly inveighed against them, died in 1173 of an illness brought on by the excess of his vehement zeal in preaching against them.—*Ib.* It is asserted that the Vaudois of the Alpine valleys had not only their pastors, but their missionaries who "traversed all Italy, where they had fixed stations at different points and, in almost all the towns, adherents." (*Israel of the Alps*, ch. i.) This seems to imply a community of religious intercourse, feeling, and sentiment among the early op-

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the city was taken, how he could separate the heretics from the Catholics, replied, "Kill them all; God will know who belong to him."—*Ib.*, Roscoe's Note.

<sup>1</sup> *Sirvente*, a war song, a warlike, political, or satirical poem, as distinguished from the *chanço* (chanson), love-song of Provençal poetry.

<sup>2</sup> MILLOT, *Hist. Litt. des Troubadours*.

ponents of the Church of Rome, beyond what is generally supposed.

But besides the sects whose doctrines lay under the ban of the Papacy, and who were themselves the objects of its relentless persecution, there were many among the leading minds of Italy, who, although continuing in outward communion with the Church of Rome, had received some tincture of evangelical truth; while the awakened spirit of inquiry, and the impulse given to thought by the revival of classical learning, had tended to open their eyes to the corruptions of the Church and the daring usurpations of its chief. DANTE stood in the foremost rank of these. He held, indeed, many erroneous opinions in common with the Church in which he had been bred; he had little or no sympathy with the sects which were the objects of her vengeance;<sup>1</sup> and he places in Paradise among the souls of the elect, some of their bitterest persecutors.<sup>2</sup> Yet on many important points his opinions and sentiments very nearly coincided with theirs. His condition of mind somewhat resembled that of Luther, before his open rupture with the Papacy, and when at an early stage of his career he visited Rome, and there saw the full riot of that grand corruption of Christianity of which it was the seat and centre. Like Luther at that time, he still acknowledged the spiritual supremacy of the Pope, yet like Luther he had also heard the terrific murmur, "If there is a hell, Rome is built over it; it is an abyss whence issues every kind of sin." And to him, as to Luther, the Voice Divine had whispered, "The just shall live by faith." In him that *faith* had awakened a new life. The HOLY SPIRIT, as he tells us, had impressed the *Evangelic Doctrine* on his mind: and this principle of heavenly faith had brightened in his soul from a spark to a flame, till it shone there like a star in the clear depths of the firmament. Hence we find him paying reverential attention to the Old and New Testament. He speaks with awe of the Man who was born and lived without sin, and was crucified at Jerusalem; at whose death trembling seized hell, the universe thrilled with love, and the way to hell was broken and impeded (*Inferno*, xii, 40, xxi. 113, xxxiv. 115, &c.); he frequently dwells on the importance of faith in Christ, as the true principle of Religion, without which it is impossible to please God, or secure admittance into his heavenly kingdom. In the twenty-fourth Canto of *Paradiso*, St. Peter catechizes DANTE concerning "the faith by which he himself had walked on the sea." The dialogue which takes

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<sup>1</sup> See *Inferno*, xxviii. 55—60, and note.

<sup>2</sup> Folco Bishop of Toulouse.—*Paradiso*, ix. 90, and St. Dominic.—*Ib.* x. xi. xii.

place between them clearly proves that the poet held the great doctrine of the Reformation, *Salvation through faith in Christ*. He is told, "the citizens of this (the heavenly) kingdom are made such by true faith." In reply to the question, "What is faith?" he answers in the words of St. Paul, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the proof of things not appearing." St. Peter then says, "This precious jewel, on which every virtue is founded, whence comes it to thee?" DANTE replies, "The copious rain of the Holy Spirit, which is poured out on the Old and New Testament, and an argument which so conclusively convinces me that every other proof seems obtuse in comparison of it." When asked, why he concluded the old and the new revelation to be the voice of heaven, he replies to St. Peter, "The proof which discovers to me their truth is, the works which followed, for which nature never heated the iron nor smote the anvil" (*i. e.*, the miracles wrought by the inspired prophets and apostles were supernatural). And when asked for the evidence that these miraculous works were in reality wrought, he answers, "If the world had been converted to Christianity without miracles, this would itself have been such a miracle, that all the rest would not have been a hundredth part so great. For *thou* enterdest poor and fasting into the field, to sow the goodly plant which was formerly a vine, and now is become a bramble." Thus DANTE expresses his conviction of how much the Christian religion had been deteriorated by the traditions of the Church! He then repeats his *Credo*, but without any of the additions which had made the vine a bramble. "I believe in one God, sole and eternal, who, unmoved himself, moves all heaven with love and desire. And for such belief I have not only physical and metaphysical proof, but also the truth which is showered down from heaven bestows it on me, through Moses, the prophets, the Psalms, the Gospel, and through you who wrote when the burning spirit made you sublime. And I believe in three eternal Persons, and these I believe in essence one, so one and so trine that they admit conjointly of *are* and *is*. Of this profound and divine condition, which now I merely touch, the Evangelic Doctrine (*l'evangelica dottrina*) hath often sealed the impress on my mind. This is the principle, this is the spark, which afterwards is kindled into a vivid flame, and shines in me like a star in heaven."—*Paradiso*, xxiv. 38—147.

In the *Inferno*, DANTE says that St. Paul, the "vessel of election," was taken to Paradise "to bring confirmation to that faith which is the beginning of the way of salvation."—*Inferno*, ii, 28—31.

In the *Purgatorio*, he speaks of one who had "lost heaven for no other guilt than for not having faith."—*Purg.* vii. 7, 8. He

also says that "faith is that without which good works are not sufficient." — *Purg.* xxii. 60. And he makes the Infernal Adversary complain that one tear of repentance had robbed him of a soul." — *Purg.* v. 107.

He makes the shade of Manfred, who died under the Papal excommunication, speak thus:—"When I had received two mortal wounds, I gave myself up weeping to Him who freely forgives. My sins were horrible, but Infinite Goodness hath such wide arms that it embraces all who turn thereto. If the shepherd of Cosenza whom Clement had let loose to hunt me down, had then duly considered this attribute of God, my bones would yet have lain at the head of the bridge of Benevento, protected by the ponderous tumulus. Now the rain bathes my corse and the wind drives it out of the kingdom, as far as the river Verde, whither he transported them with torches quenched. Yet by their curse we are not so lost but that the Eternal Love can return while hope retains the least blossom." — *Purg.* iii. 118—135.

In his treatise *De Monarchiâ*, DANTE says; "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. He himself is the rock on which the Church is built." — *Lib.* iii. And in his *Convito*;—"Christ is the way, the truth, and the light; the way, because by him we proceed without obstacle to immortal happiness; the truth, because he admits not of any error; the light, because he dissipates in us the darkness of worldly ignorance." — *Convito*, *Trat.* ii. cap. 9.

Such were the Religious opinions of DANTE. We admire their simplicity and sublimity, and recognise in them the ancient Faith, preserved in the midst of ignorance, error, and superstition, to reappear and triumph at the Reformation.

## THE TIME OF DANTE'S VISION.

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THE year fixed on by DANTE as the date of his vision, was the year of the Jubilee, 1300; the season, Spring, when the Sun is in Aries: but in determining the time with complete precision, such difficulties have occurred as are not easily surmounted. It has generally been supposed by the commentators, that Good Friday was the day of the Poet's descent. We venture to differ from this opinion; without, however, claiming infallibility for our own.

DANTE states, that on the night when he found himself "within a wood obscure astray" (*Inferno*, i. 2), the moon was full (xx. 127—129): now, according to the eminent astronomer, Mr. Hind, by whom the calculation has been carefully made (see *Athenæum*, Nov. 28, 1857, p. 1457), the exact time of the Paschal full-moon of 1300, was on Wednesday, April 6th, at 2 A.M., Greenwich time. Consequently, it could not have been later than the following night that DANTE was in the "selva oscura;" and it must therefore have been on *Thursday*, April 7th, A.D. 1300, that with Virgil for his companion, he "enter'd on that pathway deep and wild," which led them to the infernal portal. That day he regarded as the anniversary of the Crucifixion (xxi. 112—114), and the third day after as that of the Resurrection. In coming to this decision he appears to have been guided by the following reasons.—

1. The Jews began their mouths at the time of the new moon, which they determined, not by astronomical calculation, in which they were little skilled, but by actual observation. Confidential persons were stationed on the neighbouring hills to watch its first appearance, and to give notice of the fact; on which the authorities caused the *New Moon* to be proclaimed by the sound of trumpets. In the first month of their sacred year, which was always at the time of the Vernal equinox, and on the evening following the fourteenth day of the month (or what we should call

the evening of that day), which was always the time of the *full moon*, the Jewish Passover was eaten, and the solemnities of that season commenced. The *fifteenth* day of the month, including that evening, was reckoned the first day of the Paschal week: for the Jews reckoned their days from sunset to sunset, as the Italians do still; and we ourselves have a remnant of the custom; for the *Eve* of every Church fast or festival is always the evening which *precedes* the day.

2. At that time of the year, Christ ate the Paschal supper with his twelve apostles; namely, on the eve of (that is, the evening preceding) the *fifteenth* day of the month Abib. On that day, the *fifteenth*, at noon, he was crucified; and at the ninth hour, or about three o'clock in the afternoon, he expired.

3. The Asiatic Christians in commemorating the death of Christ, observed its anniversary,—without regarding on what day of the week it might fall,—at the same time of the year as that on which the Jews kept their Passover, and in which our Saviour also had celebrated it; and they commemorated the resurrection the third day after, inclusive: that is, with an interval of one whole day. And they affirmed that they had derived this custom from the Apostles John and Philip. The Western Churches observed a different method; and so arranged their calendar that the annual celebration of the Crucifixion might always be on a Friday, and that of the Resurrection on the Lord's day. And they pleaded the authority of St. Peter and St. Paul for so doing. In the second century it was amicably agreed between Polycarp of Ephesus and Anicetus, Bishop of Rome, that both parties should continue the custom they had already followed. But at a somewhat later period, Victor, who presided in the see of Rome, wrote a letter to the Eastern Churches, demanding their conformity to the Roman custom; and, on their refusal, proclaimed them excommunicated: on which account he was severely reprov'd by St. Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, in Gaul, and others, who exhorted him to pursue a course more calculated to promote peace, unity, and love among the churches.—EUSEBIUS, *Ecc. Hist.* B. v. ch. 24. DANTE appears to have sympathised with the Asiatic churches in regarding *Thursday* 1300, rather than Good Friday, as the day of our Saviour's crucifixion; an instance of his anti-papal spirit, which may be added to those more obvious and palpable ones that have been so frequently adduced.

DANTE emerged at the Antipodes, and “saw the stars again,” at a period corresponding with Saturday, April the 9th, the day which he regarded as that of Christ's resurrection. His passage through Purgatory was a more tedious affair, occupying him nearly four days. His visit to Paradise takes him about twenty-four hours. So that, including the night he spent in the wood,

before he set out on his journey, the whole vision lasts just a week, from the night immediately following Wednesday to the corresponding time in the next week; or, to express it according to the Italian method of reckoning, from the *eve* of Thursday the 7th to that of Thursday the 14th. The passages in the *Trilogy* which determine the time are numerous, and will be more fully explained in the notes as they occur: but we here subjoin a Calendar for the *Inferno*.

FIRST DAY of the Vision: Night spent in the Wood, on the Eve of Thursday April 7th, 1300; Canto i. 1—12. Moon Full; xx. 127. Sunrise; i. 37. Spring; Sun in Aries; i. 38. Anniversary of the Crucifixion; xii. 38—45.

SECOND DAY; Friday, April 8th (Italian method of reckoning): Evening; ii. 1—3. Midnight; vii. 95. Two hours before Sunrise; xi. 113.

An hour after Sunrise; xx. 124—126.

Four hours after Sunrise; xxi. 112, 113.

Mid-day; xxix. 10.

THIRD DAY; Saturday, April 9th (Italian reckoning): Night; xxxiv. 65. Half-past seven P.M., on the meridian of Jerusalem; but an hour and half after Sunrise (or 7:30 A.M.) on the opposite meridian, the poets having passed the centre of the Earth; 93—115. Morning—Noon: on the meridian of Jerusalem: Night—Midnight, at the Antipodes, which the poets had now reached, and where, on emerging, they see the Stars. Anniversary of the Resurrection.

## NOTICE TO THE READER.

IN quoting from the Classics, for the sake of making our notes intelligible to all, we have generally preferred giving a literal version of each passage; the quotation being in all cases accompanied by a *reference*, which will enable the learned reader to turn to the original.

In the pronunciation of *Italian* names, the following notice will be of service to the English reader:—

A, long, is pronounced as in the English word *father*.

AE (when not joined together in a single character, æ) as two syllables: thus, *Fa-enza*.

C, before *e* or *i*, as *ch* in *child*.

Ce, in the same situation, as *tch*; thus, *Fucci*, *Rusticucci*, as *Futchy*, *Rusticutchy*.

Ch and cch, as *k* or *ck*; thus, *Schicchi*, as *Skicky*.

E, long, as *ay*. The final *e* is always sounded.

Ei, as a diphthong, *ey*.

G, before *a*, *o*, or *u*, hard as in *gay*; before *e* or *i*, soft as in *gen*.

Gh, as *g* hard.

Gia, as *ja*; thus *Gianni*, as *Janny*.

Gli, as *l'ye* coalescing in one syllable, or as in the Anglicised word *seraglio*.

Gn, as in *bagnio*, *poignant*; thus, *Agnello*, as if written *Ahn-yellow*.

I, long, as *ee*.

Ia, as *ya*; *Bianca*, in two syllables, as *B'yan-ca*.

Ie, as *yea*; thus *Fiesole*, as *Fy'eh-so-ley*.

Sc, followed by *e* or *i*, as *sh*.

U, as *oo*.

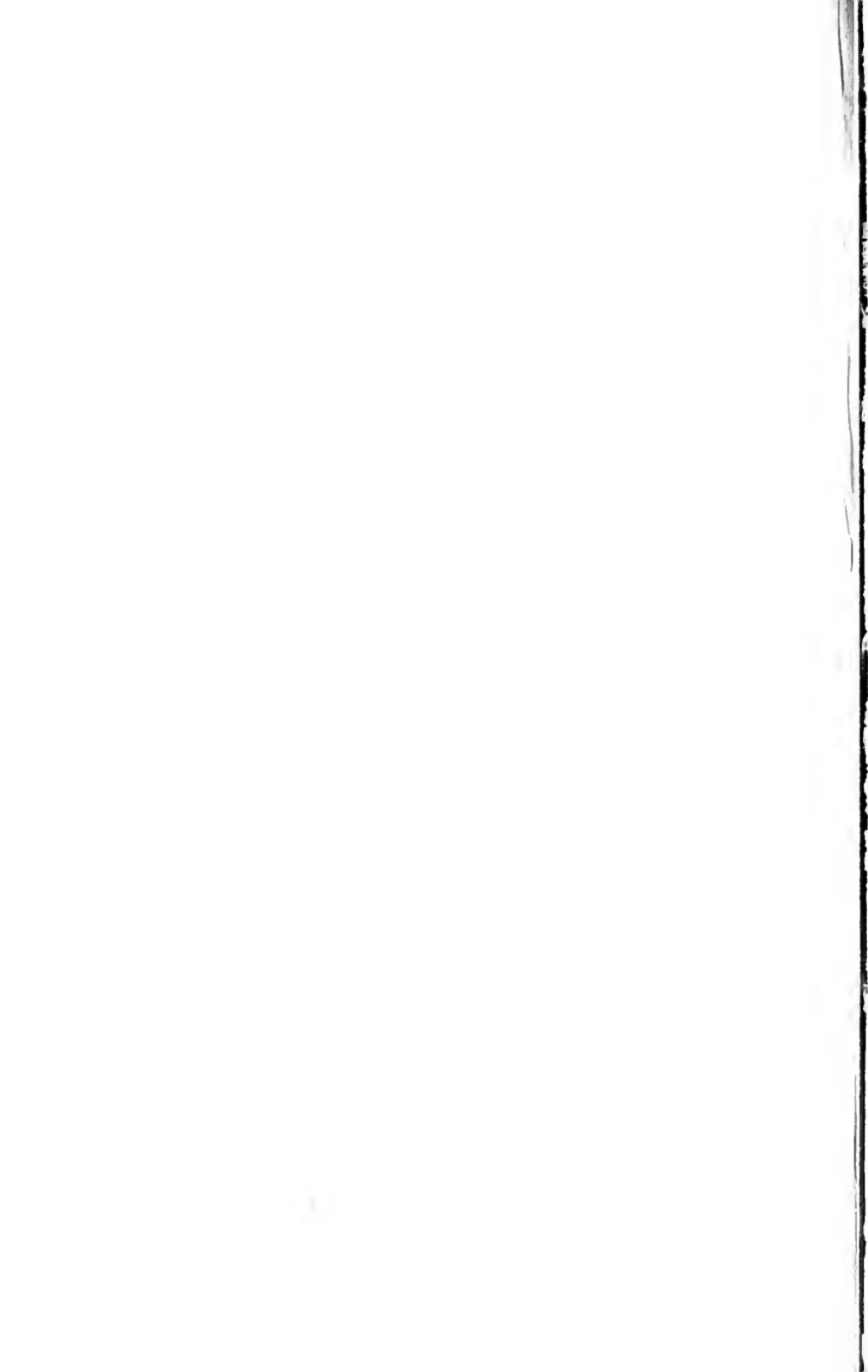
Ua, as *wa*; thus *Guadralda*, as *Gwadralda*.

Ui, as *we*; thus *Guido*, as *Gweedo*.

Uo, as *o* in *note*; thus *Buoso*, as *Bō-so*.

Z, and zz, in most cases as *tz*, in a few as *dz*.

The Translator would here express his acknowledgments to several gentlemen, for their kind communications on some interesting and difficult points; and particularly to the Rev. Samuel Coley, the Rev. Father Gavazzi, the Right Hon. Lord Brougham, and H. C. Barlow, Esq., M.D.: and his only regret is, that it has not been his privilege earlier and more extensively to avail himself of their accurate and intimate acquaintance with DANTE.



# THE TRILOGY, &c.

## I N F E R N O.

### CANTO I.

#### THE ARGUMENT.

Dante, having lost his way in a gloomy wood, wanders on till sunrise, when seeing a mountain before him, he attempts to ascend it, but is hindered by three fierce beasts. Virgil comes to his assistance, and promises to conduct him through Hell and Purgatory, and that then a more worthy spirit would show him the bliss of Paradise. Dante willingly agrees to follow the Roman poet.

In my mid journey on life's road,<sup>1</sup> I found  
Myself within a wood obscure,<sup>2</sup> astray ;  
Of path direct no trace appear'd around.  
Ah ! 'tis indeed no easy task to say

<sup>1</sup> Dante has fixed the *date* of his Vision A.D. 1300, at which time he was thirty-five years of age. In his '*Convito*,' comparing human life to an arch, he considers this age to be its middle or highest point, in those of sound and vigorous constitution. This answers to the Psalmist's "three-score years and ten," just half of which are thirty-five, or Dante's "mezzo del cammin di nostra vita."

<sup>2</sup> Virgil makes both Orpheus and Æneas, when approaching

How savage, rough, and horrid was that wood,  
 The thought of which yet fills me with dismay,  
 And seems the bitterness of death<sup>1</sup> renew'd.  
 Of other things I'll speak, which there I found,  
 To show more clearly the resulting good.  
 I scarce know how I enter'd on that ground; 10  
 For when I quitted the true path, I fell  
 At once into a slumber so profound!  
 But when I reach'd the mountain's foot whose swell  
 Closed up the valley, which with such a load  
 Of anguish and of fear my heart could quell;  
 I look'd on high, and saw its shoulders broad  
 Clothed with the rays which day's bright planet<sup>2</sup>  
 east,  
 Which leads mankind aright through every road.  
 Then was the terror somewhat still'd at last,  
 Which did within my cavern'd heart remain, 20  
 The night which I in such distress had pass'd.

the infernal regions, pass through a gloomy wood.—*Geor.* iv. 468; *Æneid.* vi. 268.

<sup>1</sup> "Surely the bitterness of death is past."—*Son.* xv. 32.

<sup>2</sup> According to the ancient system of astronomy, which made the earth the centre of the universe, Dante regards the sun as one of the planets revolving round it. See Canto ii. line 78, note.

"He who beholds the sun at noon-day shining,  
 Will find in the cloudless ether no bright star more splendid."

PINDAR, *Olymp.* Carm. i. lines 7—10.

And as the shipwreck'd seaman, who doth gain,  
Though with exhausted strength, the welcome  
shore,  
Turns round and gazes on the dangerous main ;  
Even so my soul, its flight not giving o'er,  
Turn'd back that pass of peril to survey,  
Which never living person left before.<sup>1</sup>  
To rest my wearied frame awhile I lay ;  
Then through the desert place fresh haste I make,  
With firm foot ever lowest,<sup>2</sup> on my way.      30  
And when the ascent I had begun to take,  
Behold a panther, graceful, swift, and light,  
Whose skin with spots was cover'd, made me quake.  
Nor did she vanish from before my sight ;  
So much indeed obstructed she my way,  
That many times I turn'd again for flight.  
The time was at the early dawn of day,  
With that same constellation rose the sun'

<sup>1</sup> "None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life."—*Prov.* ii. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Biagioli conjectures that *il piè fermo* may mean "the right foot," and that Dante mounted the hill transversely, or in a slanting direction, with its summit on his left, and the right foot always towards the base, and lowest. But, without leaving anything to conjecture, while in walking both feet are frequently on the ground at once, in *running*, the firm foot is always lowest, one being always raised. That is, Dante was in the greatest haste to leave the valley, until he was confronted by the leopard.

<sup>3</sup> It was spring, when the sun is in Aries. Virgil gives voice

As when creating love to their array  
 Gave motion, and when first their glories shone. 40  
 The hour of dawn, the spring-time of the year,  
 And that wild beast's gay spotted skin had won  
 To cheerful hope my heart:<sup>1</sup> yet still my fear  
 Found a new object, for that instant gleam'd  
 A form that did a lion huge appear,  
 About to rush upon me, as I deem'd,  
 Rampant and furious in his hungry mood,  
 So that the very air affrighted seem'd.  
 A she-wolf then, so lean that for all food  
 With ravenous craving she appear'd engross'd, 50  
 And many a realm to sorrow had subdued:<sup>2</sup>

to the tradition that the world was created at that season of the year.

“For that was the season of spring, a spring that pervaded the universe,

And eastern winds repressed their wintry breathing,

And cattle first drank in the light, and the race of man, hard as iron,

Its head first lifted out of the stony quarry,

And wild beasts peopled the woods, and the stars bedecked the heavens.”—*Georg.* lib. ii. l. 338.

<sup>1</sup> “And to the heart inspires

Vernal delight and joy, able to drive

All sadness but despair.”—*Paradise Lost*, B. iv. l. 154.

<sup>2</sup> The leopard, lion, and wolf are associated, *Jeremiah* v. 6. The lion and leopard are mentioned, *Dan.* v. 4, 6; and the wolf, *Matt.* vii. 15, and elsewhere, in a metaphorical sense. as here. The commentators explain the leopard or panther of Dante to signify licentious pleasure; the lion, pride or ambi-

What misery this wolf my bosom cost,  
 Even from the terror which her looks inspire.  
 To reach the mountain-top all hope I lost :  
 And like to him who eager to acquire  
 Beholds the hour when he is stripp'd of all,  
 Then all his thoughts with grief and woe conspire ;  
 So did this restless beast my heart appal,  
 Who thus opposing drove me gradually  
 To where the silent sunbeams never fall.<sup>1</sup> 60  
 While towards the vale retreating rapidly,  
 Before my eyes one present I descried,  
 Who from long silence weak-voiced seem'd to be.<sup>2</sup>  
 When I beheld him in this desert wide,  
 " Whate'er thy name, take pity on me thou ;  
 Whether a shade or living man ;" I cried.

tion ; and the wolf, avarice. Rosetti and others interpret the leopard to be Florence ; the lion, the king of France ; and the wolf, the court of Rome. Daniel says, " These great beasts are four kings which shall arise : " and Gildas thus apostrophises the tyrant of the Demetians, (Cardigan, Pembroke, and Carmarthen), " Thou, also, who, like the spotted leopard, art diverse in manners and in mischief."—*Works*, sect. 31.

<sup>1</sup> *La dove 'l sol tace*, " Where the sun is silent ; " that is, the wood, where the light of the sun did not penetrate. So in *Joshua* x. 13, literally rendered, " And the sun was silent, and the moon stayed." See Canto v. l. 28, and note.

<sup>2</sup> From the length of time during which the classic authors had been concealed or neglected, and almost forgotten, the language of Virgil seemed strange, " fiocco," hoarse, or weak. Dante was one of the revivers of classical learning.

He said, "I once was man, though not so now ;  
 Of Lombard parents, who by country were  
 Both Mantuans, I was born, ere yet his brow  
 Julius to Rome's imperial height could rear.<sup>1</sup> 70  
 I under good Augustus lived at Rome,<sup>2</sup>  
 While false and lying gods were worshipp'd there.  
 I, as a poet, bade my song relume  
 Anchises' pious son who came from Troy,  
 After proud Ilion felt her fiery doom.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Publius Virgilius Maro, the prince of Latin poets, was born at Andes, a village near Mantua, B.C. 70. Julius Cæsar's first consulship was ten years later, B.C. 60. From Pharsalia he returned, like a ruling angel

"Victorious from some world-o'erthrowing fight,"

and assumed the dictatorship, B.C. 48, or twenty-two years after the birth of Virgil. This determines the sense of the poet's "*Nacqui sub Julio ancor ehe fosse tardi*" to be, not "I was born in Julius's reign, though late," which would *not be true*, but "I was born in the time of Cæsar, though he had not then reached the supreme authority which he attained at a later period." He was killed in the senate-house, B.C. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Virgil was trained and educated at Cremona. The lands in that vicinity having been distributed among the soldiers of Augustus, after the battle of Philippi, he had to swim across a river for his life, to escape the resentment of the new proprietor, with whom he had disputed the possession of his fields. Repairing to Rome, he became acquainted with Mæcenas, and through the favour of Augustus his lands were restored. His first *Bucolic* was written to express his gratitude, and to prove that the emperor's regard had not been misplaced. He died in his fifty-first year, at Brundisium, B.C. 19.

<sup>3</sup> "After it had pleased the gods to subvert the power of Asia

But why return'st thou to so much annoy ?

Why climb not rather yonder blissful mount,

Which is the cause and fountain of all joy ?"<sup>1</sup>

"O art thou then that Virgil, and that fount

From which so broad a stream of eloquence 80

Is pour'd ?" I answered him, with bashful front.

"O glory of all poets, light intense,

Let it avail me that with study long

Thy volume I have search'd with love immense.

My master and my author, from thy song

Alone the beauty which brings fame I took ;

To thee my style and honour both belong.<sup>2</sup>

At that fierce beast from which I turn'd me, look !

Assist me, sage renown'd, against her ire ;

For she my very veins and pulses shook." 90

"To hold a different course it will require,"

And Priam's guiltless people, when proud Ilion had fallen, .  
And when all sea-defended Troy upon the ground lay smok-  
ing."—VIRGIL, *Æneid*. lib. iii. l. 1.

<sup>1</sup> "But why return to the wood—that obscure and intricate course which thou hast so recently left? Why not enter on that path, upward and difficult though it be, which conducts to fame and the rewards of virtue?"

<sup>2</sup> In this eulogy Dante shows at once his own modesty, and his high estimate of Virgil. Preferring him to all other authors, he ascribes to the study of his writings whatever excellence he himself had attained in Latin composition: for at that time Latin was deemed the only language worthy to be employed in literature.

He answer'd, when he saw me weep for woe,  
 " If from this savage place thou would'st retire.  
 For this rude beast, through whom thou criest, so  
 Impedes the pass near which she's known to dwell,  
 That all she slays who by that way would go :  
 Her nature too so evil and so fell,  
 Her craving appetite finds no relief,  
 But all she eats her hunger cannot quell.  
 With many an animal in marriage brief           100  
 She joins, and will with more, till comes, indeed,  
 That greyhound<sup>1</sup> who shall make her die with grief.  
 He not on earth or metals base will feed,  
 But live on wisdom, love, and virtue tried :<sup>2</sup>  
 Between two Feltros will his line succeed.<sup>3</sup>  
 Fair Italy to safety he shall guide,  
 For which Camilla virgin, in the fight,  
 Nisus, Euryalus, and Turnus died.<sup>4</sup>  
 This greyhound having put the beast to flight,

<sup>1</sup> Can Grande della Scala, Lord of Verona, a prince of a liberal disposition, the best soldier and ablest captain of his time, the first politician in Italy, and the most generous of Dante's benefactors.

<sup>2</sup> "He will not indulge his appetite with the acquisition of many lands, or by hoarding treasures; but with wisdom, charity, and the purest virtue."

<sup>3</sup> Verona, the country of Della Scala, is between Feltro, a city of Trevigiana, and Monte Feltro, a city in the March of Ancona.

<sup>4</sup> When Æneas landed in Italy, Turnus, king of the Rutuli,

Through every town shall chase her back to  
hell, 110

Whence first, by envy loosed, she sprung to light.<sup>1</sup>

I now decide, thy interest pondering well,

To be thy guide, if thou wilt follow me,

And lead thee through eternal realms, where dwell

The grieving souls of old, whom thou shalt see,

And hear their loud-voiced cries of deep despair,

Where each the second death wails endlessly.<sup>2</sup>

Thou shalt see those too who contented are

In fire, because they have a hope that they

Shall in due season, to the blest repair.<sup>3</sup> 120

was assisted in opposing him by Camilla, queen of the Volsci. Nisus and Euryalus came with Æneas. In the night they entered the enemy's camp together. When returning victorious, they were discovered by the Rutulians, who attacked Euryalus. Nisus in endeavouring to rescue his friend, perished with him. Their friendship, like that of Pylades and Orestes, and that of Theseus and Pirithous, has become proverbial.—*Æneid.* ix. 176, &c.; xi. 831; xii. 952.

<sup>1</sup> "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition."—*Rev.* xvii, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Not "a second death," as the passage has been rendered, as if those souls were invoking annihilation. In "*la seconda morte*" the allusion is to *Rev.* xx. 15, "And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire: *this is THE Second Death.*"

<sup>3</sup> The souls in purgatory are here intended. There is classical, if not scriptural authority for this doctrine, which in its origin is certainly more *Pagan* than either Jewish or Christian. The proof of this assertion we shall postpone until, with Dante, we have

That realm of peace if thou wouldst then survey,

A soul shall guide thee worthier far than I.<sup>1</sup>

With her I'll leave thee when I go away.

For that Imperial Chief who reigns on high,

Since I was rebel to his law, ordains

None reach through me his palace in the sky.<sup>2</sup>

He every where commands, and there he reigns:<sup>3</sup>

There is his citadel and his high seat:<sup>4</sup>

O happy he who there admission gains!<sup>5</sup>

And I to him: "Thee, poet, I intreat, 130

"escaped the Stygian pool," and have entered on the second part of the *Divina Commedia*, where we shall find both time and place more suitable for the discussion of *Purgatory*.

<sup>1</sup> Beatrice, the glorified spirit of Folco Portarini's daughter. See *Sketch of Dante's Life and Times*, prefixed to this translation.

<sup>2</sup> "None ever obtain salvation through heathen lore." It does not therefore follow that no heathen was ever saved: for the benefits of redemption are more extensive than the knowledge of it; and "the Gentiles who have not the law" on tables of stone, yet "show the work of the law written in their hearts."—*Rom.* ii. 14, 15. And "in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him."—*Acts* x. 35.

<sup>3</sup> "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all."—*Ps.* ciii. 19.

<sup>4</sup> "This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill."—*Paradise Lost*, v. 732.

<sup>5</sup> Literally, "who is elected there." On this phrase the words of St. Peter may throw light: "Give diligence that ye may make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—*2 Pet.* i. 10, 11.

By Him to thee unknown—that God so dread,  
So from this ill and worse I shall retreat,  
That now thou lead me whither thou hast said,  
To see the portal by Saint Peter kept ;<sup>1</sup>  
And those o'er whom such gloom thy tale hath  
shed.”

Then he moved on, and I behind him stept.

<sup>1</sup> Some have supposed that by “St. Peter’s Gate” is here meant the gate of Purgatory, which Dante describes as kept by an angel who is deputed by St. Peter.—*Purgatorio*, ix. 127. But, besides that the poet cannot be supposed to have known this beforehand, it is evident that he here anticipates his introduction to the “worthier guide” (Beatrice) with whom, he had been told, Virgil would leave him; and refers to that gate *up to* which Virgil undertakes to conduct him, but *beyond* which he cannot accompany him. We agree with Biagioli, that by St. Peter’s gate is meant the gate of heaven. See *Matt.* xvi. 19, and *Paradiso*, x. 35.

## CANTO II.

## THE ARGUMENT.

As they go on their way, Dante, distrustful of his strength, and fearing that he is unworthy of the high enterprise on which he is entering, is reassured and comforted by Virgil, who relates how he had been sent by Beatrice.—Dante takes courage; and the two poets proceed together on their journey.

THE evening shadows, now the day was done,  
 Embrown'd the air and brought repose to all  
 With labour wearied;<sup>1</sup> I the only one  
 Prepared to combat with what might befall  
 Through pity, or the pathway through that shade,  
 Which my unerring memory shall recall.  
 O Muses, help! O lofty genius, aid!  
 O Mind, recording all that I espied,  
 Here be thy true nobility display'd.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> " 'Twas night, and on the ground their placid slumber taking,  
 Lay the o'erwearied; and the woods and the angry ocean  
 Were quiet," &c.—*Eneid.* iv. 522.

Ariosto has imitated the commencement of this canto;  
*Orlando Furioso*, c. viii. st. 79.

<sup>2</sup> Chaucer has imitated this apostrophe to mind and thought.—  
*The House of Fame*, ii. 15—20.

"Poet," I thus began, "who art my guide,      10  
     Mark well my virtue; of its strength inquire;  
     Ere thou to me this high emprise confide.  
 Thou hast the story told how Sylvius' sire<sup>1</sup>  
     An entrance found ere from corruption freed,  
     And sensibly was with the immortal quire.  
 The foe of every ill might well concede  
     This grace to him; viewing the high effect—  
     The race and deeds that should from him proceed—  
 'Twill not seem strange, even to our intellect.  
     He in the empyrean heaven was made      20  
     Of mild imperial Rome the sire elect;  
 Whose empire and herself, if truth be said,  
     Were thus establish'd 'or the holy place,  
     Where sits great Peter's heir in state array'd:  
 He from this journey, paid by thee with praise,  
     Learn'd things by which his victory first he gain'd,<sup>2</sup>  
     Whence now the papal robe itself displays.  
 Then he admission also there obtain'd  
     Whom we the 'vessel of election' call,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Æneas.—See *Æneid*. vi. 637, &c.

<sup>2</sup> "Then the wars he would thenceforth have to wage, he show'd him;

Informed him of the Latin people and the Latin city;  
 And how he might either avoid or undertake every labour."

*Æneid*. vi. 180.

<sup>3</sup> St. Paul. He is called, in the Latin Vulgate, "*vas electionis*,"

The faith by which salvation is attain'd           30  
 Confirming. Not Æneas I nor Paul ;  
     Why should I come there? Who concedes it  
         me ?  
     Deem'd by myself unworthy, and by all.  
 If then this journey I commence, 'twill be  
     A vain attempt, I fear : thou who art wise,  
     My meaning better than I speak wilt see."  
 Thus, like a man who what he wish'd for flies,  
     When his firm purpose by new thoughts is cross'd,  
     All vanish'd his intended enterprise ;  
 Such I became upon that gloomy coast :           40  
     And that to which at first I had address'd  
     Myself in haste, was in mere thinking lost.  
 " If aught I see by what thou hast express'd,"  
     To me thus answer'd that magnanimous shade,  
     " Thy mind is yet by dastard fear oppress'd ;  
 Which oft is to a man such hindrance made,  
     He turns from honourable toil to flee,  
     As doth a beast when by a phantom fray'd.<sup>1</sup>  
 That from this terror thou thyself may'st free,

"a vessel of election:" in the English authorised version. "a chosen vessel."—*Acts* ix. 15.

<sup>1</sup> It is popularly believed that when a horse starts, especially in the dusk of the evening or by night, without any cause visible to the human eye, he sees a phantom or apparition. May not this be traced to *Numbers* xxii. 22—27 ?

I'll tell thee why I came, and what I learn'd, 50  
 When I indulg'd my earliest grief for thee.  
 Among the spirits in suspense I mourn'd;<sup>1</sup>  
 A lady call'd me,<sup>2</sup> she was bless'd and fair,  
 So that for her commands I ask'd and yearn'd.  
 Her eyes shone brighter than the morning star;  
 And she began a sweet and soft discourse—  
 Tuned with angelic voice her accents were.  
 'Soul of the courteous Mantuan, whom the course  
 Of ages hath not stripp'd of fame, for thee  
 That fame shall flourish while the world endures. 60  
 The friend far less of fortune than of me,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The spirits in *limbo*, the first or superior circle of hell, described in Canto iv. as being deprived of happiness, but without suffering positive misery.

<sup>2</sup> Celestial Wisdom is here supposed to be personified by Beatrice; Enlightening Grace (Milton's Urania), by Lucia; and the Divine Mercy, by the Gentle Dame, line 94. But Beatrice being a real person (Canto i. l. 122, and note) as well as an allegorical one, Lucia and the Gentle Dame are probably such likewise. Lombardi supposes the one to be St. Lucia, the martyr: may not the other be the Virgin Mary?

<sup>3</sup> It may mean, A disinterested friend, or A friend who is unfortunate, or My friend from choice, not chance. The first seems the most probable. "Se non fortunæ sed hominibus solere esse amicum."—CORN. NEPOS, in *Attici vitæ*, cap. ix. In Geoffry of Monmouth's *Chronicle*, to which Shakspeare was indebted, Lear says of his ungrateful daughters, "While I had any thing to give, they valued me, being friends, not to me but to my gifts; they loved me then, but they loved my gifts much more."—*Brit. Hist.* b. ii. c. 12.

In the lone hill is hinder'd on his way,  
 And has turn'd backward through timidity.  
 Indeed I fear he's now so far astray,  
 Judging from what in heaven I have been told,  
 That succour will be late through my delay.  
 Haste, then, and let thy eloquence unfold  
 Whatever he may for his safety need ;  
 And aid him, so that I may be consoled.  
 I, who have on this errand bid thee speed,           70  
 Am Beatrice ; to that place whence I came  
 Desire springs back : Love prompts me thus to plead.  
 With praise I often shall repeat thy name  
 When I'm again before my Sovereign's throne.'  
 She ceased ; and thus I answer'd that fair dame :  
 ' Lady, of virtue rare, through whom alone  
 Mankind surpasses all contain'd within  
 The heaven that calls the lesser orbs its own,<sup>1</sup>  
 So much thy orders my acceptance win,  
 That, if fulfill'd, obedience would seem late :   80  
 No further need'st thou speak thy wish therein.  
 But wherefore durst thou leave, I pray relate,  
 And with such ardent longing to return,  
 For this low central realm, thy blest estate ?'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The orbit or heaven of the Moon.—See Frontispiece and Explanation.

<sup>2</sup> "Dall' ampio loco ;" "From the ample region," the Empyrean, the outermost and most spacious of the ten heavens.—*Ibid.*

'Of what thou wouldst so thoroughly discern  
 I'll briefly tell thee;' thus to me she said;  
 'Why fearless I come hither thou shalt learn.  
 Those things alone should we regard with dread  
 Which have the power to hurt in various ways:  
 By nothing else need fear in us be bred.       90  
 For God hath framed me so, be his the praise,  
 Your misery hath no power of touching me,  
 Nor flame of that fierce fire on me can seize.  
 In heaven there is a gentle dame, and she  
 So mourns his hindrance whereto thee I send,  
 That there stern justice yields to clemency.  
 With prayer did she her call on Lucia blend,  
 And said, 'Thy faithful votary below  
 Now needs thy aid: him I to thee commend.'  
 Then Lucia, of all cruelty the foe,       100  
 With speed came to the place where I abode,  
 Seated by Rachel, mourn'd so long ago,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jacob's grief for the loss of Rachel was in proportion to the intensity of his affection for her. Of no other female's death and burial is so much said in the Sacred History, as of hers. Jacob, even on his death-bed, thus touchingly refers to it. "And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath."—*Gen.* xviii. 7. His thoughts ever lingered near the grave where he had laid her, and there he set up a pillar SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF RACHEL. The son of her sorrow, BENONI, was the son of *his right hand*. BENJAMIN,

And said, ' O Beatrice, true praise of God,<sup>1</sup>  
     Wilt thou not succour one that so loves thee,  
     That for thy sake he quits the vulgar crowd ?  
 Dost thou not hear him groaning piteously ?  
     Nor see the death with which he has to fight,  
     Upon a whirlpool furious as the sea ?<sup>2</sup>  
 Ne'er in this world could any speed their flight  
     To gain some good, or from some hurt to fly, 110  
 As I, so much these words of hers excite.  
 Down hither from my blessed seat came I,  
     Confiding in thy noble words alone,  
     Which thee, and those who hear them, dignify.'  
 When this discourse of hers to me was done,  
     Her bright and weeping eyes she turn'd away,  
     Which made me still more zealous to be gone.  
 As she enjoin'd, I came without delay,  
     And aided thee against that furious beast,  
     Who by the mountain fair stopp'd thy near  
                     way. 120

the darling of his age. Even her nurse's grave was marked by "The Oak of Weeping."—*Gen.* xxxv. 8.

<sup>1</sup> The literal meaning of the name *Beatrice*, has furnished the allusion—"She who blesses."

<sup>2</sup> "The waves of death compassed me."—2 *Sam.* xxii. 5. "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me."—*Psa.* xlii. 7. "Who hath delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver."—2 *Cor.* i. 10.

What ails thee, then? Why have thy efforts ceased?

Why should vile fear within thy bosom dwell?

Why doth not courage—boldness fill thy breast  
When three such blessed ladies, to repel

All ill from thee, in heaven their councils hold,

And so much good to thee my words foretell?"

As flowers bow'd down and closed by midnight  
cold,

Soon as the early sunbeams on them shine,

Rise on their stem and all their leaves unfold,<sup>1</sup>

So ceased my weary virtue to recline;<sup>2</sup> 130

And I as one undaunted thus began,

Such frank and ardent boldness now was mine.

"What grace was hers who to my rescue ran!

And thou, so courteous, who without delay

Fulfil'dst of her true words the purposed plan,

Thou hast disposed my heart unto that way

With such desire, by what thy words have shown,

That I to my first aim, whence I did stray,

<sup>1</sup> A beautiful figure, which Boccaccio and Chaucer appear to have copied: but it is one which, without any borrowing, might easily have occurred to any lover of nature.

<sup>2</sup> " — Or have ye chosen this place  
After the toil of battle to repose  
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find  
To slumber here, as in the vales of heaven?"—*Paradise Lost*, i. 318.

Return ; and since the will of both is one,  
    Be thou my guide, my lord, my master mild." 140  
    Thus I address'd him ; and when he moved on,  
I enter'd on that pathway deep and wild.

## CANTO III.

## THE ARGUMENT.

The two poets arrive at the gate of Hell—Dante reads the terrible inscription over it.—They enter, and in the outskirts of damnation survey those who, having lived indifferent to good or evil, are assigned a place with the neutral angels.—On reaching the river Acheron, they see the shades of the wicked ferried across by Charon in his boat.—An earthquake, accompanied by a blast of lightning, so terrifies Dante that he falls insensible to the ground.

“ THROUGH me men reach the city of deploring,<sup>1</sup>  
 Through me the path to endless woe they prove,  
 Through me they join the lost beyond restoring,  
 Justice did my Supreme Creator move ;  
 I am the work of Power Divine, design'd  
 By Sovereign Wisdom and Primeval Love.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The two preceding Cantos are introductory. The abrupt opening of the third Canto with the inscription over the gate of hell, has a very peculiar and striking effect.

<sup>2</sup> As the future punishments of the wicked are decreed by infinite WISDOM and JUSTICE, they cannot be inconsistent with real *Benevolence*. A regard to the *general* welfare must induce a wise and beneficent government to provide the sanction of rewards and penalties, and to enforce obedience to law by suitable examples. Impunity to crime would be the destruction of law,

Before me nothing save immortal mind  
 Was made,<sup>1</sup> and I eternally endure.  
 O ye who enter leave all hope behind."<sup>2</sup>  
 These words tremendous, writ in hues obscure, 10  
 I on the summit of a portal spied.  
 "Ah! Sir," said I, "to me their meaning, sure,  
 Is hard!" Then he, as one inform'd, replied,  
 "Here trembling diffidence must lose its hold;  
 Here must all cowardice be laid aside."<sup>3</sup>  
 We've reach'd the place of which you have been  
 told,

and the greatest cruelty to society. Dante feels that there cannot be love, wisdom, or power, without justice.

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, Hell, as the place of punishment "prepared for the devil and his angels," *Matt.* xxv. 41, was created in that immeasurable interval of time between the creation of angels and that of terrestrial beings, who alone, as far as we know, are subject to mortality.

<sup>2</sup> The tremendous line "*Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch'entrate,*" may have been suggested by a passage in Plautus, and has been imitated by Milton:

"Pandite atque aperite properè *januam hanc Orci* obsecro,  
 Nam equidem haud aliter esse duco, quippe quò nemo advenit,  
 Nisi quem spes reliquere omnes."—PLAUT. *Bacchides*, iii. 1.

— "Hope never comes  
 That comes to all."—*Paradise Lost*, b. i, l. 66.

<sup>3</sup> In the *Eumenides* of Æschylus, Apollo gives a similar caution to Orestes in his encounter with the Furies—"Be not faint-hearted; . . . Remember: let not fear overcome thee."—l. 77, 88.



Who seem so vanquish'd by their grievous doom?  
 And he to me, "This wretched scene displays  
 What those endure who have their life pass'd  
 through,  
 If without infamy yet without praise;  
 And here they mingle with that caitiff crew  
 Of angels who, though not rebellious, were  
 Through neutral selfishness to God untrue."<sup>1</sup>

which we believe to be the most correct, and have rendered it as we think Dante would have expressed himself had he written in English.

<sup>1</sup> Dante's notion of an intermediate or neutral class of angels is not a fanciful invention of the poet, as some have deemed it, but, like many other parts of the *Divina Commedia*, was adopted from the popular mythology of his time. The elves, dwarfs, and fairies of mediæval Europe were for the most part regarded in popular belief, as fallen angels of an intermediate class, *too good for exile to hell*, and *too evil for re-admittance to heaven*; condemned, therefore, to wander till doomsday in certain assigned abodes, on or near the surface of the earth, with considerable power over nature. They are not to be confounded with ghosts and damned sprites, but must be regarded as beings of another sort; and when in some instances they have been mistaken for devils, they have treated the imputation with scorn! —See KEIGHTLEY'S *Fairy Mythology*. In *Tales and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* (p. 72, "The Rival Kempers"), when speaking of the fairies, Mr. Carlton says, "The general opinion, at least in Ireland, is, that during the war of Lucifer in heaven, the angels were divided into three classes. The first consisted of those faithful spirits who at once and without hesitation adhered to the Omnipotent: the next consisted of those who openly rebelled, and followed the great apostate: the third and last consisted of those who, during the mighty clash and uproar of the contending

The heavens expell'd them, not to be less fair, 40  
And yet they sunk not to the depths of hell,

hosts, *stood timidly aloof and refused to join either power.* These, says the tradition, *were hurled out of heaven, some upon earth, and some into the waters of the earth,* where they are to remain, ignorant of their fate until the day of judgment."

To show the origin and extent of this opinion, we may further observe, that the Jews, Arabs, Persians, and Greeks believed in the existence of an intermediate class of beings between angels and mankind. Plato describes the dæmons as of an intermediate nature between the gods and men. Hesiod says, "The souls of those who lived in the golden age became gods, the inhabitants of heaven, and guardians of mortal men. The second, or silver age, produced those who for their impiety were overwhelmed in the divine anger. The third, or brazen race, were warlike, unfeeling, and *overcome by themselves they descended inglorious into hades,* though awful shadows, yet the prey of death, deprived of the sun."—*Works and Days*, i. 108—154. It is remarkable enough that an opinion so little known at present should have existed in times and places so distant from each other; a fact for which Jerome of Palestine in the fourth century, Dante of Florence in the fourteenth, De Sales of Switzerland in the sixteenth, and Leibnitz of Germany in the seventeenth, may be appealed to as authorities; as well as Plato, Hesiod, and the fairy tales of mediæval Europe, still cherished in Ireland and elsewhere. Schlegel says that the opinion was held by St. Jerome, St. Francis de Sales, and Leibnitz, "that in the revolt of the rebellious spirits, while those who remained in their state of innocence, and in their allegiance, rallied only the closer round their Creator, *a considerable number, fearful and undecided, vacillating between good and evil, remained neutral in the conflict, and thereby lost their original place in the hierarchy of the heavenly host, without, however, being counted among the utterly lost.*"—*Philosophy of Life*, lect. vi. p. 136 (Bohn).

Else would the damn'd have claim'd some glory  
there."<sup>1</sup>

"Master," I said, "What grievous pains compel  
These to complain with such loud clamorous  
breath?"

And he replied, "The cause of this I'll tell  
In briefest space: These have no hope of death,<sup>2</sup>  
And envy every other lot; so base  
Is the blind life they suffer here beneath,  
While for their fame the world allows no place.

Mercy and Justice hold them in disdain: 50  
Of them we'll talk no more, but look and pass."  
And then I saw a flag whirl'd round amain,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Either, the bolder transgressors would have gloried over the more timid and cowardly; or, more probably, the rebel angels would have deemed themselves less guilty than they are, if those who were neutral, and only negatively bad, had been doomed to share their abode and punishment. Milton has imitated the turn of this passage:—

"For neither do the spirits damn'd  
Lose all their virtue, lest bad men should boast  
Their specious deeds on earth."—*Par. Lost*, ii. 482.

<sup>2</sup> "For to die is not the greatest of evils, but for a man  
To wish for death and not be able to obtain it."

SOPHOCLES, *Electra*, l. 1013.

"Which long for death and it cometh not."—*Job*, iii. 21.

"And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it,  
and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them."—*Rev.* ix. 6.

<sup>3</sup> The Florentines had twenty banners in the city, and seventy-

Which, as I look'd, so rapidly did run,  
 It seem'd to scorn all pause.<sup>1</sup> And then a train  
 So long came after it, that I, for one,  
 A multitude like that which I survey'd<sup>2</sup>  
 Could scarcely think death ever had undone.  
 Some I had recognis'd, when, lo! the shade  
 Of him appear'd before me who of late  
 Through cowardice the grand refusal made.<sup>3</sup> 60

six in the country, under which all the youth were inscribed, and were obliged to appear in arms whenever summoned. And as a rallying point in battle, they had a standard of white and red elevated on a chariot. When Clement IV, in 1265, invited into Italy Charles of Anjou to depose Manfred, the Guelf exiles at Bologna offered their aid, which the Pope accepted, and sent them his own standard; and it was used by the Guelfs of Florence whenever they made war, down to the time of Machiavelli. —*Hist. Fior.* ii.

<sup>1</sup> Biagioli says that all the commentators have spoiled the beauty of this conception by rendering *indegna* in the sense of “unworthy;” whereas it is an abbreviation of *indegnata*, disdainful, indignant.

<sup>2</sup> “There was so large a multitude, that it seemed to surpass the population of the whole world.”—*St. Patrick's Purgatory*: ROGER OF WENDOVER, *Hist.*

<sup>3</sup> The common and most probable opinion is that Dante here alludes to Pope Celestine V. See Canto xxvii, l. 105. Nicholas IV. dying in 1292, the holy see was vacant two years and a quarter. At length, in 1294, a famous hermit, Piero di Murrone, so called from the mountain where he lived in solitude, was raised *against his will* to the pontificate, at the age of seventy-three, and took the name of Celestine V. But the austerity of his manners, and his efforts to reform the church, ill suited the luxury of the cardinals and the corruption of the Roman court. His talents

Immediately I knew, past all debate,  
That they the band of abject wretches were  
Whom God and godless men alike must hate.  
These drones, who never truly lived, quite bare  
Against their puny foes, were stung full sore  
By hornets and by wasps all swarming there,  
Their faces bathing while the blood ran o'er,  
Which mingling with their tears fell to their feet,  
Gather'd by loathsome worms that prey on gore.<sup>1</sup>

for government were probably small, and amidst the cares and splendour of greatness, for which his age, taste, and habits unfitted him, he sighed at the remembrance of his former obscurity, and was easily persuaded by the cardinals, especially by the crafty and ambitious Benedict Cajetan, to lay down the papacy. The only difficulty in admitting this application is, that Dante should have consigned to hell a pope of Celestine's character, whose virtues both papal and protestant writers concur in praising; and for such an act, the abdication of supreme power; an act which in Sylla, Charles V, and Washington, has been deemed heroic and sublime. But believing that Celestine possessed the inclination and intention, as well as the power, to reform the church, Dante had been disappointed that the opportunity of doing so should, through weakness of character and infirmity of purpose, have been thrown away. This appears to have constituted the essence of the offence which he condemned as "il gran rifiuto," and the result of cowardice. Some late commentators, in trying to find a substitute for Celestine, have searched, but without much success, for some one in Florence who, from want of sympathy with the ruling party, or a reluctance to incur the toil and perils of war, declined accepting the chief magistracy in that city: and a certain Torrigiano dei Cerchi has been mentioned in one account; but we know not on what authority.

<sup>1</sup> "Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be

When I look'd onward other scenes to meet,      70  
On a great river's bank vast crowds I saw.

"Master," I said, "now grant me, I entreat,  
To understand what these are, and what law  
Makes them so eager to pass over there  
Where I, through this dim light, perceive them  
draw?"

And he to me: "These things will all appear,  
When we the river Acheron have gain'd,<sup>1</sup>  
And stay our footsteps on its margin drear."

With shamed and downcast eyes I then remain'd,  
Fearing he had been grieved with my discourse, 80  
So to the river I from speech abstain'd:

And in a vessel towards us steer'd his course  
An old man, hoar with age, who did accost  
The crowd, and cried, "Woe to ye, souls perverse:  
Hope never more to see the heavens: I've cross'd

quenched."—*Isaiah*, lxi. 24. "The surface of the place abounded with a multitude of worms, in the same way as the court-yard of houses abound with rushes; with a dreadful gaping of their jaws they lacerated the crowds of wretched beings with a voracity not to be escaped from."—*Vision of a Monk of Eresham*, A.D. 1196. *ROG. WENDOV.* ii. 158.

<sup>1</sup> A river of Epirus, which, after emerging from the Acherusian marsh, disappears under ground, whence it again emerges, and pursues its course to the Ionian Sea. Hence it is represented by Homer as one of the rivers of hell. According to the poets, its waters were muddy and bitter, and it was the stream over which the souls of the departed were first conveyed.

This flood to waft ye to the other shore,  
 To dwell in endless night with fire and frost,<sup>1</sup>  
 And thou who stand'st there, living auditor,  
 Begone from these who are already dead."<sup>2</sup>  
 But when he saw I stay'd there, as before, 90  
 "By other means, through other ports," he said,  
 "Thou to that shore wilt pass; not by this way,  
 But in a lighter boat must thou be sped."  
 "Charon," my leader said, "thine anger stay;

<sup>1</sup> This thought may have originated in *Job*, xxiv. 19, which the *Fulgate* reads—"Ad nimum ealorem transeat ab aquis nivium, et usque ad inferos peccatum illius." Hesiod has—"The ample region of cold hell."—*Works and Days*, lib. i. 152. The monkish visions describe the punishment of the wicked as an alternation between fire and frost.—BEDE. *Ecc. Hist.* p. 254. ROG. WEND. ii. 155. The passages in Shakspeare and Milton to the same effect are too well known to need quotation.

<sup>2</sup> "Then the journey begun, they move onward, approaching the river;  
 And now from the Stygian wave the surly ferryman spied them,  
 As they came from the silent wood, and their course to the shore were directing;  
 Then thus he addressed them in words and with accents reproachful:  
 'Whoever thou art who thus arm'd art approaching our river,  
 Go to! Say, why comest thou? Move not thence a step further;  
 For this is the region of shadows, of sleep, of night, and of slumbers;  
 To convey living bodies in the Stygian boat is not lawful.'"  
*Æneid.* vi. 384.

Thus it is will'd where power exists to do  
 Whate'er is will'd : have thou no more to say."<sup>1</sup>  
 The woolly checks thenceforward quiet grew  
 Of him, the pilot of the livid lake,<sup>1</sup>  
 Whose eyes had flaming wheels that round them  
 flew.  
 But they, the souls who faint and naked quake, 100  
 Changed colour, and with gnashing teeth broke  
 forth,  
 Soon as they heard the cruel words he spake,  
 In blasphemies against both heaven and earth,  
 Their kin and kind, the place, the time and stock  
 Alike of their begetting and their birth.  
 Then gathering close, they all together flock,  
 Loudly lamenting, to that evil shore  
 Which each must pass who fears not God our Rock.  
 With eyes of burning coal the demon hoar,  
 Charon, collects them thither, beckoning all ; 110  
 Beating whoever lingers, with his oar.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dante's expression is "livida palude;" Virgil's, "vada livida."—*Ibid.* 320.

<sup>2</sup> "Charon, the tremendous ferryman, horribly squalid,  
 Guards these waters and rivers ; from whose chin descendeth  
 A long white beard uncomb'd, his eyes like fires are flaming ;  
 From his shoulders, tied in a knot, a greasy cloak is hanging.  
 With a pole he impels the bark, and with sails assists its motion ;  
 And in the dusky boat wafts over the shades of dead bodies.  
 Ancient he seems, but old age in a god remains lively and  
 vigorous.

As when the wither'd leaves in autumn fall,<sup>1</sup>  
 They one by one from every branch are freed,  
 Till their last spoils strew earth as with a pall ;  
 So, signall'd one by one, the evil seed  
 Of Adam from that bank themselves throw down ;  
 Even as the bird which at its call will speed.  
 Thus they depart across the waters brown,  
 And ere they land upon the further side,  
 New multitudes the shore on this side crown. 120

Hitherward rush'd the whole crowd, spread out on the banks  
 of the river ;  
 Mothers and husbands were there, and boys and unmarried  
 virgins,  
 And youths placed on the funeral pile before the eyes of their  
 parents ;  
 And, lately departed from life, the shades of magnanimous  
 heroes.  
 As thick as the leaves that have fallen in the early frosts of  
 the autumn,  
 Bestrowing the woods ; or as birds to the land from the  
 ocean  
 Flock together numberless, as soon as the winter compels  
 them  
 To pass over the sea, and migrate to countries more sunny :  
 So stood they praying that they might be first in taking the  
 voyage,  
 And stretch'd out their suppliant hands, for the opposite  
 shore greatly longing.—*Ibid.* 298.

<sup>1</sup> Virgil's "lapsa cadunt folia" of the preceding note, and this passage in Dante, have been imitated in *Paradise Lost*, i. 302.

"Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks  
 In Valombrosa, where the Etrurian shades  
 High over-arch'd imbower."—*Par. Lost*, i. 302—4.

"My son," thus spake to me my courteous guide,  
 "All those who in the wrath of God expire  
 Assemble here, from every land supplied;  
 To pass the river promptly they require,  
 Justice Divine so spurs them that their fear,  
 When they arrive, is turn'd to strong desire.<sup>1</sup>  
 No good man's spirit ever passes here:  
 Therefore if Charon did of thee complain,  
 What his speech meant must now to thee be clear."  
 When he had spoken thus, the dark champagne 130  
 So violently trembled that my frame  
 In thinking of that fright is bathed again  
 With sweat. The woeful earth a blast of flame  
 Shot upwards, a vermilion light it blazed:  
 That sight at once my senses overcame,  
 And down I fell, as one with slumber seiz'd.

<sup>1</sup> "The monstrous sight  
 Struck them with horror backward, but far worse  
 Urged them behind: headlong themselves they threw  
 Down from the verge of heaven."—*Par. Lost*, vi. 862.

## CANTO IV.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Dante, roused by a peal of thunder from the stupor into which he had fallen, and following his guide onwards, descends into the first Circle of Hell, which is the Limbo of the unbaptized. There he beholds the great poets, philosophers, heroes, and heroines of heathen antiquity, together with all who have died without Christian baptism. From hence, accompanied by Virgil, he proceeds towards the descent which leads to the second or next inferior circle.

UPON the deep sleep in my brain there broke  
 A crash of thunder; so that at the sound  
 I, like one shaken by main force, awoke.  
 And glancing now my rested eyes around,  
 I gazed intently, as upright I rose,  
 To view the place where now myself I found.  
 Yes, on that shore I trod which doth enclose  
 The valley of the dolorous abyss,<sup>1</sup>  
 The thunder gathering of unbounded woes.  
 Obscure, profound, and so beclouded this,           10

<sup>1</sup> He had been conveyed thither during his condition of unconsciousness; but *how* he had passed the river Acheron was a *mystery*.

That when I downward look'd its depth to see,  
All objects of perception there I miss.  
“Now then, the bard all pallid said to me,  
“Let us descend to that blind world below :  
I will go first, and thou my follower be.”  
I who that change of hue could not but know,  
Said, “How shall I hold on if thou dost quake,  
Who in my fear couldst comfort once bestow ?”  
“The sufferings of the under-nations make  
My face,” he answer'd “of the hue it is, 20  
Through pity, which thou dost for fear mistake.  
Let us proceed : the long way urges this.”  
Thus he moved on, and I his entrance share  
To the first circle that surrounds the abyss :  
While, as I listen'd I perceived that there  
No plaint was made excepting that of sighs,  
Which moved to trembling the eternal air ;  
And these for grief, and not for torment, rise  
From the vast multitudes who share that woe,  
Men, women, children—every age, sex, size. 30  
Then the good master said, “Wouldst thou not know  
What are these shades thou seest? I deem it best  
Now to inform thee, ere thou further go,  
That these sinn'd not ; if merit they possess'd,  
'Twas not enough, since they no baptism knew,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The doctrine which consigns to hell all who happen to die

The portal of that Faith, by thee profess'd.<sup>1</sup>  
 They lived before Christ came ; yet worship due  
 From them, even then, to God they did not give :  
 With such an I myself partaker too.

unbaptised, must be considered as inconsistent with the Divine perfections, and opposed to the letter and spirit of the *New Testament*. Yet this revolting doctrine was sanctioned by the general opinion of Christendom in the time of Dante, and long after, and is still the doctrine taught by the Church of Rome, as a concomitant of that which ascribes regenerating and justifying grace to the *opus operatum* of baptism. In the *Pylgremage of the Soule*, written in French, about A.D. 1330, translated into English in 1413, and printed by W. Caxton in 1483, the pilgrim is shown by an angel the place in hell, marvellously black and dark, where those infants are confined who have died without baptism. He naturally asks what ends of wisdom or justice can be answered by such an arrangement? The angel replies, "As Seynt John recordeth, he seith, that an innoeent deyng without baptyem is dampned withouted ende." A very incorrect quotation. Yet this single passage was supposed to justify the conclusion which doomed the most innoeent, if unbaptised, to the penalty of eternal darkness and the privation of all joy. In the *Vision of Piers Ploughman*, written about A.D. 1362, this proof is adduced with an air of the greatest triumph. "Ae barne withouten bapteme may noght be saved. *Nisi quis renatus fuerit*. Loke ye lettred men, Whether I lie or do noght."—l. 6737—43. The Council of Trent says of infants, "They, unless they be regenerated unto God through the grace of baptism, whether their parents be Christian or infidel, are born to eternal misery and perdition."—*Catechism*, part i, c. ii, q. 20. Regarding this as the doctrine of the church, from which he dared not swerve, the good sense and humanity of the poet, aided by his genius, contrived for the unbaptised a kind of paradise in hell!

<sup>1</sup> *Porta della fede*, is the reading here adopted, in preference to *parte della fede*. The Council of Florence, A.D. 1439, says,

For these defects, and for no positive 40  
 Offence, we're lost, and have this only smart,  
 That still desiring without hope we live."  
 At hearing this, great sorrow seized my heart,  
 Because a people of great worth I knew,  
 Suspended in that Limbo<sup>1</sup> had their part.  
 "Tell me, my master, tell me, teacher true,"  
 I answered, wishing further ascertain'd  
 That faith which every error can subdue,  
 "Has any e'er by his own merit gain'd,  
 Or other's, egress hence in bliss to be?"<sup>2</sup> 50  
 Knowing the covert sense my words convey'd,  
 "Hither I saw a mighty one," said he,  
 "Arrive—when I in this estate was new—  
 Crown'd with the sign of recent victory."<sup>3</sup>

"Holy baptism holds the first place among the sacraments, because it is the gate (*janua*) of spiritual life."—LABBE *Concilia*, tom. xiii. Deeret. Eug. iv. Ad Armen.

<sup>1</sup> Limbo, from Lat. *limbus*, a border.

<sup>2</sup> A covert question, its object being to ascertain what benefit his guide and others had reaped from our Saviour's advent.

<sup>3</sup> This refers to our Saviour's descent into HELL, a word which formerly, like the Latin *Inferi*, the Greek *Hades*, and the Hebrew *Sheöl*, signified the condition and abode of the departed; where, it was believed, there were two separate regions, appropriated to the two great divisions of mankind. In Virgil's description of this common receptacle of the dead, the Sybil says to Æneas,—

"This is the place where the way into two is divided;  
 The right is the path which conducts to the palace of Pluto;

Forth with him our first parent's shade he drew ;  
 Abel his son's ; and Noah's did he bring ;  
 Moses the lawgiver ; the patriarch too,  
 Obedient Abraham ; David the good king ;

By this we proceed to Elysium : but the left one still tendeth  
 To Tartarus dire, and conducts to the pains of the wicked."

*Æneid.* vi. 540.

In the Old Testament Jacob says, "I shall go down mourning to my son to *Sheōl*. And Josephus says that the soul of Samuel came up (ἐξ ᾗδου) *out of hades*. The Jews who believed in the immortality of the soul, he says, thought that the just are rewarded and the wicked punished (ὑπο χθονος) *under the earth*, or (καθ' ᾗδου) *in hades*. Most of the ancient fathers held the same opinion. It was in this sense that the soul of our divine Redeemer "descended into hell."—See PEARSON *on the Creed*, Art. V.

But in the age of Dante the prevalent opinion was that our Saviour actually visited the place of torment, and released from thence the souls of the patriarchs and saints. This opinion may be traced back to the third or fourth century. In the spurious *Gospel* ascribed to *Nicodemus*, a forgery of that age, two of those who rose at the time of the crucifixion are made to say, "We were placed with our fathers in the depths of hell, in the blackness of darkness. On a sudden there appeared the colour of the sun like gold, and a substantial purple-coloured light enlightening the place. Adam and all the patriarchs rejoiced and said, 'That is the author of everlasting light, who hath promised to translate us thither.' Then Isaiah said, 'This is the light of the Father, the Son of God, according to my prophecy.'" Other speeches are made by Simeon and John the Baptist. "Then the mighty Lord appeared and enlightened those places that had before been in darkness, and broke asunder those fetters which before could not be broken. Death and the devils were in great horror at his coming. Christ then trampled on death, seized the prince of hell, and amidst great confusion among the powers of darkness,

Israel with sire and sons, and her he loved,<sup>1</sup>  
 Rachel, for him of so much toil the spring. 60  
 And many more he hence to bliss removed.  
 I'd have thee know too that ere these, of all  
 Mankind, no soul salvation ever proved."  
 While thus conversing we walk'd on withal,  
 But still within the wood our path we find ;—  
 The *wood*—such I the crowd of spirits call.  
 Ere yet far from the top our path declined  
 Within, I saw a fire, which in that place  
 O'er the whole hemisphere of darkness shined.

took Adam by the hand, and conducted him forth. All the other saints followed and ascended with Christ to Paradise."

From this apocryphal source, painters, poets, and theologians have subsequently borrowed. Compare the above with *Piers Ploughman's Vision*, l. 3471—89. The Trent Catechism says, "Christ the Lord descended into hell, that having seized the spoils of the devil, he might conduct into heaven those holy fathers, and the other just souls liberated from prison." "Until he died and rose again, heaven was closed against every child of Adam." The benefits of Christ's death, however, were shared by the faithful from the time of the original promise: hence he is called "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." And that the saints and patriarchs were *not* detained from bliss, and shut up in darkness, until his actual crucifixion, is proved by Enoch and Elijah carried up to heaven, Moses and Elias appearing in glory, and Lazarus carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.

<sup>1</sup> "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her."—*Gen.* xxix. 20.



Next Horace, known in satire to excel ;  
Ovid the third ; and Lucan is the last. 90  
The name which with united voice they swell  
To sound as mine, to each of them is due :  
They do me honour and therein do well.”  
Thus that bright school I saw in union true,  
Of him the lord of the sublimest song,  
Who o'er the others like an eagle flew.  
When they had talk'd awhile themselves among,  
They turn'd to me with a saluting nod,  
A smile then play'd my master's face along :  
And so much honour they on me bestow'd, 100  
That they admit me of their company,  
Thus with such wisdom rank'd the sixth I stood.  
Then onward to the beacon-light walk'd we,  
Talking of things which now I may not name,  
Though utter'd then with strict propriety.  
Now to a noble castle's foot we came,  
Seven times with lofty walls encompass'd round ;  
And round it also flow'd a pleasant stream,  
O'er which we passed, as if upon firm ground : [110  
Through seven gates entering with the sages there,  
We reach'd a meadow with fresh verdure crown'd.  
With grave slow eyes, the crowds assembled were  
In their appearance of great majesty ;  
And as they talk'd, their words were sweet and rare.

Thus to one side retiring enter'd we  
 An open place, light, lofty, and serene ;  
 So that all there were visible to me.  
 There just above, upon the enamell'd green,<sup>1</sup>  
 The mighty spirits I could recognise,  
 Whom I esteem it honour to have seen.      120  
 Electra,<sup>2</sup> lo ! and her companions rise !  
 'Mongst whom I Hector and Æneas knew ;  
 And armèd Cæsar with the falcon eyes ;<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Enamels are vitrified substances, which may be variously coloured, spread on plates of gold or copper: the face of a watch is the most familiar example. Enamelling was practised by the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. The art of painting on enamel is a comparatively modern discovery. By adding to the usual materials the oxide of copper, green enamel ("verde smalto") is produced. The figurative use of the term by Dante has been imitated by Fairfax and Milton:—

"And with his beams enamelled every greene."—*Tasso*, i. 35.

"O'er the smooth enamell'd green."—*Arcades*, 2.

<sup>2</sup> One of the Pleiades, or seven daughters of Atlas, king of Mauritania, so called from Pleione, their mother, one of the Oceanidæ.

"Dardanus, of the Trojan city, the first father and founder,  
 Sprung, as the Greeks tell us, from Atlas through Electra,  
 Was driven among the Trojans:—great Atlas, whose shoulder  
 Sustains the ethereal orbs, was the father of Electra."

VIRGIL, *Æneid*. viii. 134.

<sup>3</sup> Augustus Cæsar wished to be thought the son of Apollo. His eyes were clear and piercing, and his flatterers ascribed to them a divine irradiation. He was pleased if the person on whom he fixed his look held his face down, as if dazzled with the effluence. "A terrible eye" is ascribed to the Caliph Vathek,

Camilla and Penthesilea too :<sup>1</sup>  
 The other side old king Latinus graced,<sup>2</sup>  
 Whom, with his child Lavinia sat, I view.

and an overpowering glance to the late Emperor of Russia, Nicholas. But it is not wonderful that a strong will, joined with the consciousness of irresponsible power on the one side, and abject submission on the other, should produce these effects. Virgil thus flatters his powerful patron :—

“Hence Augustus Cæsar, leading the Italians to battle,  
 With senate and people of Rome, and the gods both the house-  
 hold and greater,  
 As he stood on the lofty stern, twin flames from his beautiful  
 temples  
 Dart forth, and over his head appears the star paternal.”

*Æneid.* viii. 678.

<sup>1</sup> Camilla, queen of the Volsci, daughter of Metabus. In her infancy her father fled with her from Privernum, fed her with mare’s milk, and brought her up a huntress. She assisted Turnus against the Trojans, and was treacherously slain by Aruns.—*Æneid.* vii. 803, xi. 432. Penthesilea, queen of the Amazons, came to assist Priam after the death of Hector.—

“Penthesilea raging leads the host Amazonian,  
 Armed with crescent shields, and burns for the fight midst a  
 thousand;  
 Under her naked breasts a golden belt having fastened,  
 Which in warlike fashion appear’d and the virgin with men  
 dares the combat.”—*Æneid.* i. 490.

<sup>2</sup> He had promised his daughter and only surviving child, Lavinia, to Turnus, king of the Rutuli : but the oracles declared she must marry a foreign prince. On the arrival of Æneas her father offered him her hand. Turnus took arms in support of his own claim, and the contest was decided by the victory of Æneas over his rival, in single combat. Soon after the marriage, Latinus died, and bequeathed him his kingdom.—*Æneid.* vii. &c.

Lucretia, Brutus who the Tarquin chased,  
 Cornelia, Julia, Marcia there I see;<sup>1</sup>  
 Saladin, whom alone apart I traeced.<sup>2</sup>  
 When I had raised mine eyes more loftily, 130  
 I saw the master there of those who know,  
 Sit midst the philosophic family.<sup>3</sup>  
 Him all admire, to him due reverence show.

<sup>1</sup> The violence offered to Lucretia by Tarquin occasioned his expulsion from Rome, and the abolition of royalty. Cornelia, wife of T. Gracchus the elder, was the daughter of Scipio Africanus, and preferred being the wife of a Roman citizen to sharing the throne of Egypt with Ptolemy. Julia, daughter of Julius Cæsar by another Cornelia, was famous for her beauty. Marcia was the daughter of Cato of Utica. These four women were remarkable among the Romans for their virtues.

<sup>2</sup> Salah e' deen Joosef Ebn Eyoob, founder of the Eyoob dynasty, that ruled Egypt from A.D. 1171 to 1250, is renowned in the East for his valour, piety, and humanity. He was of Kurd origin: his uncle had been sent with an army by Nouredin of Aleppo, to assist the Fatemite Caliph of Egypt against his domestic foes; and having overcome them, was made general of all the Caliph's forces. Saladin succeeded him in this office, and on the Caliph's death, seated himself on the throne of Egypt. He conquered Asia Minor, Tripoli, and Tunis, and put an end to the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem, after it had subsisted ninety-one years. He made his triumphant entry into the Holy City, A.D. 1187, and died A.D. 1211.—D'HERBELOT.

<sup>3</sup> Aristotle, born at Stagyræ. Plato was his tutor, and Alexander the Great, his pupil. During the middle ages, his writings acquired an immense ascendancy, and in the schools of learning were considered an authority from which there was no appeal. Melancthon, a great admirer of Aristotle, complains that his *Ethics* were read in the churches, instead of the Gospels.

At Socrates and Plato<sup>1</sup> then I glance,  
Who next him stand before all others ; lo,  
Democritus who gave the world to chance;<sup>2</sup>  
Diogenes<sup>3</sup> and Anaxagoras<sup>4</sup> stood !  
Thales,<sup>5</sup> Empedocles<sup>6</sup> we saw advance,

<sup>1</sup> Petrarch gives Plato the first place among the wise.—*Trionfo della Fama*, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Born at Abdera, B.C. 460 ; he followed Leucippus, and preceded Epicurus, as an expounder of the atomic philosophy. Arguing that out of nothing nothing could arise, and that whatever exists cannot be annihilated, he contended for the eternity of the material universe. His system was necessitarian and atheistic. Among his fellow-citizens he was called Γελασινος, “the Derider,” and is known to us as “The Laughing Philosopher.”

<sup>3</sup> The cynic philosopher, son of Hiccens, a money-changer of Sinope. He practised and inculcated the most rigid abstinence, the severest self-control, frugality, temperance, and an entire contempt of pleasure.

<sup>4</sup> A philosopher of the Ionic school, born at Clazomenæ, B.C. 500, and taught at Athens the existence of a “disposing Mind, the Cause of all things.” He accounted for eclipses, and asserted the moon to be an opaque body enlightened by the sun, on which account he was accused of impiety, and condemned to death. Among his disciples were Socrates, Euripides, and Pericles : by the influence of the latter, his sentence was with difficulty changed to that of banishment.

<sup>5</sup> Born at Miletus, one of the seven wise men of Greece, founder of the Ionic sect ; was eminent for mathematical and astronomical science, and for moral and political wisdom.

<sup>6</sup> A philosopher, poet, and historian of Agrigentum, B.C. 444. He held the doctrine of transmigration, and was famous for his learning, humanity, and social virtues. The story of his leaping into Etna (*Hor. Ars. Poet.* l. 465) is rejected by Strabo.

With Heraclitus,<sup>1</sup> Zeno,<sup>2</sup> and the good  
 Collector;<sup>3</sup> Orpheus,<sup>4</sup> Tully, Livy there,           140  
 And Seneca with moral truth imbued :  
 Euclid<sup>5</sup> and Ptolemy<sup>6</sup> together were,

<sup>1</sup> "The Weeping Philosopher," born at Ephesus, flourished about B.C. 503, and founded the Italic School of Philosophy, a branch of the Pythagorean sect.

<sup>2</sup> Founder of the sect of the Stoics—Men of the Porch, so called from the Pæcile, or "painted porch," which being the most famous portico in Athens, was called by way of distinction, Ἡ Στοα, "The Porch." Here Zeno taught. He practised and inculcated plainness of dress, frugality of living, and a strict morality.

<sup>3</sup> Dioscorides, a native of Anazarbus in Cilicia, flourished in the reign of Nero. He travelled through Greece, Italy, Asia Minor, and Gaul, collecting plants, and studying their medicinal properties. He is the great Botanist of Antiquity, and his work "*On the Materia Medica*" was regarded for sixteen centuries as the highest authority on that subject.

<sup>4</sup> "Orpheus, of the gods the sacred priest and interpreter,  
 First deterred men from savage slaughters and filthy diet,  
 On this account reported to have tamed tigers and lions."

HOR. *Ars. Poet.* 391.

Little is known of him but what is traditional or fabulous, except that he was an ancient poet of Thrace.—See VIRGIL, *Ec.* iii. l. 46, *Georg.* lib. iv. 454, *Æneid.* vi. 119.

<sup>5</sup> A celebrated mathematician of Alexandria, B.C. 250, professor of mathematics under Ptolemy Lagus.

<sup>6</sup> Claudius Ptolemy, of Alexandria, in the reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus. He was the prince of ancient astronomers, the expounder and defender of the system which regarded the earth as the centre of the celestial motions, and the great geographer of antiquity.

Hippocrates,<sup>1</sup> Galenus,<sup>2</sup> Avicen,<sup>3</sup>

Averroës<sup>4</sup> the commentator rare.

The full survey of all I cannot pen,

<sup>1</sup> A celebrated physician of Cos. He received from the Athenians a golden crown and the privileges of citizenship, for his able and successful efforts in mitigating the horrors of a pestilence, in the beginning of the Peloponessian war.

<sup>2</sup> Claudius Galenus, or Galen, one of the most renowned and valuable of the ancient medical writers, was born at Pergamos, A.D. 131. He practised at Rome; and his authority long remained absolute, and his reputation unbounded, both with Europeans and Arabians. He is said to have been converted from atheism to the belief of a Divine Creator, by studying the anatomy of the human frame.

<sup>3</sup> Avicenna, in Arabic, Ebn Sina, an Arabian philosopher, was born in the vicinity of Bokhara, A.D. 992, and died at Hamadan in 1050. His philosophical, mathematical, and medical works are very numerous; but his great work was entitled *The Canon, or Rule of Medicine*. Except Aristotle and Galen, his authority as a philosopher and physician has been longer acknowledged than any other.

<sup>4</sup> Ebn Roshd, or Abou-l-Walid ben Ahmed ben Roshd, an Arabian physician and philosopher of great celebrity, born at Cordova, A.D. 1149. He made the last and best known of the Arabian translations of Aristotle, from an older version by Alsheigi. His translation, and the Latin version made from it, were long the only medium through which the writings of the Stagyrte were known. Averroës accompanied the text with ample commentaries, of which St. Thomas Aquinas and other schoolmen did not scruple to avail themselves. His system brought him into collision with the Mahomedan ecclesiastical authorities, by whom he was condemned to death, which he only escaped by an inglorious exile to Morocco, where he died A.D. 1198.

So urged by that long theme I've undertaken,  
That words oft fail for what befel me then.  
Our company decreased, by four forsaken,  
And my sage guide led me another way  
From that calm air to one for ever shaken, 150  
And to a place I came where shines no ray.

## CANTO V.

## THE ARGUMENT.

The poets arrive in the second circle.—At its entrance they find Minos, the infernal judge, who cautions Dante on his entering those regions.—Here he sees the punishment of carnal transgressors, who are perpetually tossed about by whirlwinds in the dark and troubled air.—Among them he is shown Semiramis, Helen, Dido, Cleopatra, Paris, Tristan, and others.—He stays awhile to converse with Francesca di Rimini, and, through pity at her sad story, falls faint and senseless to the ground.

THUS from the highest circle I descended

Even to the second, girdling a less space,

Where much more frequent grief with wail is  
blended.

There Minos grinning stands with ghastly face ;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Minos, King of Crete, son of Jupiter and Europa, is famed for his wisdom, equity, and moderation. Although he reigned considerably more than a thousand years before the Christian era, his laws remained in force till Plato's time, who puts the following apologue respecting him into the mouth of Socrates. "The wrong judgments formed of men's characters on earth having been complained of, Jupiter ordained that they should not come on their trial till after death, and that then they should come unbodied before a purely spiritual judge. 'With this design,' he said, 'I have appointed my sons, Minos and Rhadamanthus, born in

To scrutinise and judge the faults of men  
 On entering, and to fix each culprit's place  
 According as he girds himself. Thus when  
 The ill-starr'd spirit is before him come,  
 She all confesses: that stern doomsman then,  
 To mark what place in hell her sins become, 10  
 As many times his tail himself winds round  
 As the degrees down which he wills her doom.  
 Before him always many souls are found,  
 And these in turn, as they for judgment go,  
 Speak, listen, and are hurl'd to that profound.  
 "O thou that comest to this house of woe,"  
 To me said Minos, whom with care he eyed,  
 As for a time he did his task forego,  
 "Hced how thou com'st—in whom thou dost confide :

Asia, and Ææus, who is a native of Europe, to be judges. These after death shall hold their court in a certain meadow, from which there is one road leading to Tartarus, the other to the Islands of the Blessed." Virgil says:—

"Nor are those seats without a lot, without a judge appointed;  
 Minos the inquisitor shakes his urn, and the crowd of shadows  
 all silent,  
 He calleth upon them, their lives and their crimes discerning."  
*Æneid.* vi. 431.

But the theologians, in the ages preceding Dante, had changed gods into demons, and heroes into monsters. The poet, therefore, yielding to the influence of popular opinion, abandoning Virgil's guidance, has taken his cue from them; depriving "the just lawgiver" of his urn, and substituting a tail instead.

Let not the entrance broad thy steps betray." <sup>1</sup> 20

"Wherefore this clamour?" then exclaim'd my  
guide :

"Hinder him not upon his destined way.

Thus it is will'd where that which will and can  
Be done are one : <sup>2</sup> have thou no more to say."

Now notes of lamentation loud began

To make themselves perceived : now I am come  
Where wailing strikes me, such as might unman.

A place I came to where all light was dumb, <sup>3</sup>

Which roar'd as when a storm the sea infests,  
While warring winds howl their prelude. 30

The infernal tempest here, which never rests, <sup>4</sup>

Urging the shades with its fierce rushing leap,

<sup>1</sup> "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat."—*Matt.* vii. 13.

"Easy enough is the descent to Avernus,  
Night and day stand open the gates of the hall of Pluto :  
But to retrace one's footsteps, and escape to the upper breezes,  
This, this is the task, the toil."—*Æneid.* vi. 126.

<sup>2</sup> "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth : none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou ?"—*Dan.* iv. 35.

<sup>3</sup> From which light and its influence were excluded. A Hebraism : thus, "The heavens declare the glory of God."—*Ps.* xix, 1. "Sun, be dumb (דום) in Gibeon, and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon." Eng. version, "Stand thou still." Margin, "Be silent."—*Joshua* x. 12.

<sup>4</sup> "A violent tempest from the north swept them away, and the Knight with them, weeping and lamenting."—*St. Patrick's Purgatory*, A.D. 1153. ROG. WENDOV. i. p. 516.

And whirling, dashing, grievously molests.  
 When they arrive before that ruinous sweep,  
     There loudly they blaspheme the Power Divine,  
     With cries and groans, and lamentations deep.  
 To undergo such punishment malign,  
     Carnal transgressors, as I learnt, were doom'd,  
     Who to their appetite the soul resign.  
 And as the starlings when for winter plumed,<sup>1</sup> 40  
     In large full troop on wing are seen to move,  
     So in that blast the evil spirits loom'd,  
 As they were driven, here, there, below, above.  
     No cheering gleam of hope they ever know,  
     That pause or mitigation they shall prove.  
 As cranes their lays lugubrious chanting go,<sup>2</sup>  
     In their long line when towards the horizon verging,  
     Even thus I saw the shades bewail their woe,

<sup>1</sup> Towards winter, starlings migrate in vast numbers to low and warm countries, or from the uplands to the sea-shore. The plumage of the starling is black, with rich and varying reflections, from golden green to deep purple, sprinkled with small triangular spots like stars. Pliny says (x. 24), "Starlings are accustomed to fly in flocks, and to wheel round in a kind of globe, all tending to the centre."

<sup>2</sup> A peculiar kind of turn or doubling in the trachea of the crane gives extraordinary force to its vocal efforts. Cranes frequent marshy places, and are found in Europe, Asia, and America. Their migrations in spring and autumn (the regularity of which is alluded to, *Jer.* viii. 7), are performed high in the air; yet even when out of sight, the progress of the flock may be traced by their loud cries.

Whom furiously the hurricane was urging.

I therefore said, "My teacher, who may be 50

Those people whom the black air thus is scourging?"

"The first of those," my guide then answer'd me,

"Concerning whom some tidings thou hast hoped,

An empress reign'd o'er many tongues; and she

Was by the vice of luxury so corrupt,

That lust was licens'd by the law she made

To clear the blame to which herself had stoop'd.

This is Semiramis, who, as we read,

Gave suck to Ninus, yet his wife became :<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ninus is generally reckoned the first Assyrian monarch, though some ascribe that honour to Belus. Ninus dying, his wife, Semiramis, took the reins of government, and transmitted her authority to her son. She is represented as a woman of great talents, enterprise, and beauty. "Justin says, that at last, having indulged a guilty passion for her son, she was by him put to death. Some say that she took him for her husband, and, to cover her infamy, enacted a law, that every one should be at liberty to do the like."—LANDINO.

So little certainty is there in the history of Semiramis, that even as to the date of her reign, authors differ to no less an extent than 1464 years. Dante, however, has embodied the current tradition respecting her. He had stated that she made a law to sanction the licentiousness with which she herself was stained. What law? and what instance of licentiousness? Instead of telling us, the old reading substitutes a fact entirely irrelevant—"che succedette Nino"! a platitude which Dante could scarcely have penned. We have therefore ventured, on the authority of Padre Paolo, Fiorentino, in the fourteenth century, and of two MSS. (Nos. 10,317 and 932) out of nine Codices of the *Divina Commedia*

She held the land now by the Soldan<sup>1</sup> sway'd. 60  
The next is she, self-slain, whom love o'ercame,

in the library of the British Museum, to adopt a reading which differs from that of the printed editions. I am indebted for the information to H. C. Barlow, Esq., M.D., of Newington Butts, whose argument, I think, is conclusive in favour of the proposed reading. Virgil had promised to inform his disciple of that which to him would be "news" (*novelle*) respecting the lady indicated; but Dante did not want to be informed that Semiramis *succeeded* Ninus. "But put the words 'sugger dette,' or their equivalent, in the place of 'succeedette' (which might easily have been substituted for them), and the unity of the passage is preserved, its signification explained, confirmed, and strengthened; the lustful empress stands forth in alto-relievo, worthy of the hand of the mighty Florentine, and Dante is rescued from tameness and tautology."

<sup>1</sup> The title Soldan, or Soudan, is a corruption of the Arabic word *Sultán*, which signifies Lord, King, Master. Dante's reference is to the Memlook Sultan of Egypt, whose capital was near the site of the Roman Babylon—the modern Cairo. The early crusades took place while the Fatemite Caliphs reigned in Egypt. This dynasty was, in 1171, supplanted by Saladin the Great (see note, Canto iv. l. 129), who founded that of the Eyobites. This in turn gave place, in 1250, to the Baharite Memlooks, who also took possession of Syria. About 1262, Baybers, also a Memlook, dethroned and slew his master, conquered Damascus, defeated the Tartars, put an end to the Caliphate of Asia, and extended his conquests to the furthest limits of Armenia. His descendants reigned till 1352, and retained possession of Syria as far as the Euphrates, giving great encouragement to arts and agriculture. The year of Dante's 'Vision,' 1300, was that in which Othman, the founder of the Turkish empire, began his reign. Five years after the poet's decease, that empire only occupied part of Asia Minor, and had not yet reached the Bosphorus.

Who to Sichæus' ashes proved untrue :<sup>1</sup>  
 Then Cleopatra, that luxurious dame."<sup>2</sup>  
 Helen I saw, through whom so evil grew  
 The times :<sup>2</sup> and I the great Achilles spied,  
 Whom to his end Love his co-champion drew.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dido, or Elissa, daughter of Belus, king of Tyre, and wife of Sichæus, priest of Hercules. Pygmalion, successor of Belus, murdered Sichæus for the sake of his immense wealth. Dido, and a number of Tyrians, escaped from the tyrant. Driven by a storm on the African coast, she and her people built first a citadel and then a city. Among many suitors, Iarbas, king of Mauritania, was favoured by her subjects, and threatened war if his wooing were unsuccessful. To avoid both alternatives of marriage and war, she built a funeral pile, as if to appease the *manes* of Sichæus, to whom she had vowed eternal fidelity. When all was prepared, she ascended the funeral pile, and stabbed herself in the presence of her people. By a convenient fiction, Virgil makes her false to the memory of Sichæus for the sake of Æneas, and the hero of the *Æneid* equally false to her. The fiction is evident from the anachronism, Dido having left Phœnicia 247 years after the Trojan war and the age of Æneas. Ariosto and Petrarch have been more just to her memory.—*Orl. Fur.* xxxv. 28; PETRARCHA, *Trionfo della Castità*.

<sup>2</sup> Whose beauty occasioned all the miseries of the Trojan war, and the overthrow of the Trojan state.

<sup>3</sup> "Che con amore al fine combatteo." Achilles fought *with* love—not *against*, but on the same side; and thus lost his life. Having become enamoured with Polyxena, the daughter of Priam, he offered to become his ally, on condition of receiving her hand in marriage. Priam consented; but at the nuptial ceremony Paris, who had concealed himself, treacherously slew Achilles, by wounding him with an arrow in the heel.

Paris<sup>1</sup> I saw, and Tristan ;<sup>2</sup> and beside,  
 More than a thousand shades he show'd and  
 nam'd,  
 Of those who had through Love's betrayal died.  
 When thus my guide had my attention claim'd, 70  
 Naming each antique dame and cavalier,  
 I seem'd quite lost, my heart compassion tamed,  
 And I exclaim'd, "O poet, with yon pair  
 I fain would speak, who close together fly,  
 And in the blast so delicate appear."  
 Then he to me : "Thou'lt see them by and by,  
 Nearer to us ; then by their mutual love  
 Do thou entreat them, and they will comply."

<sup>1</sup> His treacherous abduction of Helen from the court of her husband, Menelaus, the Spartan king, where he had been hospitably entertained, was the cause of the Trojan war and the destruction of his country.

<sup>2</sup> Son of King Meliadas, of Leonois or Lyonesse, a tract between the Lizard and Land's End, in Cornwall, but long ago submerged by the sea. His name (like Rachel's Benoni—Son of my sorrow!) was given him by his mother, when she found herself dying in child-birth. He was one of the most famous knights of King Arthur's Round Table ; but proving false to his uncle, Marco, King of Cornwall, whose bride, Isotta, he was employed to bring over from Ireland, he was killed with his own lance by the injured king ; whereon Isotta fell on the dead body, and immediately expired. The earliest of the Norman-French romances of chivalry was that of *Tristan de Leonois*, written in prose A.D. 1190, by an anonymous trouvcur.

Soon as upon the eddying wind they move  
 Toward us, I thus exclaim'd: "O troubled  
     shades, 80  
 Approach and speak, if none the attempt reprove."  
 Like doves air-borne that fly where fondness leads,  
     On wings outspread and firm, to their sweet nest,<sup>1</sup>  
     So these, from where the troop of Dido speeds,  
 Approach'd us, wafted through the air unblest;<sup>2</sup>  
     Of such avail my gentle speech I found.  
 "O gracious one," thus they their thoughts express'd,  
 "Benignant soul, who to this dark profound  
     Art come, though living, through the lurid air,  
     To visit us whose blood hath tinged the ground. 90  
 If nature's King with us in friendship were,  
     Him would we for thy welfare supplicate,  
     Since thou hast pitied the dire ills we bear.  
 What thou shalt please to hear or to relate,  
     That will we hear or tell thee readily,  
     While thus the tempest doth its rage abate.  
 The land where I was born beside the sea  
     Is seated, on that shore where Po descends  
     To dwell with all his followers peacefully.

<sup>1</sup> Ariosto has copied this comparison, *Orland. Fur.* c. xlvi. st. 111.

<sup>2</sup> "Per l' aere maligno." Thus Virgil and Ausonius:—  
 "Sub luce maligna."—*Eneid.* vi. 270; *Auson. Idyll.* vi. 5.

Love, which the gentle heart soon apprehends,<sup>1</sup> 100

Enthrall'd *him* with my beauty, which from me

Was taken, and even yet the mode offends.<sup>2</sup>

Love, who insists that love shall mutual be,

Link'd me to *him* with charm strong as our fates ;

Even now it leaves me not, as thou dost see.

Love led us to one death : *Caïna* waits<sup>3</sup>

Him who so rudely dealt the mortal blow."

In these sad accents she her tale relates.

When these offended souls I heard, so low

I bent, and downward held so long my face, 110

<sup>1</sup> The word "gentle" is here used in its ancient sense—noble ; and as in *gentiluomo*, gentleman. The sentiment is repeated by Dante, in his *Vita Nuova* :—

"Love and a gentle heart are but one thing."

<sup>2</sup> Some codices read "mondo" instead of "modo," but this is not sufficient to outweigh the still greater number by which the usual reading is supported. Besides, the sense would be rendered obscure. "The *world* offends me." What can this mean ? The meaning suggested by certain commentators makes it refer to her fame and character—of which, indeed, she *says* nothing : but she says that her beauty was taken from her in a manner which yet she could not think of without pain. This seems more natural than the construction which makes her complain so enigmatically of the world's censure ; of which, by the bye, she could *know* nothing. (See Canto x. 105.) Next to her love, that which was uppermost in her mind, from first to last, was the ruthless and sudden slaughter of which she had been the victim.

<sup>3</sup> That region of hell which Dante has appropriated to the punishment of those who, after the example of the first murderer, Cain, have betrayed their own relatives to death.—*Inferno*, xxxii.

That Virgil ask'd me, "Why so pensive now?"  
 To whom I answering said, "Alas! alas!  
 That such sweet thoughts, with love that overflow,  
 Should e'er have brought them to this wretched  
 pass!"

Then turning once more towards them, sad and slow,  
 I said, "Francesca, in my pitying eyes  
 Your sufferings have compell'd these tears of woe.  
 But tell me, in the time of those sweet sighs,  
 By what and how you were empower'd by Love  
 Your dubious passion first to recognise?" 120

Then she to me: "The task will painful prove;  
 No grief is greater, as your teacher knows,<sup>1</sup>  
 Than when in misery our thoughts will rove  
 Back to the happy time.<sup>2</sup> But whence arose  
 Our hapless love, even from its earliest root,  
 If thou wouldst know, I will the tale disclose,  
 As one who speaking weeps the bitter fruit.

<sup>1</sup> In allusion to the commencement of Æneas's narrative to Dido:—

"Infandum, Regina, jubes renovare dolorem," &c.—*Æneid*, ii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> "*Baptista*. To have been happy, madam,  
 Adds to calamity."

BEAUMONT & FLETCHER, *Fair Maid of the Inn*, act i.

"In every reverse of fortune the greatest unhappiness is, to have been formerly happy and not to be so now.—BOETHIUS, *De Consol. Phil.* lib. ii. pr. 4.

"Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things," &c.—*Luke* xvi. 25.

One day we read for pastime, in romance,  
 How Lancelot was enthrall'd by Love's pursuit ;<sup>1</sup>  
 We were alone, suspecting no mischance ;      130  
 That reading rais'd our eyes once and again,  
 And made our colour change at every glance.  
 But one sole moment overcame us, when  
 That smiling look of beauty, love, and youth,  
 Is kiss'd by such a lover ; he, too, then—  
 May we ne'er part—all trembling kiss'd my mouth.  
 The book, and he who wrote it, both were vile.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Son of King Ban, of Brittany, and one of the knights of Arthur's Round Table. Trained by the beautiful Vivian, Lady of the Lake, he was entitled Lancelot of the Lake. The romance of *Lancelot du Lac* was written soon after that of *Tristan de Leonois*, and these, together with that of the *Saint Greal*, of the same period, furnished models for all subsequent writers of that class. *Lancelot du Lac* was commenced by Christian de Troyes, but continued, after his death, by Godfrey de Ligny. Its source may be found in the *Romance of Brutus*, by Gasse, written in 1155, who versified therein every rumour and tradition that was afloat at the time.—SISMONDI, *Hist. Lit.*

<sup>2</sup> "Galeotto fu il libro e chi lo scrisse." Galeotto signifies a galley-slave ; and such persons being usually convicts and criminals, it may be taken to signify a vile or wicked person, a wretch. There is also a double meaning here in the employment of the term ; an allusion to the name of Sir Gallehault, Lord of Surluse, and one of the knights of the Round Table, who entertained Queen Guenever and Lancelot at his castle during a seven days' tournament, and, on romantic authority, is accused of having countenanced their passion. It is obviously absurd to take the word *merely* as a proper name ; for how could the *book* be a Gallehault ?

That day we read no farther on, in sooth.”  
So spake one shade, the other wept meanwhile,<sup>1</sup>  
Whence grief and pity did my senses quell, 140

<sup>1</sup> Francesca was the daughter of Guido di Polenta, Lord of Ravenna, between whom and the Malatestas, Lords of Rimini, there had been a long and deadly feud. By the mediation of some neighbouring princes peace was at length made; and, to cement the alliance, it was agreed that Malatesta's eldest son should marry Francesca. This was Lanciotto, deformed in person and of disagreeable aspect; the marriage, therefore, was to be by proxy, as it was thought the lady, who was as high-spirited as she was high-born and beautiful, would refuse Lanciotto should she see him before the celebration of the nuptials. Accordingly, Paulo, the brother of Lanciotto, came to Ravenna as the ostensible suitor. He was good-looking, and of attractive manners; and, as he crossed the courts of the palace with his retinue, he was pointed out to Francesca as her future husband. Under the influence of this foolish and cruel deception, the marriage contract was made. She travelled to Rimini under the fatal mistake that he who accompanied her was her spouse, nor was she undeceived till too late. The imposition was the converse of that practised upon Jacob, when Leah was substituted for Rachel. The morning light revealed to the astonished bride Lanciotto instead of Paulo! The unavoidable conflict which arose in her mind between indignation, grief, and love, she endeavoured to repress, or to conceal; and it does not appear that her husband had any suspicion of her aversion. In her story, as given by Dante, we have the result, in a simple but affecting and highly-wrought picture of guilty and unhappy love. Her love was strong as death; and she declares that her attachment had not ceased, even in hell. With woman-like tenderness she seeks to relieve her companion from the blame of any ill design. It was the reading of a love-story that smoothed their path to ruin. In her narrative there is not a shade of impiety or indelicacy. She is woman still, notwithstanding the greatness of her fall, and the severity of her doom. She curses

And, growing faint, as if with mortal toil,  
Like a dead body to the ground I fell.

the book and the author that occasioned the mischief. A single line completes the tale and her confusion:—

“Quel giorno più non vi legemmo avante.”

Thus, with downcast looks, she concludes her story; while her companion remains at her side in silence and tears. Dante, without daring to ask the manner of her death, overwhelmed with grief and pity, falls down faint and insensible. The hiatus thus left, Boccaccio's comment fills up. Lancelotto, informed of his wife's misconduct, but unwilling to believe it, pretending a journey, privately returns, and is concealed near her chamber, into which he soon sees Paulo enter by a secret door. Leaving his ambuscade, he hastens to the chamber door, intending to break it open; and Paulo, alarmed by the noise, had time to leave the chamber by the way he had entered: but the skirt of his garment was caught by the closing door, or a nail, till Francesca, not aware of the accident, had admitted her husband. The detection was instantaneous, and Paulo was quickly dragged back into the room, where Francesca, endeavouring to save him as Lancelotto struck at him with his dagger, herself received the fatal blow, undesigned, it is said, by her husband, who, incensed almost to frenzy by this new disaster, sacrificed Paulo to his resentment by repeated wounds. Dante had known Francesca when a girl, blooming in beauty and innocence, under her father's roof. Well might he feel, therefore, the sympathy which he has described. In his lingering exile he had found a constant asylum in the very house where she was born; and there he penned the canto which contains her story—the most deeply pathetic and beautiful in the whole of the *Inferno*.

## CANTO VI.

## THE ARGUMENT.

On recovering from the stupor into which he had fallen, Dante finds himself in the third circle, where the gluttonous are punished, lying in the mire beneath an unceasing storm of rain, hail, and snow, exposed to the fangs of Cerberus, and stunned by his barking. The poet sees Ciaccio, a Florentine, with whom he converses respecting the factions which distract their native city. Virgil and Dante journey on in converse, till they reach the stairs descending into the next circle.

My sense returning, which had been astounded  
 With grief and pity for that kindred pair,  
 Through which my mind was totally confounded,  
 New torments and new sufferers, wheresoe'er  
 I move, or turn me, or my vision strain,  
 On every side before my eyes appear.  
 In the third circle now I am, of rain  
 Eternal, cursed, grievous, cold ;—and so  
 Its mode and quality unchanged remain.  
 Great hail, discolour'd water, driving snow,<sup>1</sup>      10

<sup>1</sup> “And the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt; and the rain was poured upon the earth—very grievous—and the hail

For ever pouring through the darken'd air.  
 The land smells putrid from this overflow.<sup>1</sup>  
 Here strange, fierce, cruel Cerberus hath his lair :<sup>2</sup>  
 From his three throats his dog-like bark is heard  
 Over the multitudes that flounder there.  
 Red are his eyes, and greasy black his beard,  
 His belly large, claws arm his fingers foul ;  
 He scratches, flays, and tears the ghostly herd.  
 By the dire shower compell'd, like dogs they  
     howl ;  
 To shield by turns with either side their form, 20  
 The wretched impious often turn and roll.  
 When we were seen by Cerberus, that great  
     worm,<sup>3</sup>

smote all that was in the field, both man and beast."—*Exod.* ix. 23—25.

"On the opposite promontory of the same hill was such an intense cold, caused by snow, hail, and raging storms, that I thought I had never seen anything more torturing than the cold of that place."—*Vision*, in ROGER OF WENDOVER, p. 155.

<sup>1</sup> "And the land stank."—*Exod.* viii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> A dog with three heads, the offspring of Typhon and Echidna, and, according to the poets, porter of hell. The Egyptians, from whom the Greeks derived this fable, in their astronomical tables, instead of the Greater Bear, had the figure of the Hippopotamus, or "Dog of Typhon," which they also placed before the dwelling of the Supreme Judge presiding in *Amenthi* (Hell). The name of Cerberus is from *κρεας*, *flesh*, and *βοα*, *food*, or *fodder*: quasi *κρεαβορος*, *carnivorous*, "the flesh-devourer."

<sup>3</sup> The word "worm" is used as synonymous with serpent,

With open mouth his tusks he held in view ;  
 At which no trembling limb of mine held firm.  
 Stretching his hands, my guide together drew  
 Some earth, and what with both his fists he seized  
 He into those voracious gullets threw.<sup>1</sup>  
 As when a greedy dog barks unappeased,  
 But stops when he has seized the morsel thrown,  
 To swallow which alone he strives well-pleased, 30

or dragon (See Canto xxxiv. 108, and note), and is applied to Cerberus, as the fruit of Echidna's incestuous union with Typhon her son. The allegory of Death and Sin, in *Paradise Lost*, (ii. 650), is an adaptation of the fable of Echidna. Cerberus is described by Apollodorus as having three heads, a dragon's tail, and serpents instead of hair. Herodotus relates (iv. 9) as a Greek fable, that the Scythian monarchs descended from Scythia, a son of Hercules by the daughter of King Colaxais, who, inhabiting a cave, resembled in other respects a woman, but her lower parts were like a serpent.

<sup>1</sup> "Through these realms vast Cerberus is heard with his bark  
 three-throated,  
 There, in an immense cavern opposite, was he lying :  
 Whose neck, with snakes now bristling, the Sybil observing,  
 Threw him a cake soporific prepared with fruits and with  
 honey.  
 He, rabid with hunger and furious, his three throats wide  
 opening,  
 Snatch'd the thrown morsel, and his unwieldy body relaxing,  
 Fell prostrate on the ground, and through all the vast cavern  
 extended."—*Æneid*. vi. 483.

Thus also when Orpheus descended to the Shades to bring back Eurydice, charmed by his music the Furies listen,

"And gaping Cerberus holds fast his three mouths."

*Georgic*. iv. 483.

So from these filthy throats now ceased the tone  
 With which the demon Cerberus stuns the ear,  
 So that the souls wish'd they could deaf have  
 grown.

Now trampling on the shades laid prostrate there  
 By that o'erwhelming shower, we onward stray  
 O'er empty shapes which substances appear.

They all along the earth extended lay,  
 Excepting one who had risen up to sit,  
 As soon as he beheld us pass that way.

“Thou who art led through this infernal pit,      40  
 Me, if thou canst,” he said, “now recognise;  
 For ere my members perish'd thine were knit.”

I answer'd, “Thy great anguish might suffice,  
 Perhaps, to chase remembrance; hence thy face  
 Seems never to have been before my eyes.

Say, who thou art that in such doleful place  
 Art suffering, from this elemental strife,  
 A doom than which, if greater, none's more base.”

And he to me; “Thy city, where so rife  
 Is envy that the measure fill'd runs o'er,      50  
 Held me her child in that serener life.

Among you Ciaccio was the name I bore :<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This countryman of Dante was nick-named “Ciaccio,” which signifies *hog*, on account of the extravagant epicurism which had reduced him to penury. He was, however, a great wit and a

For my injurious fault of gluttony,  
Me, as thou seest, this rain hath wearied sore :  
And I am not alone in misery ;  
Since a like punishment endure all these,  
For a like fault." No further word spake he.  
" Ciacco," I then replied, " thy suffering weighs  
My spirit so, it makes me weep to hear.  
But tell me, if thou know'st, in future days 60  
What fate the parted city's tribes will bear :<sup>1</sup>

brilliant diner-out; and continued to be received in the best Florentine society, for the sake of his facetious and agreeable conversation. Biondello, an acquaintance of his, equally fond of good living, was in dress and manners an exquisite of the first water. One morning in Lent he was at the fish-market buying two large lampreys; Ciacco asked him for whom they were? Biondello replied that, having purchased, the evening before, three much finer ones and a sturgeon for Ser Corso Donati, they were found not enough, as that gentleman expected company to dine with him: he had therefore been commissioned to buy two more, and asked Ciacco if he did not mean to be among the guests? Ciacco answered, "Yes;" and in due time went: but though asked to stay and dine, he found that no company was expected, and that the dinner merely consisted of pulse and dried fish. Perceiving that a hoax had been played off on him, he resolved to be even with its author. Meeting Biondello a few days after, who had already had many a laugh at his expense, he was asked, how he liked the lampreys? "Very well," answered Ciacco, "and in less than eight days I hope to make you a suitable return." For the conclusion of the story, see note to Canto viii. l. 61.

<sup>1</sup> Florence. An outrage committed at Pistoia in 1300, the date of Dante's vision, divided the inhabitants into two factions,

Is one there just ; and wherefore may it be  
 That such fierce discord hath assaulted her ?”  
 “ After long combat,” then said he to me,  
 “ They’ll come to bloodshed, and the forest faction<sup>1</sup>  
 Will chase the other with much injury.<sup>2</sup>  
 Within three solar years will come reaction —  
 This party fall, the other rise again,  
 By aid of him now coasting on to action.<sup>3</sup>  
 With brows held high long time will it remain,     70  
 Making the other great oppression bear,  
 Which they will take with grief and with disdain.<sup>4</sup>

*Bianchi* and *Neri* (Whites and Blacks), and these extending to Florence, created there one of the most virulent political schisms with which that republic was ever afflicted. See note on Canto xxiv. l. 113. The history of Florence, and of the Italian republics generally, strikingly illustrates the fatal consequences of party-spirit when carried to excess: according to the saying of our Saviour: “ Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.”—*Matt.* xii. 25.

<sup>1</sup> The head of the *Bianchi* was *Veri de’ Cerehi*, whose ancient and opulent family had lately come to Florence from *Acone* and the woody region of the *Val di Nievole*. Hence Dante calls the *Bianchi* “ *la parte selvaggia*.”

<sup>2</sup> The *Neri*, at the head of which was *Corso Donati*, who, though not wealthy, was of an illustrious family.—See *Purgatory*, xxiv. 82.

<sup>3</sup> Charles of Valois, Count of Provence, and King of Naples, whom Pope Boniface VIII., at the solicitation of the *Neri*, sent, in 1302, to Florence; the result of which was the restoration of the *Neri*, and the exile of the *Bianchi* party, including Dante himself.

<sup>4</sup> “ The most deadly hatred is that which men, exasperated by

The just are two, but both unheeded there.<sup>1</sup>

Three sparks—pride, envy, avarice—are, in short,  
Those which within all hearts enkindled glare.”<sup>2</sup>

Here ended his deplorable report.

And I to him ; “ For my instruction tell

Yet more ; thy further converse would I court.

Tegghiaío, Farináta, who excel ;

Jacópo Rusticúcci,<sup>3</sup> Arrigo,<sup>4</sup> 80

Mosca,<sup>5</sup> and others, bent on doing well ;

Tell me, where are they ? Pr’ythee, let me know :

For much I long to learn if now they share

Heaven’s blissful sweetness, or hell’s poisonous  
woe.”

And he ; “ Among the blackest souls they are,

Low plunged for various faults in misery :

proscription and forfeiture, bear to their country.”—HALLAM,  
*Middle Ages*, vol. i. p. 39.

<sup>1</sup> Some suppose that Dante and his friend Guido Cavalcanti are intended: others refer the panegyric to Barduccio and Giovanni Vespignano, who died in Florence in 1331, and are eulogized by G. Villani, lib. x, c. 179.

<sup>2</sup> “ Four gledès han we, which I shal devise ;  
Avaunting, lying, anger, and covetise.  
These fourè sparkès longing unto eld.”

CHAUCER, *Reeves Prologue*.

*Glede* is a Saxon word, signifying a spark, a burning coal.

<sup>3</sup> Of these three see Canto x. l. 36 ; xvi. 41, 44, and the notes.

<sup>4</sup> Of the noble family of the Fifanti.

<sup>5</sup> Of Mosca degli Uberti, or Lamberti, see Canto xxviii. 106, and note.

Them wilt thou see, if thou descend so far.  
 But shouldst thou the sweet world revisit,—me  
 Do thou, I pray thee, there commemorate well.<sup>1</sup>  
 I say no more, nor further answer thee.” 90  
 His eyes took then a squint most horrible ;  
 Awhile he gazed at me, then bow'd his head,  
 And down among his blind companions fell.  
 “ No more will he awake,” my teacher said,  
 “ Till sounds the archangel's trump, that final  
 wonder :<sup>2</sup>

When comes the hostile Power to judge the dead,  
 His mournful tomb will each find rent asunder ;  
 Again resumes her flesh and form the soul,  
 And hears the eternal doom for ever thunder.”  
 So pass'd we onward through that mixture foul 100  
 Of shadows and of showers, with footsteps slow,  
 Touching though slightly on their future dole.  
 I said, “ Instructor, will their torments grow,  
 After the last great sentence pass'd on all,  
 Or be made less, or be severe as now ?”  
 Then he ; “ That scientific truth recall,

<sup>1</sup> Milton also represents the fallen spirits in the bottomless pit haunted with an eager though vain desire for renown.—*Par. Lost*, vi, 378.

<sup>2</sup> “ The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised.” —1 *Cor.* xv. 52. “ The voice of the archangel and the trump of God.”—1 *Thess.* iv. 16.

That each more perfect grown perceives the more,  
Whate'er of joy or suffering may befall.  
Although this race, to curses given o'er,  
To true perfection never may attain,                   110  
More afterwards awaits it than before."<sup>1</sup>  
We through a winding road our journey sped,  
Talking a great deal more than I repeat :  
And as we reach'd a stair that downward led,  
There Pluto our arch-enemy we meet.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Human nature is less perfect while body and soul are separated, than it will be after they are united at the resurrection, to be separated no more. Then, according to St. Augustine, the happiness of the good and the torment of the wicked will be increased.

<sup>2</sup> Sometimes called Dis, presiding over death, funerals, and the infernal regions. He had no temples; and only black victims, especially bulls, were offered in sacrifice to him, their blood being permitted to sink into the ground. The early Christian fathers, who conceived that the gods of the heathen were devils, naturally regarded "inexorable Pluto king of Shades," as synonymous with the Great Enemy.

## CANTO VII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

At the descent into the fourth circle, Pluto loudly exclaims against their entrance, but is silenced by Virgil. Here the Avaricious and the Prodigal are doomed to perpetual conflict by rolling vast weights at each other, accompanied with mutual upbraidings. Among these are many popes and cardinals; hence Virgil takes occasion to expound the instability of human greatness, and the power of fortune in the affairs of men. On descending to the fifth circle, Dante sees the Wrathful plunged in the miry lake of Styx, and tearing each other in pieces: he also learns that at the bottom of it the Gloomy and Discontented are punished. Having walked round a great part of it, the poets arrive at the foot of a lofty tower.

“ Papé Satán, Satán, aleppe, heu !”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Strange words and untranslatable, uttered by Pluto in his amazement at the appearance of a living person. Yet they are not without a glimpse of meaning, and even of a *double* meaning. *Papé* is a Latin word signifying “Oh! strange!” The commencement of Canto xxxiv. also is taken from a Latin hymn. And as the present canto brings to view great numbers of clergy—popes and cardinals—grandees of the Church, we recognise in *Papé Satán*, a note of wonder, and at the same time a covert and punning satire aimed at the *Aleph* (*aleppe*) or chief of the Papacy. See Canto xix. 106.

It is asserted by Benvenuto Cellini, a Florentine artist who

Pluto<sup>1</sup> exclaim'd in accents hoarse and dread.  
 And that benignant sage who all foreknew,  
 To reinforce my confidence, thus said ;  
 " Let not fear harm thee, for no power he hath,<sup>2</sup>  
 Which down this rock shall thy descent impede."  
 Then turning to that swollen lip, he saith,  
 " Silence, accursed wolf, thy fury prey  
 Within, and be thou choked by thy own wrath.  
 Not causeless through the deep he takes his way. 10  
 It is so will'd on high, where Michael's sword

died in 1570, that this exclamation was suggested to Dante in a court of justice in Paris, where he himself heard it in the Great hall of the Palace. Two gentlemen, who wanted to hear the trial then going on, were trying to force an entrance at the door, and the porter was endeavouring to keep them out ; when the judge, annoyed by the disturbance, exclaimed, " Paix, paix, Satan, allez, paix !" " Peace, peace, Satan, begone, peace !" Dante may have heard such an exclamation, if, as it is asserted, he visited Paris with his friend Giotto. But Biagioli treats this explanation with contempt.

<sup>1</sup> The myth of Pluto probably originated in a mining district ; and the name was given to him who was the earliest or most successful in raising the precious metals. The Greek name, Πλουτων, from πλουτος, *wealth*, and his Latin name of *Dis*, have the same signification, and are equivalent to *rich*. Superintending the labours of those who dug in the bowels of the earth, he also came to be regarded as king of the lower world. Dante appropriately places the souls of misers and prodigals under his jurisdiction.

<sup>2</sup> " Behold I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy : and nothing shall by any means hurt you."—*Luke* x. 19.

For that abduction proud held vengeful sway."<sup>1</sup>  
 As from the wind the swelling sails expand,  
 But fall collapsed when breaks the mast unsound,  
 So fell that cruel beast prone on the land.  
 Descending thus within the fourth steep mound,  
 We still advance along that woeful shore  
 Which doth the ill of the whole world surround.  
 Justice of God! alas! that hast in store  
 Such torments new, such plagues as then I  
 view'd!<sup>2</sup> . . . . . 20  
 And wherefore brings our fault this anguish sore?<sup>3</sup>  
 Even as the wave above Charybdis' flood,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The "abduction proud" ("superbo strupo") is generally supposed to be the seduction of the angels by Lucifer, through pride. But as Pluto takes the allusion so much amiss, may not the rape of Proserpine also be here glanced at? All the goddesses having refused Pluto as a husband, on account of the gloomy character of his abode, he determined on obtaining a wife by force, and accordingly carried off Proserpine, who was exquisitely beautiful, from the Plain of Enna, in Sicily, where, with her female attendants, she was gathering flowers.—CLAUDIAN, *De Raptu Proserpine*. Again, after David had carried off the wife of Uriah, *Salun* stirred him up to number the people, for which offence a pestilence was sent. "And David lifted up his eyes and saw the angel of the Lord having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem."—1 *Chron.* xxi. 16.

<sup>2</sup> "Who considereth the power of thine anger, and thy wrath in proportion as it is terrible."—*Psaln* xc. 11.

<sup>3</sup> "Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments."—*Jer.* xii. 1.

<sup>4</sup> A place on the coast of Sicily, opposite another called Scylla

Which breaks against the wave that meets it  
 there ;  
 In such a dance whirl'd round<sup>1</sup> the wretched  
 crowd,  
 Whom here I saw more numerous than elsewhere.  
 They roll'd from side to side, with mighty  
 howling,  
 Vast weights by force of breast and effort rare.<sup>2</sup>

on the coast of Italy, both which often proved fatal to mariners. They are only dangerous when the current and winds are in opposition, so that vessels are impelled towards the rocks.—

“On the right hand Seylla, on the left insatiate Charybdis,  
 Lies waiting, and thrice in the deep gulf of the whirlpool  
 Sucks down the headlong waves, and again in turn ejects them  
 Into the air aloft, and strikes the stars with water.”

*Æneid.* iii. 420.

But the Seylla and Charybdis of Homer were not in the Straits of Messina, for the poet says that the ship Argo alone had escaped them. They were “the blue Symplegades” in the Bosphorus, near the entrance of the Euxine, which in that early age were the terror of navigators.

<sup>1</sup> *Riddi*, wheeled round so as to meet again, as in the dance called *ridda*, perhaps from *riedere*, to return.

<sup>2</sup> “Some roll a mighty stone.”—*Æneid.* vi. 616. “And the unconquerable rock.”—*Georg.* iii. 39. The brevity of the allusion in Virgil is owing to the subject having been more fully described by Homer.—

“And truly I saw Sisyphus enduring his grievous punishment,  
 With both his hands extended a monstrous rock sustaining,  
 With his hands, indeed, and also with his feet he endeavoured  
 To urge the stone up to the top, and yet whensoever  
 At the summit it arrived, from thence it strongly rebounded ;  
 And again to the ground the vast stone downward came rolling.”

Struck by the encounter, and thence backward  
rolling,

Both parties loudly and by turns complain,  
“ Why hold so fast ? ” “ Why send it caracol-  
ling ? ” 30

Through the dark circle, till they met again,  
They on each side pursued their ceaseless round,  
Still chaunting loudly their opprobrious strain.  
And when they reach'd the semicircle's bound,  
Again they turn'd in mutual strife to meet.  
And I, whose heart was pierced with grief pro-  
found,

Said, “ Now, instructor, tell me, I entreat,  
What crowd is this ? Were these all clergymen  
Who on the left with shaven crowns<sup>1</sup> we greet ? ”  
And he to me ; “ They knew no medium when 40  
Alive, in spending ; so distorted all  
Without exception in their mental ken.

This their own voice proclaims them as they  
brawl,

The two points of the circle reach'd, where they  
Through their opposing faults to conflict fall.

But he again urged it up with huge toil, until the sweat flowing  
Bathed all his limbs, and high o'er his head the dust ascended.”

*Olyss.* xi. 592.

<sup>1</sup> The clerical tonsure.

These once were clergymen, whose heads display

No covering hair, and popes and cardinals,<sup>1</sup>

In whom unbounded avarice once held sway.<sup>2</sup>

I said, "Among this host of criminals,

Some I should recognise with ease, I trow, 50

Who of such vices foul became the thralls."

And he to me; "Vain thought indulgest thou;

The sordid life which foul'd them heretofore,

Dark to all recognition makes them now.

The two will come to blows for evermore.

<sup>1</sup> "And Pride shal be pope,  
Prynce of holy chirche,  
Coveitise and unkyndenesse  
Cardinals hym to lede."

*P. Ploughman's Vision*, l. 13400.

<sup>2</sup> St. Bernard in the twelfth century complains—"I wish a limit were put to our superfluities! I wish we did not covet immeasurably!"—*De Vit. S. Malachie*. "Even offices of ecclesiastical dignity pass into filthy gain, and the work of darkness: nor in these is the salvation of souls but the extravagance of wealth sought." "For bishopricks and archdeaconies at this day they impudently contend, that they may dissipate the revenues in superfluity and vanity."—*In Psalmom Qui habitat*. Matthew Paris, a monk of St. Alban's, in the thirteenth century, says, "And it is known and learned by multiplied experience that the pope was ambitious and proud above all mortals, insatiably thirsty of money, and to all wickedness easy and indulgent for gifts or promises of reward."—*Hist. Major*. The same history contains "An Epistle of the whole of England on the Court of Rome," Hen. III., A.D. 1245; "The grievances of the Realm of England," 1246; and various other testimonies.

These from the tomb will rise with fist fast  
 clench'd,  
 And those reft of the very hair they wore.  
 Ill-spending and ill-keeping from them wrench'd  
 The blissful world, and in this feud arrays,  
 Which yet no words can paint. How soon is  
 quench'd, 60

Now mayst thou see, my son, the transient blaze  
 Of worldly fortune<sup>1</sup> and her every boon,  
 For which mankind at large such turmoil raise.  
 Not all the gold that is below the moon,  
 Or ever has been, could obtain repose  
 For one of these worn spirits, late or soon."  
 "Master," I said, "now, pray, to me disclose  
 What is this Fortune, touch'd on in thy speech,  
 Whose clutches firm all worldly goods enclose?"  
 Then he exclaim'd, "O creatures of small reach! 70  
 What ignorance your onward path attends!  
 Now somewhat of her let my maxims teach.

<sup>1</sup> In the account given of the ceremonies attendant on the consecration of Pope Leo X., it is stated that he went to the high altar of St. Peter's. "preceded by the master of the ceremonies, with a reed in each hand, to the summit of which was attached a lighted candle, and to the other a bunch of tow. This officer, kneeling before the pope, set fire to the tow, at the same time repeating the words, *Pater sancte, sic transit gloria mundi.*" ["Holy father, so passeth away the glory of the world."] — ROSCÖE'S *Leo the Tenth*, ch. iii.

He whose omniscient wisdom all transcends,  
Prepared the heavens and gave them those who  
guide,

So that each part with each its radiance blends,  
Fairly distributing the light supplied.

Thus He ordain'd a general Minister,<sup>1</sup>  
O'er worldly splendours also to preside,  
Changing in time the transient blessings there,  
Transferr'd from realm to realm, from race to  
race, 80

Beyond prevention of man's wisest care.

One nation rules, and one declines apace,  
Following the course mark'd out by her decrees,  
Who like the snake in grass holds occult place.

Compared with hers your wisdom nothing sees.

'Tis hers, providing, judging, to maintain  
Her kingdom, like the other deities.

Her changes without pause run on amain.

Necessity compels her to make speed ;

Of those who change require so throug'd the  
train. 90

And this is she so much reviled, indeed,

<sup>1</sup> Chaucer has copied this passage :—

“The Destinee, Ministre general,  
That executeth in the world over al  
The purveiance, that God hath sen beforene,” &c.

*The Knightes Tale.*

By those who owe her praise, withheld amiss ;  
 Unjust reproach and calumny her meed.  
 But she is blessèd, and she heeds not this :  
 Among the other primal creatures blithe  
 She rolls her orb, exulting in her bliss.<sup>1</sup>  
 We'll now descend where greater sufferers writhe :  
 Each star declines that at our outset rose,  
 And too long stay denied bids us be lithe.  
 We cross'd the circle to its brink, which shows 100  
 A bubbling fountain ; down the rocky steep,  
 By a small self-worn channel thence it flows.  
 Darker than Persian dye<sup>2</sup> the waters leap,

<sup>1</sup> The Greeks and Romans built altars to Fortune. Dante supposes that each of the celestial spheres is presided over by an Angelic Intelligence ; or that the nine moveable heavens, according to the Ptolemaic and Scholastic systems of philosophy, have been given in charge to the nine orders of angels, to guide and control them in their courses : and that, in like manner, this Earthly Ball has been subjected to the government of an Intelligence, to whom he gives the name of Fortune. A fine *poetical* idea ; but, strictly speaking, there can be no such thing as fortune or chance. “Those causes which are called fortuitous, whence also Fortune receives her name, we do not assert to be non-existent, but latent ; and we attribute them either to the true God, or to the will of any spirits whatever : even those which are natural we do not disjoin from the will of him who is the Author and Founder of nature.”—*Aug. de Civ. Dei*, lib. v. cap. ix.

<sup>2</sup> Dante speaks of the *liquid* Persian dye. In his *Convito* he says, “Perso is a colour compounded of purple and black, but the black predominates.” In the Prologue to *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer says of the Doctour of Phisike,

“In sanguin and in perse he clad was alle.”

And with the ashy wave we downward came,  
 And enter'd by an uncouth way the deep.  
 This dismal rivulet a marsh became,  
 The bottom reach'd, expanding at the base  
 Of the gray baleful hills, and Styx its name.<sup>1</sup>  
 I stopp'd, attentively to view the place,  
 And in that marsh, foul'd with its sediment, 110  
 I saw a crowd all naked, with flush'd face.  
 To fight, not only with their hands, they bent,  
 But with their head and breast and feet beside ;  
 And with their teeth each other piecemcal rent.  
 " Now see, my son," the good instructor, cried,  
 " The souls of those who were o'ercome with ire.<sup>2</sup>  
 Of this too be thou fully certified,  
 That crowds beneath the water there suspire,  
 And make those bubbles on the top appear,  
 Where'er thou turn'st thine eyes. Fix'd in the  
 mire, 120

<sup>1</sup> A river of Nonacris, in Arcadia, whose waters were unwholesome, and, like our Mole, disappeared in the earth at a small distance from its fountain-head : hence said to be a river of hell.—

"The fates oppose, and the marsh with its hateful billow  
 Confines, and Styx nine times interfused coerces."

"Thou see'st the deep marsh of Cocytus and the Stygian river  
 By which even the Godhead fears to swear and to deceive."

*Aeneid.* vi. 323, 438.

<sup>2</sup> "Is not this a cursed vice? Yes, certes, alas! it benimeth

They ery, ' We once were sad in the sweet air  
 Which the bright sun makes gladsome with his  
 beams,  
 Carrying the sluggish smoke within us there:<sup>1</sup>  
 Now are we vex'd in these black muddy streams.'  
 This hymn they gurgle in their throat, and spurt ;  
 One word entire to escape unable seems."  
 Thus, that foul pit as with wide sweep we girt,  
 'Twixt the dry bank and reeking fen<sup>2</sup> we pass'd,  
 Turning our eyes on those who gorged the dirt ;<sup>3</sup>  
 The foot of a high tower we reach'd at last.      130

fro man his witte and reson, and all his debonaire lif spirituel.  
 that shuld kepe his soule."—CHAUCER. *Personnes Tale. De Ira.*

<sup>1</sup> "Accidioso fummo." "After the sinne of wrath, now wol I  
 speke of the sinne of accidie, or slouth: for envie blindeth the  
 herte of a man, and ire troubleth a man, and accidie maketh him  
 hevvy, thoughtful, and wrawe (froward or perverse). Envie and  
 ire maken bitternesse in herte, which bitternesse is mother of  
 accidia, and benimith (taketh from) him the love of all goodnesse.  
 Then cometh the sinne that men clepen (call) *tarditas*, as when a  
 man is latered, or taryed or (ere) he wol tourne to God: and certes  
 that is a grete folie. He is like him that falleth in the diche, and  
 wol not arise."—*Ib. De Accidia.*

<sup>2</sup> *Mezzo* (when pronounced *meitso*, as distinguished from *mezzo*,  
 middle) signifies *dead-ripe*, and is applied to apples or other  
 fruit when beginning to rot.

<sup>3</sup> Tacitus (*De moribus Germ. c. xii*), when speaking of the  
 different punishments inflicted by the ancient Germans, for diffe-  
 rent offences, says, "The idle, and cowardly, and effeminate are  
 plunged beneath a hurdle into mire and bog."

## CANTO VIII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Two beacon lights, which shine from the tower, are answered by another from a great distance, and Flegyas arrives with his boat, into which the poets enter, and are ferried across the Stygian lake. They are accosted by Filippo Argenti, whose rage and punishment are described. They arrive at the city of Dis, which is defended by a deep ditch and walls of glowing iron: at its gate Virgil confers with the guard of demons, who retire and shut the gates upon him: he foretells the swift approach of one who would forcibly open them.

My tale continuing, I relate, that ere  
 We reach'd the basement of the lofty tower,  
 Our eyes we towards its distant summit rear,  
 Whence two small flames their sudden brillianee  
 pour :  
 Far off another signal answering burn'd ;  
 So far, the eye to see it scarce had power.  
 And I, to that deep sea of wisdom turn'd,  
 Ask'd, "What says this? and what has that  
 replied ?  
 Who lights the signal-fires by us discern'd ?"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus, the watchman who for ten

And thus he said, "Now on the filthy tide      10  
 Thou may'st see that which is expected here,  
 Unless from thee the marshy vapours hide  
 Its prospect." Never yet the cord through air  
 Impell'd the arrow with so swift a flight,  
 As a light skiff which cleft the water there,  
 Approaching us, that moment came in sight,  
 Whose course a solitary pilot steer'd ;  
 Who cried, "Art thou come hither, felon spright?"  
 "O Flegyas, Flegyas!"<sup>1</sup> thus my guide I heard

years had been posted on the roof of the palace at Argos, at length perceives the signal that proclaims the fall of Troy. Clytemnestra says, "A fire sending its lucid beam from Ida, one beacon answering to another, conveyed the tidings hither." She mentions the intervening stations of the watch-fires—the heights of Lemnos, Athos, Eubœa, Bœotia, Cithæron, and Arachnæus in Argolis, which last was in sight of Argos. "From thence the light which derives its birth from the fires on Mount Ida, streams down on the palace of the Atridæ. Thus according to the commands they have received, watchmen with beacon-fires on the intervening mountains inform one another, the tidings running from the first to the last: this, then, is the appointed signal of what I relate to you, which my lord has announced to me from Troy."—l. 291.

We pen this note within view of an ancient "Beacon," which stands on the summit of a hill north-east of Penrith. In WALKER'S *History of Penrith*, it is stated, that "the beacon was last lighted in December, 1745, when the Highlanders were retreating through Westmoreland."

<sup>1</sup> Phlegyas, king of the Lapithæ in Thessaly, son of Mars, and father of Ixion and Coronus. In revenge for an insult offered to his daughter by Apollo, he conducted an army to Delphi, and

Exclaim, "this time thou criest out in vain: 20  
No longer shalt thou have us when we've near'd  
Yon shore across the mire."—As one with pain  
Listens, who has been duped by some grand  
sleight,  
Such anger Phlegyas seem'd to entertain.  
My guide went down into the bark, whose freight

burned the temple; for which outrage Apollo slew and placed him in hell, with a huge stone over his head, for ever threatening to fall.—

"The most wretched Phlegyas solemnly cautions all,  
And through the shades with loud voice bears witness;  
By me admonished, learn to act justly, and do not contemn  
the gods."—*Æneid*. vi. 618.

With due deference to the two poets and their patron, we must remark, that the evidence *in re* Phlegyas is *ex-parte*; for we have only that of the prosecutor, who, on his own showing, does not come into court with clean hands. The testimony of the prisoner, if construed into a confession, must go for nothing, as it was given under duress and extorted by pain, yet is quite general. The admitted provocation, if it does not justify, considerably mitigates the offence. The evidence of the Far-Shooter must be received with caution, especially in his own cause, for in poetic and other oracles, as well as in hunting, he was in the habit of using the long-bow. Whether the case was ever tried in any court but *his own*, does not clearly appear. If not, this is another hardship on the accused—and condemned: but if it was, the decision reflects no credit on the court, whether that of Mars, the prisoner's father; of Minos; or of some ancient Lynch. In deference to the claims of Poetic Justice, we feel bound to offer these remarks.

When he had bid me follow, and my foot  
 Had stepp'd within, then only seem'd complete.  
 Soon as my guide and I on board had got,  
 The antique prow moved off; more deep than  
 e'er

It had been wont, her keel the waters cut.<sup>1</sup> 30  
 As o'er the stagnant channel we career,  
 One rose all cover'd with the miry stain,  
 And cried, "Who art thou, ere thine hour  
 come here?"

And I to him, "I come not to remain;  
 But thou, thus foul become, thy name impart."  
 He said, "Thou seest I'm one who mourn my  
 pain."

And I to him, "With sorrow and with smart,  
 Accursed spirit, be it thine to stay:  
 I know thee well, all filthy as thou art."  
 He stretched both hands, them on our bark to  
 lay; 40

My wary master therefore thrust him down,  
 And said, "There, with the other dogs away!"  
 And then his arms about my neck were thrown:

<sup>1</sup> "—— It received in its hollow  
 The vast Æneas, with whose weight the boat so fragile  
 Groan'd, and through chinks admitted the marsh's water."  
*Æneid.* vi. 412.

He kiss'd my cheek and said, "Indignant soul,  
 How blest is she once great with such a son.<sup>1</sup>  
 He in the world had pride beyond control,  
 But bounty none his memory to adorn :  
 Hence fury here his shade possesses whole.  
 How many deem'd great kings on earth—forlorn  
 Ere long shall wallow here like hogs in mire,<sup>2</sup> 50  
 Leaving their names the prey of horrid scorn.  
 "Master," I said, "it would be joy entire  
 To see him in this hell-broth<sup>3</sup> plunging o'er,  
 Ere we ourselves shall from the lake retire."  
 And he to me ; "Before the infernal shore  
 Appears in sight thou shalt be gratified :  
 Such mirth is fitly for thy wish in store."  
 Soon after, such rough mockery<sup>4</sup> I spied

<sup>1</sup> An Orientalism, but not unknown to the classic writers. "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked."—*Luke xi. 27.*

"Blessed are they from whom thou hadst thy birth,  
 And the nurse who gave thee her breasts."—*OVID, Metam. iv. 322.*

<sup>2</sup> "Deeth cam dryvyng after, And al to dust passhèd  
 Kyngès and knyghtès, kaysers and popès."

*P. Ploughman's Vision, l. 14124.*

"The sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."—  
<sup>2</sup> *Pet. ii. 22.*

<sup>3</sup> "*Broda,*" *broth*, and thence *mud, quagmire*. Here we have Shakspeare's "hell-broth" anticipated.—*Macbeth*, act iv. sc. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Strazzio* may signify either violent injury, or contemptuous treatment. Both are evidently here intended.

Made of this fellow by that miry rout,  
That God I thank who such a sight supplied. 60  
“At Filippo Argenti!” all cried out.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A Florentine of the Cavicciuli, a branch of the Adimari, a family of the highest rank. He was a man of violent temper, and foremost in opposing Dante's recall from exile. To illustrate his character, we give the conclusion of the story relating to Ciaccio. See note, Canto vi. 52.

Ciaccio, on parting with Biondello, hired a porter, and giving him a bottle, conducted him to the mansion of the Cavicciuli, and there pointed out to him Sir Philip Argenti, tall, muscular, strong, proud, irritable, and eccentric beyond most others. Ciaccio said to the porter, “Go to that gentleman with this flask, and say, ‘Sir, Biondello has sent me to you, entreating that you will be pleased to redden this flask with your best claret, as he wishes to enjoy himself with his cronies.’ And be sure to keep out of his reach, else you will come to harm, and my project fail.” The porter delivered his message, and Argenti, who could ill bear to be jested with, immediately construed it into an insult. In his rage he would have seized the porter, who being on his guard escaped, and having related all to Ciaccio was well paid and dismissed. Ciaccio having found Biondello, asked if he had lately been at the palace of the Cavicciuli, where, he told him, Sir Philip was making earnest inquiry after him. Upon this Biondello set off in that direction, followed by Ciaccio at some distance, watching the event.

Argenti, boiling with indignation, was meditating revenge, when the unfortunate Biondello accosting him requested to know his commands; and the answer he received was a blow in the face. In vain he demanded the meaning of this outrage. Argenti's only answer was a second blow; and having knocked off his cap, he seized him by the hair, and dragged him along the ground, exclaiming, “Traitor, thou shalt know what I mean. Dost thou talk of reddening to me? Dost thou send about thy cronies to me? Am I a child, that thou thoughtest fit to jest on me?”

The eccentric Florentine, in spirit sore,  
Turn'd on himself his teeth while thus they  
shout.

Then him we left, of him I say no more.

Now smote mine ears a lamentation loud ;

Hence with wide opening eyes I gazed before.

And my good guide said, as the waves we plough'd,

“ Now to the city named of Dis we come,<sup>1</sup>

With its grieved citizens, a mighty crowd.

“ Master,” I said, “ its towers<sup>2</sup> already loom, 70

There, certes, in the vale I see them well,

While saying this, he showered blows which seemed of iron, smashed his face, rolled him in the mire, tore his clothes from his back, and stripped his hair from his head : nor could Biondello say one word, nor ask why he did it. A crowd gathering, they were with difficulty separated ; and after a great many exclamations and oaths, an explanation was obtained from Sir Philip. The crowd having heard the message he had received, threw the blame on the victim, telling him that he ought to have known that Sir Philip was not a man to be trifled with. In vain did Biondello declare he had sent no such message : his excuse was not credited ; and sad and sorrowful he reached his home, to which he was long obliged to confine himself. He readily guessed that the author of his misfortune was Ciaccio, who on his going abroad, met him and asked him how he liked the claret of Sir Philip. ? “ As well,” replied he, “ as you liked the lampreys of Sir Corso.” “ Remember then,” said Ciaccio, “ that such a dinner as you procured me, will always be repaid by such wine as I obtained for you.”—*Decam.* ix. 8. As an instance of Sir Philip's “ eccentric ” vanity, it is said, that he had his horse shod with silver, whence his name of Argenti.

<sup>1</sup> See Virgil's description.—*Æneid.* 548—572.

<sup>2</sup> “ Meschite : ” literally, *mosques*—the Mohammedan mosques having minarets like towers, from which, instead of a bell, the

Vermilion—as if issuing through the gloom  
 All fire.” Then on mine ear his answer fell ;  
 “The eternal fire within makes them appear  
 All red, as thou behold’st, in this low hell.”  
 Moated around was that sad region there,  
 And we arrived within its fosses deep.  
 The walls, it seemed to me, of iron were ;  
 Not without making first an ample sweep,  
 We reach’d a place at which our boatman strong 80  
 Cried, “Here’s the entrance ; from the galley  
 leap.”<sup>1</sup>  
 Above the gate more than a thousand throng,  
 Rain’d down from heaven, who in fierce anger  
 said,  
 “Pray, who is he that dares to walk along  
 Deathless within the kingdom of the dead ?”<sup>2</sup>

muezzin calls the people to prayer. Dante compares the towers of Dis to these minarets. He places Mohammed and Ali much lower (*Canto* xxviii. 31, 32).

<sup>1</sup> “At length across the river he landed in safety  
 Both the sybil and poet on the filthy mud and the green  
 rushes.”—*Eneid*. vi. 415.

<sup>2</sup> “But come, tell me in turn, what chances have brought  
 thee hither  
 Living? Dost thou come driven by wanderings on the  
 ocean?  
 Or by admonition of the gods? Or what fortune hath  
 troubled thee  
 To visit these sunless realms, and their mansions of misery?”  
*Ibid.* 531.

“A terrible apparition of ugly demons in derisive address

And my sage master by a sign reveal'd  
 The wish for private parle within him bred.  
 Then somewhat they their mighty rage conceal'd,  
 And said; "Come thou alone, let him be gone,  
 Who came with bosom by such daring steel'd. 90  
 Let him retrace his foolish path alone:  
 Try if he knows; for thou shalt here remain,  
 Who him hast through so dark a country shown."  
 Think, reader, what was then my mental pain,  
 At what those cursed words to me convey'd.  
 I thought we never should return again.  
 "Dear guide, whose more than seven-times-granted  
     aid  
 Hath brought me sure defence, and drawn me back  
 From deepest peril in my path array'd,  
 Me thus undone," said I "do not forsake: 100  
 And if our journey onward is denied,  
 Our backward path with speed we both will take."  
 And that kind master who had been my guide,  
 Then said, "Fear not; for none our passage fit  
 Can hinder, with such sanction fortified.

the knight: 'Other men,' said they, 'who serve us are content to wait till they are dead, before they come: but you honour this company of your masters so much, that you come to us soul and body whilst you are alive. Are you come to receive punishment for your sins?'—*St. Patrick's Purgatory*: ROGER OF WENDOVER, A.D. 1153.

Here wait me, and thy weary spirit knit  
 With vigour new, and feed it with good hope ;  
 For I'll not leave thee in the infernal pit."

Thus the kind father left me there to mope,  
 And went his way ; while I remain in doubt, 110  
 As "No" and "Yes" within my fancy cope.

I heard not what he talk'd to them about :  
 But parleying with them he remain'd not long,  
 When back within they rush'd with headlong  
 rout.

Closed were the gates too by that hostile throng,  
 Against my master, who without remain'd,  
 And back to me moved with slow steps along.

His eyes were to the earth, his brow maintain'd  
 No more its boldness, and he spoke in sighs.  
 "Who hath my step from sorrow's home re-  
 strain'd?" 120

And then to me, "Though my resentments  
 rise,  
 Despond not thou, for I shall gain the war,  
 Whate'er defence they may within devise.

Not new is this their insolence, by far ;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This refers to our Saviour's descent into hell ; see note on Canto iv. l. 53. Virgil states that these demons displayed on that occasion, at the outer gate, over which was seen the fatal inscription, the same insolent resistance which they were displaying now. The following is a description of the supposed scene,

Once shown at a less secret gate, thrown wide ;  
 And which even yet is found without a bar.  
 O'er it the fatal writing you espied :  
 Within, already down the steep, at hand,  
 Crossing the circles, comes without a guide  
 One who shall make this place an open land." 130

from *Piers Ploughman's Vision*, Dr. Whitaker's Edn. 1813. p. 354 ;  
 which copies the the apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus*.

"*Attolite portas principes vestras, clavamini portæ eterales,*  
 &c.,

A voys loude in that light to Lucifer seide  
 Princes of this palyis un do the gates,  
 For here cometh with coroune the kyng of alle glorie.  
 Then syhede Satan, and seide ;  
 Ac rys up Ragamoffyn, and reche me alle the barres  
 Ar we thow bryghtnesse be bleut : barre we the gates,  
 Cheke we and cheyne we, and eche chyne stoppe,  
 And thow Astrot hot out, and have oute knaves,  
 Coltyng and al hus kynne, our catel to save  
 Brynston boilaunt brenning, out casteth hit  
 Al hot in here hevedes, that entren in ny the walles  
 Setteth bowes of brake, a brasene gonnes  
 And shetteth out shot e ynowh. . . .  
 What lord ert thu quath Lucifer ? a voys a loud seyde,  
 The lord of myght and of man, that made alle thynges,  
 Duke of this dymme place, a non undo the gates  
 That Crist now comen in, the kynges sone of heaven,  
 And with that breth hell brake, with alle Beliales  
 For eny wyc other warde, wyde openede ze gates."

## CANTO IX.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Dante, alarmed by Virgil's hesitating speech on his return, is reassured by his guide, who informs him that he well knows that road, having travelled it before.—The three Furies appear on the blazing tower, invoking Medusa to petrify the poet with her Gorgon look.—Preceded by a whirlwind, an angel from heaven arrives, and the gates fly open at his touch.—The poets enter the city of Dis, and find it full of burning sepulchres, in which are punished the Heresiarchs and their followers.—The poets pass onward between the tombs and the city walls.

THAT hue which terror on my cheek pourtray'd,  
 When backward I beheld my guide return,  
 Check'd that new fear which his own face display'd.  
 He stood as one who would by listening learn :  
 Because to no great distance could our sight  
 Through the thick fog and darken'd air discern.  
 He then began : " We're sure to win the fight ;  
 If not—so great a one his aid has proffer'd :  
 How slow seems time till he shall here alight ! "  
 And I could plainly see that thus he cover'd 10

With something else what his beginning meant ;  
 These last, so different from the words first offer'd,  
 Yet they no less to fear occasion lent.

For now the mutilated words I groupe,

With meaning worse, perhaps, than their intent.<sup>1</sup>

“ Do any to this bottom ever stoop

In the sad hollow, from the first degree

Of those whose doom is but a ruin'd hope ?”

I ask'd this question ; and thus answer'd he :

“ Rarely do any of us undergo 20

The toilsome journey now commenced by me.

'Tis true, I formerly was here below ;

Compell'd by dire Erictho's magic spell,<sup>2</sup>

Who made the shades back to their bodies go.

<sup>1</sup> Virgil, observing Dante's pallor, breaks off the sentence he had commenced, and restrains the expression of his own fear. The sentence completed may be supposed, “ If not, why was the journey proposed, and aid promised us by Beatrice ?” Dante's anxiety is increased by the seeming attempt to withhold from him a knowledge of the true state of affairs.

<sup>2</sup> Erictho was a soereess of Thessaly, to whom Sextus, the son of Pompey, came (aeording to Lucan, who has described her incantations), to know the event of the impending battle, and his own fate.—*Pharsalia*, vi. 507. She takes a yet warm corpse from the field of battle, evokes a spirit from the shades, with which she reanimates it. The description reminds us of Saul's visit to the Witch of Endor, 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 7. Erictho may have survived the battle of Pharsalia long enough to have employed magical incantations at Virgil's death, twenty-nine years after. A poetical probability is all that was here necessary.

When I in flesh not long had ceased to dwell,  
     My entrance through you wall did she procure,  
     To draw a shade from Judas' round of hell—  
 The deepest circle and the most obscure,  
     And furthest from the heaven which circles all :  
     That I well know the road, rest thou secure. 30  
 This marsh, which breathes a stench thus prodigal,  
     Girds round about the city fill'd with mourning ;  
     Nor can we enter without strife its wall."

More yet he said, but it has fled ; for turning  
     Mine eyes they drew me suddenly away  
     Up to the lofty tower with top all burning,  
 Where three infernal furies I survey ;  
     Uprisen at once, and stain'd with blood they  
     frown'd :  
     In limbs and action feminine were they ;  
 Their waists with hydras green were girdled  
     round : 40  
     Small serpents and cerastes dire were seen,  
     For hair, about their savage temples bound.  
 And he, who knew these handmaids of the queen  
     Of endless lamentation, said to me,  
     " Mark there the Erinny's, fierce in mind and mien :<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Εριννυς*, contr. from *Εριννυες*, pl. answering to the Latin *Furiæ*, furies: perhaps from *εριννυω*, *to be angry*, or *ερις*, *contention*. Sophocles has the following colloquy respecting them between *Edipus* and a citizen of *Colonus* :—

This is Megara on the left ; and see

On the right side Alecto stand confest ;

While in the midst appears Tisiphonè.”

He ceased ; and with her nails each tore her breast,

Smote with her hands, and cried so loud that I, 50

Through apprehension, to the poet press’d.

“Medusa come, so him we’ll petrify !”<sup>1</sup>

They shout, as they look down from where they  
hover :

“Not ill-avenged for his assault we were

On Theseus !”<sup>2</sup>—“Turn thee back, thy face well  
cover :

*Citizen.* “In that place the dreadful goddesses,  
Daughters of Earth and Night, have their abode.

*Ædipus.* What awful name shall I invoke them by ?

*Citizen.* This people call them the Eumenides,  
The all-beholding powers.”—*Ædipus Col.* l. 39.

They are personifications of accusing Conscience and retributive Justice, employed in punishing the guilty on earth and in Hades.—See ÆSCHYLUS, *Eumenides*. Virgil has,

“And the livid Eumenides, whose hairs are twisted serpents.”—*Georg.* iv. 482. And of certain criminals in the infernal regions he says, that “near them the chief of the Furies shakes her torch and lifts her voice.”—*Æneid.* vi. 605.

<sup>1</sup> Of the three Gorgons, only Medusa was mortal. She could kill or petrify with her looks. Perseus cut off her head and placed it on Minerva’s shield, by the aid of which he had been victorious. With it he turned into rock the sea-monster to whom Andromeda had been exposed, and Phineus who opposed his marriage with her.—LUCAN, *Phars.* ix. 625, 670 ; OVID, *Met.* v. 216.

<sup>2</sup> Theseus, with his friend Pirithous, descended to the infernal

If Gorgon show herself, and her thou see,  
 All hope of thy return above were over.”<sup>1</sup>  
 And when my master thus had spoken, he  
 Turn'd me himself, lest mine own hands should  
 fail :  
 Hence with his own he also cover'd me.       60  
 Ye of sound intellect, beneath a veil  
 Consider well what your attention craves,—  
 The doctrine which these mystic strains conceal.  
 And now there came upon the troubled waves  
 A loud resounding crash, so full of dread,

regions to carry off Proserpine. Pluto caused them to be seized. Pirithöus was placed on his father Ixion's wheel, and Theseus was fastened to a huge stone, on which he had sat down to rest himself. Virgil represents him as suffering eternal punishment in Tartarus. —*Eneid.* vi. 617.

Instead of “*Mal non vengiammo,*” some copies read, “*Mal noi,*” &c. “*Badly did we avenge the assault of Theseus.*” But this reading scarcely agrees with the “*Sedet, æternumque sedebit infelix Theseus;*” for surely *that* may be considered sufficient vengeance. It is not a complaint, but a boast and menace that the Furies utter in Dante's hearing. According to some authors, Hercules, when in his twelfth labour he dragged Cerberus by a chain to upper earth, tore Theseus away from the stone, but with such violence as to leave a portion of his skin behind; and both he and Pirithöus returned to earth, but not without suffering the most excruciating torments.

<sup>1</sup> “But pallid fear seized me,  
 Lest far-famed Proserpine from Oreus should send to me  
 The Gorgonian head of the terrible monster.”

That both shores trembled which that deluge laves.  
Not different from the fiercest whirlwind bred

From the conflicting heats of summer sky,  
Which through the forest raging, overhead  
Tears off the boughs, beats down, and sweeping  
by, 70

Bears them careering forth in dusty pride,  
Making the wild beasts and the shepherds fly.  
Mine eyes then leaving free, thus spake my guide ;

“ Now let thy visual nerve direction take  
Along that ancient foam, and where abide  
The densest fogs.” Before the hostile snake  
As frogs all hurrying through the water ply,  
Till they in mud their crouching ambush make :  
Thus of lost souls more than a thousand I

Saw chased by one, who at a bound pass'd  
through 80

The Stygian river, and with footsteps dry.  
The turbid air he from his visage threw,  
By his left hand, oft waved before him, riven ;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “ Stretch forth thine hand toward heaven, that there may darkness over all the land of Egypt, even darkness that may felt.”—*Erod.* x. 21.

“ And through the palpable obscure find out  
His uncouth way.”—*Paradise Lost*, ii. 406.

It is sometimes hyperbolically said of a *London fog*, that you may “ cut it with a knife.”

That labour seem'd the sole fatigue he knew :  
'Twas plain he was a messenger from heaven.

That I should silent stand, and to him bow,  
My guide inform'd me by a signal given.

Ah, me ! what noble scorn sat on his brow !<sup>1</sup>

He reach'd the gate, which with a slender wand

He open'd, leaving there no hindrance now. 90

“ Outcasts of heaven ! ” he said, as he his stand

Sublimely took upon that horrid sill,

“ Whence this presumption ? despicable band !

Wherefore still kick ye thus against His will

Whose faithful purpose none can ever mar,

And which has oft increased your penal ill ?

Ah ! what avails it with the fates to war ?

Remember how for this your Cerberus mourn'd,<sup>2</sup>

While his peel'd throat and maw yet show the  
scar.”

Then through the filthy road he back return'd ; 100

To us he spake not, but seem'd inly stirr'd,

As one with urgent far-off charge concern'd,

<sup>1</sup> “ O what a deal of scorn looks beautiful ! ” — SHAKSPEARE.

<sup>2</sup> The last of the twelve labours of Hercules, performed at the command of Eurystheus, was to drag from hell the three-headed monster Cerberus. He descended by a cave in Mount Tænarus, and was permitted by Pluto to release Theseus and Pirithöus, and to carry off Cerberus, on condition of employing for that purpose nothing but his own strength. After presenting Cerberus to Eurystheus, he carried him back to his former station in hell.

Careless of what before his eyes occur'd.

And we moved towards the region thus disclosed ;  
Secure, since we those holy words had heard.

We enter'd there, by war no more opposed,

And I, through strong desire within me bred  
To view the state by such firm walls inclosed,

When enter'd look'd about, and saw outspread

A spacious plain around me and before,      110  
The scene of anguish deep and torments dread.

At Arles, where seems the Rhone to move no more,<sup>1</sup>

And Pola near Quarnaro, whose fair bay

Bounds Italy, and bathes her utmost shore,<sup>2</sup>

The tombs lie scatter'd o'er the rugg'd clay ;<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In Archbishop Turpin's *History of Charlemagne and Orlando*, it is related that above 10,000 warriors who fell in the battles of Ronceval and Garzim were "buried in the plain of Arles." Ariosto has copied this passage of Dante—*Orl. Fur.* c. xxxix. st. 72. This legend is no longer accepted as history; but, as an illustration of Dante, it is not obsolete.

<sup>2</sup> An ancient city of Istria, near the Gulf of Quarnaro, or Carnaro, to which it gives name. It was made the eastern boundary of Italy by Augustus; and such it has continued down to nearly our own times.

<sup>3</sup> Ancient burying-places were extra-mural. The law of the Twelve Tables at Rome decreed, "The dead shall neither be buried nor burned within the city." The usual places of burial were the fields and suburbs, especially near the highways. Burying in churches and churchyards, which arose out of the excessive veneration for the relics of saints and martyrs, did not become general till about the beginning of the sixth century. After this it was left to the discretion of the ecclesiastical authorities, and

So here they had in every part been made,  
 Save that far greater horrors these display :  
 For flames among the sepulchres were spread,<sup>1</sup>  
 By which all burning, as it seem'd, they were,  
 Like iron in the workman's furnace laid.      120

in many places the practice of extra-mural sepulture continued. The ancient cemetery of the Campus Elysius, without the walls of Arles, exists at present. One part of it is still called Eliscamp, containing several tombs; those of pagans being distinguished by D. M. (*Diis Manibus*), and those of Christians by a cross. In this canto of Dante, however, the infernal burying-place is described as *intra-mural*!

<sup>1</sup> The northern nations believed that the tombs of their heroes emitted a kind of lambent flame, which was always visible at night, and served to guard the ashes of the dead, and the arms and armour, or other treasures, often buried with them. Odin was supposed to kindle these sacred and wandering fires. In the *Herwarat Saga*, one of the northern mediæval romances, Tírfing, the charmed sword which had been forged by the dwarfs, is buried with Angantyr, whose only daughter, Hervor, determines to obtain it. "Nothing in northern poetry," says Mr. Keightley, "equals in interest and sublimity the description of her landing alone in the evening on the island of Sams, where her father and uncle lay in their sepulchral mounds, and at night ascending to the tombs that were enveloped in flame, and by force of entreaty obtaining from the reluctant Angantyr the formidable Týrfing."—*Fairy Mythology*, p. 73; Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*, pp. 214, 395, Bohn, 1847.

We find other traces of the above superstition in the tradition of ever-burning lamps in ancient sepulchres (see SCOTT'S *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, ii. 18, and note); and in the *Cunhyllan Cyth*, corpse-candles, or corpse-lights, of Wales, which are supposed to presage death, and sometimes to precede the corpse to the place of sepulture.

Their covers were above them hung in air ;  
And from them issued forth such doleful cries,  
'Twas plain the wretched and the lost were there.  
I said, as to my guide I turn'd mine eyes ;  
" Who, buried here in their sarcophagi,  
Reveal their presence by those mournful sighs ? "  
" Here," he replied, " the great Heresiarchs lie,<sup>1</sup>  
With all the sects that have their followers been :  
More than thou would'st believe these graves  
supply.

The tombs with more or less of heat are seen ;    130  
And laid within them like with like are class'd."  
Our path now turning to the right, between  
The sufferers and the high battlements we pass'd.

<sup>1</sup> And whom does Dante intend by the great Heresiarchs who are placed here ? Biagioli, as if intending a *special plea* on behalf of the Papacy, answers, " Arius, Pelagius, *Luther*, and their followers ! " Dante certainly proved himself to be before his age in attainments ; not by placing Luther in hell two centuries before he existed, but by anticipating much of what that great Reformer more clearly saw, and more effectively taught ! The only names mentioned by the poet are those of Epicurus, Farinata, the *Emperor* Frederick II., and *Pope* Anastasius ; besides whom he has designated Cavalcanti, and *Cardinal* Ubaldini. It is most evident, therefore, that by the Heresiarchs (*gli eresiarchi*) and their followers of every sect, he intended the sects of Infidel Philosophy and their leaders ; whether purely heathen, or nominally Christian.

## CANTO X.

## THE ARGUMENT.

In continuing their journey amidst the tombs of the Heretics, Virgil explains to Dante the nature of the punishments there inflicted. Farinata degli Uberti addresses Dante from one of the sepulchres. Their conversation is interrupted by Cavalcante, who anxiously inquires for his son Guido, the intimate friend of Dante. Farinata predicts the poet's exile, who is consoled by Virgil's assurance, that Beatrice will hereafter make known to him his course of life.

Now journeying onward through a narrow track  
 Between the sufferers and the walls that led,  
 My master went, and I just at his back.  
 "O sovereign virtue!" thus to him I said,  
 "Who at thy will these impious rounds among  
 Dost lead me; speak, and on my spirit shed  
 That light for which so ardently I long.  
 The people in yon sepulchres who lie,  
 Can they be seen? The covers all are hung  
 Above them now, and yet no guard is nigh." 10  
 "When from Jehoshaphat again they come,"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The valley of the Kidron, east of Jerusalem, is called the valley of Jehoshaphat, *Joel* iii. 2, 12, which contains a prediction

Clothed with the bodies they have left on high,  
 Them," said my master, "shall these vaults entomb,  
 With lids all fasten'd down. This burial plain  
 Yields Epicurus and his tribe their doom,  
 By whom the soul is with the body slain.<sup>1</sup>

Thy question then, and wish, though unreveal'd,  
 Here from within contentment soon shall gain."<sup>2</sup>  
 "Good guide," I answer'd, "I have not conceal'd  
 From thee my heart, save that my words are  
 few : 20

This fruit in me thy frequent counsels yield."  
 "O Tuscan, who alive art passing through  
 The fiery city, fair in thine address,

of judgment on the heathen and the restoration of Israel. The name signifies "the judgment of the Lord." The opinion which regards this valley as the scene of the Last Judgment, has extensively prevailed among Jews, Mohamedans, and Christians, and was the received opinion in Dante's time. It is expressed in *Piers Ploughman's Vision*, l. 12821. The valley was anciently a burial place, and is still resorted to by devout Hebrews, to die and lay their bones there.

<sup>1</sup> The philosophy of Epicurus asserted the casual formation and government of the universe, and the materiality and mortality of the soul. The allusion may also be to the fatal tendency of this doctrine on the morals and future condition of mankind. Since Dante mentions Epicurus and his followers first among those who occupy the sixth circle, or burying place of hell, this affords additional proof, that by the Heresiarchs and their followers he intends disbelievers, infidels, of every age and country.

<sup>2</sup> Dante asked to see, but secretly wished to converse with, some of those confined in the sepulchres.

Here (wilt thou?) rest awhile within my view.  
 Thou art—for thy soft accents prove no less—  
 A native of that land of noble fame  
 Which I perhaps did once too sorely press.”  
 Such were the sounds which on a sudden came  
 From one of those sarcophagi,<sup>1</sup> and I  
 Press'd near my guide, for fear my heart o'er-  
 came. 30

But he exclaim'd, “Return; why dost thou fly?  
 See Farinata there who now is risen :<sup>2</sup>  
 Him upwards from the waist thou may'st descry.”  
 My eye met his already, while we listen,  
 As he arose with breast and solemn brow,  
 Holding in high disdain the infernal prison :<sup>3</sup>  
 My leader's prompt and daring hands had now

<sup>1</sup> “A lamentable groan was heard from within the sepulchre,  
 And a voice emitted was borne to mine ears.”—*Eneid*. iii. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Farinata degli Uberti, a noble Florentine, leader of the Ghibelines when they obtained a signal victory over the Guelfs at Montaperto, near the river Arbia.

<sup>3</sup> And well he might, for it was hardly fair  
 That he, the patriot hero, should be shut  
 In that obscure and fiery dungeon where,  
 As Dante says, the blackest souls are put!  
 Did party-spirit help to send him there?  
 A great-soul'd man was Farinata; but  
 The poet was a Guelf; and so, of course,  
 He damn'd the Ghibelines without remorse.  
 When the Guelfs split into the two factions of Neri and

Push'd me among the tombs to him there laid,  
 And said, "In words compactly clear speak thou."  
 As soon as at his coffin's foot I staid,                   40  
 Gazing upon me, with an aspect stern,  
 "Who, pr'ythee, were thine ancestors?" he said:  
 And I related all he wish'd to learn,  
 Without concealment, eager to obey:  
 Whereat I saw his eyebrows upward turn.  
 "Fiercely opposed to me," he said, "were they,  
 Foes of my sires and friends, in act and heart;  
 Them, therefore, twice o'ercome, I chased away."<sup>1</sup>  
 "If they were chased, yet they from every part   50  
 Return'd," I said, "each time, despite their foes.  
 But your allies have not learnt well that art."  
 Then to our sight a shade beside him rose,

Bianchi, Dante joined the latter, who in some cases coalesced with the Ghibelines.

"I cannot forgive Dante," says Mr. Hallam, "for placing this patriot 'tra l'anime più nere' (Canto vi. 85) in one of the worst regions of his *Inferno*. The conversation of the poet with Farinata is very fine, and illustrative of Florentine history."—*Middle Ages*, vol. i, p. 393, note.

In Dante's defence it has been said, that Farinata denied the immortality of the soul, and belonged to the philosophical sect of the Epicureans. No doubt, this is what the poet intended to be understood: but Farinata's infidelity must have been *very* secret indeed, since Dante himself, when with Ciaccio, had no suspicion of it!—Canto vi. 79.

<sup>1</sup> In 1248, when they were driven out by the aid of Frederick II., and in 1260, at Montaperto.

Discover'd but as low as to the chin :<sup>1</sup>

Upon his knees he rested, I suppose.

He, looking round me, eager seem'd to win

Intelligence if some one else was near ;

But when all quench'd his hope, did thus begin,

Weeping the while ; “ If through this dungeon drear

Thou dost through loftiness of genius go,

Where is my son,<sup>2</sup> and why is he not here ?” 60

I said, “ Not of myself I come below ;

He who there waits conducts me through this  
place.

Him haply did your Guido rate but low.”

His words and mode of punishment soon chase

My ignorance, and this man's name supplied :

The fuller answer did my speech embrace.

All suddenly he rose and loudly cried :

“ What hast thou said, ‘ *He did* ?’ lives he not now ?

Is the sweet light then to his eyes denied ?”

<sup>1</sup> The soul of Cavalcante Cavalcanti, a noble Florentine of the Guelf party. He is said to have entertained the opinions of Epicurus, but more secretly than even Farinata !—BIAGIOLI.

<sup>2</sup> Guido Cavalcanti, son of Cavalcante, and son-in-law of Farinata, was an intimate friend of Dante (*Vita Nuova*). He was of a philosophical and elegant turn of mind. “ His poems,” Hallam says, “ in the diction and turn of thought, are sometimes not unworthy of Petrarch.”—*Middle Ages*. He died, either in exile at Serrazana, or soon after his return to Florence, December, 1300.

When he perceived a pause, remarking how 70  
Before my answer somewhat I delay'd,  
Supine he fell, nor show'd again his brow.  
But that magnanimous foremention'd shade  
Changed not his hue, nor stoop'd his side, or head,  
While I before his place of suffering stay'd.  
“And if they had not learn'd that art,” he said,  
The theme continuing of our first discourse,  
“That more torments me now than even this bed ;  
But how much that same art is worth, perforce  
Thou too shalt know, ere fifty times the queen 80  
Who governs here<sup>1</sup> resumes her brilliant course.  
And mayst thou see again the world serene,  
As thou shalt say what hath such harshness bred,  
As to my race in all your laws is seen.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The moon : mythologically called *Diva triformis*, daughter of Jupiter and Ceres, distinguished as Luna in Heaven, Diana on Earth, and Hecate or Proserpine in Hell. Thither Pluto carried her, in spite of her cries for help. Her mother demanded his punishment and her release ; but as Proserpine had plucked and eaten a pomegranate while walking in the Elysian fields (a tradition of Eve and the forbidden fruit !) Jupiter could only grant that she should remain but half the year in hell, and spend the other half with her mother on earth. The astronomical application of this myth is obvious ; and Farinata's assertion may be paraphrased, “Not fifty months will have passed, before thou shalt learn by sad experience, the difficulty of returning from exile to thy native city.”

<sup>2</sup> From every amnesty the Uberti had been excepted, and the bones of the family had been dug up and thrown into the Arno.

Then I to him ; “ The slaughter thou didst spread  
 Which tinged the Arbia with a crimson dye,<sup>1</sup>  
 To such decrees hath in our councils<sup>2</sup> led.”  
 He shook his head and answer’d with a sigh ;  
 “ I was not sole, nor moved in that affair  
 With others without cause to justify :           90  
 But sole I was amidst that council where  
 Florence was doom’d, while none her fate oppose ;  
 Yet then her cause I boldly champion’d there.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Ghibelines, aided by Frederick II., established their supremacy in Florence. Afterwards, finding their authority decline through the popularity of the Guelfs, they called in Manfred king of Naples : but the attempt being discovered, they were driven out, and obliged to take refuge in Siena. Manfred’s forces arriving, under the command of Farinata, they defeated the Guelfs at the river Arbia with such slaughter that they gave up the city for lost, and fled to Lucca.—MACHIAVELLI, *Hist. Fiorent.* lib. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, “ temple.” The Councils were held in the churches at Florence till the year 1251.—MACHIAV. *Hist. Fior.* ii. The coincidence or analogy between this custom and that of our own Parliament meeting in St. Stephen’s Chapel, cannot but strike every one.

<sup>3</sup> After the victory at Montaperto on the river Arbia, the Ghibelines, under the command of the Count Giordano, advanced to Florence and reduced it to obedience. A council of the Ghibeline cities was convened at Empoli, in which, to secure the preponderance of the Ghibelines in Tuscany, it was urgently demanded that Florence should be razed to the ground, and its people dispersed among the neighbouring towns. When this resolution was about to be adopted, Farinata rose and indignantly denounced such an abuse of the victory which he had just gained. He protested that he loved his country better than his party, and

Him then I pray'd; "As thou would'st wish repose  
 To thy posterity, the enigma clear  
 Which wraps my mind, in what thou dost disclose.  
 Now it appears, if I correctly hear,  
 That while the future is before you spread,  
 Things present never in your view appear."  
 "Like him who is by faulty vision led,"<sup>1</sup> 100

had incurred so many difficulties and dangers only in the hope of being restored to it: and he declared his resolution to join the friends of his country to fight in its defence against its enemies, rather than consent to its destruction. He was a man of great courage (*uomo di grande animo*) says Machiavelli; and the consideration of his authority put an end to that resolution, and brought them to concur with him in taking new measures for the preservation of the city.—*Ib.* and SIMONDI, *Ital. Rep.* ch. iv.

<sup>1</sup> "*Chi ha mala luce*;" "who has a bad light." The expression being general, it is difficult to decide what particular case the poet had in view in this comparison. The versions of this passage differ, but we have not seen any attempt at explanation. The allusion apparently is to *defective sight*, arising from the decreased convexity of the eye through age, which by increasing its focal distance, obliges us to hold further from us any object in order to our distinctly seeing it.

But it is not impossible that the allusion may have been to one of the following cases:—1. *Night*, which conceals what is on earth, but reveals to us the heavenly bodies, at immeasurable distances. 2. *Twilight*, or what in Scotland is called *gloaming*, which is not only deceptive to the sight, but by which, to a dis-tempered fancy, common objects may be transformed into ghosts and monsters. 3. A magical illusion, giving a false appearance to persons or things. Chaucer in his *Frankleines Tale*, taken from Boccaccio, has related an instance. "This species of deception is well known in Scotland as the *glamour* (*deceptio visus*),

We see," he said, "the things that are afar ;  
 So much of light is still upon us shed  
 By the Supreme ; but when their shadowy car  
 Approaches, or arrives, our knowledge flies :  
 Unknown to us all human interests are  
 If new, save what each new report supplies.  
 Hence thou mayst comprehend, that from the time  
 Which shuts the future's door our wisdom dies."<sup>1</sup>  
 Then, as repentant of my heedless crime,  
 I said, "Pray tell that fallen one, his son    110  
 Doth yet with nature's living chorus chime.  
 Tell him, though mute before, I did not shun

and was supposed to be a special attribute of the gipsies."—Sir W. SCOTT'S *Demonology*, &c. iv. 4. Or lastly, Dante may have referred, like Milton, to the *Ignis-fatuus* or Will-o-th'-wisp.

——— "A wandering fire,  
 Which oft, they say, some *evil spirit* attends,  
 Hovering and blazing with *delusive light*,  
 Misleads the amazed night-wanderer from his way,  
 To bogs and mire."—*Paradise Lost*, ix. 634.

We have adopted, but not without hesitation, what seems to us the preferable interpretation, leaving the reader to choose : and if we have erred, we are not willing to incur the risk of going further astray by following up the subject ; warned by the example of the Italian translator of *Manfred*, who turned "the *wisp* on the morass" into "a bundle of straw !"

<sup>1</sup> Thus in the *Odysey* (lib. xi.), Ulysses descends to Hades to consult Tiresias respecting the future : at the same time, the Shades of Agamemnon and Achilles desire to know of Ulysses the condition of their surviving sons.

To answer, but was influenced by the thought  
Whose error now thou hast thrown light upon.”

My guide recall'd me then, so I besought

That shade that he would quickly let me know

Who dwelt with him. And I this answer caught :

“ More than a thousand here with me lie low :

Here lies the second Fredrick inurn'd,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The emperor Frederick II., son of Henry VI., and grandson of Barbarossa. By his mother Constantia, daughter of William the Good, king of Sicily, who though a professed nun, had been obliged to marry the emperor Henry, Frederick was carefully educated. He possessed extraordinary learning, and understood all the languages spoken in his dominions—Greek, Latin, German, Italian, French, and Arabic. Next to Charlemagne, he was the most distinguished prince of the middle ages. Though opposed by rival kings, a turbulent aristocracy, a powerful democracy, an arrogant hierarchy, and the terrors of excommunication and interdiction, he reigned forty years, and held the sceptre to the last. He married Yolande, daughter of John of Brienne, king of Jerusalem; and in 1224 founded a university at Naples. He set out on the Crusade, but the pestilence which raged in his army prevented its prosecution; and on his return he was excommunicated, and his kingdom laid under interdiction, by Gregory IX. Yet notwithstanding the death of his wife in child-birth, he set out again in 1228, and by a treaty with Kamal, sultan of Egypt, acquired possession of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, with a ten years' truce, so that this was the most successful of all the Crusades against the infidels. The Pope, to thwart him, had advised the patriarch of Jerusalem and the three orders of knights to oppose him in everything; had betrayed his counsels to the sultan, who gave him the first notice of the treachery by showing him the papal correspondence; had caused his hereditary estates to be invaded, and placed his kingdom of Jerusalem under interdiction. Frederick made his public entry into the city, and placed the

The Cardinal,<sup>1</sup> and—more I may not show.” 120

crown on his own head, as no priest would say mass. On Palm-Sunday, 1239, Gregory again thundered against him the sentence of excommunication, and the next year Frederick entered the Papal States, and might easily have taken Rome, but was restrained by religious considerations. Accused of heresy, he in vain submitted his faith to examination; and Innocent IV. pronounced on him the dreadful anathema, absolving his subjects from their oaths, and including in the same sentence all who should dare to obey him. But Frederick showed that he was still an emperor: he justified himself to the princes of Europe, and met in the field of battle the enemies thus incited to attack him. But his dearest friends and most trusted councillors betrayed him: his son, like Absalom, rebelled against him; and, like David, he mourned his death, and desired to die in peace. But Innocent rejected the most reasonable terms of reconciliation: again Frederick was victorious, and he would probably have humbled Innocent, as he had humbled Gregory; but death terminated his career at Fiorentino, December 13th, 1250, in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and forty-first of his reign.

He has been represented as a fierce persecutor of the Church, a heretic, and an infidel. We doubt the justice of these charges. The book ascribed to him, “Of the three impostors,” has been proved by Mosheim and others to be a clumsy forgery, of a date long subsequent to his time. Matthew Paris, though a monk, evidently disbelieved most of the stories by which his enemies endeavoured to blacken his character, and has not only spoken highly of him, but asserted that he died remarkably contrite and humble, after having received absolution. We are far from regarding him as a faultless character; and our sympathies are more with the Guelfs than the Ghibelines of those times: but that Dante should have placed him with the heresiarchs in hell, only proves that the great poet was either misinformed of the facts, or biassed by party spirit; and that he did not wholly escape the taint of superstition, so prevalent in his age.

<sup>1</sup> Ottaviano Ubaldini, a Florentine, archdeacon and procurator

He disappear'd ; and I my footsteps turn'd  
     Towards him, the ancient poet, pondering o'er  
     That speech from which my adverse fate I learn'd.  
 My guide moved on and walking spake once more,  
     “ Why art thou with such new amazement seized ? ”  
     And I related Farinata's lore.  
 “ Lay up within thy memory what he phrased,  
     To thee so adverse, ” then that sage did say ;  
     “ And now attend ; ” — and he his finger raised —  
 “ When thou shalt be before the gentle ray     130  
     Of her whose bright and beaming eye sees all,  
     Then wilt thou know thy life's appointed way. ”  
 Now to the left he turn'd ; and from the wall  
     We towards the middle of that region went ;  
     Our sloping path did towards a valley fall,  
 While even thus high its noisome stench was sent.

of the church of Bologna, made cardinal in 1245, by Innocent IV., and died in 1273. He was called, by way of distinction and pre-eminence, “ *The Cardinal*,” on account of his great influence. Trusted in the most important affairs, he employed his whole authority on behalf of the Ghibeline party. He is reported to have said, “ If there is such a thing as a soul, I have lost mine for the Ghibelines. ” This brings to mind the story of the Cardinal de la Roche Guyon, a celebrated epicure, and his confessor. When taken ill, the cardinal exclaimed, “ *Ah, mon ami ! je sens les tourmens de l'enfer !* ” (“ Ah, my friend ! I feel the torments of hell ! ”) To which the confessor's reply was, “ *Quoi ! déjà ?* ” (“ What ! already ? ”) The anecdote has also been related of the Cardinal de Retz and his physician.

## CANTO XI.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Dante, having reached the verge of a rocky precipice overlooking the seventh circle, is annoyed by the stench exhaled from below. Retreating for shelter behind a lofty tomb, he reads thereon the epitaph of Pope Anastasius. The poets pausing to inure themselves to the foul atmosphere, Virgil takes the opportunity of explaining to Dante the divisions and arrangements of the remaining circles. The poet having mentioned some doubts, they are cleared up by his guide; after which the two proceed in company to the top of the path which leads down to the seventh circle.

UPON the utmost verge of a high shore  
 Which girds the deep with craggy rocks hung  
 over,  
 We came where fiercer torments are in store;  
 And there such horrible excess discover  
 Of stench which that profound abyss up-threw,<sup>1</sup>  
 Backward we turn'd, retreating to the cover

<sup>1</sup> The stench arising from the next or seventh circle, where murderers are steeped in blood.

“O, my offence is rank; it smells to heaven;  
 It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,  
 A brother's murder!”—*Hamlet*, iii. 3.

Of a high tomb, where I a writing view,

Which said; "Pope Anastasius here I keep,<sup>1</sup>

And him Photinus from the right way drew."<sup>2</sup>

"'Tis fit we pause ere we descend the steep;      10

<sup>1</sup> Dante has been accused of confounding this pope with the emperor of that name, so as to relieve the secular potentate at the expense of the pontiff. We do not believe him to have been capable of such injustice. It is true, the Greek Emperor Anastasius, who reigned from A.D. 492 to 518, a period comprehending the pontificate of Anastasius II., has been accused of Manicheism; but this may have been a calumny of his enemies, on account of his not acceding to the terms on which a union of the Eastern and Western Churches was proposed. (See DU PIN, *Church History*, cent. vi., ch. iii.) Pope Anastasius II., on the other hand, laboured to terminate the separation between the two churches. He was a native of Rome, elected pope in 496. He wrote a congratulatory letter to Clovis on his conversion to Christianity, prohibited the combats with wild beasts in the public shows, and died in 498. The grounds of the charge here made against him do not appear; and both Baronius and Bellarmine deny its justice. It therefore seems that, by placing him in hell, Dante would intimate his hostility to the office itself, and his opinion that by the end of the fifth century the corruptions of the Papacy had entitled its head, thus drawn from the right way, to be entombed magnificently with the great heresiarchs in hell.

<sup>2</sup> Photinus was a native of Cappadocia, and Bishop of Sirmich. He had been a disciple of Marcellus, who was accused of Sabellianism. Photinus denied that the Word is a distinct person from the Father, and that the term Son of God is applicable to Christ before his human birth. This error was condemned by the Eastern Bishops in a Council at Antioch, A.D. 345, and by those of the West in the Council of Milan, in 346. Photinus was banished under the Emperor Julian, and again under Valentinian. He died in Galatia, A.D. 376.—DU PIN, *Hist. of Church*, cent. iv. ch. iii.; cent. v. ch. vi.

Then first our sense, to this dire breath inured  
 Somewhat, will bear it with disgust less deep."  
 So spake my guide ; and I, " Be it secured  
 By some amends, that time shall not be lost."  
 And he, " For that I care, be thou assured.  
 My son, within these rocks which we almost  
 Have touched," he then began, " are circlets three,  
 Descending by degrees, like those we've cross'd ;  
 All with accursèd spirits fill'd ; but thee  
 That the mere sight hereafter may suffice,      20  
 List how and wherefore they in durance be.  
 Of every vice which makes heaven's anger rise,  
 The end is injury ; such end, 'tis shown,  
 By force or fraud another's bane supplies.  
 But fraud, an ill peculiarly man's own,  
 Displeases God the most, hence lower fall  
 The fraudulent, and with deeper anguish groan.<sup>1</sup>  
 And first the violent have this circle—all :  
 But since force may be done to persons three,  
 Three rounds divide it, each with severing wall.      30  
 To God, himself, his neighbour—man may be  
 Unjust through force,—to them or theirs, I say ;

<sup>1</sup> "That which is true, simple, and sincere, is best adapted to human nature." "Since injury may be done in two ways, by fraud or violence, fraud seems as if it were fox-like, violence the property of a lion: but fraud is the most hateful."—Cic., *De Officiis*, lib. i., cap. 13 and 23.

As you shall hear me prove convincingly.  
 By violence, or treacherous wounds, men slay  
 Their neighbour ; or his property destroy  
 By wasting, arson, or injurious prey :  
 Hence homicides, and he who smites to annoy,  
 Spoilers and robbers all in different bands,  
 The first round holds, its torments to employ.  
 A man may on himself lay violent hands,       40  
 And on his goods ; hence in the second round  
 Filty with fruitless penitence he stands.  
 Those who deprive themselves of life, confound  
 Their goods by waste or gambling, or lament  
 When they have cause for joy, in this are found.  
 Force to the Deity may man present  
 With heart profane, or blasphemies express,  
 Despising nature and her bounty sent :  
 Thus doth the lower round its seal impress  
 On Sodom and Cahors,<sup>1</sup> and all who speak       50  
 Of God with inward scorn and wilfulness.  
 Fraud, which its bite will on each conscience wreak,

<sup>1</sup> These two cities are mentioned as examples and types of their respective sins. Cahors, a city of Guienne, had long been regarded as infamous for usury. In the thirteenth century the money-lenders of England were called Cahorsians, because the first who carried on that business here were from Cahors. Matthew Paris complains most grievously of their extortion and rapacity.—*Hist. Major*, A.D. 1235. Boccaccio says that in Florence the word *Caorsino* was used synonymously with *asuario*, usurer.

A man on those may practice who confide,  
 And those whose confidence he does not seek.  
 This last-named method seems but to divide  
 The single band of love which nature plights :  
 Hence in the circle next to this reside  
 Hypocrisy, and flattery, magic rites,  
 Falsehood and robbery, simony unjust,  
 Procurers, cozeners, and such filthy sprights. 60  
 But by the other mode that love is lost  
 Which nature makes, and what may after be  
 Therewith conjoined, creating special trust :  
 Whence in the lesser circle, where thou'lt see  
 O'er the world's centre gloomy Dis resides,  
 Each traitor is consumed eternally.  
 Then said I, " Master, thy discourse provides  
 Clear information, and distinctly shows  
 This dungeon and the people whom it hides.  
 But tell me; those whom the rank marsh o'erflows, 70  
 Swept by the wind, beat by the showers that fall,  
 And those who meet with rasping tongue as foes ;  
 Wherefore within the city's red-hot wall  
 Are they not punish'd, if God's wrath they bear ?  
 If not, why are 'they in such plight at all ?"  
 And thus he answer'd ; " Wherefore wanders there  
 So far beyond its wont thy mind withal ?  
 Or at what meaning aim'st thou elsewhere ?

Dost thou forget thine 'Ethics' ?<sup>1</sup> Pray recall  
How those three dispositions thou hast had 80  
Therein explain'd, which heaven forbids to all ;  
Incontinence, and malice, and the mad  
Brutality ; and how incontinence  
Offends God less, nor brings reproach so sad.  
If thou this judgment weigh with thy good sense,  
Remembering who they are without the walls,  
Condemn'd above to useless penitence,  
Thou'lt clearly see why from these felon thralls  
Justice Divine has sever'd them, and why  
Less provocation for less vengeance calls." 90  
" O Sun, that healest every troubled eye,  
Such joy I feel when thou my doubts dost solve,  
That they not less than knowledge gratify.  
Yet backward for a while," I said, " revolve  
What thou hast said, how usury offends  
Celestial bounty, and that doubt resolve."  
He said, " Philosophy, when one attends,  
Points out, not merely in a single part,  
How Nature takes her course and shapes her ends  
From Intellect Divine, and from its art. 100

<sup>1</sup> The *Ethics* of Aristotle. The passage referred to is, "Respecting morals, there are three sorts of things to be avoided, malice, incontinence, and brutishness."—*Ethic. Nichomach*, lib. vii. c. 1.

If thou thy ' *Physics* ' read attentively,<sup>1</sup>  
 This truth, ere many a page, it will impart,  
 That Art, far as it hath ability,  
 But follows Nature with a pupil's pace ;  
 Thus must your Art, as 't were, God's grandchild  
 be.

By these two, if thou Genesis retrace,<sup>2</sup>  
 From the beginning it was meet for man,  
 To guard his life and benefit his race.  
 But since the usurer takes another plan,  
 Nature herself and Nature's followers, lo,     110  
 He scorns ; of other hope the partizan.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The *Physics* of Aristotle, lib. ii. cap. 2. "Art imitates Nature."

<sup>2</sup> "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."—*Gen.* i. 28. "And the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it."—ii. 15. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground."—iii. 19.

<sup>3</sup> The *sin* of "usury," so severely denounced in sacred Scripture, is that of the unfeeling and inhuman creditor, and of him who takes *unfair* advantage of other people's necessities. Where *lawful* interest for the *use* of money is intended, the word is also employed. "Thou oughtest to have put my money to the exchangers, that at my coming I might receive mine own with *usury*." Dante's political economy, like his astronomy, may be considered somewhat obsolete; but no discoveries in science, no

But follow me, for now I wish to go ;

The Fishes mounting o'er the horizon glide,

O'er the north-west the Northern Wain sinks low,<sup>1</sup>

And there our path descends the rocky side."

improvement in the commercial systems of nations, can supersede the principles of equity and justice, which are eternal in their obligation and unchangeable in their importance.

<sup>1</sup> The constellation Pisces and Ursa Major are on opposite meridians : and as the sun was in Aries at the time of the vision, it follows that when Pisces was rising, and Ursa Major ("the Northern Wain"), which never sets, was over the north-west, it was within two hours of sunrise.

## CANTO XII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

On the brink of the precipice lies the Minotaur, whom Virgil rouses by sarcasm and paralyses with rage, enabling Dante meanwhile to gain the descent, over which by a rugged pathway they enter the seventh circle. In its first round, those who have injured their fellow-creatures by violence stand, at different levels according to the degree of their guilt, in a river of boiling blood. On the bank the Centaurs run to and fro, transfixing with arrows any who emerge too far. They oppose the progress of the poets, but Chiron, their chief, appeased by Virgil, sends Nessus to show them the ford and carry Dante over it. Nessus points out several tyrants and robbers who are suffering there.

The place was wild and such the object there,  
 Where o'er the steep the pathway downward bent,  
 To which we came, in every aspect drear.  
 As is that ruin on this side of Trent,<sup>1</sup>  
 Which struck in flank the Adige from above,  
 By earthquake, or for want of buttress, rent.

<sup>1</sup> The side of Trent nearest Italy. The hill of Monte Barco, between Treves and Trent, having been shaken by an earthquake, or undermined by the river Adige, parted in the middle, and, one part falling across the river, turned it for a time from its usual channel.

When from the mountain-top 'twas seen to move,  
 The shiver'd rock so heap'd the plain that day,  
 That one above thereby some path might prove.

Such our descent of that deep rocky way ;            10

And o'er the brink of the disrupted road

The infamy of Crete extended lay,<sup>1</sup>

The simulated heifer's monstrous brood.

Himself he bit on seeing us advance,

Like one who feels of inward rage the goad.

Then my sage leader cried to him, "Perchance

Thou think'st the Duke of Athens now is here,

Whose arm on earth quell'd thy exorbitance."<sup>2</sup>

Away, thou brute, this man doth not appear

Conducted hither by thy sister's arts,            20

But to behold your penalties severe."

Like to a bull that desperately darts,

When he hath just received the mortal blow,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Minotaur, half man, half bull: described by Virgil, *Æneid.* vi. 24, 30.

<sup>2</sup> Theseus, the son of Ægeus king of Athens, rescued his country from the ignominious tribute of seven noble youths and seven virgins, exacted annually by the Cretan monarch, for the murder of his son Androgeus by the Athenians, and given to be devoured by the Minotaur. Ariadne, the king's daughter, admiring the manly beauty of Theseus, gave him a clue which guided him through the labyrinth, where, after having killed the monster, it brought him safely back.—PLUTARCH, *Theseus*; OVID, *Metam.* viii. 130.

<sup>3</sup> "As when a strong young man, the sharp axe wielding,

That cannot walk, but this and that way starts ;  
The Minotaur I now saw plunging so.

That sage exclaim'd, "Run to the passage straight;  
And while he rages thus, descend below."

So by those broken rocks we from that height

Now downward made our way : beneath my tread  
They often shook, with that unusual weight. 30

I musing went : " Perhaps thy thoughts," he said,

Are of this ruin'd steep, thus guarded by  
The brutal anger now by me struck dead.

Now therefore know, that formerly when I

Descended hither to the lower hell,

This rock had not yet fallen from on high.

Not long before (if I distinguish well)

He came who carried off the mighty prey

Of Dis from that first round; the deep foul dell

Through all its confines trembled so that day, 40

The universe, as I conjecture, yearn'd

In loving sympathy ;<sup>1</sup> whereby, some say.

Smitheth behind the ears a bullock of the pasture,  
Through skin and muscle cleaving; he leaping forward  
falleth."—HOMER, *Iliad*, xvii. 522.

<sup>1</sup> See Canto iv. l. 54, note. " Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. . . . And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened."—*Matt.* xxvii. 45, 51, 52. In the valley of the Arno this event is still traditionally referred to, to account for the

The world has oft been into Chaos turn'd.<sup>1</sup>

And in that moment here, and more elsewhere,  
This old precipitous rock was overturn'd.

But fix thine eyes upon yon valley, where  
The river of blood approacheth us, which hath  
All who by force hurt others, boiling there.<sup>2</sup>

O blind cupidity! O foolish wrath!

By which in this life we are goaded so,       50  
And then for ever plunged in such dire bath.

I saw an ample foss curved like a bow,  
As that whole plain it stretch'd out to embrace,  
For so my courteous guide had let me know.  
And there between it and the steep rock's base,  
Centaur's in file and arm'd with arrows hied,  
As they on earth were wont to urge the chase.<sup>3</sup>

fissures of the rocks. Addison saw "at Cajeta the rock of marble said to have been cleft by an earthquake at our Saviour's death. There is written over the chapel door that leads into the crack, 'Ecce terræ motus factus est magnus.'" In the Holy Land we find the same tradition.

<sup>1</sup> A singular anticipation of Cuvier's *Theory of the Earth*; said to have been the opinion of Empedocles.

<sup>2</sup> A similar punishment is assigned to homicide's in the *Vision of Albericus*, sect. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Some derive the name from *κεντῶν ταύρους*, *goaded bulls*; because the Centaurs hunted wild bulls, &c. Homer says nothing of their equine form, which must therefore be considered a myth of later invention. Lucian describes a picture by Zeuxis, who flourished about B.C. 468, of a female Centaur suckling her twins, one held in her arms at the breast, the other sucking like a colt!

Each made a halt, when our descent they spied ;

She appears with the body and limbs of a beautiful Thessalian mare, unbroken and unused to the saddle ; the upper part that of a woman of exquisite beauty, except that the ears are those of a Satyr. The union is so managed that you scarcely perceive where one animal form blends into the other. The male Centaur looks down from a rock, but is only half visible, his aspect formidable, his hair tossed in wild confusion ; and he appears rough, shaggy, and savage, though smiling—an untamed child of the desert.

Egypt has always been famed for her horses. When the first Egyptians who colonized Greece had landed in Thessaly, they appeared on horseback, and the terrified inhabitants fled, imagining that they were about to be attacked by monsters half man half horse. It is said, that on the discovery of America by the Spaniards, many of the natives made a similar mistake. It is natural to ascribe the fable of the Centaurs to some such origin. But a second explanation is offered. The Thessalians were the first Greeks who employed cavalry, in a country where the horse was comparatively unknown ; and their subjugation of this noble animal was so complete as to excite amazement, and gave birth to metaphor and allegory, like that of Shakspeare, who makes the King, in *Hamlet*, say of Lamord,

“ He grew unto his seat ;  
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,  
As he had been incorpsed and demi-natured  
With the brave beast.”—*Hamlet*, act iv. sc. 7.

Virgil thus alludes to these fabulous creatures :—

“ Bacchus gave occasion for the offence : and he subdued  
In death the famous Centaurs, Rhætus and Pholus  
And great Hylæus—threatening over the bowl the Lapithæ.”  
*Georgic*. ii. 455.

Of the entrance into Hell, among other monstrous forms, he says,

“ The Centaurs stable at the doors.”—*Æneid*. vi. 486.

And in *Æneid*. vii. 674, in allusion to the myth of their having sprung from Ixion's embrace of the cloud instead of Juno, he calls them *nubigenæ*, “ cloud-born.”

And from the troop three issued forth, with bows  
And arrows first selected; then one cried 60  
Thus, from afar addressing us; "What woes  
Come ye to suffer who descend this coast?  
Speak—thence; or from this bow the arrow goes."  
My master said to him, "We will accost  
With our fit answer Chiron, there at hand.<sup>1</sup>  
Quick was thy temper always to thy cost."  
Then whispering me, "See Nessus foremost stand,<sup>2</sup>  
Who for the lovely Dejanira died,  
But had the vengeance he himself had plann'd.  
The midmost, whose own breast by him is eyed, 70  
Is the great Chiron who Achilles train'd;

<sup>1</sup> A Centaur famous for his knowledge of music, medicine, and archery. He instructed Achilles, Esculapius, Hercules, &c. Euripides describes him as a most pious man (*Iph. in Aulid.* 926). He was accidentally wounded in the knee with a poisoned arrow, by Hercules, when in pursuit of the Centaurs. Hercules flew to his assistance, but the wound was incurable. He was placed by Jupiter among the constellations, under the name of Sagittarius.

<sup>2</sup> He offered violence to Dejanira, whom Hercules had entrusted to his care, with orders to carry her across the river Evenus. Hercules saw from the opposite shore the distress of his wife, and let fly a poisoned arrow, which pierced the Centaur to the heart. Nessus, as he expired, gave the tunic which he wore to Dejanira, assuring her that from the poisoned blood which had stained it, it had received the power of recovering the affections of a strayed husband. Of this she afterwards made a present to Hercules, to whom, on his putting it on, it proved fatal.—SOPHOCLES, *Trach.* 464; OVID. *Met.* ix. 1.

Pholus the next, so full of angry pride.<sup>1</sup>  
 Around the foss move thousands unrestrain'd,  
 Shooting each soul that from the blood in view  
 Leaps higher than is for its fault ordain'd."  
 We to those savage swift ones nearer drew,  
 And Chiron took a shaft, and put his beard  
 Back with the notch, and o'er his cheek-bone  
 threw.  
 And he, when thus he his great mouth had bared,  
 Said to his mates ; " Know you that he whose  
 tread 80  
 Is hindmost moves what his feet touch ? So fared  
 Never before the footsteps of the dead."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He hospitably entertained Hercules in his expedition against the Erimanthean boar, but refused him wine, since that which he had belonged to the other Centaurs. Hercules immediately set the cask abroach and drank the wine. On the Centaurs endeavouring to force an entrance into the house, Hercules killed the greater part of them. Pholus, in paying their funeral rites, was mortally wounded by one of the poisoned arrows, as he drew it from the body of a Centaur. Hercules, unable to cure him, buried him when dead, and called the mountain which contained his tomb Pholæ.

<sup>2</sup> "Meanwhile Hermod was proceeding on his mission. For the space of nine days and as many nights, he rode through deep glens so dark that he could not discern anything, until he arrived at the river Gjöll, which he passed over on a bridge covered with glittering gold. Madgudur, the maiden who kept the bridge, asked him his name and lineage, telling him that the day before five bands of dead persons had ridden over the bridge, and did not shake it so much as he alone. 'But,' she added, 'thou hast

And my good guide, who had by this time gone  
 Close to his breast where the two natures wed,  
 Replied; "Indeed he lives; by me alone,  
 Not for delight, but through necessity,  
 Thus must the gloomy vale to him be shown.<sup>1</sup>  
 She who consign'd this office new to me  
 Celestial halleluias left above.  
 No felon spirit I, no robber he. 90  
 But by that virtue in whose might I move  
 My feet along such savage pathway, spare  
 One of thy train who to the ford will prove  
 A faithful guide, and on his back will bear  
 My comrade o'er it; for he is no spright,  
 And cannot fly across it through the air."  
 Chiron bent o'er his shoulder to the right,  
 And said to Nessus; "Turn and be their guide: <sup>2</sup>

not death's hue on thee; why, then, ridest thou here on thy way  
 to Hel?"

"I ride to Hel," answered Hermod, "to seek Baldur."—*The Prose Edda: Mallett's Northern Antiquities*, p. 448. Bohm, 1847.

<sup>1</sup> See Canto viii. l. 85, note.

"But the commands of the gods, which compel me now  
 to travel

Through these shades, these regions horrid, filthy, and this  
 night profound,

Their mandate required."—*Æneid*, vi. 461.

<sup>2</sup> Dante assigns to Nessus the office of carrying him across the  
 ford, on the authority of Sophocles and Ovid:—

"He who across the deep river Evenus

Should any stop them, put that troop to flight.”  
 Now, with our trusty escort, on we stride      100  
 Along the shore of the red bubbling flood,  
 Where the boil'd culprits with loud clamours cried.  
 One band up to the eyebrows plunged I view'd :<sup>1</sup>  
 And the great Centaursaid; “They're tyrants these,  
 Who spent their lives in robbery and blood :  
 Here they lament their cruel injuries.  
 Here's Alexander, Dionysius there,<sup>2</sup>  
 Who Sicily fill'd so long with miseries.

Carried passengers in his hands for hire, neither using  
 The nimble oar to row with, nor the sail-wafted vessel.”

SOPH. *Trach.* 568.

“Nessus was there, both powerful of limbs, and in the fords  
 experienced.”—*Metam.* ix. 108.

<sup>1</sup> “Human beings of both sexes, and of all ranks and ages; some wholly immersed, some up to their eyes, others to their lips and necks, others to their breasts, and others again only to their knees and legs.”—The knight Owen's *Vision of St. Patrick's Purgatory*. ROG. WEND. vol. i. 516.

<sup>2</sup> Not Alexander the Great, so celebrated by our poet in his *Convito*, but Alexander, tyrant of Pheræ, in Thessaly, whose atrocities are recorded by Plutarch and others. He treacherously imprisoned Pelopidas, but was at length killed by his own wife and her brothers, whom he had outraged: B.C. 357. The tyrant of Syracuse, Dionysius, had risen from the condition of a private citizen. The cruelty of his government rendered him hateful to his subjects: hence he became so suspicious that he would not admit his wife or children into his private apartments without their being first searched; and never trusted a barber to shave him, but always burnt his beard.

That forehead cluster'd o'er with such black hair

Is Ezzelin,<sup>1</sup> Obizzo<sup>2</sup> by his side, 110

<sup>1</sup> Eccelino Romano, lord of Bassano and Piedmont, got himself elected Captain of the people by the republics of Verona, Vicenza, Padua, Feltre, and Belluno. The authority thus derived from the people he soon changed into a frightful tyranny: suspecting all who were distinguished or eminent among their fellow-citizens, he cast them into prison, and there sought by the most excruciating tortures to wring from them what might justify his suspicions; and then registered such names as might escape their lips in the agony of torture, to supply fresh victims of his tyranny. The executioner was kept constantly at work: yet eight prisons in Padua were always full. Alexander IV. proclaimed a crusade against him, in which the Marquis D'Este, and the troops of Bologna, Mantua, and Ferrara, with other nobles and cities, engaged. Padua was taken by the crusaders, with the legate at their head, and barbarously pillaged for seven days. From each of the two largest prisons 300 captives were liberated, and six others were found crowded with miserable objects of both sexes and every age, mutilated or deprived of sight. Eccelino, on hearing that Padua was taken, disarmed and imprisoned 11,000 Paduans of his own army, of whom all but 200 perished by hunger, thirst, cold, or on the scaffold. His courage, skill, and military talents, together with his intriguing abilities, protracted the war three years, and would probably have brought him successfully through it, but for the complicated treachery by which he disgusted his Ghibeline associates, who united in an alliance with the Guelfs for his destruction. At length hunted down, abandoned by his troops, wounded and taken prisoner, he refused all surgical assistance, tore the bandages from his bleeding limbs, and thus desperately expired.—SIMONDI, *Hist. Ital. Rep.*

<sup>2</sup> Obizzo, Marquis of Ancona and Ferrara, of the noble family of Este, by every species of tyranny and oppression had accumulated a vast fortune; and, in 1293, is said to have been smothered with a pillow by his own son, who for this unnatural act is called by Dante his step-son.

Of Este, with the flaxen ringlets fair :  
On earth indeed he by his step-son died.”

Then to the bard I turn'd, and thus he said,  
“I will be second now, let him be guide.”

A little further on the Centaur stay'd

Over a crowd that from the throat had left  
That fountain. On one side a lonely shade

He show'd us, and spoke thus ; “The heart he eleft

Even in God's bosom, which upon the Thames

Of its due honour yet is unbereft.”<sup>1</sup> 120

Then others from the river, of their frames

<sup>1</sup> Guy, son of Simon de Montfort, and grandson of that earl who headed the crusade against the Albigenses. Simon stood so high in favour with our Henry III. that he married the king's sister, and was created Earl of Leicester in 1239. He led the barons in the war against the king, and was defeated and slain at Evesham, A.D. 1266. Five years afterwards, a conclave of fifteen cardinals was sitting at Viterbo, in Italy, for the purpose of electing a Pope. The interest of the election had drawn together several royal personages, among whom was the English prince Henry d'Almagne, son of Richard earl of Cornwall, and nephew of Henry III. This young prince, while kneeling at divine service, was murdered before the high altar by Guy of Montfort and his brother, in revenge for the death of their father in battle, and at the very time when he was labouring to make their peace with the king. The murderers escaped by taking refuge in the church of the Franciscans.—HUME, *Hist. Eng.* xii.; HOLINSHED, *Chron.* A.D. 1272; BLACOW'S *Barons' Wars*, p. 311. Villani says, “The heart of Henry was placed in a golden cup, and set on a pillar at London-bridge over the Thames, for a memorial of the outrage to the English.”

Held up in sight the head and all the chest :  
Here many a face my recognition claims.  
Thus more and more the blood in depth decreased  
Until the feet alone it cover'd o'er :  
And here we had to cross it. "As thou seest  
The boiling waves diminish more and more  
On this side," said the Centaur ; "be thou sure,  
On that in like proportion sinks their floor,  
Until it reaches to that depth secure 130  
Where it is fit that tyranny should groan.  
Eternal Justice here, their pangs to endure,  
That Atilla, the scourge of earth,<sup>1</sup> has thrown,

<sup>1</sup> Attila, in German Etzel, king of the Huns. At first he shared the supreme authority with his brother Bleda. The victorious hordes of Huns, from the East, had spread from the Volga to the Danube. Under Attila they twice compelled Theodosius to purchase an ignominious peace. The bravest and most skilful of military leaders, by the Huns he was believed to possess the sword of their God of War, which conferred a title to universal empire. He pretended a divine command for the murder of his brother, which he celebrated as a victory. He styled himself "*The Scourge of God* for the chastisement of the human race." The Eastern and Western empires paid him tribute ; the Ostro-Goths, Vandals, Gepidæ, and part of the Franks, united under his banners ; Germany, Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece, submitted to his arms. On crossing the Rhine to make war on Theodoric king of the Ostro-Goths, he was defeated with great slaughter, 300,000 having fallen on both sides. He next invaded Italy, spreading his ravages through Lombardy. His death was appropriate and singular. On the night of his marriage with Ildico, a beautiful young lady, he expired by suffocation from the rupture of a blood-vessel,

Pyrrhus<sup>1</sup> and Sextus :<sup>2</sup> and extorts for aye  
 Tears by the boiling flood unlock'd alone,  
 From Rinier Pazzo and Corneto ; they  
 On peaceful travellers unsheath'd the sword,  
 And carried war into each public way."<sup>3</sup>  
 Back then turn'd Nessus and recross'd the ford.

A.D. 453. A coffin of gold, inclosed in one of silver and an outer one of iron, contained his body ; and, to keep the place of his interment a secret, the slaves who dug the grave were strangled.

<sup>1</sup> Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, B.C. 280, invited by the Tarentines, invaded Italy. In his first battle he defeated the Romans ; in his second both sides claimed the victory. He left Italy to assist the Sicilians against the Carthaginians, whom he twice defeated, and took most of their towns. But his conduct growing tyrannical, the Sicilians were glad when he departed for Italy, where, with an army of 50,000, he was defeated by 20,000 Romans under Manius Curius. Leaving Italy for Epirus, B.C. 274, he attacked Antigonus of Macedonia ; but in a combat at Argos was killed by a tile which a woman threw from the top of a house, as he was fighting with her son and just going to run him through. His head was presented to Antigonus, who gave his remains a magnificent funeral, and presented his ashes to his son Helenus, B.C. 272.—PLUTARCH: LIVY, xiii. 14 ; HOR. *Od.* 3, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Sextus, the son of Tarquin, and ravisher of Lueretia. See Canto iv. l. 125, and LIVY, i. 57, &c. Some suppose that the allusion is to Sextus Pompeius, who spared the life of Octavius when in his power, and was afterwards defeated by him in a naval engagement, and his fleet of 350 ships nearly destroyed.

<sup>3</sup> Rinier da Corneto and Rinier Pazzo, two noblemen, the latter of the Pazzi family in Florence, took the opportunity which the party contentions of their country afforded them, to indulge their natural ferocity and avarice ; making the public roads of Italy the scenes of frequent robberies and murders.

## CANTO XIII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Arrived in the second round of the seventh eirele, Dante finds himself in a dense and savage wood. Here those who have committed violence on themselves are changed into knotted and stunted trees, which are preyed on by the harpies. Among them Piero della Vigne tells his own sad story, and explains the transformation of the Suicides and their final doom. Here also are punished the wasters of their own substance, two of whom, Lano and Jacopo da St. Andrea, are seen chased by hell-dogs, and the hindmost torn in pieces. A Florentine who had hung himself, expounds the cause of his country's calamities.

NESSUS had not yet reach'd the other side  
 When on a wood we enter'd, where we view  
 No path, nor any track of steps descried ;  
 No green leaves had it, but of dusky hue ;  
 No goodly boughs, but gnarl'd, involved, and rude ;  
 No fruits were there, but thorns envenom'd grew.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> " Thence I came into another valley, far more terrible, full of very slender trees, like spears, of sixty cubits length, the heads of which were all sharp and thorny, like stakes."—*Vision of Alberic*. sect. 4.

Not such rough tangled branches has that wood  
 Of savage beasts who hate the cultured field,  
 Betwixt Corneto and Cecina's flood.<sup>1</sup>  
 Place for the filthy harpies' nests they yield,     10  
 Who chased the Trojans from the Strophades,  
 While boding sad of future harm they peal'd.<sup>2</sup>  
 Broad wings with human neck and face have these,  
 Claw'd feet, and their great bellies feather'd; they  
 Make lamentation on these mystic trees.

<sup>1</sup> Corneto is a small town on the river Marta, ten miles north of Civita Vecchia. Cecina is a river emptying itself into the Mediterranean, twenty miles south of Leghorn. Between these is a wild, woody, and mountainous tract of country, abounding in deer, goats, and wild boars.

<sup>2</sup> "The isles which the Greeks call Strophades, Situate in the Ionian main, where dire Celæno And the other harpies dwell, since the house of Phincus Was shut against them, and they left for fear their former tables.  
 No monster more hateful than they, no pest more cruel,  
 Or judgment of the Gods, e'er rose from the Stygian abyss.  
 The face of these birds is that of virgins, and most foul their ordure;  
 Their hands arm'd with claws, and their countenances always  
 Pallid with hunger."—*Aeneid*. iii. 210.

The repast of Æneas and his companions is disturbed by the descent and noise of these harpies, who snatch their victuals, and pollute everything they touch. The Trojans attack them in vain, for they are invulnerable and impassable as the yielding air. When the rest have taken flight, one remains—*infelix Celæno*, the messenger of fate, who foretells the calamities impending over them.

And my kind master now began to say

To me, "Before thou enterest further, know

Thou'rt in the second round, and here wilt stay

Till to the horrid sandy plain thou go.

Then look attentively, and thou shalt see 20

Things which the truth of my discourse will show."

From all sides now came cries of misery,

Yet we of none who made them could see aught;

Whereat I stood lost in uncertainty.

My master, I believe, supposed I thought

Those voices issued from among the trees,

From some who shunning us concealment sought.

He therefore said, "If thou should'st lop of these

One little twig from any single tree, 30

The thoughts thou hast will be dispell'd with ease."

I then put forth my hand, and presently

Did a great thorn-tree of one twig divest;

At which its trunk exclaim'd, "Why tear'st thou  
me?"

As the dark blood flow'd down, the tree express'd

Again these words; "What may thy rending mean?

Is there no soul of pity in thy breast?

Once we were men, though plants we now are seen:

More mercy at thy hand was surely due,

Even if the souls of serpents we had been."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the *Argonautics* of Apollonius Rhodius, Phineus explains

As a green fire-brand when it burns anew           40  
     At its one end, will at the other weep,  
     And hisses with the wind there rushing through,<sup>1</sup>  
 So from this broken branch together leap  
     Both words and blood: I let fall instantly  
     The twig, and stood like one in terror deep.  
 “ Had he before believed my verse and me,<sup>2</sup>

to the heroes of the expedition that the poverty of Perœbius was a penalty for his father's crime:—

“ For one time cutting trees  
 Alone among the hills, he spurn'd the prayer  
 Of the Hamadryas Nymph, who weeping sore,  
 With earnest words besought him not to cut  
 The trunk of an old oak-tree, which with herself  
 Coeval had endured for many a year.  
 But in the pride of youth he foolishly  
 Cut it; and to him and his race the Nymph  
 Gave evermore a portion profitless.”

<sup>1</sup> Ariosto has imitated this simile.—*Orl. Fur.* c. vi. st. 27, 28.

<sup>2</sup> “ By chance a tunulus was near on whose top were rods of  
 cornel,  
 And myrtle-trees bristling with branches all spear-like:  
 I approach'd it and endeavour'd to pull up a sapling,  
 That I with leafy branches might cover the altars.  
 I then saw a portent, horrible to tell and wonderful:  
 For the first tree I pluck'd from the ground, its roots being  
 broken,  
 From its fibres the dark drops of blood were distilling,  
 And staining the earth with gore. Cold horror seized me;  
 My limbs shook, and the chilling blood at my heart was  
 gather'd.  
 Another pliant rod again to pluck I attempted,  
 And the hidden causes of what I had seen to discover;

O injured soul," my leader sage replied,  
"He would not have put forth his hand on thee ;  
Proof of my word is now before his eyes.  
That he a thing incredible might learn,           50  
I urged what now a weight upon me lies.  
But tell him who thou wert, that in his turn,  
As some amends he may thy fame renew

And the dark sanguine stream from the bark of the tree  
again follow'd.  
Thinking of many things, the Nymphs of the wood I then  
reverenced ;  
And father Mars, who presides over the fields of the  
Thracians,  
That they would render the sight propitious, and give a  
better omen.  
After that, with a still greater effort, I approach'd a branch  
the third time,  
And down on my knees with the adverse earth I struggled.  
Shall I speak, or be silent? A lamentable groan from  
within  
The tumulus was heard, and a voice issued forth with these  
accents,  
'Why dost thou, Æneas, thus tear me? Spare me, already  
buried :  
Forbear to pollute thy pious hands ; to thee I am no stranger.  
Troy bore me : this blood flows not from a tree insensible.  
O fly from these cruel regions ; fly this shore avaricious ;  
For I am Polydore : the shower of iron that whelm'd me  
Fix'd here has grown up a thicket of sharp javelins.'  
Then indeed I was astonish'd, oppress'd with doubtful  
terror ;  
My hair in horror stood up, and my effort to speak was  
useless."—*Æneid*. iii. 22.

Above on earth to which he must return.”

The trunk replied ; “ So sweetly lured by you,  
I can't be mute ; let not my words displease,  
If thus ensnared, I somewhat linger too.

I then am he who once held both the keys  
Of Frederick's heart, and who in that high post,  
Opening and shutting, turn'd them with such  
ease, 60

None else his secret confidence could boast ;  
And in that glorious office kept such faith,  
That by it I my sleep and vigour lost.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Piero della Vigne, a Capuan, who, from a humble rank, by his knowledge and eloquence rose to be the chancery-clerk of Frederick II. It is asserted that, yielding to the counsels of the monks, he promised to poison his master. Some affirm that the Pope had, by presents and promises, induced him to attempt this crime. Others contend that the courtiers, envious of his influence and honours, by forged letters from Pope Innocent IV. brought on him the suspicion of the emperor, and thus occasioned his fall. By the emperor's order he was imprisoned and deprived of sight ; and in 1245 committed suicide by dashing his head against a stone wall. It is difficult to decide on the guilt or innocence of this minister. On the one hand, the excommunicated emperor was in constant danger of being abandoned and betrayed. And on the other, Frederick, thus beset with danger, became suspicious and cruel : his distrust fell on his most faithful friends ; and the executions which he ordered—like Jedburgh justice—at times preceded the proofs of guilt. Raumer, in his ‘ History of the House of Hohenstaufen,’ considers the attempt to poison doubtful, though he does not believe that Pier was entirely innocent. Dante evidently regarded him as falsely accused ; but the poet appears to have been prejudiced against



Speak ; lose no time ; ask, if thou more would'st  
learn."

Then I to him ; " Enquire thou on my part ;  
If aught thou seest that I should be assured.  
I cannot ask, such pity fills my heart."  
Whereon he recommenced ; " Spirit immured !  
As thou wouldst have my comrade freely do  
What thou hast pray'd should be for thee proeured,  
So may it please thee to inform us too,  
How in these gnarlèd stumps the souls are bound ;  
And if aught ever will the tie undo ?" 90

Thereat the trunk breathed hard, and then a sound  
Articulate like this the wind became :  
" Briefly an answer shall for you be found.  
When the fierce spirit quits her mortal frame,  
Whence she by her own act was torn away,<sup>1</sup>  
This seventh gulf Minos as her doom doth name :  
Into the wood she falls when on her way,  
No part selected, but where flung by chance  
There like a grain of spelt she sprouts, a spray

<sup>1</sup> " Then the next places those grieving souls occupy  
Who slain by their own hand though innocent, and the light  
hating,  
Were prodigal of life. Of the upper air how wishful  
Now, to bear even poverty and toils the most difficult !  
But fate forbids, and the hateful marsh with sad billow  
Binds them, and Styx nine times interfused coerees."

To rise, then to a savage tree advance. 100

The harpies feeding on her leaves give pain,  
And for that pain the means of utterance.

Like others we shall come our spoils to obtain,

But not to be again in them array'd ;

What he rejects a man should not regain.

Them we shall hither drag ; this gloomy glade

Will then throughout, our bodies hold suspended,

Each to the wild thorn of his troubled shade."

While to the speaking trunk we still attended,

Expecting further still to hear its voice, 110

All suddenly therewith a tumult blended :

Like him who at his post can recognize

The wild boar and the chase when towards him  
rushing,

Who of the beasts and branches hears the noise.

And lo, two forms which at our left hand brushing,

Naked and torn were flying, out of breath,

And every leafy branch before them crushing :

The foremost cried, "Now haste, haste hither,

Death!"<sup>1</sup>

The other, who more slowly made his way,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is very affecting to find the soul of the suicide here calling, in vain, for Death to save him from being lacerated by the hell-hounds who hold him in chase. See Canto iii. l. 46, and note.

<sup>2</sup> Both were running swiftly, but not with equal speed ; and Jacopo's pace appeared slow *in comparison* of Lano's.

Cried, "Lano, not so prudent, by my faith, 126  
At Toppo's jousts were thy two legs that day!"<sup>1</sup>

Then he, perhaps from failing breath, was fain  
Within a bush, well grouped therewith, to stay.  
Behind them fill'd the wood a numerous train  
Of swift black bitches, eager for the prey,  
Like greyhounds that have lately slipp'd the chain.  
They fix'd their fangs on him who crouching lay,  
And piccemeal having torn him, on they hied,  
And with them bore those wretched limbs away.

Then, as he took me by the hand, my guide 130

Me to the bush within the thicket led,  
Which through its bleeding fractures vainly sigh'd.  
"O Jacopo da Sant' Andréa," it said,<sup>2</sup>

"What boots it thee that I'm thy shelter made?  
What fault of mine thy wicked life e'er sped?"  
And when the master over it had stay'd,

"Say who thou wast that breathèst through,"  
cried he,

<sup>1</sup> Lano, a Sieneſe, had ſpent his patrimony in a courſe of prodigal diſſipation. Being ſent by his countrymen on a military expedition, to aſſiſt the Florentines againſt the Aretini, and finding the battle loſt, he ruſhed into the thickeſt of the fight and was killed. His companion taunts him, not with cowardice, as Mr. Wright ſuppoſes, but with want of prudence, at the fight of Toppo.

<sup>2</sup> Jacopo da St. Andrea had ſpent his property with a kind of mad profuſion. Reduced to poverty at laſt, he killed himſelf in a fit of deſpair.

"So many pores a speech by grief o'erlaid?"  
 "O souls who have arrived in time to see,"  
 To us he said, "that ignominious crush,      140  
 Which has divided thus my leaves from me;  
 Collect them at the foot of the sad bush.  
 My native city for the Baptist's love      [brush  
 Changed her first patron,<sup>1</sup> whence with many a  
 Of warlike art he'll always hostile prove:  
 And did there not o'er Arno's pass remain  
 His image yet, her citizens, above  
 The ashes left by Atilla, in vain  
 Had rear'd the walls, or those foundations laid,  
 O'er which at length the city rose again.      150  
 My house a gibbet for myself I made.<sup>2</sup>"

<sup>1</sup> Florence was built on the Campus Martius of the older town of Fiesole, and a temple of Mars occupied the site where the church of St. John the Baptist now stands. According to a common custom, on their conversion to Christianity, the Florentines exchanged their tutelar deity for a patron saint; and the statue of the god was removed and placed on the bank of the Arno. It is said to have fallen into the river on the supposed taking of the city by Atilla, and to have been recovered previous to the rebuilding of the city by Charlemagne, the planet Mars being then in a favourable aspect. What remained of it continued to be superstitiously regarded as a kind of palladium on which the welfare of the city depended. The statue is said to have been visible till 1337, when the bridge was destroyed by a flood.

<sup>2</sup> Rocco de' Mozzi; or, according to others, Lotto degli Agli.

## CANTO XIV.

## THE ARGUMENT.

The poets arrive in the third round of the seventh circle: it is a plain of scorching sand, on which flakes of fire are showered eternally.—Here are punished the violent against God, against nature, and against art; the first class only are described in this canto, and amongst them Capaneus is seen, and his blasphemies are heard.—Journeying for protection along the edge of the wood, they arrive at a place where a crimson brook issues from it and traverses the sandy plain, quenching the vapours above it.—Virgil describes an ancient image in Crete, from which flows a stream that supplies this and the other three infernal rivers.

THE love of native country with sweet force  
 Constrain'd me, and I gather'd up the leaves,  
 And gave them back to him already hoarse:  
 From thence we reach'd the boundary which cleaves  
 The second and third round, where its display  
 Justice Divine tremendously receives.  
 What those new things were, I proceed to say;  
 How to a plain our path we now pursued,  
 From whose dry soil each plant had pass'd away.  
 A garland round it waves the dolorous wood,      10

As did the sad foss round the wood expand :  
There pausing just upon its verge we stood.  
A space it was of thick and arid sand,  
Not much unlike that Lybian desert sear'd,  
Once trod by Cato and his little band,<sup>1</sup>  
Vengeance of God, Oh ! how shouldst thou be fear'd  
By every one who shall the story read,  
Of that sad scene which to my eyes appear'd !  
I saw vast flocks of naked souls outspread ;  
All these were weeping very woefully,           20  
To diverse laws appearing subjected.  
Supine lay on the earth one company,<sup>2</sup>  
Some huddled in a heap were sitting low,  
And others paced about continually.  
The band was largest that walk'd to and fro,  
And that the least which lay with suffering spent,  
But these with looser tongue proclaim'd their woe.  
And hovering o'er the sand, with slow descent,  
Broad flakes of fire were falling all around,  
Like Alpine snows through the calm element. 30

<sup>1</sup> After a march of seven days through the burning sands of Lybia, Cato arrived in the neighbourhood of Utica with 10,000 men, the remains of Pompey's army.—PLUTARCH, *Cato* ; LUCAN, *Phars.* lib. xix.

<sup>2</sup> "Whereas in the former place they had their bellies to the ground, all here were lying on their backs."—*St. Patrick's Purg.* ROG. WEND. ii. 515.

As Alexander, where the heats abound  
 Of India, with his army, overhead  
 Saw solid flames descending to the ground,  
 Hence he bethought him on the soil to tread  
 With all his host, and thus each vapoury spire  
 Was quench'd with ease ere with new sunbeams  
 fed :<sup>1</sup>

Even so descended the eternal fire,  
 From which the sand, like tinder from the steel,  
 Was kindled up, doubling the anguish dire.  
 Without repose for ever was the wheel                    40  
 Of wretched hands, now turning here, now there,  
 To shake from them the fresh-fallen fire they feel.  
 Then said I, "Master, who couldst subjugate  
 All but the demons fierce who through the dim  
 Gate at the entrance issuing did appear ;  
 Who is that mighty one, morose and grim,"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Albertus Magnus (*De Mirabilibus Mundi*) says that in India the sun extracts the terrestrial vapours, and kindling them in the air, sends them down in showers of fire ; and that Alexander to prevent this caused the ground to be turned up. Dante makes Alexander tread out the flames, before the sun arose to kindle the vapours with new heat. "But such a sun, thank heaven (says Bishop Heber), never glared on England as this day *rained its lightnings* upon Chunar."—*Narrative of Journey through Upper Provinces of India*, vol. i. p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> "But how shall I describe how Capaneus was raging?  
 Bearing a long ladder he advanced, and this he loudly boasted,  
 That not the awful fire of Jove should hinder him from taking

Who careless of the burning seems to lie,  
 So that the fire-shower cannot soften him ? ”  
 And he, as to my leader I apply,  
 Perceiving 'twas of him I thus enquire,        50  
 Cried, “ What I was alive, such dead am I.  
 If incensed Jupiter,<sup>1</sup> his workman tire,

The city's highest towers ; then with a storm of stones around  
 him,

He mounted the steps of the ladder, beneath his shield col-  
 lected :

Just as he reach'd the battlements, Jove smote him with his  
 thunder ;

The earth resounded so that all trembled, and from the ladder  
 The torn limbs were hurl'd as from an engine,

His hair flew towards Olympus, but his blood fell on the  
 ground,

His hands and feet whirl'd round like the wheel of Ixion,

While his dead body fell flaming to the earth.”

EURIPIDES, *Phonissæ*, l. 1179.

This scene has been paralleled in modern times and actual life. Mr. Moffat, the father-in-law of Livingstone, in his *Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern Africa*, says, “ During tremendous thunder-storms, which prevail in that quarter, and which, it might be supposed, would speak to mankind with an awful voice, I have known the natives of Namaqualand shoot their poisoned arrows at the lightning, in order to arrest the destructive fluid. I knew a man who, though warned by myself and others of this daring practice, persisted, and was struck dead by the lightning.” See also *The Seven against Thebes* of ÆSCHYLUS, 425 ; and the *Thebais* of STATIUS, lib. x. xi.

<sup>1</sup> Jupiter, alarmed at the conspiracy of the giants to dethrone him, in vain called all the gods to his assistance; for the giants, employing rocks, oaks, and burning woods, as their weapons, piled Ossa on Pelion to enable them to scale the celestial abodes. The

From whom he snatch'd the thunderbolts that day  
 Which was my last, and struck me in his ire ;  
 If he—the rest all spent by turns while they  
 The sledge in Mongibello's black forge wield—<sup>1</sup>  
 Cry, ' Help, good Vulcan, help !' as in the fray  
 He cried of old on the Phlegrean field,<sup>2</sup>  
 And launch his bolts at me with all his might,  
 A joyful vengeance it shall never yield." 60  
 My guide then spoke aloud, in accents quite  
 Above whate'er had been his previous strains ;  
 " O Cápancus, more woful is thy plight,  
 In that thy pride unhumbled yet remains.

gods fled in dismay to Egypt, and concealed themselves, by assuming the shapes of different animals, to which, therefore, veneration was afterwards paid. Jupiter, however, having discovered that the giants might be vanquished, if he called a mortal to his aid, by the advice of Pallas armed Hereules in his cause ; by whose assistance the giants were soon defeated and put to flight.

<sup>1</sup> Or Montegibello, from the Arabic *gibel*, a mountain ; a name given to Ætna on account of its magnitude : reminding us of the conquest of Sicily by the Saracens ; as Gibraltar of those in Spain. See Virgil's description of Vulcan's assistants and their smithy.—*Æneid.* viii. 416.

<sup>2</sup> Phlegra, or *Phlegreus campus*, afterwards called Pallene, the scene of the giants' war. The same name was given, and the same tradition attached, to a district near Cumæ in Italy, containing Mount Vesuvius, the grotto of the Sybil, and the lakes Avernus and Acheron. These objects first terrified the early Greek navigators, and were afterwards embellished and exaggerated by the imagination of their poets.

No torture, save what thy own rage affords,  
 Could for thy madness yield proportion'd pains."  
 Then, turn'd to me, he said, with softer words,  
 "Of the seven kings he's one, whose shields were  
     borne  
 At leaguer'd Thebes, where they unsheath'd their  
     swords ;  
 And then, as now, it seems, had God in scorn, 70  
     Unprized ; but, as I told him, his fierce mood  
     Inflicts fit wounds his bosom to adorn.  
 Now follow me, nor let thy feet obtrude  
     On the scorch'd sand henceforth, but let thy route  
     Be always kept exactly at the wood."  
 Holding our peace we came where rushes out  
     A small stream from the wood, whose redness yet  
     With creeping horror thrills my frame throughout.  
 From Bulicamè as the rivulet  
     Comes welling forth, which sinful women share,<sup>1</sup> 80  
     So through the sand ran down that brook beset  
 By craggy rocks, which form'd its bottom there,  
     Both sloping banks, and margin on each side.  
     On these our path lay, I was thence aware.  
 "Amongst all other things," then said my guide,

<sup>1</sup> A natural pool of hot water near Viterbo, fed by a mineral spring. A constant stream flows from it, upon which houses of dissolute resort are said to have formerly stood.

"That I have shown thee, since the gates we pass'd  
 Whose threshold's entrance is to none denied,  
 Nothing so worthy thy regard thou hast  
 Had present to thine eyes as is this brook,  
 Which all the flames by which 'tis overcast 90  
 Quenches." These were the words my leader spoke.  
 I pray'd he'd give me of that food to taste,  
 For which the hunger he himself awoke.  
 "In the mid-sea a ruin'd isle is placed,"  
 My guide then answer'd me, "whose name is  
 Crete,  
 Under whose king the world long since was  
 chaste.<sup>1</sup>  
 A mount is there call'd Ida,<sup>2</sup> once the seat  
 Of joy, with verdure crown'd, whence water flows :  
 Now 'tis deserted, as a thing effete.  
 This for her son's sure cradle Rhea chose, 100  
 Whom better to conceal, by her commands,  
 Whene'er he wept, the attendants' clamour rose.  
 Within the mount a huge old image stands,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "I believe that chastity dwelt on earth under king Saturn."

JUVENAL, *Sat.* vi. 1, 2.

<sup>2</sup> The highest mountain in Crete, where Jupiter in infancy is said to have been concealed from his father Saturn by his mother, and educated by the Corybantcs.

<sup>3</sup> The transfer hither of Nebuchadnezzar's visionary image of empire (See *Daniel* ii.) is a huge poetic licence. Here it represents Time, with his back turned on the ancient seats of empire,

His back on Damietta turn'd ; his glass  
 Rome seems to be, towards which his look expands.  
 His head is form'd of finest gold ; a mass  
 Of purest silver are his arms and breast ;  
 Thence even to the thighs he is of brass ;  
 And downwards, temper'd steel is all the rest ;  
 Save that the right foot is of baken clay,<sup>1</sup> 110  
 Which by his weight, as its chief prop, is press'd.  
 All parts except the gold some rents display,  
 And through each fissure tears are falling slow,  
 Which gathering pierce the grot ; then find their  
     way  
 Into this vale, as down the rocks they flow,  
 And Acheron, Styx, Phlegethon they make :<sup>2</sup>

and his face towards the Christian powers of the West. The mirror of the Babylonian image is not the Mohammedan city, but Rome ! Hesiod and Ovid also have described the successive ages of the world as the golden, silver, brazen, and iron periods. In addition to this adumbration of human degeneracy, Dante describes the growing vices and miseries of his age, under the idea of four infernal rivers, formed by the tears of Time for the degeneracy of his offspring.

<sup>1</sup> "The ninth age has now arrived, even worse than the age of iron,

And one for whose wickedness no name has been invented,  
 Nature has formed no metal that will suitably represent it."

JUNENAL, *Sat.* xiii. 28—30.

<sup>2</sup> The common etymology of Acheron is ἀχαια ρέων, "the river of sadness." Fourmont makes it an Egyptian word—*Achon Charon*, "the Marsh of Charon." See Canto iii. l. 77, note. The usual derivation of Styx is from Στυγέω, I hate, abhor, am hor-

Then through this narrow trench descend below,  
 Till there whence they no lower course can take  
 They form Coeytus ;<sup>1</sup> what that pond is, here—  
 Since thou wilt see it soon—I need not speak.” 120  
 Then I replied : “ If thus the streamlet near  
 Hither descend from upper earthly ground,  
 Why should it first at this low verge appear ? ”  
 And he to me, “ Thou know’st the place is round,  
 And though thou now hast travell’d o’er much  
 space,  
 Descending to the left the gulf profound,  
 Thou hast not circled yet all this round place :  
 Therefore if in it anything seems new,  
 It need not bring such wonder to thy face.”  
 I ask’d him ; “ Phlegethon where may we view, 130  
 And Lethe ? thou of one hast nought express’d,  
 And say’st, the other to this shower is due.”  
 He said ; “ With all thy questions yet address’d,  
 Certes, I’m pleased ; but the red boiling wave  
 Might have resolved thy present question best.”<sup>2</sup>

rified. Canto vii. l. 108. Phlegethon, “the burning river,” from φλεγω, I burn. Canto viii. 68.

<sup>1</sup> Coeytus, a river of Thesprotia in Dalmatia, from κοκκνειν, to weep and lament. Hence the poets made it one of the infernal rivers.

<sup>2</sup> Certainly the proof was flagrant : what river *could* this be but Phlegethon ?

The sight of Lethe thou far hence wilt have,<sup>1</sup>  
Where, when repented sin is wash'd away,  
The pardon'd souls proceed themselves to lave.  
Now it is time that from the wood we stray :  
See that thou follow me from this precinct ; 140  
The unburnt margins will afford us way,  
And over them each vapour is extinct."

<sup>1</sup> Lethe (*λήθη*) signifies forgetfulness, oblivion. On the four infernal rivers, consult Plato's *Phædo*, sections 139 to 142. The etymology of their names is finely made use of in *Paradise Lost*, B. ii. l. 577 :—

“ Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate ;  
Sad Acheron, of sorrow black and deep ;  
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud  
Heard on the rueful stream ; fierce Phlegethon,  
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.  
Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,  
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls  
Her watry labyrinth ; whereof who drinks,  
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,  
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.”

## CANTO XV.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Continuing their journey in the third round, and leaving the confines of the wood, the poets proceed along one of the high rocky margins of the brook. They meet a troop of spirits who are walking along the sand, the souls of those who have done violence to nature: among them Dante recognizes his former preceptor, Brunetto Latini, towards whom he expresses his gratitude and esteem. Brunetto censures the Florentines and intimates the evils which Dante might expect from them, and the honour that awaited his memory. Having named Priscian, Francis d'Accorso, and the Bishop of Bacciglione as among the chief of his fellow sufferers, he leaves Dante and turns back to rejoin them.

ONE of the solid margins bore us now,  
 And o'er the brook the mist that spread around  
 Screen'd banks and water from the fiery glow.  
 And as the Flemings build the lofty mound  
 From Cadsand unto Bruges<sup>1</sup> 'gainst the tide,

<sup>1</sup> Guzzante, or Cadsand, is five leagues from Bruges, and on the coast. It is a fortified place—or was so at the time of the Walchereen expedition. In the age of Dante, Bruges was the emporium of the Hanseatic League, a great confederacy of the northern European states. Thither the merchants of Venice

Fearing its flood, and thus have safety found ;  
And as the Paduans theirs on Brenta's side,<sup>1</sup>  
Their seats and castles to protect, have laid,  
Ere summer heat melts Chiarantana's<sup>2</sup> pride :  
On such plan were the mounds we now survey'd, 10  
Though not so lofty nor so vast, whoe'er  
The master was by whom they had been made.<sup>3</sup>

and Genoa resorted, and, in return for the productions of Italy and the East, brought back the manufactures and other commodities of the North, including gold and silver from the mines of Germany, then the most productive in Europe. In the year 1301, Joanna of Navarre, consort of Philip le Bel, of France, visited Bruges, and was so struck with the wealth and grandeur of the city that she exclaimed, not without some degree of envy and mortification, "I thought I had been the only queen here, but I find there are many hundreds more" (GUICCIARDINI). The Netherlands owe their safety, and almost their existence, to those immense embankments, which the Dutch call Dykes, raised along the coast, and on the banks of rivers. The dyke alluded to by Dante is said to be still kept up. It was probably one of the earliest.

<sup>1</sup> As soon as the Alpine snows begin to melt, the Brenta rises ; and as the country round Padua is flat and low, the erection of dykes and mounds to confine the river to its channel was at an early period found necessary. Ariosto alludes to these embankments. *Orl. Fur.* xviii. 153.

<sup>2</sup> The name of one of the Alps near Trent ; or the Carnic Alps generally, which separate Italy from Carinthia.

<sup>3</sup> The infernal mounds are not here described as greater than those with which they are compared, as Mr. Brooksbank's version makes them, but *less*. We were at first inclined to adopt the view which he has given of them, because Virgil's rule is the usual one in poetical comparison :—" Sic parvis componere magna

So far already from the wood we were  
 That not a glimpse thereof I now might get  
 Though backward I had turn'd to seek it there,

solebam." But a little reflection convinced us that the comparison here is of the less with the greater. Dante, who in passing through the infernal world is always directing his thoughts to the world above, here glorifies the labours of man, as God himself has often done. (*Job* vii. 17; *Psalms* viii, 5, 6.) It must be remembered:—1st. That these infernal mounds were intended merely to confine a *brook* ("un picciol fiumicello," xiv. 77, "rigagno," 121, "ruseello," xv. 2), which flowed through a narrow channel (*stretta doecia*, xiv. 117). For *this* purpose no such vast and lofty embankments were *needed* as those which the Flemings required to keep back the ocean-tide; or the Paduans, to confine the river Brenta to its channel. 2d. As Dante walked with his guide along the top of one of these infernal mounds, Brunetto Latini, walking on the sand at the bottom, lays hold of the border of his garment. This is decisive, and completely overthrows the *argini sì alti e sì grossi* which Mr. Brooksbank had erected for so small a purpose. 3d. Although Dante speaks doubtfully as to the master who constructed these embankments, yet in a similar case, when describing the cable with which the giant Ephialtes was bound, he speaks in the same manner ("qual che fosse il maestro non so io dir," xxxi. 85, 86). For aught we know, the Great Architect may have employed in hell, as well as on earth, subordinate agents to accomplish his work. Milton has adopted this idea, and made greater use of it than even Dante. He makes Beelzebub anticipate such toil:—

"That so we may suffice his vengeful ire,  
 Or do him mightier service as his thralls  
 By right of war, whate'er his business be,  
 Here in the heart of hell to work in fire."—*Par. Lost*, i. 148.

He makes one of the fallen angels "Master of the Works" for the erection of

"Pandemonium, the high capital of Satan and his peers."

When presently a band of souls we met

Who on the sand along the margin lie ;

And, as their eyes men on each other set

At evening under the new moon, they pry ;

Sharpening their eye-brows on us fixedly,      20

Like an old taylor at a needle's eye.

Thus I, gazed on by such a family,

Was recognized by one of them, who caught

My skirt, and cried, "What wonder do I see !"

And when his arm he thus to me stretch'd out,

I gazed on his baked aspect stedfastly,

So that the scorch'd up visage hinder'd not

But that I recognized him easily.

With hand held out, I, toward him bending down,

Said, "Ser Brunetto, are you here ?"<sup>1</sup>—And he 30

This was Mammon—with an *alias*, Mulciber :

—“Nor aught avails him now

To have built in heaven high towers ; nor did he 'scape

By all his engines, but was headlong sent

With his industrious crew to build in hell.”—*Ib.* 748.

<sup>1</sup> Brunetto Latini, a famous Professor of Rhetoric and Philosophy in Florence, Chancellor of the City, and a poet of considerable talent. His poem, *Il Tesoretto*, may have suggested to Dante the idea of his exordium. He loses his way, and wanders in a wood, where Nature appears to him, and discloses the secrets of her operations. Under her auspices he reaches a plain where many emperors, kings, and sages are assembled. In this poem, as in the *Inferno*, usury is branded as a sin against God and nature. The sin also for which Brunetto is here condemned by

Thus answer'd, "Be not angry, O my son,  
 If Brunetto Latini some small way  
 With thee return, and let his troop go on."  
 I said, "For that with all my might I pray,  
 And we'll sit down, so please you, on this rock,  
 If he who is my guide permit my stay."  
 He said, "Whoe'er a moment of this flock  
 Pauses, a century prostrate must consume,<sup>1</sup>  
 Nor fence against the fire's intensest shock.<sup>2</sup>  
 But go thou on; I at thy skirts will come,       40  
 And afterwards rejoin my kindred crowd  
 Who go lamenting their eternal doom."  
 I would not venture down from that high-road  
 To join him, but as one who reverently  
 Attends while walking, so my head I bow'd.  
 And he began; "What chance or destiny,  
 Before thy end, brings thee to this obscure?  
 And he that shows thy pathway, who is he?"  
 "I, in yon life above serenely pure,"  
 I answer'd, "in a valley went astray,       50

his pupil Dante, is mentioned with great horror. Brunetto died in 1295.

<sup>1</sup> If any of the gods violated an oath by the Styx, they were made to drink of its poisonous waters, and deprived of nectar and the privileges of divinity for a hundred years.—HESIOD. in *Theog.*

<sup>2</sup> The punishment here assigned to this class of transgressors as their "eternal doom," appears borrowed from *Genesis* xix. 24, and *Jude* 7.

Before I had arrived at age mature ;<sup>1</sup>  
 But left it on the morn of yesterday ;  
 And then, returning towards it, saw appear,  
 Him who now leads me homeward by this way.”  
 “ A glorious port thou canst not miss, thy star  
 So thou but follow ;” he to me replied,  
 “ If well I judged thee in the life more fair.  
 And had I not so prematurely died,  
 Seeing that heaven to thee is thus benign,  
 I for that work some aid might have supplied. 60  
 But that ungrateful people so malign  
 Who claim descent from ancient Fiesole,<sup>2</sup>  
 Nor do the mountain lime-stone yet resign,  
 Will be for thy good deeds thine enemy.

<sup>1</sup> Dante was in the summer of life, the full ripe autumn had not yet commenced.

<sup>2</sup> The Roman colony of Fæsulæ was established by Sylla. Forty years after, Augustus allotted part of its territory to a colony of Roman soldiers whom he sent into the neighbourhood. This was the origin of Florence. Fiesole being situated on the top of a mountain, a place between the foot of the mountain and the river Arno, was fixed on for the convenience of holding markets. When the Roman conquests and renown had rendered Italy safe from foreign aggression and invasion, the temporary accommodation for fairs and markets gave place to permanent habitations and an influx of inhabitants ; and thus the city of Florence had its birth.—MACHIAVEL. *Hist. Fior.* lib. ii. The hill of Fiesole, covered with gardens and country-houses, is north-west of Florence, and almost reaches to its walls. The town of Fiesole is much decayed, and now contains hardly 3000 inhabitants.

No wonder the sweet fig-tree should not find,  
 Midst the sour crabs, place for her fruit to be.<sup>1</sup>  
 Old fame in yonder world proclaims them blind;<sup>2</sup>  
 A greedy tribe, envious and proud they are.

From these their customs be thy soul refined. [70  
 Thee such great honour waits through Fortune's care,  
 The parties twain shall hunger both for thee.<sup>3</sup>

But be the fresh grass from the goat's tooth far.  
 The Fiesolan cattle their own litter be,  
 Nor with their touch the generous plant molest,  
 If such their dunghill springing yet should see,

<sup>1</sup> Dante compares the disposition of the Florentines to the hard and rugged lime-stone, hewn out of the mountain of Fiesole, of which their city was built, and to the sour crabs growing wild on the mountain sides; while, by the sweet fig-tree, he is supposed to claim descent from the old Roman colonists of Florence.

<sup>2</sup> The Florentines, having assisted the Pisans to conquer Majorca, were offered in return their choice of two beautiful gates of bronze, or two porphyry pillars: they chose the pillars, but afterwards found that they had been injured by fire; and, to conceal this defect, had been artfully coloured by the Pisans. This was in 1117. Hence the proverb that represents the Florentines as blind.—See GIOV. VILLANI, lib. iv. cap. 30.

<sup>3</sup> A remarkable anticipation of posthumous renown, similar to that of Milton. After the death and burial of Dante at Ravenna, the Florentines, having frequently endeavoured, but in vain, to recover the body of their illustrious exile, crowned his image, struck medals, and raised statues to him. Fifty-one years after his death, a professional chair was endowed by them for the exposition of his works, and Boccaccio was the first professor appointed.

In which revives the holy seed confess'd

Of those old Romans, who remain'd there still

When 'twas of so much malice made the nest."<sup>1</sup>

"Had heaven been pleased my wishes to fulfil,"

I answer'd him, "you would not thus apart, 80

From human nature exiled, mourn this ill ;

For in my memory fix'd, now grieves my heart

The dear and good paternal image known

Of you on earth, where with a master's art

You taught me how eternity is won.

How dear I hold the lesson, while I live

'Tis fit should by my eloquence be shown.

I note the account which of my course you give,

And keep it, with one text besides,<sup>2</sup> till bared

By a lady's comment, who will all perceive, 90

If I her presence reach. Be this declared

To thee, that if my conscience does not chide,

Do Fortune what she will, I stand prepared :

Not new such warning to mine ear supplied.

Let Fortune as she pleases whirl her wheel ;<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Let these rough descendants of the Fiesolan mountaineers long for thee still, and long in vain ; and while they trample down and prey upon each other, let not a people tainted with such sordid and filthy customs touch those—if any such should spring up among them—who are descended from, and possess the noble spirit of, those Romans who first colonized their city."

<sup>2</sup> The prediction of Farinata ; Canto x. 80, 130.

<sup>3</sup> Brunetto had used more than one proverbial saying, and

And by the rustic be his pickaxe plied.”  
 Then my instructor, turning on his heel,  
 Look'd back, presenting to me his right cheek,  
 And said, “ He listens well who notes with zeal.”  
 I not the less for that go on to speak 100  
 With Ser Brunetto, asking who among  
 His comrades were of note, and chief to seek.  
 “ Of some 'tis good to know, but of the throng,”  
 He said, “ 'tis fitter silence to maintain,  
 Since time so short forbids a tale so long.  
 In sum, know they were clergy—that whole train,  
 Men of great learning and great fame no doubt ;  
 On earth of one foul sin they bore the stain.  
 Priscian is wandering with that wretched rout,<sup>1</sup>

here Dante pays him back in the same coin. This proverb expresses resignation to the inevitable, and the satisfaction of having done one's duty, whatever may happen.

<sup>1</sup> Priscianus, a celebrated grammarian of Cappadocia, who taught grammar and rhetoric at Constantinople, A.D. 525. If, as the commentators assert, there is no reason to believe that he was stained with the vice here imputed to him, an injustice has been done him far worse than “breaking Priscian's head.” It has been said, that the individual is here put for the class; but this only makes the matter worse; for, to libel a whole class of men, is a greater injustice than to libel an individual. Besides, how can Priscian be supposed to *represent* those who were *present with him*? for it is said of his companions, “all these were clerks,” &c.; and how can one of stainless character be said to represent the foulest and the worst?

Priscian composed several works, of which his treatise *De Arte*

Francis d'Accorso,<sup>1</sup> and, if thou could'st e'er 110  
 Such nuisance wish, thou might'st have thereabout  
 Seen him who by the Servants' Servant's care  
 From Arno's flood Bacchiglione took ;<sup>2</sup>  
 Who left his ill-strain'd nerves exhausted there.  
 Of more I'd speak, but must no longer brook  
 Journey or speech with thee, because I see  
 New smoke risen from the sand the way I look :  
 A party comes with whom I must not be.  
 In your kind care my ' Treasure '<sup>3</sup> I repose,

*Grammatica* was first published at Venice by Aldus, in 1476, from a MS. found in France, and went through five editions in about twenty years. It is the most complete treatise on the Latin language that has come down to us from antiquity, and has supplied materials for most subsequent ones. It is particularly valuable for the number of its quotations from works no longer extant.

<sup>1</sup> The son of a celebrated Florentine civilian, who expounded Roman law at Bologna, of great authority in his profession. The father died in 1229, at the age of seventy-eight : of the son here mentioned little is known. Over their tomb at Bologna is this brief epitaph :

“ Sepulchrum Accursii Glossatoris et Francisii ejus Filius.”

<sup>2</sup> *Servus Servorum Dei*, “ Servant of the Servants of God,” is one of the titles which the popes have assumed. Andrea de Mozzi, Bishop of Florence (on the Arno), was translated, either by Nicholas III. or Boniface VIII., to Vicenza (on the Bacchiglione), as a less frequented place, that his scandalous life might be less exposed to observation. Did the character and interests of the Church demand from the Servant of Servants no severer discipline than *this*, on *such an offender*?

<sup>3</sup> Brunetto's great work was his *Tresor*, which contains a course of philosophical lectures, in four books. 1. Cosmogony and

Where yet I live; I ask no more of thee." 120  
Then turning, he appear'd as one of those  
Who at Verona o'er the champagne run<sup>1</sup>  
For the green mantle; not of those who lose,  
But likest him by whom the prize is won.

Theology. 2. A translation of Aristotle's Ethics. 3. On Virtues and Vices. 4. On Rhetoric. It is written in the French of St. Louis's reign.

<sup>1</sup> A cloak, or piece of cloth, was the usual prize at the foot-races of the time. At Verona it was customary that a robe or mantle of green cloth should be run for on foot, the first Sunday in every Lent.

## CANTO XVI.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Having almost reached the end of the pier and the termination of the third round, the poets hear the noise of the stream descending into the eighth circle. They meet another troop of similar sinners, from which three military nobles, who recognise Dante as their countryman, advance to converse with him. They inform him who they are, and inquire the state of things in Florence, to which he replies. On their departure Dante strips himself of his Franciscan girdle, and gives it to Virgil, who throws it down the abyss. At that signal they beheld a horrible figure come swimming up to them through the air.

Now came I where was heard the noise rebounding  
Of water hurl'd from that round to a lower ;  
Like hum of hives with swarming bees resounding :  
When lo, three shades together starting scour  
Across the champagne, from a passing band  
That bore the heavy torment of that shower.  
And as they towards us came, along the sand,  
Each cried, " Stay thou, whose habit seems to be  
Proof that thou comest from our wicked land."  
Alas ! what wounds I on their limbs did see, 10

Recent and old, which the fierce flames had made !  
 My grief revives even from their memory.  
 And at their cry awhile my leader stay'd,  
 And straightway towards me as he turn'd his face,  
 He said, " To these must courtesy be paid.  
 And were it not the nature of the place  
 To shoot those fiery arrows, I should say,  
 'Twere best to meet them, and not wait their  
 chase."

They, as we paused, resumed their ancient lay, [20  
 And when arrived where we o'erlook'd the soil,  
 Form'd in a ring all three themselves display.  
 As champions naked and besmear'd with oil  
 Watch where their hold the advantage may expect,  
 Before with blows and strokes in strife they toil,  
 Thus wheeling round, their faces they direct  
 To me, so that of each one as he wheel'd,  
 The neck and feet opposed proceed uncheck'd.<sup>1</sup>  
 " And if the woe on this loose ground reveal'd  
 Should make thee scorn us and our prayers as well,"

<sup>1</sup> The next circle being so near, they could not turn back with Dante, as Brunetto did; and they are deterred by the penalty which he mentions (Canto xv. 37—39) from standing still. Without interrupting their journey, therefore, they kept running round in a circle, all the while looking at Dante; so that when in that part of the circle which led *from* him, their necks turned round, so as to bring their faces in a direction contrary to that in which their feet were going.

Commenced the one, “and our dyed aspects  
peel’d, 30

Yet let our fame incline thee now to tell

Us who thou art, whose living feet thus tread  
Securely through the dreary vaults of hell.

He in whose footsteps thou behold’st me led,

Though bare and flay’d he walks along this waste,  
Of higher grade than thou mayst think was bred :

The grandson of the good Gualdrada chaste,<sup>1</sup>

Call’d Guidoguerra, and his life if scann’d,

Both head and sword with equal splendour graced.

This other shade who next me treads the sand 40

Is Tegghiai’ Aldobrandi,<sup>2</sup> who the wide

<sup>1</sup> Alas! we have here another instance in proof that virtue is not always hereditary. Gualdrada was the daughter of Bellincioni Berti (*Paradiso*, Cantos xv. xvi.) of the Ravignani family, a branch of the Adimari. The emperor Otho IV. at a festival in Florence, being as much pleased with her modesty and resolute virtue as he had been struck with her beauty, calling to him Guido, one of his barons, gave her to him in marriage, bestowing on him the rank of Count, and on her the whole of Casentino and part of Romagna as her portion. Of her two sons, Guglielmo and Ruggieri, the latter was father of Guidoguerra, a man of great military skill and prowess, who, at the head of 400 Florentine Guelfs, was mainly instrumental in giving Charles of Anjou the victory over Manfred king of Naples, at Benevento, in 1265.

<sup>2</sup> Of the noble family of Adimari, much esteemed for his military talents. The rejection of his counsel by the Florentines, against attacking the Sienese, was the occasion of their memorable defeat at Montaperto, and the banishment of the Guelfs from Florence.

World's approbation should above command.  
 And I, placed thus in torment by their side,  
     Jacopo Rusticucci was,<sup>1</sup> and me  
     Sure my fierce wife hurt more than aught beside."  
 Could I but from the fire have still been free,  
     Down I had cast me among those below,  
     And from the bard, I think, had liberty.  
 But since it would have scorch'd and burn'd me so,  
     Fear overcame good-will, and did allay      50  
     My eagerness for their embrace to go.  
 "Not scorn, but grief," I then began to say,  
     " Must your condition in my heart awake;  
     A pang that will but slowly pass away  
 Seized me, as soon as my instructor spake  
     Those words which first induced me to suspect  
     That such as you their way would near us take.  
 Yes, I am of your land ; in high respect  
     Your deeds I hold ; your honour'd names commend,  
     And with affection hear and recollect.      60  
 I leave the gall and for the sweet fruit wend,  
     To me fore-promised by a leader true,  
     But to the centre first I must descend."  
 " So may thy soul conduct thy members through

<sup>1</sup> An opulent and generous Florentine, whose domestic unhappiness drove him to licentious courses ; which makes him here attribute his perdition to his wife's ill temper.

A lengthen'd future," he to me replied,  
"And after thee thy fame shine brightly too,  
As thou shalt say, if still as wont reside  
Courtesy and valour in our urban state;  
Or if thrust forth by all they wander wide?  
For Guigielm' Borsieri,<sup>1</sup> who of late 70  
Join'd us in grief, and with you company  
Wanders, did by his words much pain create."  
"The new race and the sudden gains in thee,  
O Florence, have produced excess and pride,<sup>2</sup>  
For which even now thou weepst wofully."  
When with my face uplifted thus I cried,  
Those three, who deem'd it the reply they sought,  
As men who hear the truth, each other eyed.  
"If thou so easily canst answer aught,"  
They all replied, "in every other case, 80  
Happy art thou who so canst speak thy thought.  
Wherefore if thou, escaping this dark place,  
Return to see the lovely stars again,

<sup>1</sup> A liberal and well-bred nobleman of Florence, the peacemaker among his acquaintance. On visiting Genoa he was consulted by an avaricious nobleman of great wealth, Ermino de' Grimaldi, what rare ornament he should procure to adorn his new saloon? To whom Borsieri replied, "Liberality." The hint was taken, and the churl, in this instance, became bountiful.—*Decameron*, i. 8.

<sup>2</sup> "There is not any town in all Italy more extravagant in their expenses, in their carnivals, and feasts of St. John, than Florence."  
—MACHIAVELLI.

When thou with pleasure shalt the past retrace,  
With gentle words commemorate us then."

Then they their circle broke, and fled away ;

Wings their swift legs seem'd, so that an "Amen"

In such short time a person could not say,

As that in which these shades had disappear'd.

Wherefore my master straight pursued his way,  
I follow'd, and when we not far had fared, [90

A sound of water now our ear perceives

So near, each other's voice we scarcely heard.

Even as that river its first pathway cleaves,

From Monte Veso as its waters move,

Eastward where Apennine's left side it leaves,

And then is Acquacheta call'd above,

Ere to a lower bed its billows glide,

At Forli doom'd no more that name to prove ;<sup>1</sup>

There o'er St. Benedict<sup>2</sup> resounds its tide, 100

<sup>1</sup> The river, while exhibiting in the early part of its course—

"The torrent's smoothness ere it dash below,"

is named *Acquacheta*, "Quiet water." At Forli (the ancient Forum Livii), after precipitating itself with great noise over a ledge of rocks, near the rich abbey of St. Benedict, it takes the name of *Montone*, "Ram." The descent of the river Phlegethon is here compared to this cascade.

<sup>2</sup> The religious order of St. Benedict was established A.D. 529. Its founder, a native of Nursia in Umbria, a man of piety and character, gave new form to the monastic life. After he had long lived a hermit, he founded a convent at Monte Cassino in Campania. Here he introduced a new system of rules, which mitigated

As from an Alpine precipice descending,  
A shelter where a thousand might abide :  
Thus o'er a rock precipitous impending  
Rush'd the dark roaring wave which here we found ;  
Which soon had stunn'd us, with its noise offending.  
I had a cord with which I girt me round :  
And formerly I thought it might conduce  
To lead the pard with painted skin fast bound.<sup>1</sup>

the extreme rigour of eastern Monachism, prescribed a variety of suitable employments, but especially distinguished his institution by exacting from all who entered it a promise never to quit the monastery again, and strictly to observe its rules. This system soon spread in Italy, Greece, and Spain, and in the ninth century had absorbed all the other religious societies. Instead of the former diversity of monasteries, uniformity was now established : and thus arose the first Monastic Order, or association of many monasteries living under the same rule. About the middle of the sixth century the Benedictines, already accustomed to a well-regulated activity, adopted literary pursuits, after the example set them by Cassiodorus, who had made the first attempt of this kind in the convent built by him near Squillaci in Bruttia. They also reclaimed waste lands, promoted education, handed down to posterity the history of their times in Chronicles, and preserved, by their copyists, the writings of antiquity. Having acquired immense wealth from the devout liberality of the rich, the Benedictines gave way to the temptations of luxury, sloth, and worldly ambition, multiplying the ceremonies of religion as a substitute for their departed virtue, and claiming especial merit by their endeavours to enlarge the power and authority of the Roman Pontiff. Almost all the English abbots who held baronies and sat in Parliament were Benedictines.

<sup>1</sup> The thirteenth century gave rise to the Mendicant Orders, or Begging Friars, of which the two principal were the Dominicans

When I had made it from myself quite loose,

and Franciscans. The founder of the Franciscans was born at Assissi in Umbria, the son of a wealthy merchant, and afterwards canonized as St. Francis. When a young man he was of dissolute habits, but a fit of sickness threw him into the opposite course of religious extravagance; to cure him of which his father sent him to prison, but in vain. At his father's instance, he renounced all claim to his paternal inheritance, in addition to which he stripped himself to his shirt. On hearing the Gospel read at church, "Provide neither gold nor silver," &c., he conceived that the essence of the Gospel consists in a voluntary and absolute poverty, which he adopted, and persuaded others to adopt, as the rule of life. For the religious order thus originated he drew up an institute, approved by Innocent III. in 1210, and by the Lateran Council in 1215. Instead of the usual term *Fratres* (Brothers or Friars), he called his monks *Fratrulli*, "little brethren;" hence they are called Fraticelli by the Italians, Frères Mineurs by the French, and Friars Minor by the English. Their habit was a grey gown reaching to their heels. They were also, by the rules of their founder, *senza calzone*—*sans culottes!* The name of Capuchin was first given in jest by the boys in the streets, to that branch of their order, instituted in 1528, which accepted the name as their proper designation. It was provoked by the peaked hood (*cappuccio*) which they wore. The Franciscans, when they went abroad, wore a cloak, went barefoot, and girt themselves with a cord: hence they were called Cordeliers. Their first house in England, about 1221, was in Canterbury; their second in London. Their success was prodigious. Their profession of poverty, contrasted with the grasping spirit of the clergy and the older monastic orders, produced a powerful effect. Matthew Paris, in the middle of the thirteenth century, complains that nobody confessed except to these new-fashioned monks-errant, and that the parish churches were deserted. Their communities, however, not only acquired the advowsons of livings, made over to them by their admirers, but also extensive estates and ample revenues. They treated the other religious orders with great

Because my teacher had commanded this, 110  
Coil'd up I reach'd it forth to him for use.

Then turning on the right hand towards the abyss,  
Few paces distant from the shore he stood,  
And flung it down o'er that rough precipice.

To such new signal, with keen eye pursued  
By my instructor, I said inwardly,  
"Some novelty should in reply be view'd."

Ah me! how cautious it were wise to be

haughtiness, reviling all except their own. Before they had been twenty years in England a great and scandalous controversy arose between them and the rival order of St. Dominic—the Black or Preaching Friars—as to precedence, and the respective merits of their two orders. Having been furnished by the Holy See with extensive powers of confession and indulgence, the Franciscans became in return the most grasping agents of the Papacy. Matthew Paris gives examples of their avarice, impudence, and hypocrisy.

Probably Dante had in early life adopted the Franciscan "cord" and rule, as a kind of novitiate, for the purpose of mortifying and subduing his carnal appetites; but having found the experiment a failure, he exchanged the cord of St. Francis for a different kind of tie, and the rule of a more ancient institute:—he married! The covert satire conveyed in this Canto is scarcely less severe than that in the *Crede* of Piers Ploughman, where the Franciscan order, which had been so popular, and still continued so powerful, is described as "The ymage of ypocricie ymped upon fendes," l. 607. Dante having, at the instance of Virgil, stripped off the "cord," the Latin poet employs it as a *bait* for Geryon; while Dante looks on, wondering what "strange fish" it would bring up. Soon "the fell monster with the sharpened sting" ascends from the abyss (see *Rev.* xi. 7), in the seeming expectation of meeting a Franciscan ready to make the descent with him.

Near men whose mind beyond the action pries  
 Into one's thoughts with keen sagacity!      120  
 Then he to me ; " Soon wilt thou see arise  
     What I await, thy fancy's waking dream,  
     To be ere long display'd before thine eyes."  
 Well may that truth continued silence claim  
     Whose face the semblance of a lie begrimes,  
     Because without a fault it causeth shame.<sup>1</sup>  
 But I must speak, and, reader, by the rhymes  
     Of this my Comedy, to thee I swear,  
     So may they miss no favour through all times,  
 I saw then, through that gross and gloomy air, 130  
     A shape come swimming upwards, which to see  
     The stoutest heart had quell'd with wonder there.  
 So he returns who goes below to free  
     The anchor, grappling with its iron claws  
     The rock, or aught beside hid in the sea,  
 Who springing upward thence his feet withdraws.

<sup>1</sup> Ariosto makes a like reflection, in imitation of Dante.—

" I saw it, I know it ; yet I am not sure  
 In speaking of it to others, that so great a wonder  
 Will not appear more like falsehood than truth."

*Orl. Fur.* ii. 54.

## CANTO XVII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

A description of the monster Geryon, the living symbol of Fraud.—

While Virgil is conversing with him, Dante proceeds a little further, along the edge of the abyss, to observe the condition of the usurers who suffer there: they are identified by their armorial bearings, embroidered on purses hanging from their necks.—The two poets descend into the eighth circle on the back of Geryon.

“ Lo the fierce reptile with the sharpen’d sting  
 Who passeth mountains, breaking walls and spears,  
 And doth o’er all the world his ordure fling.”

Thus fell my leader’s accents on mine ears :

Who made a sign that he should come to shore  
 Near to the marble causeway’s utmost piers.

He who of fraud the loathsome image wore  
 Emerging laid on shore his head and bust,  
 But on the bank to lift his tail forbore.

His face was human and proclaim’d him just, 10

Its outward aspect so benignly fair,  
 And of a serpent all the trunk robust :

Two paws were, to the armpits, rough with hair ;

Back, breast, and both sides variegated prove,  
 With knots and circles painted on them there.  
 With colours dyed beneath and laid above,  
 Their cloth ne'er Turks nor Tartars varied more;<sup>1</sup>  
 Nor such adorn'd the web Arachne wove.<sup>2</sup>  
 As oft the vessel rests upon the shore,  
 Part on the water and a part on land,                   20  
 And as where dwells the greedy German boor,  
 The beaver to make war sits on the strand;<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The art of dyeing has been practised in the East from the earliest times. The Turks and Tartars, like other Oriental nations, have always been characterised by a taste for gaudy and variegated colours.

<sup>2</sup> Arachne, daughter of Idmo, a dyer of Colophon in Ionia, whose *myth* represents her as having been so skilful in needle-work, that she challenged Minerva; by whom however she was vanquished, and then hung herself in despair, but was changed by the goddess into a spider. Her *name* is the Greek word for a spider.

<sup>3</sup> The position indicated is, with its body on the shore, and its tail in the water. This is *not* a suitable position for catching fish or watching them; the occupation in which nearly all the translators represent the animal to be engaged,—as if his tail were both bait and hook! The "*guerra*," "war," which the beaver wages, is with plants, among which it makes fearful havock. It is of the order *rodentia*, has no canine teeth, is amphibious, timid, and shy, invariably carrying on its labours, in the construction of huts and dams, by night. It is related of a tamed and domesticated beaver, that he liked *to dip his tail in the water*, but was not fond of plunging the whole body. If his tail was kept moist, he never eared to drink; but if it was kept dry, he appeared to be distressed, and would drink a good deal. The earliest notice of the beaver is in Herodotus, iv. 109, who describes it as being

So did this wild and worst of pests remain,  
On the rock margin that enclosed the sand.  
Glancing about in that void space amain  
His tail ; its venom'd fork, which upwards twined,  
Was arm'd with sting, as is the scorpion's train.  
“ Now,” said my guide, “ our way must be inclined  
Sideways a little space, to where in sight  
That savage beast is on yon brink reclined.” 30  
We thereupon descended to the right ;  
Ten paces on the utmost verge went we,  
To shun the sand and flames which there alight.  
And when to him we had advanced, we see,  
A little further on upon the sand,  
Another tribe near the declivity.  
Then said my guide, “ That thou may'st understand,  
And of this round complete experience bear,  
Now go, and well be their condition scann'd :  
Short be thy conversation with them there. 40  
Till thy return I will with this one talk,  
That we the aid of his strong back may share.”  
Thus then upon the verge extreme I walk  
Of that seventh circle, and without my chief ;  
Where sat that mournful tribe alone I stalk.

found among the Budai, a people who lived on the river Tanais or Don. It still lives and burrows on the banks of the Rhine, Danube, Weser, and other European rivers ; but in the British Isles, where it formerly existed, it has become extinct.

Through their sad eyes burst forth their inward grief;  
    Against the vapour and hot soil they try,  
    With hands moved here and there, to find relief.  
Not otherwise the dogs in summer ply  
    Their jaws and feet when bitten by the flies, 50  
    Or fleas, or brizes that around them fly.  
When on some faces I had fix'd mine eyes,  
    Of those beneath that dolorous fiery shower,  
    Not any of them could I recognize ;  
But saw that from the neck of each hung lower  
    A pouch which certain marks and colours bore,<sup>1</sup>  
    And these their eyes seem'd eager to devour.  
When come among them, gazing to explore,

<sup>1</sup> Armorial bearings have been in use immemorially. The devices and mottoes emblazoned on the shields of the Seven Chiefs who besieged Thebes, are described by Æschylus. But the general introduction of such bearings as *hereditary distinctions*, can be traced no higher than to about the commencement of the 13th century, and originated partly in the devices borne by the armed knights in the tournaments of chivalry; and partly from those employed by the Crusaders of different nations, to distinguish the banners of their respective chiefs. The earliest heraldic document extant is of the reign of Edward I. It is in old Norman-French, and rehearses the names and armorial bearings of the barons, knights, &c. who attended him at the siege of Caerlaverock castle, A.D. 1300, the year of Dante's Vision. Heraldry was at that time a pictorial language, far more necessary than at present. But these distinctions had even then become food for the gratification of personal vanity and family pride. This Dante ridicules by adorning with such emblazonry the purses of usurers.

One yellow purse I saw with azure wrought,  
 The which a lion's face and figure bore.<sup>1</sup> 60  
 Proceeding thus in my survey I caught  
 The sight of one of blood-red colour now,  
 Which show'd a goose more white than milk,<sup>2</sup>  
 methought ;  
 And one that bore a fat and azure sow  
 Pictured on his white satchel,<sup>3</sup> I descried,  
 Who said to me, " What in this deep dost thou ?  
 Away, and since thou dost in life abide,  
 Know thou that here, my neighbour once, by name  
 Vitalian,<sup>4</sup> is to sit at my right side.  
 I with these Florentines a Paduan came ; 70  
 And oft they stun mine ears with their loud cry :  
 ' The sovereign cavalier with pouch, we claim,  
 The three goats bearing ;<sup>5</sup> let him hither hie ! ' ”  
 Thereon he writhed his mouth and thrust his  
 tongue  
 Out like an ox that licks his nose :<sup>6</sup> and I,

<sup>1</sup> The arms of the Gian Figliuzzi of Florence.

<sup>2</sup> The arms of the Ubriacchi, another noble family there.

<sup>3</sup> The arms of the Scrovigni, a noble family of Padua.

<sup>4</sup> Vitaliano del Dento, a noble Paduan, much given to usury.

<sup>5</sup> The arms of the Buiamonti. The reference is to Giovanni Buiamonte, a Florentine usurer, the most infamous of his time.

<sup>6</sup> A sign of derisive contempt among the ancient Romans—*" Nec linguæ, quantum siliat Canis Appula, tantum."*—*PERSIUS, Sat. i. 60*; and still employed among the lower classes in Italy.

Fearing that if I should my stay prolong, [speedy,  
 'Twould grieve him who had warn'd me to be  
 Turn'd backward from that wearied spirits' throng.

Upon the back of that fierce brute already  
 I found that Virgil his ascent had made. 80

He said to me, "Now be thou bold and steady,  
 Such are the stairs which our descent must aid.

Mount thou before, I'll in the middle sit;  
 Thou needst not then be of the tail afraid."

As he who hath so near a shivering fit

Of quartan ague that his nails are pale,  
 And the shade shakes him even to look at it;

Such I became to hear my teacher's tale: [me,  
 But shame now smote and threaten'd to disgrace  
 Which makes, before his lord, the servant hale. 90

I on those shoulders huge did therefore place me.

I would have said (but that my words a stop  
 Experienced<sup>1</sup>), "Look that firmly thou embrace

But he who oft before had been my prop, [me."  
 Soon as I mount, his arms around me cast;

And lifting high he firmly held me up.

"Now, Geryon,<sup>2</sup> move thou on," he cried at last;

"Be large thy circuits, thy descent with ease;  
 Think of the unusual burden which thou hast."

<sup>1</sup> *Vox faucibus hæsit.* "The word stuck in my throat." *Æneid.*

<sup>2</sup> An ancient king in Spain, who was overcome and slain by Hercules. *Æneid.* vii. 662.

As the small vessel backward by degrees      100  
 The land forsakes, thus he withdrew his trail,  
 And feeling 't was "all right," himself he frees ;  
 There where the breast had been he turn'd his tail ;  
 Thus like an eel outstretch'd his length he steers,  
 And towards him with his talons fann'd the gale.  
 Not Phaëton methinks caused greater fears,<sup>1</sup>  
 When he the reins abandon'd in despair,  
 Because the sky was burn'd, as yet appears :<sup>2</sup>—  
 Nor when the wretched Icarus in air  
 Felt the plumes loosen'd by the scalded wax,<sup>3</sup> 110

<sup>1</sup> Phaëton, son of Apollo and Clymene, one of the Oceanidæ. On being reproached with *not* being the son of Apollo, he, at the instance of his mother, begged his father to give proof of his paternity. After Phœbus had sworn by Styx to give him whatever he required, Phaëton demanded leave to drive his chariot one day. Phœbus expostulated, but in vain ; and as his oath was inviolable, he instructed his son how to proceed. But no sooner had Phaëton received the reins than his incapacity appeared ; the flying horses took advantage of it, and departing from their usual track, a universal conflagration seemed imminent : which Jupiter perceiving, struck the charioteer with a thunderbolt, and hurled him from his seat into the river Eridanus.—*Metam.* ii.

<sup>2</sup> When Phaëton, unable to keep the line of the sun's course along the ecliptic, missed his way, he came so near the earth as to dry up all the countries under it, and burned a great part of the heavens, "which the philosophers call *via lactea*, and the Sciolists St. James's way ; although the very loftiest poets affirm it to be the place where Juno's milk fell when she suckled Jupiter."—*Rabelais*.

<sup>3</sup> Icarus, son of Dædalus, who with his father, to avoid the resentment of Minos, is said to have fled from Crete on artificia

While cried his sire, "Thou hold'st the wrong  
way there!"—

Than mine when, as his path the monster tracks,

I saw myself in air all round ; and lo !

Save that fierce beast my sight all prospect lacks.

Himself he launch'd, and downward floated slow,

Wheeling and sinking imperceptibly,

Save that my face is fann'd as from below ;

And on my right a whirlpool seems to be,

Which underneath us made a horrible crash,

Whence I with head stretch'd forth look'd down

to see,

120

But shrunk back timid at what seem'd so rash,

To attempt from such a height the scene to  
explore :

Wailings I heard, and saw of fires the flash,

Thence I all trembling stoop'd. Now—not before—

Perceived I the descent and circular swoop,

So near all round appear'd those torments sore.

Like as the falcon when his pinions droop,<sup>1</sup>

Long poised in air, nor lure nor bird could see,

wings. But his flight being too high, the sun melted the wax which fastened them, and he fell into that part of the Ægean which from him is called the Iearian Sea.—OVID. *Metam.* 183.

<sup>1</sup> Falconry or hawking, unknown to the Greeks and Romans, is believed to have been practised in the East, and among the barbarous nations of the north, from a very early period. It is

Which makes the falconer cry, "Ah dost thou  
stoop!"

Descends fatigued; then swiftly gliding, he 130

By a hundred wheels,<sup>1</sup> and with disdain conceived,

Far from his master perches gloomily:

Thus Geryon stoop'd; on foot the ground received

Us at the furrow'd rock's deep base below;

And of our persons being thus relieved,

He went off like an arrow from the bow.<sup>2</sup>

still a favorite sport in central and northern India. Falconry was introduced into the provinces of the Roman empire by the barbarians who overran and eventually subdued them. The laws of Italy in the 9th century regard the sword and the hawk as of equal dignity and importance in the hand of a Lombard nobleman. On the Bayeux Tapestry, Harold, on his visit to William of Normandy, is represented with a hawk on his fist. In our own country, from the Heptarchy down to the time of Charles II. Falconry was the principal amusement of the nobility and gentry; and although it is no longer recognized among the sports of civilized Europe, we have many mementos of its former prevalence, in our Surnames, our Heraldry, our Proverbs, and our Literature.

Hawks intended for training were taken young; and great skill, patience, and perseverance were necessary in reclaiming these fierce birds. Well-trained hawks were highly valued, and often sold at enormous prices. The allusions to falconry are frequent in the writings of Dante, Ariosto, Boccaccio, Chaucer, &c.

<sup>1</sup> "Throws his steep flight in many an airy wheel."—*Paradise Lost*, iii. 741.

<sup>2</sup> Geryon, having been disappointed of an expected prey, goes off displeased, like the baffled and moody falcon.

## CANTO XVIII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

A description of Malebolgè, or the eighth circle divided into ten concentric gulfs or valleys, for the punishment of ten different kinds of fraud.—In this Canto the poets only traverse two of them, crossing each by a rocky bridge, whence they look down and survey the transgressors and their torments.—In the first valley panders and seducers are scourged by demons : Dante recognizes and converses with Caccianimèo, and sees Jason.—In the second valley flatterers and harlots are immersed in filth : Alesio and Thaïs are discovered there.

THERE is a place in hell call'd Malebolgè,<sup>1</sup>  
 All rocky and of dark ferruginous stain ;  
 Like the surrounding steep of which I told ye.  
 Right in the middle of that direful plain  
 Wide yawns a gulf, how vast, and how profound !  
 Whereof due time the structure will explain.

<sup>1</sup> Malebolgè, "the evil enclosures." Dante describes it as a huge labyrinth, consisting of ten circular concentric valleys, divided from each other by rocky mounds, with a gradual descent from the outer to the innermost circle. Across these mounds are bridges leading from the surrounding rock to the central chasm. To the left, between the rock which they had just descended and the first of the ten valleys, the poets proceed, surveying on their right the sinners engulfed below.

That girdle therefore which remains is round,  
 Between the gulf and bank so high and hard :  
 Ten separate valleys occupy the ground.  
 As where with many a foss the walls to guard 10  
 Men gird about some castellated town,  
 And thus the space within from danger ward.  
 On the same plan those fashion'd here were shown :  
 And as such fortresses, even from their foot  
 To the outer bank opposed, have bridges thrown ;  
 So here, proceeding from the rock's low root,  
 The flinty paths across each rock and mound,  
 Even to the gulf which gathering ends them, shoot.  
 Such was the place in which ourselves we found  
 From Geryon's back dislodged : and now my  
 guide 20  
 Moves to the left, while after him I bound.  
 On the right hand new misery I spied ;  
 New pangs and flagellators there had place,  
 With which the first chasm fully was supplied.  
 Below were naked sinners : us they face  
 Who walk'd this side the middle ; those we view'd  
 On that, walk'd with us, but with quicker pace.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The crowds were moving in opposite directions on the two sides of the foss beneath, so that those nearest the poets faced them, and those furthest off were walking in the same direction with them, towards the bridge. The direction which the poets had taken on their arrival in Malebolgè, as in every other circle,

Even as the Romans, that the multitude  
 At Jubilee,<sup>1</sup> whose numbers none can count,  
 May pass the bridge, this method have pursued: 30  
 All those on one side towards the castle front,  
 And so approach St. Peter's; all who flock  
 The other side move onwards to the mount.<sup>2</sup>

was to the left; they had the foss, therefore, at their right hand. Hence it is clear that each sufferer took that side of the foss which was at his right, and had those at his left who were walking in the opposite direction. When Dante and his companion arrived at the bridge which crossed the foss, and, having reached its top, looked down on those who were about to pass under its arch, they would face those who had before been walking in the same direction with themselves.

<sup>1</sup> In imitation of the Secular Games of the ancient Romans, which were celebrated at the end of every 110 years, Boniface VIII. instituted the Jubilee, which was first observed A.D. 1300, and decreed its observance at the conclusion of every century. At this first Jubilee such vast numbers resorted to Rome, that, as G. Villani, who was present, informs us, to obviate the inconvenience arising from their throng, his Holiness caused the bridge of St. Angelo to be divided lengthways by a partition, and ordered that all going to St. Peter's should keep on one side, and those returning, on the other. From Dante's comparison we learn, that the rule established on this occasion was the same as is now observed in our own towns and cities, as well as in those of Italy, &c.; namely, the custom of taking the right side of the road and giving the left, in walking.

<sup>2</sup> "The bridge," mentioned by Dante, is in a line with the castle of St. Angelo, which faces one end of it. "The mount" is the Janiculum, and more especially that part on which the church of St. Pietro in Montorio stands. We may fairly suspect a deep sarcasm, in the comparison of those who crowded to the Jubilee, with the sinners in Malebolgè.

On either side along the sable rock

I saw horn'd demons, who with mighty blows  
Them on their backs unmercifully struck.

Ah! how the first stripe from those demon foes  
Made them spring forward; for a second none  
Waits, nor a third, before his speed he shows.

Meanwhile, as on I walk'd, my eyes met one 40  
Whom soon as I beheld I said, "This man  
Seems to my sight already not unknown."

Therefore I stay'd my feet his form to scan:

My guide paused with me too, and let me go  
Backward some steps to view that face so wan:

And then that scourged one bent his visage low  
Himself to hide, but vainly, for said I,  
"Thou who to earth dost bend thine eyelids so,

If thee thy features do not much belie,

Venédico Caccianimíco<sup>1</sup> art. 50

What brings thee here such poignant sauce to try?"

And he; "To tell it thee I've not much heart:

But thy clear language hath remembrance bred  
Of the old world in which I had my part;

And that compels me. I am he who led

Fair Ghisola to do the Marquis' will;

<sup>1</sup> A Bolognese of a noble family, who betrayed the virtue of his own sister Ghisola to Obizzo d'Este, Marquis of Ferrara, mentioned Canto xii.

However Fame the shameful tale may spread,  
 Nor I the only Bolognese who spill  
     My tear-drops here, so throng'd with us the place.  
     Between Sevena and the Reno<sup>1</sup> still                   60  
 So many tongues know not in our quaint phrase  
     To answer *Sipa* :<sup>2</sup> and if proof more strong  
     Thou ask, our avarice of heart retrace."  
 Him, speaking thus, a demon with his thong  
     Struck, and exclaim'd, " Away, procurer, for  
     Here are no girls for sale ; so get along !"  
 My escort then I overtook once more ;  
     And, a few paces on, our way we find  
     To where a rock projected from the shore ;  
 And up its side with ease our footsteps wend :     70  
     Then on its erag, turn'd to the right we go,  
     And those eternal circles leave behind.<sup>3</sup>  
 When we arrived where yawns the arch below,  
     To let the flagellated souls pass through,  
     My leader said, " Pause here and let the woe

<sup>1</sup> These two rivers rise in the Apennines, and flow past Bologna ; the Sevena east, and the Reno west of the city.

<sup>2</sup> Now *Sipo*, a Bolognese provincialism for *Si*, Yes. Daute thus distinguishes Bologna by its dialect, as well as by its topographical position.

<sup>3</sup> Turning to the right, they mount one of the rocky bridges that cross the first chasm of the eighth circle ; in doing which they necessarily turn their backs on the seven circles which they had previously passed through.

Of these unfortunates now meet thy view,  
Whose faces have not been to thee display'd,  
Since they have walk'd beside us hitherto."  
From the old bridge we now the crowd survey'd  
Who toward us came upon the other side, 80  
And whom the lash had in like manner flay'd.  
Then thus, without my asking, spake my guide ;  
" Mark thou yon great one who doth hither wend ;  
From whom no grieving tear is seen to glide.  
How regal is the look by him retain'd !  
'Tis Jason,<sup>1</sup> who by heart and skill crewhile  
The ram from Colchis and its people gain'd.  
As he pass'd thither through the Lemnian isle,  
When those bold cruel women all their males  
Had rudely slaughter'd ; there did he beguile, 90  
With tokens and with soft persuasive tales,  
Hypsipyle the young ;<sup>2</sup> who had deceived

<sup>1</sup> A celebrated hero of Iolehos, in Thessaly, leader of the expedition from the Pegasean gulf, in the Argo, to Colchis, where, by the assistance of Medea, he obtained the golden fleece. He afterwards proved false to *her*, for which she took a terrible revenge, by destroying their children in his presence.

<sup>2</sup> When the Lemnian women put to death all their male relatives, Hypsipyle alone spared the life of her father Thoas. Not long after this, the Argonauts landed at Lemnos, in their expedition to Colchis. During their stay in the island they became attached to the Lemnian women, and Jason at his departure vowed eternal fidelity to Hypsipyle ; a vow no better kept than his subsequent engagements to Medea.

Still earlier all the others : with spread sails  
Her he abandon'd, pregnant and bereaved.  
For this was he condemn'd to this keen smart ;  
Medea's vengeance too hath he received.  
With him are those who practised the same art.  
Of the first vale this knowledge may suffice,  
And of the souls who in its pangs have part."  
Now came we where our narrow pathway lies 100  
Across the second mound, whose shoulders there  
To bring us to another arch arise.  
Hence in the second chasm the crowd we hear,  
Who deeply groan and with spread nostrils puff ;  
And blows, with their own palms inflicted, bear.  
The crusted banks with mouldy scum were rough ;  
For the foul steam reek'd up and there it cleaved,  
Giving both sight and smell a rude rebuff.  
So deep the bottom that we nought perceived  
From any part, until we mounted up 110  
On that high arch whose crag above it heaved :  
Thither we came, and looking from the top,  
A crowd in ordure plunged, which seem'd to flow  
From common-sewers, I saw : and as I stop,  
And search with prying eye the depth below,  
I noticed one, so grimed with filth his head,  
That whether clerk or layman few could know.  
He chid me thus ; " Why would thine eyes be fed

So greedily with looks at me, before  
 Those other sordid ones ?” “Because,” I said, 120  
 “Thee I remember having seen of yore,  
 With thy locks dry. Thou art Alessio<sup>1</sup>  
 Interminei of Lucca : therefore more  
 Than all the rest I saw thee.” Beating now  
 His head he said ; “The flatteries with which  
 My tongue I ne’er could glut sunk me thus low.”  
 Immediately my leader said ; “Just stretch  
 A little further forward now thy face,  
 If that thine eyes may peradventure reach  
 The visage of that harlot foul and base, 130  
 Whose filthy nails her form so lacerate ;  
 Now crouching and now standing on the place :  
 Thaïs that harlot is, who when her mate  
 Fondly enquired, ‘Have I great thanks from thee?’  
 Responded, ‘Yes, and wonderfully great.’<sup>2</sup>  
 Well may our view from hence now satiate be.”

<sup>1</sup> Of an ancient and considerable family in Lucca, the Interminei.

<sup>2</sup> A celebrated courtesan of Athens, who accompanied Alexander in his Asiatic expedition, and gained such an ascendancy over him that she induced him to burn the royal palace of Persepolis. After his death she married Ptolemy king of Egypt. Menander celebrated her beauty ; and Terence, who copied Menander, introduces her in a dialogue between Thraso and his messenger, thus :—  
 “Thraso. Well, but did Thaïs give her thanks to me? Gnatho. Vast thanks.”—*Eunuchus*, act iii. sc. 1. Thaïs herself does not appear in the scene, as Dante seems to have supposed. The passage is quoted by Cicero, *De Amicitia*, 93, where Dante may have seen it, which accounts for his mistake.

## CANTO XIX.

## THE ARGUMENT.

The poets reach the third valley of Malebolgè, where the followers of Simon Magus are punished. These are fixed in circular holes, with their heads downward, while only their legs appear, with flames playing on the soles of their feet. Dante is borne by his guide to the bottom of the valley, where he finds Pope Nicholas III., who mistakes him for Boniface VIII., his successor, whose coming, as well as that of Clement V., he foretells. Dante sternly and severely reproves their covetousness and evil deeds. Virgil then carries him again to the top of the bridge, along which they pass to the next valley.

O SIMON MAGUS,<sup>1</sup> O ye wretches who  
 His footsteps follow, and the things of God,  
 To goodness plighted, so rapacious you  
 For gold and silver prostitute!<sup>2</sup> aloud

<sup>1</sup> The history of Simon Magus is in *Acts* viii. 5—24. Irenæus relates, that he afterwards applied himself to magic more than ever, travelling through various provinces, for the purpose of withstanding the Apostles, and opposing Christianity. Much more is related of him which appears conjectural and fabulous. The traffic in ecclesiastical preferments has from him been called Simony.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Paris thus describes the state of things in the thirteenth century. "Simony was now practised without a blush. Illiterate persons of the lowest class, armed with the bulls of the Roman

For you the awful trumpet now must sound,  
Because in the third chasm is your abode.  
Already we had climb'd the rocky mound  
Of the next vault ; the huge cliff in that part  
Hung o'er the middle of the foss profound.  
Wisdom Supreme ! how is thy wondrous art      10  
In heaven, earth, and this evil world made clear !  
How just the meed thou dost to all impart.  
Throughout the sides and at the bottom there  
The livid stone all full of holes I see,  
Of equal size, and each was circular.  
They neither less nor larger seem'd to me  
Than those that are within my fair St. John  
Made for the priests who serve the Baptistry.<sup>1</sup>

Church, daily presumed to plunder the revenues left by pious men for the maintenance of the clergy, for the support of the poor, and the hospitable entertainment of pilgrims. And if any of the injured appealed or pleaded privilege, they were suspended or excommunicated, on the warrant of an authority from the Pope." —*Hist. Major.* A. D. 1237.

<sup>1</sup> The vast and magnificent cathedral, or *Duomo*, at Florence, dedicated to St. John, ranks among the first ecclesiastical buildings of Europe. The fine double cupola was the earliest, and the model of succeeding ones, and of that by which alone it has been surpassed, the *Dome of St. Peter's*. This cathedral was begun in 1296 by Arnolpho di Lapo, a scholar of Cimabue the painter. Here, as at Pisa and many other places, the Baptistery is a separate edifice : it stands in the middle of the great square in front of the cathedral. It is an octagon, with a low dome supported by many granite pillars. Its interior walls are faced,

To save a drowning child, few years are gone [20  
 Since one of these I broke : the cause explain'd,  
 Be this the seal to undeceive each one.  
 Forth from its mouth each hole this chasm contain'd  
 A sinner's feet and legs display'd above,  
 Even to the calf, all else within remain'd.  
 And on both soles the flames enkindled move.  
 Therefore with such vehemence play'd each joint,  
 Enough to break both cords and ropes 'twould  
 prove.  
 As on the ground which unctuous things anoint,  
 The flame just licks the surface on its way,  
 So glided here the flames from heel to point. 30  
 " Pray, who is he so tortured, master, say,  
 With feet more nimble than his comrades' are ;"  
 I ask'd ; " on whom a redder flame doth prey ?"  
 And he to me ; " If thou but let me bear  
 Thee down below by yon bank's easiest fall,

and the pavement laid, with marble. The concave of the dome is covered with mosaic, the work of Andrea Tafi, one of Cimabue's pupils. All the children born in Florence and the suburbs used to be christened here ; and as the population in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was great, the baptismal fonts must often have been crowded. Dantè's comparison of the holes in the rock of Malebolgè to these, appears rather sinister, but was, no doubt, as innocently intended, as the fracture of one of them — condemned as a sacrilege by the superstitious, but justified by the occasion, in the eyes of all who think human life more precious than the richest marble, and more sacred than the costliest shrine.

He shall to thee himself and crimes declare.”  
 I said, “What pleases thee is best of all ;  
 Thou art my lord, and by thy will I’m bound,  
 Who know’st my thought in each mute interval.”  
 Then on the fourth pier come, and turning round, 40  
 Upon the left hand we descend below  
 To that confined and perforated ground.  
 Nor yet would my kind master let me go  
 Down from his arms, till by the hole at last  
 Of him whose legs betray’d his torment so.  
 “Whoe’er thou art with head below misplaced,  
 Sad spirit, like a stake driven in the soil,”  
 Thus I commenced, “speak, if the power thou  
 hast.”  
 I stood like friar that shrives the assassin vile, [50  
 Who even when fix’d<sup>1</sup> where he his doom must bear,  
 Calls him again, postponing death awhile.  
 And he<sup>2</sup> cried out, “Already stand’st thou there ?

<sup>1</sup> In Dante’s time, assassins were “put into a deep hole in the ground with their heads downward, and buried alive.”

<sup>2</sup> John Cajetan, a Roman of the noble family of Orsini, was elected pope November 23d, 1277, and took the name of Nicholas III. His attachment to the Ghibelines was hereditary, and he favoured them everywhere, obtaining their recall in all the Guelf republics. Charles of Anjou having scornfully rejected his proposed alliance between their families, Nicholas intended to transfer the kingdom of Sicily from him to Peter of Aragon, to promote which object, the Sicilians rose on Easter-day 1282, and slew all the French in that island. This was the famed Sicilian

Already!—and erect!—O Boniface?<sup>1</sup>  
 The writing told me false by many a year.  
 Didst thou so surfeit of that wealth apace  
 For which thou fear'dst not that fair dame to take  
 By fraud, and then afflict with outrage base?<sup>2</sup>  
 Not comprehending what the sufferer spake,  
 I felt like one to ridicule exposed,  
 And paused, not knowing what reply to make. 60  
 “Say quickly, thou art not whom he supposed,”

Vespers.—DU PIN, vol. iii. p. 192; SISMONDI, ch. iv. p. 101. Machiavelli describes Nicholas as a daring, ambitious man, who first openly set the example of nepotism to succeeding popes, designing to carve out kingdoms for his family; but before he could accomplish this he died, A.D. 1250.—*Hist. Fior.* i.

<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Benedict Cajetan was raised to the Pontificate A.D. 1294, by the name of Boniface VIII. See Canto iii. note. He took for his motto *Ecce duo gladii*, and aimed at making himself master of all kingdoms. He forbade all princes exacting anything from ecclesiastical revenues, and sent legates to France to collect money. In his bull, *In unam sanctam*, he claimed dominion in spirituals and temporals. The first resistance to papal aggression was offered on this occasion by the king and people of France. Boniface was even arrested by Philip's agent, and though liberated from duress by the people of Agnania, where he was, he died of rage and grief at Rome, October 12th, 1303.—DU PIN, *cent.* xiv.; RANKE, *Hist. of Popes*, i. i. 4. Nicholas, thinking that the person he addressed was Boniface, expresses wonder that he had arrived so soon, and that he stood erect, instead of taking his place in the hole with head inverted.

<sup>2</sup> By fraudulent means obtaining the supreme dominion of *the Church*, and then by the abuse of that authority inflicting on her the greatest injury.

Said Virgil then, "tell him thou art not he."  
And I made answer as my guide proposed :  
Whereat the spirit writhed vehemently  
His feet ; then sighing and lamenting sore,  
He thus replied, "What askest thou of me ?  
If, who I am, thou art so keen to explore,  
That thou for this the bank descended'st there,  
Know then that I the mighty mantle wore,<sup>1</sup>  
And was indeed a son of the she-bear :<sup>2</sup> 70  
So eager to advance the cubs, that I  
On earth to store away my wealth took care,  
And here myself. Under my head there lie  
Others dragg'd through a fissure in the rock,  
Who have before me practised simony.  
I too, when he arrives whom I mistook  
Thee for, and did with sudden question greet,  
Low down shall fall. Since I began to cook  
My soles, and thus have borne reverse complete,  
More time hath pass'd already, than his doom 80  
'Tis to be planted here with ruddy feet.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The robe of Supreme Pontiff.

<sup>2</sup> In allusion to his family name of Orsini.

<sup>3</sup> He had already waited longer for Boniface than the latter would have to wait for Clement. He had been dead about twenty years. Boniface had reigned five, and continued to reign three years longer ; from whose death to that of Clement V. ten years elapsed.

For after him, of deeds more foul, will come  
 One from the west, a lawless pastor he,<sup>1</sup>  
 Who shall above both him and me find room.  
 Like him we read of, a new Jason see,  
 In Maccabees; to whom his king was kind;<sup>2</sup>  
 Even so to him the King of France will be.”  
 I know not if too rashly I my mind  
 Express'd, but my reply this burden bore;  
 “Alas! now tell me, when our Lord inclined 90

<sup>1</sup> A reign of eleven months, that of Benedict XI., followed that of Boniface, after whose death the Holy See was vacant thirteen months, the conclave at Perugia not being able to agree in an election. At length it was agreed that the Italian cardinals should nominate three candidates not Italians, out of which the French cardinals were to choose one. One of the three was Bertrand de Got, Archbishop of Bourdeaux. On hearing this the King of France sent for him, and having agreed with him on certain conditions, wrote to the French cardinals to elect him; which they did June 5th, 1307. By the name of Clement V. he was crowned at Lyons, revoked the bulls of Boniface and reversed his judgments. Following through his whole reign the directions of Philip the Fair, he called a Council at Vienne in 1311 for the purpose of condemning the rich and powerful order of the Templars, whose ruin had been agreed on, for the sake of their wealth, which the king so greatly needed. Clement's ordinary abode was in France; and thus commenced the residence of the popes at Avignon. He died in May, 1314.

<sup>2</sup> Jason, the brother of Onias III., offered Antiochus Epiphanes 100 talents of silver to depose Onias, and appoint him to the high-priesthood in his stead. In this office he did all in his power to substitute Grecian customs for the laws of Moses.—*2 Macc.* iv. 7, &c.

To put the keys into St. Peter's power,  
 What treasures did he first of him demand?  
 None :—' Follow me,' he said, and ask'd no more.  
 Peter and th' others, of Matthias' hand  
 Nor gold nor silver took, when lots they cast  
 For one in Judas' forfeit place to stand.  
 Then stay where thy just punishment thou hast :  
 And look that well thou guard that wealth ill-  
 gain'd,  
 Whence thou against King Charles<sup>1</sup> embolden'd  
 wast.  
 And if it were not that I am restrain'd           100  
 By reverence for the keys which once did fill  
 Thy grasp, while cheerful light to thee remain'd,  
 The words I speak would be severer still ;  
 Because your avarice the whole world hath  
 griev'd,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Charles of Anjou, king of the two Sicilies. See note, l. 52.

<sup>2</sup> " The Roman Court, now in the time of our new pope Innocent IV., laying aside all sense of shame, continued by daily decrees impudently to extort revenues. The king, therefore, annoyed by the manifold avarice of the Romans, wrote to the Pope,—“ To the most holy father in Christ, and Lord Innocent, by the grace of God, Henry king of England, &c. health and kisses to his blessed feet. In some of your decrees granted to the clerks of England and other countries, we find ourselves oppressed in no slight degree,” &c.—MATT. PARIS, A.D. 1244.

“ The king at the same time instituted a diligent inquiry throughout all the counties as to the amount of revenues received by Romans, and as to the number of Italians whom the Court of

Trampling the good and raising up the ill.  
 You shepherds the Evangelist perceived,  
 When her who on the waters sits he saw,  
 And who with kings in filthy whoredom lived :  
 Her who with seven heads born could also draw  
 From the ten horns conclusive argument, 110  
 While yet she pleased her spouse with virtue's law.<sup>1</sup>  
 What could the idolater do more who bent  
 To gold and silver, which you make your god ?  
 But worship to a hundred ye present,  
 For one ! Ah, Constantine ! what ills have flow'd,

Rome had fraudulently and by force enriched in England. These revenues were found to amount to 60,000 marks annually ; a sum more than equal to the annual revenue of the whole of England. Wherefore the king was struck with abhorrence at the insatiable cupidity of the Roman Court," &c. "Wherefore a letter was prepared by the community of the kingdom, which set forth the execrable extortions of the Pope, and the manifold exactions of his legates and certain clerks invested with unheard of powers."—*Ib.* 1215. The letter is given by the historian. "The Pope, with great anger at the complaint, replied in the negative ; and issued a decree that the property of clerks dying intestate should devolve to him, appointing the Minorites (Franciscans) to carry it into effect."—*Ib.* These are only a few instances from one historian, in proof of the charge here brought by Dante.

<sup>1</sup> If by "her spouse" the Pope is meant, it must be as a *vice*-husband, certainly, since the true Bridegroom and Spouse of the Church is Christ. Some explain the seven heads and ten horns to mean the seven sacraments and ten commandments. From these, Dante says, she derived the evidence of her relation to him, so long as she pleased him by her obedience. Biagioli

Though not from thy conversion, from the dower,  
Which to thy gift the first rich father owed." <sup>1</sup>

And while into his ears these notes I pour,

He, whether wrath or conscience pierced his breast,  
Brandish'd both soles aloft with all his power, 120

explains the line, "So long as the pontiffs, who are the husbands of the Church, were moral, holy, and lovers of faith." But it is observable that the poet speaks of her *husband* ("suo marito") not of a plurality.

<sup>1</sup> In a sumptuous chapel close to the Lateran, is to be seen the baptistery, or font, in which Constantine is *said* to have been baptized by Sylvester. The chapel is also adorned with paintings representing the ceremony. The baptismal fee which Constantine is reported to have bestowed on Sylvester was rather large; it consisted of the city of Rome and all Italy. This gift was popularly and religiously believed in for ages, like Arthur's Round Table, which may still be seen in Winchester Castle. Yet it was long suspected, and is now generally admitted, that this donation of Constantine, after all, was but the pious fraud of a subsequent age. The proofs (not of its piety, but of its fictitious character) are these:—1. Twelve copies of the grant, all extant, differ from each other. 2. In the spring of 324, Constantine was not at Rome, but at Thessalonica, as appears from two constitutions of his in the Theodosian code. 3. Neither Eusebius, though giving a most minute and particular account of Constantine, nor any contemporary writer, has even hinted at a thing so memorable. 4. Theodoret, Sozomen, Soerates, Photius, Jerome, and the Council of Rimini, affirm, and all the ancient Greek and Latin writers agree, that Constantine was baptized, not at Rome, but at Nicomedia, when he lay at the point of death.—BOWYER, *Lives of the Popes*; MOSHEIM, *Ecc. Hist.* In his treatise *De Monarchia*, iii. Dante seems to speak doubtfully of this gift of Constantine; and Ariosto treats it as mere *moonshine*.—*Orl. Fur.* xxxiv. 80.

My leader's joy, methought, his smiles attest,  
Regarding always with so pleased a look,  
The sound of those true words by me express'd :  
Me therefore now in both his arms he took,  
And to his bosom lifting, that same way  
He came remounted, and that vale forsook :  
Nor tiring, clasp'd me whom he did convey,  
Till on the summit of the arch he stood :  
For here our passage from the fourth pier lay  
Unto the fifth ; so, gently he his load           130  
Laid down on the rough rock so steep and high,  
Which to the goat had proved a tiresome road :<sup>1</sup>  
From thence another valley I descry.

<sup>1</sup> It would have been difficult and tiresome even to the goat, an animal remarkably surefooted, and fond of climbing rocks and clambering among precipices.

## CANTO XX.

## THE ARGUMENT.

In the fourth valley of the eighth circle the pretended prophets and soothsayers are punished. Having endeavoured to pry into futurity, their heads are turned, and their faces thus reversed are made to look behind them, so that in walking they find it necessary to march backward, and advance by retreating! Among these Virgil points out Amphiaraus, Tiresias, Aruns, and Manto, from whom he takes occasion to relate the origin of Mantua, his native city. They also discover Eurypilus, Michael Scot, Bonati, and Asdente, and then pursue their journey.

Now must I versify new scenes of woe,

And matter to the twentieth canto give—

Of my first lay, and those immersed below.

I now stood gazing, eager to perceive

The suffering souls in the uncover'd deep,

Bathed in the tears of anguish as they grieve.

Advancing there a tribe all silent weep

Along the circling vale; such solemn pace

Choirs chanting litanies in this world keep:

When lower down I look'd the scene to trace, 10

Each wondrously reversed appear'd to be,<sup>1</sup>  
 While just above the chest and neck the face  
 Was from the reins averted, so that he  
 Advanced by walking backward, just because  
 Not one among them could before him see.<sup>2</sup>  
 Some one, perhaps, whom force of palsy draws  
 May thus have been entirely turn'd about;—  
 But I ne'er saw it, nor believe it was.  
 So God permit thee, reader, to have fruit  
 Of this thy reading, think, in my surprise      20  
 Could a dry visage with my feelings suit,  
 When I beheld our image in such guise  
 Distorted,<sup>3</sup> that the tears of these distress'd  
 Bathed the hind parts down streaming from their  
 eyes?  
 Certes, I wept as I reclining press'd

<sup>1</sup> In *Notes from the Diary of a Late Physician*, No. 14, we have the story of "The Turned Head;" the hypochondriac patient, believing that the back of his head was in front, and his face looking backward, insists on having his clothes put on front behind. When advised not to look at the dark side of things, he replies that he is compelled to look at the *back* side of them: and when urged to look forward to better days, he exclaims, "Nonsense! Impossible! My life will henceforth be spent in wretched *retrospections*."

<sup>2</sup> A severe satire on the professors of divination and magic, and all those pretenders to superior illumination who endeavour to promote their selfish purposes by deceiving and misleading mankind.

<sup>3</sup> Compare this passage with Milton, *Paradise Lost*, xi. 494, &c.

A cliff of the hard rock, so that my guide  
 Exclaim'd, " Art thou too simple as the rest ?  
 Here pity best survives when mortified.

What greater crime than when with daring brow  
 By mortal man Heaven's justice is defied ? 30  
 Lift up, lift up thy head, and see *him* now [call,  
 For whom at Thebes earth yawn'd ; whercat they  
 ' Whither Amphiaráus rushest thou ?<sup>1</sup>

Why leavèst thou the war ?' Yet did he fall  
 In ruin down the gulf with direful scath,<sup>2</sup>  
 Even to Minos whose firm grasp holds all.

Lo, how his shoulders for a breast he hath ;  
 And, since he wish'd to gaze too far before,  
 Behind him looks and treads a backward path !<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Amphiarauus, the son of Oicleus and Hypermnestra, was at the Calydonian boar-hunt, and in the Argonautic expedition. He married Eriphyle, sister of Adrastus, king of Argos. When his brother-in-law, at the request of Polynices, declared war against Thebes, he foresaw its fatal issue and concealed himself, but was betrayed by his wife, and obliged to accompany Adrastus.—ÆSCH. 7 *against Thebes*, 570. The Argives being defeated, Amphiarauus, in retiring from the battle, was swallowed up with his chariot by the earth ; Jupiter thus interposing to save him the disgrace of being killed by the enemy.—PINDAR, *Nem.* ix. 57. Hemer and Euripides give him the highest character.—*Od.* xv. 244 ; *Phœnis.* 1116.

<sup>2</sup> " With hideous ruin and combustion down."

*Paradise Lost*, i. 46.

" Heaven ruining from heaven."—*Ibid.* vi. 868.

A literal adaptation of Dante's "*di ruinare*."

<sup>3</sup> " That frustrateth the tokens of the liars (*divinorum*. Vulg.),

Tiresias note, who changed the form he bore,      40  
 When from a male to feminine he turn'd,<sup>1</sup>  
 So that each limb an alter'd aspect wore :  
 And then to sever first, it him concern'd,  
 The two entwining serpents with his rod ;  
 Thus to regain the virile plumes he learn'd.  
 To him see Aruns' back turn'd in like mode :  
 Where Luni's hills the Cararese invite  
 To toil, who at their foot hath his abode ;  
 He in a cave among the marbles white  
 His lodging found, whence of the stars and sea 50  
 He had without impediment the sight.<sup>2</sup>  
 And she whose bosom, which thou canst not see,  
 Is with her loosen'd tresses overspread,<sup>3</sup>

and maketh diviners (*ariolos*) mad; that turneth wise men backward (*retrorsum*)," &c.—*Isaiah* xlv. 25.

<sup>1</sup> Said to have struck two serpents with a stick in Mount Cyllene to separate them, and found himself suddenly changed into a girl; and by a similar act seven years after, to have recovered his original sex. He was deprived of sight by Juno, but compensated by Jupiter with the gift of prophecy. Homer makes Ulysses descend into Hades for the purpose of consulting him about his own return to Ithaca.—*Odys.* x. 492. PINDAR, *Nem.* i. 93.

<sup>2</sup> Aruns was a Tuscan soothsayer of Luna, a maritime town on the river Maera, famous for the marble quarries in its neighbourhood. The inhabitants were much addicted to the practice of augury.—LUCAN, *Phars.* i. 586. The city was destroyed in the middle of the ninth century by a band of Norman sea-rovers.—MALLET'S *Northern Ant.*

<sup>3</sup> "Bravoes by profession, and villains of every kind, used to

While all her scalp the further side hath she,  
 Was Manto,<sup>1</sup> who crewhile with wandering tread  
 Search'd many lands, then dwelt where I was born;  
 So hear what briefly shall by me be said.  
 After her father's death, and when forlorn  
 The city of Bacchus was the conqueror's prize,<sup>2</sup>  
 Long through the world she wander'd, travel-worn.  
 High in fair Italy a lake there lies, [60  
 Benacus named,<sup>3</sup> at the Alps' foot which keep

wear a long lock of hair, which they drew over the face like a visor on meeting any one, when the occasion rendered disguise necessary, and the undertaking required both force and circumspection."—*I Promessi Sposi*, di A. MANZONI.

<sup>1</sup> From Tiresias, her father, she inherited the gift of prophecy, At the taking of Thebes she was made prisoner and sent to Delphi, where she became priestess. She afterwards visited Italy, and married Tiberinus, king of Alba. Her son, Ocnus, built a town in the neighbourhood, which, in honour of his mother, he called Mantua. Her sorrow for her country's calamities is said to have changed her into a fountain. Her legend illustrates the progress of the popular mythology. The *Fatidica Mantus* of Virgil (*Aeneid*. x. 199) has become the *Maga Manto* of Dante, and the *Fata* (fairy) *Manto* of Ariosto.—*Orl. Fur.* xliii. 97, 98.

<sup>2</sup> Thebes, founded by Cadmus, whose daughter Semele was the mother of Bacchus. His rites were first observed at Thebes. Pentheus, its king, attempting to suppress them, was torn in pieces by the females engaged in their celebration.

<sup>3</sup> An Italian lake, now Lago di Garda, whence the Mincio flows into the Po. It is the largest of the Italian lakes; about twenty-eight miles in length and eleven in breadth. A steamer now plies on it from Desenzano to Riva.

Germania shut and o'er the Tyrol rise.  
 From thousand springs and more, the waters sleep  
     Within that lake, twixt Garda and the vale  
     Camonica, which bathes the Pennine steep.<sup>1</sup>  
 Midway thereon close by a place we sail  
     Where the Trent shepherd, and the Brescian, and  
     The Veronese might, passing that way, hail.<sup>2</sup>  
 Fair Peschiera's bulwarks firmly stand,                 70  
     To awe the Brescian and the Bergamese,  
     Where lowest, all around it, sinks the strand ;  
 There o'er the bank the loud cascade conveys  
     Whate'er Benacus' bosom cannot hold,  
     Which then through pastures green a river strays.  
 No more Benacus named ; what we behold  
     Is Mincio, from the time its waves commence  
     Their course, till to Governo they have roll'd,  
 Then fall into the Po.   Not far from whence

<sup>1</sup> *Pennino*, a mountain of the Alps, between Garda on the Benacus, and the Val Canonica, a great valley in Bresciano. While the Alps derive their name from their snowy whiteness, the name Pennino, or Apennino, seems to indicate height, as it contains the Celtic word *Pen*, a head, promontory, or high mountain. It is employed to designate—1. The spur of the Alps westward of Benacus, and here alluded to. 2. The highest portion of the Alpine range, including Monts Blanc, Rosa, and Cervin, the three highest peaks in Europe. 3. The whole mountain range of Italy south of the Alps.

<sup>2</sup> The boundary between the provinces of Brescia and Verona extends through the lake lengthwise from north to south ; and

It rises is a plain, o'er which outspread,           80  
 Marshlike its waters oft bring pestilence,  
 In summer.    Passing thence the cruel<sup>1</sup> maid,  
 Beheld a land surrounded by a fen,  
 Uncultured, uninhabited, decay'd.  
 Here, to avoid all intercourse with men,  
 Resting, her arts she with her servants plied ;  
 Here lived, and left her body lifeless.    Then  
 The tribes that round the place were scatter'd wide,  
 Since it was strong, their forces thither drew,  
 By that broad fen cut off from all beside.       90  
 And soon above her bones a city grew,  
 To which, from her who chose the spot, belong'd  
 The Mantuan name—no omen else they knew.<sup>2</sup>

that which separates them from the territory of Trent in the Tyrol, crosses it from east to west. There are several small islands, in one of which, midway, it is said, the bishops of Trent, Brescia, and Verona have equal jurisdiction.

<sup>1</sup> *Cruda*, so called from the bloody rites of conjuration which she practised. STATIUS, *Theb.* iv. 463. It is the same epithet as the poet had given to the witch Erichtho; Canto, ix. 23. The other significations of the word are inapplicable to Manto, who, as the reader will see from Dante's account of her, was neither immature nor inexperienced.

<sup>2</sup> Mantua, supposed to have been founded by the Etruscans, B.C. 600, was an ancient city in the time of Virgil, who ascribes to it an Etruscan origin. *Æneid.* x. 198. Pliny regarded it as the only relic of that people beyond the Po. *Hist.* iii. 19. It is an island five miles in circumference, in the middle of a lagoon formed by the Mincio, and is joined to the mainland by causeways, the shortest of which is one thousand feet long.

Once with more people was the city throng'd,  
 Ere Casalodi's foolishness was there  
 By the deceit of Pinamontè wrong'd.<sup>1</sup>  
 If e'er then of my country thou should'st hear  
 Another origin, I counsel thee,  
 Of truth let no feign'd tale beguile thine ear."  
 "Master," I said, "thy reasonings are to me 100  
 So certain, and my faith so firmly lead,  
 That like quench'd coals all other things will be.  
 But if thou seest of those who here proceed  
 One who deserves remark, I pray thee speak :  
 For that is now the only thing I heed."  
 Then he replied, "That person from whose cheek  
 The beard above his shoulders brown flows wide,  
 Was, when of old the country of the Greek  
 Lack'd males, and scarce the cradles were supplied,  
 An augur, and with Calchas gave the sign 110  
 In Aulis the first cable to divide.  
 Eurypylus the tragic strain of mine  
 Has somewhere named him in majestic song ;<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Alberto da Cassalodi, the first sovereign prince of Mantua, was persuaded by Pinamonte to banish to their castles all the unpopular nobles, for the purpose of ingratiating himself with the people. But Pinamonte, by divulging his counsels, raised the populace against him, and having by their means driven him out, seized the sovereign power.—VILLANI.

<sup>2</sup> A noble Augur, who, with forty ships, assisted the Greek expedition to Troy; *Iliad*, ii. 734; and was there slain with the

As well thou know'st, who hast the whole made  
thine.

That other, who hath sides so lean and long,

Was Michael Scot,<sup>1</sup> a man indeed who knew  
All tricks that to the magic art belong.

Guido Bonatti<sup>2</sup> see; Asdente<sup>3</sup> too,

Repenting late that he did not confine

To thread and leather his ambitious view. 120

See those vile hags who did the loom resign,

And spindle, needle, all for sorcery gave;

Cetēi who accompanied him.—*Odys.* xi. 519. He was sent by the Greeks, on that occasion, to consult the oracle of Apollo at Delphi.—*Eneid.* ii. 114.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Michael Scot, of Balwirie, flourished during the thirteenth century, and was a man of great learning. Frederick II. invited him to his court, and employed him to translate the works of Aristotle and his best commentators, and to compose a voluminous work on astrology. Boccaccio speaks of him as a great master of neeromauey, who lived not long before in Florence. After Frederick's death, in 1250, he returned to Scotland, and is said to have been one of the ambassadors sent to bring the Maid of Norway to Scotland on the death of Alexander III.

<sup>2</sup> An astrologer of Forli, who flourished about A.D. 1282, on whose skill Guido, Lord of Montefeltro, placed such reliance, that he is said never to have engaged in battle but at the hour declared fortunate by Bonatti. He was the author of a work published at Venice, entitled *Theoricæ Planetarum et Astrologia judiciaria*.

<sup>3</sup> A professor of divination of such notoriety that our poet says, in his *Convito*, p. 79, "If those who are best known were accounted the most noble, Asdente, the shoemaker of Parma, would be more noble than any one in that city."

With herb and image working deeds malign.  
 But come : Cain and the thorns<sup>1</sup> already have  
 The confines of both hemispheres now found,  
 Touching, beneath fair Seville's towers, the wave.<sup>2</sup>  
 And yesternight the moon was full and round ;<sup>3</sup>  
 Thou should'st remember well, for oft she proved  
 To thee not hurtful in that wood profound."  
 Thus he address'd me, and we onward moved. 130

<sup>1</sup> Here put for the moon. Grimm, in his *Deutsche Mythologie*, p. 412, says there are three traditions respecting the Man in the Moon : 1. That he is Isaac carrying a bundle of sticks for his own sacrifice. 2. That he is *Cain with the thorns*, the most wretched production of the ground, of which his offering consisted. 3. That he is the sabbath-breaker mentioned in the book of *Numbers*. The last is the most current in England, and is alluded to by Chaucer. That the second was also known to our ancestors, as well as in Italy, seems probable.

<sup>2</sup> The moon had reached the western horizon and was about to set : consequently, being about fifty-three hours past full it was an hour after sunrise. Seville, with respect to Italy, lies westward.

<sup>3</sup> The Italians reckon their days from sunset to sunset ; hence "yesternight" signifies the night before yesterday, this being the second day of the journey. Dante was assisted, not hindered, by the moon, when wandering in the wood. Canto i. 1—12.

## CANTO XXI.

## THE ARGUMENT.

From the rocky bridge that crosses the fifth chasm of Malebolgè the poets gaze on a river of boiling pitch below, and are suddenly startled by the arrival of a demon who flings into it a sinner whom he had brought thither. Here are punished those guilty of peculation and embezzlement, watched by a troop of demons, and torn by their hooks whenever they appear above the pitch. Leaving Dante concealed, Virgil passes the bridge, and the demons prepare to assail him, but on Virgil's remonstrance their leader prevents them, and sends a party to escort and guide the poets along the sixth pier.

Thus on from bridge to bridge with other talk,  
Which this my Canto cares not to renew,  
We went, and at the summit stay'd our walk,  
Which had of Malebolgè brought to view  
Another chasm, and the vain weeping there ;  
And o'er it wondrous darkness brooded too.  
As in the Arsenal at Venice,<sup>1</sup> where

<sup>1</sup> The old arsenal at Venice was begun in 1304; two others were afterwards added; the whole, three miles in circumference, occupying the eastern extremity of the city, is surrounded by a high wall. Formerly 16,000 men were employed in it, under the

Boils through the winter the tenacious pitch,  
 Wherewith each damaged vessel they repair,—  
 For now they cannot sail, instead of which      10  
     Some build the bark, and some the ribs will stop  
     Of that which hath made many a voyage rich ;  
 One hammers well the prow and one the poop ;  
     Some shape the oars, and some the cables twine ;  
     The mizen and the mainsail some sew up :—  
 So, not by fire but by the art divine,  
     There boil'd below a thick and pitchy mass,<sup>1</sup>  
     Daubing in every part the steep decline.  
 The pitch I saw, but not what therein was,  
     Except the bubbles by the boiling raised,      20  
     Heaving and sinking all. It came to pass  
 That while with look intent below I gazed,  
     My guide exclaim'd aloud, " See ! see !" and drew  
     Me towards him from where I myself had placed.  
 I turn'd as one who still delays to view  
     That which beheld he will have need to shun,  
     Whom sudden fear debilitates, and who  
 Will not for looking hesitate to run.  
     Behind us I beheld a demon black,

direction of an admiral. It is now the dockyard of the Austrian, navy, and employs but 1000 men, of whom half are convicts.

<sup>1</sup> In the Visions of Charles le Gros, of St. Patrick's Purgatory ; and of the Evesham Monk, mention is made of boiling pitch as a punishment of lest souls.

And running up the rock that evil one                   30  
Advanced : how fell in aspect he ! Alack !

How fierce he seem'd in gesture ! Drawing nigh  
With wings outspread and feet of lightest track,  
His shoulder was acute and proudly high,

Where he a sinner with both haunches bore,  
Grasping the sinew'd foot he held him by.

“Ye of our bridge keen-fang'd,” I heard him roar,

“One of Saint Zita's elders here behold.<sup>1</sup>”

Send him below while I return for more,  
Unto that land where many such there be.                   40

All men are knavish barterers there except  
Bonturo :<sup>2</sup> there ‘No’ turns to ‘Yes’ for gold.”

<sup>1</sup> One of the chief magistrates of Lucca, supposed to be Martin Botaio. St. Zita was the patron saint of Lucca. Born in 1212, at a village near Lucca, she was piously brought up by her mother, and at the age of twelve was put to service in the family of a citizen of Lucca, where she behaved with exemplary diligenece, faithfulness, and modesty: she was also self-denying and charitable, and died at the age of sixty. The city of Lucca pays a singular veneration to her memory. But although thus canonized by local tradition and in Dante's verse, it was not until 1696 that she was raised by a papal decree to the saintly order, one hundred and fifty miracles having been duly sworn to, in proof of her title! Her name appears in the Calendar, April 27th, the supposed anniversary of her birth.—BUTLER'S *Lives of Saints*.

<sup>2</sup> This exception is a graceful irony, Bonturo di Dati having been regarded as the worst speculator and most corrupt magistrate of his time.

He dash'd him down ; and then returning leapt  
 O'er the hard rock : ne'er with a thief in chase  
 The hound let loose the ground so swiftly swept.<sup>1</sup>  
 That other sunk ; then writhing rose apace ;  
 Those demons who the bridge for shelter have,  
 Cried, " Here the hallow'd visage hath no place :<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Remarkable for its exquisite scent and unwearied perseverance, the bloodhound has been trained to the pursuit of game, and also to the chase of man. For a vivid poetical description of the bloodhounds' chase of a felon, see SOMERVILLE'S *Chase*, i. 316.

<sup>2</sup> The *Santo Volto*, a relic preserved at Lucca, and invoked by the inhabitants when exposed to danger, is the supposed impression of our Saviour's face. Two similar ones are exhibited at Rome on two different handkerchiefs ; one in St. Sylvester's chapel, said to have been sent by Christ as a present to Abgarus, prince of Edessa, who by his letter had requested a picture of him : the other, which is exhibited in St. Peter's on Holy Thursday, to the wondering multitude, is said to have been given by him at the time of his crucifixion to St. Veronica, who had lent him the handkerchief to wipe his face, on his way to Calvary. Eusebius tells us that at Cesarea Philippi he saw, sculptured in brass, the figures of Christ with outstretched hands, and the woman cured of the issue of blood bending before him at the door.—*Ecc. Hist.* vii. 18. The apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus* gives this woman the name of Veronica, v. 26. Matthew Paris mentions the impression of Christ's face done for St. Veronica " that his memory might be cherished here on earth."—*Hist.* A.D. 1249. " By the holy face of Lucca," was a favourite oath of William the Conqueror. The effigy of Christ, an ancient and miraculous crucifix in the cathedral of Lucca, was also much celebrated. " By the Rode of Lukes !" (rood, or crucifix of Lucca) occurs in the *Vision of Piers Ploughman*, l. 3995. The saint is probably as fictitious, and factitious, as the miracle. Mabillon, a Roman Catholic writer, in his *Iter Italicum*, pp. 88, 89, after giving some particulars of

Here men their limbs not as in Serchio lave:<sup>1</sup> [50

And therefore, if thou dost not want our crooks,

Raise not thy head above the pitchy wave.”

Then grappled him above a hundred hooks.<sup>2</sup> [him ;

“ Here cover'd must thou dance,” they cried to

“ So rob in secret, if thou canst.”—The cooks

Make their assistants mid the cauldron's brim,

Thus with their flesh-hooks plunge the meat below,

So that it may not on the surface swim.<sup>3</sup>

the origin and progress of the legend, adds, “ Hence it will be seen that the name Veronica, according to its derivation, signifies an image, not a woman, and is formed by contracting those two syllables, *vera icon*, into one word.”

<sup>1</sup> The city of Lucca (Luca) is situated on the river Serchio, in a delightful plain surrounded by mountains, twelve miles from the sea, and about ten miles north-east of Pisa. It was taken from the Ligurians by the Etruscans, and afterwards became a Roman colony. The cathedral, dedicated to St. Martin, belongs to the eleventh century. In the Middle Ages the Lucchese had but an indifferent character among their neighbours: nor has this been quite forgotten. To this day, a man of Lucca, if asked from whence he comes, always replies, “ Vi sono de' buoni e de' cattivi d' appertutto—sono Lucchese per servirla.” “ There are good and bad people everywhere—I am a Lucchese at your service.”

<sup>2</sup> “ The demons kindled a large fire, and seizing the knight by his arms and legs, threw him into the midst of it, dragging him with iron hooks, backward and forward through the fire.”—*Vision of St. Patrick's Purgatory* by the knight Owen, A.D. 1153. ROG. WEND.

<sup>3</sup> “ I saw a great river proceeding from hell, burning and pitchy. Into this river they plunge, rising and falling by turns, they were tormented therein, so that they were boiled like flesh that is being cooked.”—*The Vision of Alberic*, 17.

Then said my master, "That they may not know  
 That thou art with me, go and shelter thee  
 Behind some craggy rock, and there bend low ; 60  
 And whate'er insult may be offer'd me,  
 Fear not, for I have counted well the cost,  
 Since in such strife 'twas mine ere now to be."  
 Then passing thence the bridge's head he cross'd,  
 And when he had arrived on the sixth pier,  
 'Twas then a dauntless brow he needed most.  
 With such tempestuous fury dogs appear,  
 When they rush forth on some unhappy wight,  
 Who suddenly asks alms while waiting near :  
 So rush'd they from beneath the arch to sight, 70  
 And all at him their weapons turn'd and shook.<sup>1</sup>  
 But he exclaim'd, " Restrain your felon spite :  
 Before you seize upon me with your hook,  
 Let one of you step forth to hear, and then  
 Consult if I those iron fangs must brook."  
 Then all cried out, " Go, Malacoda !"—when

<sup>1</sup> "The demons, seeing the knight walk so freely across the bridge, shook the air with horrid cries which alarmed the knight : others of his enemies under the bridge threw red-hot hooks of iron at him, but they could not touch him, and thus he crossed the bridge in safety."—*St. Patrick's Purgatory*. ROG. WEND.

"Some of the blackest devils flew to me with fiery hooks, and would have seized me with their hooks and cast me into those pits of sulphur ; but my guide," &c.—*Vision of Charles le Gros*, A.D. 882. *It.*

One of the troop advanced, the others stay'd :  
 And he came growling on, "What can he gain?"  
 "Believ'st thou, Malacoda," Virgil said,  
 "That thou behold'st me hither come so late, 80  
 From all your arms secure and undismay'd,  
 Without the will divine and favouring fate?<sup>1</sup>  
 Make way, for I must show — 'tis will'd in  
 heaven—  
 This desert-path to one on whom I wait.  
 Then fell his pride so, at the answer given,  
 That at his feet he let the weapon fall ;  
 And told the others, "He must not be riven!"  
 "O thou that sittest," such my leader's call,  
 "Bent low, among the bridge's crags to hide,  
 Now hasten back to me, secure from all." 90  
 Then I arose, and to my teacher hied ;  
 And all those fiends advanced, so that I fear'd  
 That by the compact they would not abide.  
 Thus formerly I saw the warriors scared,  
 That by capitulation issued from  
 Caprona, for so close their foes appear'd.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "For without the gods, I think, you had not undertaken  
 Over such rivers as these and the Stygian lake to voyage."

*Æneid.* vi. 368.

<sup>2</sup> A castle in the vicinity of Pisa, at the surrender of which to  
 the combined forces of Florence and Lucea, in 1290, Dante was

And to my leader's side when I was come,  
 With all my might I clung, and eager watch  
 Kept on their aspect which appeared so grim.  
 Then they their hooks presenting, "Shall I touch  
 Him," one said to the other, "on the breech?"  
 Who answer'd "Yes; and give him there a notch."  
 But then that demon who had holden speech  
 With my conductor, turning quickly round,  
 Said, "Hold, Scarmiglione!" then to each  
 Of us he said, "Upon this rock the ground  
 Forbids your further progress, for indeed  
 All shatter'd lying the sixth arch is found  
 Even to its base; but if you will proceed,  
 Along this cavern's brink you hence may pass; 110  
 Then o'er a neighbouring rock your path will lead.  
 Last night, just five hours after this, it was,  
 Twelve hundred sixty-six years reach'd their end,<sup>1</sup>

present. When the garrison saw themselves in the midst of numerous enemies, crying, "Hang them! kill them!" they were afraid that the capitulation would be violated.

<sup>1</sup> This passage fixes the date of the vision, the time of the year, and the hour of the day. Add thirty-four, the supposed age of our Lord, to the number here mentioned, and it will give the date of A.D. 1300. The time of the earthquake at our Lord's death was the ninth hour, from which deducting five hours, it was now the fourth hour after sunrise on the day of the crucifixion. Biagioli sees here (owing, no doubt, to the "wondrous darkness" of the place,) a difficulty which does not exist. It was an hour after sunrise when the poets were on the bridge across the fourth chasm,

Since here the road was broken to this mass.  
 Part of my troop I thitherward will send,  
 To see if some uncover'd may be spied.  
 They are not savage, so with them you'll wend  
 Your way, Come Alichino forth," he cried ;  
 " Yourselves Cagnazzo, Calcabrina, show ;  
 And Barbariccia, thou the ten shalt guide. 120  
 Come Libicocco, Draghignazzo now ;  
 Ciriatto fang'd, mad Rubicant that raves ;  
 And Graffican ; and Farfarello thou.  
 Search ye around the pitch's bubbling waves :  
 These to the other cliff unharm'd bring ye,  
 Which stretches all unbroken o'er the caves."<sup>1</sup>  
 I said, " O master, what is that I see ?  
 Ah ! without escort let us go alone,  
 If thou know'st where ; no guide I ask but thee,  
 Since thou art prudent, as in seasons gone, 130  
 Dost thou not see how horribly they grin,  
 And scowling threaten how they'll make us groan ?"  
 Then thus he charged me, " Do not now begin  
 To fear ; even let them grin as they're inclined :

and they were now on that across the fifth. That they took three hours in going "from bridge to bridge, with other talk" than that related, and too multifarious for description, must surely be considered more probable than the proposed alternatives—that they accomplished it "in no time;" or that time stood still meanwhile!

<sup>1</sup> That the *next* rock bridge stretched all unbroken over the chasms, the poets found to be a misrepresentation of Malaeoda's.

It is at those who seethe in woe for sin."<sup>1</sup>  
 To leftward o'er the pier their way they wind :  
 But first with tongue between his teeth each pass'd<sup>1</sup>  
 A signal to their chief ; which from behind  
 He answer'd loud as with a trumpet blast.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The demons turn towards Malacoda for the signal to march, having each his tongue pressed between his teeth, to intimate a secret understanding of their master's falsehood, and in sly ridicule of their charge, only worthy of such vulgar fiends.

<sup>2</sup> "Ed egli avea del cul fatto trombetta." This was the confirming token in reply to theirs, as well as the signal for their departure. Like master like men. The corporal was worthy of his troop. A literal translation of the line has not been ventured on in any of the versions. Biagioli apologizes for its coarseness, and deprecates the wrath of the delicate critic who turns up his nose at its ill scent. In the *Clouds* of Aristophanes the disciple of Socrates is made to say, that in his master's opinion, the humming of water-gnats is produced by an impulse of the air through a narrow tube from behind. On which Strepsides exclaims with admiration, "So then the breech of gnats is a trumpet!"—Aet. i. sc. ii. l. 165.

The *names* of the demons in this Canto are probably intended for grimly familiar and humorous nicknames. Pulci has employed several of them. See *Morgante Maggiore*, ii. 31. The following may, perhaps, be accepted as their English equivalents. Malacoda, *Ear-tail* ; "For with their tails they do hurt."—*Rev.* ix. 19. Alichino, *Droop-wing* ; Barbariccia, *Curly-beard* ; Graffiacane, *Tear-dog* ; Libicocco, *Blackberry* ; Cagnazzo, *Dog-fiend* ; Farfarello, *Foal's-foot* ; Scarmiglione, *Ruffler* ; Rubicante, *Red-hot* ; Ciriatto (*Χοιρο-ιχνη*), *Boar's-imp* ; Draghignazzo, *Dragon-fiend* ; Calcabrina, *Tread-mist*. Some see in these names the passions and arts of speculators : others regard the Malebranche as types of the Italian *sbirri*. These names and the scene described, remind us of the execrable jests which are perpetrated by the fiends in *Paradise Lost*.

## CANTO XXII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

As the poets proceed, accompanied by their escort, they see other peculators immersed in the boiling pitch. One of these, Ciampolo of Navarre, a demon seizes with his hook and brings to shore. In compliaunce with a request of the poets, he gives an account of himself and his companions. By a clever stratagem he deceives his captors and escapes from their hands. Two of them, enraged at the trick put upon them, come to mutual blows, and while fighting fall into the pitch. Dante and Virgil hurry from the scene, leaving the demons to extricate their comrades as they best may.

I HAVE seen horsemen shift their camp, and I  
 Have seen them join in fight, and at review,  
 And sometimes quit the battle-field and fly :  
 I've seen the light-arm'd squadrons riding through  
 Thy plains Arezzo, and the troopers fleet ;<sup>1</sup>  
 And where in jousts and tournaments there flew  
 The sparks from clashing swords, and coursers' feet ;  
 While trumpets, bells, and drums give notes of war,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the battle of Campaldino the Florentines defeated the Aretines, June 11th, 1259. Dante was present in this battle.

<sup>2</sup> Trumpets and bells were in use among the Israelites, from the time of Moses. *Exod.* xxviii. 33, 34; *Lev.* xxv. 9. The Jewish

And signal-sounds from castles men repeat ;  
 Our own, or brought from foreign lands afar.     10  
     But horse or foot by such strange pipe I ne'er  
     Saw move, nor ship with sign from land or star.  
 With the ten demons on our way we were  
     (Fell escort !) but "with saints for company"<sup>1</sup>  
     At church, with gluttons at the tavern fare."  
 Now on the pitch I turn'd my gaze to see  
     All that the chasm contain'd, and who consort  
     Within its bounds—that sad community !  
 As when the dolphins in their ocean sport,     [20  
     To seamen, with arch'd back the storm forebode,  
     Whence warn'd the pilot steers for some nigh port,<sup>2</sup>

trumpets were much like our own, as appears from the representation of them on the arch of Titus. Bells were first used in churches in the early part of the fifth century. The Hebrew *Toph* was a drum, tabor, tabret, or timbrel. The drum was adopted from the Saracens, and introduced by the crusaders into Europe. To the sound of the great bell, "Martinella," the Florentines used to march, in Dante's boyhood.

<sup>1</sup> In passing through life we cannot *always* choose our company, but may occasionally be exposed to that which is low, disagreeable, and even detestable. The worst will sometimes intrude their society on the best. "When the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan also was among them."—*Job* i. 6. But—

"The mind is its own place, and of itself  
 Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."—*Par. Lost.*

<sup>2</sup> *Dolphini tranquillo mari lascivientes flatum præagiunt.* PLINY, xviii. 35. "Dolphins in fair and calm weather pursuing

So to relieve his pain some sinner show'd  
 His back, but dived within the pitchy tide,  
 Swift as the lightning flashes from the cloud.  
 And as the croaking frogs the brink beside  
 Of some full moat with jaws exposed remain,  
 While yet their feet and bulkier part they hide.  
 So stay'd the sinners on each side : but when  
 Fierce Barbariccia now approach'd them, they  
 Beneath the bubbling swiftly hide again. 30  
 I saw—even yet it strikes with deep dismay  
 My heart—one lingering, so it chanced there, as  
 A frog that stays when rush the rest away :  
 And Graffican who nearest to him was,  
 Grappled his pitchy locks and upwards drew  
 Him who, I thought, might for an otter pass.<sup>1</sup>

one another as one of their waterish pastimes, foreshows wind, and from the part whence they fetch their frisks."—BRAND'S *Popular Antiq.* In Falconer's *Shipwreck*, the tempest is preceded by the sport of dolphins.—ii. 70.

<sup>1</sup> The otter is predatory and amphibious, feeding on fish, which it pursues by night with the greatest agility and speed, at any depth. Its burrow, generally sunk far below the ground on the bank of some river or lake, opens near the water's edge. Here, concealed among the tangled herbage, it lurks by day. Its form is admirably adapted to its aquatic habits, long, flexible, and terminated by a stout and tapering tail, which serves it as a rudder. The limbs are short but strong and somewhat muscular, the feet, five-toed, are webbed; the eyes large, ears short, and lips furnished with strong mustachios. It has an under-coat of close, short, water-proof wool, and an outer one of long, coarse, glossy hair.

For them already by their names I knew ;  
 So mark'd I them when chosen ; and beside  
 How since they call'd each other. Then that crew  
 Accursèd, all of them together cried, 40  
 " O Rubicant look that thy claws be laid  
 So on his back that thou strip off his hide."  
 " My master, if thou canst, find out," I said,  
 " What is this wretched soul whom we espy  
 A prisoner by his adversaries made."  
 My leader, to his side approaching nigh,  
 And asking what he was, this answer drew,  
 " Born in the kingdom of Navarre was I ;<sup>1</sup>  
 My mother placed me in the retinue  
 Of a great lord : a losel was my sire, 50  
 A waster of himself and substance too.  
 In good king Thibault's court<sup>2</sup> I next acquire

When assailed it usually betakes itself to the water. Otter-hunting was a favorite sport in the middle ages.

<sup>1</sup> Ciampolo, or Gian Polo, was of good family, but his father having dissipated his fortune by his extravagance, his mother placed him as a page with a baron of the court of Navarre, who gave him so good an education, that he rose to the first honours of the state ; in which, however, he incurred the greatest disgrace by his corrupt practices.

" His father was a lewd and spendthrift ribald,  
 And he a venal judge of good king Tibbald."

<sup>2</sup> Theobald, or Thibault, Count of Champagne, to whom the kingdom of Navarre came by marriage, was a musician, a poet, and a great encourager of the liberal arts. Two of his songs,

A post, and there my hands in knavery dip,  
For which the account I render in this fire”  
Then Ciriato, who from out his lip,  
Boar-like, on either side a tusk had got,  
Gave him with one of these a dreadful rip.  
Among ill cats had fallen the mouse’s lot!<sup>1</sup>  
But Barbariccia clasp’d him round and cried,  
“Stand by, while I transfix him on the spot.” 60  
Then turning said, as he my master eyed, [know,  
“Ask, if thou more from him would’st wish to  
Ere others mangle him.” Then said my guide,  
“Now somewhat of thy guilty comrades show :  
Know’st thou of any sprung from Latium there  
Beneath the pitch?” Then he, “Not long ago  
With one I parted who thereto lived near.  
O that with him I under cover lay ;  
Nor nail nor hook should I have cause to fear.”  
Then Libicocco cried, “Too long we stay !” 70  
And with a prong him by his arm he took,  
So that he tore and bore the flesh away.

with what were probably the original melodies, of his own composition, are still extant. From him descended the Bourbon family of France.

<sup>1</sup> Ariosto says of the magician Atlantes, that he treated his prisoners “As the sly cat is seen to play with a mouse, for some time gently, then she begins to torment him, then gives him a bite, and at last kills him.”—*Orl. Fur.* iv. 22.

Him Draghignazzo also with his hook [chief  
 Would by the thighs have seized; whereat their  
 Turn'd him on all sides round with angry look.  
 Thus overawed they yield a short relief  
 To him, who on his wounds intently pried.  
 Meanwhile my leader ask'd him thus in brief.  
 "But who was he thou speakest of, whose side  
 Thou left'st in evil hour to come abroad?" 86  
 "It was the friar Gomita," he replied,  
 "He of Gallura, vessel of all fraud."<sup>1</sup>  
 His master's enemies in hand had he,  
 Yet used them so that him they all applaud:  
 He took their cash, 'tis said, and set them free.  
 In each charge else no paltry rogue, he soar'd  
 Even to the highest pitch of knavery.  
 Him Michael Zanche, Logodoro's lord,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> After the downfall of the Roman empire, Sardinia was taken by the Saracens, from whom the Pisans, during the period of their naval power in the Mediterranean, conquered it. They divided it into four prefectures—Logodoro, Callari (now Cagliari), Gallura, and Alborea—and sent governors from the principal Pisan families, and these afterwards became sovereign lords of the territories they had in charge. The friar Gomita was a Sardinian, whom Nino di Gallura dei Visconti, a nobleman of Pisa, entrusted with the government of Gallura. His venality, long unknown to his master, was brought to light when, having some prisoners in his custody, he took a bribe for their escape.

<sup>2</sup> About the middle of the thirteenth century, Frederick II. reunited Sardinia to the German empire, and made his natural son Enzo king, whom he caused to marry Adelesia, heiress of Logodoro

Accompanies, and when they once begin  
 To talk about Sardinia, 'twill afford 90  
 Their tongues no rest. — Ah, see that horrid grin !  
 I would say more ; but fear that hideous fellow  
 Will lay his hands upon my tingling skin.”  
 Their chief then cast a look on Farfarello,  
 Who roll'd his great broad eyes and aim'd a blow.  
 “ Off, cursed bird, avaunt !” Thus he did bellow,  
 Then recommenced that frighted one, “ If you  
 Desire to see or hear, I will constrain  
 Tuscan or Lombard hither from below ;  
 But at some distance those ill claws restrain, 100  
 So that my mates their vengeance may not fear.  
 And while I still in this same place remain,  
 For one as I am, I'll make seven appear :  
 When I shall whistle, as we're wont to do  
 To inform each other when the coast is clear.”

The seneschal or president of Logodoro under Enzo, was Michael Zanche, who in that office amassed a princely fortune, chiefly by the acceptance of bribes. He is said to have poisoned his lord, whose mother (to whom, after her son's death, Frederick had given the sovereignty), or, as others say, the widow of Enzo, and heiress of Logodoro, he prevailed on to accept him as her husband ; and to have been himself poisoned at an entertainment by his son-in-law, Branca d'Oria, to whom he had destined his immense wealth. See Canto xxxiii. l. 137.

“ Those whom I knew to have been the judges of others, or prelates in this life, were tormented with an increased degree of severity.”—*Monk of Evesham* :—ROGER WENDOV. ii. 155.

Cagnazzo at that word began to screw

His muzzle up, and wagg'd his head, and said,

“Hear his malicious scheme for slipping through  
Our hands and plunging down.” Whereat he made

This answer, for of wiles he had great store : 110

“Yes, too malicious, I must really plead,  
Am I, to make my comrades suffer more.”

Then Alichin who could no more be mute,

The rest opposing spake ; “If from the shore  
Thou leap, I'll after thee, not run on foot,

But beat my wings above you pitch accurst.

Leave we the hill ; for shield the bank will suit,  
To see if thou alone our troop can worst.”

Now, reader, for new sport : to th' other coast

Each turn'd his eyes, the most obdurate first. 120

The Navarese, by whom no time was lost,

Fix'd on the ground his feet, and at a bound

Escaping, their late proposition cross'd.

Stung to the quick was each when this they found ;

But he the most who let the captive fly : [ground,

Crying, “I'll have thee yet,” he spurn'd the

But match'd with fear, in vain his pinions ply ;

The terror-spel plunged, and was seen no more :<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ciampolo had pretended a project for deceiving and drawing forth his companions, by giving the accustomed signal that the Malebranchè their tormentors were absent ; who in the meantime

The other flying raised his breast on high.  
When the duck spies the falcon hovering o'er 130  
Her head, 'tis thus she on the instant dives:<sup>1</sup>  
And he remounts, enraged and baffled sore.  
The trick to fury Calcabrina drives,

were to retire out of sight. Cagnazzo suspects the real motive, but Alichino, deceived by his eagerness in the prospect of more victims, consents; and the demons retire beyond the ridge of the hill, so as not to be visible from the pitch. Ciampolo, profiting by the opportunity of cheating them, slips away, and escapes to his companions, instead of calling them forth. The poet could scarcely have given a more striking instance of the craft of speculators, and of the small comfort which they must ultimately reap even from their success, than by Ciampolo's cheating the devil, or, more properly speaking, a troop of devils, only to leap into the boiling pitch.

There is no ground for believing that "the devil and his angels" are to be the official punishers of sin in the future world. Wicked men will be *associated with* them in misery, not punished by them (*Matt.* xxv. 41); although, in various ways, the evil may be *mutual* plagues to each other, in the world to come, as in this. But it is by the *Holy Angels* that the finally impenitent are to be arrested and delivered over to punishment (*Matt.* xiii. 41, 42).

<sup>1</sup> From the frequent mention of rivers in connexion with falconry, we may infer that herons and other water-fowl afforded the best diversion. When a river frequented by game ran between high banks, or was overlooked by hills, it was usual for a sportsman, with dogs well-trained for the purpose, to go along by the water's edge, while the rest of the party on horseback, each with his hawk on his fist, cantered over the high ground above, prepared to cast it off. When a wild duck or any smaller water-fowl was sprung, the hawk descended and grappled it at once; or, as a falconer would say, "bound" it, without needing "the mount," or upward flight.

Who him pursuing for his safety yearn'd,  
Because new ground for strife he thence derives.  
And when the barterer had escaped, he turn'd  
His claws on his companion ; so pell-mell  
Above the foss they grappled : but he learn'd  
The other was a falcon fierce, that well  
Could rend him with his talons, and into I 10  
The middle of the boiling lake both fell.  
The heat at once forbade them to renew  
The strife : of power to rise they were bereaved ;  
So firmly did the pitch their pinions glue.  
But Barbariccia with the rest being grieved,  
To four gave charge that from the other coast  
They fly with all their arms. The word received,  
On both sides they descended to their post ;  
Their hooks reach'd forth to those within the snare,  
Who from the pitch had got a thorough roast ; 150  
And so we left them while entangled there.

## CANTO XXIII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Dante's terror at being pursued by the demons. Virgil carries him down the slope to the sixth chasm, where they are safe from further pursuit. Here hypocrites are punished by wearing caps and vests of lead externally gilt, under the heavy pressure of which they slowly and wearily pursue their destined and eternal journey. Catalino and Loderingo of Bologna make themselves known. Annas and Caiaphas lie in the foss, the latter affixed to a cross. Catalino directs the poets how they may reach the next mound.

Now silent and companionless we strode,  
One foremost and the other close behind ;  
Like friars minor<sup>1</sup> journeying on the road.  
Old Æsop's fable came into my mind :<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Franciscans, the monks-errant of the middle ages, who for the most part subsisted on daily and casual charity ; while the other orders had lands and revenues, and were confined to their several monasteries and respective localities.—See Canto xvi. 108, note.

<sup>2</sup> The mouse, thirsty and just escaped from the cat, came to the lake to drink, and was enticed by the frog to mount his back for a voyage. When half way across, the frog, scared by the appearance of a water-serpent, suddenly dived and left the mouse to drown.—HOMER'S *Batrachomachia*, l. 9. But it is probably to

That of the frog and mouse ; the recent *row*  
 Suggesting it : not more alike we find  
 The meaning of *at present* and of *now*,<sup>1</sup>  
 Than—if their cause and sequel we compare  
 Attentively—the twain we must allow.  
 As from one thought another springs, thus here 10  
 Another from that earliest then was born,  
 Which added greatly to my previous fear.  
 For thus I reason'd ! Since they suffer scorn  
 Through us, with harm and ridicule so keen,  
 Their breasts will doubtless be with anguish torn.  
 If anger then be added to their spleen,  
 They'll follow us more cruel than the hound,  
 That with the hare betwixt his jaws is seen.  
 Already all my hair on end I found  
 With terror, and look'd backward eagerly. 20  
 "Master, my fears of those claw'd fiends abound,  
 Unless thou quickly hide thyself and me,"  
 I said ; "even now they're close behind, alas !  
 Strong fancy makes me feel them so to be."  
 He answer'd, "Were I form'd of leaded glass,"<sup>2</sup>

the following variation of the story, not Æsop's however, that Dante alludes. The frog offered to carry the mouse across a ditch, with the intention of drowning him, when both were carried off by a kite.

<sup>1</sup> "Mo" (Latin *modo*) is still used in Lombardy, and "*issa*" (*héc ipsá horá*) in Tuscany. Both mean "now."

<sup>2</sup> Metal mirrors are mentioned by Job and Moses. Glass

Not sooner would thy outward form be shown  
Than that within I trace : it came to pass  
This moment that thy thoughts among mine own  
Enter'd, so like in their effect and face,  
That from them both my counsel is but one. 30  
If the right bank doth so itself abase  
That we may to the other chasm descend,  
We may escape from this imagined chase.”  
He had not spoke this counsel to the end  
When with expanded wings, not far off, I  
Saw them approach, ourselves to apprehend.  
On me my guide took hold all suddenly,<sup>1</sup>  
Even as a mother whom the noise awakes,  
To see the kindled flames already nigh,  
Seizing her child at once her flight she takes, 40  
Less for herself than him such care she shows,  
So that a night-dress her sole vest she makes.

mirrors can only be traced to the thirteenth century: in the fourteenth century they were extremely scarce, and metal ones continued in use. The mirror of Anne of Bretagne, consort of Louis XII. was of metal.—BECKMAN'S *Hist. of Inventions*, vol. ii. p. 195. Dante mentions “leaded glass” as a thing well known; but in that age Italy was almost the only country where the arts flourished.

<sup>1</sup> “One of those hellish ministers, all rough, horrid, and tall of stature, hastily advancing endeavoured to drive me, and by all means do me hurt: when lo, the apostle running more swiftly, suddenly snatched me up and threw me forward into a place of glorious vision.”—*Vision of Alberic*, 15.

Down from the ridge of that hard bank he throws  
 Himself supine on that steep rock hung low,  
 Which one side of the other chasm doth close.  
 Less swift the waters through the channel flow,  
 To turn the huge wheel of a mill terrene,  
 Even when they to the ladles nearest go;<sup>1</sup>  
 Then gliding o'er that edge my guide was seen,  
 Bearing me on his breast, as if his son, 50  
 And not his mere companion, I had been.  
 Scarcely his feet the lowest bed had won  
 Of that profound beneath, when on the hill  
 Above us they arrived: but we had none  
 To fear; for that high Providence whose will  
 Of the fifth foss made each a minister,  
 Denies them all the power to quit it still.  
 Below we found a painted tribe, who there  
 Pace with slow steps around, and weeping groan;  
 Faint and o'ercome with toil did they appear. 60

<sup>1</sup> Water-mills were known in Asia in the time of Mithridates. Rome had water-mills in the time of Augustus. Public water-mills appear for the first time under Honorius and Arcadius; and the oldest laws which mention them show clearly that they were then (about A.D. 396) a new establishment, which it was necessary to secure by the support of government. As there were floating mills on the Tiber, the Venetian lagoons, and elsewhere, Dante distinguishes the one he mentions as a land-mill (*mulin terragno*). See BECKMAN'S *Hist. Inventions*; i. 151. 4th Ed. Bohm. The "ladles" are the receptacles of the millwheel, into which the water falling turns it.

Cloaks had they on with cowls that hung low down  
Before their eyes, like those with which bedight  
The monks are seen who walk about Cologne.<sup>1</sup>  
Without they were of gold and dazzling bright,  
But all within was lead.<sup>2</sup> Such weight they had  
Frederick's with them compared, as straws were  
Oh! in eternal tiresome raiment clad! [light.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Carthusian order was instituted about A.D. 1080, by Bruno, a native of Cologne, who retiring with six companions to a wild named Chartreux, or Cartusia, near Grenoble (whence the name of the order), adopted the rule of St. Benedict, supplemented with a number of severe and rigorous precepts, to which his successors added others. Hence the order surpassed all others in the extravagant austerity of its discipline. Hair-cloth next the skin, entire abstinence from flesh, and almost perpetual silence, were enjoined upon its members. The order had an establishment in Cologne at an early period, and its monks are doubtless those alluded to by Dante. The conical hood of the Carthusians is large, the cloak ample, and the colour of both white. The ancient Carthusian convent may still be seen among the public buildings which adorn Cologne. The comparison is another stroke of satire, at the expense of these monks, whose larger and coarser cowls were meant to indicate their pre-eminent holiness; as the Pharisees "made broad their phylacteries, and enlarged the borders of their garments."—*Matt.* xxiii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Their punishment presents a resemblance to their fault—hypocrisy; the glorious outward show, but without the inward grace; the pretence of superior piety to adorn concealed stupidity and vice.

<sup>3</sup> The emperor Frederick II. caused those who were guilty of high treason to be wrapped in lead and thrown into a heated furnace, where, as the lead melted, the criminal was destroyed.—*VILLANI*, vi.

Turn'd to the left, our walk we now repeat,  
Intent upon their lamentation sad.  
But those o'erwearied people, through the weight, 70  
Came on so slowly that our company  
Was changed at every motion of our feet.  
So to my guide I said, " Search if there be  
Some one who by his deeds or name is known ;  
While thou art walking, turn thine eyes and see."  
Then, at my Tuscan speech, behind us one  
Who understood it cried, " Restrain your speed,  
Ye who through this dark air so swiftly run.  
Perchance through me thy search will best succeed."  
Wherefore my leader then turn'd round and said  
" Wait, and with them at their own pace proceed."  
I paused, and then saw two whose look display'd  
Great eagerness my steps to overtake.  
But them their load and the strait path delay'd.  
They when arrived their observation make  
On me, with eye askaunt, but nought express'd,  
Then to each other turn'd, and thus they spake :  
" One lives, for see the heaving of his chest !  
If they are dead what charter can allow [90  
That thus they walk without the cumbrous vest?"  
And then to me they said, " O Tuscan, thou  
Who com'st the abode of hypocrites to view,  
To tell us who thou art refuse not now."

And thus I answer'd, "I was born and grew  
By Arno's lovely stream in that great town,  
And am embodied as on earth: but who  
Are ye from whom such mighty grief flows down  
Your cheeks as now I see? What penance weighs  
Upon you by the sparkling vesture shown?" [100  
And one replied, "Well may such weights as these,  
The tawny cloaks of lead we wear so great,  
Produce this creaking of the balances.<sup>1</sup>  
We jovial friars and Bolognese of late,<sup>2</sup>  
I Catalano, he Loderingo, were  
Elected jointly by thy native state,  
To guard its peace, although more usual there  
A single umpire:<sup>3</sup> what we then were found,

<sup>1</sup> The cloaks are called "weights," and the wearers are "the balances;" while, to keep up the metaphor, their sighs and groans are the "creaking" occasioned by the weights being so heavy.

<sup>2</sup> The military order of the Frati di Santa Maria, instituted by Urban IV. was nicknamed "Frati Godenti" (Jovial, or Joyous Friars), answering to the "Ordre de bel Eyse" (Order of Easy Living), in France, of whom the ancient satirist says, that though they were drunk every day, it was not for excess, but merely for company and good fellowship.

<sup>3</sup> "The Ghibeline rulers in Florence, perceiving the popular discontent, and fearing a rebellion, to satisfy the people, made choice of two knights, Frati Godenti of Bologna, on whom they conferred the chief power, M. Catalano dei Malavolti, and M. Loderingo di Liandolo; one an adherent of the Guelfs, the other of the Ghibelines. The Frati Godenti were called knights of St. Mary, and became knights on taking the habit; their robes

Around Gardigno yet will best appear."<sup>1</sup>  
 "O friars," I said, "your ills"—no further sound  
 I made: for I of one a glimpse received 110  
 Fix'd to a cross, with three stakes on the ground.  
 When he saw me, he all distorted heaved,  
 Ruffling his beard with sighs. And thus to me  
 The friar Catalan who this perceived,  
 Said, "That transfix'd one, whom thou now dost see,  
 Counsell'd the Pharisees 'twas fit that day  
 That one should for the rest a martyr be."<sup>2</sup>  
 He lies transfix'd and naked in the way,  
 As thou behold'st, so that he first must taste [120  
 How much each one that passeth him doth weigh.

were white, the mantle sable, and the arms a white field and red cross with two stars; their office was to defend widows and orphans, and to act as mediators: they had, like other religious bodies, internal regulations. The above-named M. Loderingo was the founder of that order. But ere long the knights too well deserved the appellation given them, their chief object being to enjoy themselves. These two friars were called in by the Florentines, and lodged in a palace over against the abbey. Such was the dependence placed on the character of their order, that it was expected they would be impartial and economical; instead of which, though of opposite parties, they concurred in promoting their own advantage rather than the public good."—VILLANI, vii. 13. This was in 1266.

<sup>1</sup> A street or quarter of the city in which stood the houses of the Uberti, a noble family at the head of the Ghibelines, burnt and destroyed by these two Jovial Friars, or by the Guelfs who bribed them to allow it.

<sup>2</sup> *John* xi. 49, 50.

His father-in-law too in this foss lies placed ;<sup>1</sup>  
And those who with them in that Council went,<sup>1</sup>  
An evil seed which did the Jews lay waste.  
Then I saw Virgil marvel, as intent  
He gazed on him extended on the cross  
So vilely, in eternal banishment.  
Then to the friar he said, as at a loss,  
“ Tell us, if ’tis permitted you, we pray,  
If to the right there leads out of this foss  
An opening for us two through which we may 130  
Go forth, and the dark angels not constrain  
To come and lead us from its depth away ?”  
Then he replied, “ There doth a rock remain  
Which o’er each valley nearer than you hope,  
From the great circle leads, a pathway plain ;  
Save that ’tis broken here, and has no cope :<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *John* xviii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Dante sublimely imagines that the earthquake at our Saviour’s crucifixion overthrew the infernal ramparts, and obstructed the way to hell : but the shock was most felt in the circles of the Violent (Canto xii. 44, 45) and of the Hypocrites (Canto xxi. 104—114), of those who crucified the Holy One and the Just. The rocky bridges which cross the ten fosses of Malebolgè, from the outer circle to the ninth (Canto xviii. 16—18) or central one, were here broken and the communication interrupted. The ruins of one of them afford the poets a means of ascending to the next mound, without the necessity of troubling their fierce and deceitful escort, the Malebranchè, and where they would be beyond their jurisdiction and power.

And by the ruin you may climb the ascent, [up.”  
 Which sideway slants and from the depth mounts  
 My guide who stood awhile with his head bent,  
 Said, “ He described the matter fraudfully, 140  
 Who yonder with his hook the sinners rent.”<sup>1</sup>  
 Then said the friar, “ Once at Bologna I  
 Heard of the devil’s faults, and mongst the res  
 That he’s a liar and father of a lie.”<sup>2</sup>  
 Then with huge strides my leader onwards press’d  
 A little anger in his aspect glow’d,  
 I therefore left those burden’d souls unblest’d,  
 And took the path which his loved footsteps show’d.

<sup>1</sup> The misrepresentation complained of was twofold; 1st, that the next rock-bridge was not broken (Canto xxi. 111, 126); and 2d, that the Malebranchè would not be savage (Canto xxi. 117).

<sup>2</sup> “Ye are of your father the devil, &c., for he is a liar and the father of it.”—*John* viii. 44. Catalano was himself a Bolognese, and had heard this text, as Dante himself perhaps had also heard it, from one of the pulpits of Bologna, whose university was even then celebrated for the study of the canon-law; and where, it seems, the vices of the devil were both described and copied. How low it stood in Dante’s estimation we may gather from Canto xviii. 58—63.

## CANTO XXIV.

## THE ARGUMENT.

With great difficulty the poets emerge from the sixth chasm, and on reaching the rock by which the seventh is bridged over, they behold therein the punishments inflicted on robbers, who are tormented by poisonous serpents. Vanni Fucci, of Pistoia, being accosted by Virgil, describes the sacrilege for which he suffers, and predicts the injuries about to be inflicted by the contests of the Bianchi and Neri, and the overthrow of the former party, to which Dante himself belonged.

IN the year's early childhood, when the sun  
Beneath Aquarius tempers his bright hairs,  
And back towards half the day the nights now run,  
When the white frost upon the earth appears,  
Her snowy sister's image chaste and hoar,  
But changes in brief time the plume she wears,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the early part of the year, when the sun (*Crinitus Apollo*, *Æneid.* ix. 638) is in Aquarius, and the vernal equinox is at hand, the nights have decreased in length to little more than half the twenty-four hours. In Italy the day is reckoned from sunset to sunset, so that *mezzo di* (mid-day) is not noon, but half way between these two periods, or twelve hours after sunset. At this season, too, the hoar-frosts in the morning appear like snow, but

The husbandman, when fails his little store,  
 Rising and looking round, his thigh will smite,<sup>1</sup>  
 When he beholds the plain all whiten'd o'er.  
 He to his cot return'd, a wretched wight,           10  
 Mourns up and down, unknowing what to do.  
 Then comes he forth, and hope again grows bright;  
 For lo! the world around has changed its hue  
 In that brief time, and with his sheep-hook arm'd,  
 Forth to the fields he drives his flock anew.  
 So me my guide with anxious fear alarm'd,  
 While I stood gazing on his troubled brow;  
 And with like speed the malady he charm'd,  
 For at the fallen bridge arriving now,  
 My leader turn'd to me with that sweet look   20  
 He first on me did by the mount bestow.  
 Surveying well the ruin first, he took  
 Some counsel with himself, then opening wide  
 His arms, he seized me, and that vale forsook.  
 As one who while he works computes beside,  
 And always seems with foresight blest, so raising  
 Me towards the summit of one rock, my guide

are soon melted by the rising sun. The last line, literally rendered, would be, "But a short time endures the temper of her pen." By a singular metaphor, the hoar-frost is compared to a writer, the *point* or *temper* of whose pen will not last, so that he is unable to continue his work of copying.

<sup>1</sup> Smiting on the thigh, as a sign of grief, is mentioned *Jer.* xxxi. 19; *Ezek.* xxi. 12; and *Iliad.* xii. 162.

On the next cliff above appear'd still gazing,  
 And said, "Lay hold on that, but take thou care  
 It will sustain thy weight, ere firmly seizing." 30  
 No path for those the leaden cloaks who wear  
 Was this, when he so light, and I push'd on  
 From cliff to cliff, could scarce mount upward there.  
 And were that coast not lower than the one  
 Preceding, how he had succeeded I  
 Know not, but I should have been quite undone.  
 But where the mouth of the abyss is nigh  
 Thither all downward Malebolgè slopes :  
 Its valleys hence have each this property,  
 That one side rises and the other droops. 40  
 Now had we reach'd at length that point above  
 Where of the rock the last loose fragment stoops.  
 Of breath my lungs did so exhausted prove,  
 When at the top arrived, I sat me down,  
 Because at first I could no further move.  
 "Now thus must indolence be from thee thrown,"<sup>1</sup>  
 My master said, "for not on downy plumes,  
 In canopied indulgence, fame is won."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Thus by this hard and toilsome journey thou art required to shake off all sloth and poltrouy." *Spoltrre, spoltrrare, spoltrrire*; quasi dis-poltrrire; from *dis*, negative, and *poltrrire*, to be idle, or inert. Hence also, *poltrrone*, poltroon, a do-nothing, an idler, one who skulks away from duty.

<sup>2</sup> "There is nothing truly valuable that can be obtained without

And without that whoe'er his life consumes,  
 Will leave such vestige of himself as foam     50  
 On water, or in air the smoky fumes.

And therefore rise ; this weakness overcome,  
 With that fix'd mind which every battle gains,  
 Unless she with the body's weight succumb.<sup>1</sup>

A longer ladder yet to climb remains,  
 Even when we leave the fiends and their strong hold ;  
 Now understand and profit by my strains."

Then I arose, affecting (self-controll'd)  
 More strength of lungs than I in truth possess'd :  
 And said, " Come on, for I am strong and bold."

So to our journey we ourselves address'd,     [60  
 Scaling the rock, rough, rugged, strait, and still  
 More steep than that before. As on we press'd

I went on talking to appear not ill :

When from the other foss a voice I heard,  
 For verbal utterance quite unsuitable.

pains and labour," &c. See *The Choice of Hercules*, an apologue by Prodicus, recommended and embellished by Socrates.—*Tutler*, 97.

<sup>1</sup> "For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things."—*Liber Sapientie*, ix. 15. Assuming that this book was written by Philo-Judæus, according to the general opinion (see HORNE'S *Introduction*, vol. iv. p. 245, ed. 1821), the author must have been indebted for the preceding passage to Horace:—" Besides this, the body, overloaded with the debauch of yesterday, depresses the mind along with it, and fixes to the earth that particle of breath divine."—*Sat.* ii. lib. ii. 78.

Of what he said I did not know one word,  
    Though on the arch that crosses there was I :  
    But he who spake appear'd to anger stirr'd.  
I stoop'd to gaze below, but living eye           70  
    The depth could never pierce through that black pall.  
    Then said I, " Master, do thou onward hie  
To the other round, and let's descend the wall,  
    For hence I hear, but do not understand ;  
    And looking down distinguish nought at all."  
He said, " I've no reply to thy demand,  
    Save to comply : when fit request is made,  
    The deed should answer, from the silent hand."  
The bridge we now descended at its head, [road; 80  
    Where joining the eighth mound it form'd our  
    And then the chasm was to our view display'd.  
Within it I beheld a terrible crowd  
    Of serpents, in their kind so strange to see,  
    Even yet their very memory chills my blood.<sup>1</sup>  
No more let Libya boast her sands, though she  
    Chelyder, Jaculus, Pareas, own ;  
    Though Cenchrus too, and Amphisbœna be  
Her brood ; so many plagues she ne'er hath known,

<sup>1</sup> In more than one passage of Albericus' *Vision*, the infliction of punishment by horrid and loathsome serpents is described. The *names* of the serpents here introduced by Dante are taken from Lucan's *Pharsalia*, x. 710—721.

Even with all Ethiopia,—nor so bad ;  
 Nor are there such above the Red sea strown. 90  
 Mid this abundance, cruel and most sad,  
 Their feet a scared and naked people plied,  
 Nor hope of heliotrope<sup>1</sup> or outlet had.  
 With serpents were their hands about them tied,  
 Which through the reins infix'd their tail and head,  
 And coil'd in folds before. Near our bank-side  
 One of the doom'd we saw, and as he stray'd  
 A serpent met and pierced him through just where  
 The neck and shoulders have their junction made.  
 Ne'er "O" nor "I" so swiftly written were, 100  
 As he took fire and burn'd with that fierce flame,  
 Till on the ground he fell all ashes there.  
 Yet where he lay dissolved the ashes came  
 Again together—with new life self-bred—  
 And presently rose up in shape the same.  
 Thus by great bards and sages, it is said,  
 The Phœnix dies, and then reborn it grows,  
 When the five hundredth year is nearly fled :  
 Nor herb nor blade through life its pasture knows,

<sup>1</sup> The gem heliotrope is of a dull green colour veined or spotted with red, and when favorably placed changes the sunbeams to red by reflection; whence its name. The pretenders to magic say, that mixed with the plant of the same name, and consecrated with certain rites, it has the power of rendering the bearer of it invisible.—PLINY, xxxvii. 10; SOLINUS, *Polyhist.* x; *Decameron*, viii. 3.

But tears of frankincense and amomum,      110  
 While nard and myrrh its funeral couch composc.<sup>1</sup>  
 As he who to some demon doth succumb,  
 Falling he knows not how, to earth dragg'd down,  
 Or else by epilepsy overcome ;  
 Who when he rises up again looks round,  
 Bewilder'd all with that fierce agony  
 He has endured, and stares with sighs profound :  
 When rose the sinner, so aghast was he.  
 Justice of God ! Oh, how severe, whose ire  
 In vengeance showers such blows tempestuously !  
 And who he was my leader did inquire.      [120  
 " Not long since I rain'd down," he answer'd then,  
 " From Tuscany into this gullet dire.  
 I chose a brutish life, not that of men ;  
 Mule that I was, and Vanni Fucci named.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dante has here abridged Ovid's description of this fabulous bird. It is remarkable enough, that Clemens Romanus (1 *Ad Corinth.* xxv.) appears to have borrowed this tale from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (xv. 392), and has made it a type of the resurrection. The latter is so unlike what we should have expected from a companion of St. Paul (*Phil.* iv. 3.), that the genuineness of the epistle has on that account been doubted. It has, however, been sufficiently attested by Eusebius, Irenæus, and others ; yet we cannot but observe a striking contrast, when we compare this epistle with the writings of the inspired Evangelists and Apostles.

<sup>2</sup> An illegitimate offspring of the Lazari family in Pistoia. Having, in 1293, robbed the sacristy of St. James's Church in that city, he secreted the goods in the house of an acquaintance, probably

Ah, beast!—Pistoia was my worthy den.”  
 Then to my guide I said, “His stay be claim’d,  
 And ask what fault hath put him here, whom I  
 Once knew, a man of blood with rage inflamed.”  
 The sinner heard, nor feign’d in his reply;      130  
 But right towards me his mind and visage turn’d,  
 Portray’d in which sad shame I could espy.  
 “That thou hast caught me I am more concern’d,  
 And that thou seest me in this misery dipp’d,  
 Than even the loss of earthly life I mourn’d.  
 Of what thou ask’st I cannot be close-lipp’d.  
 I’m placed thus low, because the sacristry  
 By theft of its fair ornaments I stripp’d,  
 Whose blame another suffer’d wrongfully.  
 For joy to see it thou hast little cause,      140  
 If thou from these dark regions e’er be free,  
 Open thine ears to what my speech foreshows.  
 First in Pistoia shall the Neri fail,<sup>1</sup>

without his knowledge. Several persons were tortured on suspicion; at length, a friend of Vanni’s being sentenced to the rack, the latter, to save him, sent anonymous information where the spoils might be found; which proving true, the master of the house, Vanni della Nona, was convicted and executed, while the actual criminal escaped.

<sup>1</sup> A period of great prosperity in Florence was interrupted by a dispute which originated in Pistoia. Among its chief families was that of the Cancellieri. Two boys of this family, Leri the son of Guglielmo and Geri the son of Bertaccio, quarrelled while at play, and, coming to blows, Geri received a slight wound.

Then Florence change her citizens and laws.  
But lo, a vapour drawn from Magra's vale,  
With turbid mists involved by Mars's frown,  
With fierce impetuous tempest shall assail:  
On Picen's field the wreck of war is thrown,  
Whence suddenly the lowering cloud shall break,  
So that each Bianco shall be stricken down.<sup>1</sup> 150  
And that it may afflict thee, this I speak."

Grieved at this, Guglielmo sent his son to the house of Geri's father to ask his pardon for the offence. But Bertaccio, instead of accepting this apology for a boyish fault, inhumanly ordered his servants to seize the youth, and having taken him into the stable (for the greater indignity), to chop off his hand on the manger. Leri, thus mutilated, was then sent back to his father with a message, "That wounds are not so properly cured by words as by amputation." Enraged at this cruelty, Guglielmo and his friends took arms to avenge it, while Bertaccio and his friends did the same to defend themselves; and thus the whole of Pistoia became involved in the quarrel. An ancestor of these Cancellieri had two wives, one called Bianca and the other Nera, names which these two factions adopted. After many lives were lost and houses destroyed, the quarrel extended to Florence, the Donati taking part with the Neri, and the Cerchi with the Bianchi; and very soon the whole city and country were divided between these two factions.—MACHIAVELLI, *Hist. Fior.* ii. In May 1301, the Bianchi party in Pistoia, with the assistance of the same party who ruled in Florence, drove out the Neri from the former place, destroying their houses, palaces, and farms.—GIO. VILLANI, viii. 44.

<sup>1</sup> In 1302 the Pope sent Charles of Valois, brother of the French king, to Florence; the Neri, under Corso Donati, returned and took the reins of government; the Bianchi were expelled. And in 1304, Morello Malespina, from the Val di Magra, utterly defeated the Bianchi on Campo Piceno near Pistoia.

## CANTO XXV.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Vanni Fucci's blasphemy, punishment, and flight. Cacus the centaur tormented by serpents and a dragon. Dante meets with five of his countrymen, four of whom are the subjects of strange and horrible transformations. Agnello loses the human form and becomes blended with a six-clawed serpent, and that serpent is Cianfa. Buoso is pierced by a fiery viper, and gradually exchanges the human form for that of a serpent, while the viper simultaneously assumes an erect position and the likeness of a man, and proves to be Guercio Cavaleanti. Of the five, only Sciancate remains unaltered.

THIS speech the robber having ended, he  
 Forming the figs both hands in scorn extends,<sup>1</sup>  
 And cried, "Accept them, God, I give them thee."

<sup>1</sup> To "make the fig," or some equivalent expression, signifies to thrust out the thumb between the forefinger and second finger of the fist; said to have been a mode of insult extensively and for many ages employed among the nations of Europe.—Douce's *Illustrations of Shakspeare*. A vestige of this we have still in such expressions as, "A fig for his resentment." Shakspeare makes the travelled Pistol employ the Spanish word, as having a more *military* air: thus,

"*Pistol*. Die and be damn'd; and *figo* for thy friendship!  
*Fluellin*. It is well.

From that time have the serpents been my friends.<sup>1</sup>  
 For one entwined itself his neck around,  
 As though it said, "Lo, here thy prating ends."  
 And gliding up his arms another bound  
 And firmly riveted itself before,  
 So that no power of moving them he found.  
 Pistoia! ah, Pistoia! pause no more,                   10  
 Ere thou to ashes turn thee, since thou dost  
 In evil act surpass thy sires of yore.<sup>2</sup>  
 I saw through hell's dark circles, mid the lost,  
 No spirit against God that show'd such pride:—  
 Not he at Thebes, struck down for his vain boast.<sup>3</sup>  
 He fled: nor utter'd he one word beside.  
 Next him a Centaur full of fury ran:  
 And "Where is he? where is the brute?" he cried.

*Pist.* The fig of Spain!

*Flu.* Very good.—*Henry V.* act iii. sc. 6.

The Spanish *higo* (anciently *figo*, now obsolete), the Italian *fico*, and the Latin *ficus*, not only signify a fig, but also a disease—the piles, or hemorrhoids. There is probably an allusion in the text that does not at first sight appear. Vanni Fucci's townsmen (in 1228) had "a tower seventy cubits high, on the rock of Carmignano; and at the top of it were two arms of marble with hands that made the figs at Florence."—MALESP. 116; VILLANI, vi. 5.

<sup>1</sup> "Sempre soleva le serpi favorire."—ARISTO, *Orl. Fur.* xliiii. 79.

<sup>2</sup> The dissolute soldiers of Catiline, who, after the battle in which their leader fell, took refuge in Pistoia (the ancient Pistoria) and its neighbourhood.

<sup>3</sup> Capaneus.—See Canto xiv. l. 46, and note.

Maremma's marsh<sup>1</sup> had not more serpents than  
 Were seen on him upon the croup thick set, 20  
 To that part where the human form began.  
 Upon his shoulders lay a dragonet,<sup>2</sup>  
 With wings outspread, and just behind the head,  
 Breathing out fire on whomsoe'er he met.  
 "Cacus<sup>3</sup> is this:" to me my master said,  
 "Who underneath the rock of Aventine  
 Oft made a lake of blood. Here must he tread  
 A different way to what the fates assign  
 His brethren, for his fraudulent action when  
 From the great herd he filch'd the neighb'ring  
 kine. 30  
 His felon deeds were put an end to then,  
 Beneath the mace of Hercules, who may

<sup>1</sup> An extensive tract of marshy ground in Tuscany, near the sea-shore, abounding in reptiles.

<sup>2</sup> "Fiery dragons were sitting on some of them and gnawing them with iron teeth: others were the victims of fiery serpents, which coiling round their necks, arms, and bodies, fixed iron fangs into their hearts."—*St. Patrick's Purgatory*.

<sup>3</sup> A robber-monster of Italy. When Hercules returned from the conquest of Geryon (Canto xvii. 97, and note), Cacus stole some of his cows, and to avoid being discovered by their track, dragged them backward into his cave. But their lowing in reply to that of the herd without, betrayed the theft, for which Hercules attacked and slew him.—*Aeneid*. viii. 193. Some of the translators render *affuoca* in l. 24, "sets on fire." The word is capable of either sense, but Virgil's description of Cacus, as *ora vomens ignes* (199), fixes the meaning here.

Have given a hundred blows unfelt save ten."<sup>1</sup>  
 While thus he spake, the Centaur sped away,  
 And three souls came beneath us ; unaware  
 Was I, and eke my guide, of them till they  
 Exclaim'd aloud, " Pray tell us who ye are."  
 This brought our converse to a termination:  
 Henceforth intent on these alone we were.  
 I did not know them, but on this occasion,        40  
 As oft it happens, it befel that they  
 Each other had to name in conversation.  
 One saying, " In what place doth Cianfa stay ?"<sup>2</sup>  
 Then that my leader might attention give,  
 Upon my lips did I my finger lay.  
 If thou art backward, reader, to receive  
 What I shall say, no marvel it is so ;  
 Since I who saw it scarce myself believe.  
 For while mine eyes were fix'd upon them, lo !  
 A serpent with six feet sprung forth on one,    50  
 To whom it facing clung and seem'd to grow ;  
 The middle feet around the paunch were thrown,  
 And with the foremost were the arms confined :  
 Then with its teeth each cheek it fasten'd on :  
 The hinder feet the thighs o'erspread and bind,

<sup>1</sup> The first ten blows depriving him of all feeling.

<sup>2</sup> Said to be of the Donati family. Suddenly transformed into a serpent, his three companions miss him, and ask where he stays.

Betwixt both which the tail a passage found,  
 And upwards turn'd upon the reins behind.  
 Never did ivy clasp so firmly round  
 The oak, as now that hideous beast obscene  
 His own about another's members wound.      60  
 Then, as if burning wax they both had been,  
 With mingling hues each in the other blends,  
 And that which either was no more is seen.  
 Thus a brown tint the fire to paper<sup>1</sup> lends  
 Held o'er it, scorch'd ere kindled to a flame,  
 Not yet turn'd black, although its whiteness ends.  
 The other two look'd on and both exclaim,  
 "How art thou changed! Alas, Agnello<sup>2</sup> see!  
 Not double, yet not single, is thy frame!"  
 Already the two heads had come to be      70  
 But one, and the two figures seem'd to fade,

<sup>1</sup> The art of making paper from fibrous materials, reduced to a pulp in water, appears to have been first discovered by the Chinese. The Arabians in the seventh century made paper from cotton, and having brought the art into Spain, made paper from linen and hemp. The first paper made from linen in Italy was at Trevigi, in the fourteenth century, by Pier da Fabiano. The first paper-mill known to have existed in England was at Hertford, early in the sixteenth century. Even in the middle of the seventeenth century, Fuller complains of the little encouragement paper-making received, "considering the vast sums of money spent in our land for paper out of Italy, France, and Germany." By *lo papiro* some understand the wick of a candle, made of *papyrus*.

<sup>2</sup> Of the Brunelleschi family, belonging to the Neri party.

Lost in one form of strictest unity.<sup>1</sup>  
Of the four separate bands two arms were made ;  
The thighs, the legs, the belly, and the chest,  
Became such limbs as eye hath ne'er survey'd :  
All trace of former aspect was erased :  
Both and yet neither seem'd that form perverse.  
And such with lingering steps it onward pass'd.  
As in the dog days when the heat is fierce,  
Like sudden lightning gleams the lizard's train, 80  
Crossing the path from hedge to hedge transverse,  
So, towards the bellies of the other twain  
Speeding, appear'd an adder all on fire ;  
Livid and black even as a pepper-grain.  
In that part one he pierced whence we acquire  
Our earliest nourishment ;<sup>2</sup> then drawing back,  
Before him fell stretch'd out that reptile dire.  
On it the pierced one gazed, yet nothing spake,  
Then stagger'd he with hesitating feet,  
As one whom sleep or fever doth attack. 90

<sup>1</sup> Probably suggested by Virgil's description of the punishment inflicted by the tyrant Mezentius:—"He tied dead bodies to living ones, hand to hand and face to face, and thus (O dire punishment!) with gore and corruption flowing in a loathed embrace, inflicted a lingering death."—*Æneid*. viii. 485. Servius, in his comment on the passage, remarks that the gore (*sanie*) of the dead produced putrefaction (*tabum*) in the living.

<sup>2</sup> The navel. The "poison of conscious theft makes the man a serpent."

He view'd the serpent, and their glances meet.  
 One from his mouth the other from his wound,  
 Breathed a thick smoke whose curling vapours greet.  
 Let Lucan rest in mute repose profound,  
 Nor tell Sabellus' nor Nasidius' fate;<sup>1</sup>  
 But listen to the tale which I propound.  
 Of Cadmus now no more let Ovid state<sup>2</sup>—  
 And Arethuse—how to a serpent he,  
 She to a fountain changed;<sup>3</sup> though he relate  
 In verse their tale, not envious shall I be.      100  
 Two natures ne'er sung he, that face to face  
 Their form and substance changed thus readily.  
 So corresponded they in what took place,  
 The serpent's tail into a fork was cleft,  
 While closed the smitten one his feet apace.  
 The legs and thighs, of separate life bereft,  
 Were join'd together, and so closely stuck,  
 Of the least seam no visible sign was left.

<sup>1</sup> Two of Cato's army, the one stung by a slender serpent called *seps*, the other by that called *prester*, in the Lybian desert. The description of the effects produced, as given by Lucan, may have suggested that here given by Dante.—See *Pharsalia*, ix. 763—804.

<sup>2</sup> Cadmus and Hermione having retired into Illyricum, infirm with age, and overcome with grief at the calamities of their children, entreated the gods to release them from the ills of life, and were immediately changed into serpents.—OVID. *Metam.* iv. 562.

<sup>3</sup> A nymph of Elis, attendant on Diana, whose aid she implored when flying from the river-god Alpheus, and was by her changed into a fountain.—*Ibid.* v. 409.

The cloven tail meanwhile the figure took [110  
Which they had lost, quite soft became its skin ;  
While his acquired an indurated look.  
I at each armhole saw the arms drawn in,  
And the fierce beast's two shorter legs now grew,  
And what in length the other's lose, they win.  
The hinder feet entwined together drew,  
Becoming then the part which man conceals ;  
From his, of these the sufferer put forth two :  
And while a smoke the one and the other veils  
With a new colour, as it forms on one  
The skin, which yet it from the other peels. 120  
The one arose, the other low fell down,  
Nor shifted yet the eyes with baleful light,  
'Neath which the muzzle had its change begun.  
Then towards the temples, he who stood upright,  
Drew his : the surplus matter that came there,  
From the smooth cheeks, as ears grew up in sight :  
While that which drew not backward, of its share  
Abundant, added to the face a nose,  
And made the lips of their due size appear.  
He who lay prostrate then his muzzle throws<sup>1</sup> 130  
Forward, and draws the ears down to his head,  
Even as a snail his slender horns withdraws.  
The tongue which whole and apt for speech was made

<sup>1</sup> Milton has imitated this passage :—*Paradise Lost*, x. 511.

At first, now cloven was ; and the fork'd tongue  
 Of the other closed : and then the smoke was laid.  
 Away the soul changed to a reptile sprung,  
 Hissing along the vale ; and after him  
 The other sputtering talk'd, and walk'd along.  
 Then, as he plied each renovated limb,  
 He said to the other, " Buoso,<sup>1</sup> swiftly thou 140  
 Crawling, as I have done, this pathway skim."  
 The ballast thus of the seventh hold below,  
 Shift and re-shift I saw. And here, if I  
 Err aught, the strangeness may excuse me now.  
 And though in some degree confused the eye  
 That saw it, and the mind bewilder'd too,  
 Yet could they not escape so covertly,  
 But Puccio Sciancato well I knew :<sup>2</sup>  
 Of the three comrades whom I did perceive  
 At first, he only without change withdrew. 150  
 The other still dost thou Gavillè grieve.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Of the Donati family, or, as others say, that of the Abbati in Florence.

<sup>2</sup> A noted robber, of the Galigai family of Florence.—See *Paradiso*, xvi. 96.

<sup>3</sup> Francesco Guercio Cavalcante, who was slain at Gavillè, a town in the Val d'Arno. His death was cruelly avenged by his party, who killed many of the inhabitants and wasted the district.

With a little attention it will be perceived, that the six-legged serpent was Cianfa ; the three companions, Agnello, Buoso, and Puccio Sciancato ; and the black adder, F. Guercio Cavalcante ; the *five* Florentine robbers whom, in the next Canto, Dante says he *saw*.

## CANTO XXVI.

## THE ARGUMENT.

An apostrophe to Florence, occasioned by Dante's recognition of the five robbers. The poets climb the same rock they had descended; and having reached the bridge that crosses the eighth gulf of Malebolgè, they see below innumerable flames gliding hither and thither, each of which contains the spirit of an evil councillor. One flame cleft at the top conceals Diomede and Ulysses, the latter of whom relates his last voyage and the manner of his death.

FLORENCE exult! thy greatness who can tell;  
O'er sea and land thy rushing wings resound:  
Meantime thy name hath spread itself through hell.  
Five such among the plunderers there I found  
Thy citizens,<sup>1</sup> whence shame befalleth me,  
And to thyself no glory can redound.  
But if our dreams near dawn may claim to be  
The truth,<sup>2</sup> much time will not elapse ere thou

<sup>1</sup> The five robbers described in Canto xxv.

<sup>2</sup> "For about the dawn of day when the lamp was just expiring, (At which time dreams are wont to appear true)," &c.

OVID. *Ep. Heroid.* xix. 195.

Feel what, not Prato<sup>1</sup> only, wisheth thee ;  
 And 'twould not be untimely if 'twere now :      10  
     Would that it were so, since it must take place ;  
     'Twill grieve me more the more with age I bow.  
 We now set out, and on the rock's rough face,  
     Which first had served for steps our downward tread,  
     My guide remounting drew me : thus we trace  
 Upward our solitary way, which led  
     Mid crags and rocky cliffs, the top to gain.  
     Nor without hand should we with feet have sped.  
 I grieved, and even now I grieve again,      [20  
     When my thoughts turn to what I then descried ;  
     Even more than usual I my fancy rein,  
 Lest I should run where Virtue doth not guide.  
     And that I envy not myself the boon  
     Which my good star, or better still, supplied.<sup>2</sup>  
 As when the summer sun uprising soon

<sup>1</sup> A city in the neighbourhood of Florence. The misfortunes to Florence here poetically prognosticated, are,—1. The fall of the bridge Carraia, then of wood, on which a multitude of persons were assembled, May, 1304, to witness a representation of Hell and its torments, which were exhibited in the bed of the Arno. 2. A conflagration, the following month, in which 1700 houses were destroyed. 3. The civil discord between the Bianchi and Neri.

<sup>2</sup> “ When I reflect on what I then saw, I am more than ever anxious to avoid the sin there punished, so as not to abuse to my own injury the genius given me by my natal star, or to speak more properly, by Providence.”

And setting late, least hides his aspect bright,  
 Reclining on a rock some country loon,  
 When flies give place to gnats, the fire-flies' light  
 Sees through the vale below,<sup>1</sup> perchance where he  
 To vine or plough applies his daily might: 30  
 Through the eighth chasm thus shone resplendently  
 Innumerable flames which I perceived,  
 Soon as its bottom was disclosed to me.  
 As he whose vengeance was by bears achieved,<sup>2</sup>  
 At its departure saw Elijah's car,<sup>3</sup> [upheaved,—  
 When wing'd for heaven the steeds their flight  
 To follow them his eyes unable are—  
 Nought could he see except the flame alone,  
 Upsoaring like a misty spark afar :  
 So moved along the fosse's gorge each one ; 40  
 And every flame a sinner's form wrapp'd round,<sup>4</sup>  
 So close that of the theft<sup>5</sup> no trace was shown.

<sup>1</sup> With us the female glow-worm (*lampyris*) is luminous, but without wings; the winged male not possessing light in any perceptible degree. But in Italy there is another species of lampyris—the *luccioli* of Dante—of which both sexes are at the same time winged and luminous.—EDWARDS' *Manual of Zoology*, § 529.

<sup>2</sup> 2 *Kings* ii. 24.

*Ibid.* 11, 12.

<sup>4</sup> *Luke* xvi. 24.

<sup>5</sup> By "the theft" is meant that which was concealed or secreted within. The appearance, named in Wales *corpse-lights*, or *corpse-candles*, may have suggested the idea to Dante. See Canto ix. 118, note.

I stood to look, and bending o'er the mound,  
 Grasp'd hard a rocky mass with either hand,  
 Else I had fallen into the gulf profound.  
 My guide who saw me thus attentive stand,  
 Said, "There are spirits in those fires below,  
 Each swathed therewith as with a fiery band."  
 "Master," I said, "thy word assures me; though  
 Beforehand my opinion was that they                50  
 Were such, and I desired of thee to know  
 Who is in yonder fire that comes this way,  
 Parted at top as if sprung from the pyre  
 Whereon of old the Theban brothers lay."<sup>1</sup>  
 He answer'd me, "Ulysses in that fire  
 And Diomed together bear their doom,  
 Hastening to torture as of old to ire.  
 And still they grieve, within their flaming tomb,  
 The ambush of the horse that oped the door [60  
 Whence came the seed that sow'd imperial Rome."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eteocles and Polynices, who killed each other in their war for the Theban sovereignty. The Greek tragedians have given them separate funerals; but the allusion of Dante is to the following:—Statius says, "Behold again the brothers; as the devouring fire touches the first limbs, the funeral pile trembles, and a strange impression is made on the corpses: the flames burst forth with a divided summit, and the tops alternately flash with an abrupt light."—*Theb.* xii. 429. Thus also Lucan; "The flame is divided in two parts, and rises with a double top, like the Theban funeral pile."—*Phars.* i. 550.

<sup>2</sup> The ambush of the principal Greek warriors in the wooden

There for that fraudulent act they suffer yet,  
Which grieves De-id-a-mía, even though dead,  
For her Achilles :<sup>1</sup> and they expiate  
There the Palladian theft."<sup>2</sup> "If they," I said,  
"Have power within those sparks to speak, O guide,  
Hear me, as if a thousand times I pray'd,  
Nor let my wish to tarry be denied,  
Till here the hornèd flame arrive. See how  
I bend with longing towards it." He replied,

horse, led to the destruction of Troy; and that (according to Virgil) to Æneas's voyage into Italy, where his descendants founded the Roman empire.

<sup>1</sup> Thetis, to prevent her son Achilles joining the expedition against Troy, sent him, disguised in female attire, to the court of Lycomedes, king of Seyron. Here he became enamoured with Deidamía, the king's daughter. But as Chalcas had predicted that Troy would not be taken without him, Ulysses came to the island in the disguise of a travelling merchant, for the purpose of discovering him. He offered for sale to the family of the king several articles of feminine attire, and mingled with them some pieces of armour. On a sudden blast being given with a trumpet, Achilles instantly seized on the armour and was thus discovered.—STATIUS, *Achilledon*, ii. 201. The young warrior then, abandoning Deidamía, joined the army against Troy. But Homer makes him proceed from the court of his father direct to the siege of Troy. (*Il.* ix. 439.)

<sup>2</sup> The Palladium, as its name imports, was a statue of Pallas, or Minerva, said to have fallen down from heaven, near the tent of Ilus, as he was building the citadel of Hium. On its preservation the safety of Troy was supposed to depend. Ulysses and Diomedes were commissioned by the Greeks to steal it from the Trojan citadel, which, creeping through subterranean passages and sewers, they effected.—*Æneid.* ii. 163.

"Thy wish is worthy of much praise, and now 70  
     I do accept it, but would recommend  
     Thy tongue be not employ'd; to me leave thou  
 The task of speaking, for I comprehend  
     Thy wish, and they perchance to thy discourse,  
     For they were Greeks, might no attention lend."  
 When that the flame was come where consonance  
     Of time and place seem'd fittest to my guide,  
     I heard him thus in speaking make advance:—  
 "O ye two souls that in one fire abide,  
     If living I of you did merit aught, 80  
     Howe'er upon its measure you decide,  
 When in the world my lofty strains I wrote,  
     Move not from hence till one of you relate  
     When him befel at last the death he sought."  
 The greater horn of that old flame then straight  
     Began to vibrate with a murmuring roar,  
     As if the wind that flame did agitate.  
 Then, like a tongue that speaks, the summit wore  
     A quivering look, and forth these sounds did throw:  
     "When I escaped from where a year and more, 90  
 I was detain'd by Circè my fair foe,  
     Who near Gaëta did her spells employ,  
     Before Æneas yet had named it so:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gaeta, so named by Æneas, from his nurse Caiëta, who was buried there. Virgil says that Circe dwelt in its vicinity.—*Æneid.* vii. 1.

Neither my longing to behold my boy,  
Nor filial reverence for my aged sire,  
Nor love deserved, that should have fill'd with joy  
Penelope, could conquer my desire  
The knowledge of the world at large to gain,  
Of human vices and of valour's fire :  
I sail'd along the deep and boundless main, 100  
With one sole bark and with that company,  
Faithful though small, that yet composed my train.  
As far as Spain I either coast did see,  
Far as Morocco and Sardinia's isle,  
And th' others bath'd on all sides by that sea.  
I and my peers grew old and slow meanwhile,  
But we arrived at that famed strait at last,  
Where Hercules inscribed on either pile,  
' Beyond these bounds let no man bend his mast.'  
On the right hand fair Seville's walls I left, 110  
Already Ceuta on the other pass'd.  
' Brethren,' I said, ' who have the billows cleft,  
And through unnumber'd perils reach'd the west,  
To this short watch remaining, ere bereft  
Of all activity our senses rest ;  
Beyond the setting sun pursue your course,  
Nor of the unpeopled world refuse this test.  
Consider well your elevated source :  
Ye were not made to live like brutes I ween,

But virtue and knowledge to pursue.' The force  
 Of this short speech by its effect was seen. [120  
 My comrades now I scarce could have restrain'd ;  
 Their longing for the voyage was so keen.  
 Then, turning towards the dawn our stern, we strain'd  
 For our mad flight, while wing-like swept each oar,  
 And constantly upon the left we gain'd.  
 Each star of the other pole, as on we bore,  
 The night beheld, and ours had sunk so low,  
 That now it rose not on the ocean-floor.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> After passing the straits of Gibraltar, they sailed westward constantly bearing to the left or south. Thus Juvenal, "A fleet will venture wherever the hope of gain invites; not the Carpathian and Lybian seas only will it pass through, but leaving Calpe (Gibraltar) far behind, will hear in the western ocean the noise of the setting sun."—*Sat.* xiv. 277. The imaginary voyage of Ulysses into the Atlantic may have been suggested by the opinion, arising from the accidental coincidence of names, that Lisbon was founded by him. Olyssipo, or Ulyssipo (whence Lisboa, Lisbon), was the only municipium of Roman citizens in the province of Lusitania, and was probably of Roman origin.—*PLINY*, iv. 22. The mariner's compass was discovered A.D. 1302; but nearly half a century elapsed before its effects were marked and decided, in inducing navigators to venture into distant parts of the ocean. Dante may be said to have anticipated the voyages of the Portuguese and Spaniards of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. After many unsuccessful attempts, it was in 1484 that from the city of which Ulysses was the supposed founder, a powerful fleet sailed 1500 miles beyond the line, and the Portuguese for the first time beheld a new heaven, and observed the stars of another hemisphere.—*ROBERTSON'S America*, i. It is more surprising that Dante should have prognosticated such

Five times rekindled was the lunar glow,           130  
 And then as often was that light consumed,  
 Since that high path we enter'd on, when, lo!  
 A mountain dim that in the distance loom'd,  
 And seem'd to me so high that none beside  
 Had in my sight such aspect e'er assumed.<sup>1</sup>  
 Our joy was great, but when the land we spied  
 'Twas turn'd to mourning: thence a whirlwind  
 And struck the vessel on the foremost side: [sprung,  
 Thrice whirl'd around with all the waves she swung;  
 The fourth time lifted (so heaven's will disposed)  
 The stern; the prow sank down the waves among,  
 Till o'er our heads the roaring ocean closed."

attempts, than that he should have been unable to anticipate their success. For after the brilliant discoveries of the Portuguese in the East, the project of Columbus was deemed visionary, even by those whom the sovereigns of Spain selected as the best qualified to judge on such a subject.

The particulars which Dante has related respecting the voyage of Ulysses and its unhappy termination, may have been suggested by the following: 1st. A hint in the *Odyssey*, where Tiresias thus vaticinates to Ulysses: "But if thou hurt them, then I foretell destruction both to the ship and thy companions," &c.—xi. 111. 2d. An Arabian tale, of which we have the substance in the sixth voyage of Sinbad. 3d. It is not unlikely that Dante had heard of some early and adventurous navigators, who having set out on a voyage of discovery in the Atlantic, had never returned. Columbus had very nearly perished by a storm *after* his discovery of America.—ROBERTSON'S *America*, ii.

<sup>1</sup> Some have identified this mountain with Teneriffe, and others explain it as denoting purgatory.

## CANTO XXVII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

In another flame is punished Guido da Montefeltro, who asks information respecting the state of Romagna. Dante describes its condition, and in return inquires who and what he is. Guido relates that he had been a Franciscan, but was drawn by the deceitful representations of Boniface VIII. from his retirement, and induced by the promise of absolution to give him that counsel for which, at his death, when claimed by St. Francis, he was borne off by a demon, and adjudged to his present suffering.

Now upward rose the flame erect and still,  
 No more to speak, and now it pass'd away,  
 With license granted at the poet's will :  
 Another had behind it come that way,  
 Whence issued forth a sound confused and dull,  
 Which toward its top compell'd our eyes to stray.  
 When roar'd at first the famed Sicilian bull  
 With doleful cries of him (a just decree !)  
 Who to construct it had employ'd his tool,  
 It bellow'd with the sufferer's voice, while he 10  
 Within was tortured ; hence what was all brass

Appear'd to be transfix'd with agony.<sup>1</sup>  
 Thus while the words of grief no way to pass  
 Could find, no opening from their source ; into  
 The flame's own language they were changed, alas !  
 But having won themselves an avenue  
 Up through the point, they gave it that slight shake  
 The tongue had given to them ere they pass'd through.  
 "Thou whom I now address," 'twas thus he spake,  
 "Who lately did'st in Lombard phrase exclaim, 20  
 'Depart, no more to thee appeal I make ;'  
 With me—though tardily perchance I came—

<sup>1</sup> Perillus, an Athenian artist, having made a brazen bull, in which a man could be enclosed, so that when fire was applied his cries would resemble the roar of a living bull, presented it to Dyonisius, tyrant of Agrigentum, in Sicily, who ordered him to be made the first victim by way of experiment.—PLINY, xxxiv. 8. It is often alluded to by the poets ; thus :—

"Would they not rather groan in the brazen Sicilian bullock?"

PERSIUS, *Sat.* iii. 39.

"And if in a cause obscure and doubtful at any time you're cited  
 As a witness, and Phalaris with his brazen bull be present,  
 Commanding you to be false, and dictating the perjury ;  
 Be not so profligate as to prefer safety to honour,  
 Nor lose for the love of life what alone is worth living for."

JUVENAL, *Sat.* viii. 80.

"And Phalaris roasted the body of Perillus  
 In the roaring bull ; his work the wretched artist handsell'd.  
 Both the one and the other was just ; nor is any law more  
 equitable,  
 Than that by their own art the artificers of death should perish."

OVID. *Art. Amor.* i. 653.

To stay for converse let it irk not thee,  
 For me it irks not, yet within this flame  
 I burn. If into this blind world thou be  
 New fallèn from that pleasant Latian land  
 From whence my total guilt accrues to me,  
 Tell me if peace prevails, or if the brand  
 Of war among Romagna's people gleams?  
 For of the hills which 'twixt Urbino stand, 30  
 And the high peak whence Tiber sends his streams,<sup>1</sup>  
 I sprung." Attentive, bending down, was I;  
 My leader touch'd my side, and said, "It seems  
 This is a Latin; speak." And my reply,  
 Which waited, I commenced without delay:  
 "O soul that hidden here below dost sigh,  
 Not without war is thy Romagna—nay,  
 War ever was in her proud tyrants' breasts:  
 But she ostensibly hath none to day.  
 Ravenna, as for many a year, still rests; 40  
 The eagle of Polenta there is brooding,  
 So that beneath his broad wings Cervia nests.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Of Montefeltro, between Urbino and that part of the Apennines whence the Tiber springs.

<sup>2</sup> Cervia is a small sea-port, fifteen miles south of Ravenna. Polenta, a castle near Brettinoro. Guido Novella, the son of Ostasio da Polenta, was the last and most munificent patron of Dante. He took Ravenna in 1265. In 1322 he was deprived of the sovereignty, and died at Bologna the year following. He was a Ghibelline, and father of the unfortunate Francesca di Rimini.

The land which long was proof 'gainst foes intruding,  
 And the French host in bloody fight o'erthrew,<sup>1</sup>  
 The green paws grasp, each rival thence excluding.<sup>2</sup>  
 The mastiffs of Verucchio, old and new,<sup>3</sup>  
 That rent Montagna<sup>4</sup> there (no custom strange),  
 With auger fangs, as wont, their prey pursue.

The arms of the Polenta family were Per pale on a field azure and or, an eagle displayed argent and gules.

<sup>1</sup> The territory of Forli, which had gone over to the Ghibelline party. In 1282 the city was besieged by a French army, imported by Pope Martin IV., a Frenchman, and reduced to the utmost extremity. By a singular stratagem the governor, Guido Montefeltro, relieved it, and defeated the French army with great slaughter. He agreed to admit a party of the besiegers at a postern, on a preconcerted signal, on the sole condition of sparing the lives of the garrison. The French, at the appointed hour, sent a detachment of cavalry, forced the gate, and immediately began to plunder. Count Guido, in the mean time, had sallied out at another gate with a select party, and coming in a circuitous direction on the French army, cut them in pieces; then returning to the city, he found the French still plundering; and the inhabitants having secreted their saddles and bridles, they attempted to fight on foot, and were all exterminated.—G. VILLANI, vii. 81.

<sup>2</sup> The poet informs Guido, the former master of Forli, that it is now in possession of Sinbaldo Ordolaffi, whom he designates by his coat of arms—A lion vert, with a field the upper part or, the lower half with three lists vert and three or.

<sup>3</sup> Malatesta and Malatestino, father and son, lords of Rimini, called mastiffs for their ferocity and tyranny. Malatestino is supposed to have been the husband of Francesca. Verrucchio, in the territory of Rimini, was their estate; where, the poet says, they still pursue their usual oppressive practices.

<sup>4</sup> Montagna de' Parcisati, a knight of Rimini, and head of

Lamone's and Santerno's cities<sup>1</sup> range  
 Under the white-lair'd lion's whelp, and he 50  
 When summer passeth will his party change.<sup>2</sup>  
 For her whose flank the Savio bathes,<sup>3</sup> as she  
 'Twixt plain and mountain sitteth, so her state  
 Halts between despotism and liberty.  
 Now then, who thou art, pray, to us relate:<sup>4</sup>  
 Be not more stern than others here have been;

the Ghibelline party in that city, was cruelly murdered by the Malateste.

<sup>1</sup> The cities of Faenza and Imola are here indicated by the names of the two rivers on which they are respectively seated.

<sup>2</sup> Machinarado, or Mainardo Pagani, whose arms were a lion azure on a field argent. He ruled in Faenza, and changed his party as often as it suited his interest. He was called, for his treachery, the Demon;—*Purgatorio*, xiv. 118.

<sup>3</sup> Cesina, situated at the foot of a mountain, and washed by the Savio, which often descends with a swollen and rapid stream from the Apennines.

<sup>4</sup> Dante, without knowing whom he is addressing, having in compliance with his request informed him of the state of Romagna generally, and then of each particular district in it, wishes to be informed in return who his auditor is. Guido da Montefeltro had acquired a splendid reputation by his exploit at Forli just mentioned, but he soon tarnished it by his open violation of the most solemn engagements. In a fit of sickness he withdrew from the world and took the Franciscan habit, but afterwards broke his vow in the manner described by Dante and Villani. See line 56, and note; thus verifying, if his conduct did not originate, the proverb;—*Passato il pericolo, gabbato il santo*.

“When the devil was sick, the devil a monk would be;  
 When the devil was well, the devil a monk was he.”

So may thy name on earth yet walk elate."  
 Then when the fire awhile had roar'd, was seen,  
 In its own mode, the sharpen'd point to move  
 From side to side, while breathed these words  
 " If I believed that in the world above [between, 60  
 Thou with my answer ever couldst be found,  
 This flame no more should shake, nor vocal prove.  
 But since, if truth be told, from this profound  
 None can return to earth, I need not fear  
 To speak, lest infamy my name should wound.  
 I was a soldier, then a cordelier ;  
 Thinking, so cinctured, that amends I made.  
 And I had follow'd up this hope sincere,  
 Had the great priest himself not me betray'd 70  
 (Him evil catch !) to my first faults afresh :  
 And how and why, shall be by me display'd.  
 While yet I had that form of bones and flesh  
 My mother gave me, my exploits bespake  
 The fox and not the lion :<sup>1</sup> every mesh

<sup>1</sup> " Fraud seems like a wolfish property, force like that of the lion,"—Cic. *De Officiis*, i. 23. Machiavelli describes the Emperor Severus " fierce as a lion, subtle as a fox, feared and revered by every one."—*Del Principe*, xix. And in that most Machiavellian chap. xviii, entitled " In what manner princes ought to keep faith," he says, " Therefore since it is necessary for a prince to assume the nature of some beast, he ought to take those of the lion and the fox ; for the lion is in danger of snares, and the fox of wolves : hence he should be a fox to discern the snare, and a lion to drive

That subtlety could weave, all arts that take  
 A tortuous course, I knew, and so contrived  
 That my renown through all the world they make.  
 When to that age I found myself arrived,  
 When in life's voyage each his sails should lower,  
 And gather in the lines;<sup>1</sup> of youth deprived, [80  
 What pleased me once no more possess'd the power.  
 In penitence my thoughts were now engaged:  
 Ah wretch! how had it help'd in trial's hour!  
 The prince of the new Pharisees enraged,  
 Was making war hard by the Lateran,<sup>2</sup>  
 Which not with Saracens nor Jews he waged,

away the wolf. They who keep wholly to the lion have no true understanding of the matter. A prudent prince therefore cannot, and ought not to keep his engagement, when the keeping it is to his prejudice, and the occasion for which he promised exists no longer."

<sup>1</sup> "As it hath been said by Cicero, in his treatise *De Senectute*, Natural death is like a port or haven for us after a long voyage; and even as the good mariner, when he draws near the port, lowers his sails, and enters it softly, with a gentle and cautious motion, so ought we to lower the sails of our worldly operations, and to return to God with all our understanding and heart, to the end we may reach the haven with all quietness and peace."—DANTE, *Convito*, p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> On the election of Cardinal Cajetan to the Popedom, under the name of Boniface VIII., after the abdication of Celestine V. by his advice, the two Cardinals Colonna objected both to the abdication and election as uncanonical, and published a manifesto to that effect. Boniface, the most vindictive of men, cited them to appear before him, and on their refusal excommunicated them,

For of his foes each was a Christian man ;  
 And none had taken part in Acre's fall ;  
 None to the Soldan's land for traffic ran.      90  
 Not for his office high and sacred call  
 Cared he ; nor for the cord my waist that tied,  
 Wont to attenuate those it girt withal.<sup>1</sup>  
 As in Soraete Constantine applied  
 To Sylvester to cure his leprosy,<sup>2</sup>  
 Even so to cure the fever of his pride,

and instigated the Orsini, their old rivals, to make war on them ; then, joining his arms with theirs, he published a crusade against the whole family. Unable to withstand so powerful a confederacy, the Colonnas were stripped of their fortresses one after another, and shut themselves up in Penestrino (Præneste) as their last refuge ; which, however, was deemed impregnable. Boniface, who had already destroyed their house near the Lateran, wishing to take their last stronghold, enticed Guido from his monastery, for the sake of obtaining his counsel, offering him absolution for his past sins, and for that which he was tempting him to commit. Guido's advice was that he should be liberal of promises, without regard to their performance. In pursuance of this advice, Boniface proposed a reconciliation, on which the Colonnas opened their gates : but he immediately broke his engagement, razed Penestrino to the ground, confiscated their estates, and drove them into exile.—G. VILLANI, viii. 23.

<sup>1</sup> See notes on Canto xvi. l. 103.

<sup>2</sup> Dante, in his treatise *De Monarchiá* says, " Certain persons, moreover, say, that the emperor Constantine, cleansed from leprosy by the intercession of Sylvester, then supreme pontiff, gave to the church the seat of the empire, namely, Rome, with many other imperial dignities." The fiction was, that Constantine called Sylvester, then shut up in a cave on mount Soraete, still called mount Saint Sylvester, to cure him of the leprosy ; and

This man, though my superior, ask'd of me.

He claim'd my counsel, and I held my peace,  
Because his words as drunken seem'd to be.

And then he said, 'Thy heart from doubt release;  
I now absolve thee: teach me how I may [100  
Cause Penestrino from the earth to cease.

Heaven, as thou know'st, is subject to my sway,  
To shut or open; hence the keys are twain,  
In which no charm for my precursor lay.'<sup>1</sup>

These weighty arguments my will constrain,  
For silence seem'd least suited to the time.

'Father, since thou dost wash me from the stain,'  
I said, 'of what is now a needful crime,  
Large promises, perform'd but scantily,'<sup>2</sup> 110  
Shall make thee triumph in thy seat sublime.'

that Constantine, having been baptized by the said saint, was cured. This is an improvement on the original fiction, referred to in the note on Canto xix. 117.

<sup>1</sup> Celestine V. See Canto iii. 60, and note. It was on December 12th, four months after his election, that the unfortunate Celestine abdicated the papacy; and on the 24th of the same month, his adviser, the wily Cajetan, was chosen, and took the name of Boniface VIII. Jealous of his predecessor, he caused him to be seized and imprisoned in the castle of Fumone, where he died in 1296, four years only before the date of Dante's vision. His death was not without some suspicion of foul play. He founded the order of Celestines, and was canonized by Clement V. —DU PIN, MOSHEIM, BUTLER, &c.

<sup>2</sup> "Few promises are best, and fair performance."

*The Island Princess*, act i. BEAUMONT & FLETCHER.

When I was dead St. Francis came for me ;  
 But thus cried one of the black cherubim ;  
 ‘ Bear him not hence ; treat me not wrongfully.  
 He must below to join my sufferers grim ;  
 Because he gave that counsel fraudulent.  
 Since which till now I have attended him.  
 None can absolve those who do not repent :  
 Now, to repent and will at once can’t be,  
 By contradiction which forbids assent.’ 120  
 O sorrow ! how I trembled when that he [find  
 Seized me and said, ‘ Thou scarcely thought’st to  
 Me a logician.’ Then he carried me  
 To Minos, who his tail eight times entwined,

—Of the two maxims the English proverb is certainly “best.” This will appear not only from a comparison of English and Italian history, but even from the particular instance in which the Italian maxim was acted upon with such success. For there were other consequences, which though not very remote, were not anticipated by his Holiness, nor by the worldly wisdom and sagacity of his astute monastic adviser. Provoked by the cruelty and perfidy of Boniface, the Colonnas joined the king of France in his quarrel against him ; without which he might, at least, have escaped captivity. And when the pontiff was made prisoner at Agnani, Nogaret, the agent of Philip, as a foreign adversary, would have treated him with some deference ; but by the exasperated Roman, Sciarra Colonna, he was insulted both with words and blows, and for three days compelled to endure hardships which threatened his life. After his rescue from their hands, his imperious soul, smarting as from an immedicable wound, could not brook the indignities to which he had been subjected, and he expired at Rome in a frenzy of rage and revenge.—See note on Canto xix. 53, and GIBBON, *Dec. and Fall*, lxix.

Which he with fury gnaw'd, round his hard sides,  
And said, ' Be this transgressor's doom assign'd  
There where the furtive fire the guilty hides.'

Hence, where thou seëst, my sad lot is cast ;  
And wandering thus array'd my grief abides."

When of his words we thus had heard the last, 130

The twisted flame its dolorous exit made,

Shaking its pointed horn. We onward pass'd

Up o'er the rock, until we saw display'd

From the other arch the fosse o'er which 'tis thrown,

In which the penalty by those is paid

Who load them with the guilt of discord sown.

## CANTO XXVIII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

The poets arrive in the ninth chasm, where the authors of scandal, schism, and discord, are seen with their limbs and bodies torn and mutilated. Among these are Mahomet, Ali, Piero da Medicina, Curio, Mosca, and Bertran de Borne.

Who, even in words least fetter'd,<sup>1</sup> could report  
 The wounds and blood I saw, in full detail ?  
 No tongue but must in such attempt come short.  
 Although repeating many times the tale.  
 For certainly, to comprehend a theme  
 So vast, both speech and thought alike would fail.  
 If now there stood in multitude extreme  
 All those who on Apulia's fertile soil  
 Have sadly pour'd their blood in copious stream,  
 By Romans slain,<sup>2</sup> and in that warlike toil      10

<sup>1</sup> Free from the restraints of rhyme and metre.

<sup>2</sup> "Trojani" was the reading of the old editions, in allusion to the war waged by Æneas and his companions.—*Æneid.* vii. &c. But some MSS. have "Romani," which Lombardi has admitted into the text. It is now generally considered the correct reading, as agreeing best with the facts both of history and geography.

Described by Livy, who no error shows,  
 When of the rings was piled that lofty spoil,<sup>1</sup>  
 With all who felt those lamentable blows  
 In fight with Robert Guiscard ;<sup>2</sup> and those same  
 Whose bones yet heap'd, at Ceperano<sup>3</sup> rose,

<sup>1</sup> Mago, Hannibal's brother, having described in the Carthaginian senate the victory at Cannæ, "to confirm the joyful tidings, ordered his attendants to pour out in the vestibule of the court the golden rings taken from the slain, and only worn by knights of the first rank: they made a heap so great that being measured they filled, according to some, a modius, and according to others, above a modius and a half."—LIVY, xxiii. 12. A modius is somewhat more than a peck English.

<sup>2</sup> While the heirs of Charlemagne were contending with each other, a new enemy, the Northmen, invaded France, and took possession of the province from them called Normandy. Some of them went into Italy, and finding it infested by the Huns and Saracens, took possession of certain lands in Romagna, where they maintained themselves with great courage. Tancred, one of these Norman princes, had several sons, among whom were William and Robert surnamed Guiscard (i. e. *the cunning*, or *the thief!*). They and their successors conquered Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily, and founded the kingdom of Naples. Robert Guiscard having in a dispute with his nephews, obtained the good offices of Pope Nicholas II., in return for these, and at the instance of Gregory VII., obliged the emperor Henry to leave Rome, and quelled a sedition of the Roman people. He died A.D. 1110.—MACHIAVELLI, *Hist. Fior.* i.; G. VILLANI, iv. 18.

<sup>3</sup> In 1265, at the instance of the Papal court, Charles of Anjou invaded Italy with a French army, to oppose the growing power of Manfred, king of the Two Sicilies. In February, 1266, the two armies met in the plain of Gradella, near Benevento. The battle was bloody: the Germans and Saracens were true to their ancient valour, but Manfred lost the battle and his life through

Where perfidy disgraced the Apulian name ;  
And those too, hard by Tagliacozzo,<sup>1</sup> where  
The old Alardo without arms o'ercame : [appear,  
Should some of these with limbs pierced through  
Some with limbs lopp'd, yet small proportion they  
To the foul sight of the ninth chasm would bear. [20  
A hog'shead with its mid-piece torn away,  
Or cante,<sup>2</sup> yawns not like the wretch I saw,

the cowardice or treachery of the Apulians. Such numbers fell in this battle that the bones are still heaped together at Ceperano.—SISMONDI, *Hist. Ital. Rep.* iv. pp. 94—96 ; G. VILLANI, vii. 9.

<sup>1</sup> A castle of the Abruzzo, near which was fought the battle which cost Conradin, son of Conrad, and nephew of Manfred, his crown and life. At sixteen years of age he arrived at Verona with 10,000 German cavalry. All the Ghibellines hastened to join him. The republics of Pisa and Sienna made immense sacrifices for him. The Romans opened their gates, and promised him aid. He entered the kingdom of his fathers by the Abruzzo, and met Charles of Anjou in the plain of Tagliacozzo, August 23d, 1268. A desperate battle ensued, and victory long remained doubtful. It is said, that by the advice of Alardo, a captain in Charles's army, Henry de Cozance, in the dress of Anjou, was sent with the van across a ford. They were quickly defeated and their leader slain. Two divisions of Charles's army were already destroyed, and the Germans, who deemed themselves victors, were dispersed in pursuit of the enemy, when Charles, who till then had not appeared in the field, fell on them with his body of reserve, and completely routed them. Conradin, when just about to embark for Sicily, was arrested, and Charles, without pity for his youth, esteem for his courage, or respect for his just rights, caused him to be beheaded in the market-place at Naples, October 26th, 1268.—SISMONDI, iv. 97 ; VILLANI, vii.

<sup>2</sup> *Mezzul* is the middle, or *centre-piece*, in which the tap is fixed,

Rent from the chin to where the wind finds way.  
 Between the legs, push'd through the gaping flaw,  
 An entrail hung; the midriff lay all bare  
 And that sad passage leading from the maw.  
 And he, as I intently view'd him there,  
 Eyed me, and with his hands unclosed his breast,  
 Saying, "Bear witness how myself I tear: 30  
 See now Mohammed maim'd!—Ali<sup>1</sup> distress'd  
 Before me walks, from chin to forelock cleft.<sup>2</sup>  
 Sowers of schism and scandal were the rest,

the barrel being laid on its side: *Lulla*, perhaps from *lunella*, because it is in the shape of a half-moon, the *cantle*, or piece on each side the mezzul.

<sup>1</sup> Ali Ben Abou Taleb, surnamed by the Arabs, Asad Allah, and by the Persians Shir-i-Khoda, the Lion of God, was the cousin-german, protégée, earliest disciple, and son-in-law of Mohammed, having married Fatima, the prophet's daughter. He became Caliph, A.D. 655, twenty-three years after Mohammed's death. A controversy concerning the rights of Abou Bekr, Omar, and Othman, who preceded him, and those of Ali and his descendants respectively, gave rise to the schism of the Sunnites and the Shiites, which still divides the Mohammedan world. Ali died A.D. 660.—D'HERBELOT, *Biblioth. Orient.*

<sup>2</sup> The amusement of the heroes of Northern Mythology, when they are not drinking in Valhalla—the hall of Odin—is thus described by Har in the *Prose Edda*:—"Every day, as soon as they have dressed themselves, they ride out into the court (or field), and there fight until they cut each other in pieces. This is their pastime; but, when meal-time approaches, they remount their steeds, and return to drink in Valhalla."—MALLETT'S *Northern Antiq.* p. 432. Bohm. This pastime of a heathenish heaven was transferred to "another place" before Dante's time; for in the

Yea, all you see here, in the world they've left :  
     Hence cloven thus. There is a demon who  
     Stands here behind us, grasping by the heft  
 A sword with which he severs us in two :  
     Thus cruelly doth he its edge distain,  
     And of this crowd the pangs of each renew,  
 When we have travell'd round the path of pain ; 40  
     Because our wounds heal ever and anon,  
     Ere we appear before the fiend again.  
 But who art thou that standest musing on  
     The rock, perchance delaying ere begin [done ?"  
     The pains, adjudged for crimes which thou hast  
 " Nor death hath seized him yet, nor aught of sin  
     Leads him to torment : " thus my chief replied :  
     " But that he here might full experience win,  
 I who am dead must be to him a guide, [50  
     From orb to orb, throughout the infernal bounds :  
     My words are true, in them thou may'st confide."  
 More than a hundred, when they heard those sounds,  
     Stood still within the fosse to gaze on me ;  
     Through wonder even forgetful of their wounds.  
 " Thou who perchance the sun may'st shortly see,

Monk of Evesham's *Vision* the author says, "In a very short space of time I saw those wretched beings destroyed by a hundred different kinds of torture, and soon afterwards restored again, and again reduced almost to nothing, and then again renewed."—  
 ROGER WENDOV. ii. 158.

To friar Dolein<sup>1</sup> then this warning bear,  
 If here he would not soon my follower be,  
 That corn be stored, lest snow besiege him there,  
 And victory to the Novarese convey ;  
 Which else for them no light achievement were.”  
 When, with one foot just raised to go away, [60  
 These words Mohammed spake, then on the ground  
 Forth stretch'd it and pass'd on without delay.  
 Another with his throat one ghastly wound,

<sup>1</sup> Friar Dolcino, or *Dolcinus*, was one of those who in Italy, and before the time of Wielif, rose up against the corruptions of the Papacy. In 1305 he was followed by great numbers of people, some of whom were noble and wealthy, to whom he inveighed against the Pope, cardinals, and other prelates, for not observing their duty and leading a Christian life. Being attacked by Renier, bishop of Vercelli, and the Inquisition, he, with about 3000 followers, betook himself to Monte Sebello, near Novara, in Piedmont, where they defended themselves with great resolution for more than two years; and were only taken at last when their supplies were cut off by a snow-storm, in 1307. He and “Sister Margaret,” after being toru with red-hot pincers, were, with many others of his followers, committed to the flames. He is charged with presumption, error, and immorality. Of course:—but “who drew the lion vanquish'd?” The only accounts of him which have come down to us are contained in the writings of those who belonged to the church that persecuted and destroyed him. Yet Landino describes him as a man of talent and learning, possessed of singular eloquence; and says, that both he and Margarita endured their fate with a firmness worthy of a better cause. Muratori calls him and his followers *Gazzari*, that is *Cathari*, or “Puritans.” We cannot help suspecting that, like many others to whom that name was applied, their doctrine and practice have both been misrepresented.

And nose cut off even from the brows, I view'd ;  
While on his head one ear alone was found.  
Gazing in wonder with the rest he stood :  
Then forth he stepp'd before them and laid bare  
His windpipe, outwardly all dyed with blood.  
He said, " O thou from damning trespass clear, 70  
Thee once did I above in Latium know,  
If not deceived by likeness all too near :  
Remember Pier of Medicina's woe,<sup>1</sup>  
When thou revisitest the lovely plain  
That from Verelli slopes to Marcabó :  
And there make thou to Fano's worthiest twain,  
To Guido and to Angiolello known,  
That if our foresight here is not all vain,  
Out of the vessel they will both be thrown,  
And by a felon tyrant's treacherous hand ; 80  
Them near Cattolica the waves will drown.<sup>2</sup>  
Between Majorca and the Cyprian strand,  
Never hath Neptune seen a deed so stain'd

<sup>1</sup> Piero de Medicina, in the territory of Bologna, had sown dissension between the families of Fano and Malatesta of Rimini (Lanciotto, the spouse of Francesca), in the course of which two most virtuous citizens of Fano, Guido del Cassero and Angiolello da Cagnano, were invited by Malatesta to an entertainment, on pretence of reconciliation, and by his orders were drowned on their passage from Fano to Rimini.

<sup>2</sup> It is here said that they will be *mazzarati*, tied hand and foot, put into a sack with a heavy stone, and thrown into the sea.

With guilt, by pirates, or the Argive band.  
 That traitor who but one eye hath retain'd,  
 And holds the land, of which there's one with me  
 Who from the sight would wish he had refrain'd :  
 With him to parley he will treacherously  
 Ask them, contriving that their vow or prayer  
 Needless against Focara's wind shall be."<sup>1</sup> 90  
 And I to him, "Now show me, and declare,  
 If to report thee thou my aid would'st seek,  
 Who from that sight hath reap'd such bitter care?"  
 Forthwith he laid his hand upon the cheek  
 Of one just by, and opening did display  
 The mouth, saying, "This is he, but cannot speak :  
 The exile this who quell'd the doubt that day  
 In Cæsar, saying that to those prepared  
 Misfortune ever waited on delay."<sup>2</sup>  
 O then to me how terrified appear'd 100

<sup>1</sup> Focara is a mountain of Romagna, from which the gusts of wind that sometimes blow are especially dangerous to navigators off that coast. It seems to have been peculiar to that locality; like the "Helm-wind" from Cross-Fell and the ridge to which it belongs, north-east of Penrith.

<sup>2</sup> Curio Scribonius, a tribune of the people, and intimate friend of Cæsar. He is charged with venality by Plutarch and Lucan. Ariminium (*Rimini*) is the land which he had better never have seen; for it was there that he gave to Cæsar, when hesitating what course to take, the counsel which determined him to prosecute the civil war. "Renounce delays: to wait always injures those who are prepared." (*Phars.* i. 281).

Curio, who did that daring counsel try ; [shared.  
And whose rash tongue had from his throat been  
And one with hands cut off, so held on high  
Through the brown air the stumps, that all his face  
With blood was render'd foul ; and this his cry ;  
“ Remember Mosca and his counsel trace,  
‘ The deed accomplish'd has an end ;’ that day  
The seed of mischief to the Tuscan race.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The first division that arose in Florence was occasioned by his advice, A.D. 1215. The Buondelmonte and Uberti were among the most powerful of its families ; and next to these the Amidei and Donati. A rich widow lady of the Donati had a daughter of great beauty, whom she had resolved to marry to Messer Buondelmonte, a young cavalier, the head of the family. This design she had delayed to mention, when she was much mortified at hearing that he was to marry a young lady of the Amidei family. But hoping to be able, with her daughter's beauty, to break this engagement, as she saw him one day come towards her house, she went down with her daughter to meet him ; and opening the gate as he was passing, said, she could not indeed but congratulate him on his intended marriage, but that she had hoped that her daughter, whom she now presented to him, would have been the bride. The rare beauty of the damsel, her rank, and her fortune, which was not inferior to that of the person he had chosen, shook his resolution, and induced him to violate his engagement ; and without more ado he married her. When this was known, the Amidei and Uberti, who were nearly allied, being with their friends assembled in great indignation, it was concluded that the injury could only be expiated by the death of the offender. Some, indeed, objected on account of the evils which might follow ; but Mosca Lamberti replied, that he who considered things too nicely never determined anything ; and quoted the well-known maxim (*Cosa fatta, Capo hà*), “The thing accomplished is done

I answer'd, "Thy own tribe too did it slay."  
 Whence he, accumulating dole on dole,           110  
 As one distress'd and madden'd went his way.  
 But I remain'd, that I might see the whole  
 Of that same troop, and saw what I might fear  
 Without more proof to make relation sole;  
 Did not the mind her inward witness bear,  
 That good companion who the man sets free,  
 Under the breastplate of a conscience clear.  
 I surely saw, and yet I seem to see,  
 A headless trunk which on its way did go,  
 As did the rest of that sad company:           120  
 And by the hair the sever'd head hung low,  
 Held by the hand it dangled lantern-wise.<sup>1</sup>

with." Upon this the perpetration of the murder was entrusted to him and certain others. On Easter morning they concealed themselves in the house of one of the Amidei between the Old Bridge and St. Stephen's. Their victim was presently seen passing the river on a white horse, and at the foot of the bridge, under the statue of Mars, was attacked by them and slain. This murder divided the whole city, part siding with the Buondelmonti and part with the Uberti.—MACHIAVEL. *Hist. Fior.* ii.

<sup>1</sup> The punishment of Bertran was probably suggested by the fiction, which Dante must have heard, if he visited Paris, respecting the martyrdom of St. Denis, who, after his head was cut off, carried it under his arm, like a hat; and thus walked from Paris to his grave! However the legend may have originated, its popular prevalence may be illustrated by an anecdote, related by Lord Brougham in connexion with the Reign of Terror. Camille Desmoulins might have escaped the proscription which involved

It gazed on us, exclaiming, "Ah, me! woe!"<sup>1</sup>  
 Himself a lamp unto himself supplies;  
 And two he was in one, and one in two:  
 But *how*, HE knows whose judgments thus chastise!  
 Close to the bridge's foot he straightway drew,  
 And with his outstretch'd arm rear'd high the head,  
 That nearer to us might his words be too.  
 "See now this grievous punishment," he said; 130  
 "See if so great as this aught else can be:  
 Thou who yet breathing visitest the dead.  
 And that thou may'st some tidings bear of me,  
 Bertran de Borne am I, let it be known,  
 Who counsell'd the young king injuriously."<sup>2</sup>

Danton and his party, had he not offended St. Just. "But a sarcastic expression in which he indulged, at the expense of that vain and remorseless fanatic, sealed his doom. St. Just was always puffed up with his consciousness of self-importance, and showed this so plainly in his demeanour that Camille said, he 'carried his head like the holy sacrament (*le saint sacrement*).' On the jest, which has the merit of being a very picturesque description of the subject, being reported to him, 'And I,' said St. Just, 'will make him carry his head (*à la St. Denis*) like St. Denis.'"—*Works* of LORD BROUGHAM, vol. v. pp. 77, 78.

<sup>1</sup> In the Arabian tale of "The Grecian king and the physician Douban," the severed head of the physician converses with the king, answers his questions, and reproaches him with his tyranny.

<sup>2</sup> Bertran de Born, Viscompte de Hautfort in Guienne, was distinguished both as a troubadour and a warrior. He was one of the most able, accomplished, and unprincipled men of his time. He stirred up the sons of Henry II. of England to rebel against their kind and indulgent father: but as often as they made war

I put rebellion 'twixt the sire and son :

on him, he conquered and forgave them. During one of these revolts, prince Henry was taken ill, and soon expired, expressing in his dying moments the deepest contrition for his undutiful conduct. In the prosecution of the war by the injured and incensed father, Bertran de Born, the soul of the conspiracy, and the seducer of his children, fell into his hands. Never had enemy been more persevering, insidious, or dangerous : never had vassal so outraged his liege lord, or in such a variety of ways ; for being a poet as well as knight, he had mercilessly satirized Henry in productions that were popular wherever the Langue d'Oc was understood. All men concluded that he must die ; and Henry himself said so. Bertran was brought into his presence to hear his doom. The king taunted him with having boasted that he had so much wit in reserve as never to have occasion to use one half of it ; and told him that he was now in a plight in which the whole of his wit would not serve him. The troubadour acknowledged that he had made the boast, and that not without truth and reason. "And I," said the king, "I think thou hast lost thy wits." "Yes, sire," Bertran answered mournfully, "I lost them that day the valiant young king died :—then indeed I lost my wits, my senses, and all wisdom." At this allusion to his son the king burst into tears, and nearly swooned. When he came to himself his vengeance had departed from him. "Sir Bertran!" said he, "Sir Bertran! thou mightest well lose thy wits because of my son, for he loved thee more than any other man on earth ; and I, for love of him, give thee thy life, thy property, thy castle." Bertran at length assumed the habit of a Cistercian monk, and retired to a monastery, where he died. But this could not save him from the terrible retribution inflicted by the poet on his name and memory, for stirring up the son to unnatural war against the sire.—*Pict. Hist. Eng.* i. iii. 1 ; *SISMONDI*, iv. Henry, eldest son of Henry II., was crowned in his father's lifetime, on his marriage with Margaret of France, in 1173 ; and was usually called "the young king," although he died before his father in 1183. In old charters, &c., Henry I. is called *Rex Henricus vetus* ; Henry II.

Achitophel not more maliciously  
Spurr'd Absalom against King David on.<sup>1</sup>  
For parting thus the ties of family,  
I bear my brain divided from its source 140  
That in this trunk inhabits : thus in me  
The law of retribution has its course."<sup>2</sup>

is called *Rex Henricus senior* ; and his eldest son *Rex Henricus junior*.—POLLOCK.

<sup>1</sup> 2 *Sam.* xvii. 1—4.

<sup>2</sup> *Exod.* xxi. 24, 25. *Lex talionis* : 2d of the Roman xii. tables. The evil councillor who separated the family from its head, is doomed, by a just retribution, to walk with his own head severed from his body.

## CANTO XXIX.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Passing by Geri del Bello, a relative of Dante, the poets leave the ninth gulf and proceed to the bridge which overlooks the last chasm of Malebolgè, where the groans and lamentations of the forgers and alchemists reach them from below. They descend into the chasm, and then see them tortured with various and horrible diseases and plagues. Among them Dante observes and converses with Grifolino and Capocchio.

WITH the vast crowd and varied forms of pain  
 Which I had seen, mine eyes inebriate were :  
 And there still weeping wish'd they to remain,  
 But "Wherefore dost thou," Virgil cried, "so stare?  
 Why is thy downward look protracted so  
 Among the mournful spectres mangled there?  
 At the other chasms thou hast not done so : know,  
 If thou would'st count them, twenty miles complete  
 And two besides, the valley winds below.  
 Already is the moon beneath our feet.<sup>1</sup>                      10

<sup>1</sup> Hence, as the moon was then at full, the sun must have been on the meridian, consequently it was noonday.



That him thou saw'st not there, and therefore he  
 Departed." "O my guide," then did I say, [30  
 "His violent death, yet unavenged<sup>1</sup> by those  
 Who shared the shame, has made him go away  
 In high disdain, as his behaviour shows,  
 To me not speaking; so at least I thought:  
 Hence I the more compassionate his woes."  
 Thus on we talk'd, till from the rock we caught  
 Of the next valley the first glance, which would,  
 Were more light there, its depths to view have  
 brought.

When we right over the last cloister stood 40  
 Of Malebolgè, so that thence the freres<sup>2</sup>  
 Thereto belonging might by us be view'd,  
 The varied lamentations pierced like spears, [steep'd;  
 Whose barb'd and thrilling points compassion  
 At which I cover'd with both hands mine ears.  
 Were there from each Valdichian pest-house<sup>3</sup> reap'd

<sup>1</sup> Thirty years after the murder, it was retaliated upon the Sacketti by the nephews of Geri del Bello.

<sup>2</sup> Having called the place a cloister, he carries on the allusion by calling its inhabitants *Conversì*, lay-brethren of a monastery. No great compliment, we fancy, to the monastic establishments of that age.

<sup>3</sup> The marshes of Chiana (*Clusine*), the valley of the Chiana (*Clanis*), a remarkably sluggish river. Formerly the autumn heats rendered its waters unwholesome: but by a canal which now passes through it, and a system of drainage established by Leopold II. A.D. 1791, this evil has been remedied. The drai -

Their dolours from July even to September,  
 And with Maremma's<sup>1</sup> and Sardinia's heap'd  
 Together in one fosse, such I remember  
 The scene was here, and so its vapour stank, 50  
 As from the reek of many a rotten member.<sup>2</sup>  
 We now descended on the further bank  
 Of the long rock, below at the left hand :  
 And there our downward prospect of the rank  
 Foul deep was better, where with high command  
 The minister of the Almighty Sire,  
 Unerring Justice, punishes the band  
 Of forgers here enroll'd. Not pain more dire  
 Was in Ægina seen when all infirm  
 The people grew ; and ready to expire, 60  
 From the fell air, even to the little worm,  
 All creatures droop'd. And then the antique race  
 (For this is what the poets all affirm)  
 Restored, might their descent from emmets trace.<sup>3</sup>

age of the Maremma was also undertaken about thirty years since by the Tuscan government, and that district rendered healthy and productive.

<sup>1</sup> See Canto xxv. 19, note.

<sup>2</sup> Compare this description with Milton's *Par. Lost*, xi. 477—493.

<sup>3</sup> A pestilence having dispeopled the isle of Ægina, it is fabled that the ants inhabiting an ancient oak were changed into a race of men called Myrmidons:—Myrmidones, ἀ μυρμηξ, *formica*.—OVID. *Metam.* vii. 523—655.

Thus, through that gloomy vale, to us were shown  
 The languid spirits heap'd along the place :  
 Athwart each other, on his belly one,  
 And one supine, they lay ; some creeping there  
 With painful effort thus their pathway won.  
 Looking and listening to the sick we were,       70  
 And moving step by step, all converse stopp'd ;  
 They their own persons had no power to rear.  
 I saw two sit, by mutual effort propp'd,  
 As pan props pan, when warm'd they are to be.  
 With spotted scabs from head to foot bedropp'd  
 Were they : and curry-comb I ne'er did see  
 Plyed by a groom for whom his lord was waiting,  
 Nor by one watching late unwillingly,  
 So quick as each of these with sharpest grating,  
 Through pruriency of itch himself assails,       80  
 Which yet with all their pains knew no abating :  
 As from the bream the knife strips off the scales,  
 Or other fish with mail of larger size,  
 So each of these was torn with his own nails.  
 To one of them then thus my leader cries :  
 " O thou that with thy fingers dost unmail thee,  
 Whose hand its task as if with pincers plies ;  
 Tell me, as thou would'st have their toil avail thee,  
 Is any Latin 'mongst you there within ?  
 So may thy nails suffice and never fail thee." 90

“We both are Latins, tortured thus for sin,  
Whom here thou seest,” that one weeping sigh’d :  
“But who art thou that would’st an answer win  
From us?”—“I come with one,” the bard replied,  
“Still living, downward o’er each rocky mound ;  
To show him hell’s abyss, I am his guide.”  
Their mutual prop was broken, as the sound  
They heard, and each one trembling turn’d to me ;  
With others on whose ears the words rebound.  
And my good guide address’d me cordially,     100  
And said, “Now tell them all that thou would’st say.”  
“That nothing e’er may steal your memory,”  
I thus began, when he had turn’d away,  
“From human minds on earth, but that it there  
May bloom while many a summer sheds its ray,  
Inform me who, and of what place ye are :  
Nor let your foul and loathsome punishment  
Deter you, but your history now declare.”  
One answer’d, “I was of Arezzo,<sup>1</sup> sent

<sup>1</sup> Griffolino of Arezzo, a professor of Alchemy, the craft which Chaucer in the *Chanones Yemannes Tale*, and Ben Jonson in *The Alchemist*, have so humorously exposed and ridiculed. Griffolino says that it was in jest that he promised to instruct in the art of flying Albero, a natural son of the Bishop of Siena, from whom he had received large sums. But though he might trifle, and laugh in his sleeve at the simplicity of his pupil, he found the consequences no joke. Unable to perform his promise, he was accused to the bishop as a necromancer, and on conviction

By Albergo of Siena's order to 110  
 The fire ; but that for which I underwent  
 Such death brought me not here. To him, 'tis true,  
 I said in jest I through the air could fly :  
 And he, who much desired and little knew,  
 Wish'd me to teach him, and because that I  
 Made him no Dædalus, on the burning pile  
 By his reputed sire he made me die.  
 But in the last chasm of the ten meanwhile,  
 For that I practised alchemy on earth,  
 Minos condemn'd me ; him no arts beguile." 120  
 I to the bard ; " Had ever nation birth  
 That like Siena to be vain was prone ?  
 Sure not even France herself with all her mirth."  
 Then answer'd me that other leprous one,  
 " Strieca except from them, his worth compute  
 By whom economy so well was known ;  
 And Nicolo who of the spicy fruit,  
 The clove's rich custom was the first to hit,  
 Within that garden where such seed takes root :  
 Also that band in which, a comrade fit, 130  
 Caecia d'Ascian his vines and forest spent,  
 And Abbagliato so display'd his wit.<sup>1</sup>

delivered to the Secular arm, by the tender mercies of a Church which *never sheds blood!*

<sup>1</sup> The exception is ironical: these four persons belonged to a society of rich and prodigal young men in Siena, called *Il brigatu*

Wouldst know who 'gainst the Sienese hath lent  
Thee thus his aid ? turn thy keen eye on me ;  
So from this face an answer will be sent.  
That I'm Capocchio's shade thou then wilt see,  
Who metals falsified with art alchymic :  
Thou'lt call to mind, if I deem right of thee,  
That I was Nature's most accomplish'd mimic."<sup>1</sup>

*godereccia*, "the joyous brigade." They sold their estates, built a palace, and made it their paradise : they shod their horses with silver, and forbade their servants picking up a shoe if it dropped off ; and thus they expended 200,000 florins in twenty months. "La costuma ricca," a costly process of roasting pheasants and capons at fires fed with cloves, was invented by Nicolo. The *Ottimo*, a commentary by several writers, some of whom lived in the age of Dante, and one of whom, at least, was a Florentine, says that Abbagliato "was poor," but the charm of his wit was such that it was accepted as a sufficient contribution for his share of the expenses. The result was what might have been foreseen : they were all brought to extreme and unpitied poverty.

<sup>1</sup> Capocchio of Siena, said to have been at one time a companion and fellow-student of Dante in natural philosophy, and afterwards to have been an adept in the occult sciences. He was burnt at Siena for alchemy.

## CANTO XXX.

## THE ARGUMENT.

In the same gulf three other kinds of impostors are punished with horrible diseases; those who have personated others, debasers of the current coin, and those who have abused the gift of speech by employing it to deceive. The first are represented by Gianni Schicchi, the second by Adamo of Brescia, and the third by Potiphar's wife and the Greek Sinon. Gianni Schicchi seizes on the alchemist Capocchio. The Aretine, Griffolino, in dread of Myrrha, describes his fellow-sufferers to the two poets: they converse with Adamo, who quarrels with Sinon; and Dante is rebuked by Virgil for pausing to listen to their mutual abuse.

WHEN Juno's breast with fierce resentment glow'd  
 Against the Theban blood for Semelè,<sup>1</sup>  
 As formerly from time to time she show'd,  
 Then Athamas became so mad that he

<sup>1</sup> One of the daughters of Cadmus and Hermione (Canto xxv. 97, note) beloved by Jupiter. Juno, borrowing Ate's girdle, assumed the form of Beroë, the nurse of Semelè, whom she persuaded to make a request which proved fatal. Jupiter having sworn by Styx to grant whatever she might ask, and unable to persuade her to retract the rash request, came to her with the same majesty with which he approached Juno; and Semelè perished through the splendour which her mortal nature could not endure.

Who his two infant sons and wife descried,  
 As on each hand conducting them walk'd she,<sup>1</sup>  
 "Spread we the nets that I may take," he cried,  
 "The lioness and whelps here at the pass;"<sup>2</sup>  
 And stretching his remorseless talons wide,  
 Seized one, Learchus named, and him, alas! 10  
 Whirl'd round and round, then dash'd against a  
 And with that other son of Athamas [stone :  
 She plunged into the wave. When Troy, o'erthrown  
 From her high place by adverse fortune, burn'd,  
 So that both king and kingdom were undone,  
 Sad Hecuba, a wretched captive, mourn'd :  
 But when o'er dead Polyxena she hung,  
 And when the sorrowing mother saw unurn'd  
 Her Polydore, on the rude sea-beach flung,

<sup>1</sup> Athamas king of Thebes, a son of Æolus, married Ino a daughter of Cadmus (Canto xxv. 97, note), by whom he had two sons, Learchus and Melicerta. Juno sent the fury Tisiphone to the house of Athamas, who, seized with sudden madness, mistook Ino for a lioness, and her two children for whelps; and snatching Learchus from her, killed him by dashing him against a wall. Ino fled, and, with Melicerta in her arms, leaped from a high rock into the sea, and became a sea-goddess; after which Athamas recovered his senses.—OVID. *Metam.* iv. 467; *Fast.* vi. 459.

<sup>2</sup> "At once the son of Æolus, in the midst of the palace raging,  
 'Heigho, comrades,' exclaim'd, 'stretch out the nets in these  
 woodlands,

Here now appear'd a lioness, with her two young ones,'" &c.

OVID. *Metam.* iv. 511.

Bereft of sense she bark'd as barks the hound, 20  
 So much the force of grief her mind had wrung.<sup>1</sup>  
 But never furies were so cruel found  
 In any, nor of Thebes, nor those of Troy,<sup>2</sup>  
 Brute beasts, much less the limbs of men to wound,  
 As those in two pale naked shades whom I  
 Saw gnashing run, as doth a hog escape,  
 When he is just excluded from the sty.  
 One overtook Capocchio, on the nape  
 Of the neck bit him, and then dragging made  
 Along the rugged ground his belly scrape. 30  
 Then cried the Aretine<sup>3</sup> who trembling stay'd,  
 "That goblin is Gian' Schicchi,<sup>4</sup> on his track  
 In havock thus his fury is display'd."  
 "So may that other shade not rend thy back,

<sup>1</sup> Hecuba, having revenged on Polymnestor the murder of her son Polydore (Canto xiii. 46, note), being pursued by some of his Thracian attendants, attempted to speak, but could only bark. Hence the promontory of the Thracian Chersonesus, where she was buried, was called Cynosséma (Dog's tomb), which became a sea-mark.—EURIPIDES, *Hecuba*; OVID. *Metam.* xiii. 399.

<sup>2</sup> Those which impelled Athamas at Thebes, and Hecuba of Troy.

<sup>3</sup> Griffolino of Arezzo: Canto xxix. 109.

<sup>4</sup> Gianni Schicchi, of the Cavalcanti family, was of cadaverous aspect, and a ready mimic. Buoso Donati was taken ill and died in the house of a relative, Simon, who, concealing his death (which some accuse him of having caused), had the body removed, and employed Schicchi to personate the deceased, and sign a will making Simon his heir. Schicchi was rewarded with a beautiful and valuable mare, here called "La donna della torma."—LANDINO.

As thou grudge not to say whose it may be,"  
To him I said, "ere yet from hence it pack."  
"That is the antique soul," he answer'd me,  
"Of wicked Myrrha,<sup>1</sup> who her sire's became  
Beyond the bounds of rightful love, and she,  
Feigning herself another, so did frame 40  
Her purpose that his bed she foully shared.  
So he who there departs, an equal blame,  
To gain the lady of the horse-troop, dared :  
Buoso Donati's counterfeit was he,  
And sign'd and seal'd the fraudulent will prepared."  
When that wild pair whom I so eagerly  
Gazed at had pass'd away, I turn'd mine eyes  
The rest of those unfortunates to see.  
And one I saw shaped like a lute in guise,<sup>2</sup>  
Had but the groin been sever'd at that end 50  
Where in the human form it joins the thighs.  
The grievous dropsy, which did so distend

<sup>1</sup> Daughter of Cinyras king of Cyprus, and mother of Adonis. Her story is told by Ovid, *Metam.* x. 298, and has been dramatized by Alfieri. According to the former, the myrrh-tree of Arabia, into which she was changed, and which bears her name, still weeps fragrant tears for her crime and fate.

<sup>2</sup> We are not aware of any earlier notice of the lute than this. It is a stringed instrument of music, with frets or lines across the neck at proper distances, eight in number, answering to the letters in the table, or tablature of notes. It formed one of the varieties of the Cithara, and was in general use till the end of the seventeenth century.

That all proportion face and paunch defy,—  
 Nor with his limbs would that ill-moisture blend,—  
 Foreed him to hold his lips apart all dry,  
 Even like the hectic wretch who gasps for thirst,  
 One towards the chin, the other curl'd on high.  
 "O ye who even in this world accurst,  
 I know not wherefore, no affliction have,"  
 He thus began, "Behold, and hear rehearsed 60  
 What Ser Adamo suffers in this cave.<sup>1</sup>  
 Alive I had enough of all at will,  
 And now, alas! one drop of water crave.  
 The brooks which downward o'er each verdant hill  
 Of Casentino to the Arno flow,<sup>2</sup>  
 Making their channels fresh and soft, are still  
 Always before mine eyes, nor vainly so :  
 For more their image dries me up than this  
 Disease which in my unflesh'd checks I show.  
 Now from the place in which I did amiss 70  
 Derives avenging Justice a supply  
 Of means to augment my sighs in hell's abyss.

<sup>1</sup> A native of Breseia of great skill in metallurgy. He was employed by the brothers Guido, Alessandro, and Aghinolfo, lords of Romena, to debase and falsify the coin called "Lega de Batista," "The Baptist's mark," from its having the head of John the Baptist stamped upon it.

<sup>2</sup> Casentino is the upper valley of the Arno, above Arezzo, remarkable for its delightful scenery and variegated beauty.

There, in Romena, did I falsify  
The coin that bears the Baptist on its front,  
For which I left my body burnt on high.  
But could I see tormented here the Count  
Guido, or Alessandro,<sup>1</sup> or their brother,  
I would not change the sight for Branda's fount.<sup>2</sup>  
One is already here within, I gather, [80  
If the mad spectres wandering round speak true.  
What boots it me, with limbs bound by this tether?  
Were I but just so light as to pass through  
An inch in every hundred years, my wrath  
In search of him already midst this crew  
Had urged me to set forward on the path;  
Although eleven miles winding through the waste,

<sup>1</sup> Counts Aghinolfo and Alessandro de' Guidi. See next note.

<sup>2</sup> It is now generally known that the fountain here alluded to is not that which gives name to the Porta Branda at Siena, but the Fonte Branda just under the Castle of Romena, now dismantled, but formerly the stronghold of the Counti Guidi, to whom belonged the surrounding territory of Romena. The lords of that castle and territory had prompted Adamo to commit the offence for which his body was burned to ashes, amidst the scene of beauty and in view of the fountain which he describes. The fountain has been dried up, the supply of water having been cut off by an earthquake, as if to typify the coiner's fate; but with such a fountain, full and flowing in the time of Dante on the very site of the tragedy, the introduction of another, forty or fifty miles from the scene, is quite superfluous and improbable. See an interesting article on the subject in the *Athenæum*, No. 1601, p. 19, by H. C. Barlow, Esq., M.D., of Newington Butts.

Nor less than half a mile of breadth it hath.  
 By them have I among this tribe been placed ;  
 By them induced I stamp'd the florin fair,<sup>1</sup>  
 But with three carats of alloy debased."<sup>2</sup> 90  
 I answer'd, "Who are that unhappy pair  
 Who smoke like a wet hand in winter's chill,  
 Lying so close against thy right side there ?"  
 "I found them here, and since that hour of ill  
 That rain'd me down," he said, "this depth extreme,  
 They have not turn'd, and I believe, ne'er will.  
 Joseph's calumniatress one would seem ;

<sup>1</sup> The golden florin of Florence, whence it had its name. The year 1252, remembered by the Florentines as a period of great success, was named "The year of victories." About this time they first coined the golden florin of twenty-four carats, in weight a drachm, bearing the impression of John the Baptist their patron, and a lily, the device of their city (see note p. 310). It was considered the finest coin in Europe. Their most valuable coinage previously was of silver.—VILLANI, vi. 54. The florin was known in England in Chaucer's time:—"For that the florens ben so faire and bright."—*Perdonners Tale*, 450. The English noble of Edward III., A.D. 1314, corresponded with it in value, namely, 6s. 8d.—*Pict. Hist. Eng.* i. 537.

<sup>2</sup> Κερας, a horn; its diminutive κερατιον signifies the fruit of the κερατεια, carob-tree, which is corniculated, and in Syria the common food of swine. Hence Karat, Carat, a small weight, the twenty-fourth part of the marc or  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. in France; used for gold and jewels; but it varied greatly in different countries. It now merely signifies the twenty-fourth part of gold or gold alloy. If such a weight be all gold, it is said to be twenty-four carats fine; if one third only be gold, it is eight carats fine.

The other Sinon, that false Greek from Troy.<sup>1</sup>  
Sharp fever makes them reek so dense a steam."  
And one of them so much these words annoy 100  
They prompt him—haply for his tarnish'd name—  
His fist in blows on that hard paunch to employ :  
From thence a sound as from a drum there came.  
With arm that not less hard appear'd to be  
Adamo struck his face, and with the same  
Exclaim'd, "Although the power is gone from me  
To move these limbs, whose weight is now so vast,  
I have an arm for such employment free."  
"Not ready thus was that strong arm thou hast,"  
He answer'd, "when thou wentest to the fire; 110  
But readier still when thou a coiner wast."  
Th' hydropic said; "In this thou art no liar :  
But not so true the witness thou didst bear  
At Troy, to those who did the truth require."  
"If I spake falsely, thou," he said, "'tis clear,  
Didst falsely coin : one fault was mine : for more  
Than any other demon thou art here."

<sup>1</sup> He induced the Trojans to admit the wooden horse. See Canto xxvi. l. 60, note; and *Æneid.* ii. 195.—

"With such devices and perjured subtlety of Sinon,  
The thing was credited; and by frauds deceived and tears  
overcome  
Were they, whom neither Diomede, nor Achilles of Larissa,  
Nor ten years of war, nor a thousand ships could conquer."

“Remember, perjured one, the horse that bore,”  
 He of the swell’d paunch said, “the troop accurst ;  
 And for thy grief ’tis known the whole world o’er.”  
 “Thy torment be,” the Greek replied, “that thirst  
 That cracks thy tongue, the paunch before thy view  
 In which thou hast the fetid waters nursed.”

The coiner said, “As it was wont to do,  
 Thy mouth gapes wide to let thy slander pass.  
 Yet if I thirst, I’m fill’d with water too :

But thou art parch’d, pain racks thy head, alas !  
 And of entreaty thou few words would’st need,  
 To make thee lick Narcissus’ looking glass.”<sup>1</sup>

I stood intent to hear, as they proceed : 130

When thus my leader said ; “A little more,  
 And I shall quarrel with thee ; so take heed.”

I towards him, when I caught his angry lore,  
 Turn’d with such shame that through my memory  
 Its whirling sweep even yet afflicts me sore.

As one who dreams of his own injury,

<sup>1</sup> “Ugly as thou art, thy parching thirst would induce thee without reluctance to apply thy tongue to the clear mirror-fountain of Narcissus.” Narcissus, a beautiful youth, son of Cephisus and Liriope, born at Thespiæ in Bœotia, became enamoured of his own shy shadowy image, reflected in a fountain, supposing it to be the nymph of the place, for whose voice he mistook the echo of his own. Disappointed in his passion, he pined away and died, and was changed into the flower that bears his name.—OVID. *Metam.* iii. 346.

And wishes it were but a dream confused,  
Desires that what already is would be,  
Even thus was I; my tongue all speech refused.

I wish'd to excuse myself, yet all the while, 140  
Although I knew it not, I stood excused.

“Thou would less shame than thine has been assoil  
From greater fault;” my teacher then replied;

“Discharge all grief then, which thy peace would  
And think that I am always at thy side, [spoil;  
Thyself should'st thou in future ever find

Where neighbours in such wrangling strife divide;  
The wish to listen shows a vulgar mind.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Addison blames the description given in *Paradise Lost* of the grotesque humours of the fiends — of Satan's “derision” and Belial's “gamesome mood” — as they “stood scoffing” at their opponents. — *Spectator*, No. 279. Lord Brougham remarks, “The dialogue of mutual sarcasm between Adam and Sinon in the *Inferno* would have given the same offence to the critic; and the poet seems as if conscious of the offence he was offering to squeamish persons, when he makes Virgil chide him for listening to such ribaldry.” — *Works*, vol. v. p. 81, and note.

## CANTO XXXI.

## THE ARGUMENT.

The poets, following the sound of a loud horn, approach the ninth circle, which from a distance appears to be surrounded with lofty towers: but Virgil informs his companion that these are giants. Having surveyed Nimrod and Ephialtes, they reach Antæus, who at the request of Virgil takes the two poets in his arms, and stooping, places them in the bottom of the ninth circle, where traitors receive their punishment.

THE very tongue that first had made the wound,  
 So that each cheek of mine was crimson'd o'er,  
 The medicine offer'd now to make me sound;  
 The lance Achilles and his father bore  
 Could in like manner, I have heard, bestow  
 Pain first, and afterwards to health restore.<sup>1</sup>  
 We turn'd our backs upon the vale of woe,

<sup>1</sup> Telephus, king of Mysia, was wounded severely by Achilles, and was informed by the oracle, that he alone who had inflicted the wound could cure it. Achilles was applied to, and the rust which he scraped from the point of his spear gave immediate relief. According to another account, the cure was effected by applying the herb *Linostosis* or *Parthenion*, discovered by Achilles as a remedy for wounds, and thence called *Achilleos*.—PLINY, xxv. 5; OVID. *Rem. Amor.* 47.

Up o'er the bank which it encircled round,  
Nor spake one word as we across it go: [10  
There less than night and less than day we found,  
Hence onward stretch'd my view but little space:  
But from a horn I heard so dread a sound  
That thunder seem'd but tame. I sought to trace  
Backward the pathway whence that sound was  
Straining my eyes intently to one place. [borne,  
So terrible a blast Orlando's horn  
Blew not at that sad rout when Charlemagne  
From his high saintly enterprize was torn.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the Northern mythology, the giant Heimdall is the warder of the gods, and has a horn called the Gjallar-horn, which is heard throughout the universe.—MALLETT'S *North. Ant.* p. 421. Orlando is said to have won this horn from the giant Jotmund.—WARTON'S *Hist. Eng. Poet.* i. iii. 132. In Boiardo's *Orlando Inamorato*, and the romance poem of *Aspramonte*, Orlando is said to have taken it from the giant Almontes, together with his armour, horse and sword.

Turpin, in describing the battle of Roncesvalles, in which Orlando was sorely wounded, and all the Christians near him were slain, says:—"He now blew a loud blast with his horn, to summon any Christian concealed in the adjacent woods to his assistance, or to recall his friends beyond the pass. This horn was endowed with such power that all other horns were split by its sound; and it is said, that Orlando at that time blew it with such vehemence that he burst the veins and nerves of his neck. The sound reached the ears of the king, who lay encamped in the valley still called by his name, about eight miles from Ronceval, towards Gascony. Charlemagne would have flown to his succour, had he not been prevented by Ganalon."—*Hist.* xxi—xxx.

Not long with head turn'd that way I remain,  
 Ere I, methought, saw many lofty towers.      20  
 "Master," I said; "what land this is explain."  
 And he to me; "Because the gloom that lowers,  
 Thy sight cannot through such a distance rive,  
 It leads astray imagination's powers.  
 Thou'lt clearly see, when thither we arrive,  
 How much deception sense afar must brook;  
 Therefore to reach a little further strive."  
 Then tenderly me by the hand he took,  
 And said, "Before we further onward go,  
 That the reality less strange may look,      30  
 That yonder are not towers but giants, know.  
 And in the pit around the bank they are,  
 Up to the navel, hiding all below."  
 As when around the fog begins to clear,  
 We by degrees—our sight no more misled—  
 Trace what the mist had hid condensed in air,  
 Piercing the thick dark breeze my error fled,  
 While nearing now the shore ourselves we found;  
 And then pale fear came o'er me in its stead.  
 As Montereccion with a circling round      40  
 Of turrets crown'd, at distance we desery,<sup>1</sup>  
 Even so the shore which those black depths  
 surround

<sup>1</sup> The ruins of Montereccion and its towers are still visible.

The horrible giants tower'd above on high,<sup>1</sup>  
    With half length figure each, whom Jupiter  
    Still threatens when he thunders from the sky.  
And then I saw the face of some one there,  
    Shoulders, and breast, and of the groin great part,  
    And both arms hanging down the sides appear.  
Nature, indeed, when she declined the art  
    Of forming such as these, did what was meet, 50  
    Taking from War these vassals grim and swart.  
And if the elephant and whale so great  
    Repent her not, who ponders as he ought  
    Holds her herein more just and more discreet :  
For where there are intelligence and thought,  
    Join'd to malevolence and equal might,  
    Thereto resistance will avail us nought.  
To me his visage seem'd in breadth and height  
    As doth St. Peter's pine at Rome appear,<sup>2</sup>  
    And all the other parts as massive quite,           60

<sup>1</sup> The tradition of giants is common to the Scandinavian and Grecian mythologies, to the Mohammedans, and the Jews. Our version of *Gen.* vi. 4. follows the LXX. and Vulgate. "There were giants in the earth in those days." But the Hebrew word *Nephilim*, from *Naphal*, to fall, may signify *Apostates*.

<sup>2</sup> "The large pine of bronze which once adorned the top of Adrian's mole was afterwards employed to decorate the top of St. Peter's belfry, and having (according to Buti) been thrown down by lightning, it was, after lying some time on the steps of the palace, transferred to the place where it now is, in the Pope's

So that the bank they as a girdle wear  
 Down from the middle, yet so much above  
 Was shown, that only to have reach'd his hair,  
 Three Frieslanders at once in vain had strove.  
 Thus view'd I of him thirty ample palms, [prove.  
 Downwards from where men's cloaks their fastening  
 "Raphel mai amech izabi alams,"  
 The mouth which look'd so fierce began to howl,  
 For which had been unfitting sweeter psalms.  
 And thus my guide reproach'd him, "Silly soul, 70  
 Keep to thy horn, and with it ease thy breast  
 When ire disturbs, or other passions foul.  
 The thong that binds it to thee doth invest  
 Thy neck; thou'lt find it there; O soul confused.<sup>1</sup>  
 See too where now it girds thy brawny chest."  
 Then me addressing, "By himself accused,  
 This is that Nimrod by whose counsel proud,  
 One language in the world no more is used.  
 But let us leave him: be no speech bestow'd  
 On emptiness, for such to him each tongue, 80

garden, by the side of the great corridor of Belvedere. In Dante's time the pine was either on the belfry or the steps of St. Peter."—LOMBARDI.

<sup>1</sup> Nimrod is thus denominated, in allusion to the unmeaning sounds he had just uttered (l. 67), and his being the supposed author of the confusion of tongues at Babel. *Confusi sunt, quoniam Deus sprexit eos.*—*Psalm lii. 7*; see also *Gen. xi. 9.*

As his on others, by none understood.  
Then on our journey we proceed along,  
Turn'd to the left; and there another find  
A bow-shot thence, more fierce and huge and strong.  
I cannot say whose was the master mind  
That girt him, but he held the left hand bound  
Before him, and the right was chain'd behind.  
And from his neck below, the chain around  
Was seen to load with wreathèd links his frame;  
Five times complete it was about him wound. 90  
Opposed to Jove supreme, this proud one's aim  
Was of his strength to let the proof appear;"  
Thus spake my guide; "hence to this doom his  
And when the giants put the gods in fear, [claim;  
He, Ephialtes named, the great proof made:  
The arms then used, now never moves he here."<sup>1</sup>  
"I wish, if possible," to him I said,  
"What of the immense Briareus<sup>2</sup> can be,

<sup>1</sup> Homer describes him and his brother Otus as giants in stature, the sons of Neptune by Iphimedia, the wife of Aloeus, a son of Titan and Terra, who bred them up: hence they were called Aloïdes. At nine years old they made war against the gods, piling Ossa on Olympus, and Pelion with all its woods on Ossa, that they might reach heaven, and dethrone Jupiter. But they were slain by Apollo, and hurled into the abyss.—*Odyss.* xi. 304; *Æneid.* vi. 580; *Ovid. Fasti*, v. 35.

<sup>2</sup> A giant son of Cælus and Terra, who had a hundred hands and fifty heads. When Juno, Neptune, and Pallas conspired to

May be the next before my eyes display'd."

Then he replied, "Antæus<sup>1</sup> thou shalt see      100  
 At hand, who speaks and is unbound; he'll bear  
 Us to the depth of all iniquity.

He whom thou wouldst behold far onward there,  
 And fetter'd stands: just like this one is he,  
 But more defiant in his look and air."

Ne'er yet did earthquake so tremendously  
 Shake to its deep foundation some strong tower,  
 As Ephialtes then shook suddenly.

Death never seem'd so dread as at that hour,

dethrone Jupiter, Briareus ascended Olympus and seated himself beside the Thunderer, which so terrified the conspirators that they desisted from their enterprise.—*Iliad*, i. 396. He assisted the giants in their war against the gods, and having thus neutralized the merit of his former exploit, was thrown under Mount Ætna.—*HESIOD. Theog.* l. 147; *Æneid.* vi. 287; x. 565.

<sup>1</sup> A giant of Lybia, son of Neptune and Terra, celebrated as a wrestler. He boasted that he could raise a temple to his father with the skulls of those he had vanquished. Machiavelli in discussing the question, whether when threatened with war it is better to anticipate invasion or to wait for it, mentions as one of the arguments in favour of the latter, the story of Antæus king of Lybia, "who, being invaded by Hercules the Egyptian, was invincible while he kept himself within his own borders, but being drawn from them by the subtlety of Hercules, he lost both his kingdom and life. Upon which occasion was raised the fable of Antæus, that being born of the earth he received new strength from his mother, as often as he touched the ground; which Hercules perceiving lifted him up in the air, and thus was enabled to kill him."—*On the first Decade of Livy*, ii. 12. See *LUCAN, Phars.* iv. 590; *STAT. Theb.* vi. 893; *JUV. Sat.* iii. 89.

Nor need of other stroke than fear had I, 110  
 But that I saw what chains controll'd his power.  
 Then further on our path again we hie,  
 And reach Antæus, who besides the head,  
 Rose upward from the grot five ells on high.  
 "O thou who, in the fortunate vale that made  
 Great Scipio immortal glory's heir,  
 When Hannibal with his whole army fled,<sup>1</sup>  
 Didst for thy prey a thousand lions bear:<sup>2</sup>  
 If thou hadst present been in that high war  
 Waged by thy brethren, such belief men share, 120  
 The sons of earth had conquer'd.<sup>3</sup> We thus far  
 Arrived would have thee bear us (do not flout)  
 Low down where biting frosts Cocytus bar.  
 To Tityus drive us not, nor Typhon stout.  
 This man can give what here is wish'd, a name;  
 Wherefore stoop low, nor twist in scorn thy snout:  
 For in the world he yet can give thee fame,  
 Because he lives, and for long life may look,  
 If grace should him before the time not claim."

<sup>1</sup> The vale of Utica, in the Carthaginian territory. It was near the town of Nadagra on the river Bagrada (Wadi Majerda), that Scipio defeated Hannibal.—LIVY, xxx, 29; LUCAN, *Phars.* iv. 585.

<sup>2</sup>

———"Latuisse sub alta

Rupe ferunt, epulas raptos habuisse leones."—*Phars.* iv. 601.

<sup>3</sup> Lucan hints that it was fortunate for the gods that Antæus was not born at the time of the giants' war.—*Phars.* iv. 593—597.

Thus said the master ; and Antæus took           130  
 In haste my guide up with that hand outspread  
 Which Hercules in its rude grasp once shook.  
 When Virgil felt thus seized, to me he said,  
 Come hither now that I may clasp thee tight ;  
 Then took me and of both one bundle made.  
 As from below to him who lifts his sight,  
 Where it doth stoop, seems Carisenda's tower,<sup>1</sup>  
 When clouds pass o'er with motion opposite ;<sup>2</sup>  
 Such seem'd Antæus as I stood that hour  
 To see him stoop ; and I would then have fain 140  
 Gone by another way, had I the power.  
 Yet lightly, in the abyss which doth contain  
 Both Lucifer and Judas, he at last  
 Set us down safe, nor stooping did remain,  
 But rose again as doth a ship's tall mast.

<sup>1</sup> One of the leaning towers in Bologna, named after the Garisendi family, by whom it was built. The other, the Asinelli tower, is higher, but does not lean so much.

<sup>2</sup> The motion of the clouds in the opposite direction, makes the tower seem to bend with visible motion. In this case, according to a familiar optical illusion, the tower appears to move, and not the cloud. It is said to have been much higher in Dante's time.

## CANTO XXXII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

IN the first round, called Caïna, of the ninth or frozen circle, the betrayers of their own relatives are plunged in a lake of ice formed by the stagnant waters of Cocytus. Here Dante finds Camiccione de' Pazzi, who tells him of others who are there tormented. In the second round, called Antenora, he sees Bocca degli Abati, and hears from him an account of his fellow-sufferers.

COULD I command at will rough rhymes and hoarse,  
 Such as would suit that gulf of all distress  
 O'er which the other rocks in awful force  
 Their bastions firm project, I might express  
 The juice of my ripe thoughts more largely here :  
 But since I have them not, I now address  
 Myself to my great theme, not without fear.  
 To hymn the depth of all the universe,  
 Is no emprise for laughter-moving jeer,  
 Nor for a baby stammerer. Aid my verse,       10  
 Ye dames who help'd Amphion Thebes to wall,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The nine Muses. Amphion, a poet and musician, succeeded in persuading a rude people to unite in building a city, as a de-

So that my theme and song be not diverse.  
 O people ill-condition'd above all,  
 Whose dwelling to describe I scarcee endure,  
 Better be flocks or herds than hither fall.  
 Now deep we stood within that pit obscure,  
 Beneath the giants' feet, but lower far;<sup>1</sup>  
 And gazing still where those high walls immure,  
 I heard a voice cry, "Of your steps beware,  
 And let your soles not trample as you pass 20  
 The heads of your poor brethren worn with care."  
 I turn'd and saw before me a morass—  
 A lake of ice beneath my very feet,<sup>2</sup>  
 With less the look of water than of glass.  
 Not Austrian Danube o'er her waters fleet,  
 Nor wintry Tanaïs, throws a veil so great,<sup>3</sup>  
 Beneath yon sky when fill'd with cold and sleet,  
 As here was seen; where, from their snowy height  
 If Tabernich or Pietrapana fell,<sup>4</sup>

fence against their enemies. Hence he is said to have moved stones, and raised the walls of Thebes, by the sound of his lyre.

<sup>1</sup> This last circle slopes, like Malebolgè, towards the centre.

<sup>2</sup> See Canto iii. l. 87, and note.

<sup>3</sup> That part of the Danube which flows through the Austrian territory, the most northern part of its course, is most liable to be frozen, and to a greater depth. Tanaïs, or Don, is a Russian river, and in a still more rigorous climate.

"Hyperboreas glacies, Tanaïmque nivalem."—*Georg.* iv. 517.

<sup>4</sup> Tabernich, the loftiest portion of the mountain chain which

The rim would not have creak'd beneath such  
weight. 30

And as a frog its croaking cry to swell

Peeps from the stream, while resting from her work

The village maid in dreams oft gleaneth well;<sup>1</sup>

So, far as where the modest blushes lurk,<sup>2</sup>

Livid in ice the grieving shadows shook,

Gnashing their teeth with notes as of the stork.<sup>3</sup>

Each turn'd his face away with downward look :

The cold from every mouth, and the sad heart,

From those dimm'd eyes their testimonials took.

When I a hasty glance around could dart 40

I saw two at my feet with heads close press'd,

So that the hair had mix'd on either part.

“Tell me,” I said, “ye who thus breast to breast

Are strain'd, Who are ye ?” And their necks

they bent

traverses Slavonia, 2800 feet above the level of the Danube. Pietrapana, a lofty summit of the Apennines in the Carrara district.

<sup>1</sup> Here the eternal winter is contrasted with the warm Italian summer nights, when in harvest the village gleaner dreams of her day-work.

<sup>2</sup> As high as the face. They were up to their necks in ice.

<sup>3</sup> The intense cold made their teeth chatter with a sound like that which the stork frequently makes with its beak. Thus Boccaccio describes the enamoured student, waiting nearly all night in the open air for his mocking mistress, while the snow lay on the ground, “The wretched scholar became like a stork, so loudly did he gnash with his teeth.”—*Decam.* viii. 7.

And raised their faces towards me, thus address'd.  
 The moisture which had in their eyes been pent  
     Fell on their lips, and these the sharp frost glued,  
     As thus the tears between their fastening lent.  
 Dovetail'd before was never wood with wood  
     Thus firmly join'd ; hence like two goats robust 50  
     Each butts at each, by mutual rage subdued.  
 Another then who by the cold had lost  
     Both ears, exclaim'd, even with his face turn'd down,  
     “ Why gaze on us thus rudely ? If thou dost  
 Desire that these two should to thee be known,  
     The valley whence Bisenzio's waters wind,  
     Their father Albert and these two did own,  
 The offspring of one sire :<sup>1</sup> you would not find,  
     Should you search all Caïna through, a shade  
     Worthier in icy bonds to be confined.                 60  
 Not he, whose breast and shadow pierced were made  
     To part by that one stroke of Arthur's hand ;<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Alessandro and Napoleone, sons of Alberti degli Alberti, lord of the valley of Feltrona in Tuscany, where the Bisenzio rises, a branch of the Arno which joins it about six miles below Florence. Being left co-heirs of their father's property, they disagreed about it, and so fell in mutual combat.—LANDINO.

<sup>2</sup> *L'ombra* may mean either the shadow, or the soul severed from the body by the stroke which pierced the breast. Arthur, it is said, having discovered the treason of his nephew Modred, pursued him till they met, and pierced him through with his lance at a stroke, so that the sunbeam passed through the wound. “ Et dit l'histoire qu'après l'ouverture de la lance passa parmi la plaie ung

No, not Focaccia ;<sup>1</sup> nor this one whose head  
 So hinders that no prospect I command :  
 Who Mascheroni<sup>2</sup> was, thou canst not choose,  
 If thou art Tuscan, well to understand.  
 And that more words thou mayst not make me use,  
 That I'm Camicion de' Pazzi know,<sup>3</sup>  
 And Carlin wait, whose guilt will mine excuse."<sup>4</sup>  
 A thousand faces doglike, then I saw,                 70  
 From cold ; whence o'er me comes, and ever will,  
 From those broad frozen lakes a shuddering awe.  
 While towards the centre we were journeying still,  
 Where all things heavy would unite if thrown,

ray de soleil," &c.—Romance of *Lancelot du Lac*, iii. 197, Paris, 1513. To "make the sun shine through" a person, as explained by the *Tatler's* Court of Honour, is to "whip him through the lungs;" that is, run him through the body.—*Tatler*, 256.

<sup>1</sup> Focaccia de' Cancellieri of Pistoia, identified by commentators with Bertaccio (see Canto xxiv. l. 143, note). He is also said to have slain his uncle.

<sup>2</sup> Sassol Mascheroni, or da Toschi, a Florentine, who for the sake of his inheritance murdered his brother's only son, of whom he was the guardian ; for which he was justly beheaded.

<sup>3</sup> Alberto Camicione de' Pazzi of Valdarno, by whom his kinsman Ubertino was treacherously put to death.

<sup>4</sup> Carlino de' Pazzi, a Florentine, betrayed the Bianca faction by ceding to the Florentines for a bribe the Castel di Piano Travigne, in Valdarno, after the Bianco and Ghibeline refugees had for twenty-nine days defended it against the besiegers, in the summer of 1302.—G. VILLANI, viii. 52. This is a later date than that of the Vision, but Camicion says, he *waits* the coming of Carlin, as of one whose greater treachery will by comparison make his own appear less.



My leader staid ; and I with words assail

Him who continued bitterly to curse :

“ What art thou who dost thus on others rail ?”

“ Now what art thou,” he answer’d, “ who far worse,

Roam’st Antenora<sup>1</sup> smiting others’ checks ; [90

Which, wert thou living still, were too perverse ?”

“ And I am living : art thou one who seeks

For fame ?” I answer’d, “ thee I can requite,

Putting thy name with those of whom she speaks.”

And he to me, “ I wish the opposite.

Take thyself hence, and give me no more pain ;

For here thy skill in flattery is but slight.”

Then seized I on his hinder scalp amain,

And said, “ To me thou shalt thy name declare ;

Or else no hair shall on this head remain.”

Then he to me ; “ Though thou strip off my hair, 100

I’ll neither tell thee who I am, nor show ;

No, though a thousand times my head thou tear.”

His locks I had already grasp’d, and lo !

More than one handful I had pluck’d away,

<sup>1</sup> The second round of the ninth circle, so named from Antenor, who, according to Dictys Cretensis and Dares Phrygius, betrayed his country, Troy. He is said to have held secret correspondence with the Greeks, and to have counselled and assisted them in their designs. He is also fabled to have conducted a colony of Heneti, a people of Paphlagonia, into Italy, where expelling the Euganei from their possessions, he occupied them, and founded Petavium, or Padua.

He barking, with his eyes still fix'd below.  
 Another cried, "What ails thee, Bocca, say?  
 Is 't not enough thy noisy jaws to shake,  
 Unless thou bark? What devil spurs thee, pray?"  
 "Now," I exclaim'd, "I would not thou shouldst  
 Accursèd traitor! to thy lasting shame, [speak.  
 Of thee a true report I'll surely make."  
 "Begone," he cried, "and what thou list proclaim:  
 But do, if thou go hence, thy peace not hold  
 Of him whose tongue so glib just now became.  
 Here he laments in vain the Frenchman's gold.  
 'Him of Duera,' thou canst say, 'I spied,<sup>1</sup>  
 There where the sinners bide the piercing cold.'  
 If thou be ask'd, what shades were there beside;  
 At thy right hand Beccaria ruminates,

<sup>1</sup> The Guelfs, who from the field of Montaperte fled first to Lucca and then to Bologna, were invited by those of Parma to join them against the Ghibelines, in a battle against whom their valour turned the scale. Meanwhile the Pope calling in the aid of Charles of Anjou against Manfred, their services were offered and accepted, and the Pope sent them a consecrated banner. Charles, eluding Manfred's fleet, arrived at Ostia, and was joyfully received by the Romans. Manfred had a large detachment under Buoso da Duera at Parmegiano, between Piedmont and Parma, guarding a defile which the French had to pass. But Duera had been bribed by Guy de Montfort, the French general, to leave it undefended, which he did, A.D. 1265; at which the people of Cremona, his native place, were so enraged that they extirpated his whole family; although he himself escaped with his ill-got wealth, but at length died in poverty and exile.

Whose gorge the biting axe of Florence dyed.<sup>1</sup> 120  
Soldanier's further on,<sup>2</sup> and for his mates  
Are Ganellon,<sup>3</sup> I think, and Tribaldello

<sup>1</sup> Tesauro Beccaria, of Pavia, abbot of Valombrosa, and legate of Pope Alexander IV. at Florence; where, presuming on his sacred character, he intrigued in favour of the Ghibelines. But his practices being discovered, no "benefit of clergy" was allowed him: he was publicly beheaded in 1258, for which daring act the city was excommunicated.

<sup>2</sup> After the battle of Montaperte the Ghibelines, headed by Guido di Novella, held the sovereignty in Florence. But in 1266 the people chose Giovanni Soldanieri, himself a Ghibeline, to head them in an insurrection, the result of which was the overthrow of his party and his own ruin. For this Dante has placed him in Antenora.—G. VILLANI, vii. 14; MACHIAV. *Hist. Fior.* ii.

<sup>3</sup> With the mediæval writers, Ganellon of France is the standing type of treason and dissimulation. Chaucer alludes to him in the *Shipmanes, Monkes, and Nonnes Priestes Tules*. According to Turpin, "when Charlemagne had recovered Spain from the Saracens, he encamped near Pampeluna, and sent Ganellon to the Saracen kings in Saragossa, requiring them to be baptized and pay tribute. They feigned compliance, but corrupted Ganellon, who agreed to betray the king's army into their hands for twenty horseloads of gold and silver. Charles, confiding in Ganellon, began his march, giving the command of the rear to Orlando, count of Mans and lord of Guienne, and to Oliver, count of Auvergne, ordering them to keep Ronceval with 30,000 men, while he passed it with the rest of his army. In the morning they were attacked by the Saracens, whom they defeated; but being assailed by another Moorish army which, through Ganellon's advice, had been placed in ambush, faint and exhausted with previous fighting, they were in turn overcome. The sound of Orlando's horn reached the king's ears (see Canto xxxi. 18, note), and Charles would have flown to his succour, but for Ganellon, who, though aware of Orlando's condition, insinuated that he was

Who open'd, while she slept, Faenza's gates."<sup>1</sup>  
 When these we left behind, all grim and yellow,  
 Two frozen in one hole appear'd in sight,  
 So that one head a cap was for its fellow.  
 And as keen hunger at a loaf will bite,  
 The top one thus its teeth together brings,  
 Just where the other's brain and spine unite.  
 As Tydeus for disdain, the poet sings,                   130  
 Did Menalippus' temples gnawing clutch,<sup>2</sup>

in the habit of sounding his horn on light occasions. 'He is, perhaps,' said he, 'pursuing some wild beast, and the sound echoes through the woods; it will be fruitless, therefore, to seek him.' O wicked traitor! Deceitful Judas! What dost thou merit!—*Hist.* xxi.—xxiii.

<sup>1</sup> Tribaldello de' Manfredi, a Ghibeline of Faenza, whose gates he opened, A.D. 1252, to the French under the command of M. Jean d'Appia, by whom he had been bribed. Pope Martin had brought them to suppress the Ghibeline party of that place. Tribaldello was that same year slain with them at Forli.—Canto xxvii. 44; G. VILLANI, vii. 80, 81.

<sup>2</sup> An accidental homicide compelled Tydeus, a son of Æneus king of Calydon, to take refuge in the court of Argos, where he married the daughter of king Adrastus. At the siege of Thebes, after many exploits, he was wounded by Menalippus, whom in turn his javelin pierced. At his request the dead body of his foe was brought to him, and, after the head had been severed, he began to tear out the brains with his teeth; hastening his own death by thus yielding to the fury of his revenge.—*STATIUS, Theb.* viii. 717.

"Ore tenens hostile caput, dulcique nefandus  
 Inamoritur tabo."—*Ib.* ix. 18.

The terrible repast which has been depicted by the imagination

So did this man the skull and other things.  
“O thou, by brutal sign, who show'st how much  
He whom thou feed'st on doth thine hatred move,  
Tell me the cause ;” I said ; — “our compact such  
That if but just thy plaint against him prove,  
Knowing you both, and his offences, I  
Will yet repay thee in the world above,  
If that with which I speak should not be dry.”

of the poet has been paralleled, not only among the savages of ancient and modern times, but among the senators of Imperial Rome, and the Florentines of the fourteenth century. Thus “Regulus as soon as Galba was despatched, gave a purse of money to the ruffian that murdered Piso, and, throwing himself on the dead body, gnawed the head with his teeth.”—TACITUS, *Hist.* iv. 42. Thus also in Florence, A.D. 1343, when the Duke of Athens was besieged in his palace, having by his tyranny made enemies of all parties, the people refused every overture, until two of the duke's ministers and advisers, and the son of one of them, were delivered into their hands ; to which at last the duke was obliged to consent. The son of Guglielmo da Scesi was a young gentleman scarcely eighteen years of age ; but neither his youth, comeliness, nor innocence could preserve him from the rage of the multitude ; not satisfied to strike him when alive, and hack him with their swords when dead, they also tore him with their teeth, so that not only their other senses but their very taste might be regaled by their revenge.—MACHIAV. *Hist. Fior.* ii.

## CANTO XXXIII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

The story of Count Ugolino, famished to death with his children in the tower at Pisa, through the cruelty of the Archbishop Ruggieri. The third round called Ptolomea, where those are punished who have betrayed their friends. Here the souls of the friar Alberigo, Ser Branca d'Oria, and others are punished, while their bodies are in the world above, apparently alive, but each under the government of a demon.

THE mouth its fierce repast gave over tasting,  
 That sinner wiped it on the hairs which grew  
 Upon the head he had behind been wasting ;  
 Then thus commenced : “ Thou wouldst that I renew  
 A desperate grief which doth my bosom tear,  
 Even thereon thinking, ere I speak to you.  
 But if my words like seed the fruit should bear  
 Of infamy to th’ traitor whom I flay,  
 To see me speak and weep at once, prepare.  
 I know not who thou art, nor in what way      10  
 Thou’rt hither come ; but since the words which flow  
 Forth from thy lips the Florentine betray,

Me for Count Ugolino thou shouldst know;<sup>1</sup>

And here the archbishop Ruggieri see.

Why I'm so much his neighbour now I'll show.

That through the effect of his vile policy,

Trusting to him, I first was apprehended

And after murder'd, I need not tell thee :

But by what cruelty my life was ended, [20

Thou couldst not know; then hear it and mark well

If I with him have cause to be offended.

There was a little window in that cell

Which is ' the tower of famine ' call'd from me,

<sup>1</sup> The Pisans waged a most unsuccessful and calamitous war with Genoa, from 1282 to 1290, towards the conclusion of which period they were also distracted with domestic feuds. The Guelph exiles had invited the Florentines, and both attacked the city by land. The Pisans in their distress appointed as their captain-general for ten years Count Ugolino de' Gherardeschi, a Ghibeline baron, but allied by marriage to the Guelphs. He abused his power, and, to strengthen it, favoured alternately both parties, while he proscribed their more independent leaders. He was opposed by the archbishop Ruggieri degli Ubaldini, a staunch Ghibeline, who in 1288 accused him of having betrayed Pisa by giving up its castles to the Guelphs of Lucca and Florence. An insurrection, headed by the archbishop, was raised against him, and Ugolino, being overpowered, was confined with two of his sons and two of his grandsons in a tower near the Arno, the keys of which being entrusted to the archbishop, he threw them into the river, and left his prisoners to die of starvation. The *Torre del Fame*, where they perished, now forms part of the Palazzo dell' Orologio, on the Piazza Dei Cavalieri.—See G. VILLANI, vii. 120, &c. The archbishop was summoned to Rome to answer for Ugolino's death, with what result is not known.

In which unhappy captives yet may dwell ;  
 Its opening had already let me see  
 Some moons pass, when that evil sleep took place  
 Which tore the veil from my futurity.<sup>1</sup>  
 This wretch appear'd the master of the chase,  
 Hunting the wolf and whelps unto the mount  
 Which from the Pisan hides fair Lucca's face.<sup>2</sup> 30  
 With dogs lean, eager, and of good account,  
 The Gualands, and the Sismonds, and Lanfrances,  
 Were placed in sporting order in the front.  
 After short course, methought, before their ranks  
 The sire and sons seem'd wearied as they fled ;  
 Methought I saw the sharp tusk gore their flanks.  
 When I awoke, ere dawn its light had shed,  
 I heard my little sons amid their sleep  
 (For they were with me) cry, and ask for bread.  
 Right cruel art thou if thou now canst keep 40  
 From grief at what my heart did prophesy :  
 And if thou weep not, what can make thee weep ?  
 Now had they waken'd, and the hour drew nigh

<sup>1</sup> Hecuba thus relates her prophetic dream : " I saw a dappled fawn taken by force from my embrace, and miserably slaughtered by the wolf's bloody paw. And this portent appeared, Achilles on the summit of his tomb, demanding some luckless Trojan dame as an offering. Ye gods, I pray, from mine, yea from my daughter, avert the evil."—EURIP. *Hecuba*, 90.

<sup>2</sup> Mount St. Julian, between Pisa and Lucca, intercepts from each other the view of those two cities.

When usually our daily food appear'd,  
Each doubting what his dream should signify.  
And at the outer gate below I heard  
The horrible tower lock'd up : I thereon eyed  
The aspect of my sons, nor spake one word.  
I did not weep—within so petrified !  
They wept, and then my little Anselm said, 50  
“ Why, father, how thou look'st!—What can be-  
Yet then I answer'd not :—no tear I shed. [tide ?”  
Thus all that day and the next night were done,  
Till from another sun the darkness fled.  
And when a feeble ray of light had shone  
Into our mournful cell, and I could see  
The look, in their four faces, of my own,  
I gnaw'd my hands through grieving agony.  
And they, who thought I did it for that fain  
I would have eaten, rose up suddenly, 60  
And said, ‘ ’Twould give us, father, much less pain,  
If thou wouldst eat of us. Us thou didst drape  
With this poor flesh ; now strip it off again.’  
I calm'd me then that they more grief might scape.  
We that day and the next all mutely pine.  
Unfeeling earth, ah ! why didst thou not gape ?  
When the fourth morning had begun to shine,  
Gaddo fell prostrate at my feet, and he  
Cried, ‘ Why dost thou not help me, father mine ?’

And then he died. Plain as thou now seest me, 70  
 I saw the rest as one by one they fell,  
 Between the fifth and the sixth day, the three ;  
 Till blind, o'er each I groped within my cell ;  
 And two days<sup>1</sup> call'd them after they were dead :  
 Then could my grief no more my hunger quell."'  
 He, with distorted eyes, this having said,  
 Like a fierce mastiff, in his teeth again  
 Seized, piercing to the bone, the wretched head.  
 Ah, Pisa ! shame of all who appertain  
 To that fair land with language of soft sound,<sup>2</sup> 80  
 To punish thee, since neighbours yet abstain,  
 Capraia and Gorgona from the ground  
 Rise, and a mole o'er Arno's entrance throw,  
 Till with her waters all in thee be drown'd.

<sup>1</sup> "Three days," is the reading preferred by many ; which, with the preceding six (l. 72), would make the whole nine : but Buti, who explained the *Divina Commedia* at Pisa in 1355, and left a long commentary, says that "after eight days the tower was opened, and they were all found dead." Hence Lombardi and others prefer the reading which we have adopted.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, "where *si* is spoken." In the middle ages the principal European languages were denominated from the affirmative word in each, answering to our *Yes*. Thus the Provençal tongue (used also at the court of Castile) was called Langue d'Oc, the Wallon or Northern French, Langue d'Oil, or d'Oui, the German took its denomination in like manner, from Ya, and the Italian from Si.—SISMONDI, *Lit. S. Europe*, vol. i. vii. 189. Dante, in his treatise *De Vulgari Eloquentiâ*, speaks of Italy as "the country where they use the word *Si*."—i. 8.

That he thy castles had betray'd, although  
 Count Ugolino was accused by fame,  
 His children thou shouldst not have tortured so.  
 The shield of innocence which youth may claim  
 (New Thebes!) Uguccio and Brigata share,  
 And those two others hymn'd above by name. 90  
 Now pass'd we to another crowd whom there  
 Those icy bonds in savage durance keep,  
 No face turn'd down, but all supine they were.  
 Weeping itself allows them not to weep;<sup>1</sup>  
 And grief which finds a hindrance at their eyes,  
 Returns within for anguish yet more deep:  
 For the first tears congealing as they rise,  
 There cluster, and like masks of crystal seem,  
 Filling the bowl beneath each brow that lies.  
 Though in my face, which I might callous deem, 100  
 The sense of feeling I had found not slow  
 To quit its mansion, through the cold extreme,  
 Yet now I seem'd to feel a slight wind blow:  
 I therefore said, "My guide whence can it be?  
 Is not all vapour<sup>2</sup> quite extinct thus low?"

<sup>1</sup> "Think how this want of grief discredits you,  
 And you will weep because you cannot weep."

BEAUMONT & FLETCHER, *A King and no King*, ii.

<sup>2</sup> Evaporation caused by the sun's rays, which also produce wind. He supposes that the sun's influence would here be entirely excluded, and therefore cannot account for the wind.

Then he replied, "Thou shalt be speedily  
 Where thy own eyes will answer, for they must  
 Of the fierce blast which showers the occasion see.  
 Then one cried out who mourn'd in that chill crust;  
 "O souls whose cruelty could so avail       110  
 That you are to this lowest region thrust;  
 Lift from my visage this hard-frozen veil,<sup>1</sup>  
 That I may vent my heart's o'erwhelming grief  
 A moment, ere my tears again congeal."  
 Then I to him; "If thou wouldst have relief,  
 Say who thou art, thee then I'll extricate,  
 Or may I sink beneath yon icy reef."  
 "Friar Alberigo am I, who of late  
 The fruit of that ill garden pluck'd," he said,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On this passage it is well observed by Boyd, "The crimes which arose from sympathy suppressed, are here fitly punished by a vain effort to recover it; and the eyes that never overflowed with compassion are exposed to the torture of freezing tears—the grief arising from present suffering and the memory of inhuman deeds."

<sup>2</sup> Alberigo de' Manfredi, one of the Frati Godenti (Canto xxiii. 103, note); of a Guelf family, who were lords of Faenza—the "ill-garden." Having received an affront from a young relative, Manfred, he at length pretended reconciliation, and Manfred begged pardon for his youthful passion. Alberigo then invited Manfred and his son to a splendid entertainment, but had the hall beset with ruffians in the dress of attendants. At the conclusion of the banquet he called for *the fruit*. This was the signal for the assassins to rush in and despatch their victims. Hence a stab is proverbially called "Friar Alberigo's fruit." Pulci says that

"And here am for my fig repaid a date."<sup>1</sup> 120  
 "Oh!" I exclaim'd, "art thou already dead?"  
 And he replied, "How in the world above  
 My body fares, I know not : for so dread  
 Advantage doth our Ptolomea prove,<sup>2</sup>  
 That oft the soul sinks down into this place,  
 Ere Atropos compels her to remove.  
 And that the glassy tear-drops from this face  
 May by thy hand more willingly be razed,  
 Know that the instant when a soul betrays,<sup>3</sup>

Orlando waited at Roncesvalles for the tribute promised by the Saracen king, which proved, however, to be "The bitter fruits of Friar Alberigo."—*Morg. Mag.* xxv. 72.

<sup>1</sup> A proverbial expression implying complete retribution.

<sup>2</sup> The third round of the ninth circle has its name either from Ptolemy king of Egypt, the betrayer of Pompey, or from Ptolemy the son of Abubus, by whom Simon and his sons were murdered at a great banquet which he had made for them.—1 *Maccab.* xvi. 16.

<sup>3</sup> The entrance of Satan into Judas Iscariot after he had received the sop, may have furnished the poet with a hint. But besides this it was a favorite theory of the Norsemen, that when the soul departed from the body its absence was occasionally supplied by a wicked demon, who took the opportunity to enter and occupy its late habitation. A terrific instance of this kind, from the Northern mythology, is given by Sir Walter Scott in the fourth of his *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*. Allied to this superstition, doubtless, is that of the Vampyre, a corpse animated by a mischievous goule or fiend, and of which the stories are frequent in Hungary, Greece, and the Turkish provinces. Another phase of the matter is that which resolves it into hypochondria. In a recent series of tales, one of them relates to a woman who seriously told her physician that she was *dead*, and

As I have done, the body straight is seized 130  
 By a demon, who henceforward rules it there.  
 Till its full time is ended. Thus amazed  
 She rushing falls into this cistern drear;  
 Perhaps above a body yet appears  
 Of one whose shade here winters at my rear :  
 Ser Branca d'Oria is the name he bears ;<sup>1</sup>  
 Thou, if but just come down shouldst know him best :  
 Thus has he been shut up these many years.  
 "I think," said I to him, "you do but jest ;  
 For Branca d'Oria never yet has died : 140  
 He eats, drinks, sleeps, and is as usual dress'd."  
 "Where boils the pitch tenacious," he replied,  
 "The fosse of the keen-fang'd far overhead,  
 With Michael Zanche was not yet supplied,  
 When D'Oria left a demon in his stead,  
 In his own body, for that treachery,  
 And in his kinsman's, by whose aid it sped.  
 Now reach thine hand, unclose these eyes for me."

had been so for many years. On his attempting to rally her on her comforts, notwithstanding, she replied, "It was Satan that had entered into her body the moment her own soul had left it, and plagued her with eating, drinking, talking, and living, without any of the pleasure and relish of true life."—*Notes from the Diary of a late Physician*, vol. i. p. 207. xiv.

<sup>1</sup> Of the illustrious family of Doria, Ghibellines of Genoa. In conjunction with his nephew, he invited to a banquet, and then treacherously murdered, his father-in-law, Michael Zanche (see

Yet I unclosed them not, but left them cased,<sup>1</sup>  
 Since courtesy to him were villany.<sup>2</sup> 150  
 Ah, Genoese ! ye men perverse, defaced,  
 In all your ways, in whom all faults abound ;  
 Why have ye not yet from the world been chased !  
 I with Romagna's foulest spirit found,<sup>3</sup>  
 Doom'd for his deeds, one such of your compeers,<sup>4</sup>  
 In soul already in Cocytus drown'd  
 Whose body yet on earth alive appears.

(Canto xxii. 88, note), for the purpose of getting immediate possession of the immense wealth which Zanche had intended to leave him.

<sup>1</sup> This we much regret on the poet's account. But the respect in which we hold his memory must not blind us to his faults. Had he forgotten the *promise* which just before he had *volunteered*, and sanctioned with a dreadful imprecation? see lines 115—117. Did he hold the opinion that an oath made to a profligate is not binding? Such a principle, we scarcely need observe, is not only of the most dangerous tendency to the interests of society, but, as opposed to *truth*, must be highly offensive to the God of Truth.

<sup>2</sup> In Ariosto, Sacripant, king of Circassia, in a transport of rage, says to Rodomont, almost in the words of Daute,

“Gli è teco cortesia l'esser villano.”—*Orl. Fur.* xxvii. 77.

The sentiment is incorrect, and is more nearly allied to the spirit of Mohammedanism than to that of the Christian religion. Civility and courtesy to the vilest with whom we may have anything to do, cannot be degrading or improper. Charity “doth not behave itself unbecomingly.” There was nothing rude in the language or conduct of Abraham even to Dives in torment—*Luke* xvi. 25, &c. ; nor in that of Michael the archangel in a dispute with the devil himself!—*Jude*, 9.

<sup>3</sup> Friar Alberigo.

<sup>4</sup> Branca D'Oria.

## CANTO XXXIV.

The poets reach the fourth and last round of the ninth circle, where are punished those who have betrayed their benefactors. In the midst is Lucifer, surrounded with ice, in the lowest depth of hell. Here Judas Iscariot, Brutus, and Cassius are tormented. Virgil and Dante pass the centre of the earth over the back of Lucifer, and ascending by a secret path to the opposite hemisphere, they emerge, and again behold the stars.

“THE banners of the King of Hell come forth<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This Canto in the original commences with a Latin line, “*Vexilla regis prodeunt Inferni* :” a parody of the first line of an ancient hymn in praise of the Cross, usually sung on Good Friday, in the Roman Catholic worship.—

Vexilla regis prodeunt,		The banners of the king come forth,
Fulget Crucis mysterium,		The Cross's mystery shines ;
Quo Carne carnis conditor,		And there the builder of the earth
Suspensus est patibulo.		His sacred breath resigns.

In Dante's parody of the above line, which some have considered profane, others have perceived a stinging satire. The ancient Iconoclasts, Claudius, bishop of Turin, and probably Dante himself, were of opinion that the adoration of the cross was the invention of Antichrist. By the banners of the king of Hell, the poet means, the wings of Lucifer, subsequently described as resembling the sails of a windmill, which always have the form of a cross.

Towards us; now onward look," exclaim'd my guide,  
 "If thou wouldst see him." As when o'er the earth  
 A thick damp fog is breathing far and wide,  
 Or when the night obscures our hemisphere,  
 A mill turn'd by the wind from far is eyed;<sup>1</sup>  
 Such edifice did then, methought, appear.  
 Glad from the wind for shelter to withdraw  
 Behind my guide was I, none else was near.  
 I came (but rhyme with fear what now I saw) 10  
 To where the shades were all immersed, yet could  
 Be seen, as in transparent glass a straw:  
 Some lay extended, others upright stood;  
 This on his head, and that upon his feet;  
 Some like an arch, with face to feet, I view'd.  
 When we were come so far, that it seem'd meet  
 To my instructor that I should survey  
 Him who had once in beauty shone complete,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Windmills can only be traced as far back as the beginning of the twelfth century. — BECKMAN, *Hist. Inventions*, i. 250. Don Quixote's mistaking the windmills for giants may have been suggested to Cervantes by this passage. Dante says that the arms of Lucifer were as much greater than the giants, as the giants were greater than the poet: and in answer to Saücho's question, "What giants?" Don Quixote replies, "Those thou seest yonder with their vast arms, and some of them there are that reach two leagues."—i. 8. Both Dante and Cervantes mention a rising wind.

<sup>2</sup> "Thou sealest up the sun, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty."—*Ezek.* xxviii. 12.

He from before me stept, and bade me stay ; [20  
 Then thus exclaim'd, " Lo, Dis ; and lo, the place  
 Where fortitude should in thy heart hold sway."

How frozen then and faint I grew apace,  
 Ask not, for no description can I give,  
 Since words were feeble to pourtray my case.

I was not dead, and yet I did not live !<sup>1</sup>  
 Think now, ye who of genius have the flower,  
 What I became when both were fugitive.

He who the grief-realm sways with sovereign power  
 Stood forth far as the mid-breast from the ice.  
 More like a giant I in stature tower 30

Than are the giants like his arms : with nice  
 Discrimination calculate the whole,  
 To which such limbs proportion hold precise.

If once he was as fair as now he's foul,  
 And 'gainst his Maker his proud eye-brows rear'd,  
 Well may he be the fountain of all dole.

How great the marvel then to me appear'd,  
 When I three faces saw upon his head !<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "These, therefore, are neither dead nor alive, but are in a doubtful condition."—HERMÆ, *Pastor*, lib. iii. ix. 21. "Who-soever shall appear before his Lord on the day of judgment, polluted with crimes, hell shall be his reward: he shall not die therein, neither shall he live."—*Alcoran*, xx.

<sup>2</sup> According to Vellutello, the red signifies anger; the pale and yellow, envy; and the black, melancholy or despair. But is there not in the "three faces on his head" a veiled satire on the triple

The one before seem'd with vermilion smear'd ;  
Above the middle of each shoulder spread, 40  
The other two did with the first unite,  
And at the crest was its full junction made.  
Between a pale and yellow seem'd the right ;  
The left, like those who come from where his springs  
Old Nile descending leaves, appear'd in sight.  
From under each he spread forth two great wings,  
As large as suited such a bird of prey :  
Such sail above the wave no vessel flings.  
After the fashion of a bat's were they,  
And had no feathers : as they flapp'd the air, 50  
Their motion swift three rapid winds obey,<sup>1</sup>  
By which Cocytus' depths all frozen were.  
The six eyes wept, the tears which then ran o'er  
With bloody foam fell down the three chins there.

crown? and on the papal claim of sovereignty over the ruddy European, the yellow Asiatic, and the sable African? Rosetti says, "Vermilion was the colour of the papal party. The badge of the French party was the lily, a mixture of white and yellow. Black was the colour of the Neri faction, by whom Dante was banished and his friends condemned to death."—*Disquisitions*, vol. i. vi. p. 82.

<sup>1</sup> " 'Tell me,' said Gangler, 'whence comes the wind?' 'I can tell thee all about it,' answered Har. 'Thou must know that at the northern extremity of the heavens sits a giant called Hræsvelgur, clad with eagles' plumes. When he spreads out his wings for flight, the winds arise from under them.' "—*The Prose Edda*: MALLETT'S *North. Ant.* p. 415.

The teeth at every mouth a sinner tore,  
 As if the jaws had been some ponderous mill :  
 Hence three at once endured this torment sore.  
 To him in front the bite seem'd scarce an ill  
 Match'd with the clawing which oft scarifies,  
 And leaves his back of skin all naked still. 60  
 "That shade above, whose pain all else outvies,  
 Judas Iscariot is," my teacher said ;  
 "His head within, his feet without he plies.  
 Of those two others, each with downward head,  
 Brutus is he who hangs from the black snout ;<sup>1</sup>  
 See how he twists him round ; but speech is dead.  
 The other Cassius who seems limb'd so stout.  
 But the night reascends, 'tis time to part :  
 We've seen whate'er this place can show throughout."  
 As he desired, I clasp'd his neck athwart ; 70  
 And he for time and place the occasion bides :  
 Then when those pinions were enough apart,

<sup>1</sup> Of the conduct of Brutus, different, and extremely opposite opinions, have been held. Cowley and Akenside extol it, as the very perfection of moral grandeur. S. Wesley, brother to Charles and John, Master of Tiverton School, and a correspondent of Pope, agreeing with Dante, designates him "Assassin Brutus, the smiling murderer," (*Ode to the Earl of Oxford*;) and "False Brutus, cringing while he stabs his friend."—*On Mr. Hobbs*. It is said that Porson, at school, received the question as a theme,—"*Cæsare occiso, an Brutus benefecit aut malefecit?*" He cut the knot by replying, "*Nec benefecit nec malefecit sed interfecit.*"

He seized and fasten'd on the shaggy sides :  
From tuft to tuft descending by and by,  
'Twixt the thick hair and frozen crust he glides.  
When we had come exactly where the thigh  
Is turn'd the fulness of the hip-joint o'er,  
My guide, with much fatigue and agony,  
His head turn'd where his legs had been before. [80  
He grasp'd the hair as one who mounts sublime,  
I thought we turn'd to enter hell once more.  
" Hold fast ; for by such stairs as these to climb,"  
Said then my master, panting like one spent,  
" Must we now leave this world of woe and crime."  
Then through the rocky hole thence forth he went,  
And on the brink above he seated me ;  
Then to my side his cautious footsteps bent.  
I lifted up my eyes and thought to see  
Satan as I had left him just before :  
His legs alone held up reversed had he. 90  
No marvel then that I was troubled sore.  
The common sort may guess it, although they  
Know not what was that point I had pass'd o'er.  
" Rise on thy feet, for long indeed the way,"  
My master said, " and wretched is the road :  
'Tis now half-tierce, the sun has brought back day."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Mezza terza, or half tierce, is midway between prime and tierce; that is, an hour and half later than prime. Prime is

’Twas not a palace-walk where then we stood,  
 But broken ground and insufficient light,  
 A kind of natural-prison-like abode.  
 “Master,” I said, when I had risen upright,   100  
 “Ere from the abyss I part, speak, for thou hast  
 Power with few words to speed my error’s flight.  
 Where is the ice? and how is *he* made fast  
 Thus upside down? and how could it betide  
 The sun so soon from even to morn is pass’d?”  
 “Thou fanciest thou art yet,” he then replied,  
 “Beyond the centre where my grasp I gain’d  
 On that vile worm that bores the world;<sup>1</sup> that side

twelve hours after sunset, and therefore at the vernal equinox must coincide with sunrise, or 6 a.m.: hence the time indicated is half-past seven a.m. But this refers to the sun as seen in the southern hemisphere (line 105), where, at the antipodes of Jerusalem, the poets, having passed through the centre of the earth (line 110), are about to emerge. In the northern hemisphere it would, therefore, be evening, and on the meridian of Jerusalem 7½ p.m. (line 115); and as their way from the centre upwards was long, and not a macadamized road (lines 94, 95), they cannot be supposed to have reached the surface in less time than would bring daylight on Saturday, April 9th, which was Easter day on *that* meridian, (see Introd. Essay, on the time of Dante’s Vision), and consequently night on the opposite meridian. This is what the poet seems to have intended: hence when he and his companion emerge at the antipodes, they see the stars.

<sup>1</sup> The word *worm* was anciently, and still is provincially, used for *serpent* or *dragon*. The notion of the serpent boring the world—and a tremendous *bore* it has been—may be traced in

Thou wert, while I continued to descend : [110

But when I turn'd, that point then pass'd'st thou

Towards which all heavy things from all parts tend.<sup>1</sup>

Under that hemisphere thou standest now

various directions. Thus: "In that day the Lord with his great and strong sword shall punish leviathan that piercing (Vulgate "vectem," wedge-like) serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."—*Isaiah*. xxvii. 1. "Though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them."—*Amos*, ix. 3. Socrates said, "One of the chasms of the earth is exceedingly large, and perforated through the entire earth, and is that which Homer speaks of, 'very far, where is the most profound abyss beneath the earth,' which elsewhere he and many other poets have called Tartarus."—PLATO'S *Phædo*, 139. Among our northern ancestors, even when heathen, the serpent was an object of abhorrence; not, as with oriental pagans, of worship. In the *Prose Edda* it is said, "All-father threw the Midgard serpent from heaven into that deep ocean which engirdles the earth. But the monster has grown to such an enormous size that, holding his tail in his mouth, he encircles the whole earth." Thor went to fish for this leviathan, who took the bait, and was drawn up to the side of the boat; but Thor had to pull so hard that his feet went through the boat to the bottom of the sea. A tremendous contest ensued, when Thor's assistant, in his fright, cut the line and liberated the serpent, for which in return he felt upon his own head the weight of Thor's hammer.—See MALLETT'S *Northern Antiq.* pp. 423—445. Is there not here an allusion to the curse of the serpent, *Gen.* iii. 15, "He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel?"

<sup>1</sup> The doctrine of gravitation was known to philosophers in Dante's time. Newton's discovery on the subject was the extension of this doctrine to all bodies in the universe—the reciprocal attraction of all matter whether atoms or masses, in proportion to their quantities, and in the inverse ratio of the squares of their distances.

Opposed to that the great dry land hath claim'd,<sup>1</sup>  
 Beneath whose canopy in death did bow  
 The man born sinless, and in life unblamed.<sup>2</sup>  
 Thou hast thy feet upon a little sphere  
 Whose other aspect is Judecca named :<sup>3</sup>  
 Here it is morning when 'tis evening there.  
 And he whose hair we sealed on leaving hell,  
 Remains yet fix'd as he did first appear :     120  
 He lighted here when down from heaven he fell.  
 The land which here extended formerly,  
 For fear of him has made the sea her veil,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Virgil informs him that he is in the hemisphere opposite to that which is occupied by "the great dry land." Dante seems to have believed that the southern hemisphere is nearly covered with water, and that the principal part of the land is in the northern hemisphere—a remarkable approximation to truth.

<sup>2</sup> In allusion to an opinion, then commonly entertained, that Jerusalem is situated in the middle of the earth. "*Ista est Jerusalem: in medio Gentium posui eam.*"—*Ezek.* v. 5.

<sup>3</sup> The innermost, and consequently smallest sphere of the terrestrial globe, considered as consisting of several concentric ones. The half of this small sphere, opposite to that on which the poets were standing, was the fourth and last round of the ninth circle, called *Judecca*, from Judas Iseariot.

<sup>4</sup> The poet here describes the land of the southern hemisphere as shrinking with terror at the approach of Satan, and becoming submerged and covered by the ocean, and rising in the same proportion in the northern hemisphere. This nearly coincides with the tradition concerning the land called Atlantis, which according to Plato and others, was supposed to have existed at a very early period, and to have sunk in the Atlantic ocean by violent earthquakes. Marcellus says that it was sacred to Pro-

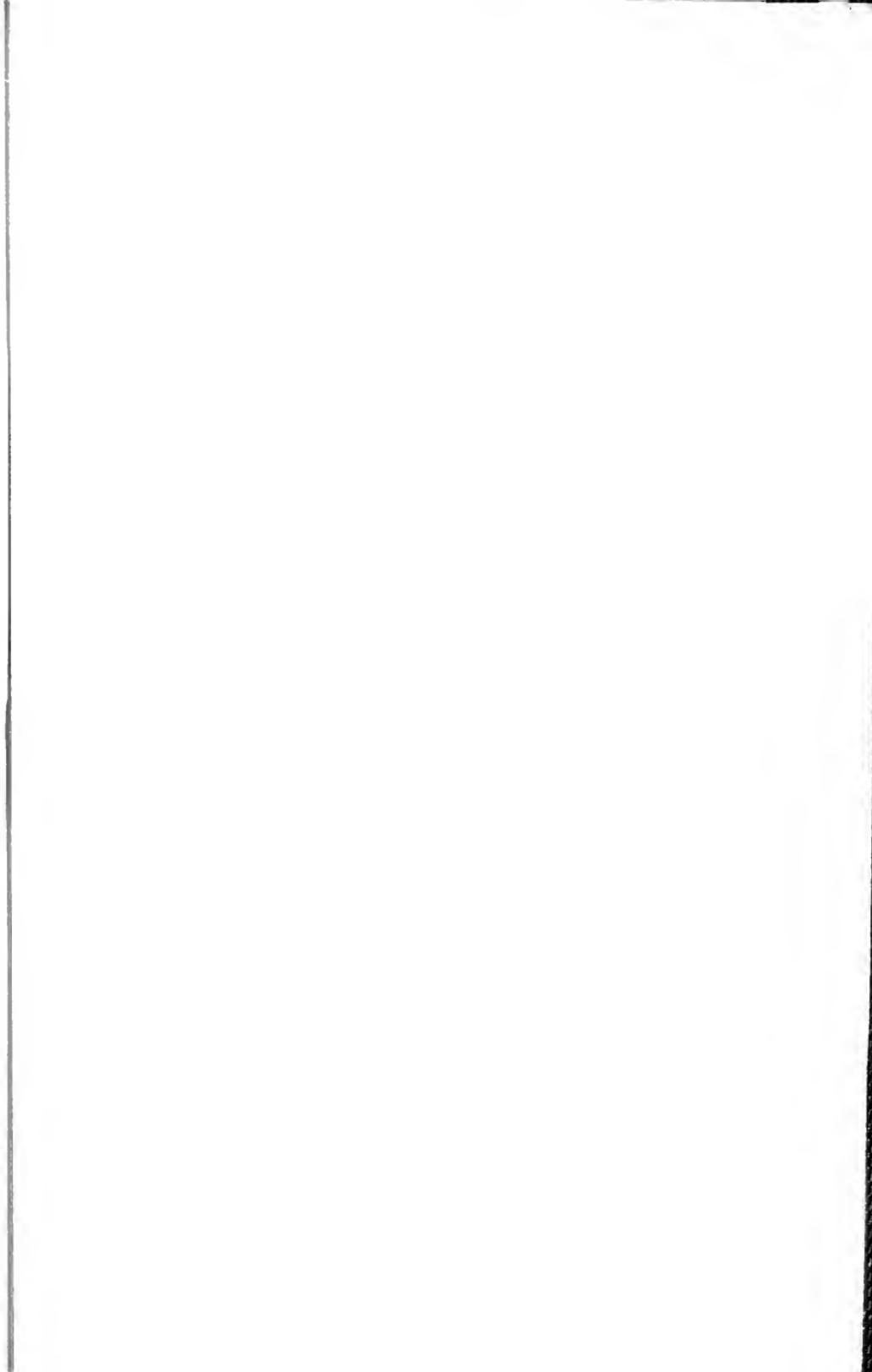
And reach'd our hemisphere : so, it may be,  
 What on this side appears left this void place  
 And gather'd overhead, from him to flee.<sup>1</sup>  
 Yon hemisphere contains as great a space  
 Remote from Satan as hell's tomb extends ;<sup>2</sup>  
 Which not by sight but sound itself betrays,  
 That of a little brook which here descends,      130  
 By a rocky channel it has worn away,  
 As gently on its tortuous course it wends."

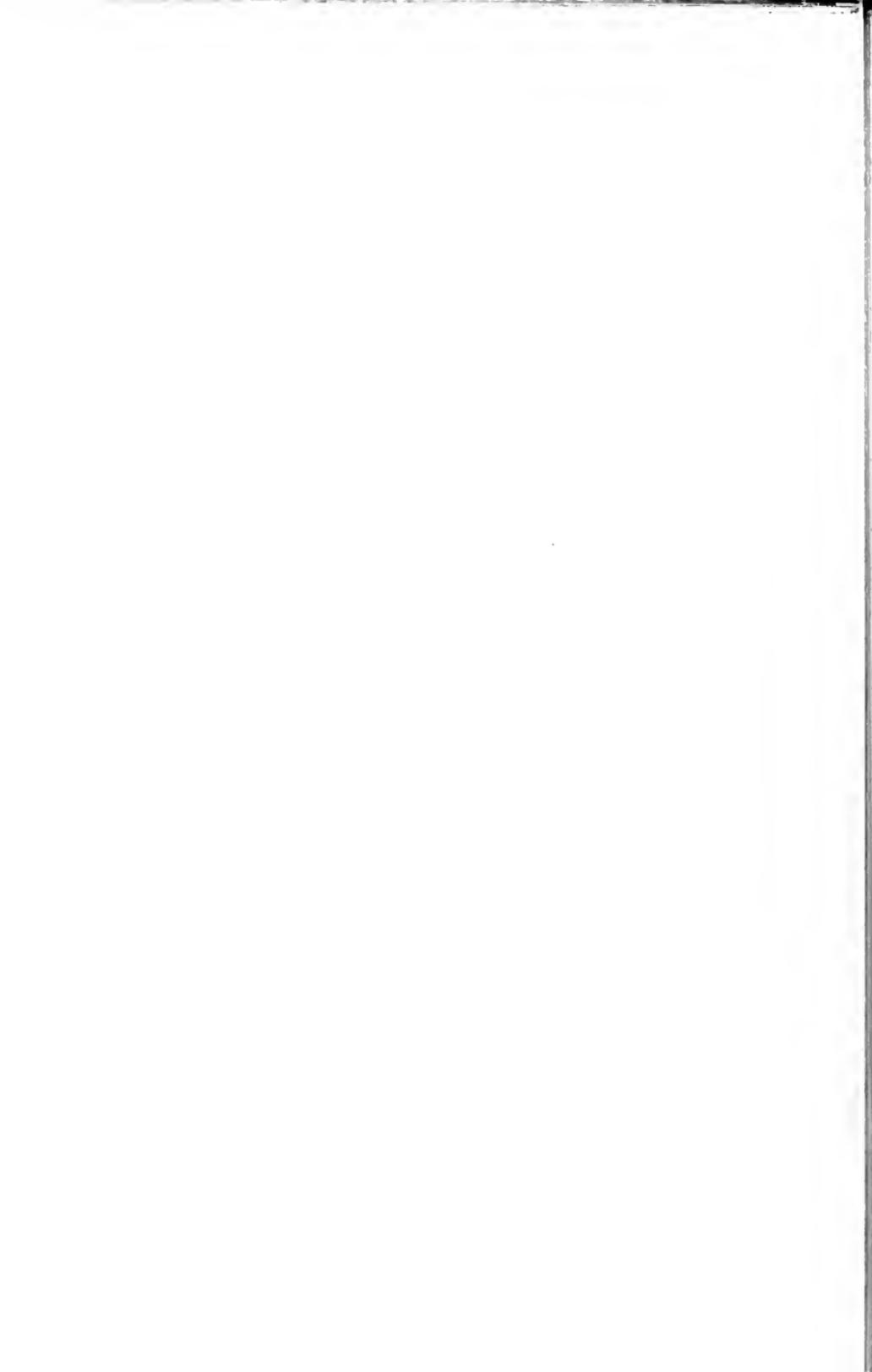
serpine.—PLATO, *Timæus*, 24. A remarkable geological coincidence may be pointed out. Lyell says, "If we are asked where the continent was placed, from the ruins of which the Wealden strata were derived; we are almost tempted to speculate on the former existence of the Atlantis of Plato, which may be true in geology, although fabulous as a historical event. We know that the present European lands have come into existence almost entirely since the deposition of the chalk, and the same period may have sufficed for the disappearance of a continent of equal magnitude situated further west."—*Principles of Geology*, vol. iii. p. 330. In Dante's time, the existence of the American continent was unknown; and the learned generally denied the existence of Antipodes, believing that beyond Europe and Africa the west was all ocean.

<sup>1</sup> "Perhaps also this hollow cave was, at the same time, and from the same cause, left vacant by the land retreating in the opposite direction, and becoming heaped together, so as to form the island in which we shall presently emerge." This island Cary calls "The mountain of Purgatory."

<sup>2</sup> The distance from Satan at the centre to the surface of that opposite hemisphere, was as great as that through which they had passed before they reached him. "*La tomba*," "the tomb," is the phrase here employed to signify hell.

My guide and I by this dim cover'd way  
Enter'd, the world of light again to find;  
And without caring for repose to stay,  
We climb'd up through, he first and I behind:  
Some of heaven's brilliant lights beheld I then,  
Which through a round and rocky opening shined,  
Whence issuing forth we saw the stars again.





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