Rivière

3, 6, 10-12; 15-16; 18, 30, 33
THE DIVINE COMEDY
OF DANTE

Translated into English Verse

WITH NOTES

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. II.

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1888
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The Riverside Press, Cambridge:
Electrotyped and Printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.
DANTE, LATINI, AND CORSO DONATI. By Giotto, probably.
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CANTO SEVENTEENTH.

ARGUMENT:

The sun sets. Dante falls into a trance, and in vision sees Itys the wife of Atreus, Haman, Lavinia. The vision, which thus furnished memorable examples of anger and its results, being ended, the Poets, guided by an Angel, ascend to the fourth terrace, where the slothful undergo purgation, the voices of the spirits chanting the while: "Blessed are the peacemakers." Night comes on and Virgil discourses.

TIME: Evening of Easter Monday.


SEARCH through thy memory, Reader, for the time When, on an Alp, a pierceless mist thee lapped, Just as a mole his sod within is wrapped; Then, when began the dense and vapory rime The air to tinge, and, dimmed, the Sun's red sphere Seemed wading through a thickening heavenly mere, And thine imagination will embrace What then I saw: that Sun whose evening glow Into the west sank down sedately slow.
And, with my Master's faithful feet like pace
Maintaining, came I from that cloud to rays
Which on the lower Mount had spent their blaze.
O Reverie fair! that from without dost steal
Sometimes our senses far from heed or care
E'en though around a thousand bugles blare,
What moves thee, if our senses nothing feel?
Moves thee a light spontaneous in the sky,
Or one which Will divine bids downward fly?

Traced in my mind's imaginings first there came
That one's impiety dire whose form was changed
Into that bird which joys in melody strange.
And here my mind kept so its inward frame,
Was so in reverie wrapped, that place it gave
To nought without that might admittance crave.
Next showered into my lofty fantasy's field
One crucified, whose visage spoke of pride
And rancorous rage wherein he fiercely died;

About him one who kingly power did wield,
Ahasuerus great, Esther his wife, and nigh,
In word and action blameless, Mordecai.
As, of itself, this airy image sprung
All into nothingness, just as when bursts
A bubble which for failing water thirsts,
Into my vision came a maiden young
Who bitterly wept, and cried: "O queen, why sought
Thine angry mind to bring thyself to nought?
"To save Lavinia, self-slain thou, through spite, 37
Thus me hast lost, and I must blend
Tears for thine, mother, and another's end."
As ceases sleep when comes a sudden light
Startling the eyelids, and first quivering sighs
The broken slumber ere it wholly dies,
Thus from before me ceased those visions quite,
Soon as upon my face effulgence smote,
More vivid far than aught of earthly note.

As round I turned to mark where we might be, 46
I heard a voice: "The pass ye mount here find!"
The voice me to its mandate so inclined
And me so full of eagerness made to see
The face of him who spoke from out such rays,
I could not choose but in his face to gaze.
But, as the Sun's blaze doth the eyesight quell,
While in its own excess its disk is veiled,
E'en so before these rays mine eyesight quailed.

"A spirit divine this is, who doth us tell, 55
Without the asking, of our upward way,
And doth himself conceal in ray on ray.
Treats he our wants as his own wants treats man,
For he the need who sees but waits request
Almost as one refusing stands confessed.
Now let our feet so guided seek the van,
Let's mount with haste ere darkness intervene,
Else must we wait till day again is seen."
Thus spoke my Guide; a path we took which brings
Unto a stairway, and as soon as were
My footsteps pressed upon the lowest stair,
Near me I felt a waving as of wings
That fanned my face, and "Blessed " said "are ye
The peacemakers, who are from anger free."
Above our heads uplifted to such length
Were the last sunbeams, followed close by night,
That frequent stars shed from the heavens their light.

"Why parted from me art thou, O my strength?"
Within myself I said; for o'er-toiled thews
To me their aid seemed almost to refuse.
The stairway now had us to that point brought
Which marked its final rise, and there stood we
Still as at shore a bark arrived from sea.
And I some little space allowed to thought,
And strained, in that new height, my listening ear,
Then counsel sought from mine Instructor dear:

"Say, Father mine, what stain is here made pure?"
Although at outset of this circle, night
Our steps arrest, let still thy speech give light."
And he to me: "Here slackness doth mature;
Here indolent love of good finds quickened pace,
And oars neglected bend to win the race.
But give unto my words thy diligent care,
And thou shalt more explicitly understand,
And rich fruits taste from your so-cultured land."
“Neither Creator nor created e’er,
   My son, of love was destitute, whether flown
From nature forth or spirit. This is to thee known.
The natural ever without error was;
The other errs if bent on evil aims
Or where it lags or, being excessive, flames.
If natural love be governed by wise laws,
   And spiritual meekly moderates its delight,
Then every joy is free from injury quite.

“But let it turn to ill, or ardor, more
   Or less than due, show in pursuit of good,
Creator then by creature is withstood.
Hence th’ inference comes that love the core
   And seed is of each virtue in your souls
And of each act which God for punishment holds.
Now, since it cannot be but that love’s eye
   That which it loves doth kindly contemplate,
All are secure from danger of self-hate;

“And since our love cannot that One deny
   That First is, and from whom we all depend,
Hatred of Him at once comes to an end.
If I discriminate fairly, it must be
   That t’wards your neighbor love of ill doth lay.
In three modes is such love born in your clay.
There are who in their neighbor’s downfall see
Preferment for themselves, and thence delight
Have in the thought he fall may from his height.
"There are who fear power, favor, honor, fame, From them may slip if doth another rise, And thence the opposites they of all these prize. And there are they whom injury doth inflame, So that revenge they thirst for; it must needs Another's harm from such ill-will proceeds. This threefold love below there is bewailed. Now of the other I would have thee learn, Which, seeking good, due rule and mode doth spurn.

"All know that bliss exists, though vaguely veiled, A rest for mental strain, and heart and soul Of its bright, restful, ways desire control. But they who them seek out with love remiss And languid, penitence first being shown, In torments of this terrace must atone. And happiness flees pursuit in other bliss: A false felicity, not that essence blest It is of bliss which fruit and root attest.

"The love in this pursuit too lavishly spent The terraces three above us put to pain, But this threefold division's place to attain Seek thou thyself, upon its paths intent."

NOTES TO THE SEVENTEENTH CANTO.

21. "That bird." An allusion, some think, to the story of the guilty slayer of her own son Itys, given by Ovid in the Sixth Book of his Metamorphoses; but it is more probably
an allusion to the story of the innocent slayer of her own son Itylius, given by Homer in the Nineteenth Book of the Odyssey.


34. "A maiden young." Lavinia, the bride of Æneas, and daughter of Queen Amata. The queen, devoted to Turnus, the ill-fated rival of Æneas, took her own life on learning of the defeat of her favorite. The story is told in the Twelfth Book of the Æneid.

To this unfortunate queen Dante compares the Republic of Florence, in that famous letter to the emperor, Henry the Seventh of Germany, wherein the poet-exile urges the "noble Harry" to march upon her gates: "This is the impatient Amata, who, having refused the fated marriage, feared not to espouse her daughter to one forbidden by the Fates."

Herein Dante means that Florence had refused the rule of the Ghibellines, and had espoused her future to the destinies of the Guelphs.

39. "And another's end." In all the editions of Cary accessible, including the latest and sumptuous one published by Cassell & Company, the text of Cary here reads "a mother's timeless end." This is, possibly, a misprint for "another's timeless end," to wit, Turnus's. Or (as the contextual phrase of Cary, "ere I fall," is not in Dante) Cary may have understood Dante's word "altrui" as referring, not to the death of Turnus, but to contemplated suicide on the part of Lavinia herself. This idea leads to the inference that Cary had not made himself acquainted with the character and career of Lavinia.

53. "In its own excess."

"Dark with excessive bright." Milton.

67. "Wings that fanned my face." The Angel fanned with his wings the face of Dante in order to take from his forehead another P, that representing the sin of anger.

68. "Blessed are ye the peacemakers." For ye "shall be called the children of God." Matthew v. 9.
72. "Frequent stars shed from the heavens their light." "Le stelle apparivan da più lati." The first line of this tercet, line 70, marks the middle point of the Commedia.

According to the authority of Lombardi, the name of the first student calling attention to the circumstance that each of the three divisions of the Commedia ends with the word "stars," is Giuseppe De Cesare Napoletano. I believe myself to be the first student of Dante calling attention to the circumstance that the middle sentence of the whole Commedia turns on the same word, "stars."

77. "And there stood we." Statius, whose stay in Purgatory seems to have been more than twelve hundred years, will relate that "for lukewarmness" he ran round this fourth terrace more than four hundred years, and that he lay prostrate among the prodigals in the fifth more than five hundred years, thus devoting more than nine hundred years to the two terraces. Post, Canto xxi. line 68; Canto xxii. line 63.

124. "Below there." On the lower terraces of the Mountain, the terraces of the proud, the envious, and the wrathful. On the present terrace are punished the slothful, the lukewarm.
CANTO EIGHTEENTH.

ARGUMENT:
The Poets in conversation await the approach of morning. On its approach they meet a multitude of spirits, and hear exclamations urging to diligence.

TIME: Evening and night of Easter Monday.


PERSONS APPEARING: The spirits of the slothful undergoing purgation and in rapid motion.

HAD his discourse now brought unto an end
The lofty Teacher, and his look benign
Sought in my face contentment's pleasing sign;
And I, in whom thirst did with diffidence blend,
Without was mute, but said within: "Perchance I questionings make more than his patience grants."

But that true Father whose prompt care had kenned
The timid wish that kept itself unsaid,
Spoke, and before his voice my faltering fled,
And said I thus: "My Master, so my mind
Illumination gains from splendors thine,
That all thy scope with ease is rendered mine,
Therefore I beg that thou, sweet Father kind,
To me that love unfold thou deem'st the Sun
Wherefrom all actions good and evil run."
"To what I now impart be thy clear ken
Applied," he said, "and henceforth know e'en
nigher
How blindly err they who to lead aspire.

"The soul by nature leans to love, and when
By pleasure wakened into action, seeks
That pleasing thing which to her promptings speaks.
An image from some real outward thing
Your apprehension draws; of it makes show;
And t'wards it makes the soul's inclinations grow.
If thus a charm upon the soul ye bring,
The inclination love is called, and bound
Within you thence is natural pleasure found.

"Then, just as upward mounts the heaven-born fire,
By its inherent tendency, and there
Its birthplace seeks, where it doth longest fare,
So yields the captive soul unto desire,—
Which is a spiritual motion,—nor doth rest
Until of what it loves it be possessed.
Now mayst thou see how from the truth they stray
Who deem that, as it changes mood or phrase,
Love merits in itself the meed of praise.
"Good always seem, perhaps, its substance may, 37
Yet every seal 's not good, nor defect lacks,
While good may be the thing impressed, the wax."

"Thy words," I said, "and my leal mind the doubt
I had, resolve, and love to me make plain,
Yet still strives doubt a place once more to gain,
For if to us love 's offered from without,
And if the soul none other footing hath,
No merit 's hers, or right or wrong her path."

And he to me: "What reason clear maintains 46
Myself have power to tell; remains a task
Beyond for faith; this do thou Beatrice ask.
Each spiritual essence which a union gains
With matter, wherewith yet it is not blent,
Specific virtue draws from influence spent,
Which is not felt unless it force attains,
Nor proven but by the effect, as seen
Life in the plant is when the leaves are green.

"But, still, of that remote source, whence we know 55
The primal things, we ignorant are; we fail
To see how first our souls allurements hail,
Which glow in man as in the bee doth glow
The honey-gathering zeal, an impulse mere
Which praise nor greets, nor blame attacks severe,
But there 's a principle, innate, supreme,
The power that counsels; and with virtue bold
Its sway the threshold of assent should hold."
"And as its diligence is doth so esteem
Your actions clothe, its duty being plain
To winnow chaff and garner golden grain.

Those who in learning sought the ultimate truth
That innate freedom found, and, fame-enwreathed,
They moral precepts to the world bequeathed.
Grant then that from necessity, or in youth
Or age, each love takes flame, the power ye hold
Within ye by the which it is controlled.

"This noble virtue, modest and sedate,
Beatrice styles free will; bear this in mind,
If her this theme discussing thou shouldst find."

The Moon, now almost unto midnight late,
Dim made the stars and rare, the while it rose
As 't were a kettle that with burnishing glows,
And, 'gainst the heavens' due course, that path pursued
The Sun illumes, when one, in Rome's streets met,
Sardinia 'twixt and Corsica sees it set.

And that great Shade, for whom is most imbued,
'Mongst Mantuan towns, Pietola with renown,
Had from my brow removed thought's burdening frown.

Whence I who reasoning full and wise and clear
To all my questionings had received, now stood
As one in dreamy reverie's absent mood.
But suddenly broke my reverie from our rear
A troop of people that upon us poured
As round the curve they came a hurrying horde.
And as Ismenus and Asopus found,
When droughty Thebes soft showers from Bacchus prayed,
A rush at night on their parched valleys made,
So they, along that terrace made their round,
And their sure riders in that penitent race,
Good will and holy love, made swift their pace.
O'ertaking us, the throng entire moved on,
A multitude vast, of whom two, in the lead,
Spoke forth, with sorrowful accents, while at speed:

"In haste the Mountains Mary blessed won;
And Cæsar, that he might Ilerda gain,
His fangs in Marseilles thrust, then flew to Spain!"

"O haste," the other shouted, "let not lost
Be any time through lack of fervent zeal,
For grace grows best in those who ardor feel!"

"O ye, in whom your fervor now 's the cost
Ye pay, perhaps, for slothful, careless aims,
Of charity sweet neglectful and her claims,

"This man who lives — to you I tell no lie —
Will seek the terrace higher when darkness ends,
So point us out the path which thither tends."

So spoke my Guide, and some who hurried by
Said: "If allowed, come, follow us on behind,
And the cleft cliff thou seekest thou shalt find;
We may not loiter; so we dread to pause
That stay we cannot; and we pardon ask
If we discourteous seem in this our task."
"I, San Zeno's abbot at Verona was,
Beneath good Barbarossa's able sway,
A sway Milan laments unto this day;
And hath one foot already in his grave
He who that monastery yet shall weep,
And his abuse of power, which there would keep
His son, whom ills of flesh and soul deprave,
And whose base birth should give him station due
In evil wrought 'gainst its own pastor true."

And whether here he mute was, or said more,
I know not, he so far us had o'erpassed,
But this I heard, and memory this holds fast.
And he who aid always unto me bore
Me led: "Turn now, for here are two who tear,
With eager teeth, sloth's ill-clad body bare!"
These closed the throng, and this they shouted:
"They
'Fore whom the sea fled opened were first dead
Ere pressed their heirs on Jordan's banks their tread!

"And they who with Æneas did not stay,
To bide fatigue, and see the end of all,
Gave glory up, to feebleness soft in thrall!"
Then, when from us the final flickering gleam
Of those swift souls had passed, there came a thought
Into my mind, with varying fancies fraught,
Whence others came, in one continuous stream,
Which me o'erwhelmed in reverie's peaceful waves
And satisfaction which nought further craves,
And meditation changed was into dream.

NOTES TO THE EIGHTEENTH CANTO.

1. "His discourse." With Dante's phrases here Cary suggests that we compare Plato (Protagoras, v. 3, p. 123 of Bip. edit.); and Apollonius Rhodius, i. 513; and Milton:

"The Angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice that he awhile
Thought him still speaking, still stood fixed to hear."

3. "Contentment's pleasing sign." It should be observed that Virgil here employs towards Dante what may be termed an investigating attitude. For this peculiarity of attitude the reason is the obscure air of night. The night was, as yet, moonless.

5. "Your apprehension." The apprehension, the will, which is free to act, and which acts on its own responsibility. The soul awaits for and receives and entertains that which the will brings to it.

30. "Its birthplace seeks." We here again meet with that sublime philosophy of Dante touched upon in the Sixteenth Canto of the present division of the Commedia, the supreme desire of all things in nature to regain their source, and the ultimate destination of the soul as obedient to the same law. This, indeed, seems to be the controlling idea in the Dantean eschatology. See the note to line 90 of the Canto just cited.

53. "Life in the plant." "Form," say the Scholastic philosophers, "is the passing from the Potential to the Actual." In the same sense, Saint Thomas, Summa lxvi. 1, says that "Whatever is Act is Form."

78. "As't were a kettle that with burnishing glows."

"Fatta com' un secchione che tutto arda."

Landino, followed by Cary, supposes that here the word should be not "secchione" but "scheggione," the latter word meaning "crag," and being more poetical than the term
The present translator was so fortunate as to come upon this portion of his translation, and upon this suggestion of these worthy Dantes, on the very day of the moon mentioned by Dante as that on which the Poets looked out upon that orb from the terrace of the penitent sluggards on the Purgatorial Mountain, five days after the full. His date was the 26th day of December, 1885. He had less than an hour to wait, and no change of posture to make. He could see the Moon as she rose into the heavens, as he sat at his desk, and, luckily, the sky was cloudless. At about twenty minutes before eleven o'clock the Moon appeared. As he observed this Moon, he should say that neither term applied, but rather bucket than crag. The moon was a deep bowl rather than a bucket. It was somewhat more than a hemisphere; the wide mouth of the bowl was tipped over towards the south, the deviation from the perpendicular being about fifteen degrees. To his eye it seemed a kettle of brass burnished, and in form identical with that vessel which, in the military commissariat, is termed a camp-kettle, and in agricultural economy a sugar-kettle. The round bottom, the wide mouth it had of these kettles, a shape seen in the kettle hat of the knights of the Middle Ages.

79. "That path pursued." Dante's meaning is that when the Sun is in the same sign as that in which the Moon then was, namely, the sign of the Scorpion, the Sun, to the inhabitants of Rome, sets between the islands of Corsica and Sardinia.

82. "Most imbued ... Pietola." Because Pictola, now Andes, was the birthplace of Virgil.

91. "Ismenus and Asopus." Rivers in Thebes on whose banks the votaries of Bacchus crowded at night beseeching him for rain to revive their vineyards.

100. "In haste the Mountains Mary blessed won." "And Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste." Luke i. 39.

101, 102. "Cesar ... flew to Spain." Leaving Brutus and Tribonius at Marseilles to prosecute the siege of that
city, Cæsar hastened to Ilerda (now Lerida) to attack the forces of Pompey. Lucan, Pharsalia, Books iii. and iv.; Cæsar, De Bello Civili, Book i.


119. "Good Barbarossa." Born 1121, died 1190, the good Barbarossa (Redbeard) was Frederick the First, Emperor of Germany, grandfather of Frederick the Second. Barbarossa conducted severe campaigns against Milan, Brescia, Placenza, and Cremona. German popular tradition represents him as sitting in a cave in the Kipphäuser Mountains, in front of him a stone table through which his wonderful beard (now possibly white) has grown. The tradition indicates the peculiar regard in which he was held by the people.

Longfellow suggests that Barbarossa's gallant championship of the rights of the temporal power was what endeared him to Dante. But this circumstance derives qualification from the fact that Barbarossa was in full reconciliation with the pope long before his death, and that, at the pope's request, he entered upon the crusade which cost him his life. This reconciliation, and this death in a glorious cause, may have suggested to Dante to call him good. There is another reason: the emperor's last wife — he had divorced his first — bore the name, beloved by Dante, of Beatrice, and this circumstance in connection with yet another, that Frederick was a person of great charms of character and person, must have endeared his name to Dante. The emperor is said, indeed, to have possessed personal characteristics closely resembling those of the Poet.

133. "First dead." Numbers xxxii. 11, 12.

136. "Gave glory up."

"Acestes hast thou here, a Dardan, born
Of race divine. Him take into thy plans.
And him a willing ally shalt thou find.
To him the people of the lost ships give.
And to them add all who have irksome found
 Thy noble enterprise and thine affairs.
The men grown old, the matrons wearied out
Notes.

With life at sea, and whatsoe'er thou hast
Of weak or timid, seek thou out, and them
In walls permit within these lands their limbs
To rest, and by the King's permission given,
They shall their new-built town Acesta call."

Nantes to Æneas, Fifth Æneid, 712.
CANTO NINETEENTH.

ARGUMENT:

The dawn of the third day approaches. The Poets meet the Siren. As the Siren is addressing them, Philosophy attacks her. An Angel fans from Dante's forehead the P of sloth, and attends the Poets to the fifth terrace, devoted to the purgation of the avaricious, prostrate on the earth, and weeping. Dante converses with the shade of Pope Adrian the Fifth.

TIME: Dawn of Easter Tuesday.


PERSONS APPEARING: Shades of the avaricious prostrated and in lamentation.

That hour it was, when of the heat of day
No lingerings the Moon's cold beams o'erpowered,
By Earth, perhaps by Saturn's, influence, showered,
When in the Orient, ere dawn's whitening gray,
The geomancer sees arise and fade
His Greater Fortune which the stars have made,
Into my dream a stammering woman came,
Whose eyes were strained, whose feet were illy used,
Whose hands were lame, whose face was tint-abused.
I looked at her, and as the sunshine's flame
Cheers chilly limbs benumbed by nightly cold,
E'en thus my gaze from her the frost unrolled.
Tongue, limbs, in little while their faculties gained,
And came once more health's hue into her face,
With love's own light illumined and wildering grace.
When thus again fair speech she had attained,
She such a strain melodious poured along
That scarce could I have torn me from her song.

"I," thus she sang, "I am the siren sweet,
Who mariners brave unman upon the mere,
Such dear delight one feels my notes to hear.
I from his course Ulysses drew discreet,
Enchanted by my voice, and he who me
Once sees, contented, seldom seeks to flee."
While yet her mouth was open, there was seen
A Lady, saint-like, bright, with well-knit frame,
Close to my side, to put her unto shame.

"Virgil, O Virgil!" with a stern, vexed mien,
"Who's this?" she said; and he now forward came
With eyes fixed fast upon that goodly dame.
She seized the other, and her front made bare,
And bared her belly, and her garments rent;
Stench rose, and thus from me my slumber went.
Mine eyes I turned, and saw good Virgil there:
"Three times at least," he said, "I've called thee; rise,
And let us t'wards the ascent bend searching eyes."
I rose; and was already day's full glow
With all the sacred Mountain's circles blent,
And smote our backs his arrows as we went.

Behind was I, and held my forehead so
As one whose mind is burdened down with thought
Till he to seem a bridge-pier arched is brought;
When heard I said: "Come, here the stairway springs!"
And in a voice so gentle, sweet and bland,
As ne'er met human ear on mortal strand.

With marshalling bright of swan-like, open wings
He who had spoken guided us along
To two sheer walls of solid granite strong,
And then his pinions moved he, and us fanned,
While he affirmed that they that mourn are blest,
For they shall comfort have and holy rest.
"What aileth thee? On what's thine heaviness planned?
Why bent to earth?" began my Leader good,
We now being higher than where the Angel stood.

And I: "A vision new with such demur
Me fills, and so controls this heart of mine
That it my spirit hesitates to resign."
"Didst thou behold that old enchantress, her
Whose wiles alone above us lead to grief?"
He said, "and how from her is gained relief?
Enough. Now let thine heels spurn earth; now raise
Aloft thine eyes, and fix them on the lure
The King Eternal whirs through orbits pure."
E'en as the falcon who his feet surveys,
Then seeks the sky, and, eager, stretches on,
By strong desire of food to such flight drawn,
So I the call obeyed, long as the rise
Of stairways mounting through the granite riven
Sent me up nearer to the planes of heaven.
On the fifth terrace when I set mine eyes
People I saw upon it strewn, who wept
While, downward turned, they miserably crept.

"My soul hath cleaved to the dust," I heard,
With sighs that came from such a depth of woe,
That what the words were scarcely could one know.
"O ye elect of God, by him preferred,
Whom Hope and Justice wait on in your pain,
Us lead to where we higher ascents may gain."
"If our prone attitude hard ye here are spared,
And would in readiest mode the height attain,
See that your right hands t'wards the brink remain."

The Poet thus inquired: the answer fared
From those in front of us some little space,
And in its words I saw of others trace.
And with my Liege's glance mine, querying, played;
Whence he, at once interpreting what I meant,
A cheerful sign me gave of his assent.
When free to act I found myself thus made,
T'wards that same shade I drew, and o'er him stood,
Because his words had given to inference food,
And said: "O Shade, in whom the penitent tear 
Makes God propitious to the earnest prayer,
Resign for me awhile thy greater care.

Say who thou wast, and why do thus appear 
Your backs turned upward, and if I in aught 
Can serve thee, there wherefrom my journey's 
brought."

And he: "Why Heaven our backs turns t'wards 
its arch
Learn soon, but this first know, thou whose 
thought soars,
That I of Peter the successor was.

"Siestri 'twixt and Chiaveri march
A beautiful river's waves, and from its name 
My lineage draws its title, known to fame.
A month and somewhat o'er of trial me taught 
How weighs the mantle down him who from mire 
It guards; are feathers all loads else that tire.
All late, alas! was my conversion wrought 
But when the Roman Shepherd's staff I held 
How false a dream our life is I beheld.

"I saw that to the heart it gave not rest,
And that therein no prouder height stood forth;
Thence 't was of this I found the priceless worth.
For till that time a soul I was distressed,
From God remote, devoured by avarice; now,
Thou seest how low this punishment doth me bow.
Where to doth avarice lead is here declared 
In moods so meek wherein our souls are cleansed,
And on this Mount no sin more pain attends;
"For, as our eyes, by earthly things ensnared,
Failed things above to heed, doth justice here
Them with the earth merge in this mode severe.
As avarice had of good our liking quelled,
And us inert made and our faculties faint,
So here doth Justice hold us in restraint,
Our feet and hands to fetters' bonds compelled,
And long as it shall please our Sovereign Lord,
We await, immovable, his blessed word."

I on my knees had fallen, and sought to speak;
But, ere my wish had framing, and he, through
His listening only, of mine homage knew,
"Wherefore," he said, "mak'st thou this reverence meek?"
"Compunction moved me that I stood so nigh
To one who bears your titled dignity high."
"Up, brother," he exclaimed, "regain thy feet,
For I thy fellow-servant am, nor thine
Alone— all men's— towards one Power divine.

"If ever thou those holy words didst meet
Of evangelic truth which say 'Nor be
In marriage given,' my reason thou dost see.
And now no more, but go thy ways, I pray,
Because thy presence doth my tears make cease
Which, as thou saidst, must ripen us for that peace.
A grandchild mine upon the earth doth stay,
Alagia, of her own mind good, unless
Our house's training teach her to digress.

Servant of Servants.
"And all I have, she is, on earth this day."

NOTES TO THE NINETEENTH CANTO.

6. "Greater Fortune." Geomancy was, originally, as the name implies, earth-divination — the prediction of the future by an arrangement of pebbles on the earth or dots made in the sand. The Greater Fortune was, naturally, a lucky combination of these pebbles or dots, suggested by the order, or imagined order, or disorder, of certain stars in the constellations of the Waterman and the Fishes, and its form suggested a tuning-fork, or a hand-mirror, or the trident of Paracelsus, thus:

* * *
* * *
* * *
* *

The thing seems puerile, but Dante finds it impossible to keep aloof from anything savoring, in however remote a degree, of astronomy. It should not be forgotten that, two hundred years after the date of Dante, Paracelsus was consulted by Erasmus.

15. "Love's own light."

"A smile that glowed
Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue."

Milton.

39. "Smote our backs his arrows." The time being just after sunrise, and the position of the sun being in the northeast, and the sea being always to the right of the Poets (post, this Canto, line 81, and Canto xxii. line 122), it follows that they were now on the north side of the Mountain, walking towards the southwest.

50. "They that mourn." Matthew v. 4.
58. "Didst thou behold?" The intimation is that Virgil,
uninformed by Dante, and of his own knowledge, knew the incidents of the dream.

59. "Above us lead to grief." To the terraces of the avaricious, the gluttonous, and the lustful.

73. "My soul." Psalm cxix.

81. "See that your right hands 'wards the brink remain." See Canto xxii. at line 122.

99. "That I."

"Scias quod ego fui successor Petri."

The spirit which speaks is that of Pope Adrian the Fifth. By birth a Genoese, he was nephew of Pope Innocent the Fifth. Infirm when raised to the papacy in 1276, he survived that event only a month and nine days. To his elevation to the papacy Dante attributes his regret for the avarice which, Dante alleges, had ruled his life. It is observable that this pontiff's elevation and death took place in Dante's eleventh year. Adrian's niece, mentioned later in the Canto, was one of Dante's benefactors during his exile.

101. "A beautiful river." The Lavagna, which gave name to the Counts of Lavagna.

117. "No sin more pain attends." Saint Bernard: "By the vice of avarice men of religion are most vehemently afflicted."


142. "Alagia." The niece of the pontiff, and wife of Marcello Malaspina. Their hospitable residence afforded Dante an asylum in the year 1307. To this lady, or to Dante as her guest, were sent from Florence, some say, the first six Cantos of the Inferno.
CANTO TWENTIETH.

ARGUMENT:

Avarice and prodigality undergo purgation. The Poets hear lamentations and rejoicings, and Dante converses with Capet, who rehearses a number of historical instances. A great trembling of the Mountain is felt, caused by the moving aloft of a purified soul. This soul, as will be seen in the next Canto, is Statius, a Roman Poet, contemporary with the Emperor Titus.

TIME: Morning of Easter Tuesday.

PERSONS SPEAKING: The lamenting spirits. The rejoicing spirits shouting the Gloria in Excelsis. Hugh Capet.

PERSONS APPEARING: The shade of Virgil, and numerous spirits.

ILL strives one's will against a will more wise; Therefore to please him, not myself, I drew The sponge out of the water not soaked through. I onward moved, moved him too I so prize, My Leader, skirting where space offered small, As when press battlements close upon the wall; For they who drop by drop through sad eyes pour That malady which doth all the world infect Left on the brink small margin to elect.
Accurst be thou, vile wolf! whose gorge doth more
Inglut of prey than every beast beside,
Yet stands with unchecked hunger open wide!
Ye orbs of heaven! round whom is here below,
As some suppose, our mortal destiny coiled,
When will he come through whom she shall be foiled?
Onward we went with footsteps brief and slow,
And I attentive to the shades, whose tears
And piteous wailing smote mine eyes and ears.

And one in front of us I chanced to hear
"Sweet Mary!" say amidst those mingling woes
As doth a dame in childbirth's twinging throes.
The voice kept on: "How poor thou wast and drear
Shows that low roof within that humble town
Where thou didst lay thy sacred burden down."
And afterwards this: "O good Fabricius, thou
Didst virtue choose with poverty's pangs allied
Rather than wealth to vice's baseness tied!"

These words with pleasure did me so endow
That further on I drew that I might seek
To know somewhat of him who did them speak.
Again he spoke, and this time was his word
Of Nicholas' gifts on maidens poor bestowed,
That they might tread with honor youth's fair road.

"O soul, whose excellent words I just have heard,"
I said, "tell me who wast thou, and why raise
No lips but thine to such examples praise."
“Not without recompense sure shall be thy boon
If I return unto its end to bring
That life which flies upon a restless wing.”
And he: “I ’ll tell thee, not that may attune
With mine congenial prayers, but for the grace
That, ere thou diest, shineth in thy face.
I was the root of that plant yielding ill
Which so the Christian world doth cast in shade
That gathering there of good fruit ’s seldom made;

“But if Douay and Ghent and Bruges and Lille
Had power, soon vengeance would it smite,
And pray I so of Him whose judgment ’s right.
Hugh Capet called was I upon the earth;
Me sire the Louises and Philips own,
They who have lately filled of France the throne.
To a Parisian butcher I owe birth;
And, when the ancient kings had passed away,
Save only one, him clothed in cloth of gray,

“I found the reins of rulership in my hands,
And power abounding such for public ends
And round me such a hedge of helpful friends,
That placed the widowed diadem of those lands
Was on the head of mine own son, and brings
From him its lineage down this race of kings.
Till the great dower of Provence had removed
Out of our lowly blood the sense of shame,
Not strong it was, yet harm none from it came.
“Then was it lies and force keen terrors proved, And then took Ponthieu, for amends, its sword, And soon was Normandy's and Gascony's lord. Charles came to Italy next, and, for amends, Slew youthful Conradin, and then to heaven The Angelic Teacher, for amends, was given. A time I see which rapidly hither wends, When shall from France another Charles appear To flaunt more widely him and his kin near.

“Unarmed he goes, excepting with that lance The arch-traitor bore, and that so deftly bears That he the bowels of poor Florence tears. He thence not land shall gain, but shall advance In sin on sin, whose force shall be more strong As lighter he doth deem such hideous wrong. I see the other, just escaped, recaught On ship-board, his own daughter sell, as trade The Corsairs females they their slaves have made.

“O Avarice, what b'yond this couldst thou have sought To make my blood so thine own proper fund That bartering its own flesh hath not it stunned! That may past ill and future sink compared, I see the flower-de-luce Alagna take And Christ in his own Vicar captive make. I see him mocked again; for him prepared The vinegar sop and torturing gall again; And, living thieves between, I see him slain.
"The modern Pilate yet doth not relent,
But, in his violent course, scorns all decrees
And seeks the Temple's courts through evil seas.

O God, my Sovereign, let me taste content
Through seeing the secret vengeance which thy wrath
Shall make seem sweet when strewed upon their path!
What I was overheard by thee to say
Of that sole bride the Holy Ghost doth claim,
And whereof thou wert querying, this the aim

"And theme is whereto all here humbly pray
While lasts the daylight: when the darkness falls
It to a different utterance us recalls.
Then do we base Pygmalion's name repeat
Whom thirst of gold led into frightful crimes,
Who traitor, thief, and parricide was betimes.

We find then greedy Midas' story meet,
And that disgrace his thirsty soul did quaff,
Whereat one ne'er can quell the rising laugh.

"Doth, then, each one the fond Achan record,
And how he stole the spoils, so that the fear
Of Joshua's anger seems to sting him here.
Sapphira next we blame and him her lord;
The hoof-strokes Heliodorus felt we praise
And the whole Mount doth in abhorrence raise
Of Polymnestor slayer of Polydore.
And last our voices swell: 'O Crassus, rolled
Beneath thy tongue, how now doth taste thy gold?'}
"The voice we speak in doth not always soar,
But some speak low if promptings such are theirs,
But each along the general chorus bears.
Therefore alone I was not when my song
Rehearsed that blessedness high we sing by day,
But no voice else was heard the words to say."
From him we had already moved along,
And were our efforts using to make speed,
That we might unto yet higher scenes proceed,

When I perceived, as from a vast weight's fall,
The Mountain tremble. Thence me seized a chill
As tremors him conveyed to death will fill.
Compared with this were Delos' tremblings small
When there Latona made her nest divine,
To bring to birth the eyes that make heaven shine.
Then upon all sides rose a vehement shout,
Which brought my Master promptly to my side,
Who me bade: "Fear not, I am still thy Guide."

"Glory!" the sound resounded all about
From those who near enough were to mine ear
To catch the bursts that now rose high and clear:
"Glory in the highest be to God!" Until
The trembling ceased no single breath we stirred,
Even as the shepherds who that song first heard.
Then did we turn our journey to fulfil,
And watched our footsteps midst the shades whose plaint
Again rose piteous for their long restraint.
Ne'er in my breast had I so great strife found
Of ignorance struggling with desire to know,
Unless obscure my memory's records grow,
As in that moment, hemmed by mystery round;
But haste made me from questioning quite forbear,
And of myself I nought could answer there,
So fared I on in dread and reverie bound.

NOTES TO THE TWENTIETH CANTO.

2. "To please him." Pope Adrian the Fifth, with whom Dante had conversed in the preceding Canto.
15. "When will he come." Dante is generally supposed to refer here to his benefactor Can Grande della Scala, the greyhound of the First Canto of the Inferno.
25. "Fabricius." Caius Fabricius Lucinus, a Roman statesman, general, consul, and censor, who, after the highest employments in the state and in the army, died so poor that the government was obliged to provide him a funeral and to give marriage portions to his daughters. Virgil extols him in the Sixth Book of the Aeneid, and Dante in the Second of the De Monarchia.
32. "Nicholas." This is Saint Nicholas, monk, abbot, and finally bishop, of Myra, a marvel of good works, and the patron saint of children, sailors, and travellers. The story alluded to in the text is a most touching one, and is related with much sweetness and fervor of diction by Miss Eliza Allen Starr, in the second series of her Patron Saints. A nobleman found himself reduced to such poverty that his only relief seemed to him to be the bargaining away of the chastity of his three daughters. On three successive nights, by stealth, Nicholas threw a bag of gold into the house of the despairing man, and thus provided a marriage-portion for
each of his daughters. On the last night, the father, laying in wait, made prize of the saint, who urged him to tell no man.
36. "No lips but thine." This will be explained by Hugh Capet further on in the Canto.
43. "The root." Hugh Capet, the present interlocutor of Dante, is not the spirit of the King Hugh Capet, but that of the King's father, Hugh Capet the elder, Duke of France, Count of Paris. These Capets were ancestors of the Philips and Louises who, for two centuries and a half, from 1060 to 1316, occupied the throne of France. The "plant yielding ill" is Philip the Fair who assumed the throne in 1285, a wily, selfish, rapacious, vindictive king. The "vengeance" imprecated upon him by Dante came in 1302, at the Battle of Courtray, wherein the king lost his life. This battle, from the number of well-equipped knights unhorsed in it, was called the Battle of the Spurs of Gold.
52. "Butcher." This phrase, through its ambiguity, was calculated to put the French legitimists into a quandary, and it is possible that Dante used it to annoy them. A French prince, Charles of Valois, was, next to Pope Boniface, Dante's most intense aversion. The ambiguity of the phrase gave the French the choice of the two horns of the dilemma, either to admit the plebeian origin of the Capetian family, or to insist upon the bloodthirstiness of its remote ancestor. Francis the First concluded to reject both, and with them, Dante and the Commedia, and he forbade the reading of the Commedia in his dominions. We may well suppose that the announcement of the royal pleasure in this regard set the French to buying the work in quantities, and studying it in detail. These abused French legitimists, and their unhappy genealogical predicament, are discussed by Villani, Benvenuto, Pasquier, Ducange, and others.
53. "Save only one." The Man in the Cloth of Gray, the last of the Carolingian line. His name and identity, like that of the Man in the Iron Mask, remain a mystery. Rudolph, Charles of Lorraine, Charles the Simple, and Louis of Outre-Mer have all been named, but all as mere conjectures.
Canto XX.

Notes.

61. "Dower of Provence." The territory of Provence was the dower which Raymond Berenger gave with his daughter Beatrice who married Charles of Anjou, brother of Saint Louis. This marriage, and this acquisition of territory, gave the Capetians a standing. The two sisters of Beatrice had married, respectively, Henry the Third of England and Richard of Cornwall, king elect of Germany.

65. "For amends." The style is here ironical. Dante here details the conquests and usurpations of Philip the Fair and Charles of Anjou.

68. "Conradin." Son of the Emperor Conrad the Fourth, a youth of sixteen, possessed of great charms of person and character. In 1268, by order of Charles of Anjou, he was beheaded in the public square of Naples, after a mock trial, and by the order of a single judge, for the sole offence of fighting gallantly for his hereditary throne. Milman, Latin Christiity, xi. 3, gives an affecting account of this event.

69. "The Angelic Teacher." Saint Thomas of Aquin. Dante seems here to adopt the story which makes Charles of Anjou amenable as guilty of compassing the life of the saint, who died, in 1274, at the convent of Fossa Nuova in the Campagna, on his way to attend the Council of Lyons. But that his death was an unnatural one, the result of poison administered by a physician at the instigation of Charles, as has been asserted, rests only upon the wild gossip of wild times.

71. "Another Charles." Charles of Valois, brother of Philip the Fourth of France. Dante here compares this Charles to Judas. By Charles of Valois, whom Dante recognized merely as the tool of Boniface, Dante was expelled as a White Guelph, a churchman with imperialistic leanings. The expulsion had the effect to make the Poet a Black Ghibelline, an imperialist with a warm side for honest churchmen.


79. "The other." Charles the Second, son of Charles of Anjou, who endeavored to recover Sicily to the French, after
the revolution known as the “Sicilian Vespers.” He married his daughter to Azzo the Sixth, of Este, and Dante says he did it for money.

28. “O Avarice!”

“To what wilt thou not mortal bosoms drive,
Thou cursed thirst for gold!”

*Third Æneid, 56.*

86. “Flower de luce.” The ancient royal banner of France, so named, either from a certain species of marsh-lily, or from the River Lys, on the banks of which this species of lily abounded.

“O flower-de-luce, bloom on, and let the river
Linger to kiss thy feet!
O flower of song, bloom on, and make forever
The world more fair and sweet!”

*Longfellow.*

86. “Alagna.” Dante here does honor to his higher feelings and nobler motives in denouncing the sacrilegious violence which a sovereign pontiff and a brave man met at the hands of his infuriated enemies. For that Boniface was shamefully treated by Nogaret and Colonna, Dante, at least while on the Expiatorial Mountain, could not deny. True, in Paradise, he will array against him Saint Peter, but merely on the question of jurisdiction. At Alagna, the head of the church was, for days in succession, made the target of envenomed personal abuse and the coarsest ridicule; he and his followers were robbed, not only of all the money, valuables, and personal effects in their possession, but even of every movable article of furniture which the hands of men could remove; the pope himself was well-nigh starved; and with Dante people of all creeds join in denouncing the outrage.

“There is Alagna, where Pope Boniface
Was dragged with contumely from his throne;
Sciarra Colonna, was that day’s disgrace
The Pontiff’s only, or in part thine own?”

*Longfellow.*
Notes.

91, 93. "The modern Pilate...The Temple." The modern Pilate is Philip the Fair of France; the Temple, the Order of the Knights Templars by him persecuted and finally suppressed, 1307-1312. Villani, followed by Milman, declares that therein Philip was prompted by avarice. The seizure of Boniface and the spoliation of the Templars were followed by much shame and adversity to the French throne.

103. "Pygmalion." The brother of Dido, and murderer of Sichæus, her husband. Dido relates the story to Æneas in the First Book of the Æneid.

"Impious, and blind with love of gold, and safe
In her regard, who to him as a sister was,
He Sichæus secretly, while off his guard,
Before the altars, on him falling, slew,
His brother's life the victim of his sword."

106. "Midas." A Phrygian king who had extended generous hospitality to Silenus the preceptor of Bacchus. Bacchus, in return, desired the king to ask some favor of him. The avaricious monarch besought of the generous God that whatever he might touch might be converted into gold. His food was not made an exception, and the king found he would starve on gold, and was compelled to ask the God to recall his gift. Midas had not so easy a time with Apollo. As umpire between Apollo and Pan, the king betrayed the vulgarity of his tastes by rendering his decision in favor of Pan, and, in consequence, the Leader of the Muses and God of Poetry and Eloquence made the king's ears to assume the entirely suitable shape, length, and hirsuteness of those of an ass.

May not these stories of Midas be pondered to advantage by the denizens of Philistia?

109. "Achan." Achan and his sons and daughters and his flocks and beasts of burden and his tent and all his possessions, after being stoned by all Israel, were destroyed by fire, because, through avarice, he had taken a portion of the consecrated spoils of Jericho. Joshua, chaps vi. and vii.

112. "Sapphira." Ananias and Sapphira his wife, for
withholding from the common fund part of the price of a possession sold, were rebuked by Peter, and fell to the ground dead. *Acts*, chaps. v. and vi.

113. *"Iliodorus."* The treasurer of King Seleucus, sent to remove the treasure from the Temple of Jerusalem. He was met by a knight, cased in armor of gold, mounted on a horse with superb trappings. The horse struck at the treasurer with his fore feet, and drove him from the Temple. 2 *Maccabees*, chap. iii.

115. *"Polymnestor."* King of Thrace. Prompted by avarice, he murdered and robbed his ward, Polydore, one of the sons of Priam. The story is told in the Third Book of the *Æneid.*

116. *"Crassus."* Marcus Licinius Crassus was, with Pompey and Cæsar, a member of the first triumvirate, and, on account of his immense wealth, was known as Crassus the Rich. Defeated in an expedition against the Parthians, he was treacherously killed. His head was taken to Orodes, the Parthian king, who poured into the mouth molten gold, saying, “Now be thou satiated with what thou didst covet through life!”

128. *"The Mountain tremble."* The cause of the trembling will be given in the next Canto, at line 58:

> It trembles here when joys a spirit crown,  
> That now 't is pure, so that its soaring worth  
> Moves upward; then doth such a shout break forth.”

130. *"Delos."* Now Dili, an island in the group of the Cyclades, in the Grecian Archipelago. Of volcanic origin, it floated on the waves until Jupiter fixed it securely, that it might receive Latona, who there gave birth to Apollo and Diana, the Sun and the Moon, thence sometimes called Delius and Delia. See Third *Æneid*, 74; and Sixth *Æneid*, 12.

136. *"The sound resounded."* “And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will!” *Luke* ii. 13, 14.
"When Goddes son also was bore,  
He sent his aungel down therefore,  
Whom the shepherdes herden singe :  
'Pees to the men of welwillinge  
In earth be among us here!'

Gower, Confessio Amantis, iii. 5.

It is observable that Gower follows the reading εἰδοκλας.

146. "Desire to know." To know the cause of the trembling, which will be explained in the next Canto.
CANTO TWENTY-FIRST.

ARGUMENT:

Statius accosts the Poets, and relates to them his history in the world and in Purgatory. He pronounces a warm eulogy upon the Æneid, and is delighted to find that he has done so in the hearing of the shade of Virgil.

TIME: Morning of Easter Tuesday.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Dante. The shade of Virgil. Statius.

PERSONS APPEARING: None, except the persons speaking.

The natural thirst that hath not full relief
But from the well whose drops divinely graced
The woman of Samaria sought to taste,
My mind in labor put; behind my Chief
Haste drove me on along the encumbered path;
And pity still I felt for that just wrath;
And lo! in manner such as Luke relates
That Christ, new-risen from his rock-wrought grave,
Met two who would his name and friendship crave,
A shade to us approached, those burdensome weights
There strewn gazed down on, but behind us came,
And ere we knew it accents these did frame:
“My brethren, may God give you peace!” Around
We suddenly turned, and Virgil’s good intent
Fair words gave back that fitted to those sent;
Then further said: “Peace be with thy soul found,
In that blest council whose all-just decree
Doth unto endless exile banish me!”

“How is ’t,” he said, the while we walked with speed,
“If ye are shades for whom God nought prepares,
Who guided hath you so far up his stairs?"
And said my Teacher: “If the marks thou heed
Which this man bears, and which an Angel traced,
Thou seest he reign must with good spirits placed;
But since she who by day and night spins on,
For him hath not yet from the distaff nipped
What Clotho grants to be by Atropos clipped,

“His soul, which is thy sister and mine own,
Could not alone its journey hither make
Because impressions ours it would not take.
From Hell’s deep gulf called forth to be his Guide
Was I, and I his Guide shall be so far
As in my school to do so lies the power.
But tell us, if thou knowest, what trembling wide
Erewhile the Mountain shook, and why a shout
Even to the ocean, it did gird about?”
His questioning thus so with my wish was one,
That merely with the hope which gathered first
Seemed less unsatisfied my deep, craving thirst.

"Naught is there in this Mountain ever done,"
He answered, "but by rule; for custom old
And order always its devotions mould.

Here permutation's periods cannot flow;
Except what from itself doth heaven receive
Into itself, nought else can here inweave,

"Because that falls nor rain, nor hail, nor snow,
Nor dew, nor hoar-frost, anywhere on this side
Of where the small, short, threefold steps abide.
Dense clouds nor rarefied ones are ever seen,
Nor coruscation; Thaumas' daughter skies
Down lower tints, but reach not here her dyes;
Nor doth dry vapor come into this scene,
Nor farther than of those three steps the height
Where rest the feet of Peter's Vicar bright.

"Perhaps somewhat it trembles lower down,
But not through winds that hollow caves conceal,
I know not how, can one its trembling feel.
It trembles here, when joys a spirit crown,
That now 'tis pure, so that its soaring worth
Moves upward; then doth such a shout break forth.

Of purity gained the will the proof affords,
The will, which, always wholly free to change
Its casual convent, gives the soul more range.
"Starts well the will, but with it not accords
The longing which, with strength of will the same
That sinned, justice divine doth to the torment tame.
And I, who prostrate have been in this pain
Five hundred years and more, have only now
A soaring impulse felt my soul endow.
Therefore the trembling was, and that glad strain
Of pious spirits round the Mountain's ways
Sung hope, and unto God his merited praise."

Thus said he to him; and since doth arise
From draughts a joy deep as the thirst's intense,
Words cannot tell the good I garnered thence.
"The net I see now," said my Leader wise,
"That snares ye here, and how your toilings cease,
Why the Mount trembles, why ye feel such peace.
Now who thou wast make me to understand,
And why so many centuries thou thy face
Hast on the ground thus held with patient grace."

"In those days when good Titus, with heaven's hand
Assisting, did the wounds avenge whence rolled
The sacred blood by Judas' treason sold,
That name which most endures and most adorns
Was mine on earth, and gave me fame," he said,
"But unto faith as yet was I not led.
So sweet my vocal spirit was, from bournes
Thoulousian mine Rome claimed me for her own,
Where on my brow the myrtle justly shone.
"The people still me Statius name on earth; 91
Thebes first I sang, and then Achilles' wreath,
But, on the way, I fell the last beneath.
The seeds that, sparkling, gave mine ardor birth
Came from that fountain bright of heavenly fire
Whence seek their light and heat an endless choir;
The Æneid's page I mean, the heroic song.
My Mother 't was, and me, a weakling nursed;
Else had my name not filled Fame's bugle-burst.

"To have lived when lived the Mantuan I would long
As doth the Sun a revolution make
An added banishment here most willingly take."
These words made Virgil's glance towards me turn;
A glance which in its silence said: "Be mute!"
But yet the will 's not always absolute.
For tears and laughter do so strongly yearn
To follow on the passion whence they spring
That in best natures least the will hath wing.

I did but smile as one who gives the wink;
Whereat the shade was silent, and, whence flies
Expression readiest, gazed into mine eyes.
"So may'st thou 'neath that toil immense ne'er sink,"
It said, "Why didst thou just now, pray,
To me the lightning of a smile display?"
Now am I straitened, there am caught, and here;
One stops, one urges, mood opposes mood;
A sigh escapes me, and 't is understood.
"Speak on," my Master said, "and have no fear
Of speaking, but with plainness to him show
That which him moves solicitude such to know."
Whereon I thus: "Thy wonder seemed to rise,
O ancient spirit, at my smile, but more
Shall now thy wonder rise than e'er before.
This one who upward doth direct mine eyes
Is that same Virgil led by whom in song
Of men and Gods thy numbers trooped along.

"If aught beside in my smile thou didst trace
Relinquish it, and be thou sure thy praise
Of him it was that in me joy did raise."
And while I spoke, he stooped down to embrace
My Teacher's feet: but "Brother," Virgil prayed,
"Rise up, a shade should not adore a shade."
And as he rose: "Now canst thou readily bring
Thy mind the sum to grasp of my warm love
When thus it mounts our vain estate above,

"And as a substance treats a shadowy thing."

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-FIRST CANTO.
The one unnamed is Lachesis. Clotho allotted, Lachesis
nipped and spun, Atropos cut, the thread of human life.
Stern and cruel old women, they were called by the Poets, in
irony, Parcae, Sparers of men, in the same sense that their
ministers, the Furies, were termed the Eumenides or Well-
Wishers. Carpere, to nip, is a favorite word with Virgil, and
is the equivalent of Dante's tirare.
32. "So far." Virgil will accompany Dante so far as is allowable; then he will place him in charge of Beatrice.

44. "Heaven." That is, nothing but the pure elements of the heavenly circles, or, in another mode of interpretation, nothing but returning souls seeking their source in heaven.

48. "The small, short, threefold steps." Those of Saint Peter's Gate. The words of Christ in his Sermon on the Mount are here, as in the description of the Gate already given, kept in mind: "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life."

50. "Thaumas' daughter." Iris, daughter of Thaumas and Electra; the rainbow.

"To him, with mouth all roseate, her sweet words
Thaumantias, Wonder's daughter, thus gave forth."

*Ninth Æneid, 4.

"Her goodly bow, which paints the liquid ayre."

*Faerie Queene, v. 3, 25.

68. "Five hundred years and more." See line 77 of Canto xvii. and the note.

82. "In those days." The spirit now speaking is that of Publius Papinius Statius, a poet of the first Christian century, and a native of Naples. Dante has fallen into a mistake in giving his birthplace as Toulouse. He has, for the moment, confused him with Statius, the rhetorician. Landino conjectures that Dante was misled by Lactantius, a commentator on Statius. It has been said that the Emperor Domitian, in a moment of anger, stabbed the poet, who was secretly a Christian, with a stylus.

Statius was the author of the *Sylva*, a collection of thirty-two poems, divided into five books; of the *Thebaid*, an epic of the Seven against Thebes in twelve books; and of the *Achilleis*, a poem founded on the history of Achilles, and unfinished except as to the first two cantos.

As bearing on the question of the genuineness of the tomb of Virgil, a translation from the *Sylva* (iv. 4) is submitted:

"Lo! reverie following and the genial shore,
Where, on its port Ausonian rise the towers
Canto XXI.  

Notes.

Where kind Parthenope the visitor greets,
With timid thumb I lift the easy latch,
And repossess my soul, and on the marge
Of that Maronean temple sit me down,
And those fair knolls where lies the mortal frame
The mighty Master owned command my song.

These notes for thee, Marcellus, let me sing,
On shores where threats again Vesuvius' rage
And torrent fires, which rival those
Which from Trinacria's Mountain flout the skies."

Eustace, Tour of Italy, vol. ii. chap. 2, page 437, makes an elaborate and successful defence of the geographical accuracy of these verses against the hasty constructions of Addison and Cluverius.

Prior to the death of Virgil, the hill of Posilippo had been the property of Vedius Pollio, who was, probably, a brother, or other relative, of Caius Asinius Pollio, to whom Virgil addressed his Prophetic Pastoral. This property the will of Vedius Pollio devised to Augustus. By the care of Augustus, Virgil was buried there; ante, Canto vii. line 6. It afterwards became the property of the Emperor Trajan. (Inscr. Fabr. p. 199, n. 486.)

85. "That name which most endures and most adorns." The name of Poet.

93. "On the way I fell." He died, leaving his Achilleid unfinished.

101. "The Sun a revolution." To make sure of meeting Virgil he would willingly have waited for him in Purgatory an entire year.

"Tanta dulcedine captos afficit ille animos," are the caressing words of Juvenal, spoken of Statius in Satire vii. at line 84.

125. "That same Virgil." This passage touchingly manifests Dante's devotion to Virgil. The time approaches at which Dante will be compelled to relinquish the companionship of his beloved Author. So he brings upon the scene another Poet, Statius, that from his mouth may come, before it be too late, exalted eulogiums of the loftiest of Bards.
CANTO TWENTY-SECOND.

ARGUMENT:

The scar of avarice disappears from the forehead of Dante, as an Angel leads the Poets into the sixth terrace, where the shades undergo purgation for the sin of gluttony. Virgil and Statius continue in conversation. Therein Statius relates the process of his conversion to Christianity, attributing the first steps in it to the Pollio of Virgil. Statius explains that his vice was not avarice but its opposite, prodigality; that Virgil's outcry, in the Aeneid, against the thirst for gold, had kept him from avarice.

TIME: Morning of Easter Tuesday.

PERSONS SPEAKING: The shade of Virgil. Statius. Voices of contrition and praise.

PERSONS APPEARING: Dante. The spirits undergoing purgation.

Now had we left the Angel, who our way Into the Circle Sixth had guided, gone Another scar his wing had beaten on; And those who justice seek from day to day Had "Blessed" sung; and then "I thirst," an end They with the first do all divinely blend; And I, now nimbler than in stairs below, Such progress made, that free from sense of toil I, with the shades, passed fleet this rocky coil;
When Virgil thus: "If doth from virtue flow

Love's own pure flame, ne'er can it fail to warm
Another's breast, when clear its outward form.
Hence from that hour when Juvenal made descent
Amongst us in that limbo where we dwell,
And told how thy kind heart t'wards me did swell,
My kindly feeling was t'wards thee, too, bent
As strongly as when one 's not seen can be;
And now all brief this path will seem to me.

"But tell me, and this will thy friendship test,
And draw a friend's forgiveness to a friend,
Thy generous confidence due to me extend,
How chanced it Avarice lurked within thy breast,
Thou who such ample stores of wisdom reaped
As show thy works in all abundance heaped?"
When met these words at first the Poet's ear
He laughed somewhat, then sweetly said: "Of thine
Each several word is of dear love a sign.

"For oftentimes, we know, do things appear
Which to our doubts present fallacious shows,
While truth below in hidden fountains flows.
For in thy question thy belief 's implied
That covetousness me in that life disgraced,
Because, perhaps, in that round I was placed;
Know, then, I was of Avarice far too wide,
And this extravagance rash hath moon on moon
By thousands made me pardon importune."
"And were it not my soul was all alive
To heed that passage where, as if to inveigh
'Gainst human nature, thou dost nobly say:
'To what wilt thou not mortal bosoms drive,
Thou cursed thirst for gold! ' there lost I 'd toil
Where rock 'gainst rock is rolled in dismal moil;
Then I perceived with lavishment's wings too wide
The hands could spread, and happily penitence me
From that, and sins beside it, rendered free.

"How many from their graves shall rise denied
Their flowing locks, whose ignorant minds here brought,
Alive and dying, no repentant thought!
And know that here opposing sinners hail,
Extremes here meet, and here their rankness dry
Sins which on earth dissevering highways try.
Therefore if I my sinning soul did trail
For cleansing, 'mongst that folk who Avarice mourn,
'T was for a sin which held their sin in scorn."

"Now, when thou didst the undying hatreds sing
Where twofold griefs Jocasta's load the line,"
Thus said the Bard of Pastoral Song divine,
"It doth not seem by inferences that spring
From Clio's prelude, that faith ruled thee there,
Faith without which good works fruit do not bear.
If this be so, what Sun's or candles' lights
Dispelled the darkness, so that onward sped
Thy bark thereafter where the Fisherman led?"
And he to him: "Towards Parnassus' heights
'T was thee me led, with thee its grots I trod,
And thou didst first me teach concerning God.
Thou wast as one who, walking in the night,
Beareth his light behind, where wise its ray
Makes those who follow where its sparkles play,
When thou exclaim'dst, 'Yields Time a birth of might,
Comes Justice back, and man's primeval state,
And now descends from Heaven a progeny great!'

"Through thee the Bard's wreath's mine, and Christian's palm,
But that thou may'st more of my story learn,
I will into its lines more color turn.
Already had the true belief, by calm
And holy messengers sent, been spread abroad,
And had been preached the Kingdom of Our Lord,
And thy prediction with the reverent aim
Of those new teachers so in unison read
That I to seek them out was often led.

"Then they so favored in my sight became
That when Domitian's persecutions fears
To their souls gave, they gave to me sad tears.
And long as I upon the earth did bide,
Their friend I was, and their most innocent ways
Made me above all other sects them praise.
And ere in verse I to the streams that glide
Through Thebes the Greeks led forth, I was baptized,
But, though a Christian, fear held me disguised.
"For long professing paganism as my creed; And this lukewarmness base I hurried for Round the fourth terrace more than centuries four. — Thou therefore who me hast from that doubt freed, Which from me hid the blessing meets me here, While we ascend, still please my listening ear, And say where now doth our friend Terence bide? Cæcilius where? Plautus' and Varro's souls? And, if 't is Hell, what part of it them holds?"

"These, Persius, and myself, with more beside," Said then my Leader, "with that Greek are placed Whom more than all the rest the Muses graced, In that blind prison's first apartment; oft That mountain forms the subject of our talk Whereon for aye our beauteous Muses walk. Euripides and Antiphon there aloft Their laurelled heads hold, with Simonides And Agatho, and Greeks far more than these.

"There may be seen of thine own train some souls; Antigone, Deiphile and Argia there Meet with Ismene still deep-sunk in care. Her who Langia pointed out, it holds, Tiresias' daughter, too, and Thetis; dwell Deidamia and her sisters there as well."

The Bards were silent both, and both inclined To look around them, now that we were through The ascending defile, and spread wide the view;
And the sun's chariot four had left behind
Of its handmaidens, and the fifth still higher
Its pole was turning, whence came floods of fire,
When thus my Guide: "Let us again proceed,
As is our wont in mounting, with our right
Turned t'wards the edge whence far extends our
sight."
Thus custom there as usher us did lead,
And with its rule were we the more content
When that good shade to it his sanction lent.

They on before me walked, while followed I,
My listening soul fed with discourses meet
From Bards to come so skilled in melody sweet.
But soon my lessons ceased; for now near by
A tree me found which in the roadway grew,
And fruitage fragrant and abundant knew.
And, as a fir-tree's upward spread 's less wide,
So in the way reverse with this 't was done,
I think in order that might climb it none.

And where our path adjoined the Mountain's side
Fell from the lofty rock a limpid stream,
Which 'mongst the leaves cast wide its pearly gleam.
Near to the tree the Poets drew, while brake
From out the foliage forth a voice which cried:
"This food unto your longing is denied!"
Then said: "More thoughtful Mary was to make
The marriage-feast of care relax the bonds
Than of herself, who now for you responds;
"And for their drink the ancient dames, 't is told, Of Rome, drank water only; while restrained Was Daniel in his food, he wisdom gained; The primal age was beautiful as gold; Hunger then made the acorns sweet, and ran Nectar each rivulet pure for thirsty man; Honey and locusts were the aliment given To John the Baptist in the desert; thence He glorious is, is thence his praise immense,

"As saith the Evangel sent to you from Heaven." 

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-SECOND CANTO.

5. "Blessed." "Are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Matthew v. 6.
8. "Free from sense of toil." In accordance with the prediction made in Canto iv. at line 90.
13. "Juvenal." Decimus Junius Juvenalis, a Roman satirical poet of the latter part of the first Christian century, and of the first quarter of the second. Surviving Statius some thirty years, Juvenal died at the advanced age of eighty. He was born, some say he only lived, at Aquinum.

"There is Aquinum, the old Volscian town, Where Juvenal was born, whose lurid light Still hovers o'er his birthplace, like the crown Of splendor seen o'er cities in the night. Doubled the splendor is, that in its streets The Angelic Doctor as a schoolboy played, And dreamed perhaps the dreams that he repeats In ponderous folios for scholastics made." Longfellow.

55. "Undying hatreds." Of Eteocles and Polynices, the
two sons of Jocasta, Statius sings in the *Thebaid*. Dante has referred to them by way of illustration in the Twenty-seventh Canto of the *Inferno*.

57. "Bard of Pastoral Song divine." A purpose seems to have influenced Dante in drawing attention at this point to Virgil as a pastoral poet. He will soon mention Virgil's *Pollio*, the most important of his Pastorals, and, without doubt, the most important Pastoral ever written.

58. "It doth not seem." At the outset of the *Thebaid*, Statius sings an invocation to Clio, Muse of Glory and History. Dante here seems inconsistent in making Virgil apparently condemn the use of the myths by Christian poets, a privilege of which Dante has allowed himself abundant use. The invocation to Clio is as follows:

"What first, O Clio, shall adorn thy page,  
The expiring prophet, or Ætolian rage?  
Say, wilt thou sing how, grim with hostile blood,  
Hippomedon repelled the rushing flood,  
Lament the Acadian youth's untimely fate,  
Or Jove, opposed by Capanus, relate?"


70. "When thou." Statius here quotes Virgil's prophetic Pastoral, the *Pollio*.

"Chanter of the Pollio, glorying in the blissful years again to be,  
Summers of the snakeless meadow, unlaborious earth and oarless sea."

TENNYSON.

The poem from which the foregoing lines are taken, the force and beauty of which are characteristic of Lord Tennyson, were written at the request of the Mantuans, on the occasion of the nineteenth centenary of the death of Virgil.


97, 98, 100. "Terence ... Cecilius ... Plautus ... Persius ... Varro." Some critics aver that Dante lacks humor. But in this reference to the three humorous poets of Rome, there seems an approach to it. It seems to be in the same vein as we may suppose will be the affectionate inquiry of
Emerson, in our twentieth century, as to the eschatological status of Hood, Barham, and Holmes. Terence, Plautus, and Cæcilius Statius were in the front rank of humorous poets. Persius was a satirist.

The more famous Varro not being a poet, Butler considers that here an error exists, and that Dante wrote "Varo" (Varus), a poet to whom Virgil addressed the Pastoral of that name. Blanc thinks Dante wrote "Vario" (Varius), the literary executor of Virgil.


106, 107, 108. "Euripides . . . Antiphon . . . Simonides . . . Agatho." Mrs. Browning, Wine of Cyprus, has some pretty lines on "Our Euripides, the human;" Longfellow asks why Dante makes no mention here of Æschylus "the thunderous," and Sophocles "the royal;" Antiphon was of Attica; Simonides of Cos; Agatho an Athenian. There is here an "embarras de richesse."

109. "Some souls." Here follow the names of ancient characters made prominent in the poems of Statius, and which Virgil repeats here by way of compliment. Dante seems here to have made a slip as to Tiresias' daughter, Manto, also called Daphne. He has already placed her among the sorcerers in the Lower World. Inferno, Canto xx. King John of Saxony ("Philalethes") suggests that Dante was as much entitled to his nap as Homer.

118. "Four." Four hours of the day were already passed. The time was after ten o'clock in the morning.

139. "The tree." Of temptation, branch of the tree of knowledge.

143. "The marriage-feast." At Cana.

145, 146, 147. "Dames . . . of Rome . . . Daniel."

"Vini usus olim Romanis feminis ignotus fuit."

Valerius Maximus, ii. 1, 5.

Daniel, on pulse and water, found himself endowed with greater vigor of mind and body than those who were pampered by the luxuries of the king's table. See Daniel, chap. i.
Canto XXII.

Notes.

148. "The primal Age."

"Would I had fallen upon those happier days
That Poets celebrate, those golden times
And those Arcadian scenes that Maro sings,
And Sydney, warbler of poetic prose!"

Cowper.

152. "John the Baptist." Dante, with art at once rhetorical and political, reserves the example of the patron saint of Florence to give point and force to the close of the Canto.
CANTO TWENTY-THIRD.

ARGUMENT:

As Virgil, Statius, and Dante proceed, they meet crowds of spirits, pale, hollow-eyed, and lean, among them Forese, the brother-in-law of Dante, with whom he converses. Forese inveighs against the immodesty of the Florentine women.

TIME: Afternoon of Easter Tuesday.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Dante. The shade of Virgil. Forese. The spirits weeping and singing.

PERSONS APPEARING: Statius. The spirits of the gluttonous made lean.

WHILST I upon the verdure fresh mine eyes
   Held fixed, with closeness as of one whose waste
   Of time is as though birdlings he had chased,
   "My son," my more than Father said, "time flies,
   The share thereof at our disposal placed
   Compels us to observe a greater haste."

Looks, steps, at once, of mine, were eagerly stirred
Towards the Sages whose delightful talk
Took of fatigue all traces from my walk,
And lo! were grief's and joy's joint accents heard, 
“My lips, O Lord!” and these so blent that fain 
I was to hear, and yet the words gave pain. 
“O my sweet Father, what is this, I’d learn?” 
And he: “Souls on their rounds, my son, are they, 
Who thus, perhaps, their debt of duty pay. 
In the same way considerate pilgrims turn 
When unknown people on the road they meet, 
And, not delaying, thus them kindly greet.” 

E’en thus, behind us, and with swifter pace 
Than ours, of shades a throng came and passed on, 
But us in pious silence watched ere gone. 
Dark, deep, like caverns, were their eyes, in face 
Each pallid was, and so emaciate grown 
That nought between the skin was and the bone. 
I do not think that unto such a shell 
Could Erisichthon’s self have shrunk, when him 
Most fear of hunger thrilled in every limb. 

“Behold the folk,” into this thought I fell, 
“That lost Jerusalem’s towers, sad ‘tis to say, 
When of her own son Mary made a prey.” 
Like rings without the gems their sockets stood; 
Whoever omo reads in th’ human face 
Could there of m have seen the evident trace. 
Who would believe an apple’s odor could, 
Or water’s, generate longing so, and dry 
Their ghastly frames, till one knew how and why.
While what could them so waste I wondering thought,
(For not yet manifest was the cause whence came Emaciation's squalor on each frame),
Lo! deep-sunk eyes from one of them me sought
With look close-fixed and keen; then said a voice
With ardor filled, "For this grace I rejoice!"
His looks would ne'er have made him known to me,
But in his tones my memory found made plain
What in his guise I e'er should seek in vain.

The light this spark gave made me now to see
Beyond the mask that his changed features bore,
And I Forese's visage knew once more.
"Ah! look not thou at my dry, leprous skin
Discolored thus, nor at default," he prayed
"Of flesh that from my members gaunt hath strayed;
But of thyself to tell at once begin;
And those two souls, thine escort, who are they?
In speaking unto me make no delay."

"That face of thine which dead I once bewailed,"
I answered him, "changed nearly past my ken,
Inclines me now no less to weep than then.
But say, by Heaven, what blasts have on ye trailed?
Make me not speak while still my wonder swells,
For ill speaks he who's held by other spells."
And he to me: "God's council power hath sent
Into the tree and water which we passed,
To make us thin, to set our looks aghast.
"This people all, who now sing, now lament,  
For appetite followed to excess, here tried  
By hunger and thirst, are thus resanctified.  
The fragrance that the apple-tree there exhales,  
And spray the leaves take from the rocky brink,  
Make grow desire in us to eat and drink;  
And not alone a single round avails,  
We, circling often here, our pain renew,  
I call it pain, but solace were more true.  

"For that same wish leads us the tree's known way,  
Which Christ to cry out 'Eli' led, when He  
With his own sacred veins made mankind free."
And I to him: "Forese, from that day  
When, for the better, thou mad'st change of spheres,  
Not quite to five are numbered yet the years.  
If sooner ceased in thee the sin whose stay  
Was baleful to thee, than the unlooked-for hour  
God us reweds cleansed by this good grief's power,  

"How so far art thou e'en already sped?  
I deemed that thou so far couldst not yet climb  
Where restitution time doth make for time."
And he to me: "Thus speedily me have led,  
The wormwood sweet to sip of this higher plane,  
Tears that came down my Nella's cheeks like rain.  
Tears, prayers, and sighs have caused mine onward tread  
Up from the coast where souls long lingering bide  
And planes below where else I had been tried."
"As single in good works her I can boast, And pleasing therefore unto God and dear, My widow whom I loved with love sincere. The tracts most barbarous of Sardinia's coast Have dames whose modesty chaste by far excels That barbarous land I left wherein she dwells. O Brother sweet, herein should I be dumb? Comes now before mine eyes a future date Which, with this hour compared, shall not be late,

"When from the pulpit shall the interdict come Against the unblushing dames whom Florence holds Who bare their breasts unveiled by kerchiefs' folds. What savage women, e'er, what Saracens e'en, Did spiritual or other discipline need To make them rules of modest costume heed? But if the shameless women that which mean The Heavens to send against them could now see, Their mouths would wide for howling open be.

"For if me foresight here is not denied, They shall of sorrow taste e'er beard his cheeks, Who now's with lullabies hushed to slumber, seeks. Brother, no longer now thee from me hide; Seest thou, not only I, but all, there gaze Where intercepts thy form the Sun's keen rays?" Whence I: "If thou to mind recallest, what thou With me hast been, and I with thee, it will A saddening memory us accompany still.
Canto XXIII.

Beatrice desired.

"From that world he me brought who now 118
Walks there in front, days since, when, round
and bright,
The sister of him who's yonder beamed with light,"
And to the Sun I pointed. "Through the gloom
Deep-set that holds the truly dead hath me,
In my true flesh, this one led safe and free.
And his availing aid hath given me room
For hope of mounting here from plane to plane
Which souls deformed like yours make straight again.

"His word I have that he will with me bide 127
Till finally where dwells Beatrice I shall be;
There I must him allow to part from me.
This Virgil is, who thus remains my Guide,"
And him I pointed at, "and by him stands
That shade for whom your realm, which so expands,
Shook, as he rose, through all its slopings wide."

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-THIRD CANTO.

11. "My lips, O Lord." "O Lord, open thou my lips, and
my mouth shall show forth thy praise.
"For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it:
thou delightest not in burnt offering.
"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and
a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."
Psalm li. 15, 16, 17.

26. "Erisichthon." A Thessalian who offended Ceres by
cutting down a grove sacred to the celebration of her rites.
She punished him with insatiable hunger.
30. "Of her own son." An incident in the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, predicted by Moses in Deuteronomy xxviii. 56, 57, and related in horrible detail by Josephus, vi. 3.

32. "omo." As Dante suggests, there is a sort of resemblance, in the lines of a meagre face (the attenuated nose with deep indentations on either side of it), to the letter m. The aspirated o at the beginning of the word, and the same letter unaspirated at the end, form the word HOMO.

This grotesque mediaeval idea was even carried so far as to include the imagined finding, in the human features, not only of the name of man (omo), but also of that of God (dei), so that the human features should read: "Man of God." For it was supposed that the shape of the human ear suggests the Greek letter delta, δ, and that the shape of the human nostrils suggests that of the Greek letter epsilon, ε, turned upon its back, and that the shape of the human mouth suggests that of the Greek letter iota, ι, placed horizontally. Thus the entire phrase would be "Homo Dei," a phrase which attests, at once, the piety and the puerility of those remarkable times.

36. "How and why." The how and why will be soon told.

48. "Forese." This spirit is that of Forese Donati, brother of Dante’s wife, Gemma Donati, and consequently of Corso and Piccardi Donati, and one of Dante’s closest friends.

Buti records Forese’s gluttonous proclivities, which bring his spirit upon the present terrace.

Rossetti, Early Italian Poets, Appendix to Part II., records that certain abusive verses launched at Dante were attributed to Forese; but caution would suggest that injurious reports in sulphurous times should be entitled to little attention.

For Piccarda, the sister-in-law of the Poet, he seems to have had great consideration. A nun of the order of Santa Clara, and married against her will to Rosselin della Tosa, Dante will question Forese about her in the next Canto, and will place her in Paradise. See Paradiso, Canto iii. 49.

71. "Circling often." And with speed, as we shall read below.
74. "'Eli.'" Matthew xxvii. 46.

87. "My Nella." His widow, the name being an affectionate contraction of some longer name, probably of Giovanella.

94. "Sardinia." The Gennargentu, the principal mountain-range in Sardinia, produced, according to Covino, a people well-nigh barbarous. In Dante's time it was called the Barbagia.

101. "Unblushing?" Sacchetti, the Italian novelist of the fourteenth century, indulges in severe censures of female fashions; but he seems to regret that, whereas before his time, the women of Florence exposed their charms unduly, they, in his time, proceeded to the other extreme, and wore high necks and long sleeves, which kept their attractions in complete seclusion.

103. "Saracens." A name applied, in the Middle Ages, to all nations renouncing Christianity, except the Jews.

117. "A saddening memory." Expressions like these have encouraged some of the critics to declare that Dante, in the Commedia, admits that stains existed on his private character. That, fairly considered, they are incapable of this construction, is the conclusion of the more charitable. Lowell, Essay on Dante, Among my Books, second series, pp. 61 et seq.
CANTO TWENTY-FOURTH.

ARGUMENT:

Dante and Forese continue in conversation, attended by Virgil and Statius. Forese discourses of Florentine politics, and predicts the downfall of Dante's chief enemy, Donati, the leader of the Neri. He points out the spirits of Pope Martin the Fourth, and others, among the rest the Poet Buonagiunta, with whom Dante converses. The Angel of the seventh terrace announces their approach to that terrace.

TIME: Afternoon of Easter Tuesday.


Our speed checked not our speech, nor that our speed;
But in full flow of talk we moved along
As moves a ship impelled by breezes strong.
And shades, that dead twice over seemed, their heed
To me gave wondering, while their tombs of eyes
Made me out living, to their deep surprise.
And I continued thus my former talk:
"It may be he more slowly upward fares,
Because that he for others' company cares."
"But tell me if of note do any walk
   Among the numerous shades that eye me so?
   And where Piccarda is, if thou dost know?"
"My sister, she so beautiful, so good!
   (I know not which the most) Olympus' brow
   Sees, crowned with jubilant triumph, even now."
This said he first, and then: "'T is not thought rude
   To indicate each other here, so slight
   Are we become, milked down on diet light.

"This," pointing t'wards him, "Buonagiunta is,
   Buonagiunta, Lucca's bard, and he
   A space beyond, the leanest face we see,
The holy Church held in those arms of his;
   Of Tours he was, and make him penitent pine
   Bolsena's eels, and grieve the Vernage wine."
Names one by one he gave of others there,
   And quite content all seemed at being named,
   For not one frown his freedom therein blamed.

Through hunger saw I bite the empty air,
   With Ubaldino della Pila, he
   Named Boniface, 'neath whose crook flocks strewed the lea.
I saw the Marquis who at Forli had
   For drinking lips less dry than now were these;
   That one he was whose thirst could nought appease.
But, just as one, a crowd who scans, is glad
   To find his choice, I most liked Lucca's bard,
   And he seemed me to hold in most regard.
A murmur, and I know not what fair-sung
Gentucca, from that place I heard, where felt
The withering wound was justice to them dealt.
“O soul,” I said, “whose so desirous tongue
Would speak to me, be it so, that thus my mind
As well as thine may mingled pleasures find.”
“That maid is born, and wears yet tresses loose,
Who shall to thee my city pleasing make,”
He said, “although men may its cause forsake.

“Go then, and put this prophecy safe in use:
If what I murmured hath thine ear deceived,
True things hereafter with it will be weaved.
But say if him I see whose hand the lay
Invented newly penned, which thus begins:
‘Ladies, ye whom love’s own sweet study
wins?’”
And I to him: “Count me as one whose way
Of writing is to wait till love inspire
And dictate fitting measures to my lyre.”

“O Brother, ’tis disclosed,” he said, “why fail
Mine and the Notary’s and Guittone’s notes
’Fore that new style whence now sweet music
floats,
Full clearly see I what doth you avail:
Ye closely follow him who dictates; our
Less wide idea was that we held the power.
And he who would surpass this love-formed style
Cannot ’twixt styles discern;” and here, as well
Contented, he forthwith to silence fell.
As birds that pass their winters near the Nile
Fly formed in solid phalanx, but are traced
Soon ranged in file whereto they’re urged by haste,
Thus all this throng of spirits as they turned
Their faces, faster fled, with leanness light,
But urged by strong desire to this their flight.
And, as a man with wearying trotting churned,
Slacks pace, and walks his steed, and falls behind,
Until his lungs a chance to breathe can find,
E’en so Forese let that holy throng
Pass by, and lingered near my side, and said:
“When near to thee shall I again be led?”
“My life,” I said, “may be or brief or long,
Yet not so soon shall I to these heights soar,
But that my wishes shall be here before;
Because the place appointed for my stay
Of its fast-lessening good sees daily loss
And dismal wreck seems there all things to toss.”

And he: “Now go; for this, guilt’s height shall pay.
For lo! I see him at a beast’s tail t’wards
That valley dragged which hope to none affords.
Faster and faster still the beast drives on
Until it dashes him to dire death, torn
His body all, and left a mark for scorn.
Brief space indeed shall those wheels turn,” and borne
His eyes were to the heavens, “ere thou shalt see
Made plain what further must be hid from thee.
"Now be thou distanced; in this realm is time
A precious thing, and too much lose I, stayed
To suit thy pace, and thus a laggard made."
As sometimes one, of knights the very prime,
At gallop dashes from a troop that ride,
Making the first assault a point of pride,
So he with lengthened strides us lost to view,
And I remained with those loved spirits twain
Who o'er the world such mighty Masters reign.

And when so far he had passed on, that through
Mine eyes I could of him as much discern
As could my mind of his forebodings learn,
Upon another apple-tree we came,
Which not far distant was, and whither straight
Our path led on from where we were of late.
A throng beneath it seemed to cry in blame,
While t'wards the fruit they hands and longings cast,
Like little children craving a repast

From one who cheats them, granting not their prayer,
But, to make keener still their appetite, gay,
What they desire holds forth in full display.
Therefrom, as undeceived, they then did fare;
And now had we unto the tree drawn near,
The mighty tree, so proof 'gainst plaint and tear.
"Pass on; approach not; further on this round
The tree doth stand the fruit whereof Eve ate,
This one its scion is, of later date."
Canto XXIV.

Contemplation.

Came from I know not whom imbowered the sound;
Whence Virgil, Statius, and myself the side
That rises sought, so warned by this new Guide.
"Remember," next he said, "the accursed sons
The cloud-rack fathered, who, when drunken,
brought
Their twyform breasts 'gainst Theseus who them fought;
And mind ye, too, of those effeminate ones
Who, for their ease in slacking of their thirst,
Left Gideon's band ere woe on Midian burst."

Thus, following yet the border, on we went,
Still sins of gluttony hearing and their gains
Which wretched were and full of torturing pains.
Then, less constrained, upon the terrace bent
We still our steps, a thousand and yet more,
With silent contemplation covered o'er.
"Why fare ye three thus pensive on the way?"
Said suddenly now a voice which startled me
As sometimes startled a dumb beast will be.

To raise mine eyes I then did make essay;
And never in a furnace's keenest flow
Did glass or metal with such brightness glow
As he whom now I saw. "So please you, here
To mount aloft ye turn, this way," he said,
"Go all who would in paths of peace be led."
Sunk 'fore his face mine eyes to darkness mere,
So that my Guide's to seek I turned me, brought
By sense of hearing there where them I sought.
As when to herald forth the dawn in May
The sweet air moves and breathes a fragrance rare
That springs from all her blooms and flowerets fair,
So did I feel upon my forehead play
A breeze divine, and wings ethereal wave,
Which forth an odor of ambrosia gave;
And then heard say: "They blessed are whom grace
Doth so illumine that their appetite fires
Not in their breasts inordinate wild desires,
"But moderation's rule for them doth trace."

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-FOURTH CANTO.

8. "It may be he more slowly." Dante is still addressing Forese, and is still speaking of Statius. Cary suggests that the soul of Statius proceeds more slowly, in order that he may enjoy as long as possible the company of Virgil.


19. "Buonagiunta, Lucca's bard." Buonagiunta Urbisani, of Lucca, a poet of Dante's time, whom Benvenuto describes as "a brilliant orator in his mother tongue, a facile producer of rhymes, and a still more facile consumer of wines." The name Buonagiunta seems to be formed from buona and giunta, and its equivalent in English would be Well-met, or Welcome, and we are probably safe in assuming that the name is a nickname, originating in the admiration of his companions.

22. "The leanest face." Pope Martin the Fourth, born 1220, died of a surfeit in 1285, Dante being then twenty years
of age. He espoused the Guelph side of the interminable quarrel, and, being a native of France, became a partisan of Charles of Anjou. The fearful state of those times may be imagined from the fact that, although elected, by the municipality of Rome, chief magistrate, senator, of the city, he made Orvieto his see, and came to his death in Perugia.

24. "Bolsena's eels, and . . . Vernage wine." The Lake of Bolsena is a few miles northwest of Viterbo, on the road from Rome to Sienna. Chaucer, in his Merchant's Tale, makes mention of the Vernage wine:

"'He drinketh ipocras, clarre, and vernage,
Of spices hot, to encreasen his corage.'"

29. "Ubaldino della Pila." Pila was in the Florentine territory. This Ubaldino was a brother of "the Cardinal" of the Tenth, and father of the Archbishop Ruggieri of the Thirty-third Canto of the Inferno, and passed his time in managing his rural affairs.

30. "Boniface." A Genoese, of the family of the Fieschi, and nephew of Pope Innocent the Fourth, he was employed by Pope Honorius the Fourth as a diplomat to settle the quarrel between France and Aragon. The question of his identity has been made matter of discussion, but the foregoing is the reasonable decision of King John of Saxony.


38. "Gentucca." Buti says: "Dante formed an attachment to a gentle lady, called Madonna Gentucca, of the family of Rossimpelo, on account of her great virtue and modesty, and not with any other love." The Ottimo, Benvenuto and Blanc consider the name a common noun, equivalent to plebeian, and give the phrase a political significance. Balbo weakly construes the term to Dante's moral disparagement. The Danteans all seem to have forgotten that the word is not that of Dante, but of Buonagiunta, and its significance should probably be sought for in his history.
43. "That maid is born." The Ottimo says the lady alluded to is Alagia Malaspina, of the preceding Nineteenth Canto, a friend of Dante in the days of his exile.

51. "Ladies." The first verse of a canzone of Dante's in his *Vita Nuova*:

"Donne, ch' avete intelletto d' amore."


55. "Guittone." A native of Arezzo, and a friar of the Frati Guadenti, or Jovial Friars, described in the Twenty-third Canto of the Inferno, and afterwards founder of a monastery in Florence. Born about 1230, died 1294. To him Cary, whose judgment has value, assigns a distinguished place in literature. He was the first who gave to the sonnet its perfect form, a species of composition in which not only his own countrymen, but many of the best poets in all the cultivated languages of modern Europe, have since so much delighted. The liberality of his disposition, I remark, may have suggested his name, *guitto* meaning miserly; just as the admirable Tignoso of the Fourteenth Canto was called a scurvy fellow because he was not one. In the Twenty-sixth Canto Dante will mention Guittone in connection with Guinicelli and Arnoud, other admired poets.

57. "New style." Buonagiunta is making an acknowledgment that, since his date, the general literary style has improved.

64. "Birds." See the Fifth Canto of the Inferno, line 46; Euripides, *Helena*, 1495; and Statius, the *Thebaid*, v. 12.


82. "Guilt's height." The words, it should be noted, are spoken by Forese Donati of Corso Donati. They are spoken of brother by brother. They indicate that both the speaker and Dante are moved by vehement Ghibelline animosity. The contemporary chronicler, Villani, viii. 96, describes Corso Donati as "the wisest and most worthy knight of his time;
the best speaker; the most experienced statesman; the most renowned, the boldest, and most enterprising nobleman in Italy: he was handsome in person, and of the most gracious manners, but very worldly, and caused infinite disturbance in Florence on account of his ambition." Such a man it was who was pursued by a raging mob, hounded on by the chief magistrate of the republic, in flagrant violation of law, and was captured and slain upon the highway: a grievous picture of a popular chieftain tracked to death by unscrupulous enemies in a lawless age!

96. "The first assault a point of pride."

"'Ho Knights! ' he said, ' who first with me the foe
Against . . . There!' And in air a javelin hurled,
The fight's beginning."

Ninth Æneid, 53.


103. "Tree." This tree and others are merely scions of
the tree of knowledge mentioned below, line 116. The tree
of knowledge will be found at the summit of the Purgatorial
Mountain, in the Garden of Eden, or Terrestrial Paradise.

111. "In full display." These playful lines illustrate
Dante's keen relish for the sports and gayeties of childhood.

122. "The cloud rack." The centaurs, born of Ixion and
the cloud, and overpowered at the wedding of Hippodamia
and Pirithous, by the Lapithæ under the lead of Thesæus.

"What gifts that equal mention merit here
Doth Bacchus grant? Indeed occasion gave
The God for grave complaint; for he it was
The Centaur's rage for blood who caused, made mad
Fierce Rhætus, Pholus, and Hylæus grim,
Hylæus whom his zeal made seize, to hurl
Against the Lapithæ, a wine-cask huge."

Second Georgic, 454.

126. "Gideon . . . Midian." "The effeminate ones" in
Gideon's army were they who "for their ease" bowed down
upon their knees to drink. The entire army so bowed down
except three hundred. These three hundred lapped the
water like a dog, "putting their hand to their mouth," but with these three hundred Gideon, under the instructions of the Almighty, overthrew the Midian host. *Judges*, chap. vii.

"The matchless Gideon in pursuit
Of Midian and her vanquished kings."

**Milton, Samson Agonistes.**

148. "Upon my forehead play." The Angel's wings were fanning away another letter P, the sixth, that of gluttony.
CANTO TWENTY-FIFTH.

ARGUMENT:

The Poets enter the seventh terrace, where purifying flames cleanse the lascivious. Statius discourses on the origin of physical being, and of the soul, and of the organization of the shade-body of the Lower World, the spiritual body of the Purgatorial Mountain, and the glorified and radiant flame-body of the heavenly spheres, and explains that the spirits on this terrace are lean, as through want of food, because the soul, continuing its influence beyond our mortal life, leads the spirit which it controls to be lean.

TIME: Afternoon of Easter Tuesday.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Dante. The shade of Virgil. Statius. Spirits in voices of penitence and praise.

PERSONS APPEARING: Spirits cleansed by fire.

An hour it was that would not brook delay,  
Because the Sun had his meridian height  
To Taurus given, and to the Scorpion night.  
Wherefore, as one that 's eager of his way,  
And tarries not, delayed by no new thing,  
While of necessity's spur he feels the sting,  
So did we haste to thread the rocky rift,  
And, mounting upwards, filing singly, kept  
Apart, while we the narrow stairway stepped.
E'en as the unfledged stork that doth uplift
Its little wing to leave the nest, but shrinks
From its attempt, while down the pinion sinks,
E'en so with me did strong desire to ask
Arise and fall, for I myself betrayed
As fain to speak by movements which I made.
Not by our pace, the day's allotted task,
My Father sweet was held; "Let fly," he said,
"From off thy well-stretched nerve its arrow-head."

This gave me courage, then, my words to find:
"How can," I said, "one lean and meagre grow
Where any want of food one doth not know?"
"If thou wouldst Meleager call to mind,
How, as a brand did waste, he wasted, here
Thou wouldst at once of every doubt be clear;
And, wouldst thou think how, in a mirror's face,
Each tremulous move you make's repeated,
Nought
Would easier be than this thy lesson taught.

"But that thy will may find contentment's grace,
Here's Statius, him thy wounds I ask to mend,
Let on his healing words thine ear attend."
"If I to him Heaven's vengeance shall unfold
Where thou art present," answered Statius,
"shields
Me thy command to which mine own wish yields."
And then to me: "Son, if thy thought shall hold
These words of mine serenely entertained,
The 'How' thou ask'st shall be in full explained.
"That perfect blood which ne'er the thirsty veins 37
Drink in, and which as unused food aside
Is laid, when us our meal hath satisfied,
For all the human members virtue gains,
Informative in the heart, a power that flows
To each new limb and whence it lives and grows.
Concocted still it gradually descends
To where let modesty veil; its drops then place
Find on another's blood in nature's vase.

"There one together with the other blends, 46
One passive, but the other active, force
Deriving from that perfect place, its source.
Conjointly there to operate they begin,
Coagulating first, then life's first signs
Giving to that which blood and blood combines.
The active virtue thus its growth doth win,
Just as a plant doth, only that a bar
Plants have in growth, which man surpasses far.

"And now it operates, moves, and feels, in form 55
A sea-sponge clinging to the rock, and wields
Of powers control that it as their seed yields.
Now, Son, doth spread that fruitful virtue warm
The generator's heart gave forth, wherein
Nature herself her edifice did begin.
How babe from animal it becomes, as yet
Thou dost not see; a point which stirred
A wiser man than thou, and yet he erred
"So far, that, in his theory, never met
The soul, and passive intellect, joined, because
Seen by him for this last no organ was.
Thy breast lay open to the truth I speak,
And know that, soon as, in the embryo, brain
Hath full articulation set in train,
The primal Mover it with joy doth seek
Pleased at such art of nature, and imbreathes
A spirit new, which virtue all inwreathes.

"This what it finds here active doth attract
To its own substance, and one soul becomes
Which lives and feels and being's measure sums.
And not to let thy wonder bide intact,
The Sun's heat note, which with the juice the vine
Holds mingled, turns the acrid sap to wine.
When Lachesis' hands the thread have spun, the soul
The flesh deserted leaves, and with it bears
The human and divine as forth it fares.

"Memory, Intelligence, Will, it doth control;
They active are beyond their wont before;
The other faculties all lack voice and power.
Without a pause, and of itself, it falls,
In marvellous way, on one or the other strand,
And here doth first its fixed route understand.
Soon as it hold high cliffs or gloomy halls
That active virtue doth once more inform
The shadowy limbs as when life held them warm;
"And, even as the air, made moist with showers, 91
The casual ray refracting, doth adorn
Its haze with hues that elsewhere have been born,
So here the air a shape acquires which powers
The soul hath on it fix, the ambient air
Which thus the soul, born elsewhere, hath in care.
And then, as flame doth follow still the fire
Where'er it moves, from burning round to round
So, following the soul, the new form e'er is found.

"Hence the soul's semblance doth the form acquire,
And spirit's called, and every sense aright
Is to it given, aye, even to the sight.
Thence 'tis we speak, and thence we laugh, and sighs
We form and tears; thou oft, 'tis like, the same
Hast noticed since thou on the Mountain came.
According as our varying wishes rise,
And promptings many, so is shaped the soul;
Answers thou hast thy wondering may control."

Now had we reached the rocky stairway's height, 109
And, to the right hand turning, found that there
Came straight before our eyes another care.
For there the precipice fire's redundant might
Pours forth, while upward from the rim a blast
With its strong breath the flames doth backward cast.
Thence must we pass upon the outer side,
And one by one; and fear me held in thrall
Of here the fire and there a headlong fall.
“Along this place must one have,” said my Guide,

“Upon the eyes a tightened rein, else err
Might easily one who on this ledge would stir.”

Then from the bosom of the flowers mine ear
Heard “God of highest clemency” chanted;
	turn
Round would I then the chanting’s source to learn;

And when I in the flames saw shades appear,
The shades who sung, my sight, divided grown,
Sought now their steps, and now observed mine own.

At that hymn’s close they shouted loud: “A man I know not;” then, with voices low, renewed
The hymn whereby they heaven’s sweet mercies sued.

Again this ended; and “Diana ran,”
They cried, “unto the wood, and from it drove
Callisto stung with love of lawless Jove.”

Then the same hymn again they mused; then names
Of wives and husbands chaste they shouted forth,
Names dear to virtue, wedded love, and worth.

And this their method is, I deem, while flames Still burn them; with such skill and care must they
Seek Heaven, and food such use upon the way,
And balm provide, balm which each last wound claims.
NOTES TO THE TWENTY-FIFTH CANTO.

3. "Taurus . . . the Scorpion." The sun's meridian being in Taurus, and, therefore, at the Purgatorial Mountain, in Aries, the time indicated would be two o'clock in the afternoon. The fleeting day counselled haste. The Scorpion is said to be involved in darkness, because its stars are antipodal to those of Taurus.

22. "Meleager." A Grecian hero, son of Mars and Althæa, or, according to others, of Æneas and Althæa. At the birth of the hero, the Sparing Sisters, the Fates, honored the mother and her infant with their presence. Ovid, *Met.* viii., Dryden's translation, thus describes the fright they gave the mother on that occasion:

“There lay a log unlighted on the hearth,
When she was laboring in the throes of birth
For th' unborn chief; the fatal sisters came,
And raised it up, and tossed it on the flame,
Then on the distaff a light portion place
Of vital flax, and turned the wheel apace;
And, turning, sang, 'To this red brand and thee,
O new-born babe, we give an equal destiny;'
So vanished out of view. The frightened dame
Sprang hastily from her bed, and quenched the flame.
The log, in secret locked, she kept with care,
And it, while thus preserved, preserved her heir."

Diana, as the story continues, offended at the neglect of her rites by an Ætolian king, sent a wild boar to ravage the fields. Meleager's pursuit of the boar is called the hunt of Calydon. He presented the boar's head to Atalanta. Her uncles desiring to possess it, he slew them; and his mother, offended at his violence, threw upon the fire the fateful brand, and as it wasted to ashes the life went out of Meleager.

Virgil reminds Dante that as divine appointment, and not the loss of blood, ended the days of Meleager, so the divine plan may bring leanness where there is no loss, and no need, of food.
Purgatorio.

Notes.

25. "Mirror." Dante's meaning is that, as change of form controls the reflections in a mirror, so changes in the soul affect the condition of the spiritual body.


63, 65, 66. "He erred . . . intellect . . . no organ." The allusion appears to be to Averrhoës, the great commentator on Aristotle. Dante places Averrhoës among the ancient worthies in the Lower World, mention of him being made in the last line of the Fourth Canto of the Inferno. Averrhoës, it would seem, saw in spiritual bodies no organism (as, in the question of sight, the organism of the eye) for the exercise of the intellectual powers, and therefore adopted the erroneous conclusion that spiritual bodies were not possessed of intellectual powers.

Dante's idea of the intellectuality of spiritual bodies has its foundation in the writings of Origen and other ancient fathers.

"Anima intellectiva remanet destructo corpore." Saint Thomas, Summa, i. 98, 3.

70. "The primal Mover." God.

79. "When Lachesis' hands the thread have spun." Dante here gives intimations of the idea pervading his wonderful descriptions of the organization of bodies in the life immortal: that of the shade-body of the Lower World, and of the spiritual body of the Purgatorial Mountain. These intimations begin at line 79, with the words:

"When Lachesis' hands the thread have spun,"

that is, when the limit of human life has been reached, and the life immortal has begun, whatever the destination of the individual soul. Dante here intimates also the radiance of the flame-body of the effulgent soul exalted to heaven and the blinding splendor of the glorified body of the resurrection,

"Even as a coal in flame abundant'borne,"

which will call for increase of power in the eye to sustain its excessive glory. See the Fourteenth Canto of the Paradiso.
These ideas of Dante's constitute the most wonderful thing in what in a note to the Inferno is denominated imaginative eschatology, and the only, as it is the unsurpassable, creation of what might be denominated exact eschatology, in literature. Some of the Danteans seem to think that Dante has aid herein from Virgil, in the discourse addressed by Anchises to Æneas on the origin of mind and matter, but this is foreign to the question of the modes and laws relating to the organization of spiritual bodies. The disciple herein has gone far beyond his Master. Dante's lofty and unapproached originality on this subject so excited the enthusiasm of Varchi, that he exclaims, as well he might: "I not only confess, but I swear, that as many times as I have read it, which day and night are more than a thousand, my wonder and astonishment have always increased!"

86. "On one or the other strand." That is, on the shore of the sea at the mouth of the Tiber, or on the shores of the Acheron in the Lower World.

88. "High cliffs or gloomy halls." That is, the Mountain of Purgatory, or the Lower World.

110. "To the right hand turning." The Poets on the Purgatorial Mountain turn, as we have seen, always to the right. This brings their right hands to the brink or edge of the mountain, towards the ocean. Cantos xix. 79; xxii. 122; xxvi. 4.

122. "God of highest clemency." First words of a hymn containing a prayer for purity.


132. "Callisto." Callisto (most beautiful) or Helice (revolving round the pole) was an Arcadian nymph beloved by Jupiter. Disguising himself as Diana, he accompanied the nymph to the chase, and surprised her virtue. But one day when Goddess and nymph were enjoying a bath together, the Goddess discovered her condition, and in her anger converted her into a bear.

Not one Goddess but another pronounced against Callisto:
for, as might be supposed, her betrayal brought upon her the vehement jealousy of Juno, in relation to which Longfellow quotes Addison’s translation of Ovid, *Met. ii.*:

"But now her son had fifteen summers told,
Fierce at the chase, and in the forest bold;
When, as he beat the woods in quest of prey,
He chanced to rouse his mother where she lay.
She knew her son, and kept him in her sight,
And fondly gazed; the boy was in a fright,
And aimed a pointed arrow at her breast,
And would have slain his mother in the beast:
But Jove forbade, and snatched them through the air
In whirlwinds up to heaven, and fixed them there;
Where the new constellations nightly rise,
And add a lustre to the Northern skies.

“When Juno saw the rival in her height,
Spangled with stars, and circled round with light,
She sought old Ocean, in his deep abodes,
And Tethys, both revered among the Gods.
They ask what brings her there: ‘Ne’er ask,’ says she,
‘What brings me here; heaven is no place for me.
You’ll see, when Night has covered all things o’er,
Jove’s starry bastard and triumphant whore
Usurp the heavens; you’ll see them proudly roll
In their new orbs, and brighten all the pole.’”

139. “*Last wound.*” In allusion to the final letter P of the seven inscribed by the Angel in the foreheads of the denizens of the Purgatorial Mountain.
CANTO TWENTY-SIXTH.

ARGUMENT:

The Poets proceed, meeting many spirits, divided into two processions, which, as they meet in the flames, exchange embraces. They are two classes of the lascivious. Each class reproaches itself. Outcries are heard, on one side of "Sodom!" on the other of "Pasiphaë!"

TIME: Afternoon of Easter Tuesday.


PERSONS APPEARING: Numerous spirits.

While on the brink thus passed we, one by one, Oft would me my good Master's warning hail: "Have care, thou, that my cautionings thee avail!"

Smote keen on my right shoulder now the Sun Whose light irradiate all the cloudless west, Blue but for that, in white serenely dressed. And gave my shadow to the umber'd flame A ruddier tint: and on this sign I saw Shades many passing look with wondering awe.
Hence first to speak of me occasion came;  
For to each other heard I them repeat:  
"In him seems substance, sure, to have its seat."

Then certain of them, far as they could come  
Without the space o'erstepping where they burned,  
T'wards me approached, and on me glances turned.  

"O thou 'fore whom, not that thy mood 's more dumb,  
But reverent rather, go the others first,  
Attend to me here burned by fire and thirst.

"Nor I alone thine answer hereto need;  
For all these feel more thirst for it than fills  
Æthiops' or Indians' dreams with rippling rills.  
Unto the truth hereof us do thou lead;  
How dost thou bar the Sun, as if not yet  
Had Death thee caught in his devouring net?"

Thus of them one to me, and no delay  
Had held my words in rendering what he sought  
Had not mine eyes another novelty caught.

For through the middle of the flaming way,  
Another party met these face to face,  
And I kept mute what they might do to trace.  
To diligence each was hurrying each, all all,  
And, meeting, each kissed each, no pause being made,  
And none being by this brief salute delayed.  
E'en so an ant, whose dusk battalion small  
Another meets, will greet an ant therein,  
Perchance his path to learn or favor win.
And that same moment that the greeting's o'er, 37
Before the foot hath time one step to take,
All into rivalry brisk of shouting break;
The later party: "Sodom and Gomorrah!"
The rest: "Into the cow Pasiphaë won
That might the bull into her luxury run!"
Then as the cranes that, part to Rhipæan snows
Might fly, and part to sandy wastes, these frost,
Those sun, avoiding, as from purposes crossed,

Comes forward one band, while the other goes, 46
And, weeping, they rehearse their hymns, and shout,
Thereafter, words which speak their penitence out;
And near my side there drew, e'en as before,
The self-same shades who had my words besought,
And with their looks was kind attention fraught.
I, who their leaning twice had seen, forbore
No longer; "Souls," I said, "of bliss secure
Whene'er these flames shall make ye fitly pure,

"Nor crude nor ripened have my limbs remained
On earth, but here are with me, duly served
With blood and articulations, all preserved.
I hither come, for clear sight to be gained;
Above a Lady is, whose favor fair
Wills that I, mortal, through your realms may fare.
But so may fondest wish of yours soon meet
Such realization that the heavenly Home,
Whose love abounds beneath its limitless dome,
"Shall you embrace, as ye shall us so greet  
As to declare yourselves, and, too, that throng  
That opposite to your path have passed along."
Not otherwise doth, dumb, the mountaineer stand,  
Who, rough and rustic, to the city strays,  
And his confusion by his looks betrays,  
Than did those shades in their ethereal land.  
But when this first amazement had been passed,  
Which in high hearts is sure not long to last,

("Blessed be thou," he then did recommence,  
Who sought us first, "who of our coasts dost seek  
Experience for those dwellings of the meek!
The throng that goes not with us gave offence  
For that, wherefor, in all his triumph's sheen,  
Great Cæsar heard himself denounced as 'Queen.'  
Thence, as they leave us, cry they 'Sodom,' shame  
Unto their burning adding, as ye 've heard,  
When, as they passed, they shouted forth that word.

"Hermaphrodite our own transgressions flame,  
And, for that we not human law observed,  
But t'wards the appetites low of animals swerved,  
By us proclaimed is, in our own disgrace,  
Whene'er we part, the name of her attired  
In bestial wood and by lewd frenzy fired.  
Now canst thou clearly forth our trespasses trace.  
If thou, perhaps, by name wouldst know us all,  
Time fails nor could I every name recall.
"Thy wish to know me my permission grants: 91
I Guido Guinicelli am, and tears
Shed late me place where cleansing stills my fears."
Such joy was mine as two sons felt whom chance
Their mother brought to quell Lycurgus' ire,
Only that rose my joy to heights still higher,
That moment that the honored name I caught,
For he mine, and my betters', Father shone,
Whene'er love rhymed in sweet and gracious tone;

And speech and hearing lost, and wrapt in thought,
Long time I went, and only on him looked,
For nearer to approach, the fire not brooked.
When fed mine eyes were with delight, my tongue
Made tender to him of my service framed
In words which my profound regard proclaimed.
Then he to me: "Footprints thou leavest among
My thoughts, and so distinct that their plain trace
The waves of Lethe never can efface.

"But homage such must have a true design,
And therefore say what is the cause wherefor
Thy words and looks t'wards me such fondness bore."
And I to him: "Those dulcet lays of thine
Which, long as lasts our beautiful modern speech,
Shall us to love their very ink-marks teach."
"Brother," said he, "there stands one in advance,"
And there he pointed, "whom showed words of pith
To be of our loved tongue a better smith."
Purgatorio.

Guittone.

“Love-verses and the prose that speaks romance
His mastery owned, and let the foolish prate
Who think him of Limoges doth him outrate.
To noise more than to truth they lend their ears,
And thus they build their quick opinions crude
Ere art or reason hath their minds imbued.
Thus had, of old, Guittone favoring peers,
Who cried him up with vigilant, keen, applause;
But there the truth hath made most people pause.

“Now if thine ample privilege opes the way
For thee to mount to that high cloister’s walls
Which Christ the Abbot of its college calls,
To Him for me an ‘Our Father’ say
So far as doth befit this state where power
To sin upon our hopes not now doth lower.”
Then, to make way, perhaps, for one who near
Came to him from behind, he in the fire
Dived like a fish whose swiftness men admire.

T’wards him so pointed out, whom saw I clear,
I moved, and to him said that my desire
And honoring breast his name sought to acquire,
And these frank words he spoke: “Your kind demand
And courteous words are such that me compel,
In answer thereto, what you ask to tell.
I am Arnaud, and with this penitent band
Walk, weep, and sing; my follies past I hate,
And future happiness here rejoicing wait.
Therefore I beg you by that power divine
Which guides you onward to the stairway's end,
That with thy prayers my sufferings thou wilt blend,
Then hid in flames which penitent souls refine.

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-SIXTH CANTO.

5. "In white serenely dressed." That is, the presence of the western sun made the blue of the sky change to white. This seems a trivial observation, at first glance; but when considered with many others, perhaps all of little value in themselves, they establish the justice of the remark so often made, that no poet has so truthfully described the effects of light. No poet has come so near to nature.

The same effect which Dante notes in the evening, may be found in the morning, sky: it changes from saffron to gray, and finally to white, and then comes the sunburst.

We may well address to Dante the words of Cowley, in his Hymn to Light:

"Say from what golden quivers of the sky
Do all thy winged arrows fly?"

34. "An ant."

"And all
Eager as ants, when, mindful that impend
The winter storms, they a great pile of wheat
Attack and place in store. Goes through the grass
The black array, and in a narrow track
The booty rolls. Some 'gainst the greater grains
Their shoulders push; some force the march and urge
The idlers on, while all the progress boils."

Fourth Æneid, 402.

40. "Sodom and Gomorrah." "... Nam eorum animi, qui se corporis voluptatibus dediderunt, earumque se quasi ministros præbuerunt, impulsuque libidinum voluptatibus obedientium, deorum et hominum jura violaverunt; corporibus elapsi circum terram ipsam voluantur; nec hunc in

"To be imprisoned in the viewless winds
And blown with restless violence round about
The pendent world; or to be worse."

*Measure for Measure*, 3, 1.

41. "Pasiphae."

"And (fortunate she
If herds had never been) Pasiphae soothed
With love she held towards the snow-white steer.
Unhappy damsels! with what madness seized!
With lowings feigned of Proetus' daughters filled
The fields were vocal made, but not with beasts
So base a union theirs, albeit they feared
The yoke upon their necks might come, and felt
Upon their smooth and broad-arched brows for horns,
Unhappy damsels! thou o'er hills dost roam,
While he, his snowy side on hyacinths soft
Reclining, chews, beneath the ilex black,
The pale green grass, or in the great herd seeks
Some favorite out."

*Fifth Pastoral (Varus)*, 45.

43. "Rhipaean." A range of mountains in ancient Scythia, modern Russia.

"The world,
So high as rounds its curve in Scythian lands
And summits steep Rhipaean, sinks as low
'Midst Libyan gales."

*First Georgic*, 240.

"Such is the hardy race severe and wild
Which, 'neath the stars that circle round the pole,
Is by Rhipaean storm-bursts buffeted,
And wraps its vigorous forms in tawny furs
Torn from the beasts that roam its heights and glens."

*Third Georgic*, 383.

52. "Leaning." Leaning to the limit of the flame-circle.
78. "Cesar." According to Suetonius (chap. xlix.), the
Roman soldiery, on occasion, would deride Caesar as having submitted to disgraceful relations with Nicomedes, King of Bithynia. A precious occasion, of course, would be a triumph, where they would call him “Queen!” and shout at him as they did, at his triumph at the close of the Gallic War: “Caesar nunc triumphat qui subegit Gallias! Nicomedes non triumphat qui subegit Cæsarem!”


92. “Guinicelli.” Guido Guinicelli, whom Longfellow declares to be the best of the Italian poets before Dante. A native of Bologna, his most celebrated poem is a Canzone on the Nature of Love, which goes far towards justifying Dante’s warmth of praise. Rossetti, Early Italian Poets, gives a version of this poem under the title of The Gentle Heart.

94. “Lycurgus.” King Lycurgus had placed his child in the care of Queen Hypsipyle. Through her neglect the child was stung by a serpent, and her sons, Eumenius and Thoas, came upon the scene just in time to save their mother from the resentment of the king. According to the account given by Statius, Thebaid, v. 949, the Queen was saved by Tydias:

“But interposing Tydias rushed between,
And with his shield protects the Lemnian Queen.”

120. “He of Limoges.” Gerault de Berneil, of Limoges, noted by Longfellow as one of the most famous Troubadours of the thirteenth century, and, in the verdict of literary history, as the superior of Arnaud. The old Provençal biographer quoted by Raynouard, Choix de Poésies, v. 166, says he was called “the Master of the Troubadours,” and adds that “he passed his winters in study, and his summers in wandering from court to court with two minstrels who sang his songs.”

123. “Guittone.” We have seen high praise bestowed upon Guittone in the Twenty-fourth Canto. Dante intimates that fashions change as to poets.

142. “Arnaud.” Arnaud Daniel, the Troubadour, was,
says Longfellow, the inventor of the *Sestina*, a form of song of six stanzas of six lines each, with the same rhymes repeated throughout the thirty-six lines, and in a peculiar order. He was also the author of the metrical romance of *Launcelot of the Lake*. Millot and Reynouard speak of his poetical standing in terms of disparagement.
CANTO TWENTY-SEVENTH.

ARGUMENT:

At the solicitation of the Angel attending the spirits, and of Virgil, Dante walks into the flames, and although heated intensely is not burned. Dante falls into a sleep, and dreams of Leah and Rachel, allegories of the Active and the Contemplative Spheres of Life. They arrive at the Terrestrial Paradise, and at this point Virgil says he now allows Dante to govern his own movements; but both he and Statius remain with him.

TIME: Evening and night of Easter Tuesday, and dawn of Easter Wednesday.


PERSONS APPEARING: Statius and other spirits.

So stood the Sun as when his earliest rays
Forth vibrate on the heights where streamed the blood
His Maker shed, while over Ebro's flood
Shines lofty Libra, and the Ganges strays
Boiled in noon-heats; and, as the daylight waned,
Round us from God's glad Angel radiance rained.
The brink he trod, outside the flames' deep dread,
And sang: "Blest are the pure in heart," in tones
So clear that such no human melody owns.
Then, as we came more near him, thus he said:

"Not further doth one go, ye holy souls,
Untouched by fire; pass ye within its folds,
And by the song beyond be your ears won."

I, when I heard his saying, was as lead,
Laid in the grave, so far my senses fled.
Mine hands I clasped, and straightened me thereon,
And scanned the fire, and grim, sad memories turned
Of human bodies I had once seen burned.

Turned t'wards me kindly looks my gentle Guides,
And Virgil spoke: "May here be torment, Son,
Not death; remember realms remote we won;
Remember Geryon and the rugged sides
Of rock-ribbed Hell through whose demesnes we trod;
Wilt thou not trust me, nearer now to God?
Be thou assured, if thou shouldst stand for years
Millenial wrapped by flames like this around,
Thou would'st not bald by one sole hair be found.

"And if, that I deceive thee, thou hast fears,
Approach, and test it with thy garment's hem
Before herein thou dost my word condemn.
All fear aside now lay, lay all aside,
Advance thou safe, come, be thou undismayed."
But still, though conscience-clear, fear held me stayed,
And, seeing that I so stubborn did abide,
Somewhat disturbed he said, "Now, Son, see, all
That thee from Beatrice severs is this wall."
As oped their lids at Thisbe's well-loved name.
    The dying Pyramus' eyes, and her espied,
    What time the mulberry was with purple dyed,
E'en thus mine obduracy being made more tame,
I to my wise Guide turned at that loved word,
    Her name, which e'er mine inmost fountains stirred.
"How now?" he queried then, the while his head
In pose he held, "Yet stay we here?" then smiled
As smiles one when an apple leads a child.

Into the fire before me then he sped,
    While Statius, who had moved aside, he prayed
    Would, after me, the flaming walls invade.
Arrived therein, if I had had my will,
    I would have cooling sought in molten glass,
So did the burning every limit pass,
While, for my help, discoursed the loved Sire still
Of Beatrice: "Ah!") he said, as on he went,
    "Her eyes I seem to see upon me bent!"

Drew us a song that on the other side
    We heard, and we, on that alone intent,
    Came from the burning where began the ascent.
"Come, blessed of my Father, come," was cried
Within a splendor of such radiant blaze
That I could not mine eyes towards it raise.
"The night is near," it added, "fades the day;
    So, tarry not, but onward press, before
Is hung the western sky with darkness o'er."
Straight forward through the rock arose our way, 64
And such its place was that the final rays
The sun cast forth were holden from my gaze.
Not far had we the defile's stairs explored,
When loss of shadow, now no longer met,
My Sages showed and me the sun had set.
And ere one tint were o'er the horizon poured,
And claimed the immeasurable scene had Night,
As held in vassalage to her sombre might,

Each of us of a stair his bed had made; 73
Not that delight had failed us, but that rose
The Mount's rough mould our progress to oppose.
Even as the goats that until noon have played
Upon the mountain-tops, and now, being fed,
In quiet ruminate till the sun is sped,
Hushed in the shade where them the goat-herd tends
While o'er his staff he leans, and them in eye
Keeps while the heats their panting bosoms try,

And, as the swain that all the long night spends 82
Beside his quiet flock, and watches there
That no wild beast their tender flanks may tear,
So did we three abide, in our night scene,
I as the goat, and as the herdsmen they,
Begirt by rocks and waiting for the day.
Between the rocks but little sky was seen,
Yet, in that limited field, the stars I saw,
Which, large and luminous, held my soul in awe.
And, as I marked their large resplendent sheen, 91
Sleep on me seized, sleep that of happenings near,
Before the event, brings tidings dimly clear.
It was, I think, the hour when, from the East,
First on the Mount beamed Cytherea's light,
She whose fair orb with love seems ever bright.
Dreams 'fore me brought of youth and grace a feast,
A Lady walking in a lea, where sought
Her lithe hands flowers, and this her song I caught:

"Know, whosoever may my name inquire,
That I am Leah, and that well it fits
To gather garlands my fair hands, while sits
My sister Rachel at her glass, nor tire
The hours she sees therein her beauteous eyes;
But mirrors mine the lakelets are and skies;
And she as eager is her charms to see
As I to wear my garlands, mine to do,
And hers to see, such aim hath each in view."

And now, as comes the dawn gives pilgrims glee, 109
Who joy the greater as the space is less
That keeps them from the home they would caress,
The darkness fled, on every side, in rout,
And with it sleep; and, seeing upon their feet
My princely Guides, rose I the day to meet.
"That fruit delicious, which, the sprays throughout,
The search of mortals after ne'er doth cease,
This day, shall set thy longings, Son, at peace."
Virgil to my glad ear these words addressed,
    Glad in a measure that could ne'er be passed,
    Words that embraced of joy a universe vast.
For flight I felt such longing and unrest,
    Desire so great to mount unto the skies,
    I seemed to feel wings on my limbs arise;
And when behind us was the stairway all,
    And we, at last, stood on the topmost grade,
    Virgil his eyes upon me kindly laid,

And said: "Son, unto me it did befall
    The temporal fire to show thee and the eterne,
    But now of me thou canst no further learn.
My mind, mine art, for thee hath thus much done;
    Let joy and pleasure guide thee now; here snares
    And tortures flee with all their burdening cares.
Behold, upon thy forehead shines the sun;
    Behold the grass, the various plants, the flowers,
    The bright spontaneous growths of myriad bowers.

"Until those bright eyes bring their wondrous light,
    Eyes which, by weeping, brought me to thine aid,
    Here may'st thou sit, or walk from glade to glade.
No further word or sign from me invite;
    Thine own free-will thou hast, upright, discreet,
    And its monitions safe thy mind will greet;
Crowned, mitred, now, thyself thou 'lt rule aright."
NOTES TO THE TWENTY-SEVENTH CANTO.

1. "So stood the Sun." The time was sunrise at Jerusalem, and therefore sunset at its antipodal point, the Mountain of Purgatory. At the same time, it was, necessarily, noon in India and night in Spain beneath the constellation of the Scales antipodal to those of India. The reader will recall the beginning of the Second Canto, wherein the order is reversed: it is there sunset at Jerusalem, and sunrise at the Mountain; and consequently night in India, beneath the same constellation.

8. "Blest are the pure in heart." "For they shall see God." Matthew v. 8.

37, 38. "Thisbe . . . Pyramus." Babylonian lovers, victims of obdurate parents and fatal misunderstandings. Living in adjoining houses, they conducted their affair of the heart through a hole in the partition wall, and thus matured an appointment to meet at the tomb of Nisus. There Thisbe arrived first, but encountered, to her dismay, a lion which had just slain an ox. The girl fled to a cave, but in her flight let fall her mantle, which the lion tore and soiled with blood. Pyramus came, and finding the mantle torn and soiled, supposed that Thisbe had been killed, and, in his frenzy, fell upon his sword. When Thisbe issued from her retreat, and found the dead body of her lover, she slew herself with the same sword. The scene of the tragedy was at the foot of a mulberry-tree, whose fruit, then white, has, in memory of this unfortunate pair, ever since been purple, the color of their blood. Their story forms the subject of one of the Metamorphoses of Ovid.

48. "Statius who had moved aside." Statius had, for some time, occupied a position between Virgil and Dante. He had then changed his position.

58. "Come blessed of my Father, come." Matthew xxv. 34. These words begin the Introit used on Wednesday of Easter Week, and the Poets, in this Canto, enter upon this day in Purgatory.
59. "A splendor." It is conceived that we should here understand that the excess of light, in place of the fanning of a wing, removed from Dante's forehead the last P.

71. "Night." Longfellow quotes from Dr. Furness's Hymn, and from the Ancient Marinere:

"Slowly by God's hand unfurled,
Down around the weary world,
Falls the darkness."

"The sun's rim dips; the stars rush out;
At one stride comes the dark."

92, 97. "Sleep . . . dreams." Dante's dream of Leah and Rachel prefigures, as he himself tells us, the near event of the appearance upon the scene of Matilda and Beatrice. Leah in the Old, and Martha in the New Testament, are the types of the Active Life; Rachel in the Old, and Mary in the New, are the types of the Contemplative Life. Matilda, devoted to the Active Life, follows Leah and Martha; Beatrice, devoted to the Contemplative Life, follows Rachel and Mary.

"Truly it should be known" says Dante in the Convito, iv. 17, "that we can have, in this life, two felicities by following two different and excellent roads, which lead thereto; namely, the Active Life, and the Contemplative."

In the church of Saint Peter in Chains, in Rome, as decorations of the monument elected to the memory of Pope Julius the Second, the statues of Leah and Rachel by Michael Angelo stand one on each side of his Moses.

113. "Upon their feet."

"Nor was Æneas less of early hours
A friend than was the king. He was awake
And up."

Eighth Æneid, 465.


130, 142. "My mind, mine art . . . Crowned . . . mitred." The mind and the mitre seem to some to represent the powers of the Contemplative Life, the art and the crown.
those of the Active, or, as in behalf of those so construing the passage, is well expressed by King John of Saxony: "Durch Ausbildung des speculativer und praktischen Intellechts bist du hierher gelangt." The incidental occasion, however, appears to be one apart from the special point in hand. The adored Virgil is about to disappear from the scene. He kindly fixes his eyes upon the Bard of Florence, and addresses to him his final words. There is ground, therefore, for the supposition that the use of the expressions "mind" and "art" is philosophical in a general sense, and that the use of the expressions "crowned" and "mitred" is intended to recall allusions elsewhere in the Poem to the imperialistic ideas of Dante, as a stanch Roman of the ideal olden times, insisting upon the division of the prerogatives of the state from those of the church. The personal compliment to Virgil is obvious. It makes him, a Poet of the pre-Christian age, the dispenser, not only of intellect and art, but of power, at least of the insignia of power, political and religious:

"'Perch' io te sopra te corono e mitrio."
CANTO TWENTY-EIGHTH.

ARGUMENT:

As the Poets are enjoying the Terrestrial Paradise, they observe Matilda. She and Dante hold a conversation in the presence of the two other Poets. Matilda tells them of Lethe and Eunoë, and refers to those passages in the works of the ancient Poets which recall the memories of the Golden Age.

Statius still remains with Dante, and will be mentioned in the two last Cantos of the present division of the Commedia. Virgil also remains, but will return to the Lower World in the Thirtieth Canto.

TIME: Morning of Easter Wednesday.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Dante. Matilda.

PERSONS APPEARING: The shade of Virgil. Statius.

THROUGHOUT those heavenly woodlands whose dense shade
With living green made mild the sun’s new gold,
Eager to find what might their depths unfold,
At once I from the brink in wonder strayed,
Along the level, with pleased gait restrained,
Upon a soil above which fragrance reigned.
A balmy air, which breathed in changeless flow,
Upon my forehead played, and with a sweet,
Kind touch did my enraptured senses greet.
And bent this gentle wind the branches so
With tremulous motion t'wards that side which gave
The sacred Mount's first shadow to the wave,
That still, in their brave tops, without annoy,
The birds, delighted, all their lessons tried,
And warblings spread throughout the charmed air wide,
And filled the hours of prime with welcoming joy,
While to their jocund songs the foliage sent
Responsive whisperings forth with odors blent,

Such as from bough to bough each other chase,
When through the pines on Chiassi's sounding shores
The surging southern breezes Æolus pours.
Already me had carried my slow pace
So far into the antique wood that lost
The place I had which I did first accost,
When lo, my further course a stream's waves barred,
Which to the left with dimpling waters laved
The grass that on its emerald margin waved.

All waters that on earth are purest, marred
The least with substances that dim and stain,
Ne'er could the clearness of this stream attain,
As, in its sweet brown bed, it moves profound
'Neath the perpetual shade which gently wraps
Suns' rays and moons' e'er from its lisping lapse.
My feet were stayed, but passed mine eyes beyond
The other bank to scan the various dyes
Wherewith the May there rivalled sunset skies;
And there appeared unto mine eyesight fond,
E'en as with wonder sometimes doth possess
The mind which only that thought would caress,
A Lady, all alone, who, as she went,
Was singing, and selecting flowers, which, choice,
Made all the pathway where she moved rejoice.

"Ah, Lady beautiful! to whom hath lent
Love his own beams to warm thee, if the heart
May testimony take thy looks impart,

"May it thee please to approach the river's marge,"
I said to her, "so close that to mine ear
May what thou singest manifest be and clear.
This place and thy fair self my memory charge
With what and where Proserpina was, when lorn
Her mother wept, and she from Spring was torn."

As doth a Lady, in her dancing turned,
Her feet restrain with slow and easy grace,
So that foot gradually to foot gives place,

Thus, on the ground where red and gold tints burned,
She t'wards me came, nor in aught other wise
Than would a shrinking maid with downcast eyes;
And my request was granted, and I heard
The dulcet voice so near that wrapped me round
The melody and the meaning of its sound.
Soon as she stood where were the grasses stirred
By waves the beauteous river rolled, she me,
'Neath eyelids raised, her eyes allowed to see,
Whence on me shone such fire as never came
From Venus' lids, what time her son's keen shaft
Tore her white breast, and missed its wonted craft.

Upon the bank she stood, and smiled, the flame
Of lively colors in her hands, from bowers
That lofty land fills with spontaneous flowers.

The stream is held but paces three apart
But not the Hellespont's flood, where Xerxes passed,
(To human pride a curb that e'er will last,)

More hatred poured within Leander's heart
That it 'twixt Sestos and Abydos rolled,
Than this, not opening, made my breast to hold.

"Ye strangers are, and, possibly, in this place,"
She said, "of all our race the joyous natal nest,
Ye from my smile some inference wrong may wrest,

Or seem therein unfriendly thoughts to trace;
But gives the psalm 'Thou, Lord, hast made me glad'
Enlightenment such as seers and prophets had.

"But thou who foremost art, and didst me call,
Say if thou more wouldst hear, for answers mine,
As need may be, I bring to doubts of thine.'"

"These waves," I said, "and forest sounds that fall
Mine ears around clash with a faith I held,
And which to abandon I am now compelled."

And she: "How that arises cause doth give
For wonder in thy mind I will relate,
And thus the haze that thee surrounds abate.
"The First Good, who sole in His joy dōth live, 91
Man good created, and this place assigned
That herein he might peace eternal find.
Through fault of his short while he here sojourned;
Through fault of his to tears he turned and toil
His laughter free and sports nought else could foil.
That might not vapors which beneath are spurned
From land and water, mostly thence through heat
Exhaled when temperatures unequal meet,

"Thence make ascent to vex here man’s estate, 100
This Mount was raised towards the Heaven so high,
And b’yond its Gate these vapors do not fly.
Now since the general atmosphere elate
Wheels, by its primal impulse driven, where nought
To check its direct onward course is brought,
Upon this summit, which on all sides stands
In living ether, doth this free air bound,
And make the dense umbrageous forest sound;

"And in the plant such power resides when fans 109
The breeze its limbs, its virtue fills the air,
And it abroad, on all its wings, doth fare;
And yonder earth, as may its merits claim,
Of soil or climate, takes the seed, and nurse
Therefrom the seasons plants and fruits diverse.
Now, this being known, no marvel ’t is when name
None can a plant that springeth from the earth,
Because it oweth to this fair land its birth.
\[ \text{Lethe. Eunoe.} \]

"And further learn, this sacred lofty plain
Of every seed is full, and fruits doth bear
The like whereof hath ne'er been gathered there.
The water in this stream is from no vein
By vapors fed which in the cold condense
And loses breath or gains through casual vents;
'Tis from a fountain sent of sure supply,
Which, through God's will, regains what it doth lose,
Nor unto rivers two doth aid refuse.

"Each river claims its several virtue high:
This flood destroys of sin all memory more;
That all past good doth to the mind restore.
Lethe the one, Eunoë the other 's named,
And none effect hath either until taste
Thereof hath us beneath its influence placed;
And by Eunoë's other sweets are tamed.
And now, albeit thy thirst is slaked, and more
Of heavenly truths I give not from my store,

"Yet a corollary still I 'll freely give,
Deeming that not less grateful will be found
What doth beyond my promise given abound.
Those who at that time sung when feigned to live
The Golden Age was and its blissful hours
Perhaps fed dreams Parnassian on these bowers.
Here man was innocent, here was endless Spring,
Here every fruit that e'er from arbor hung;
Here is the nectar of which each one sung."
Then did my body I, in gentle swing,
Towards my Poets turn, and marked the smile
That on their faces had reposed the while;
But to her beauty still mine eyes did cling.

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CANTO.

1. "Those heavenly woodlands." Now that the summit of the Purgatorial Mountain has been reached, it will be well to recall those passages in the text and notes which describe its origin and elevation, especially the Second Canto of the present division of the Poem, at line 1, and the Third, at line 15, as well as the Twenty-eighth of the Paradiso at line 139. The Mountain is described by Dante as the loftiest elevation on the globe. At its summit is the Garden of Eden, the Terrestrial Paradise, whence Adam and Eve were banished.

Milton's description of the Terrestrial Paradise is found in the Fourth Book of the Paradise Lost. It and Dante's Terrestrial Paradise recall the much feebler pictures by other Poets: that of the Island of Calypso by Homer in the Fifth Book of the Odyssey, and of the Garden of Alcinous in the Seventh; that of Colonos by Sophocles in his Ædipus Colonous; that of the Garden of Amida by Tasso in his Jerusalem; and that of Mount Acidale by Spenser in his Faerie Queene.

16. "Welcoming joy." The bird-twitterings in the early dawn of Spring have found their way into the fairest lines of the Poets. Virgil and Milton have excelled therein.

It should be borne in mind that these sounds are peculiar to the season in which Dante supposes himself to have been on the Purgatorial Mountain.

20. "Chiassi." A spacious pine-forest which stretches along the seashore from Ravenna to Cervia. Doubtless its towering trees often cast their shadow upon the Author of the Commedia.

“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 watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks  
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,  
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.”

Milton, Par. Lost, ii. 577.

40. “A Lady.” Either an allegorical personage representing the Active Life, or, as the commentators generally suppose, the Countess Matilda, daughter of Boniface, Count of Tuscany, and wife of Guelph of the House of Suabia. In the view of all who have attempted an estimate of her character, this lady is admitted to have been a person of extraordinary merits, moral and intellectual. In the view of Napier (Florentine History, vol. i. chaps. 4 and 6), the principles which governed her career were the protection of her own independence, and also that of the church at large, from the attacks of the emperors, and the protection of individual members of the church from feudal tyranny. Always generous towards the church, she, at her death, devised to the reigning pontiff, Gregory the Seventh, all her patrimonial estates, reserving, however, from the gift everything that might pertain to the exercise of civil jurisdiction. Her liberality has been the subject of criticism, but Napier judiciously observes that “the power that tamed a Henry’s pride, a Barbarossa’s fierceness, and afterwards withstood the vast ability of a Frederic, might, without shame, have been reverenced by a girl whose feelings so harmonized with the sacred strains of ancient tradition and priestly dignity.”

50, 65, 74. “Proserpina . . . Venus . . . Sestos.” It will be observed that Dante, enraptured with Matilda’s grace and beauty, compares her to Proserpina beloved by Jove, and Venus wounded, and Hero, burning with a despairing love for her Leander. It will not surprise us, therefore, to find him opening the Paradiso with an apostrophe to Apollo.
72, 73. "Xerxes... Pride." Xerxes invaded Greece with an army estimated by Herodotus at a figure largely exceeding two million of men. The estimate is probably extravagant, but the number is supposed to have exceeded that of any army ever placed in the field. Xerxes crossed the Hellespont with a fleet whose sails whitened the Mediterranean: he re-crossed it, in flight, in a small bark, and almost wholly unattended.

73. "Leander."

"What of the youth within whose bones harsh Love His great flame pours? No doubt, in night's late hours, He blind straits swims by abrupt storms disturbed, While o'er his head heaven's mighty gate resounds, And to the rocks complain the dashing waves, Nor can his wretched parents him recall, Nor she, the maid, whom cruel Fate assigns To die upon his dead lips washed ashore."

*Third Georgic, 259.*

80. "Thou, Lord." "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands." *Psalm* xcii. 4.

85, 86. "These waves... and forest sounds." In allusion to what Statius had said in the Twenty-first Canto at line 45, as to the cessation of natural phenomena at the Gate of Saint Peter.

94. "Short while." Only seven hours, according to Adam's own account in the Twenty-sixth Canto of the Paradiso at line 139.

102. "Its gate." The Gate of Saint Peter.

144. "Nectar."

"Ver erat æternum, placidique tepentibus auris
Mulcebant zephyrī natos sine semine flores.
... 
Flumina jam lactis, jam flumina nectaris ibant."

*Ovid, Met. i. 3.*

146. "The smile." Longfellow remarks that Virgil and Statius smile at this allusion to the dreams of Poets.
CANTO TWENTY-NINTH.

ARGUMENT:

Hosannas are heard, and in unmatched splendor appears the car of the Church Triumphant, drawn by a Gryphon, and attended by the four living creatures described by Ezekiel and Saint John, and by the Virtues, evangelical and cardinal, and by Moses, Luke, Paul, and the elders and doctors of the Church.

TIME: Morning of Easter Wednesday.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Matilda. Spirits singing the praises of God. Four and twenty Elders singing the praises of the Church.


SINGING, as one enamored, she again
Broke forth in song, and thus her voice had rest:
"Whose sins are covered, ye dwell 'mongst the blest."

And even as Nymphs that eager sought to attain,
Among their sylvan haunts, now one the sun,
Now one the shade, as mood of each might run,
So moved she on, against the current's course,
Along the bank, abreast of me who mused,
And longer steps than hers to take refused.
Ii6

Purgatorio.

Celestial Music.

A hundred paces 't was not there across,
   From her to me, and there turned short the stream,
   Whereat I saw the East before me gleam;
And had of time our journey met small loss,
   When round t'wards me she turned her comely head,
   And "Brother, look and hearken," then she said.
And lo! I saw, in sudden luminous trails,
   The forest gleam throughout its vistas deep,
   As though must there the living Levin leap,

But since the Levin, as it flashes, fails,
   And that still more and more in splendor grew,
   Thereof my mind sought out the solvent true.
And through the luminous air an exquisite strain
   Of melody ran. Then did it me aggrieve
   To think upon the hardihood strange of Eve;
For there where earth did like the heavens remain
   In loyalty, she, but just created, will
   Had not Heaven's high injunctions to fulfill,

Which had she honored, I had sooner shared,
   And for a longer time, those joyous hours
   To paint which language owns its feeble powers.
While through that primal garden on I fared
   Enwraapt with fruits the eternal pleasure yields,
   And in thought soaring to still loftier fields,
Before us shone, like as a thing of flame,
   The space the living verdure 'neath, and heard
   Was now almost that music's every word.
Muses, ye Virgins holy, if 't e'er came
That, for your sakes, I hunger suffered, cold
Or vigils, their reward not now withhold!
Now, Helicon, be thou through my bosom rolled,
And let Urania and her choir assist
To put in verse things that the thought resist!
Onward a little space, seven trees of gold
Seemed to invite us to their radiant leaves,
But vagueness sometimes in this way deceives;

And when so near I was as to behold
These objects closer, which now sight revealed,
By vagueness somewhat hitherto concealed,
The reasoning faculty wise that moulds discourse
Did them as candlesticks high discern; and, strong
And plain, "Hosanna," came in jubilant song.
Above them, from the socket's golden source,
Rose flames divine, which passed the midnight's scene,
When, at her full, careers the moon serene.

To my good Virgil I in wonder turned,
And he, in wonder, gave me back the look
Which he from mine own wondering visage took.
Then still those lofty things which burned and burned
I watched, and saw move with a motion slow
Which brides new-wedded easily would outgo.
The Lady chid me: "Why is thy desire
Extended only to those living lights?
Comes after them a scene which thee invites."
Then saw I people following them in choir,
   And, as they followed, shone their garments white,
Whiter than earth hath ever given to sight.
Upon my left resplendent shone the stream,
   And clear as in a mirror my left side,
E'en as I looked, was figured on its tide.
When I had now attained the marge extreme,
   And nought 'twixt me and all that scene arose,
To aid my view I gave my steps repose;

And I beheld those lights in line advance,
   And by them seemed the air a painting made,
   And they like trailing pennons were arrayed,
In each of which did its own radiance dance,
   Their sevenfold tints like those the Sun's bow shows,
   Or those the girdle of fair Delia knows.
Each ensign shone in heaven a lengthening lance,
   And was the width their seven high splendors filled
   Ten paces, so to me it seemed so thrilled.

Beneath a heaven with tints like these made fair
   Came four and twenty elders, two by two,
   With lilies crowned, advancing into view.
"O blessed thou," their song so stirred the air,
   "'Mongst Adam's daughters! And thy comely face
   Shall still continued blessings ever grace."
After that throng elect had passed along,
   Upon the flowers and beauteous leaflets rare,
   Which of that marge attested nature's care,
Even as in heaven succeed stars' stars in throng, 91
Close after them four animals walked, and green
The frondage was that on each one was seen.
With six wings every one of them was graced,
All full of eyes; from such eyes Argus gazed,
As would be seen if he to life were raised.
My Reader, rhymes more ask me not to waste
In their behalf; my purse owes other debts,
And prodigality poverty oft begets.

But read Ezekiel, who describes them, borne 100
As he them saw, from northern regions cold,
In whirlwind, fire and clouds terrific rolled.
And liking such as by them there was worn,
Was worn even here; and, as to their six wings,
With me is John, who difference herein brings.
The space surrounded by the four a car
Triumphant held two-wheeled, which there moved on
Superb, and by a Gryphon's neck was drawn.

And held he both wings so as not to mar 109
The stripes whereof the middle one ran between,
And three and three outside were pulsing seen.
The wings pierced heaven, ascending b'yond the sight;
Of gold he was, far as the bird form reigned;
Of white the rest was, with vermilion veined.
Not only Rome with car so keenly bright
Ne'er Africanus nor Augustus praised,
But b'yond the Sun's its radiant splendors blazed,
That erring car which Tellus' fervent prayer
Moved Jove by his mysterious word of doom
In fires he thereto missioned, to consume.
At its right wheel danced on three maidens fair,
Whereof was one so ruddy that if sent
A fire within, her tint had with it blent.
The next in all her flesh and members gleamed
As if of emerald made; the third a glow
Of purity had like newly-fallen snow.

And now their leader fair the white one seemed,
And now the red; and by the one who led
A song was sung which fast or slow them sped.
And at the left wheel four in purple clad
Made festival, one the rest directing wise,
In whose calm brows were seen three thoughtful

eyes.

When this quaternion further progress had,
Two old men came, dissimilar in attire,
But with traits each which admiration fire.

One shows himself as of that patient flock
Hippocrates led, him whom kind Nature gave
Care o'er the animals she with skill would save;
The other had the temper of the rock,
And shone his sword with edge and glitterance so
I trembled, though the stream 'twixt us did flow.
Next four I saw pass on with humble guise,
And following last, in sleep, with countenance
keen,
Alone, an aged man was walking seen.
And habited were these seven in similar wise

To those in front, yet not the lily round

Their reverend heads engarlanded was found;

They bore the rose and other vermeil flowers;

At distance slight the eye had sworn that flame

From out their brows in leaves and tendrils came.

Opposite to me the car stopped with its powers;

The thunder crashed; an interdict's voice seemed heard,

And nought in that array magnificent stirred.

Stood still the vanward ensigns in those bowers.

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-NINTH CANTO.

3. "Whose sins are covered." "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." Psalm xxxii. 4.

12. "The east." We are now prepared to construct a map embracing the path, direction, and positions of Dante and his fellow-Poets, the position and course of the river, and the positions, path, and direction of Matilda. From lines 12 and 25 of the preceding Canto we learn that, the time being morning, the Mountain casts its shadow towards the west; the breeze was, then, blowing from the east, with the diurnal motion "the primal impulse" (line 103) of the solar system, or, to use an equivalent expression, against the motion of the earth. Dante meets a stream on his left. The general direction of this stream (Lethe) must, therefore, have been east and west. He beholds Matilda on the other, the north, side of the stream. He and Matilda (she still remaining on the north side), turn towards the south, going up-stream, and, after rounding a bend in the stream, face eastward again. Thus, we find that the stream flowed from the east, and that the Triumphal Procession of the Church was approaching from the east.
41. "Urania." The Muse of Astronomy, or things celestial, whom art represents as robed in azure and crowned with a coronet of stars. Milton, in the *Paradise Lost*, vii. 1, invokes her as transcending Olympus, and as born in heaven before the existence of "the Muses nine:"

> "Before the hills appeared, or fountain flowed,  
> Thou with Eternal Wisdom didst converse,  
> Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play  
> In presence of the Almighty Father, pleased  
> With thy celestial song."

43, 50. "Seven trees of gold . . . candlesticks." "And I turned to see the voice that spake . . . . . I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death. . . . The seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." *Revelation* i. 12, 18, 20.

The candlesticks of Dante are by some construed as meaning the seven Sacraments of the Church, by others as the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost.

78. "The girdle of fair Delia." The halo round the Moon.

83, 84. "Four and twenty elders . . . with lilies crowned." The four and twenty elders symbolize the four and twenty books of the Old Testament named by Saint Jerome in the preface to the Vulgate, and which he says are referred to in *Revelation* iv. 4: "And round about the throne were four and twenty
elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.” The elders of Dante, it is observable, have on their heads crowns of lilies.

85. “O blessed thou.” The salutation is addressed to Beatrice. In the twenty-third chapter of the Vita Nuova, Dante relates that, at a time when he was prostrated with illness, he dreamed that Beatrice was dead, and that, standing by her dead body, he had formed the intention of saying: “O Beatrice, blessed be thou!” and had already said, “O Beatrice,” when his slumber was disturbed by an anxious attendant. The “Blessed be thou” is here spoken. He has uttered it in the most wonderful of dreams ever dreamed by mortal, the Commedia.

92, 100. “Four animals... read Ezekiel.” Four “living creatures” supposed to symbolize the four Evangelists. Each had four faces and four wings. Ezekiel i. 4. John gives the number of the wings on each as six, Revelation iv. 8, and says that the creatures were full of eyes before and behind. According to Ezekiel, of their four faces, those on the right side were of a man and of a lion, on the left of an ox and of an eagle; but according to John, each of the creatures had but one face, the first like that of a lion, the second like that of a calf, the third like that of a man, and the fourth like that of a flying eagle. The lion-headed creature is supposed to symbolize Saint Mark; the calf, or ox-faced, Saint Luke; the man or cherub-face, Saint Matthew; the eagle-headed, Saint John. The ox was the emblem of sacrifice.

107. “A car triumphal.” The Church is so symbolized. The two wheels Dante seems to interpret as Saint Dominic and Saint Francis. Paradiso, xii. 106.

108. “A Gryphon.” A symbol of Christ in his divine and human nature, the lion representing his human nature, the eagle his divine nature. The eagle-head recalls the Church’s Hymn of Saint John:

“Volat avis sine meta,
Quo nec vates, nec propheta,
Evolavit altius.”
The lion-body recalls a feature of the popular belief in the Middle Ages, that the young of the lion was born dead, and after three days was awakened to vitality by the breath or the roar of its sire, a belief which at once suggests the doctrine of the Resurrection.


121. "Three maidens." The three theological Virtues, Charity, Hope, and Faith, to follow the order in which they are described by Dante.

130. "Four in purple clad." The four cardinal Virtues, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, Temperance. Dante gives Prudence three eyes, to indicate her comprehension of the Past, the Present, and the Future.


136. "One." "Luke, the beloved physician." *Colossians* iv. 4. Hippocrates was known as "the father of medicine."

142. "Four." James, Peter, John, and Jude: John, now in the capacity of writer of his Epistles, and the rest in the capacity of writers of Epistles.

142. "In sleep." Now we have Saint John in his capacity of writer of the *Revelation*.

CANTO THIRTIETH.

ARGUMENT:

A hundred Angels, chanting, shower the triumphal car of the Church with lilies and roses, and other flowers of choice hue and fragrance; and, in the midst of this delightful shower, and descending upon the left side of the car, and afterwards taking her station upon the right of it, appears Beatrice in a robe brilliant with tints of flame, green mantle, and white veil, and crowned with an olive-wreath. Dante, in consternation, looks around for Virgil, who, to his surprise, he finds has departed. Beatrice addresses to Dante, in the presence of the Angels, reproachful speeches, which cause him to shed tears. A choir of Angels soothe and sustain Dante under these reproaches, and Beatrice addresses this angelic choir.

TIME: Morning of Easter Wednesday.

PERSONS SPEAKING: A hundred Ministers and Messengers, Angels, cheering Beatrice and scattering flowers over the car and herself; a choir of Angels reassuring Dante. Beatrice. Dante.

PERSONS APPEARING: The Gryphon; and the Virtues, Elders, Sages, Evangelists, Doctors; and the four attendant creatures. The shade of Virgil. Statius.

WHEN there the highest heaven's Septentrion bright
(Which setting never, rising never, knew,
Nor o'er whose face, except sin, cloud ne'er flew,
And which to every one a beacon-light
Held forth of duty, as the lower holds
To voyagers whom the sea's broad sweep enfolds)
Made halt, that band of truth who in the van
Betwixt its standards and the Gryphon went,
Towards the car as to their rest seemed bent;
Beatrice appears.

And one of them, as following heaven’s own plan,

“Come, Spouse, from Lebanon,” chanted, three times o’er,
And made they, all, the happy song to soar;
And as the Blest shall come, from near and far,
When sounds the final trump, and shall assume
Again their flesh, when dawns the day of doom,
So brought the Elder’s voice upon that car
Celestial ministers and messengers down,
A hundred, offering Life’s eternal crown.

And “Blessed art thou who comest” was their hail,

And as fair flowers they scattered they did sing:
“High-heaped in plenteous handfuls lilies bring!”

I, have beheld ere now, when dawn would pale,
The eastern hemisphere’s tint of roseate sheen,
And all the opposite heaven one gem serene,
And the uprising sun, beneath such powers
Of vapory influence tempered, that the eye
For a long space its fiery shield could try:

E’en so, embosomed in a cloud of flowers,
Which from those hands angelical upward played,
And roseate all the car triumphal made,
And showered a snow-white veil with olive bound,
Appeared a Lady, green her mantle, name
Could not describe her robe unless t’ were flame.
And mine own spirit, which the past had found
Often, within her presence, free from awe,
And which could never from me trembling draw,
And sight no knowledge giving me at this time, 
Through hidden virtue, which from her came forth,
Of ancient love felt now the potent worth.
As soon as on my vision smote sublime
The heavenly influence that, ere boyhood's days
Had fled, had thrilled me and awoke my praise,
Unto the leftward turned I, with that trust
Wherewith a little child his mother seeks,
When fear his steps controls and tear-stained cheeks,

To say to Virgil: "All my blood such gust
Of feeling moves as doth man's bravery tame;
I feel the traces of the ancient flame."
But Virgil had from us his presence ta'en,
Virgil of Fathers sweetest, Virgil who
Me safely led the infernal terrors through;
And all that our first mother lost was vain
To keep my cheeks from dews they had escaped,
Cheeks that at last in weeping's weeds were draped.

"Dante, weep not that Virgil leaves thee, thou
Who must the wounds feel of another sword,
Must feel the cutting of the indignant word."
Even as an admiral who, from stern or prow,
Looks out upon his fleet, and sends his cheer
To sailors brave around the squadroned mere,
Her on the left side of the car I saw,
When turned I at the sound of mine own name,
Which, from necessity, here I thus proclaim.
The Lady who appeared in such pleased awe
Of festival angel-honored, turned t'wards me
Those eyes which now I saw, and yet not free,
Because the veil that from her head flowed down,
Encircled with Minerva's emblem, clear
Less than they otherwise would, them made appear.
In attitude high, such as would grace a crown,
Continued she, like unto one who deals
Rebukes, but not the warmest yet reveals.

"Observe me well; I 'm Beatrice! Deign
At last didst thou this lofty height to scan?
And knowest thou not that happy here is Man?"
Mine eyes fell down into the watery plain,
But there mine image sent them to the marge,
So much of shame did my hot forehead charge.
In her I saw a mother's proud disdain,
For bitter somewhat is the sugared taste
Of kindness toned with magisterial grace.

Her voice was silent: Angels took the strain
With suddenness up, and sang: "In thee, O
Lord,
Hath been my hope," and it to "my feet"
poured.
E'en as the snow, where living rafters green
Crown crags where Italy's crests her forests lift,
At first flies 'fore Sclavonian winds in drift,
But then yields softly 'neath a warmth unseen,
Whene'er the shadowless land upon it breathes,
Like to a taper which the heat enwreathes,
Canto XXX.

Beatrice addresses the Angels.

Such then was I, a tearless, sighless man, 91
Before I had that choir angelic heard
In notes whereby the eternal spheres are stirred,
But when throughout their melodies sweet there ran
Compassion for me more than had they said:
"Consume him not, O Lady," then forth fled
In spirit and water all the ice that held
My heart congealed, and from my bosom crushed,
Through mouth and eyes, in sobs and tear-drops gushed.

And still my grief from its touched sources welled, 100
When she, now on the car's right side erect,
Thus spoke to those kind beings of Heaven elect:
"Your vigils keep ye in the eternal day,
So that no shape that may take things terrene
Can night or sleep make to your eyes unseen;
And greater stress I on mine answer lay
That he who there stands weeping may it hear,
And sin and dole in equal measure fear.

"Through influence not alone of those great orbs
That make a destiny for each seed, as mar
Or make conjunctions binding star to star,
But by that fortune which from heaven absorbs
Celestial graces born in vapors high,
Whereunto our feeble vision comes not nigh,
Such had this man in his new life become,
And potently, so that all habits good
In him had all opposing vice withstood;
"But as more valuable is the soil's good sum
So much the more neglect and evil seed
Makes it to *wildness* run and briers breed.
My look some time upheld him, for I showed
My youthful eyes unto him, and him led
With me in the right way, but when had sped
My life still further, and time's circles glowed
Upon my *second* age, then leaving me,
He could in others higher attractions see,

"And when from flesh to spirit I arose,
And beauty and virtue in me grew, to him
My charms were less, my guiding light more dim,
And he pursued of good false dreary shows,
That any promises made did ne'er fulfill,
But which led captive his inconstant will.
Nor me availed my prayers that he, inspired
By dreams and other influences which I sent,
Might back be called and from his folly bent.

"Such depths he sought that I, of these means
tired,
The purpose formed that, for increase of grace,
He might be shown perdition's wretched race.
I to this end the gates infernal sought,
And him who hath him guided to this height
Implored with tears which helped me with their
might.
It would God's lofty judgments set at nought,
If, without penitence shown by weeping sore,
He, tasting of the food *such* wanderings bore,
"Should through Lethean waves be idly brought."

NOTES TO THE THIRTIETH CANTO.

1. "The highest heaven's Septentrion bright." The highest heaven is the ninth, the Empyrean, that which rejoices in the immediate presence of God. The Septentrion is the flame of the seven candlesticks.

   The Order of the Procession of the Church Triumphant:
   1. The seven Candlesticks.
   3. The four animals seen by Ezekiel and John.
   4. The Gryphon and car.
   5. The three Maidens, representing the Theological Virtues, Faith, Hope and Charity.
   6. The four Maidens representing the Theological Virtues, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance.
   8. A hundred Angels, who welcome Beatrice, and shower the car and herself with flowers.
   10. A choir of Angels which salutes and sustains Dante during the speech of Beatrice. This choir is sometimes supposed to be identical with the hundred Angels who welcome Beatrice.

5. "The lower." The lower Septentrion, the seven polar stars. These stars never set, never rise. To observers in the northern hemisphere they revolve around the pole.


19. "Blessed art thou who comest." "And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest." Matthew xxi. 9.


   "Manibus date lilia plenis." Sixth Æneid, 884.
32. "A Lady." "Beatrice," says Barlow, Study of the Divine Comedy, p. 271, "is here represented as the principle of divine beatitude, or that which confers it, and bears a resemblance to the figure of the New Jerusalem seen by Saint John descending from heaven 'as a bride adorned for her husband' (Rev. xxi. 2); a representation of which, in the manner of Raphael, occurs in one of the tapestries of the Vatican, and though not arrayed in the colors of the Christian virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity, white, red, and green, as was Beatrice, may yet be regarded as a Roman version of her."

34. "The past." Beatrice died in 1290, and therefore at the date of the Commedia had been dead ten years.

39. "The potent worth." A due appreciation of the exalted estimate which Dante had formed of Beatrice, and of the adoring devotion which ruled him in regard to her, can only be attained by a perusal of his own story as detailed by him in the charming pages of the Vita Nuova. An admirable rendering has been giving by Norton, in his New Life of Dante, p. 1, of Dante's account of his first meeting with Beatrice, both of them, beloved and lover, being children of only nine years:

"Nine times now, since my birth, had the heaven of light turned almost to the same point in its own gyration, when first appeared before mine eyes the glorious Lady of my mind, who was called Beatrice by many who knew not wherefore she was so called. She had already been in this life so long that in its course the starred heaven had moved towards the region of the east one of the twelve parts of a degree; so that, at about the beginning of her ninth year, she appeared to me, and I near the end of my ninth year saw her. She appeared to me clothed in a most noble color, a modest and becoming crimson, garlanded, and adorned in such wise as befitted her very youthful age. At that instant, I say truly that the spirit of life which dwelleth in the most secret chamber of the heart began to tremble with such violence that it appeared fearfully in the least pulses, and trembling, said these words: Ecce Deus, sortior me, qui, veniens, domi-"
Canto XXX.

Notes.

nabitur mihi. (Behold a God, stronger than me, who, coming, will rule over me.)

"From this time forward I say that Love lorded it over my soul, which had so suddenly inclined to him; and he began to exercise over me such control and such lordship, through the power which my imagination gave to him, that it behooved me to do completely all his pleasure. He commanded me ofttimes that I should seek to see this youthful Angel, so that I, in my boyhood, often went seeking her, and saw her of such noble and praiseworthy deportment that truly of her might be said that word of the poet Homer, 'She seemeth not the daughter of mortal man, but of God.'

('A Divinity, whom none had deemed
From mortal man derived, but from a God.'

Iliad, xxiv. 258.)

"And albeit her image, which stayed constantly with me, gave boldness to Love to hold lordship over me, yet it was of such noble virtue that it never suffered that Love should rule me without the faithful counsel of the reason in those matters in which it were useful to hear such counsel."

This is deemed also a suitable place to present the closing words of the Vita Nuova, as rendered by the same translator:

"A wonderful vision appeared to me, in which I saw things which made me resolve to speak no more of this blessed one until I could more worthily treat of her. And to attain to this, I study to the utmost of my power as she truly knoweth. So that, if it shall please Him through whom all things live, that my life shall be prolonged for some years, I hope to say of her what was never said of any woman. And then may it please Him who is the Lord of Grace, that my soul may go to behold the glory of its Lady, namely, of that blessed Beatrice, who, in glory, looketh upon the face of Him qui est per omnia saecula benedictus (who is blessed for evermore)."

Miss Blow, Study of Dante, p. 62, in remarking upon these passages, says that in Dante's treatment of Beatrice is found
the key to the Commedia; that, primarily, the Beatrice of Dante is "the woman, Beatrice Portinari," but that Beatrice is also one with the Eternal-Womanly of Goethe, and thus represents the divine principle.

48. "I feel the traces of the ancient flame."

"Agnosco veteris vestigiae flammæ."

Fourth Æneid, 23.

The last words addressed by Dante to Virgil are Virgil's own words.

49, 50, 51. "Virgil . . . Virgil . . . Virgil." The repetition is of purpose, and has, doubtless, its inspiration in the religious idea which governed Virgil, that the triple mention of a word made it, in a peculiar manner, sacred. This rhetorical consecration is repeatedly observed by Virgil: as, in the Fourth Georgic (line 526), in the instance of "Eurydice;" in the Second Book of the Æneid, twice (lines 325 and 426), in the instance of "Troy"; and in the Third Book (line 523), in the instance of "Italy." He especially observes it in allusion to the divine power, instances of which will occur to the reader. In similar form, Tasso sings that the crusaders saluted the City of David:

"'Jerusalem! a thousand voices cry,  
'All hail, Jerusalem!' hill, down, and dale  
Catch the glad sounds, and shout: 'Jerusalem, all hail!'"

52. "All which our first mother lost." That is, all the delights of the Terrestrial Paradise.

55. "Dante." The only place in the Commedia in which the name is mentioned.

57. "Another sword." The metaphor of the sword, here begun, will be continued in the next Canto.

72. "But not the warmest yet reveals." She will reveal the warmest in the next Canto.

83, 84. "In thee, O Lord . . . my feet." "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness . . . thou hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room." Psalm xxxi. 1, 8.
Notes.

85. "Living rafters." The forests of the Appenines, furnishing rafters for the edifices of Rome, and all the other cities of Italy. One district was thence called Trabaria, the district of Massa. Denistoun, *Memoir of the Duke of Urbino*, i. 4.

"Prone fall the pines, the ilex to the axe
Responds in echoing sounds, and to the wedge
The ash-logs yield, and yields the straight-grained oak.
And down the mountains roll the mighty elms.
And, at the head of all, Æneas worked,
Encouraging his men."

*Sixth Æneid*, 180.

89. "The shadowless land." The South, the region of the equator, where the sun, being almost exactly in the zenith (the ecliptic, at its widest departure from the equator, leaving it only 23° 28'), casts but little shadow.

115. "New life." "Vita nuova." Dante is supposed here to make allusion to his work of that name.

125. "My second age." This phrase refers to the death of Beatrice. She lived to the threshold of what Dante calls the second age of human life. *Convito*, iv. 24. In another conception of the phrase as it is used here by Dante, there belongs to it a peculiar pathos. Her second age had come, she lost Dante, and passed into the life eternal.
CANTO THIRTY-FIRST.

ARGUMENT:

Beatrice renew her reproaches in a speech addressed directly to Dante, and Dante attempts to speak, but breaks down. He succeeds in saying a few words, but under the further reproaches of Beatrice he falls senseless to the ground. Matilda, clasping him in her arms, plunges him in Lethe, whose waters bring oblivion of things evil. As he emerges from Lethe, the evangelical and cardinal Virtues place him before the eyes of Beatrice unveiled. Her heavenly splendor Dante confesses his powers are inadequate to describe.

TIME: Morning of Easter Wednesday.


And then 'gainst me who saw the keen edge gleam
Of her discourse, and felt it sore, she turned
The glittering point, while pause for act she spurned:
“Say, thou, who standest b'yond the holy stream,
Say, if this be not true; it must be, thou,
If truth thou speak'st, its justice will avow.”
Such great confusion o'er my faculties reigned
That died my voice before its organs shape
To it had given wherein it should escape.
"Whereon is 't thou dost muse?" when she refrained
   A small space had, she asked, "Answer thou me,
   The pitying wave still leaves sad memories free."
Fear now confusion joined, and stunned the sense,
   While gave I forth so weak a "Yea" that sight
   Was needed it to comprehend aright.
And, as when breaks a cross-bow if too tense
   The bow-string to the archer's shoulder's brought,
   And sinks the arrow ushered forth for nought,
So, 'neath that heavy strain my strength gave way,
   And burst I into sighs and tears which came
   In torrents forth, and missed my voice its aim.
"When through my wishes," she began to say,
   "Love of the good did all thy nature fire,
   And thou didst for the highest planes aspire,
   What trenches in thy path, what chains were found,
   That so thy feet impeded that no hope
   In thee gave strength with obstacles such to cope?
"And what allurements strange or vantages crowned
   The forehead of the others that t'wards them
   The impulse was too strong for thee to stem?"
A bitter sigh I heaved, for yet my dread
   Me almost voiceless made, but came at last
   Words which with pain reviewed the eventful past:
"The things that present were," I weeping said,
   "With joys deceitful turned my steps astray,
   Soon as from your face came no guiding ray."
Their mutual Discourse.

And she: "Hadst thou been silent, or denied
What thou avowest, not less plain had been
By such a Judge observed thy manifest sin,
But when from one's own cheeks wells out the tide
Which doth one's fault proclaim, the sharpening wheel
Turns, in our court, against the edge of steel.
But still that thou may'st profit by the shame
Which thy transgression brings thee, and whene'er
Again the Sirens sing, avoid their snare,

"Let now thy tears abate, and be thine aim
To learn how in an opposite way should thee
My buried flesh have helped the path to see.
Nor art nor nature e'er such pleasing sight
Gave thee as those fair limbs, the casket bright,
Now scattered dust, wherethrough my soul shed light.
If, then, with me thy highest joy took flight,
What mortal thing, since there remained none higher,
Should have had power to make thee it desire?

"Ah! when of things fallacious the first shaft
Thee struck, thou shouldst have raised thy mind
To my high planes where error none can find.
Thou shouldst not have allowed thy wings their craft
To idly lose, nor wait for further blows,
Or some slight girl, or other transient shows;
The birdling twice or thrice the Fowler tries,
But when its wings have all their feathers grown,
From net or arrow swift its flight is flown."
Then, even as children who stand mute, their eyes
Upon the earth cast down, and, listening, meek
In penitence pardon for offences seek,
So stood I there while she urged new appeals:
"If hearing thus doth pain thee, raise thy beard,
A greater pain in seeing may be feared."
A sturdy holm up torn with less plaint yields,
When native winds its burly bole uproot,
Or those Iarbas' regions send acute,

Than was the woe wherewith my chin I raised,
And, when she by the beard bade show the face,
The sting the word conveyed I well could trace.
And when from my raised eyes I forward gazed,
I saw those hundred ministrant and angelic
powers
Make pause in their glad task of strewing flowers;
And, still bent down in spirit I observed
That Beatrice turned towards the Gryphon round,
That being wherein the natures two are found.

E'en 'neath her veil, beyond the stream broad-curved,
She seemed to me her former self to outvie,
More than when here she others all passed by.
And penitential thorns so stung me sore
That of all other loves the one which most
Me had enthralled was now the least my boast.
Such self-conviction smote me at the core,
O'erp BCMg 22211, and what was then my state
She knoweth well who caused such sadness great.
Then, when my heart restored my consciousness,

I took that o'er me stood the Lady seen
Alone by me, and still of gracious mien,
And "Loose me not," she was saying, while to the throat
She in the stream had plunged me; me she drew
Behind her, while, like to a shuttle, flew
Her form above the waves. Near the blest shore
"Sprinkle thou me," I heard so sweetly sung
That it eludes my pen and e'en my tongue.

Then the sweet Lady's arms me downward bore
Plunging my head so deeply that I drank
Perforce of that blest stream in which I sank.
Then by her dripping, dripping, I was given
To those four lovely ones who danced, while each
A beautiful arm above my head did reach.
"Nymphs here are we, but stars are we in Heaven;
Ere Beatrice to the world descended, place
We held as chosen handmaids her to grace.

"We'll to her eyes thee lead; but for the light
Divine that in them is, shall sharpen thine
The three beyond who search each deepest mine."
Thus did they sing, with cheering music bright;
Then to the Gryphon went we all, where gazed
The eyes which she not yet towards us raised.
"See that thine eyes thou spare not," thus they said,
"Before the emeralds now we place thee, there
Whence Love erewhile for thee chose weapons fair."
A thousand longings which hot fires outsped
Mine eyes held fast upon those wells of light
That held the Gryphon fixed within their sight,
E'en as the sun is in a mirror seen,
Within her eyes the twofold being shone,
One nature now, and next the other one.
Think, Reader, how I wondered, for, while e'en
The substance of the Gryphon showed no change,
In her eyes shone this alternation strange.

While I amazed and glad was, for my soul
Was relishing now that food which while we feed,
Increases in us for it hunger's need;
The other three, whose dignity them extol,
Came forward while they struck the lofty line,
And danced as rose their joyous notes divine:
"Turn, Beatrice, O, thine holy eyes," they sung,
"Turn to thy faithful one, who paces sore
Hath many borne, thyself to see once more!

"Nor needs respond to us thy favoring tongue;
Unveil, unveil, thy face to him, that he
Thy second beauty, else concealed, may see!"
O splendor, O eternal, living light!
What palest student in Pierian shades,
Whose spirit most its sparkling fountain aids,
That would not seem to ascend too high a flight
In seeking lines to set thy radiance forth,
The peerless traits of thy transcendent worth,
As seen unveiled in bowers of Eden bright?

NOTES TO THE THIRTY-FIRST CANTO.

1. "The keen edge." In continuation of the use of the metaphor of the sword, begun in the Thirtieth Canto, line 57.

42. "The edge of steel." The use of the sword-metaphor still continued. This metaphor, again and again returned to, seems to have escaped the translators, commentators, and critics.

50. "Or some slight girl." "Pargoletta," a little girl, a sportive child at play. This phrase, in connection with an expression in the Twenty-third Canto, and with those in the Thirtieth (lines 24 and 126), has led some of the critics to suppose that Dante's private life was subject to reproach, a supposition encouraged by the gossipping style of the annals of Dante's time, like everything else in that depraved age, colored with the most unwarrantable insinuations, and slavishly at the service of pharisaical criticism. Aside from the absurdity of supposing that in a work intended for his political vindication an author would pronounce his own moral condemnation, the expressions, in and of themselves, are capable of a very innocent construction. The unfavorable criticism seems as absurd as it would be to draw unfavorable conclusions from Dante's apparent admission, in the beginning of the Thirty-second Canto, that he had directed towards Beatrice "too intent" a gaze. As though Dante should paint himself in the attitude of a red-handed culprit, shrinking, like a felon, from the "quousque tandem" of an exasperated magistrate!

Dean Plumptre, in the notes to his translation, acquits Dante of the aspersions made against the purity of his character. He suggests, in his Life of Dante, liii., that Dante's ambiguous phrases, "gentucca," "pargoletta," et cetera, were thrown out by him, in a notion, half gay, half malicious, of mystifying the Philistines of his own and after times. But is it easy to conceive that he had that much thought for the
Notes.

Philistines? Dante’s temperament would lead him to pay contempt with contempt. The careless innocence of an artist in search of poetic effects is possibly the key to the secret.

72. “Iarbas’ regions.” The regions of the South. Iarbas was the Gætulian king from whom Dido bought the site of Carthage, alluded to in the unhappy vendor’s and suitor’s appeals to Jove (Fourth Æneid, 203) as “a little money-cheapened town” (Morris’s translation). For Iarbas was one of the Queen’s suitors, and a rejected one:

“Despised
Iarbas was, and so the others were,
Those leaders brave, whom Afric’s soil makes rich
With triumphs proud.”

Fourth Æneid, 36.

89. “O’erpowered I fell.” “Ch’io caddi vinto.” “Vinto” recalls the more homely “ben vinto” of the Inferno, which Longfellow, in playfulness or accuracy, translates “dead beat.”

98. “Sprinkle thou me.” The anthem, sung before solemn mass on Sundays, follows the fifty-first Psalm, and is as follows: “Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be cleansed: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”


113. “Then to the Gryphon went we all.” Dean Plumptre observes hereon, in very excellent phrase: “Dante is in harmony with the profoundest thoughts of all masters of the spiritual life. The highest outcome of the work of virtue, grace, wisdom, is that they lead the soul to Christ.”

116. “The emeralds.” The eyes of Beatrice. “A greenish blue,” says Lani, “like the color of the sea.” By Melchior Messirini, who claimed to have discovered a portrait of Beatrice, dating as far back as the fourteenth century, she is declared to have had “splendid brown eyes.” On Dante’s “emeralds” the Ottimo comments thus: “Dante very happily introduces this precious stone, considering its properties, and
considering that Gryphons watch over emeralds. The emerald is the prince of all green stones; no gem nor herb has greater greenness; it reflects an image like a mirror; increases wealth; is useful in litigation and to orators; is good for convulsions and epilepsy; preserves and strengthens the sight; restrains lasciviousness; restores memory; is powerful against phantoms and demons; calms tempests; stanches blood; and is useful to soothsayers."

Longfellow says that the beauty of green eyes, ojuelos verdes, is extolled by Spanish poets; and is not left unsung by poets of other countries. Lycophron, in his "tenebrous poem" of Cassandra, says of Achilles:

"Lo! the warlike eagle comes,  
Green of eye, and black of plume!"

And, in one of the old French Mystery-Plays, Hist. Théat. Franc. i. 176, Saint Joseph is made to describe the Holy Child as having

"Les yeux vers, la chair blanche et tendre,  
Les cheveux blonds."
The seven Virtues reproach Dante for bending upon Beatrice too fixed a gaze. The heavenly procession, escorting the Gryphon, marches on like a glorious army. The Gryphon attaches the pole of the chariot to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Dante falls asleep, and is aroused by Matilda, who, at his request, points out to him Beatrice seated at the foot of the tree of knowledge, attended by the seven Virtues. The car of the Church Dante sees attacked by the eagle of Persecution, the fox of Heresy, and the dragon of Islamism. The plumes of victory are added to the Church, but sin and dissension distract her career.

Time: Morning of Easter Wednesday.


So, after ten years' thirsting, did mine eyes
Bend to the draught, that every sense but sight
Was lost, or from it separated quite
By cloistering walls which round it seemed to rise,
As in its toils the sacred smile me held,
Toils which of old mine homage fond compelled;
When was my sight with sudden force aside,
T'wards my left hand, by those sweet Goddesses bent,
Whom I o'erheard to say: "'T is too intent!"
And, as the sight by sunshine's splendors tried
Sinks lost in radiance which at first it hailed,
So, for a while, my power of vision failed;
But when mine eyes unto the lesser view
Were now returned (the lesser view, I say,
For from the greater was I turned away),
I saw upon its right wing wheel, with hue
Divine, that glorious host, and face the sun,
While o'er its head the sevenfold flame still shone.

As when, for caution, with shields high advanced,
A squadron turns, and bears its banner round,
So moving till its new position's found,
That soldiery of the skies, on which so danced
Celestial brightness, had position changed
Ere had the car's pole yet before us ranged.
Then 'wards their wheels the attendant maidens
turned;
And moved the Gryphon, with his burden blest,
So that not stirred a feather of his crest.

The Lady fair who to me Lethe learned,
With Statius and myself, the inner line,
So curved, attended of those wheels divine.
So passing through that lofty forest, waste
Through fault of her the serpent's craft ensnared,
To heavenly music keeping time, we fared.
Perhaps from where we started, were we spaced
Where aimed would arrow-flights three attain so far,
When Beatrice her descent made from the car.
And, with one voice, all "Adam!" murmuring said,

Then circled they around a tree, whose bloom
And leafage spoiled proclaimed its storied gloom.
Its towering boughs, which further outward spread
As higher they rise, had been by Indians deemed
For height a wonder ne'er in their lands dreamed.
"Thou blessed art, O Gryphon, whose beak ne'er
Fed on these boughs, all pleasant to the taste
Since t'wards all ill hath appetite hence made haste."

Thus round the stately tree shouts filled the air;
And he, the twofold being, said: "So must
Be saved the generation of the just."
And, turning to the pole, his burden erst,
He it drew close beneath the widowed bole,
And unto it left bound the chariot-pole.
Then, as our trees put forth, when burst
The steaming heats, and with the brilliant air
Commingles that of heavenly Lasca's lair,

And from its branch each leaf and floweret teems,
With each its several tint, ere yet afar
His shafts the Sun sends 'neath another star;
More faint than rose, more deep than violet, gleams
Came in the fruit wherewith this tree was new,
There where erewhile no sign of fruitage grew.
Ne'er have I heard, not here below is sung,
The hymn which then from that throng floated;
strength
Failed me to bear its burden sweet and length.
Were 't given unto my pen or halting tongue
To paint those pitiless eyes which Syrinx's tale,
While sped a dear-bought watching, caused to fail,
Even as a painter whom a model guides,
How lulled was I to sleep I would bewray:
He may, who drowsiness readily can portray.
Therefore my verse to mine awakening glides,
And says a splendor rent my slumber's veil,
And words, "Arise, what doest thou?" bade me hail.

As, that might Peter and James and John behold
In bloom the apple-tree's boughs whereof the fruit
Glad Angels greedily seek, and from which suit
And spousals lasting do in heaven unfold,
They led were, and, by Him, from slumber's yoke
Made free, who slumbers greater far hath broke,
Saw that their company had the loss sustained
Of Moses and Elias, and that change
Was in their Lord's guise wrought; through mystery strange;

So I revived, and consciousness soon attained
That o'er me stood my kindly guide who charge
Took of my steps along the river's marge,
And "Where is Beatrice?" asked I, all in doubt.
And she: "Behold, beneath the leafage new
She sits, upon the root from which it grew;
Behold the bright forms circling her about;
The rest behind the Gryphon seek the skies,
And from them deeper songs and sweeter rise."
And what she said I know not, more than that,
So closed mine ears were by the sight of her
For whom to sounds all else I made demur.
Alone upon the very ground she sat,
Left there a guard upon the car to hold,
The car the Gryphon drew, behind him rolled.
Around her made themselves a cloister's wall
Of heavenly rays the seven Nymphs fair who safe
Hear Aquilon roar, hear Auster's frenzy chafe.

"A forester thee a little while here I 'll call,
And where a Roman Christ is, in that Rome,
With me thou 'lt have thine everlasting home.
Wherefore the ill-living world to guide aright
Observe the car well, and, to earth returned,
Write what thou seest, to be by others learned."
Thus Beatrice; and I did all my sight
And mind direct where she desired, for felt
My soul the charms 'fore which it humbly knelt.

Ne'er fire so fleet from out a heavy cloud
Came down, where loftiest heights the rain-storm

And earth with sky in levin on levin blends,
As I beheld come down Jove's eagle proud,
Which through the tree flashed, and tore leaf and bark,
And left, e'en on the buds, its impress stark,
And smote the chariot with its resolute might,
Whereat it reeled as reels a ship when, brave,
It fights the starboard, now the larboard, wave.
Thereafter saw I in the car alight
A fox, whose visage lank and carcass rude
Showed him unfed by any wholesome food;
But, him upbraiding for his honesty's lack,
Haled him my Lady to a flight as fleet
As for a fleshless skeleton seemed discreet.
Then, following down again his fiery track,
I saw into the car the eagle swoop,
And here and there a feather leave to droop.

And, using tones which show a heart that feels,
A voice from Heaven came down, which said:
"O freight,
My little bark that fills, how full of hate!"
It seemed, then, that the earth yawned, 'twixt the wheels,
And from it rose a dragon, who his tail,
Did through the flooring of the chariot nail,
And, as a wasp that doth his sting withdraw,
His tail malign, when he it backward drew,
Brought with it plenteous wrack the bottom through,

And he rejoiced, and went his way. But saw
I now the car, as grass-green fields, by aid
The feathers gave, kindly perhaps, conveyed,
Reclothed, the floor, the wheels, the pole, and all;
So speedily done that longer time would part
The lips wherethrough a sigh reveals the heart.
And to the transformed car it did befall
That heads upon the holy edifice rose;
Three on the pole, four on the car, had pose.
Giant.

Were horned the first like oxen; but bedight
The four were with a single horn each one;
Such monsters yet had never shamed the sun!
Firm as a rock that crowns a mountain’s height
Seated upon it there appeared to me
A shameless whore, with eyes swift aught to see,
And, as if not to lose his treasured dame,
I saw beside her stand a giant; bliss
They sought, at times, in fervent kiss on kiss.

And, for that she on me set eyes of shame,
Her angry paramour did her failing greet
With scourges from her head unto her feet.
Then, swollen with jealousy’s fires, and fierce with wrath,
He loosed the monster, and it dragged so far
Across the forest, that seemed that a bar
’Gainst whore and strange beast set and their wild path.

NOTES TO THE THIRTY-SECOND CANTO.

2. “Ten years.” The space of time since the death of Beatrice. The date of her death was June 9, 1290.
9. “Too intent.” The innocence of this phrase is remarked upon in the notes to the preceding Canto. Dean Plumptre sees here an honest avowal of Dante’s homage rendered to a mortal beauty, Beatrice Portinari. Beatrice, as the symbol of theology, he thinks, must be sought for in other lines than these.
19, 20. “As when . . . a squadron turns.” Dante here, it will be conceded, displays a management truly admirable of the military metaphor. He had not served in vain in the campaign of Campaldino.
39. "Gloom." "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." *Genesis* ii. 16.

40. "Its towering boughs." "I saw and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. . . . And the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth." *Daniel* iv. 10, 11.

41. "Indians."

"Those groves which nearer to the sea
Are found in India's bounds, that nook extreme
Of all our world, where, in the air driven high
No arrow can the highest tree-top clear,
And they a race not slow, when on their backs
Their own familiar quivers load they feel."

*Second Georgic*, 121.

The mention of lofty trees serves to remind one of our own mammoth trees in California, our gigantic sequoias and red-woods, which attain, sometimes, a height of four hundred and fifty feet; and of the Australian eucalypti, as lofty, if not loftier.

43. "Whose beak ne'er." The phrase is supposed to signify the separation of the civil and religious jurisdictions.

51. "Pole." He bound to the tree the pole of the chariot, the pole which was made of this tree, and left it so bound. The chariot represents the Church; the pole of the chariot the cross of Christ. The belief that the cross is made of the tree of knowledge has its foundation in an ancient legend.

53. "The brilliant air." Of the month of February, when the sun is in the constellation of the Fishes, called here by Dante, "Lasca," the name of a fresh-water fish.

65. "Eyes . . . a dear-bought watching." Juno, jealous of Io, turned her into a heifer, and employed Argus to watch her. Jupiter sent Mercury to watch Argus. Mercury told Argus a long and drowsy story about Syrinx, a nympha of Diana, beloved by Pan, but who eluded his pursuit, and after whom he named his flute; and, on the eyes of Argus closing in slumber, Mercury destroyed them.

126, 138. "Here and there a feather . . . the feathers." The donations made by the emperors to the church.

143. "Heads." The seven heads are supposed to represent the seven deadly sins, the opposites of the seven virtues.

153. "Fervent kiss on kiss." In allusion, probably, to the alliance between Pope Boniface the Eighth and Philip the Fair of France, which resulted in the Italian campaign made by Charles of Valois, brother of Philip.

154. "On me set eyes." Some commentators incline to consider this phrase an indication that Dante, for a time, was reconciled to Boniface; but it seems worthy of suggestion that the phrase is one intended to support the former one, that the evil eyes swiftly scanned everything. The offence Boniface gave Philip was in breaking with him and recognizing Albert of Austria as emperor.

156. "Scourges." Understood to be an allusion to the severe treatment received by Boniface, at Alagna, from Sciarra Colonna and Nogaret, and their bands, and the troops of Philip.

158. "The monster." Dante, here, so calls the chariot. See lines 39, 56, and 57 of the next Canto.

160. "Across the forest." The removal of the Holy See to Avignon, which Dante seems to recognize as a check upon the excesses of both the religious and the political elements. The church had become, in Dante's estimate, so corrupt as to be called a monster, and Boniface so shameless as to be termed a harlot. If Dante is to give his pontifical enemy a vigorous thrust, it must be now. The poet-politician is about to close the Purgatorio, and he doubts, for the moment, the propriety of an exhibition of such rancor in the Paradiso. As to this he will change his mind later; but, under present impressions, he summons all his force to deal his foe as fierce a blow as words and venom can inflict.
CANTO THIRTY-THIRD.

ARGUMENT:

Beatrice draws Dante into conversation, and then requests Matilda to bathe both him and Statius in Eunoë, the memory of things good.

TIME: Noon of Easter Wednesday.


PERSONS APPEARING: Statius. The denizens of the Terrestrial Paradise.

"The heathen, Lord, are come," such sounds arise, In strains alternate, three and four, which bring Tears to the maidens who such melodies sing; And Beatrice, sad, and uttering heavy sighs, With such a countenance listened that scarce less Changed Mary at the cross her deep distress. But when the others gave her place to speak, With color of the flame, she to her feet Uprose, and greeting gave them meet.
"A little while ye'll see me when ye seek,  
And then again a little, sisters mine,  
Ye shall not see me: this do ye divine."

And all the seven to walk she then did call,  
And, after them, her beckoning did engage  
Me and the Lady and that modest sage.

We eleven moved on, and scarce the tenth footfall  
To earth had come, given by her feet, when look  
Her eyes gave forth mine eyes obedient took,

And with a visage tranquil, "Make more haste,"  
To me she said, "that if thou wouldst me hear,  
Thou may'st have advantageous place more near."

As soon as nearer her I now was placed,  
She to me said, "Why, brother, by my side,  
Dost thou, unquestioning, all in silence, bide?"

It me befell as unto persons found  
Too much by reverence checked, when word  
None can they make before superiors heard;

I through my teeth could force no perfect sound,  
But said: "Thou knowest, my Lady, what I need,  
Let knowledge thine mine utter ignorance feed."

And she to me: "Of fear and diffidence more  
Thou shalt not have; speak not as one who gleams  
Of things uncertain gathers out of dreams.  
Know that the chariot which the dragon tore  
Was, and is not; but let the guilty drop  
The idea that God is baffled by a sop.
She predicts the near Future.

"Without an heir forever shall not be 37
The eagle whose proud plumes bedecked the car,
Whence, monster made, a prey 't was ta'en afar;
For in good sooth what I narrate I see:
The very stars whose safe conjunctions nigh
Pass every bar and every hindrance by,
And bring the time Five Hundred Ten and Five
Sent forth from God shall that foul woman slay
And that same giant sharer of her day.

"And it may be thy clouded mind may strive 46
With my dark saying as with Themis did,
Or with the Sphinx, minds vexed with riddles hid;
But soon events shall be the Naiads wise
Who shall this difficult riddle solve, nor yields
Of grain destroy, nor flocks that browse the fields.
The words I utter heed thou well, and prize,
And teach to men in busy life, whose breath
But helps them on to reach the goal of death;

"And, as their teacher, this in memory bear, 55
Not to conceal that thou the plant hast seen
Twice here attacked by enemies strong and keen.
Whoever doth its beauty spoil or tear
With blasphemous deed doth sin 'gainst God,
whose own
The same is, sacred to his use alone.
For tasting it, in suffering and desire
Five thousand years and more the first soul yearned
For Him who on Himself the punishment turned.
"And sleeps thy genius, if that it soars' higher
And top more spreading hath than other trees,
Thou deem'st with special reasons not agrees:
For had not vain imaginings to thy mind
As Elsa's waters been, and pleasure's train,
Like Pyramus to the mulberry, gave it stain,
Thou in such things of moment great wouldst find
The justice of God's interdict firm made clear
To men whose moral natures are sincere.

"But since I see thee in thine intellect stone
Become, and so with sunspots stained,
That by thee light is not from my speech gained,
My will is, since not written thou it own,
Thou shalt at least it in thee painted bear
As with staff palm-wreathed pilgrims homeward fare."
And I: "As shows the wax the figure bright
And true the seal doth on it press, so brain
Of mine doth on it your impress retain.

"But why, transcending so my power of sight,
Soars your much-loved discourse, that will
Of mine to grasp it's disappointed still?"
"That thou may'st know," she said, "what school-
ing 's thine,
And see at what a distance lag behind
My love clear-sighted its instructions blind,
And may'st thy path see is from the divine
Estranged as much as from Earth's orbit flies
The higher plane far-hastening in the skies."
Exchange of exalted Sentiments.

Wherefore I said: "Remembrance have I none. That I estranged from you have ever been; My conscience me arraigns for no such sin."

"And if thy memory this much have not won," She answered, smiling, "hath it for thee saved That on this very day thee Lethe laved? And if may be from smoke a fire inferred, Forgetfulness such the evidence doth fulfil That error plagues thine alienated will.

"Indeed from this time forward shall each word Of mine be naked, so far as 't is fit It to lay bare before thy halting wit."

And, sparkling now, and in its radiant vault, More slow the Sun held its meridian time, Which, changing, shifts, as shift degree and clime, When halted (as one cometh to a halt Who 'fore a troop goes as its courier, drawn By something new which on his eye doth dawn),

The sevenfold band, at a dense shadow's verge, Such as, with forest tints and sombre boughs, Oft wears a bleak Alp on its lowering brows. Methought the Tigris and Euphrates urge I saw before them forth their single stream, Then, in two floods, like friends who linger, gleam.

"O light, O glory of our kind! declare What stream is this which, poured from one source sole, Doth from itself in severing rivers roll?"
“Pray,” said to me ’t was, answering to my prayer,

“Matilda that she teach thee;” and here came
Response as from one seeking shield from blame.
The beautiful Lady spoke: “This told I him
With other things, and sure I am that slipped
Not they from him by me in Lethe dipped.”
And Beatrice now: “Perhaps hath made more dim
His mental vision some surpassing care
Which often to our memory proves a snare.

“But Eunoë see, which yonder floweth on!
Lead thither, and, as thou art wonted, life
Give thou to aid his half-dead virtue’s strife.”
And, as a gentle spirit that is drawn
By no excuses, but doth promptly make
Another’s will its own, for courtesy’s sake,
Even so, when she me took into her charge,
The beautiful Lady moved, and “Come thou, too,”
She said to Statius, who her graces knew.

If, Reader, I had not the utmost marge
Reached of my space, I would those sweet waves sing,
That draught which me could ne’er satiety bring,
But checks me here art with its curbs and bars,
For full is each appointed part and line
Within this second poem’s fulfilled design.
From all that fallen human nature mars
Regenerate rose I from that holiest stream,
As trees wherefrom new buds and leaflets beam,
Pure, and made fit for mounting to the stars.

NOTES TO THE THIRTY-THIRD CANTO.

1. "'The heathen, Lord, are come' . . . alternate." The three Theological and the four Cardinal Virtues chant, in alternate verses, the seventy-ninth Psalm, beginning: "O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled."

10. "A little while." From Christ's discourse at the Last Supper: "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father."

John xvi. 16.


36. "Sop." There would seem to have been an old superstition in Florence that the vengeance of the family and friends of a murdered man would be baffled if, within nine days from the date of a murder, the assassin could contrive to eat a sop of bread and wine upon the grave of his victim. The superstition argues the fearful barbarity of the times. For it has a practical result. It amounts to this: that any one having following enough to make his way to the grave, and to defy and overpower its guardians, acquired thereby a charter to defy the law, and to claim immunity for his crime.

37. "Without an heir." In the Sixth Canto Dante has shown his resentment of the Emperor Albert's (the German Albert as he calls him) neglect of Italy, in never having come within its borders. He here, doubtless, alludes to this neglect.

43. "Five Hundred Ten and Five." DVX, Dux, Leader, supposed by some to refer to Can Grande della Scala, but by others, with greater probability, to Henry, Duke of Luxemburg, who succeeded Albert, under the title of Henry the Seventh of Germany. Villani, though a Guelph, speaks of Henry as a wise and just and valiant monarch. Dante met him on his entrance into Italy, in 1311, with a letter which accosts him as the savior of Italy, the restorer of the golden
age, and compares him to the "Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world." The death of the monarch was a great blow to Dante. He beheld his ideal ruler, on whom he had placed all his hopes for his country, and all his personal hopes, vanish into the realms of the hereafter.

47, 48, 49. "Themis . . . Sphinx . . . Naiads." Themis, the impersonation of law, after the destruction of the world by a deluge, puzzled Deucalion and Pyrrha with the command to repeople the earth "by throwing their mother's bones behind them." The earth, they divined, was their mother, and her bones were stones. First Georgic, 60.

The Sphinx, a fabulous monster, propounded the riddle answered by OEdipus: "What animal walks on four legs in the morning, on two at noon, and on three in the evening?"

The Naiads offended Themis. She punished them with loss of cattle and crops.

Dante and the reader may, like Deucalion and Pyrrha, conjecture the mystical significance of the tree's height and spread in the progress of the Paradiso. It should be noted that the Canto starts out with a mystical saying: lines 10, 11, and 12; a saying followed by "This do ye divine!"

It may well have been that Dante had in mind at this point, the mysterious and forgotten dream of Belshazzar recalled to his memory by the Hebrew prophet, and interpreted to him by the same prophet, the interpretation being the approach of the era of Christianity. He may have been pondering the momentous words of Daniel to Belshazzar: "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and He will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed."

56. "The plant." Throughout the notes of the commentators to these passages there is a struggle to make the tree and the car of the church, the symbol of the union of church and state. This appears a strained construction, and one not necessary to the comprehension of the allegory, besides being at variance with Dante's stanch orthodoxy. The state is the eagle. The church is the car. Butler, in particular, labors to give the car, and even its seven attendants,
the virtues, a political significance. The tree is the tree of the Garden of Eden, and its significance, therefore, it is submitted, is exclusively theological.

57. "Twice." The first attack by the eagle; the second by the giant.

62, 63. "First soul . . . Him." Adam, and Christ. The usual reckoning is four thousand and thirty-six years, but Latini, Dante’s tutor, following Eusebius, placed the interval at five thousand two hundred and fifty-four. Trésor, i. 42.

64, 65. "Higher . . . trees." The unsolved riddles here appear to be why is the tree so lofty? and why does it so spread? It will be observed that Dante continues to insist that Beatrice’s explanation is unintelligible to him, and the text thus makes an enigma upon an enigma. Lombardi, in a note to line 70, gives Torelli the credit of clearing up the text “with that golden clearness and simplicity,” Lombardi says, “which is peculiar to Torelli.” But can we adopt Torelli’s elucidation? Does it not fail to elucidate? May we not rather believe Dante, who declares that he was not illuminated by Beatrice’s explanation? Dante seemed to delight rather in verbal enigmas and conversational puzzles, and, as though by way of apology for inflicting this one upon the reader and the commentators, he guarantees that Beatrice, in the future, shall speak plainly.

The place in which Dante has this sportive passage with Beatrice and the commentators, and his and their readers, is well selected. The matter is too pious for the Inferno, and it was his last opportunity for the Purgatorio, its very last Canto, and he availed himself of this margin of opportunity.

Torelli’s unexplaining explanation is: “That the tree God has made for his own use, and that man ought not to attempt its ascent, ought not to aspire to the knowledge of good and evil; for it was for attempting this that Adam was punished.” Dean Plumptre as vainly explains that “the ideal empire expands as it grows, and its topmost branches are the widest spread.”


96. "On this very day." Savors of coquetry.

105. "Degree and cline." The hour was noon, the season Spring. In the Spring the days lengthen, and the apparent motion of the Sun is therefore slower.

112. "Tigris and Euphrates." The rivers in the garden of Eden were four: Pison, Gihon, Tigris, and Euphrates. The two latter are used here as identical with Lethe and Eunoë, the oblivion of evil, and the memory of good.

120. "Shield from blame." We may imagine that the woman, Beatrice Portinari, is pouting, while the divine Beatrice, symbol of theological truth, is for the moment absent from the scene. This Canto of the Purgatorio seems to be, almost throughout, a light and playful one.

126. "A snare." The jealous woman!
PARADISO.

GENERAL ARGUMENT OF THE PARADISO.

Dante finds himself in the presence of Beatrice, and, like another Glaucus, becomes divine by feasting his eyes on her beauty. So divine he rises with motion, imperceptible, but incredibly swift, into the heavenly spheres. In the sphere of the Moon are seen the spirits of the unfortunate religious. Dante and Beatrice meet the spirit of Piccarda, his sister-in-law. In the sphere of Mercury, the heaven of the spirits of the great dead, the Poet and the Maiden meet the spirit of Justinian. He recalls the whole scope of Roman history. The sphere of Venus, the heaven of the spirits of lovers, makes them acquainted with Cunizza and Folco. They find in the sphere of the Sun the heaven of the spirits of the theologians. There Saint Thomas of Aquin recites the praises of Saint Francis of Assisium, and Saint Bonaventura eulogizes Saint Dominic; the praises of the Trinity are sung; and Beatrice and King Solomon are brought into conversation. In the sphere of Mars, devoted to the felicity of martyrs and crusaders, Cacciaguida, ancestor of Dante, discourses on the past and present of Florence, predicts Dante's exile, and urges him to write the Commedia. Jupiter's sphere, the heaven of the spirits of righteous rulers, shows them the Eagle of Christ, who holds discourse on
Paradiso.

General Argument.

historical events. In the sphere of Saturn, the heaven of the spirits of the contemplative, Dante and Beatrice listen to a discourse from Saint Peter Damian, and to one from Saint Benedict. They ascend to the sphere of the Fixed Stars, the heaven of the spirits of the metaphysicians, and review the orbits of the planets, the Earth being in the remote perspective. Exquisite melodies announce a Sun, Christ, and stars, Mary and Gabriel; and Saint Peter examines Dante on Faith, Saint James examines him on Hope, Saint John examines him on Charity. The sphere of Primal Motion shows them the heaven of the spirits of the moral philosophers; and the Empyrean brings them into the immediate presence of God. There Beatrice assumes her throne, and Saint Bernard attends Dante. The beauty of Beatrice is described in the choicest and most enamored terms, and she discourses on celestial subjects, the plan of heaven, the questions relating to Creation, Will, Salvation, Redemption, and passages of tender interest between herself and Dante frequently find place. The Poet's personal woes and longings come often before the Reader; and the utmost brilliancy of light, the utmost rapidity of motion, and the utmost ecstasy of fervor form elements of this portion of the Poem.
CANTO FIRST.

ARGUMENT:

Dante begins this division of his Poem with a promise to relate all he saw in Paradise, as far as human power and human memory may avail, and with an invocation of the benignant aid of Apollo. Beatrice appears before him, gazing on the sun. He turns his eyes in the same direction. Then, removing his eyes from the contemplation of the sun, he fixes them on Beatrice's face, feeding on the beauty thereof as Glaucus fed on the sea-weed which made him divine, and so rises. Beatrice instructs him on the innate desire of the soul to regain its source in the skies, and she informs him that the rapidity of his motion in attaining Paradise has surpassed that of the lightning.

The time passed in Paradise is four and a half days, from noon of Easter Wednesday to the First Sunday after Easter.

PERSONS speaking: Dante. Beatrice.

PERSONS appearing: The Angels. The blessed spirits.

The glory of Him who moveth all things shines
The universe vast throughout, but part more bright
Is from its glow, while part hath less of light.
Within that Heaven, which, in His wise designs,
Hath most of light, was I, and saw what none Can tell, or know, whose journey thence is done;
Because our intellect doth itself so whelm,
In drawing near to what is its desire,
That memory halts, that tuneless falls the lyre.
But whatsoever of that sacred realm
   I had the power within my thoughts to store
   Shall through my song towards those circles soar.
O kind Apollo, aid this labor last,
   And me so worthy make of thy great aims
   As should be one who thine own laurel claims!
One summit of Parnassus I have passed,
   Its steeps and fountains all I have toiled through,
   But here I challenge all the towers of two.

Pervade my bosom, thou, and therein breathe
   As at the time when thou didst Marsyas draw
   Unsheathed from limbs which held thee not in awe.
O power divine, with thyself me enwreathe,
   So that of that blest realm the shadowy trace
   Wrought in my brain my pages fair may grace;
   And thou me shalt unto thy favorite tree
   See come, and with those leaves me form a crown,
   And worthily treat the theme and thy renown.

So seldom, Father, is it that we see
   Caesar’s or Poet’s triumph seek thy leaves
   (So much of fault spoils plans ambition weaves),
That if may thirst some one of fitting fame
   For foliage thine Peneian, then delight
   Would glad the Delphian deity’s joyous might.
A little spark doth grow into a flame:
   Perchance shall better voices, following mine,
   Responses gain from Cyrrha’s domes divine.
To mortals rises from points widely ranged
The world's great lamp; but by that one where find
Four circles crosses three with them combined,
'Neath favorable stars not easily to be changed,
Conjoined it issues, and in happier heaven
To wax mundane the stamp that moulds it's given.
Almost that point, there morning, edicts wise
Had made, and evening here, and there was white,
That hemisphere's day, and here was black, our night,

When Beatrice saw I, changed somewhat in guise,
Turned to the left, and gazing at the sun;
So strong a gaze was ne'er by eagle won.
And, as a second ray is wont to rise
From that which first was forward sent, as yearn
The hearts of pilgrims for long-hoped return,
Thus did my fancy, wrought on through mine eyes,
Make mine her act, and t'wards the sun I gazed
So fixedly that here 't would me have dazed.

There much allowed is which is here denied
Unto our powers; such laws control the place
Made for the dwelling of the human race.
Short while I bore it, but with it did bide
Until I bickering spouts of flame saw flash
Like molten iron whereof the runlets splash.
And seemed it suddenly as if he who deals
With nature's forces had another sun
Enthroned, and that the two were joined in one.
And Beatrice still on the eternal wheels
Stood gazing, and (while seemed no jar or stir),
Changing my vision from above to her,
I, by her countenance, inwardly became
As Glaucus, when the herb he tasted peer
Made him of all the Gods beneath the mere.
The event occurred, no man can give it name;
Transhuman 't was; so let the example serve
Those for whom Grace the proof holds in reserve.

If, Love, who dost the Heavens' thrones rule, I
were
What of me thou but newly didst create,
Thou knowest, whose light did lift to heights so
great!
And when the wheel 'neath thine eternal care,
Spirit desired! thrilled, charmed, delighted me,
With harmonies measured and attuned by thee,
Then such wide space in heaven enkindled seemed
By flame the sun sent that nor flood nor rain
E'er made a lake that did such breadth attain.

The novelty of the sound, the light that beamed,
To know their cause such longing in me wrought
As ne'er before had reached my raptured thought;
Whence she who saw me as myself I saw
To calm my mind perturbed, before I spoke,
Her lips just opening, thus our silence broke:
"'T is false imaginings vain aside doth draw
Thy mind, which keener to observe would be
If from its clog thyself thou couldst make free."
The Sea of Being.

"Thou deemest falsely thyself yet on earth; 91
But hurrying levin from its mystic urn
Ne'er ran as thou hast hitherward made return."
If now my former doubt had lost its worth
By these brief words less spoken forth than smiled,
I by a new one was the more beguiled;
And said: "Scarce had I rested from surprise
Content, when now again I feel amaze
At what doth me 'bove those light bodies raise."

A pitying sigh she suffered to arise,
Then, t'wards me turning that expression mild
A mother casts on a delirious child,
She said: "Existent things, whate'er they be,
Have order: hence 't is, form is on things placed,
And thus the universe like to God is graced.
And higher creatures here the footprints see
Of that Eternal Power which is the end
Whereeto the law I spoke of doth extend.

"In this their order do all natures wend,
By diverse destinies prompted to digress,
Unto their origin near, some more, some less.
Hence unto ports. diverse they onward bend
The sea of being vast upon, while own
An instinct each whereby their sails are blown.
This bears towards the moon the fire; the power
That moves and wills, this is, in mortal hearts;
This binds the globe and all its several parts."
"And not alone created things that are
Of mind devoid leave, clanging shafts, this bow,
But those as well whom love and intellect know.
But Providence wise, who all this doth control,
Makes calm with His own light the highest Heaven,
Next which is that whereto speed greatest's given.
And thither now, to seats that seeks the soul,
Borne on are we by that cord's virtue strong
Whose arrows e'er for joyous aimings long.

"Yet true is it that as oft-times the form
Accords not with art's well-contrived design,
But lags dull matter deaf to the divine,
So deviate doth the creature from this norm,
Because, though thus impelled, with power to swerve
Invested 't is, and its free will to serve
(In the same way as we the fire may see
From clouds fall down), if the first impetus right
Is t'ward earth turned by some fond false delight.

"Thou shouldst not wonder more, seems it to me,
At thine ascending, than from some high peak
To see a rivulet's wave the valley seek.
'T would in thee wondrous be, if, hindrance given
Thee none, thou shouldst be seated there below,
As if earth sent from living fires no glow."
Thereat again her face she turned t'wards heaven.
NOTES TO THE FIRST CANTO.

2. "The universe." Of Dante's universe we have already in part had the plan. Satan fell from heaven, and in his fall displaced a mass of earth, leaving a cavity, the earth displaced rising in the South Pacific in the form of a mountain, the Mountain of Purgatory, the antipodes of Jerusalem. The souls destined for perdition are borne to the court of Minos, judge of the damned, who assigns to them their several circles. The souls destined for heaven take passage, at the mouths of the Tiber, for the Purgatorial Mountain, whence, in due time, they ascend, like Dante, to heaven. Heaven is a place of ten spheres, each a several heaven, the Empyrean being free to all the blest. The earth is the centre of Dante's celestial system; and, following the Convito, ii. 4, "The first heaven is that where the Moon is; the second is that where Mercury is; the third is that where Venus is; the fourth is that where the Sun is; the fifth is that where Mars is; the sixth is that where Jupiter is; the seventh is that where Saturn is; the eighth is that of the stars." The ninth, he proceeds to explain, is the Primum Mobile, the seat of primal motion, and the tenth, the Empyrean, the quiet and peaceful abode of God himself. The longing desire of the Primum Mobile to be united with the Empyrean of rest causes the Primum Mobile to revolve around it with a velocity which is almost incomprehensible.

The celestial creations which control the several Heavens; the inhabitants of the several Heavens; and that principle to which each is in an especial manner sacred, are classified as follows:

1. The Heaven of the Moon is controlled by the Angels, is inhabited by the unfortunate religious, and is, in an especial manner, sacred to the struggling will of man.

2. The Heaven of Mercury is controlled by the Archangels, is inhabited by those who have acquired fame, and is, in an especial manner, sacred to the ambitious will of man.
3. The Heaven of Venus is controlled by the Principalities, is inhabited by those who have been lovers, and is, in an especial manner, sacred to the affectionate will of man.

4. The Heaven of the Sun is controlled by the Powers, is inhabited by the Doctors of the Church, and is, in an especial manner, sacred to Light.

5. The Heaven of Mars is controlled by the Virtues, is inhabited by the Martyrs, and is, in an especial manner, sacred to Faith.

6. The Heaven of Jupiter is controlled by the Dominions, is inhabited by just Rulers, and is, in an especial manner, sacred to Justice.

7. The Heaven of Saturn is controlled by the Thrones, is inhabited by holy Hermits, and is, in an especial manner, sacred to Asceticism.

8. The Heaven of the Fixed Stars is controlled by the Cherubim, is inhabited by the Saints, and is, in an especial manner, sacred to Triumph.

9. The Heaven of the Primum Mobile is controlled by the Seraphim, is inhabited by the Moral Philosophers, and is, in an especial manner, sacred to Philosophy.

10. The Empyrean is controlled by the Supreme Wisdom, is inhabited by the Divine Presence, and is, in an especial manner, sacred to Deity.

“There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

“There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.” 1 Corinthians xv. 40, 41.

The order followed in the Commedia is adopted from the works of Dionysius the Areopagite. Dante, in his Convito, ii. 16, says that the spheres below the Empyrean are called Hierarchies; and that their number, nine, is divided into groups of three each. The grouping of the celestial creations controlling them, however, as given in the Convito, is different from that given in the Commedia, and is as follows:
Notes.


Saint Thomas of Aquin, in his *Summa Theologica*, Question I. to lxiv., and Question cvi. to cxiv., treats largely of the celestial system.

It is one of the doctrines of Plato that the Soul of the World has no determinate place, but that it is everywhere diffused, and that the Heavens constantly seek it with vehement motion. The Christian system places the Soul of the World in the Empyrean, and attributes the motion of the spheres to their vehement desire to be united thereto.

3. "Light." Dante here probably alludes to the peculiarity of the atmospheres of the Moon, and Mercury, and Venus, arising from the supposition that they are within the earth's shadow (Canto ix., line 118), and therefore enjoy less light than the planets beyond them; a supposition based on the Ptolemaic theory; but even on this theory they can only be by occultation within its shadow.

5. "Hath most of light." The Empyrean, the immediate presence of God.

9. "Memory halts." "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.

"And I knew such a man, (whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell; God knoweth;)

"How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

"Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities." 2 Corinthians xii. 1-5.

18. "The towers of two." That is: This task seems twice as difficult as to describe the Lower World and the Purgatorial Mountain.
Notes.

20. "Marsyas." A satyr, or peasant, of Phrygia. It is related that Minerva, playing on a flute, on the borders of a stream, observed, reflected in the water, the distortion of her features, and, in disgust, threw the flute away. It was picked up by Marsyas. The breath of the Goddess still lingered in it, and, as Marsyas blew, it emitted divine strains. Elated, he challenged Apollo to a contest of minstrelsy. And Apollo, with his lyre alone, was helpless; he only triumphed by adding the music of his voice. The terms of the contest were that the defeated one should submit to whatever the pleasure of the victor might dictate, and it was the pleasure of Apollo to flay his adversary alive.

29. "Caesar." In the vision of Anchises:

"Behold him now, who with rich Corinth's spoils,
Up to the lofty Capitol's heights his car
Will drive in triumph as a conqueror crowned."

On the shield of Æneas:

"But Cæsar, borne the Roman walls within,
Midst all the glories which these triumphs gave,
Was unto Gods Italian rendering thanks,
And vows performing on three hundred shrines.
These through the City testified its joy.
But joy shone everywhere, in games, in cheers,
In raging storms of cheers, which boiled where'er
The conqueror's chariot bore his form caressed.
In every temple Roman mothers sung;
At every altar Roman mothers stood;
At every shrine slain bullocks strewed the earth.
Himself on Phœbus' snowy threshold sat,
And there received of conquered peoples' wealth
The costly gifts, and them in order placed
Against the pillared temples gates superb.
Pass on, in order long, the conquered tribes,
In dress and arms as various as in tongues."

29. "Poet." Byron says of Dante:

"To him the lyre and laurels have been given,
And all the trophies of triumphant song."

32. "Peneian." The Penæus was a crystal river in Thessaly, flowing through the charming Vale of Tempe, at the foot of
Mount Olympus. The Vale of Tempe was a favorite haunt of Apollo, and it was with laurel gathered therein that the victors in the Pythian games were crowned. Virgil could not forget the beauty of this valley and its limpid river. See the Fourth Georgic, at lines 317 and 355:

"The consecrated source,
Whence flows the river all its wandering way,"

and Aristaeus on its banks lamenting the loss of his bees.

36. "Cyrrha." A town at the foot of Parnassus, dedicated to Apollo.

39, 43. "Four circles crosses three . . . almost that point." Dante describes, through scientific allusions, that point on the line of the equator where the sun crosses the line, at the time of the vernal equinox. The assumed date of his allusion is Easter Wednesday, the 31st day of March, 1300, ten days after the time of the equinox. The four circles are: 1. That of the sun; 2. That of the sun's path, the ecliptic; 3. That of the equator; 4. That of the zodiac. This conjunction is "favorable," it begins a "happier heaven," and heralds the season of Spring. The conjunction suggests a series of armlets or bracelets, and its resemblance to them is recognized in the naming of the armillary sphere. A diagram will easily show the four bracelets forming the three crosses:
42. "Wax... stamp." With Dante a favorite figure.

44. "Here." In Italy. That is, morning was accomplished. It was, with Dante, mid-day. See Purgatorio, xxxiii. 104. It may be noted that both Mr. Cary and King John of Saxony mistake the time: they both make it the moment of sunrise.

47. "To the left." The sun was at the meridian of noon. The place of Dante and Beatrice was still on the Purgatorial Mountain. The sun was therefore to the north; and if Beatrice turned towards her left to look at it, she must have been looking towards the east. Indeed, it may be supposed that this is only an adroit way, on the part of Dante, of saying that Beatrice, the impersonation of Divine Wisdom, had been contemplating the East, the source of light and knowledge.

49. "Second ray." The ray of reflection springing from that of incidence, like the yearning of a pilgrim to return from his pilgrimage. So Dante's wandering gaze came back, as to its home, to follow the direction of the eyes of his beloved Beatrice.

68. "As Glaucus." A fisherman of the Boeotian coast, he ate of the divine herb planted by Saturn, and became a God. So Dante, tasting, with his eyes, of the divine countenance of Beatrice, became divine.

74. "But newly didst create." The doctrine of Plato was that all souls were created at once, and afterwards the bodies of men were created, and invested with soul. The phrase used by Dante means therefore body, and is a reference to the saying of Saint Paul already quoted from Second Corinthians: "Whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell." The doctrine of Plato, although supported by Origen, is denied by Saint Thomas of Aquin, Summa, i. 118, 3. He maintains that "creation and infusion are simultaneous in regard to the soul." Dante, in the Twenty-fifth Canto of the Purgatorio, line 70, maintains the opinion of Saint Thomas.

78. "Harmonies... attuned." Rixner, Handbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie, i. 100, speaking of the Ten Heavens, otherwise called The Lyre of Pythagoras, says: "These ten celestial spheres are arranged among themselves in an
order so mathematical and musical, that is, so harmonious, that the sphere of the Fixed Stars, which is above the sphere of Saturn, gives forth the deepest tone in the music of the universe (the World-Lyre with ten strings), and that of the Moon the highest."

It is observable that Cicero, in his Vision of Scipio, attributes the deepest tones to the Moon, the highest to the spheres more remote.

"Look, how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold;
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st,
But in his motion like an Angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim:
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But while this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."

Shakespeare, Merchant of Venice, v. 1.

93. "Made return." Sought again, with the instinct of the creature, the abode of the Creator.

103, 104, 105. "Not in the largeness . . . a ray resplendent." That is: "The image, although smaller, will be none the less resplendent." As Butler well phrases it: "The intrinsic quality of light is not affected by distance."

114. "An instinct." The innate desire of the spirit to regain its origin in the skies, of the creature to be reunited to the Creator, of that which is sent forth to regain the source whence it is sent. In the next Canto (line 19) Dante will describe it as

"That concreate thirst perpetual with its spur,"
and in line 40, as the burning desire

"Which us ne'er leaves."

115. "Fire." To repeat from Latini (Trésor, ch. cviii.) what is given in a former note:

"After the zone of air is placed the fourth element. This is an orb of fire without any moisture, which extends as far
as the Moon, and surrounds this atmosphere in which we are, And know that above the fire is, first, the Moon and the other stars, which are all of the nature of fire."

122. "The highest . . . speed greatest." The highest is the Empyrean; that of greatest speed is the Primum Mobile.
CANTO SECOND.

ARGUMENT:

Dante and Beatrice find themselves borne with incredible swiftness to the Moon, the first of the ten Heavens. The Heaven of the Moon is under the control of the Angels, and is inhabited by those members of the religious orders who have broken their vows under compulsion. Beatrice discourses upon the Moon and the other heavenly orbs and the seat of Primal Motion and the Empyrean, and their relations to each other, and upon the effects of light.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Dante. Beatrice.

PERSONS APPEARING: The Angels. The spirits of the unfortunate religious.

Do ye, who, in some dainty little craft,
Have followed, eager to pursue, the notes
My ship gives forth, which musically floats,
Let now kind winds or oars ye backward waft;
Beware the open sea, where me to lose
Might, with your own loss, end your venturous cruise.

A sea I sail where keel hath never sped;
Minerva’s breath, Apollo’s pilotage, cares
The Muses give, me herald t’wards the Bears.
Canto II.

The Sphere of the Moon.

And ye, the others, few ye, but who bread  
Of Angels lift the neck towards, and live  
On the sole food satiety doth not give,  
Let lead upon the deep salt sea your band  
Its vessels stanch, my trailing wake your guide  
That o'er the vast sends dimpling wavelets wide.  
Those glorious chiefs who drove on Colchos' strand  
Not wonder felt such as 'waits ye, when plowed  
The land they saw by Jason labor-vowed!

That concreate thirst perpetual with its spur  
T'wars God-resembling realms bore us on high  
Swiftly almost as sweeps your glance the sky.  
Gazed Beatrice upward, and gazed I on her,  
And in such time as strikes an arrow, sent  
Forth from the notch, while thrills the bow  
that 's bent,  
Arrived myself I saw where filled my sight  
A thing of wonder great, and therefore she  
From whom no single care of mine could flee,

Turned t'wars me all her gladsome beauty bright,  
And said: “Now be by thee God gratefully  
sought,  
He who hath us unto the first star brought.”

It seemed to me a cloud did round us furl  
Its luminous, dense, consolidate, polished folds,  
As sunlight's sheen the imprisoned diamond  
holds.

Into itself us took the eternal pearl  
As doth the limpid wave the unbroken beam  
Of light receive that to its depths doth gleam.
Paradiso.

Its peculiar Atmosphere.

If I was body (and none here conceives
Dimension how dimension tolerates, shown
When bodies two the same place claim and own)
More the desire should burn which us ne'er leaves,
To see that essence where by dullards e'en
God and our nature are united seen.
Heaven will reveal what faith declares, not shown
By proof, but evident of itself, as shine
To man's belief the primal truths divine.

And then I answered: "Lady, I do own
My gratitude, 't is in utmost measure given
To Him who lifts me from the world to Heaven.
But tell me what may be the dusky spots
Upon that orb, which there below on earth
To fables quaint of Cain have given birth?"
Smiled she somewhat; then, "If to solve these
knots
The minds of mortals fail, whene'er of sense
The key unlocks not where it makes pretence,

"Sure, should not thee the shafts of wonder sting,
Since, as thou seest, the senses' feeble flight
Calls reason forth on wings of little might.
But speak thyself, what solvent dost thou bring?"
And I: "The light, I think, 't is which doth fare
Through mediums diverse, dense or rare."
And she: "Most surely wilt thou see immersed
In error thy belief, if that thou grace
The arguments clear wherewith I will it face."
"Lights many from the eighth sphere on us burst
Whose kind and size each makes of different hue
As shine they 'fore the amazed observers' view.
Were this to rarity, now, or denseness due,
One single virtue would there be in all,
With influence equal, or more great, or small.
Perforce the fruits of formal principles true
The diverse virtues are; and these, save one,
Neglects thy reasoning, which the rest doth shun.

"Besides, if rarity were of this dimness cause,
Throughout its substance all were this orb rare,
And spots would not obscure its body fair,
Or else, as would a body following laws
Apportioning fat and lean, so would the range
Of leaves throughout its volume interchange.
The first, were 't true, would easily be made clear
Whene'er the sun's eclipsed, by light across
The orb's disc sent without especial loss.

"The fact 's not so; then look the other near,
And if it, too, I prove not well-based, fall
Both sides of your opinion baseless all.
Now if this rarity not all parts pervades
There must a limit be where 's found the dense,
Which now the rarity's further spread prevents,
The dense sends back the radiance which invades
Its surface from abroad, e'en as glass sends
Reflection forth when with its back lead blends."
"Now wilt thou say that this accounts for hues
Diverse as more or less remote are found
The surfaces whence the light hath its rebound.
Of this, experiment will thee disabuse,
If trial thereof thou make, whence start
Founts which to rivers grow in every art.
Three mirrors take thou, and at distance slight
Place two before thee, and the third between
The other two, but more remotely seen.

"Towards these turned, let back of thee a light
Be placed, illumining thus the mirrors three,
And from them by reflection sent to thee.
Although not in the largeness of its form
The image more remote excel, a ray
Resplendent as the others 't will display.
But now, as, 'neath the touch of sunbeams warm,
The snow-clad ground its hue and coldness yields,
And shows the sod of summer-seeking fields,

"So thus warmed, cleared and cheered in mind of thine,
Thee will I teach with rays of light so clear
That they will thrill thee as they touch thee near.
The Heaven within of the repose divine
Revolves that space whose virtue life doth give
To all the Heavens that in its circling live.
Next comes the Heaven filled full with many a star;
Diverse 't is by its essences own maintained
Yet next unto that primal virtue ranged."
Canto II.

The Seal of God.

"The other Heavens, at measured distances far, effects and purposes have to which adapt themselves distinctions growing from reasons apt. Thus do these organs of the world march on, as thou perceivest now, grade following grade, while is to higher command obedience paid. See now how hereby thou art so well drawn unto the truth thou seek'st, that thou may'st wade thyself the ford thou reachest through this glade.

"The power and motion of the sacred spheres, as from the workman power his hammer wields, forth from blest motors circle through those fields. These Heavens, whose spread of light so great appears, take from the Wisdom deep that moves them trace as of a seal impressed in proper place, and, even as within your dust, the soul, through members diverse formed on needful plans, to faculties several, circulates and expands,

"So doth this Wisdom through great orbits roll, and it the stars in their own elements solve, while it on its own unity doth revolve. This Wisdom thus, in diverse ways, alloy makes with each precious orb, as flows the life in you, where from your body grows. Derived its quickening from the seat of Joy, the mingled virtue through these orbs doth fly, E'en as glad glances beam in mortal eye."
"From this results, that 't is twixt light and light. The difference is, and not 'twixt dense and rare: The forming principle this is, whence doth fare, In grades of goodness, what seems dark or bright."

NOTES TO THE SECOND CANTO.

16. "Those glorious chiefs." Jason succeeded in plowing the land with the fire-breathing bulls of King Æetes, only by the secret aid of the king's daughter Medea, an enchantress, enamored of Jason. We may imagine the king saying to Jason, as Samson did to the Philistines: "If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle."

Premising that "Tiphys" was the pilot of the Argonautic expedition, we may note the opinion of the Cumæan Sibyl, if not of Virgil, that military expeditions and wars will continue to be made:

"Another Tiphys there shall be; and borne
Another Argo's ribs within, the swords
Of other heroes famed like those of old,
The flower of all the lands from whence they come;
And other wars; and to another Troy
The great Achilles shall again be sent."

Pollio, 35.

22. "And gazed I on her." Again, like Glaucus, become a God through tasting the seaweed, Dante becomes exalted to the skies by tasting with his eyes the divine countenance of Beatrice.


37. "If I was body." Dante expresses, in this way, the amazed condition of his mind. He was not sure whether he was body or spirit. If body, however, celestial laws admitted his being incorporated with "the eternal pearl," as the "unbroken wave of light" is incorporated with the "limpid wave."

42. "God and our nature are united seen." The Incarnation.
51. "To fables quaint of Cain." Cain with his bush of thorns. This fable we have seen referred to in the close of the Twentieth Canto of the Inferno.

52. "Smiled she somewhat." The smile of Beatrice is one of the delights of the Paradiso. Dante will leave no beauty of language unemployed in describing this divine smile. In his Convito, iii. 15, he says that demonstration resides in the eyes of Wisdom, and that persuasion resides in her smile.

59. "The light." Dante's explanation, briefly stated, seems to be that the spots on the Moon are not the effects of density, but of light as peculiarly affecting that orb. This passage some critics have pronounced tedious. It has been, however, imitated by Milton.

64. "Lights many." The Heaven of the Fixed Stars.

96. "Experiment." The principle of induction recommended by Aristotle and Bacon, and examined by Mill.


121. "March on." Note that the Heavens are describable as well from above (the Empyrean) as from below (the Earth). Motion originates from above. God in rest ordains motion; the First Motor (Primum Mobile) gives motion to all the inferior Heavens down to the Earth.

143. "The mingled virtue."

"The heaven, at first, and earth, and watery fields,
The moon's bright globe, and the Titanian stars,
An inward Spirit feeds, and, poured throughout
All parts and particles, there doth exist
A Mind intelligent which moves the mass,
And mingles with the body vast of things."

Anchises to Æneas, Sixth Æneid, 724.
CANTO THIRD.

ARGUMENT:

With one of the spirits of the unfortunate religious, Piccarda, Dante's sister-in-law, he converses. She relates to him her experience in both states of existence, and points out to him Constance, mother of the Emperor Frederick the Second, and recalls the history of that lady.

Still the Heaven of the Moon.


PERSONS APPEARING: Angels. Constance, and other members of religious orders.

THAT Sun, which erst with love my bosom warmed,
Of beauteous truth the sweet face had unveiled
Through proof of all, and reproof where I failed;
And, that I might my judgments own reformed,
With confidence strong, and yet with gratitude meek,
My head I raised in attitude now to speak.
But there a vision came which me withdrew,
And so close held, in its deep interest caught,
That of my purpose I no longer thought.
As clear and polished glass when we see through,  
Or crystalline floods by no commotion tost,  
But not within dark, pebbleless, bottoms lost,  
And come to us our faces' outlines weak,  
As weak as would a pearl's, on forehead white,  
Claiming acknowledgment from the puzzled sight;
Such saw I many faces prompt to speak,  
So that mine error opposite his did mount  
Who love conceived as looked he in the fount.

Soon as of them aware, them deeming sent  
Reflections forth from mirrored surfaces, turned  
I round mine eyes, where might the truth be learned,  
But nothing saw, and now their gaze I bent  
On my sweet Guide, and on her very eyes,  
Wherein her gracious smiles began to rise.  
"Marvel thou not because I smile," she said,  
"At this thy childish judgment, since not yet  
Upon the truth its trusting foot is set,  
"But by it thou t'wards vacancy still art led.  
True substances all are these by thee observed,  
Exiles because from holy vows they 've swerved.  
But speak thou with them, they the truth will tell,  
For that true light which bringeth to them peace  
Is guaranty fair their truth will never cease."  
And so, with haste embarrassed, it befel  
That I my speech directed to that shade  
Which earnestness most for converse had displayed:
“O Spirit born for bliss, who in the rays of life eternal dost that sweetness own
Which, being untasted, never can be known,
’Twill me make glad if from thy mouth of praise
I hear thy name and thy companions’ state.”
Whence promptly she, with laughing eyes elate:
“Ne’er doth our Charity high the portals close
A just demand against, and she desires
That like herself should be her heavenly choirs.

“A virgin sister’s lot it was I chose;
And, nearly scanned, my features will reveal,
That I Piccarda am, who ’mongst the blest
Who live with God, or distant or more near,
Enjoy beatitude in the tardiest sphere.
The affections of us all burn on with zest,
Drawn from our pleasure in the Holy Ghost,
And jubilant that his order is our boast.

“And this our station, which doth humble seem,
Is to us given because that, brought to nought
Our vows have been in ways not by us sought.”
“There seems of the miraculous a gleam,”
I said, “in all your visages seen divine,
Which makes them past quick recognition shine.
Therefore was I in my remembrance slow;
But what thou now dost tell me of your state,
Bids memory act without delay so great.
Worship, not Envy.

"But tell me, ye who happiness here do know,
Are ye desirous of yet loftier planes?
Seek ye variety more? Or friendship's gains?"
First, with those other shades, she gently smiled;
Then words so full of joy me made return
That in love's primal glow she seemed to burn:
"Ah, Brother! Charity leads us unbeguiled
By our own wishes; what we have we enjoy,
Worship, not envy, doth our minds employ.

"If we should seek to rise to loftier grace,
Our aspirations would unlovingly meet
The will of Him whom here our love should greet.
Such mood, thou 'lt find, in these planes hath no place,
If Heaven's a place where Charity should abide,
And if, as thou 'lt confess, it masters pride.
Nay, here we would not live one moment blest,
Unless united with the will divine,
Wherewith in one our wishes should combine.

"So that, as rise the several ranks of rest,
Plane following plane, the realm with pleasure fills
King, subjects, all, and his will rules our wills,
And is our peace; this is the embracing mere
To which moves onward constantly whatsoe'er
It doth create and place in nature's care."
Then that all Heaven was Paradise was full clear,
Although the grace the Good Supreme doth rain
In several measure seeks each several plane.
But, as in eating, if one dish doth sate,
   And for another still we appetite feel,
Declining that, on this we close our meal,
E'en thus did I in this our kind debate;
   And questioned I because I not yet knew
What web was that the shuttle went not through.
And she: "A lady o'er us, high in heaven, keep
   Her perfect life and merit; vest and veil
   Her rule in your world order, that may fail

"Ne'er until death their vigilance, and that sleep
   They may beside that Spouse whom vows delight
   Which Charity blesses in its blissful height.
In youth, to follow her the world I fled,
   And, in her habit and her cause retained,
   I vowed to tread the path her rule ordained.
Then men whom seldom good, oft evil, led,
   From that sweet cloister tore me; God doth know
   In what sad course my life from thence did flow.

"This other splendid shape upon my right,
   And which glows forth with all the lustre clear
   That doth belong to this our special sphere,
Like me was overpowered by lawless might.
   From her, a sister, was the wimple torn,
   By her with fond and close devotion worn.
And when to her the world again laid claim
   Her wishes 'gainst, and 'gainst good usage, ne'er
   Did ruthless they from her the heart's veil tear."
“’Tis great Costanza’s radiance so doth flame, 113
Who from the second blast of Suabia birth
Gave to her third and latest name of worth.”

Her speech was ended, and her voice began
“Ave Maria” singing, but the sound
Vanished with her as weight in waves profound.

My sight, that after her as long time ran
As possible, when her it lost, turned round
Where it a mark of more attraction found,

And once again to Beatrice came, but flashed 127
Such levins she into mine eyes that bear
Could not at first my sight the blinding glare,
And this in questioning made me more abashed.

NOTES TO THE THIRD CANTO.


17. “The fount.” Narcissus unhappily mistook a shadow for a substance; I, more fortunate, mistook a substance for a shadow.

49. “Piccarda.” Dante’s sister-in-law, sister of his wife Gemma Donati and of Forese Donati and Corso Donati. Forese says of her in the Twenty-fourth Canto of the Purgatorio, line 13:

“My sister, she so beautiful, so good!
(I know not which the most) Olympus’ brow
Sees, crowned with jubilant triumph, even now.”

She was a nun of the order of Santa Clara. Her brother Donati compelled her marriage to Rosselin della Tosa. She did not long survive this incident of a most villainous age.

66. “Variety . . . or friendship.” See the next Canto,
where Beatrice says that the highest plane, the Empyrean, is the common meeting-place of all the blest. Further on in the Poem, the Rose of the Blessed, in the Empyrean, will be described, wherein the denizens of all the Heavens will have appropriate seats.

70. "Brother." The word is applicable in a double sense. Both human and divine relationships may be meant. Dante was, in law, Piccarda's brother; he is, also, supposed to be a member of the Third Order of Saint Francis; and the nuns of Saint Clare were a branch of the Franciscan order.

96. "A Lady o'er us." Santa Clara.

118. "Costanza." Mother of the "third blast of Suabia," Frederick the Second. Her husband, the "second blast of Suabia" was Henry the Fifth, son of Barbarossa. This lady was a member of a religious order, and her marriage a forced one.
CANTO FOURTH.

ARGUMENT:

Beatrice discourses upon the ways of God in respect to the places of the several spirits, and of their merits in view of intention and uncontrollable circumstances. Dante proposes the question whether other good works may not be substituted in the scale of merit for those which have failed.

Still the Heaven of the Moon.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Dante. Beatrice.

PERSONS APPEARING: Angels. The spirits of the unfortunate religious.

One willing freely, 'twixt two kinds of food

Alike remote and tempting, would first die

Of hunger's pangs ere he could either try.

So would a lamb, alike with fear imbued,

Of two fierce wolves their ravennings equally dread;

So 'twixt two does might be a dog's life led.

My doubts me held in such necessity then;

Wherefore I gave myself nor blame nor praise;

Nought could I do but there before me gaze.
I silent stood; but who had held in ken
My face, had keenness seen there which more prayed
Than had words fervently their orisons made.
As Daniel, when he Nebuchadnezzar led
Aside from wrath, which made his merciless brow
Injustice threaten, so looked Beatrice now.
"Well I discern how thee attract," she said,
"Two several wishes which thy thought restrain,
So that thy breath is thereby held in rein.

"Thou arguest: 'If remains the intent intact,
Why should decrease my merit force
Which in the minds of others hath its source?'
Again with doubts thy thoughts are racked
Because of that idea in Plato learned,
That to the *stars* souls seemingly returned.
These are the questions which assail thy will
With equal buffetings fierce, and first of all
I 'll treat the one that hath the bitterest gall.

"He of the Seraphim Deity most doth fill,
Or Moses, Samuel, John (and which John choose)
Or Mary (who let here no reverence lose),
None, have in any other Heaven their place
Than have those souls which thou didst just now see,
Nor ages fewer nor more in bliss to be,
But all the primal circle's glory grace,
And this sweet life partake, in diverse grades,
As more or less God's breath their souls pervades.
These shown were to thee not because this sphere
Allotted is to them, but that the least
Celestial height might give thine eyes a feast.
Speech must be such as comes to evidence near,
For grasp we always through the sense the thought
Which to the intellectual smithy then is brought.
For this cause 't is the scripture condescends
Unto man's limited faculties, feet and hands
To God attributing, and thus gloss demands;

And Holy Church an aspect human lends
To Gabriel's might and Michael's, and his, too,
Who Tobit's power of vision did renew.
What Plato teaches, from Timæus drawn,
Resemblance bears not to what here is seen;
Their words import, perhaps, that which they mean.
The soul, they say, unto its star is borne,
Whence, their belief was, that it took its way
When nature form gave to its infinite ray.

Perhaps their doctrine meant is us to learn
More than the words import, and possibly runs
To meanings that our just derision shuns.
If mean they that unto these orbs return
Honor or blame their influence earns them, then
Some truth doth come within their arrows' ken.
This principle ill-understood once wrong
The whole world nearly set, until the stars
Men would invoke, as Mercury, Jove, and Mars.
"The other doubt disturbs thee is less strong
In venom; its more mild malevolence ne'er
Could thee and me to separate orbits bear.
That in man's eyes our justice should appear
A thing unjust, doth on faith's side contend,
And countenance none doth unto heresy lend.
But yet, that your perception may be clear
Upon this point, I will thy wish content,
And also on this verity's theme comment.

"If violence be, when he who suffers force,
Consents not thereunto, not thence the abused
Could justly make the claim that he's excused;
For, unopposed, will holds triumphant course,
As nature doth in fire, howe'er it wrest
A thousand times the force whereby 't is pressed;
For if it yields or more or less, so far
It follows force; and these so did, though power
Their shrines to regain gave many an opportune hour.

"In these had will been perfect, as when scar
On scar burnt Lawrence, and when Scævola's hand
Fed the fierce flames at his serene command,
It would have urged them back the path to seek
Whence force had drawn them, soon as liberty came;
But in too few doth such high principle flame.
And by these words borne in thy memory meek
That argument vain which thee might oft perplex
Will nevermore thy pious ponderings vex."
"But now to thee seems yet a question blind, And such that by thyself the pathway straight To find might thee subject to weariness great. I have it firmly fixed within thy mind That ne'er can lie these souls, for near The primal Truth they hold their blest career. And then thou might'st have heard Piccarda say Costanza for the veil affection kept; And 'twixt us here hath seeming discord crept.

"If hath been, brother, oft the hated way That, peril to escape, men that have done Reluctantly which righteous men would shun; E'en as Alcmaeon, at his father's prayer, Slew his own mother; thus, to pious prove, He from his soul forth all of pity drove. At this point thou should'st in thy memory bear That force with will's so blended, that from thence Excuse cannot be pleaded for the offence.

"Will absolute with evil ne'er agrees, But in so far consents as its alarm Makes it, if it refrain, incur more harm. Hence when Piccarda words employs like these, Will absolute she means, while I intend The other; thus doth in truth each pathway end." And onward thus divine that river sped Which in the Source of all truth hath its spring, And thus each doubt fled forth on clattering wing.
"O the first Lover's love, O Goddess," thus I said, 118
Enraptured, "thou whose speech bathes, warms me so,
That more and more I gain of Wisdom's glow,
Affection deep enough I cannot claim
As grace for grace to render; may reply
By One be made who sees and rules for aye!
I find made clear that ne'er attains its aim
Our intellect's strength unless 'neath Truth's bright beam,
Beyond which only erring arrows gleam.

"Our mind in Truth rests as the beast untame 127
In his remote, safe lair; this absolute rest
It can attain, else were defeat confessed.
Doubts spring as shoots their lively leaves unfold
Around the trunk of Truth; and nature's made
To make us climb from heightening grade to grade.
This doth invite me, this doth make me bold,
To ask you, Lady, one more doubt to solve
Which seems in error's darkness to revolve.

"This would I know, if good deeds earn one praise 136
To outweigh the vows which broken are, and heaven
Accepts these if in compensation given."
From Beatrice came upon me now a gaze
Full laden with love's sparks, and so divine
That turned I, so intensely did they shine,
Vanquished and almost blinded with their rays.
NOTES TO THE FOURTH CANTO.

2. "Alike remote and tempting." A whimsical introduction to a Canto which, as do several others, treats of the freedom of the will. The idea is one of great antiquity. It is found in Aristotle, De Cælo, ii. 13. Ovid applies it to the case of a tiger in a valley between two lowing herds:

"Tigris ut, auditis, diversa valle duorum,
Extimulata fame, mugitibus armentorum,
Nescit utro potius ruat, et ruere ardet utroque."

Met. v. 166.

Saint Thomas of Aquin alludes to it in his Summa, ii. 1, 13, 6. Since the time of Dante it is known to logicians as "the dilemma of the ass of Buridan."

13. "Daniel." Nebuchadnezzar was enraged against the wise men of Babylon, and threatened their extermination, because they could not make known to him a troubled dream, the details of which he had forgotten, and of which he demanded not only the details but the interpretation. Daniel, through a revelation of God, supplied both. The dream was, in substance, a revelation of the approach of the Christian era. Daniel, chap. ii.

23, 49. "Plato . . . Timæus." Timæus was one of the preceptors of Plato. It is supposed, rather than known, that Timæus wrote the work entitled Of the Soul of the World and of Nature.

The substance of Dante's contention here is that Timæus and Plato, although right in saying that the soul originated in the celestial spheres, yet were wrong in averring that each soul has its several star; they were right in maintaining that the soul returns to the skies, but wrong in maintaining that each individual soul returns to some separate and individual star. It seems interestingly observable that Dante here is at pains to admit his belief in general planetary influence:

"If mean they that unto these orbs return
Honor or blame their influence earns them, then
Some truth doth come within their arrows' ken."
He is at pains, too, to admit that, possibly, the doctrines of these ancient philosophers as to the return of the soul to its source were, in substance, the same as those of the Christian philosophers:

"Perhaps their doctrine meant is us to learn
More than the words import."

28. "He of the Seraphim Deity most doth fill." "Che piu s' india," that most in-God's himself. The same form of expression was met with in the preceding Canto, line 97: "In-ciela," in-Heaven; and will be met with again in the Ninth Canto at line 73: "tuò veder s' inluia," thy sight in-Hims itself, and at line 81: "s' io m' intuassi come tu t' immii," if I could in-thee myself as thou dost in-me thyself; and in the Seventeenth Canto, line 13: "che sì t' insusi," who dost so in-heights thyself; and in the Twenty-second Canto, line 67: "l' ultima spera non s' impola," the last sphere, the Em-pyrean, does not impole itself, that is, has no poles, does not revolve as does the crystalline sphere, the sphere of Primal Motion, but is a quiet sphere, where God himself repose.

47. "His." Raphael's. Tobit was a worthy Jew of the tribe of Naphtali, living in exile at Nineveh, who, in his enforced home, enjoyed, at first, much prosperity, but afterwards became poor and blind. His son, Tobias, however, had the good fortune to make a journey with Raphael, "one of the seven holy Angels who present the prayers of the saints, and who go in and out before the Holy One." The Angel sent to the father, by the hands of the son, the gall of a fish, the application of which to the blind man's eyes restored his sight.

54. "Form." Saint Thomas of Aquin, Summa, i. 76, 1, says: "Form is that by which a thing is." The thinking principle, intellect, or intellectual soul, is "the form of the body."

63. "Men would invoke." Scartazzini's suggestion is adopted: "to call upon." But the interpretation, "to call," or "name," seems to have the authority of Saint Augustine,
De Civitate Dei, vii. 15: "De stellis quibusdam, quas pagani deorum suorum nominibus nuncupaverunt." "Of certain stars which the pagans called by the names of their Gods."

Plausible, too, seems the suggestion of King John of Saxony which makes the "nominar" (name) of the text "numenar" (to deify), so that the meaning, like Scartazzini's, would be to worship certain stars as Gods.

68. "On faith's side." Cary explains: "That the ways of Divine Justice are often inscrutable to man, ought rather to be a motive to faith than an inducement to heresy."

83. "Lawrence ... Scævola." Saint Lawrence suffered martyrdom in the reign of the Emperor Valerian, August 10, 258. In his capacity of archdeacon he had charge of the treasury of the Church. Ordered by the Prefect of Rome (head of the police of the city) to surrender the supposed millions as confiscated to the imperial treasury, he asked delay to prepare an inventory and appraisement. When the time arrived, the treasures which he displayed were a crowd of wretched people sick and poor. The disappointment enraged the officer, who ordered that the archdeacon be lashed to a frame of iron bars, and reduced to ashes by fire. His heroism was succeeded by numerous conversions. His relics are preserved, on the very spot where he expired, in the same sarcophagus with those of Saint Stephen the first martyr.

Six hundred years before Christ, Mutius Scævola, a Roman knight, was one of three hundred conspirators who had vowed the death of Lars Porsenna the Tuscan king at war with Rome. Mistaking the identity of the king, he killed, instead, a member of his council. At once apprehended, he stood before the king. Coals, for the making of a religious sacrifice, were brought in on a brazier. Mutius placed his right hand upon the coals, and, while it burned, he presented to the king a countenance wholly unmoved. In admiration of such heroic fortitude the king handed him his sword, and bade him go free. His right hand being destroyed, he received his sword in his left, and is thence called Scævola,
"And to seduce your love should aught else seem, Nought is it but some ill-distinguished mark Of that same light, which spark emits on spark. Thy question is, if with good works for sin Of breaking vows, can such return be made That on the soul no burden will be laid."
Thus Beatrice did this Canto's lines begin; And as one who in speech proceeds, her voice Continued thus her strain of argument choice:

"The greatest gift that from the bounty e'er Of God creating came, and which doth rise Nearest His heights, and that which He doth prize Most highly, is that gift in largess fair Alone His intellectual creatures given, The freedom of the will, best boon of heaven. Now reason hence, and thou wilt see how high In worth a vow is, when God's mind doth treat With yours to make it; His and yours here meet.

"And thus man doth, in God's own sovereign eye, A sacrifice make of this prized treasure, crowned By its own act, and by God's fiat bound. What compensation, then, can be returned? Canst thou retain to use what's not thine own? Can theft do good? Canst thou reclaim thy loan? Now, on the greater point, thou truth hast learned: But Holy Church here dispensation makes; And of apparent contradiction this partakes.
"But thou at table must awhile yet bide,
Because the solid food thy stomach hath
Needs aid to lead it to digestion's path.
Thy mind to my words open thou now wide;
Plant them there deep; for 'tis not knowledge gained
To hear a thing, unless it be retained.

Essential to this sacrifice concur
Two things; the form, the matter of it, one,
The bond the other 'neath which 'tis begun.

"This bond can no man from its moorings stir;
It must be followed; wherefore of its force
I have already made so strict discourse.
Therefore upon the Hebrews God did call
To offer still, although the offering might
Sometimes commuted be; am I not right?
The other thing which rests in method all,
May well be such that none can forfeit praise
If it be changed for other methods' ways.

"But let none be the judge in his own case;
Both keys should turn, the white and yellow, used
Whene'er God's gifts to man have been abused.
And on no permutation confidence place
Unless the method lost ye can infix
Within the new, as four's contained in six.
But if a thing is of such weighty worth
That it out weighs whate'er's against it weighed,
Its compensation cannot be o'erpaid."
"And to seduce your love should aught else seem, 10
   Nought is it but some ill-distinguished mark
Of that same light, which spark emits on spark.
Thy question is, if with good works for sin
Of breaking vows, can such return be made
That on the soul no burden will be laid."
Thus Beatrice did this Canto's lines begin;
And as one who in speech proceeds, her voice
Continued thus her strain of argument choice:

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   Of God creating came, and which doth rise
Nearest His heights, and that which He doth prize
Most highly, is that gift in largess fair
   Alone His intellectual creatures given,
The freedom of the will, best boon of heaven.
Now reason hence, and thou wilt see how high
   In worth a vow is, when God's mind doth treat
With yours to make it; His and yours here meet.

"And thus man doth, in God's own sovereign eye, 28
   A sacrifice make of this prized treasure, crowned
By its own act, and by God's fiat bound.
What compensation, then, can be returned?
   Canst thou retain to use what's not thine own?
Can theft do good? Canst thou reclaim thy loan?
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   But Holy Church here dispensation makes;
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I have already made so strict discourse.
Therefore upon the Hebrews God did call
To offer still, although the offering might
Somer times commuted be; am I not right?
Some thing which rests in method all,
Well be such that none can forfeit praise
Be changed for other methods' ways.

Let none be the judge in his own case;
Th keys should turn, the white and yellow, used
When'er God's gifts to man have been abused,
On no permutation confidence place
Unless the method lost ye can infix
Within the new, as four's contained in six.
But if a thing is of such weighty worth
That it outweighs whate'er's against it weighed,
Its compensation cannot be o'erpaid.
"At random vow not, or in jest or mirth;
Be faithful wholly, and not blind therein,
As Jephthah when to vow he did begin,
Who should have said 'I have done wrong,' not kept
His vow, and thus worse done; as foolish, too,
One must the mighty Grecian leader view
Whose Iphigenia her fair face bewept,
And tears alike from wise and simple brought
That men of worship such as this had thought.

"Christians! be ye to principles more true;
Not by each wind be ye like feathers blown,
Nor deem that every fount doth merits own.
Ye have the Testaments, the Old and New,
Ye have the Pastor of the church your guide;
Let them for your eternal needs provide.
If evil appetite hail you with its cries,
Be ye as men, and not as sheepish stocks
Whereat the Jew among you justly mocks.

"Be ye not as the lamb that doth despise
Its mother's milk, and like a silly elf,
At its own pleasure, combat with itself."
I write what Beatrice unto me did speak;
Whereon, filled full with love, she turned again
To parts where most doth heaven its influence rain.
I had in mind more answers yet to seek,
But on me silence brought her silent mood
And countenance changed, of thought, not speech, the food;
And, swift as speeds an arrow from the bow,
The mark attaining ere the bowstring sleeps,
The second realm we reached in heavenly deeps.
My Lady then with radiance such did glow,
Soon as that Heaven her presence entered bright,
The planet grew more luminous to the sight;
And if the star itself seemed warmed and blest,
What felt I then, who am by nature apt
To be by every hallowing influence rapt!

As, in a fish-pond pure whose wavelets rest,
The fishes draw t'wards that which food they deem,
As there they see it through the crystal beam,
So drew a thousand splendors, then, and more,
Our place towards, and words each uttered glad:
"Behold her come who shall to our love add!"
And as each came, effulgence seemed to pour
Ample and clear from each, which made us know
That with beatitude added each did glow.

Think, Reader, if that which begins just here
Should go no further, what an agonized need
Your mind would feel to have the theme proceed;
And thou wilt of thyself know how, to hear
Their state, me filled with curiosity keen,
Since that themselves were by mine eyesight seen.
"O born in happy hour, and by Grace led
To see, e'er ends your warfare, where arise
The eternal triumph's thrones throughout the skies,
Paradiso.

Radiant Justinian.

"Glow we with light that throughout heaven is spread,
And if of us thou inquiry aught wouldst make,
Let plenteously thy pleasure's asking take."

Thus spoke one 'mongst those radiant spirits blest;
And Beatrice then: "Speak, speak, and feel secure;
Trust them as Gods, their every thought is pure."

"Well I discern how thou thyself dost nest
In thine own light, which from thine eyes is poured,
Because they, sparkling, with thy smile accord,

"But who thou art I know not, spirit august,
Nor why thy station in that sphere is made
Whose brightness doth in alien brightness fade."

This said I t'wards the lofty soul who just
Had me addressed, whence brighter it became
And beauty took which made its first glow tame.
Even as the sun, that shades itself in wings
Of too much light, when hath his heat away
The tempering influence worn of vapors gray,

By greater rapture its own radiance brings,
Concealed itself the saintly figure high,
And thus close, close, enwrapped, me made reply
In mode whereof the following Canto sings.
NOTES TO THE FIFTH CANTO.

12. "That same light." Longfellow quotes from Burns, The Vision:

"I saw thy pulse's maddening play
Wild send thee pleasure's devious way,
Misled by fancy's meteor ray,
By passion driven;
And yet the light that led astray
Was light from heaven."

24. "The freedom of the will."

"Them thus employed beheld
With pity Heaven's high King, and to him call'd
Raphael, the sociable spirit, that designed
To travel with Tobias, and secured
His marriage with the seven-times wedded maid.

"'Raphael,' said he, 'thou hear'st what stir on earth
Satan, from hell scape'd, through the darksome gulf,
Hath rais'd in Paradise, and how disturb'd
This night the human pair...
Go, therefore, half this day as friend with friend
Converse with Adam... and such discourse bring on
As may advise him of his happy state;
Happiness in his power left free to will,
Left to his own free will, his will though free
Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware
He swerve not, too secure; tell him withal
His danger, and from whom."

Paradise Lost, v. 219.

31. "Compensation." In the sense of commutation. Here occurs in the text of Dante a hiatus in the sense which requires that the following, or similar, words should be supplied:

"And now, in the case supposed, that the vow, so solemn in its nature, be broken, what compensation for the breach can be rendered? What commutation? What equivalent?"

43. "Two things." The one the nature of the vow, the other its exact terms.

49. "Therefore upon the Hebrews." Final chapter of Leviticus; and verses 4 and 5 of the fifth chapter of Ecclesiastes.
52. "The other thing." The thing sacrificed, the thing of which an offering is made.


66. "Jephthah." For victory over the Ammonites, Jephthah vowed to sacrifice by fire the first person who should meet him on his return to his house. This person was his own daughter. She approached him "with timbrels and with dances."

69. "The mighty Grecian leader." Agamemnon. He offended Diana by killing a stag in a grove sacred to her. His vow was to sacrifice to the Goddess whatsoever the year should to him bring forth most beautiful. When the expedition against Troy was about to set sail from Aulis, Calchas the seer declared that the Gods demanded the sacrifice of Iphigenia. But when the immolation was about to take place, Diana herself, more merciful than her minister, intervened, and bore the maid in a cloud to Tauris where Iphigenia became her priestess.

80. "Sheepish stocks." Dante says in his Convito, i. 2: "If one sheep should throw itself down a precipice of a thousand feet, all the others would follow, and if one sheep, in passing along the road, leaps from any cause, all the others leap, though seeing no cause for it. And I once saw several leap into a well, on account of one that had leaped in, thinking, perhaps, it was leaping over a wall; notwithstanding that the shepherd, weeping and wailing, opposed them with arms and breast."

93. "The second realm." Dante's mode of rising to a new sphere was always by tasting, with his eyes, of the divine countenance of Beatrice, as Glaucus, with his tongue, tasted of the divine sea-weed.

106, 108. "Effulgence ... beatitude added." Increase of joy in the spirits in Paradise is shown by increase of effulgence.

121. "One." The spirit of the Emperor Justinian.

129. "Alien brightness." The brightness of the sun. Mercury is so near to the sun that it is only visible at the time
Notes.

of its greatest elongation, that is, when two lines drawn from the earth to the sun and Mercury include their greatest angle. 133, 134. "In wings of too much light."

"Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear, Yet dazzle heaven." *Paradise Lost*, iii. 380.

"A flaming mount, whose top Brightness had made invisible."

*Ib. v. 598.*
CANTO SIXTH.

ARGUMENT:

Justinian recalls the history of the Church, and the Empire, and his personal history, and speaks in high praise of Romeo, minister of Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence. Dante diverges into the field of Italian politics.

Still the Heaven of Mercury.

PERSON SPEAKING: Justinian.


"After that Constantine the Eagle turned
Against heaven's course, a flight it had pursued
Since him who won Lavinia doubly wooed,
Two hundred years and more with ardor burned
The bird of God on Europe's edge extreme,
Near mounts which first its eyrie held and dream;
And, to its consecrated mission true,
It governed all, held on the prince's hand,
Then came to mine its mastering plumage grand."
"Cæsar I was, and am Justinian, who
(The Primal Love I own the moving cause)
The useless took and obsolete from the laws;
And, ere upon this work engaged, believed
One nature to exist in Christ, not more,
And such false faith with pleased contentment bore.
Therefrom the Supreme Pastor me relieved,
Agapetus, now the blessed, who made clear
My way to find the rock of faith sincere.

"Him I believed, and that his words were meet
I now see clearly, for both false and true,
E'en in your contestations, spring to view.
Soon as the Church to its ways brought my feet,
'It pleased God's grace me for this task to inspire,
And I it gave my time and care entire.
Mine army I 'neath Belisarius placed,
And him heaven's right hand plainly joined therein,
As if to rest me had its purpose been.

"Mine answer thus to your first question haste
Might say is made, but character such it hath
That I more slowly will pursue its path.
That thou may'st see the little reason shown
By men who 'gainst the sacred standard move,
Men not alone who hate it but approve,
Behold what mighty power hath been its own,
Beginning from that hour when Pallas died
To give it honor and reverence far and wide.
"Thou know'st well how in Alba's walls it dwelt three hundred years and upwards till the glaive of strife the valiant three to three there gave. Thou know'st well how to it the Sabines knelt, down to Lucretia's grief, when, battle-proud, 'Fore its seven kings the neighboring nations bowed. Thou know'st well how 'neath it bore Romans down 'Gainst Brennus, Pyrrhus, and their allies strong, And shone illustrious throughout contests long.

"Torquatus thence, and Quinctius, from his crown unkempt so named, the Decii, Fabii calm, That fame received I gladly here embalm. It quelled the pride of the Arabian hordes Which, led by Hannibal on, through Alpine snow, Brought terror to thy sources, fruitful Po! Pompey and Scipio with their youthful swords Beneath it triumphed, and sore felt its scorn That fortified hill beneath which thou wast born.

"Then, when the time approached which heaven had willed Should give the whole world its own mood serene, Rome willed its aid to Cæsar's valor keen, Its victories which 'twixt Var and Rhine all thrilled, The Isère's waves saw, the Saône's, and silvery Seine's, And all the valleys whence the Rhone leads rains; Its victories when it had Ravenna stilled, And leaped the Rubicon's bound, a flight attained Whereto in vain would tongue or pen be strained.
"Its legions, then, t'wards Spain it wheeled, then sought
Dyracchium's shores, and so Pharsalia smote
That, stung, the lukewarm Nile thereof took note.
Antandros and the Simois, whence 't was brought
It saw again, and where lies Hector's life,
And, ill for Ptolemy, spread its folds in strife.
Then flashed its limpid levin on Juba's arms;
Then, when the trump Pompeian would molest,
It wheeled, and went again unto your west.

"From what it wrought 'neath its next lord's alarms
Brutus and Cassius howling are in Hell,
And Modena and Perugia woe befell.
Hence still doth wretched Cleopatra weep,
Who, when pursued by its close-led attack,
Took from the adder's sting sudden death and black.
By this lord led, it sought the Red Sea deep,
While of the world such peace possessed the states
That Janus of his temples barred the gates.

"But victories all that had this standard won
Before this date, or after should, through realms
Where mortal triumph mortal effort whelms,
Dim and inglorious are, compared with one
Which might the Caesar Third have gained (if seen
This Caesar be with heart and vision clean)
Because the living Justice which I breathe
The glory granted in his hands its wrath
To pour in vengeance round this standard's path,
"But, as thou know'st, it Titus' brows did wreathe or
With fadeless bays, to inflict, midst war's harsh din,
Vengeance for vengeance of the ancient sin.
And when the tooth of Lombardy sought to gore
The Holy Church, her flanks did well Charlemagne
Under her wings victorious shield from pain.
And, for thyself, judge thou those whom before
I challenged to thee, judge their crying crimes,
Which are the cause of all your troublous times.

"One party, 'gainst the universal ensign, rears
The yellow lilies; the other for its own
That ensign claims: both sin, not one alone.
Ye Ghibellines, this to an honest mind appears:
Should 'neath some other standard train your arts,
Not here should train who it and justice parts.
But let not this new Charles its folds assail,
He and his Guelphs: the talons him may quell
Which from a nobler lion stripped the fell.

"The father's crime oft causes sons to wail;
Nor can he think that God His plans will yield,
And change His heraldry for the liled shield.
This little planet with good souls is bright,
Whose active lives pursued the lofty aim
That might their names be ever dear to fame;
And whensoever to this lesser height
Reach claims imperfect thus, the height's thus less
Than where desires t'wards higher ideals press.
"But herein also joy we find that meet
To our desert our wages portioned are,
Nor doth the thought one blissful moment mar,
Because that living Justice makes so sweet
Affection in us that can never win
Regret one slightest tendency here to sin.
Voices divine sweet music make, and so
These grades diverse sweet harmony make among
Spheres where, throughout, deep gratitude rules
the tongue.

"And in the enclosure of this pearl doth glow
The sheen that Romeo sheds, whom ill reward
For fair and goodly work vouchsafed his lord.
But the Provençals for their wrong atone
Where little cause there is for smiles and mirth;
Sad men are they who smile by others' worth.
Four daughters, each of whom attained a throne,
Had Raymond Berenger; and Romeo's thought,
A pilgrim poor though he, this 'round had brought.

"Then to malicious words his lord gave way,
And to a reckoning called this man of men,
Who to him seven and five returned for ten.
Though poor and stricken in years, he scorned to stay;
And, if the world could know the heart he bore,
In begging morsels from kind door to door,
'Twould greater praise than e'er it paid him, pay."
NOTES TO THE SIXTH CANTO.

1. "Constantine." Constantine, by changing the seat of the Empire from Rome to Byzantium, named by him New Rome and Constantinople, turned the flight of the Roman eagle towards the east. Æneas, the founder of the Roman Empire, had brought the eagle towards the west, following the course of the sun in the heavens.

3. "Lavinia doubly wooed." By Turnus the native prince and Æneas the wanderer from Troy. Both sought this amiable daughter of King Latinus,

"Her royal tresses fair and gem-wrought crown,"

and the defeat of Turnus in the single combat gave her to the Trojan.

4. "Two hundred years and more." The interval between the date at which Constantine made Byzantium his seat of government, 324, and the date of the reign of Justinian, 527.

5. "On Europe's edge extreme." On the eastern borders of Europe, the boundaries of Asia, near the Trojan chain of which Mount Ida forms a link.

8. "It governed all." According to the prophecy of Anchises made in the Lower World to Æneas, the mission of Rome was to govern the nations:

"But thou, O Roman, mind thee the great arts
Of government to learn. These shall be thine.
Thou shalt thine Empire on the peoples lay.
Thou shalt the ways of Peace unto them teach.
Thou shalt the conquered spare, but shalt fight down
The proud contemners of thy State and Laws."

10. "Justinian." Gibbon, in his Decline and Fall, chap. xliii., describes Justinian as affable, laborious, abstémious, as giving himself little time for sleep, and as subjecting himself to rigorous fasts. But the age was unfortunate. Learned in law, in theology, in philosophy and poetry, he failed to meet the expectations of his people; his marriage was not to their liking, and the empress and his ministers abused their powers.
12. "The laws." John and Tribonian, in fourteen months, condensed into twelve books the Imperial Constitutions, which had not been revised since the time of Theodosius. Tribonian and sixteen other jurists were then set to work on the Digest, which they arranged in fifty books, containing the substance of two thousand, under the title: "Digest or Pandects of the Eliminated Law, collected from all the ancient law." This work required three years (530-533). Then, Tribonian, Theophilus, and Dorotheus were ordered to prepare an elementary work under the title of the Institutes. The revision of the new code and the collection of the new Constitutions followed.

The Institutes start out with a proposition which suggests Dante and his purity of principle, and even exhibits the treble rhyme of the Commedia:

"Juris præcepta sunt hæc:
Honeste vivere,
Neminem non laedere,
Suum cuique tribuere."

14. "One nature." The heresy of Eutyches, who asserted that only the Divine nature existed in Christ, not the human; that the Divine nature had absorbed the human in the process of uniting with it. This was equivalent to denying the sufferings of Christ upon the cross.

17. "Agapetus." Pope, ten months, 535-536. In 536 he undertook a voyage from Rome to Constantinople in the capacity of a commissioner, to reconcile the conflict of affairs in Italy and Asia, civil, military, and religious. His courage and address were rewarded with success. He fell ill and died in Constantinople. His remains were brought to Rome.

21. "E'en in your contestations." Dante is here at pains to make the emperor's philosophy apply to the state of politics in Italy, the question of church and state, the strifes of Ghibelline and Guelph, and Black and White.

25. "Belisarius." The once favorite general was accused, but on trial acquitted, of conspiring to compass the death of the emperor; but the popular story, embellished with the
words from the lips of a blind beggar, "date obolem Belsario," is supposed to be without foundation.

33. "Men not alone who hate it, but approve." The sacred standard, the Roman eagle, Justinian says, has suffered from open enemies and avowed friends. Another allusion to the intestine wars and plots of the Italians of the time of Dante, when violence, venality, and treachery ruled the course of public events.

35. "Pallas."

"'Go, decorate now,' he said, 'with gifts supreme,
The memory fair of those illustrious souls
Who, by their blood for us so freely shed,
Have won a land we may our country call.
And, first, unto Evander's sorrowing town
Must we his Pallas send, whom that dark day
Removed, rich as he was in virtue's gifts,
And sunk the bitter waves within of death.'"

Eleventh Æneid, 23.

37, 40, 43. "Thou know'st . . . thou know'st . . . thou know'st." "Tu sai . . . sai . . . sai."


40. "Sabines . . . Lucretia." The rape of the Sabine women brought on war wherein the Roman eagle triumphed over the Sabine men, in the days of Romulus the first of the seven kings. The violence done to Lucretia by Tarquin the proud ended the dynasty of the same kings.

44. "Brennus." The Romans, under Camillus, so "bore down" upon Brennus that they annihilated his command. Tradition says that not one survived to tell the tale. Brennus surprised the city while it was defenceless and in a state of panic. Alone the Roman Senate preserved its equanimity, to such an extent that, until violence was offered to them, the Gauls supposed the senators to be statues of the Gods. The last rallying place of the populace was the capitol. An attempt to capture this fortress by night was defeated by the noise of geese, some accounts say, the sacred geese of Juno, kept in that enclosure, but others say a goose or geese which appeared there in a supernatural manner. The supernatural,
or miraculous, account is adopted by Dante in his work *De Monarchia*, ii. 4. Virgil has given, on the Shield of Æneas, the picture of this repulse:

"And here the silver goose, in porticoes high
Of gold, sung that the Gauls the threshold pressed,
And then the Gauls came on among the leaves,
And had the fortress reached, by darkness helped,
And by the shadows hid. And golden shone
Their hair, and gold their dress. Bright shine their coats
Gay-striped. Their milk-white necks their golden chains
Hang round. Gleam in their hands two Alpine staffs,
And shields of ample length their limbs protect."

And, in the Vision of Anchises, he introduces Camillus returning from his successful campaign:

"And comes Camillus, bringing from proud foes
In Gallia's land, his country's standards back."

American annals have produced an American Camillus: Sitting Buffalo, usually called Sitting Bull, Tatonkaiyotonka, a chief of the Dakotas. On the 25th day of July, 1876, he made a total destruction of the force under General Custer. The history of this chief illustrates the native beauty of the aboriginal nomenclature. Sitting Bull was first named Standing Angel: Wakaniyonajin. It was designed that he should become a medicine-man, a prophet, a sacred poet. He developed, however, in a campaign against the Crows, the hereditary enemies of the Dakotas, such military ability and such a fund of personal prowess, that his father concluded to change his career, and with his change of career, his name. It may be noted that names of exalted significance are not unknown to our Indian annals. Tecumseh, the name of the head of the formidable Shawnee confederacy, is, when translated, the Shooting Star; and the tribe of the Foxes counted among its chieftains at the treaty held at Prairie-du-Chien, in Michigan, in the year 1825, the name of Tagwanatekishu, the Thunder-that-is-heard-around-the-World.

44. "Pyrrhus." A King of Epirus. Born about 318, died 272. He boasted his descent from Achilles. He at one time advanced to within twenty-four miles of Rome. He was held
in esteem not only as a commander, but as an author on the art of war.

46, 47. “Torquatus . . . Decii . . . Fabii.” In the Vision of Anchises:

“And just now, see the Decii there; and see,
There, in the distance, too, the Drusi pass;
And with his axe severe Torquatus comes;

Or where drive ye, great Fabii, wearied me,—
Ye, of whom thou the Greatest, art the one
Who by delay to us the State restored?”

46. “Quinctius.” Cincinnatus, that is, “the curly haired.”
50. “Hannibal.” Horace, Odes, iv. 4, puts into the mouth of Hannibal lofty praises of Rome and the Romans:

“Gens, quæ cremato fortis ab Ilio,
Jactata Tuscis æquoribus sacra,
Natosque maturosque patres
Pertulit Ausonias ad urbes,

“Duris ut ilex tonsa bipennibus
Nigræ feraci frondis in Algido,
Per damna, per cades, ab ipso
Ducit opes animunque ferro.”

Of the Latin lines the following imperfect translation is submitted:

“. . . That race inflexible as brave
Which, from the flaming walls of Troy,
Across the untried Tuscan wave,
Bore parent, wife, and prattling boy,
And household Gods, and daughters coy,
To far Ausonian towns, to destined grief or joy.

“Like as the ilex axes lop
Of all its boughs, where richly rise
The woods which Algidus o'ertop,
All shorn, its loss it can despise:
Where every slaughtered army lies
It draws from hostile swords a strength that never dies.”

52. “Pompey.” In the Vision of Anchises:

“And thou dost see in harmony blent two souls.
Brilliant alike, with equal arms and will,
They stand, while on their heads night settles down.
Alas! between them what fell war would rise
If that by them the light of life were reached!
What combats, then, would rage, with endless deaths
And gory fields foul with fraternal hate!"

52. "Scipio." In the Vision of Anchises:
"The Scipios grim, twin thunderbolts of war,
And Libya's scourge."

54. "That fortressed hill." Fesole, the ancient Fæsulae, about three and a half miles northeast of Florence. It was the refuge of Catiline and his force, and was destroyed by an attacking army. Restored, it was again, by the Florentines, dismantled, in 1010.

56. "Serene." Prophecy of the coming of Christ, in the Pollio:
"He shall of Gods the life accept, his eyes
Heroic men with Gods commingled see,
And he by them be seen and recognized.
He shall, by virtue of his Father's powers,
Reign rightful ruler o'er a world at peace."

"When now the Asian power to overthrow,
And Priam's race, not meriting such fate,
To whelm in waves of ruin heaped on high,
It pleased the Gods above; and Ilium fell
Superb, and all Neptunian Troy in smoke
Lay prostrate; led by auguries great of heaven
To seek wide exile and unpeopled shores,
A fleet we build beneath Antandros' self,
And Phrygian Ida's mountains; yet not sure
Where to the Fates might bear us, where our fleet
Might stand."

Third Æneid, init.

"There where roll on
Beneath the Simoan wave, red, red, with blood,
Helmets and shields and bodies of the brave."

First Æneid, 100.

69. "Ptolemy." It was "ill for Ptolemy" when the Roman eagle, "spreading its wings in strife" for Cleopatra, deprived Ptolemy of any share in the government.
70. "Juba." He protected the enemies of Cæsar, after the battle of Pharsalia, and, in consequence, lost his own kingdom, Numidia.

71. "Pompeian." The final engagements of the Civil War were in the west, in Spain.

73. "Next lord." Octavius, the Emperor Augustus. He defeated Brutus and Cassius at Philippi.

75. "Modena and Perugia." Near these cities were fought bloody battles between Augustus and Antony.

76. "Cleopatra." On the Shield of Aeneas:

"The Queen
Unto the winds her sails was seen to give,
And now, now, let the cordage slacken free.
Her among slaughters, dreading death to come
The Ignipotent had there made pale and wan,
Borne from the fight by waves and Iapyx's breeze."

86. "Cæsar Third." Tiberius. This emperor, Dante says, might have made his reign illustrious for avenging the crucifixion of Christ, but this honor was reserved for Titus.

90. "Vengeance for vengeance of the ancient sin." That is: vengeance for the crucifixion. The crucifixion was vengeance for the sin of Adam and his descendants. As to man, the crucifixion was just; but a God was crucified: it was, in this sense, unjust. Dante will revert hereto in the next Canto, line 20.

94, 96. "Lombardy . . . Charlemagne." The Lombards attacked the Church, and were subdued by Charlemagne. Justinian, Dante would have us understand, is here speaking prophetically, as the reigns of Justinian and Charlemagne were three hundred years apart. May there not be, here, also, an intimation, on the part of Dante, that when an age degenerates into savagery (as Dante's own age had), even religion may have to be fought for?

101. "Lilies." The Golden Lilies of the French ensign. The Ghibellines had taken for their ensign the Roman eagle, too good an ensign, Dante intimates, for vicious partisans. The Guelphs, another vicious party uniting with the French,
had assumed the Fleur-de-Lys, the Golden-Lilied banner. The Roman eagle, Dante says, is the symbol of justice, and the Guelphs will do well not to attack it. The Eagle is of the heraldry of God. He will not change it for the Lily.

106. "Charles ... talons ... lion." Charles II. of Apulia, son of Charles of Anjou; or, Charles of Valois, son of Philip III., and sent for, at this time, by Pope Boniface, who designed to make him emperor. Villani, viii. 42. Dante intimates that this "new Charles" is an ignoble whelp, whom some "old Charles," Charlemagne, may arise to flay.

114. "Fame." Longfellow quotes Milton's *Lycidas*: Fame is "the spur" of "the clear spirit;" a "plant" of which Jove is the "witness" and "judge."


118. "To our desert our wages portioned are." Dante thus alludes again to the varying heights of bliss accorded to the denizens of heaven, proportioned to their several gifts of the grace of God. In the Fourth Canto he said:

"But all the primal circle's glory grace,
And this sweet life partake, in diverse grades,
As more or less God's grace their souls pervades."

128. "Romeo." A case of ingratitude, intended to point the moral of the line:

"Spheres where, throughout, deep gratitude rules the tongue."

Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence, had long profited by the services of a faithful steward, who, besides being the manager of negotiations through which the count's four daughters married each a king, had increased the value of his estates one fifth. But malicious tongues succeeded in poisoning the count's mind against him, and Romeo departed as poor as he came.

The four royal matches were Margaret, married to Saint Louis of France; Beatrice, married to his brother, Charles of Anjou, King of Naples; Eleanor, married to Henry Third of England; and Sancha, married to Henry's brother, Richard, King of the Romans.
There seems some ground for supposing that the instance of Romeo is cited here because connected with the adored name of Beatrice: Beatrice Berenger, wife of the brother of Saint Louis.

142. "The heart he bore." Longfellow quotes Lord Bacon, Essay on Adversity, to the effect that the blessing of the Old Dispensation is prosperity; that of the New, adversity; and that, even in the Old, David's harp has funereal notes; "and the pencil of the Holy Ghost hath labored more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon."
CANTO SEVENTH.

ARGUMENT:

Justinian departs, chanting Hosanna, and, with great swiftness of motion, he and other spirits are borne away. Beatrice remains, and instructs Dante on the plan of redemption.

Still the Heaven of Mercury.


PERSONS APPEARING: The Archangels. The spirits of the great dead.

"HOSANNA, O thou holy God of hosts,
Who, with the abundance of thy brightness, fires
Dost make more bright throughout the heavenly choirs!"

So, wrapped in melody high our orb ne’er boasts,
This substance sung, the while, a brightening light,
Double and doubled, it amazed my sight;
And danced it and the rest who with it sped
From where we were, for distance rapidly veiled
From us their steps, like hurrying sparklets trailed.
Me doubt possessed, and "Speak," it to me said,
"Unto thy Lady," for no effluence meet
To slake my thirst e'er failed her accents sweet.
Yet with such awe, such reverence e'er was led
My heart by all of Beachy's name spelled out,
That drowsiness me seemed wholly wrapt about.
Not long did Beatrice this my mood endure;
She spoke, whilst me she gave a smile so bright
That in the flames 't would tortures silence quite.

"As comes to me advice from sources pure,
Thou pondering art in what way vengeance just
Can justly be avenged; in me put trust,
And I will speedily set thy mind at rest;
And I a present to thy listening ear
Will make, which shall a wondrous doctrine hear.
By suffering not his will to be repressed
For his own good, that man who ne'er had birth
Himself condemned and all his heirs on earth;

"Whereby mankind through error's mazes ranged
Diseased for centuries many till the Word
Of God it pleased to make His mission heard;
And humbled to man's nature so estranged,
He it to his own person joined, a plan
Which in God's everlasting love began.
Now let thy sight none other aim distract:
This nature, which its Maker thus assumed,
At its creation, with all goodness bloomed,
"But banished was by its own wilful act
From Paradise forth because its ways at strife
Were with the way divine of truth and life.
Therefore so just was never penalty borne
As bore the cross, if we for measure take
Our nature so assumed for mortals' sake,
And ne'er was act which justice so would scorn
If be the measure taken the Person, shame
Who bore, mankind to shield from blame.

"And flowed from that one act effects diverse:
One death pleased God, and pleased the Jews,
and riven
By this dread death was earth, and opened
Heaven.
It should not, then, from reason seem averse
When a just court on vengeance just 't is said
Directs that vengeance in return be sped.
But yet remains perplexed, I see, thy mind;
Thought tangles thought; and from the knot relief
Is now, 'midst all the maze, its yearning chief.

"Thou say'st: 'Instruction clear herein I find,
But from me hidden is it why one mode
Alone for our redemption God bestowed.'
Brother, remaineth buried this decree
Unto the eyes of souls not fully grown,
And whom not yet love's fires perfected own.
It is, in very truth, a mark which see,
Well-orbed, few eyes, e'en after lengthened gaze;
Hear, then, why this was worthiest of these ways.
"Celestial Goodness, which hath envy none,
From out its sparkling furnace's sun-bright heart,
Beauties eternal suffers to depart.
What distillation thence hath once begun
End none doth afterwards find, the impress stays
The seal gave forth moved by that heart's own ways.
Whate'er from this source raineth freedom hath
Because whene'er new things attend its way
With influence none do these its progress stay.

"Joys it the more the more it holds the path,
For that blest ardor brightening every coast
In what's most like itself takes pleasure most.
With all of these things hath advantaged been
The human creature; if lack there one thing,
To his nobility this may ruin bring.
Alone what can disfranchise him is sin,
Which renders him so unlike the Good Supreme
That but a little blanches him its beam.

"And dignity lost hath no return, unless,
To bring it back, is filled again with pain
The emptiness made by folly's jocund train.
Your nature, when it sunk in sin's distress,
In its own seed its God-like dignity lost,
And e'en to you it goodly Paradise cost;
Nor could regain its footing (thou wilt own,
All subtlety exhausted) by mode aught
Than these two fords across the torrent sought:
"Either that God, through clemency mild alone, 
Had pardon granted, or for folly, weighed
'Gainst duty, man had satisfaction made.
Fix now thine eye the deep abyss within
Of God's eternal counsel, and give heed
To words of mine which will thine hunger feed.
Man, in his limitations, had e'er been
Powerless to satisfy; for not he could go
Sinking, in his humility bowed, so low

"As would the height be that he thought to soar
In disobedience, and 't is thus made plain,
His hopes to satisfy by himself were vain.
Then to his perfect life man to restore,
God, it behooved, should work in his own ways,
In one or both ways, both deserving praise;
But since the deed the doer doeth, when feel
Men placed therein the goodness of his heart,
More joy to the recipients doth impart,

"Goodness divine, that doth the universe seal,
Hath been so minded all its ways to use
To lift you up, and none of them refuse,
Nor, 'twixt the last night and the primal day,
Procedure such on so magnificent scale
E'er did, or shall, one or the other hail;
For God more bounty far did then display
In himself giving that thus man might lift Himself aloft, than were it his mere gift;
"And for his justice had all other modes
Inadequate been had not Incarnate trod
Humility's path to death the Son of God.
Now, to search out the last of doubt's abodes,
Let me return to one place, where thy mind
Should see as mine, and be no longer blind.
Thou sayest, 'The air I see, the fire, the earth,
Water, and all the mixtures from them fraught,
In little time corrupt, dissolved and nought,

"'And yet Creation brought these things to birth;'
And if what I have said were true, not one
Of those were by corruption's mastery won.
The Angels, brother, and this clime intact
Around thee now, created may be called,
With permanence round at their creation walled,
But all those elements and their compounds lacked
This permanence, for they from without are warmed
By a created virtue, and informed.

"Created was their matter, but bright roll
The stars around them; these have influence given
Which do inform them by the will of Heaven.
Of every brute, and of the plants, the soul
Attracts, through its complexion potent, ray
And motion of those sacred lights each day;
But on your life, by Goodness Infinite, laid
Hath been immediate inspiration; this
Enamors it; hence longs it for that bliss.
Canto VII.

The Parents of the Race.

"And hence may you draw argument's forceful aid
Your resurrection proving, if again
Ye think how flesh of man did form attain
When both the parents of the race were made."

NOTES TO THE SEVENTH CANTO.

5. "Brightening." With increase of fervor.
14. "Beachy." An attempt to put into English the Italian nickname of Beatrice, "Bice."
17. "A smile so bright." Convito, iii. 18: "And I say these delights appear in two places, namely, In her eyes and in her sweet smile, which two places may be called balconies of the Lady who inhabits the edifice of the body, that is, the Soul. . . . This Lady, the Soul, shows herself in the mouth, as color behind glass. And what is laughter but a coruscation of the delight of the soul, that is, a light appearing outwardly as it exists within? And, therefore, it behooveth man to show his soul in moderate joy, to laugh moderately with dignified severity, and with slight motion of the arms, so that the Lady, the Soul, who then shows herself, may appear in her natural modesty. Hence The Book of the Four Cardinal Virtues commands us, 'Let thy laughter be without cachination, that is to say, without cackling like a hen.' Ah, wonderful laughter of my Lady, the Soul, that never is perceived but by the eye of the observer!"
20. "Vengeance." See the preceding Canto, line 93, and the note.
56. "One mode." Butler continues to refer to Saint Thomas, adding to his citations A3.
65. "Furnace." Dante here quotes from Boëthius, Conso-
lations of Philosophy, iii. 9, who quotes from the *Timaeus* of Plato, 29 E.

105. "Both ways." Mercy and Justice.

132. "Permanence." The Angels, the heavens, and the soul are created by immediate inspiration from heaven, the immediate breath of God. They are, therefore, enamored of God, and desire to return to him. The animals, the elements, and the plants are influenced by the stars, and are perishable.

146. "Resurrection." Dr. Carlyle, as we have seen, asserted that Dante knew history better than the historians, and Salvini says that Dante gave him a better knowledge of the soul than did the school divines.
Dante, unaware to himself, is wafted to the planet Venus, the sphere of the third Heaven, placed under the control of the Principalities of the Heavens, and the sphere set aside for the souls of those who on earth were lovers. There, among the spirits sounding hosannas, he meets with Charles Martel, King of Hungary, and has discourse with him on Italian politics and other subjects.


The world believed, when in its perilous days,
That the fair Cyprian love's fond rays flung bright
From the third epicycle's orb of light;
Wherefore not only did unto her raise
Altars and sacrifice and vows of old
Nations whom ancient error's ways controlled,
But they her son and mother did include
Herein, Dione she, he Cupid, said
In Dido's lap to have sat while banquets sped;
And they from her, of whom I here prelude,

The name of that star took the sun which woos,
And shows, now following, now in front, its hues.

Conscious I was not of our being borne
Into its orb; but it my Lady's glow
Increased of beauty made me sweetly know.

And as a spark a flame's heart doth adorn,
And as voice sounds in voice, when comes and goes
One, while the other's even tenor flows,

Within that light I lamps of lustre saw
Which circling sped, some swift, some slow, as shone
In each, I thought, interior light its own.

Ne'er winds from vapor cold in sudden flaw
Sent down, or seen or unseen, came so swift
They would not seem as laggards slow to drift
To one who had those holy flamings seen
Which now us sought, their circling flight at rest,
Begun among the lofty Seraphim blest.

And they that stood remote in that fair scene
Such an hosanna sounded that mine ear
Hath sought, e'er since, that pleasing strain to hear.

Then came more nearly to us of them one
Which sole began: "That thou may'st in us joy,
As may thee please our offices kind employ.

With those celestial Princes here we run,
And with them turn and soar and thirst for more,
To whom thou didst below thy sonnet pour:
"Ye intellectual, the third Heaven who move,'  
And are so full of love that pleasure thine  
Will readily us to quietude's rest incline."

Mine eyes first sought their reverence deep to prove  
Unto my Lady, and she them content  
Gave with the look that she upon them bent;  
Then turned unto that lamp whose kindly speech  
Me urged, and with affection great impressed,  
"Say who art thou," my voice the light addressed.

Oh, how it brightened in its broad, high reach,  
With added joy its former joys took on,  
As soon as from my lips the words were gone!  
Thus changed it spoke: "Me a short time possessed  
The world below; had longer been my stay,  
Less ill had made upon the earth its way.  
My gladness, which doth me with rays invest,  
Me hides from thee as doth its fair-wrought fell  
A creature swathe in its own silken cell.

"Much didst thou love me, and with reason good;  
And had I stayed on earth, my love's young tree  
Had more than barren foliage borne for thee.  
The Rhone's left bank the time awaiting stood,  
When, from where mingles Sorgue's fleet flood,  
had bowed  
To me in vassalage all its honors proud,  
With that Ausonian horn of town on town,  
Bari and Gaeta and Catona, where  
Tronto and Verde to the salt sea fare.
“Had flashed already on my brow the crown
Of that dominion which the Danube laves
When German cease to be its seaward waves;
And beautiful Trinacria, which betwixt
Pachinus and Pelorus frowns (where wrath
Upon the gulf accompanies Eurus’ path)
Not through Typhoeus, but clouds sulphur-mixed,
Would have awaited still her lawful kings
Whom right from me through Charles and Rudolph brings,

“Had not ill rulership, whose sure effect
Is, e’er, to exasperate the people, proved
What to the cry of ‘Death!’ Palermo moved.
Had but my brother foresight to detect
His danger, flight had saved the ruin brought
By greedy Catalonia poverty-fraught.
And, truly, there might be of thought desire
By him, or others for him, lest more freight
His bark o’erladen sink, or soon or late.

“He, mean in impulse as was high his sire,
Should ask a soldiery such as were not willed,
First thing of all, to have their coffers filled.”
“My lord, now doth my gratitude raise still higher
Thy speech, which shows my gladness unto thee
Is manifest, just as thine is unto me,
Here where doth every good and perfect thing
Begin and end, and where all truth to learn
Thou dost t’wards God thine eyes adoring turn.
"Glad thou hast made me, so to clearness bring, 93
Since hath thy speech a doubt me given, why seed
That sweet is called can bitter progeny breed."
Thus I; and he: "If I with truth can mend
Thy faltering sight, I 'll put before thy face
That which thou now behind thy back dost place.
The Good, which all this realm thou dost ascend
Makes move in harmony, gives its providence power
Within these globes effectual hour by hour,

"And know thou ne'er doth perfect intellect lend 100
Its powers to trace the natures here, but why
They live in bliss, nor know what 't is to die.
And whatsoever doth from this bow wend
Drives foreordained unto its destined end
As doth an arrow to its target tend.
If 't were not so, these heavens wherein thy course
Thou takest would effects such cause that here
Ruins, not arts, would put thy soul in fear.

"This cannot be unless have failed in force 109
The Intellectual Powers these stars who rule,
And He failed first who taught them in his school.
Wouldst thou this truth in clearer colors ran?"
And I: "Not so; for this I plainly see,
That Nature cannot e'er neglectful be."
Whence he again: "Say, were it worse for man
If fellowship's joys on earth he would decline?"
"Yes," I rejoined, "and here no doubt is mine."
"And can society stand if live not men
In diverse ways where diverse duties grow?
Read well your master, and he tells you 'No!'
So to this point came his deductions; then
Conclusion such he made: "Thus well it suits
That sins diverse should strike from different roots.
Hence one is Solon born, one Xerxes, here
Melchisedec's seen, and there that venturous one
Who, flying through the air, did lose his son.

"Nature revolving makes her seal appear
On mortal wax, but practicing well her art,
And not distinguishing inn from inn apart.
Thence happeneth it that Jacob's qualities shine
Not forth in Esau; and Quirinus Mars
Is given for father, to hide sinister bars.
If dominant did not Providence rule divine
A generated nature would the path
Always pursue which its progenitor hath.

"Now placed before thee is what was behind;
But that thou yet another sign may'st bear
Of my delight, this corollary do thou wear:
Ever doth nature, if it fortune find
In discord with it, like each other seed
In climes unsuited, illy thence proceed;
And if the world below would strive to attain
A basis on foundations nature yields,
Of fruitage fair, 't would furnish goodly fields;
Aptitudes.

"But ye unto religion wrongly train
Him unto whom ye should the war-sword bring,
And sermons take from him ye make a king;
Therefore your feet err from the pathways plain."

NOTES TO THE EIGHTH CANTO.

2. "The fair Cyprian."

"And Cyprus' isle,
In mines, in vines, in men, most excellent found,
And where white shrines that Venus honored glowed."
From the Speech of Queen Dido, First Æneid, 622.

3. "Epicycle." The astronomical system of Claudius Ptolemy endured for more than fourteen hundred years, from the second Christian century to the sixteenth, the date of Nicholas Copernicus. Ptolemy, to whose system, as the prevailing one of his time, Dante conformed, fixed the Earth as the great centre about which the sun, the moon, the planets, and the starry heavens revolved. But, to account for irregularities in the movements of the sun and moon, he taught that the Earth was not in the exact centre. And, to account for the anomalous movements of the planets, he devised the system of cycles and epicycles. Every planet, he taught, moved uniformly in the circumference of a small circle whose centre moved uniformly in the circumference of a large circle near whose centre the earth stood poised. By such ingenious theorizing it might be shown that a planet might appear at one time to be retrograding, at another time to be apparently stationary, and at another time to be advancing among the fixed stars. And computations predicting the places of the planets could, by such theorizing, be made with an element of error so small as not to be detected by the rude instruments in use prior to the time of Copernicus. It is, however, a fact in proof of the antiquity of correct theories of the universe, that Pythagoras had derived from the Egyptians our modern theory of a central sun, and had taught it to the
Paradiso.

Notes.

Greeks six hundred years before Ptolemy, two thousand years before Copernicus. Mitchel's *Planetary and Stellar Worlds*, Lecture iii.

8. "Dione."

"My mother fair,
Dione's daughter."

From the Speech of Æneas at Queen Dido's Banquet,
*Third Æneid*, 19.

8, 9. "Cupid ... Dido." Cupid in the semblance of Ascanius, son of Æneas.

"She, with her eyes and heart,
Her whole heart, clings to him; and while she holds
Against her breast the blooming youth, knows not,
Unhappy Dido, that she loves a God."

*First Æneid*, 715.

11. "That star." Latini (*Trésor*, iii.) says that Venus "always follows the sun, and is beautiful and gentle, and is called the Goddess of Love." When Venus follows the sun, it is Hesperus, the evening star; when it precedes, is "in front" of the sun, it is called Phosphor, the morning star.

"Lo, in the painted oriel of the West,
Whose panes the sunken sun incarnadines,
Like a fair lady at her casement, shines
The evening star, the star of love and rest."

Longfellow.

"Wake, sisters, wake! the day-star shines;
Above Ephrata's eastern pines
The dawn is breaking, cool and calm.
Wake, sisters, wake to prayer and psalm."

Sister Maria Christina's Song, in the *Hymn of the Tunkers*.

Whittier.

"Venus near her, smiling downward at this earthlier earth of ours. Closer on the sun, perhaps, a world of never-fading flowers; Hesper, whom the poet called the bringer home of all good kings—All good things may move in Hesper, perfect peoples, perfect things. Hesper, Venus, were we native to that splendor, or in Mars, We should see the globe we groan in fairest of their evening stars. Could we dream of wars and carnage, craft and madness, lust and spite,
Canto VII.

Notes.

Roaring London, raving Paris, in that point of peaceful light?
Might we not, in glancing heavenward on a star so silvery fair,
Yearn and clasp the hands and murmur, 'Would to God that we were there.'"

Tennyson, in Locksley Hall, Sixty Years after.

13. "Conscious I was not." Tasting with his eyes the face of Beatrice, he moved unconsciously, but with incredible swiftness, to this planet.

20. "Some swift, some slow." The degree of rapidity in the motions of the spirits, as well as the degree of effulgence to which they attain, is in proportion to the degree in which they comprehend the vision of the Deity:

"Its brightness is as is our fervor's heat,
Our fervor as our vision, and this last
As it on unearned grace hath holding fast."

Canto xiv. 40.

34. "Princes." "Principi." The Principalities govern the sphere of Venus.

37. "Ye." Dante gives here the first line of the first of his canzones commented on in the Convito.

49. "It spoke." The spirit of Charles Martel of Hungary, one of Dante's special friends and benefactors. He lived but a short time, 1272-1295, dying at the age of twenty-three. By right of his mother, Mary, Queen of Hungary, he succeeded to the crown of Hungary, but as he did not survive his father, Charles the Second, King of Naples, he did not become invested with the sovereignty of Naples. He should not be confounded with the Charles Martel of the eighth century.

58, 59, 61, 66. "The Rhone . . . Sorgue . . . Ausonian horn . . . Trinacria." Portions of Provence and Sicily are here mentioned, which were under the jurisdiction of Charles's father, and which Charles would have inherited had he survived his father.


70. "Typhoös."

"Then the Earth,
In birth nefandous Cœus' life produced
And Iapetus and Typhoös dire,
Paradiso.

Notes.

And that bad brotherhood which joined in league
To abolish heaven."

First Georgic, 278.

" No face thee terrifies, Typhoüs' self
Not e'en, in arms, in arms, arrayed 'gainst heaven."
Song of the Salii in honor of Hercules, Eighth Æneid, 298.

72. "Charles and Rudolph." Charles of Anjou, his grandfather, King of Naples and Sicily, and, after the Sicilian Vespers, of Naples alone; Rudolph, Emperor of Germany, his father-in-law. Both of these we have met in the Twentieth Canto of the Purgatorio.

73. "Ill rulership . . . Palermo." An outline of the remote and proximate causes of the revolt known as the Sicilian Vespers will be remembered, as in the notes to the Nineteenth Canto of the Inferno.

76. "My brother." Robert, misled by an impecunious and greedy Catalonian cabinet, and preyed upon by mercenary troops.

120. "Your master." Aristotle, styled the "Master of those who know."

130, 131. "Jacob . . . Esau." "And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents."

131. "Quirinus." Romulus, of such obscure parentage that his origin was attributed to Mars.

147. "Sermons." Another allusion, it is supposed, to Charles's brother, Robert, King of Sicily, better fitted, according to Villani and the annotator of the Monte Cassino Codex, for a pulpit than a throne.
CANTO NINTH.

ARGUMENT:

Still in the sphere of Venus. Dante has discourse with Cunizza, a society lady, and Folco, a troubadour-poet, afterwards bishop, who successively impart to Dante the history of their several careers. Folco announces to him that Rahab, the harlot, who concealed Joshua’s spies on her house-top, is a bright spirit, having been the first released by Christ on his ascension into heaven. The Canto closes with reflections on the political and religious affairs of Italy.


As soon as thy loved Charles, O Clemence fair,  
    Had me enlightened, he me made to know  
    The treacheries foul his heirs should undergo,  
But said: “Say naught, the circling years let fare.”  
    So I can only say that o’er your wrongs  
    Shall sing the sorrowing Muses pitying songs.  
And now that saintly lamp had turned again  
    Unto the Sun that fills it its clear face  
    As to the all-sufficient source of grace.
Ah, souls deceived, and creatures weak as vain,  
    Who from such good so turn away your hearts,  
    Adoring that which emptiness sole imparts!  
And lo! another splendor now advanced,  
    And of its will to please me ample sign  
    Gave in its added lustre all divine.  
The eyes of Beatrice which upon me glanced  
    Gave, as before, to me their kind assent  
    To that whereon my kindled mind was bent.

And "O," I cried, "my wish grant swift reward,  
    Thou blessed spirit, and proof give thou to me  
    That thoughts of mine I can reflect in thee!"  
Whereat the light wherewith I sought accord  
    From its envelopment, whence before it sung,  
    Thus used, as one in kind acts glad, the tongue:  
"Within that part of Italy's land depraved  
    That 'twixt Rialto lies and fountain-heads  
    Whence Brenta flows and Piava's torrent spreads,

"Rises a hill not high whence madly waved  
    A torch which on the suffering plain below  
    Made of its inroads fiery traces glow.  
The same root life gave both to me and it;  
    Cunizza was I called, and here am blest  
    Since by the splendor of this star oppressed;  
And gladly penalty other I remit,  
    And am not grieved that here my crown doth gleam;  
    Strong thence your vulgar ones my mind may deem.
"Was given this lamp who unto us most near
Shines like a gem, serene and precious fame,
And e'er shall fade upon the earth his name,
Shall five times over pass the hundredth year.
And should not man at excellence aim below,
Since thence he may bliss here eternal know?
But thus thinks not the present multitude base
'Twixt the Adicé and Tagliamento scourged,
Yet not thereby to needed penitence urged.

"And soon will Padua on Vicenza's race
Bring doom for duties wholly laid aside,
And tinge with blood her marshy waters wide;
And where the Silé and Cagnano creep,
One lords it, and his shameless head holds high,
To make whose net now busy shuttles fly.
There Feltro, too, an impious crime shall weep,
Her pastor's guilt, which shall so monstrous be
That ne'er for such heard prisoner Malta's key.

"Large would the vat be which the blood would hold
Ferrara furnished, and for rest would pray
He who its contents ounce by ounce would weigh,
Whereof this courteous clergyman, controlled
By partisan spirit, shall a present make,
One which doth of the country's ways partake.
Our eyes are upward to high mirrors bent,
Thrones, as ye call them, whence reflected shine
God's judgments; these thus make our speech divine."
Paradiso.

A Ruby fine.

Ceased she, and seemed on other thoughts intent, and by the wheel whereon she came seemed turned
T'wards other scenes in bliss for which she yearned.
The other joy, to me already known,
Became a thing of splendor, as is seen
A ruby fine when strikes the sun its sheen.
Above, delight is in effulgence shown,
As on the earth in laughter; but below,
The saddening mind the shade makes darker grow.

"God seeth all; on Him thine eyes repose,
Blest spirit," I said, "so that his holy will
Thy conscious eyes and mind must ever fill;
Why then unto my longings brings no close
That voice of thine which glad heaven ever makes
With music which from those blest ardors breaks,
Which cowl themselves with their six wings outspread.
I would not thee compel so long to plead,
If I in thee'd were, as thou art imme'd."

"The valley of waters which is farthest led,"
Forthwith his words began "(that sea alone
Except, whose waves around the earth are thrown),
Between discordant shores, against the sun
Extends so far that it meridian gains
Where is its wont to wash the horizon's plains.
I for my home did that vale's margin own
'Twixt Ebro's flood and Magra's short career
That Genoa 'twixt and Tuscany seeks the mere.
“Sunset and sunrise are full near the same
To that my city and to Buggia, spot
Where blood once made its crimson harbor hot.
Folco that people called me who my name
Knew well; and I of this orb bore the seal,
Which makes me now its heavenly impress feel;
For more did Belus’ daughter never burn
In wrong Sichæus t’wards and Creusa dead
Than I, so long as youth’s locks crowned my head,

“Nor yet that Rhodopean made to turn
Demophoön t’wards, nor yet Alcides held
By Iole’s charms which all his heart compelled.
Yet here is no repenting; smile we here,
Not at the fault which ne’er annoys the thought,
But at the power which good from evil brought.
Rejoiced we see the skill that makes all clear
With such effectual working, and we know
The good whereby this world turns that below.

“But that I may not any wishes slight
Born to thee in this sphere, and that thou bear
Hence answer thereunto, I further fare:
Thou wouldst inquiere who is within this light
That here beside me sparkles as the beam
Casting in limpid waves its brilliant gleam.
There rests within it, be it to thee known,
The soul of Rahab, to our sphere assigned.
Her merits here our highest honors find.
"Into this orb, where ends the shadowy cone
Cast by your world, first soul of all to rise,
She in Christ's Triumph mounted to the skies.
Full meet it was to leave her in some heaven
E'en as of that vast victory high a palm
Which he achieved with one and the other palm,
Because to Joshua's first great deed was given,
Within the Holy Land, her potent aid,
Events which almost from the Pope's mind fade.

"Thy city, plant of him who madly first
Upon his Maker turned his back, whom sore
For his ambition's fruits all men deplore,
Brings forth and spreads about the flower accursed;
Sheep thus and lamb alike have widely strayed,
Since of the Shepherd it a wolf hath made.
For this to the Evangel and the Doctors lent
Is light attention, and of them instead
Show soiling thumb-marks the Decretals read.

"On this the Pope and cardinals are intent,
Their meditations ne'er to Nazareth stray,
Where Gabriel shone in heavenly ray on ray.
But soon Mount Vatican's haunts, and parts elect
Besides of Rome, which have a cemetery been
To Peter's soldiery, shall deliverance win
From the adulterer, and Rome stand erect."

NOTES TO THE NINTH CANTO.

the commentators as to whether Clemence was the wife or daughter. The conclusion is deemed a safe one that it was the daughter, and for these reasons: the wife was long since dead, and the Poet is here addressing the *posteriority* of Charles. The use of the word "Charles" instead of "father" may be explained by the needs under which the Poet labored of connecting, in an intelligible manner, this Canto with the one preceding it, and of using a word which would mean more than father—would do the same service as the more accurate legal term "the common ancestor."

3. "Treacheries." The allusion is to the wrong done to Charles's son in 1309, nine years after the assumed date of the Poem, in dispossession of him of the sovereignty of Naples in favor of his uncle Robert, Duke of Calabria.


13. "Another splendor." Cunizza. This lady was the sister of the ferocious Azzolino, or Ezzolino, of the Twelfth Canto of the Inferno. Dante acquits her of any taint except what Purgatory could cleanse, but she had, according to Rolandino, as quoted by Muratori, viii. 173, a sufficiently remarkable career. According to this authority, she was first married to Richard of Saint Boniface; then she had an intrigue with one Sordello; then she wandered about with a soldier of Treviso, named Bonius, "taking much solace," says the old chronicler, "and spending much money,"—*multa habendo solatia, et maximas faciendo expensas*. After the death of Bonius, she was married to a nobleman of Bragenzo; and she married, later, a gentleman of Verona.

The *Ottimo* says: "This lady lived lovingly in dress, song, and sport; but consented not to any impropriety or unlawful act."

The Cambridge commentary says: "Fuit recte filia Venetis, amorosa et vaga, erat tamen pia, benigna, et misericors, communiens illis quos frater affligebat."

28, 29. "A hill . . . a torch." The hill the site of a castle, that of Romano; the torch Azzolino, born there. Before his birth his mother is said to have had a dream similar to that
of Hecuba before the birth of Paris, that she would bring forth a torch which would set all Ilium in flames. How near the dream of the Italian mother was prophetical may be judged by what history says of her son: "Ezzelino, son-in-law of the emperor, placed himself at the head of the Ghibelline faction, deluged Italy with blood, and won the deserved epithet of Ferocious, applied by general execration." Darras, History of the Catholic Church, iii. 362.

36. "Strong."

"Che forse parria forte al vostro vulgo."

37, 40, 93. "This lamp . . . five times over . . . Folco." The spirit of Folco, or Foulques of Marseilles, a Troubadour of fame, and promised by Dante a continuance of fame for five hundred years, a promise which Dante has more than kept. He seems to have originated in Marseilles, and to have become bishop of Marseilles or Toulouse, after death had removed the companions of his earlier and gayer life, and, among others, the lady patroness of his songs.

43. "Multitude." The district indicated embraces the cities of Feltro, Treviso, Padua, and Vicenza.

46. "Padua . . . Vicenza." This seems to be a prediction of the events of 1312, when the Paduans revolted against Ghibelline authority sustained by the Emperor Henry the Seventh, deposed his vicar, and made a massacre of the Ghibellines. In 1314 the Vicentines under Can Grande turned the tide of affairs, and at the battle of Bacchiglione administered a severe chastisement to the Paduans. Dante, probably, wrote the prophecy in the text after 1312, and prior to 1314.


50. "One . . . net." Riccardo da Camino, assassinated in Treviso while playing at chess. Muratori describes him as a son of the good Gherardo, and brother of the beautiful Gaia of the Sixteenth Canto of the Purgatorio. He succeeded Gherardo in the lordship of Treviso, but his love adventures were carried on so openly and flagrantly that he was taken in the "net" of an outraged husband.
52, 54, 60. "Feltri . . . Malta . . . country's ways." A bishop of Feltrio, afterwards beaten to death with sandbags, basely surrendered to the Guelphs certain Ghibelline gentlemen of Ferrara who had taken refuge with him, and who, in consequence of his bad faith, were put to death. Malta was a prison on the shores of Lake Bolsena where political prisoners were incarcerated. There Pope Boniface the Eighth imprisoned the Abbot of Monte Cassino for permitting the fugitive pontiff, Celestine the Fifth, to escape from his custody. No wonder that Dante expresses his horror of a district containing such cities, and that he paraphrases the exclamation of Cicero:

"O tempora, O mores!"

59. "A present." The "present" which this "courteous clergyman" made was that of the blood of his guests to his partisan friends, the Guelphs.

62. "Reflected." Reflected upon the minds of the celestial denizens from the Source of All Light as mirror reflects light to mirror. Thus are mirrored upon the minds of the celestial denizens all the knowledge, all the judgments, of God. So see Canto xi. line 20. Thrones are here spoken of, which, as we have seen, control the sphere of Saturn, inhabited by the spirits of holy hermits, and devoted to asceticism.

67. "The other joy." Folco.

81. "If I inthee'd were, as thou art imme'd." That is, were I as much thought of by you as you are by me. The commentators treat this form of phraseology as a freak of Dante. This is a mistaken idea, however; the form, although now obsolete, is older than Dante. That Dante's use of it is free from affectation is shown in his use of it as applied to the Supreme Being, this Canto, just above, at line 73:

"Tuo veder s' inluia,"
(Thy sight in-Him's itself)
"On Him thine eyes repose."

Other instances of it have been given in the notes to the Fourth Canto, line 28. The dictionaries wrongly interpret
the phrase. The method, and defence, of the phrase are found in the word “immure” (in muro, within a wall or enclosure).

79. “Six wings.” The “blest ardors” who so “cowl themselves” are the Seraphim seen by the prophet, Isaiah vi. 2: “Above it stood the Seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.”


86. “Meridian . . . horizon.” That is, that, from the Pillars of Hercules to the shores of the Levant, the Mediterranean passes through degrees of longitude which make its waves wash the Orient. The actual number of degrees is forty-two. Forty-eight more would carry the point into the mountains and plateaus of Thibet. Some of the commentators imagine that Dante supposes the Mediterranean to cover ninety degrees of longitude, but Dante was much too good a geographer to make such a mistake as this, and the fair construction of Dante's words seems to be the one here followed:

“Là dove l' horizonte pria far suole.”

This construction would carry the eastern point beyond the shore into the plains and mountains of the Orient, the sources of the morning sun, the “usual” place of the eastern “horizon.”

88. “My home.” Marseilles, just half way between the Ebro in Spain and the Magra in Italy. The river Magra is one of “short career,” that is, a little river.

92. “Buggia.” A port on the African coast opposite Marseilles. It is called by the French, Bougie.

93. “Harbor.” Made hot and crimson by the blood shed in the siege of Marseilles, invested by Caesar, on land by a force under Tribonius, on the sea by a fleet under Brutus.

100. “That Rhodopean.” Phyllis of Thrace, called the Rhodopean because a resident of the region near Mount Rhodope, the “embowered” Rhodope of the Fifth Pastoral,
the "steep" Rhodope of the Third Georgic, and the "towering" Rhodope of the Fourth.

101. "Alcides." Hercules was so enamored of Iole that he sat among her maidens, spinning, like them, with the distaff. And after all his assiduous solicitude, and after winning her fairly, as he claimed, in an archery contest, he was denied this daughter of a king.

"Quem non mille fere, quem non Stheneleius hostis, 
Non potuit Juno vincere, vincit Amor."

Ovid, Heroides, Ep. ix. 25.


118. "The shadowy cone cast by your world." The Ptolemaic theory extended the shadow of the earth so far as to include the sphere of Venus. This is the meaning of the phrase in exact science. The allegorical meaning of the phrase, as it has been well defined by King John of Saxony, is that in the three lower spheres of Paradise, those of the Moon, Mercury, and Venus, are found souls who have been prevented from attaining at once the higher spheres of beatitude through the earthly failings of inconstancy, ambition, and unregulated love.

119, 122, 123. "First soul . . . a palm . . . one and the other palm."

"Alma . . . palma . . . palma." With each sacred "palm" of Christ pierced by the nails of the crucifixion, Dante will rhyme only "palm," the palm of victory and "alma" the redeemed soul. And Dante's reverence for the sacred name of "Christ" makes him refrain from using it in the Inferno and even in the Purgatorio; and in the Paradiso he will only permit it to rhyme with itself. See the instances collected in the notes to the Fourth Canto of the Inferno.

Of plays upon words the Scriptures themselves furnish instances, which will readily occur to the student of divine truths.

121. "Full meet it was to leave her in some Heaven." As Christ ascended higher, to his Father in the Empyrean, he
left Rahab in the lower Heaven consecrated to those who have struggled with love excessive, love unregulated.


130. "The flower." The golden coin of Florence called the florin. The notes to the Thirtieth Canto of the Inferno have already given some of the data in the history of the coins of Florence. "The first gold florin," says Mr. Hall, in The London Numismatic Chronicle for 1886, p. 3, "was struck at Florence in the year 1252. It has on one side a lily, with the legend ‘Florentia,’ and on the other the patron of Florence. The extensive commerce of the Florentines caused this coin to be very widely circulated, and, before long, it was reproduced throughout Europe . . . This type was retained by Florence for three centuries."

By special permission of the authorities of the British Museum, casts for the use of this work have been taken of such a florin as Mr. Hall describes, which is, of course, of the time of Dante.

133. "For this." For money.

134. "The Decretals." Letters sent by the early popes to different churches on matters of church organization or government or discipline. These, being afterwards collected, governed the ecclesiastical courts in matters under their cognizance, which, in earlier times, embraced questions of matrimony and divorce, inheritances, estates, and crimes, and of course, controversies originating among the clergy themselves on the whole circle of subjects falling under ecclesiastical cognizance. Recognized as the Body of the Law Canonical, "Corpus Juris Canonici," are the five books ap-
proved by Gregory the Ninth in 1234, a sixth added by Boniface the Eighth in 1298, the constitutions issued by Clement the Fifth in 1308, and the additional decrees of John the Twenty-second, of the date of 1317. Later pontiffs have, from time to time, issued still further decrees. This body of laws was, therefore, taking form while the Commedia was in progress, and Dante intimates that the papal court of his time was unduly absorbed in the study of it.


139. "Mount Vatican." The commentators usually say this prediction has reference to the death of Boniface and the removal of the papal see to Avignon. But this construction seems to narrow unduly the significance of a very noble wish that Rome may be freed from violence which makes it a charnel-house, and corruption which causes it to bow its head in disgrace.
CANTO TENTH.

ARGUMENT:

The sphere of the Sun is now reached, the seat of the fourth Heaven, the abode of the spirits of the theologians, and placed under the control of the Powers of the Heavens. There Beatrice appears ineffably bright; there voices of incredible sweetness sing the praises of God; and there Saint Thomas of Aquin favors Dante with a discourse in which he points out to him spirits of this sphere to the number of eleven, and, counting Saint Thomas, to the number of twelve.


Looking upon his Son with all the love
Which breathes from each eternally, that Power,
Primal, ineffably Good, all that each hour
The mind or eye contemplates, throned above,
Created; and with order such that none
Exist, not by its pleasing workings won.
Raise, then, O Reader, to the lofty wheels,
With me, thine eyes, and let them that point greet
Where doth one motion's path the other's meet.
And there observe thou how creation feels
Joy at the Master's art, whose inward thought
So loves it, by his eye 't is ever sought.
Behold how thus oblique the circle tends
Wherein the planets are on errands whirled
To wield their healthful influence o'er the world;
Wherefore their pathway through the heavens thus bends,
Else were much heavenly virtue vainly linked,
And here on earth well-nigh all power extinct.

If from this fixed line distant more or less
Were the departure, great would be the fault
Earth zones would plague and heaven's ethereal vault.
Now, Reader! on thy bench thy soul possess
In quietude yet, and muse upon the feast
Wherein, toil left, thy joy shall be increased.
Lo! I have set before thee, thyself feed;
Henceforth the theme whereof I, missioned, write
Asks all my care it worthily to indite.

That one of nature's ministers whom doth heed
The rest as greatest, and who prints heaven's power
On earth, where measures off his light each hour
We call our own, was in his orbit wide
So joined with other circles, speeding on
Where now, each day, he earlier sheds his dawn;
And I was with him; but to me denied
My consciousness my rising, save as thought
First seeks the mind ere it to form is brought.
And Beatrice, she, who to move on is seen
   From good to better, and with flight so swift
   That slower fleet time itself along doth drift,
How her own light shone forth with ray serene,
   And how she in the Sun shone, now my sphere,
Which light, not color, there would make appear,
I, though I call on genius, art, and skill,
   Before the imagination cannot place;
Believe; and long ye for its distant trace!

And if our feeble fancy cannot fill
   Such lofty heights, it seems no wonder; run
Can fancy ne’er beyond the dazzling Sun.
Such, in this place, was the fourth family blest
   Of that high Father, who it ever sates,
Showing herein how breathes he and creates.
And Beatrice, “Thanks, give thanks,” thus me addressed,
   “Unto the Sun of Angels him whose grace
Hath brought thee the perceptible here to face!”

And ne’er was heart of mortal so disposed
   To worship, nor, with all its gratitude deep,
To give itself to God, did it so leap,
As, at those words, did mine, and, wholly closed
   All thought of Beatrice, thus eclipsed, I merged
With His my being so by His bounties urged.
Nor this displeased her, but thereat she smiled,
   And of her laughing eyes the splendor broke
My trance of prayer, and me from rapture woke.
I lamps there many saw who round us filed
   Triumphant, vivid, and with voices sweet
   That than their lustre even seemed more meet.
Latona's daughter thus is sometimes seen
   Surrounded, when the teeming air her zone
   A circle makes, beyond her bosom thrown.
Within heaven's court, whence I return, the sheen
   Of many jewels shines, so fair, so choice
   No speech of earth can give their radiance voice.

Of such were they who sung; who takes not wings,
   Wings wonted there to fly, may from the dumb
   Expect words fitting messages such to come.
Like unto stars around the poles in rings
   Of radiance, when those burning suns, with song,
   Had thus three times around us thrown their throng,
They ladies seemed, not from the dance released,
   But stopping short, listening in silent quest,
   To catch the air, the melody's new behest.

And from within one, this I heard: "Increased
   By loving true love is, and when grace rays
   Throughout thy soul wherein its radiance plays,
   And is there multiplied with splendor such
   That it conducts thee upward by that stair
   Where not reascending none doth downward fare,
He who his vial of wine should from thy touch
   Withhold, nor heed thy thirst, would as constricted
   Be as the water not towards ocean drained.
"It would thee please to know what flowers divine
Make up the garland which with joy attends
The Lady fair who heavenward strength thee lends.
To be a lamb of that blest flock, 't was mine,
Which Dominic leads upon a path where well
One fattens if desire to stray he quell.
He who is nearest to me on the right
My brother and master was; him claimed Cologne
As Albert; I, Thomas, mine Aquin own.

"If thou of all the others seek'st certain light,
Upon my words await, while thy pleased eyes
Thee of that sacred garland's charms advise.
That next effulgence from the smile comes forth
Of Gratian, who both forums honored so
That here in Paradise pleased his praises flow.
Next soul that lights our company with his worth
That Peter was, whose 'Treasure' rich was given,
Like the poor widow's, freely unto heaven.

"There shines the fifth light, that, 'mongst us so fair,
Is by so great a love inspired that yearns
Your world to know if here its splendor burns.
Within is found the lofty mind, if there
Be truth in truth, which knowledge deep doth hold
Such as is of no second worthy told.
The lustre next, while in the flesh, looked most
Within the nature Angels have, and saw
Most closely all their ministry ruled by law.
"And there, near by, another soul we boast, 118
He who, the Christian Centuries' champion, brought
To Augustine's aid his active genius sought.
Now if thy mind's eye thou dost train along,
From light to light pursuing still my praise,
Thy thirst, this moment, for the eighth one stays.
The soul which shows the world's deceit and wrong
To him who listeneth well, hath now its rest,
In seeing, sainted, every good soul blest.

"The body whence 't was chased forth into heaven
In Cieldauro lies; its woes here cease;
Exiled and martyred came it to this peace.
Lo! there beyond where flames the lustre given
To Isidore, and Bede, and Richard, he
Who, more than man, could things ethereal see!
This, whence to me thy look comes querying, glow
Of his soul hath who, on high musings borne,
Held death, for its slow progress made, in scorn.

"The eternal light of Sigebert 't is whose flow 136
On earth the Street of Straw with light illumed,
Where, ill at ease, unhappy envy gloomed."
Then, as a bell that summons us, what time
The Bride of God her matin service yields
Unto her Spouse, for whose response she kneels,
Wherein forth, back, resounds the holy chime,
And ting! ting! sounds each answering note above,
Until the pious spirit swells with love:
Sounds thus I heard the glorious wheel employ,
And voice harmonious render unto voice
That elsewhere hath ensample none so choice
Excepting there where triumphs endless joy.

NOTES TO THE TENTH CANTO.

1, 2, 5, 51. "Son . . . Love ... Power ... created ... how." Saint Thomas of Aquin says, in his Summa, lvi. 6: "Deus pater operatus est creaturam per suum Verbum, quod est filius; et per suum Amorem, qui est spiritus sanctus."
The Creator Spiritus is the subject and the title of a hymn composed by the Emperor Charlemagne, who died January 28, 814. The hymn will ever be a favorite one in the repertory of sacred music. It begins:

"Veni, Creator Spiritus,
Mentes tuorum visita,
Implesuperna gratia
Quae tu creasti pectora."

8, 32. "That point ... so joined with other circles." Allusions to the occurrence of the vernal equinox, near which, as we saw in the First Canto, the sun now is. The "motions" here referred to are those which, bringing the zodiac and the celestial equator into apparent conjunction, "join" them "with other circles."

Dante, at this point of time, supposes himself to stand on the ecliptic, and to be, therefore, between the equatorial and zodiacal planes, and he requests the Reader to direct, with him, his eyes to the point of intersection of the three, ecliptic, zodiac, and equator.

13. "Oblique the circle." The circle of the zodiac, which intersects the equator, at an angle of 32° 28'. The angle of the ecliptic with the equator is only 23° 28'.

27. "All my care." He ascends to the sphere of the Sun, the region of theological light and learning. He leaves behind him every trace and shadow of worldly things. The theme demands his utmost solicitude.
Canto X.

Notes.


33. "Earlier." That is, after the vernal equinox, when, the Sun rising earlier every day, the days are lengthening.

34. "And I was with him." Of course this leads immediately to a mention and description of Beatrice, because it is by tasting her countenance with his eyes that he ascends, that he becomes, like Glaucus, a God.

67, 68. "Latona’s daughter . . . zone." The halo round the Moon Dante declares somewhat resembles the indescribably beautiful envelopment of the beatified spirits.

79. "The dance." Doctors dancing in Paradise, like David before the ark.

82. "And from within one." From within one of the lustres. The spirit is that of Saint Thomas of Aquin.

86. "That stair." The ladder in Jacob’s dream.

88. "My vial of wine." That is, love begets love, your ardor increases my ardor towards you, and I could no more refuse you the use of my flask than water can refuse to run down-hill.

99. "Albert." Albert “the Great,” a Dominican, belongs to the thirteenth century. A prodigy of learning and industry, he justly earns the title, besides that of “the Great,” of the “Universal Doctor.” He, first of all theologians, reconciled the teachings of Christ with those of Aristotle; and from him Dante has his doctrine of Free-Will as the basis of Ethics.

99. "Thomas." Saint Thomas of Aquin, the “Angelical Doctor,” also a Dominican, and the leading name in theological science. Died March 7, 1274. He was thus a contemporary of Dante for the first nine years of the life of the Poet.

When Longfellow visited Monte Cassino, he had before his eyes the “old Volscian town” wearing its “crown of splendor” as the birthplace of Juvenal. “Doubled the splendor is,” he sings:

“Doubled the splendor is, that in its streets
The Angelic Doctor as a school-boy played,
And dreamed perhaps the dreams, that he repeats
In ponderous folios for scholastics made.”
104. "Gratian... both forums." A Franciscan, author of a Digest of Canon Law. His knowledge of Civil Law, too, was so extensive that "both forums," the civil and the ecclesiastical, paid him deference.

107. "Peter Lombard." Author of a work called The Book of Sentences. Dante's allusion is to a phrase in the preface: "I desire to contribute, like the poor widow, my mite to the treasury of the Lord."

109. "The Fifth." Solomon. "'Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.'" I Kings iii. 12.

III. "If here." The point as to whether Solomon had attained a seat in Paradise was a mooted one among theologians.

115. "Next." Dionysius the Areopagite, converted by Saint Paul: "And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; and others said: We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them" [the Athenians]. "Howbeit, certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them." To Dionysius were ascribed writings which probably belong to some theologian four centuries later than his time.

119, 120. "The Christian Centuries' champion... Augustine's aid." Paul Orosius is supposed to be here meant. In his youth he visited Saint Augustine in Africa. His work, The Seven Books of Histories, was a vindication of Christianity, and its preparation Saint Augustine is supposed to have requested as in aid of the purpose of his work, The City of God. He survived Saint Augustine. They both date as of the beginning of the fifth century.

125. "The soul which shows." Boëthius, a Roman politician and philosopher of the early part of the sixth century. Gibbon says of his work, The Consolations of Philosophy, that it is "a golden volume not unworthy of the leisure of Plato.
or Tully." This work found a translator in Alfred, "the most glorious of the English kings."

128. "Cieldauror." Boëthius was persecuted to death by the Ostrogothic conqueror Dietrich, known as Theodoric, who had assumed the side of the Arians, and who could not tolerate the existence of his powerful and peaceful antagonist. The Emperor Otho the Third reverently removed his remains to the Church of Saint Peter of the Golden Heaven, Cielo d' Auro, in Pavia, an edifice now neglected.


Beda, or Bede, an Anglo-Saxon monk, 672–735. About the ninth century he began to be called "the Venerable." He was a voluminous writer of ecclesiastical works, and, like Orosius, was honored by having King Alfred for his translator.

Richard of Saint Victor was a monk in the monastery of Saint Victor near Paris. He was distinguished as a writer of theological treatises, and belongs to the twelfth century.

134, 136, 137. "His soul . . . Sigebert . . . Street of Straw." Sigebert, or Sigier, belongs to the latter portion of the thirteenth century. He wrote and lectured on Logic in the Street of Straw, Rue du Fourarre, formerly Rue de l'École, in Paris. Dante seems to have entertained for him a rapturous admiration, and it is probable that he attended his lectures. The commentators have heretofore concurred in making him a native of Courtrai, but Mr. Paget Toynbee, in an article in the Academy, vol. xxix. p. 328, maintains, on good grounds, that the Sigier of Courtrai was another person, and that the Sigier of our text, and of our Poet, belonged to Brabant.

139, 140, 143. "Bell . . . matin service . . . answering note." Dante here describes the sounding, by the bell in the church tower, of the hour of mass; the humble attitude of the worshippers; the bells rung, in the sanctuary, at the elevation of the host; and the responsive notes, from the tower, sounding the angelical salutation.
CANTO ELEVENTH.

ARGUMENT:

Saint Thomas of Aquin, a Dominican, rehearses to Dante the praises of Saint Francis of Assisium. Still the Heaven of the Sun.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Dante. Saint Thomas.


O SENSELESS care 'round busy mortals spun,
How inconclusive are the arguments light
That hinder thy clogged wings from loftier flight!
Laws one pursued, and medicine's methods one;
And one the priesthood followed; and one force
Or sophistry took as basis of his course,
In theft expert, or in affairs of state;
And one to sensual pleasures low was wed;
While one his hours in ease unfruitful led;
While I, made free from all these burdens great,
With Beatrice welcomed into spheres divine,
Found such exceeding heights of glory mine!

And now the throng that had been circled took
Its former shape, and those lights seemed as seem
In candlesticks fixed the candle's golden beam;
And saw I 'wards me, with more luminous look,
A smile directing, that effulgent one
Who now renewed his speech so well begun:

"E'en as the Eternal Light doth me illume,
So, looking up into its mirror clear,
Your thoughts to me therein divulged appear.
Thou art in doubt, and wouldst in larger room
And more extended phrase, I should restate,
That with thy sense it may more readily mate,
What I have just now said to thee: ‘Where well
One fattens,’ and ‘Is of no second told;’
’T is need that here distinction I unfold.

"The Providence high whose counsel wise doth quell
Created vision all, whene'er it strives
To seek the deep foundations of our lives,
Unto the end her own Belov'd might meet
The Bride of Him who, uttering a loud cry,
Espoused her with his precious blood, whereby
She might more gladly Him, and faithfully, greet,
Two Princes did ordain to be her pride,
And who might her attend on either side."
"Was all seraphic in his fervor one;  
The other from his wisdom shed on earth  
A light cherubic, both of mighty worth.  
Of one let me now speak, the same is done  
For both, because let either be the theme,  
One object both held in regard supreme.  
Tupino's rill betwixt and waves that roll  
Down blest Ubaldo's chosen hill, there hangs  
Rich slope of mountain high, whence chilly pangs

"And warm alternate seek Perugia's goal  
Through Porta Sole, and, behind it, folk  
Gualdine and Noceran mourn their burdening yoke.  
Born on that slope where most its steepness yields,  
Upon the world a sun arose, which bright  
Shone as that one from Ganges bringing light;  
Therefore should one who paints Assisian fields  
The Orient say, would he describe the place  
Where rose to sight this brilliant orb of grace.

"Not far his beams had sought their upward path  
When from his mighty virtue there began  
To scintillate rays that blessed the race of man.  
For gained his radiant youth his father's wrath,  
Because a Dame he sought to whom doth close  
As unto death the gate that pleasure knows;  
And 'fore the spiritual court, in lowliness pure,  
And in his father's right, was to her wed,  
Her whom he loved the more, the more time sped."
Canto XI.

Saint Francis of Assisiun.

"Bereaved of her first husband, scorned, obscure, One thousand and one hundred years and more She waited till this suitor sought her door. Nought had it her availed that not the tone Of Cæsar's voice which terror bore abroad, Nor hers nor Amyclas' soul had overawed; Nought had availed her dauntless ardor shown When Mary stood below enwrapped in woes; And on the cross with Christ himself she rose.

"But, darkening terms no longer to employ, My speech diffuse these lovers' names shall give: Francis and Poverty, one for aye to live. Their sweet accord, their lives of wondering joy, Upon them made the thoughts of men to pause, And, in high souls, of holy thoughts were cause; So much so that, for this so sacred race, First pious Bernard bared his feet and ran, And deemed himself too slow this scrupulous man.

"O wealth uncounted! Good beyond all trace! Egidius fleet, and now Sylvester, stride, The Bridegroom following, charmed they by his Bride. Then takes that father, master, saint, his way, He and his Lady, and that family, now The halter round them girding, and their vow; Nor on his brow did feeble cowardice weigh At being Peter Bernadone's son, Nor for the keen contempt his life had won;
"But royally now his purpose hard he brought 'Fore Innocent's see, who first gave from his hand
The seal upon his Order, and when grand
In numbers were the people who him sought,
All poor, he whose sweet life and lofty aim
The glorious songs of these high orbits claim,
Crowned (with a garland brighter than the first)
Was, through Honorius, by the Spirit Eterne,
The holy purpose of this dazzling urn.

"And when had him for martyrdom's gate the thirst
Before the Sultan's court superb made preach
Christ and the others who his precepts teach,
And finding their raw unbelief unmixed,
And, that he might not tarry there in vain,
Returned to reap once more Ausonian grain,
On the hard rock Tiber and Arno 'twixt,
From Christ did he receive the final seal
His form two years did wondrously reveal.

"And when time came that he his way must wend,
Obedient to the summons of his Lord,
To taste of lowliness crowned the just reward,
His most dear Lady did he then commend
Unto his brethren, as to rightful heirs,
And her claims urged to their assiduous cares;
And from her bosom the illustrious soul
Would leave the earth, returning to its seat,
And for its body deemed no bier so meet.
"Think, now, the man he was, the bark
Of Peter chosen o'er the seas to guide
And teach his company all its waves to ride.
And he our Patriarch was; and who doth mark
The wise commands he gives, will speedily know
His freight, and how excels its golden glow.
But greedy so his flock for pasturage new
Hath grown, that it must needs astray
Seek fields that lie at distance great away,

"And, in proportion as those sheep the true
And him desert, and leave, so hold
They less of milk, returning to the fold.
And, verily, some there are who yield control,
In fear of harm, still, to their shepherd; few
These are; cloth for their hoods slight charges knew.
Now if I have what I assumed to tell
Delivered clearly, and thy mind hath bent
Attentive to the thoughts I it have sent,

"'Twill serve in part thy doubtings to dispel,
For thou shalt see the plant whence these chips fell,
And the rebuke these words convey: 'Where well
One fattens if desire to stray he quell.'"

NOTES TO THE ELEVENTH CANTO.

25, 26. "Where well... no second." The reference is to the preceding Canto.
32. "The Bride." The Church, the Bride of Christ.
35. "Two Princes." Gournerie, Christian Rome, gives the following account of the first meeting of these remarkable characters:

“One night, whilst Dominic was sleeping, he seemed to see Christ preparing to exterminate the arrogant, the dissolute, the avaricious; when suddenly the Blessed Virgin propitiated her Divine Son by presenting to him two men: one of them was Dominic himself; as to the other, he knew no such man; but the next morning, on entering the Lateran, he saw the unknown man. The man was covered with rags, and was praying with fervor. Dominic threw himself into his arms, and embracing him with effusion said: ‘Thou art my companion; our career, our objects, are the same, let us have a common home, and no enemy can prevail against us.’ And from that moment, continues the legend, they had between them but one heart and one soul in the Lord. This pauper, this beggar, was Saint Francis of Assisium.”

39. "Cherubic." Saint Dominic. Saint Thomas of Aquin, i. 108, 5, says that the Seraphs represent aspiration, fervor, light; the Cherubim represent the possession, and the imparting, of knowledge of divine things.


54. "This brilliant orb of grace." The career of Saint Francis is a magnificent protest against his venal, selfish, arrogant, vicious age. He welcomed poverty, humiliation, destitution; he even welcomed death; for his last words are said to have been: "Welcome, sister Death!" His dates are 1182-1226. Those of Saint Dominic are 1170-1221.

58. "His father's wrath." The wrath of his natural father, Peter Bernadone.

62. "In his father's right." By permission of the bishop, his spiritual father.
Notes.

65. "One thousand and one hundred." Poverty, after the death of Christ, waited, for eleven hundred years and more, for a suitor in the person of Francis.

68, 69. "Caesar . . . Amyclas." Like Amyclas, the fisherman, at whose hut Caesar, on the shores of the Adriatic, knocked for means of transport across the sea, Poverty had remained unawed by power.

Herein, certainly, is contained a stinging satire upon the venality and corruption of the times. The rich, for sale, hastened to the market: Poverty, like Amyclas, remained in her hut.

80. "Bernard." Attracted by the piety of Francis, Bernard, a rich merchant of Quintaval, sought the saint's society, sold all his effects and distributed the sum among the poor, all in one day, and attached himself to his revered leader, as his first disciple. This Bernard should not be confounded with Saint Bernard.


83. "Sylvester." A priest, but a covetous one, and drawn to Saint Francis by evidences of his contempt for money.

87. "The halter." Saint Francis called his body "Brother Ass," and bound a halter around it to bring it into subjection. This halter is perpetuated in the cord of the Franciscan Order, and thence the members of that order have been called Cordeliers.

92, 98. "Innocent . . . Honorius." Pope Innocent the Third gave authority to Francis to establish his Order. This was in 1214. In 1223 ampler authority was conferred by Pope Honorius the Third.

106. "Rock." On Mount Alvernia of the Apennines Saint Francis, two years before his death, received the sacred stigmata, the marks of the wounds of Christ in the crucifixion: his hands and feet showed the piercing of the nails, his side that of the lance. This proof of the divine recognition of this exalted servant of God, together with all the other facts
forming the wonderful history of Saint Francis, have been industriously collected and faithfully recorded in the admirable work of M. Chavin de Malan.


117. "No bier so meet." On his death-bed, Saint Francis gave directions that he be buried among the malefactors, at the usual place of public executions, called the *Colle d' Inferno*, or Hill of Hell. The request was not complied with, but the name of the place was changed to Hill of Paradise, *Colle di Paradiso*; a church was built there; and afterwards, in 1230, the dying request of the saint found attention, and his remains were, with every act which could denote devotion and honor, transferred thither.

Longfellow, besides showing his admiration for Saint Francis in the notes to his translation of the Commedia, has further evidenced it by his poem on Saint Francis preaching to the birds, entitled *The Sermon of Saint Francis*.

"Are we devils? Are we men?
Sweet St. Francis of Assisi — would that he were here again.
He, that in his Catholic wholeness used to call the very flowers
Sisters, brothers, and the beasts whose pains are hardly less than ours."

TENNYSON, in *Locksley Hall, Sixty Years after*.


124. "His flock." Dante laments that the disciples of Saint Dominic have left their original sheep-folds, and wandered about in search of preferments and livings.
CANTO TWELFTH.

ARGUMENT:

Saint Bonaventura, a Franciscan, pronounces to Dante the praises of Saint Dominic.
Still the Heaven of the Sun.

PERSONS SPEAKING: The Powers of the Heavens in song.
The spirits of the theologians in song. Saint Bonaventura. Dante.


As soon as had the sacred flame the word That last it uttered framed, began to feel The sacred millstone impulse strong to wheel, And had not yet one revolution stirred Before another wrapped it in a ring, While song and motion flew on lightsome wing; Song that as much our Muses doth outsport, Our Sirens, with their clarion voices, quite As primal splendor doth reflected light.
And as are spanned, a tender cloud athwart,
When Juno's handmaid's tints are brought to view,
Two parallel rainbows rich of similar hue,
The outer taking birth from that within,
Like to the speaking of that wandering one
Whom love consumed as vapors drinks the sun,
And men recall the covenant, following sin,
God made with Moses, that should nevermore
The floods abound beyond the ocean's floor,

So did those sempiternal roses round
In garlands twain encompass us, and so
One to the other answered, glow to glow.
After the dance and gloryings and the sound
Of jubilant song and blithe and tender streams
Of radiance sent in far-effulgent beams,
With one volition moved, as are the eyes
Which move together, or when closed or when
They lift aloft obedient lids again,

From one of the new lights of such blest guise
There came a voice which me a needle made
To seek the star before me there arrayed,
And it began: "The love that makes me fair
Prompts me to speak about the other guide,
His guide who so well praised our Order's pride.
Where one is named the other should have care,
That, as they stood united in war's ranks,
They should like glorious proffer have of thanks."
"The warrior-bands of Christ, now once more massed
At cost so great, behind their standard, few
In numbers moved, and doubt and apathy knew,
When the Emperor whose reign shall ne'er be past
Equipped his legions, thus in peril thrown,
Not through their worth, but through his grace alone.
And, as was said, He to his Bride brought aid
With champions twain, whose rallying words and deeds
Gave to the host of faith and power its needs.

"Beneath the mighty shield whereon displayed
A lion subject and supreme we find,
And where caresses of the sweet west wind
The new leaves open wherewith is begun
Spring's reign enamelling Europe far and near,
Not distant from the beating of the mere
Beneath which, in its journey long, the sun
Concealed sometimes from all the nations falls,
Are situate happy Callahorra's halls.

"There of the Christian Faith the lover sweet
Was born, the hallowed athlete who his own
Made glad with joy midst enemies overthrown.
And when his mind created was, replete
With such a potent virtue was it made,
That, in his mother, it his life portrayed.
Soon as the Faith betwixt and him was tied
The bridal knot at holy font where dower
Of mutual safety power exchanged with power,
"The woman who was surety on his side
   Saw, in a dream, the wondrous fruit foretold
   He and his heirs should bring from green to gold;
And that construction just his name might bear,
   She was inspired to give him that his name
   Whereby him wholly God might ever claim.
Dominic his name was therefore; him whom Christ
   Chose as the husbandman, his garden's plants
To aid him into fruitage to advance.

"Servant and messenger both he seemed of
   Christ,
   For even in infancy soft his mind seemed stirred
   By things of God, and his first deed the word
Of counsel followed first given forth by Christ.
   His downy bed his nurse found empty oft,
   And prostrate him, his mind, his sight, aloft.
O happy father, Felix rightly named!
   O favored mother, well Joanna seems
To lead the mind to ponder heavenly themes!

"Not for the world by many people claimed,
   Not Ostiense's lore and Taddeo's skill,
   He the true manna sought with mastering will,
And, in brief time so great a teacher grew
   That he the vineyard's paths began to seek
Where fruit improves 'neath fruitful pruning meek;
And of the see that once more friendship knew
Unto the righteous poor, not through its fault,
   But him who fails his station to exalt,
"Not dispensation, two or three for six,
Nor choice appointments vacancies might afford,
Nor tithes he asked kept from the poor of the Lord,
But 'gainst the erring world his spear to fix,
And warrant to do battle for the seed
Wherefrom these twice twelve plants round thee proceed.
Then doctrine's spear he took and will's keen blade,
And seemed as thence of blows came rain on rain,
A torrent leaping from a lofty vein,

"And dashing 'gainst the lines that heresy arrayed,
His plunging charge was there most heavily felt
Where confidence most in heresy's leaders dwelt.
And from that torrent many rivulets played,
Contrived to quench the catholic garden's thirst,
And freshness yield where barrenness ruled at first.
If such the one wheel of the chariot was
Wherein the Holy Church its warfare waged
And rode triumphant through the battle gaged,

"No instant need thine hesitation pause
To laud the other, which, before I came,
Thomas ye heard with courtesy such proclaim.
But still the track its sacred tire impressed
Deserted is, so that where once was crust
Compacted, mould now stays the arena's dust.
His family meek that once itself addressed
To follow in his footsteps, set the toe
Where was his heel, as well the traces show;
And soon they will discover sheaf by sheaf
Of this bad husbandry's course when shall complain
The tares that they are winnowed from the grain.
And yet I say that he who, leaf by leaf,
Would search our volume, would there pages meet
Where 'I the same remain' his eye would greet.
But Acquasparta nor Casale ne'er
Would readers such send to a question vexed,
For narrows one its rule, and one neglects.

"Bonaventura of Bagnoaregio fair
Am I, who have all sinister aim aside
Laid in the duties high which me have tried.
Illuminato here and Agostino shine
Who of the first bare-footed meek ones were
That with God's halter girded forth did fare.
Hugh of Saint Victor joins the radiant line,
And Peter Mangiador, and Peter of Spain,
Whose volumes twelve on earth his fame maintain;

"The prophet Nathan; metropolitan great
Chrysostom, Anselm, and Donatus famed
For teaching how fair sentences best are framed.
Here is Rabanus and, with joy elate,
Joachim who, Calabria's Abbot, saw
And foresaw, seer 'neath Christian law.
So great a paladin's worth to muse and state
Hath moved me Brother Thomas's courtesy warm,
Which he knows well to give instructive form,
"On which myself and all here gladly wait."

NOTES TO THE TWELFTH CANTO.

3. "Millstone." The motion of a millstone is horizontal, not vertical. We must take this for one of Dante's homely metaphors. He will return to it in the Twenty-first Canto, line 80, where, in the Seventh Heaven, he will say of the effulgent spirit of Saint Peter Damian:

"Scarce had I ended, when, as in a mill,
A stone is turned around its centre, so,
In revolution swift, this lamp did glow."

The simile below, at line 19, of roses swinging round in garlands, seems much more pleasing.

11. "Juno's handmaid." Iris, the Goddess of the rainbow, daughter of Thaumas and Electra (Wonder and Brightness), and, in the Iliad, messenger of Jupiter and Juno (as, in the Odyssey, Mercury is), but in the Æneid, the messenger of Juno alone.

14. "The speaking." Echo. In Greek mythology, Echo was an oread Nymph, exposed to the jealousy of Juno. The Nymph became enamored of Narcissus; and, through the malevolence of the Goddess, she was reduced to a mere voice.

15. "The sun." Here, it is remarkable, are found three similes, one inclosed in the other: the successive similes of the rainbow, the echo, and the sun. The spirits, "roses" swinging "round in garlands," were as a rainbow, which was as the voice of Echo consumed by love, which was as vapors imbibed by the sun.

29, 127. "A voice . . . Bonaventura." John of Fidanza, General of the Franciscan Order, was born at Bagnoreggio, in 1221, and died at Lyons, July 15, 1274. While one of the most profound and eloquent men of his age, the saint was a pattern of humility and simplicity. An invalid boy, he was brought, by his mother, to receive the blessing of Saint Francis, who, on meeting him, exclaimed "Welcome!"
(“Buona ventura!”) The name remained with him. “One golden sentence of his,” says, with enthusiasm, our poet Longfellow, “cannot be too often repeated: ‘The best perfection of a religious man is to do common things well. Constant fidelity in small things is a great and heroic virtue.’” The anecdote told of him, as to his reception of his hat as cardinal, shows that he practised what he taught. Pope Gregory sent the hat by the hands of a delegation. “Hang the hat on a spray of that tree,” he said, “until I have finished washing these dishes.” A writer of unsurpassed industry, he has left voluminous works. The sublimity of his style and the sweetness of his life have earned for him the title of the “Seraphic Doctor.”

The “Sacrosanctae,” composed by Saint Bonaventura, and earnestly recommended by Pope Leo the Tenth as the first words of prayer, reads as follows: “Sacrosanctae et individuae Trinitati, Crucifixi Domini nostri Jesu Christi humanitati, beatissimae et gloriosissimae semperque Virginis Mariae fecundae integritati, et omnium sanctorum universitati, sit sempiterna laus, honor, virtus, et gloria, ab omni creatura; nobisque remissio omnium peccatorum, per infinita saecula saeculorum!” (To the most holy and undivided Trinity, to the Humanity of our Crucified Lord Jesus Christ, to the fruitful integrity of the most blessed and most glorious Mary ever Virgin, and to the universal company of all the Saints, be everlasting praise, honor, power, and glory, from every creature; and to us be the remission of all our sins, through infinite ages of ages.)

Worthy of remark seems the easy diction of this comprehensive eulogy of God and the saints, and the rhyming in its principal parts: “Trinitati,” “humanitati,” “integritati,” “universitati,” besides the rhymes so apt to occur, in Latin verse and prose: “Peccatorum,” “saeculorum.”

32. “Prompts me.” The courtesy of Saint Thomas of Aquin, a Dominican, proclaiming the praises of Saint Francis, prompts Saint Bonaventura, a Franciscan, to celebrate the praises of Saint Dominic.
Notes.

54, 55. "Calahorra ... the lover sweet." Saint Dominic, Founder of the Order of Preachers, was born in the Castilian town of Calaroga, now Callahorra, April 5, 1170. He died August 6, 1221. Abstemious, devout, benevolent, gifted with a voice of surpassing qualities, he was, in the pulpit, one of the most brilliant champions ever commissioned by Providence to succor a suffering cause; and his preaching was correspondingly effective. Of the noble family of the Gusmans, his personnel deserves a royal portraiture, and it has been given by King John of Saxony: "Saint Dominic was a man well-built, his complexion of a delicate tint, but, in expression, both attractive and imposing. His hair and beard were of a reddish cast, and his hands long and beautiful." His life and mission have received fitting homage from the pen of the illustrious Lacordaire.

56, 57, 96, 101. "Athlete ... enemies overthrown ... spear ... blade ... plunging charge." Similes like these, employed by Dante and other writers, in their enthusiasm over the spiritual successes of Dominic, have led some to suppose that the saint combined the military career with the spiritual, or, at least, that he was a man of bitter and remorseless violence, a persecutor, like Saul before he became Paul. On the pages of history, however, the vindication of the saint is very easy. His campaigns were all conducted in the pulpit, his cruelties were all inflicted there: his logic was inexorable, not himself. All that can be discovered in connection with the infliction of death is, that he rescued from death an unfortunate man whom opportunity enabled him to favor; and that while an Albigensian battle was raging round the church of Muret, he was, throughout the entire engagement, on his knees in prayer in the church. His connection with the Inquisition is a mere freak of the imagination on the part of writers who have made imperfect examination of data.

58. "When his mind." Dante adopted the doctrine of Saint Thomas of Aquin that the creation and infusion of the soul, its union with the body, were simultaneous acts. This doctrine departed from that of Plato, which declared the
souls of all men to be created in the beginning, once for all, and afterwards united with the body.

60, 64. "Mother ... woman." His mother, before his birth, dreamed that she had brought forth a dog, spotted black and white, and having a lighted torch in his mouth; symbols of fidelity and illumination. His godmother dreamed that he had a star on his forehead and another opposite, on the back of his head, and that these stars shone towards the east and the west; symbols of influence and fame.

68. "His name" Dominicus, belonging to the Lord.

70, 73, 76. "Christ ... Christ ... Christ." Noticeable here is the refusal of Dante to rhyme with the Sacred Name any other than the Sacred Name. Instances of this will be met with again in the Fourteenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-ninth, and Thirty-second Cantos.

75. "His first deed ... the words of counsel first given forth by Christ." "Master, what lack I yet? Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: if thou wilt be perfect, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions." Matthew xix. 21; Mark x. 21. This was, probably, that "great refusal" to which Dante has heretofore made allusion. But Dominic implicitly, fervently, adopted this counsel. He, a young man, not yet having finished his studies, sold his books, and even his clothes, to relieve the poor. He even offered to sell himself in ransom of a poor man held in captivity by the Moors.

79, 80. "Felix ... Joanna." Happy is the signification of Felix; full of grace that of Joanna.

83. "Ostiense ... Taddeo." The first was Henry of Susa, a cardinal, and Bishop of Ostia, and thence called Ostiense, a commentator on the Decretals. Taddeo Alderotti, of Bologna, translated the Ethics of Aristotle. They both belonged to the thirteenth century. Taddeo was a contemporary of Dante.
89, 93. "Poor . . . poor." Buti says that in early times the revenues of churches were divided into four parts: one for the prelate, one for the clergyman or clergymen who officiated, one for church repairs, and one for the poor.

90. "Him." Pope Boniface the Eighth.

91. "Dispensation." Commutation of the dues to the poor, in the proportion of "two or three for six," that is, depriving the poor of more than half of their dues.


110. "The other." The other wheel of the chariot of the Church Triumphant; Saint Dominic and Saint Francis being the two wheels. Cary calls attention to the opinion of Machiavelli ("no great friend to the church," as Cary observes) that the revival of Christianity was due to the influence of these two saints, that the Christian religion, if it had not by them been brought back to its principle, would have been extinguished.

113, 114. "Crust . . . mould." A simile derived from a wine-cask and applied to a chariot course. Good wine deposits in the cask a crust, tartar; bad wine a mould, fungus. With the simile of the chariot is thus combined this new simile. Dante, evidently, does not object to similes in clusters.

124. "Acquasparta . . . Casale." Successively generals of the Franciscan Order, and contemporaries of Dante. The first relaxed the rules of discipline, the second gave them increased stringency.

130. "Illuminato . . . Agostino." Illuminato was the special companion of Saint Francis, his Achates. He went with him to the court of the Sultan. He persuaded him to discard his scruples, and make known to the world the wonderful mark of God's favor in the stigmata.

Agostino became the head of the Franciscan Order in the Terra di Lavoro. He there received, on his deathbed, a supernatural revelation of the death of Saint Francis, and immediately exclaimed: "Wait for me! wait for me! I am
coming with thee!" When asked of whom he spoke, he answered: "Do ye not see our Father Francis ascending to Heaven?" and life instantly fled.


134. "Peter . . . Peter." Peter Mangiadore, or Peter Comestor, so called because a devourer of books, was also a monk of Saint Victor. He was Chancellor of the University of Paris, and wrote voluminously on ecclesiastical history. He died in 1198.

Peter of Spain was the author of a work on Logic, and was elevated to the papacy in 1276, under the title of John the Twenty-first, and died the next year, when Dante was eleven.

136. "Nathan." The prophet's boldness before King David rendered him, in Dante's estimation, worthy of a place in Paradise.

136. "Chrysostom, Anselm, Donatus." John, metropolitan bishop of Constantinople, belongs to the fourth century. As lawyer, monk, preacher, bishop, he reached to the loftiest heights in oratory, and deserved his surname, the Golden-Mouthed.

Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, a theologian of high and searching insight, belongs to the eleventh century.

Ælius Donatus, a Roman grammarian of the fourth century, was one of the preceptors of Saint Jerome, whom Dante is careful to mention in the Twenty-ninth Canto.

139. "Rabanus." Rabanus Maurus, Bishop of Mayence, was a learned theologian and writer of the ninth century.

140 "Joachim." A distinguished mystic, ascetic, and author of the twelfth century. His chief work or subject was the Eternal Gospel, the Gospel of the Spirit. God ruled, he said, in the Old Testament, Christ in the New, and the reign of the Holy Spirit is to follow. He made repeated prophecies, which were verified, "Seer 'neath Christian law."
Notes.

Longfellow, in his *Christus*, bids him sing:

"Open and manifest to me
The truth appears, and must be told:
All sacred mysteries are threefold:
Three Persons in the Trinity;
Three Ages in Humanity,
And Holy Scriptures likewise Three,
Of Fear, of Wisdom, and of Love."
CANTO THIRTEENTH.

ARGUMENT:

Dante now sees and describes twenty-four stars, theologians, concentric with the pole. The array of stars divides itself into two discs revolving in opposite directions around the pole. These stars sing the praises of the Trinity. Then silence prevails, and Saint Thomas of Aquin, one of the twenty-four, enters upon a discourse on the divine purposes and plans, suggested by Dante's second doubt as to the eminent place assigned by Saint Thomas to Solomon. The Canto closes with a homely admonition against rash judgment.

Still the Heaven of the Sun.


Let him who would conceive what now I saw,
Imagine this: (and let him, while I speak,
The image hold firm as a mountain's peak)
The fifteen stars that with such 'wildering awe
The heavens illumine that their mastering glare
Make dim all clustering splendors of the air;
And stars the Wagon turn through heaven's high dome
Around the pole, its axis, night and day,
As wends it on celestial roads its way;
The Trinity.

And the bright angles of the horn where home
The fair stars claim forth from the axis ranged
Round which still primal motion swings un-
changed;
Let him all these imagine to have wrought
In heaven two signs like those which came serene
From Minos' daughter's death to such a scene,
And one to be around the other brought,
And both revolving motion such to show
That one would opposite to the other go;

And he of that true constellation's mass
May form an image, and the double dance
That 'fore mine eyes did either way advance;
And do those heavenly motions so surpass
Our lingering ways, as lags Chiana's ooze
Behind the swiftest heavens that rest refuse.
Not Bacchus' praise, no Io Pæan's meed,
Sounds here; the Godhead's Three here praise combine
With that of One both human and divine.

The song and dance now ceased, and courteous
heed
To us those sacred lights imparted, joyed
To be in change of kindly cares employed;
And 'fore those saints harmonious now he spoke,
Who had, from his own light, to me set forth
The wondrous life of God's meek man of worth,
And said: "Love doth me now invoke
That other straw to tread that may its seed,
With that already garnered up, thee feed."
Paradiso.

Atonement.

"Thou knowest that all of life that is vouchsafed 37
To human nature was infused entire
When brought one and the same creative fire
Life to that breast from whence the rib was graved
To form the beauteous cheek whose wayward taste
Doth all their long prosperity's happiness waste,
And to that other breast the lance transfixed,
And which, before and since, atonement made
So ample that it evils all outweighed;

"And hence thy wonder is well-nigh unmixed
At what I said, that never second had
The fifth light's glow of knowledge deep and glad.
To this mine answer now thy mind apply,
And thy thoughts and my words, each true alike,
Shall both the centre of the circle strike.
Whate'er dies not, as well as that doth die,
Are each but ways of that idea divine
Our Lord to exist doth lovingly design;

"Because that Living Light, which doth proceed
From out hisBrightness, so that, with his Love
And Him, it reigns Triune, so moves above
That it unites the rays its bounties feed
In nine subsistencies, a mirror wide,
But One itself eternally doth abide.
Descending thence to lowest powers, from act
To act, it so its energy sinks it some
Contingencies allows in these to come.
"Contingencies are things wherein hath lacked Creative force; them moving stars control,
With or without seed, by their motion sole.
Neither their wax, nor that first impress made
Remains immutable, and hence may shine
The seal ideal more or less divine.
And in the self-same tree the seal may fade,
And of its kind yield better fruit and worse,
As men are born with character-germs diverse.

"If to perfection tempered were the wax,
And in its mood disposing Heaven supreme,
The seal would with complete perfection beam,
But nature’s fault is it e’er somewhat lacks
As doth the artist skilled, whose trembling hand
Cannot perfection’s ultimate point command.
If fervent Love, then, and high Vision clear,
And primal Power, the seal fix and dispose,
There all perfection from the impact glows.

"Thus was of old the clay created, dear
Its traits with every gift vouchsafed to man,
And thus its influence to the Virgin ran.
So I commend thy judgment, that hath ne’er
Our human nature such perfection shown
As in those two prime instances alone.
Now, if herein I should no further fare,
‘Then in what way had he no peer?’ would be
Upon my words thy pertinent comment free.
"But, that what now appears not may be seen,
Recall his state, and in what noble task
He made request when it was told him 'Ask.'
I so have spoken as indeed I mean,
That he a king was who for wisdom prayed,
That, as a king, he might therefrom have aid;
Not that he might the Heavenly Motors count,
Or, if, with a contingent, necessary could
Necessity make, or if 't is understood

"That a First Motion hath its certain fount,
Or if one, in a semi-circle's line,
A triangle not rectangular may define.
Whence, noting all that I have said, observe
A royal prudence unexcelled is claimed
As that whereto my shaft's intention 's aimed.
And to see 'worthy' if thy clear eyes serve,
Thou 'lt see it doth to kings alone refer,
Of whom are few that do not greatly err.

"With this distinction take thou what I said,
And thus it will with thy belief unite
Of our first father and our Chief Delight.
And to thy feet let this be always lead
To make thee, as a weary man, obey
Slow progress t'wards the hidden Yea and Nay;
For very far towards the fools he tends
Who, in each case where should distinction reign,
Will bluntly 'Aye' or bluntly 'No' maintain;
“Since it befalls that, in most instances, bends 118
Current opinion to false ends; and, then,
Bias and prejudice warp the minds of men.
Far more than vainly doth he loose from shore,
Since he returns e’en idler than he left,
Who fishes for the truth, of skill bereft.
Hereof plain proofs before the whole world bore
Parmenides, *Melissus, Bryson, and the crowd
Who journeyed on, and no true aim avowed.

“So Arius did, Sabellius, and fools more, 127
Who, like to scimitars, have the scriptures made
Distorted seem, and strangely disarrayed.
In judging, none should into confidence soar,
Like one who, while the crop’s still in the field,
Determines what will be the future yield.
For I have seen intractable, rough and rude
All winter long, the thorn severely frown,
And afterwards bear, transformed, a roseate crown,

“And I have seen a ship which hath pursued 136
Its swift, safe way across the sea, at last,
Sink in the harbor’s mouth, freight, man, and mast.
Let not Dame Bertha nor Sir Martin all
God’s way to measure think, when they one steal
Shall see, and one, his offering making, kneel;
For one of these may rise, the other fall!”
NOTES TO THE THIRTEENTH CANTO.

4, 7, 10. "Fifteen . . . the Wagon . . . the horn." The fifteen stars "that make dim all other splendors" are the largest stars around the pole. The stars the Wagon turn, in other words those of the Great Bear, are seven in number. "The bright angles of the horn" are the pole star and the last star of the Little Bear.

14. "Minos' daughter." According to the tradition, Bacchus placed the wedding-crown of Ariadne among the stars. It is the "Cretan crown" of the First Georgic, 222:

"The Cretan splendors dense
That Ariadne's brilliant crown attend."

And the "clere corowne" of Chaucer, Legende of Good Women:

"And in the syne of Taurus men may se
The stones of hire corrowne shyne clere."

And the "crowne, unto the starres an ornament" of Spenser, Faerie Queene, vi. 10, 13:

"Looke! Now the crowne which Ariadne wore
Upon her yvory forehead that same day
That Theseus her unto his bridale bore,
When the bold Centaures made that bloudy fray
With the fierce Lapithes which did them dismay,
Being now placed in the firmament,
Through the bright heaven doth her beams display,
And is unto the starres an ornament,
Which round about her move in order excellent."

23. "Chiana." A stream in Tuscany, broadening into the stagnant marshes of the Valdichiana, and emptying into the Arno near Arezzo. Modern drainage and cultivation have made this valley a dream of beauty; so that the metaphor no longer applies.


34, 47. "That other straw . . . Never second." Said of Solomon:
"The lofty mind which knowledge deep doth hold,
Such as is of no second worthy told."

Tenth Canto, 112; repeated in the Eleventh, 26; and now here explained.

53. "Idea divine." All things, perishable and imperishable, are but the thought of God, "emanations," as Cary well says, "from the archetypal idea residing in the divine mind," and by the divine thought created in love. The immediate powers in creation are, as we have seen, employed in the creation of man, the remote in that of the lower orders.


59. "Nine subsistencies." The nine choirs controlling the nine Heavens. "What exists by itself, and not in anything else, is called subsistence." Saint Thomas of Aquin, Summa, i. 29, 2.

60. "One." The Trinity in Unity.

63, 64. "Contingencies." Imperfect and perishable results more or less divine.

81. "All perfection." The work of Love, Vision, Primal Power, of the Spirit, the Son, and the Father, is perfect.

82, 85. "The Clay . . . The Virgin." Adam; the Blessed Virgin, the descendant of Adam.

93. "Ask." "God said, Ask what I shall give thee. . . . Give thy servant an understanding heart . . . lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." I Kings iii. 5, 12.

99. "If, with a contingent." Dante, by all this, means to say that Solomon did not "ask" for wisdom in astronomy, dialectics, logic, or the mathematics, but asked that he might excel in "royal prudence."

125. "Parmenides, Melissus, Bryson." Illogical logicians and assertors of strange theories as: "All is already one from eternity." Nothing is created, but "a powerful necessity holds it within the bonds of its own limits," and similar verbiage.
Notes.

127. "Arius . . . Sabellius." Sabellius was of the third, Arius of the fourth, century. Arianism distracted the church for more than three hundred years.

128. "Scimitars." It would seem that this simile is derived from a usage of the wandering Arabs in employing their scimitars as mirrors. Such a mirror would distort the features, and such philosophers distort truth.

139, 140. "All God's way." These wise people who know "all God's way," Dante calls "Dame Bertha" and "Sir Martin." We would probably call them Mrs. Grundy and Mr. Wiseacre. "What every one is in the eyes of God," Saint Francis used to say, "that he is, and no more," and, of course, he meant, and no less. Wright, in the original series of notes to his translation, quotes Burns's Address to the Unco Guid:

"Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman;
Though they may gang a kennin' wrang,
To step aside is human:
One point must still be greatly dark,
The moving why they do it:
And just as lamely can ye mark
How far perhaps they rue it.

"Who made the heart, 't is He alone
Decidedly can try us;
He knows each chord—its various tone,
Each spring,— its various bias.
Then at the balance let's be mute;
We never can adjust it;
What's done we partly may compute,
But know not what's resisted."
CANTO FOURTEENTH.

ARGUMENT:

In behalf of Dante, Beatrice addresses to the celestial spirits queries as to celestial natures, which are answered by King Solomon.

Amidst blinding splendors, Dante finds himself translated to the sphere of Mars, the seat of the fifth Heaven, the abode of martyrs and crusaders who died fighting for the faith, and placed under the control of the Virtues of the Heavens; Virtue here implying, with its other meanings, valor. There, amidst exquisite music, certain spirits arrange themselves in the form of a cross whereon Christ is seen. One of these spirits is Cacciaguida, a crusader, the great-great-grandfather of Dante.

PERSONS SPEAKING: The celestial choirs. Divine music.


In a round vase the water is inclined
From edge to centre, or in course reverse,
Just as 'tis stirred by that it doth immerse.
Such was the image came into my mind
What time to silence sank the glorious voice
Of Thomas speaking from that circle choice,
Because like his discourse it seemed, as well
As words that from the centre outward went
From Beatrice still on offices kind intent:
"This man hath need (though this he doth not tell,
Not with his voice, nor yet e'en in his thought)
That he in face of one more truth be brought.
Declare unto him if the light that now
Your substance kindles shall the same remain
Eternally with you, and its flame maintain;
And, if it do remain, inform him how,
After again ye visible are, the light
Be kept from injuring your corporeal sight."

As, by increase of gladness moved, a throng
Of dancers who a ring adorn, with voice
Upraised and motion quickened, all rejoice,
So, in their circling and their wondrous song,
Those holy companies high new joy displayed
At this devout and prompt petition made.
Whoso doth sorrow feel that here we die
That we may live above, hath of that shower
Eternal felt ne'er the reviving power!

The One and Two and Three who lives for aye,
And who reigns ever in Three, Two, and One,
All circumscribing, circumscribed by none,
Three several times each spirit chanted, notes
So charming using that the lofty lay
For all deserts men know would amply pay.
And from the most divine of those meek throats,
Within the inner arc, a voice was heard,
Such as perhaps the Angel's accents stirred
Who Mary sought: "Long as this festal seat
Of Paradise bides, so long shall round us ray
A vesture like this one wherein we stay.
Its brightness is as is our fervor's heat,
Our fervor as our vision, and this last
As it on unearned grace hath holding fast.
When we our flesh shall glorious reassume,
More saintly shall our persons then be seen,
More pleasing, as complete; more bright our sheen.

"For will increase and spread to greater bloom
The light unearned the Good Supreme makes ours,
Light which to endure his presence aids our powers;
So will our vision pierce through infinite room,
So will our fervor swell through vision's fire,
So will our radiance rise by fervor higher.
Even as a coal in flame abundant bound
Rules with its vividness dense the rarer light,
So that its contour readily strikes the sight,

"Thus the effulgence that now wraps us round
Shall in its brightness yield unto the flesh
Which mouldering clods of earth to-day enmesh;
Nor will such light excessive weary us then,
For our corporeal organs will have might
Sufficient for our enjoyment of delight."
And now the ready and devout "Amen!"
Sent by the voices all of each blest choir
Well showed for their dead bodies their desire;
Not for themselves alone, perhaps, but those
Who, ere imperishable flames they were,
Their fathers, mothers, friends, shared their kind care.
And lo! extended equally, now there rose
All round a lustre brighter than that sphere,
Like an horizon which becomes more clear.
And, as at twilight's evening hour there peer,
From out the gloaming, visions seeming new,
So there sights real and unreal shone through,

And new subsistences seemed coming near
And shaping gradually a sphere of light
The brilliant circles twain transcending quite.
O sparkling real of the Eternal Ray,
How did its incandescent suddenness throw
Athwart my sight its overpowering glow!
But Beatrice now, with that her beauteous play
Of smiles and graces so me held in thrall
From memory shrinks that glow, her beauty, all.

Then to look up mine eyes regained their power,
And I beheld myself to loftier skies
Sole with my Lady midst those splendors rise.
Well knew I by the smiling of the star
Wherein we entered that the height was gained,
For there around a ruddier radiance reigned.
With all my heart, and in that language high
Which all employ, I gratefully made to heaven
Such holocaust, then, as claimed the new grace given.
And had not of that inner altar's sigh
  The fervor slackened ere that offering true
I as accepted and auspicious knew;
For with such mighty sheen and lustre red
  Splendors appeared before me ray on ray,
I said: "O Lord God, glorious is thy way!"
As leads the galaxy wise men ne'er have read
  From pole to pole its greater lights and less
There beaming fair while each on each doth press,

Thus sown with brilliants in the depths of Mars
  Those rays described that sign mankind adore
Which, in a circle's bounds, makes quadrants four.
Here memory conquers all of genius' powers,
  For on that cross as levin gleamed forth Christ,
Whereof is worthy no similitude; Christ
He who will humbly follow, he who Christ
  As pattern seeks, will phrases waive when light
Auroral leads him to that heavenly sight.

From side to side, and 'twixt the top and base,
  Lights met in scintillations lone or massed,
As hither, thither, up and down they passed.
'T was as are seen in ever-changeful race
  The motes the sunbeams flicker, which the sight
Sees marching here and there, where'er the light
  Strikes through the lattices art prepares to shield
The burdened eyes and overheated head
From rays which pour from torrid torrents sped.
And as across a widely-spreading field
The dulcet tinkling comes of lute or harp
Where distance makes the notes less plainly sharp,
So seemed to come, from out that luminous maze
Upgathered through the cross, a melody dim
Which held me rapt, though knew I not the hymn.
Yet knew I well 't was one of lofty praise,
Because "Arise and conquer!" meet mine ears
As sound meets one who, not distinguishing, hears.

So much enamored I therewith became
That, until then, such fetters sweet ne'er held
A prisoner close by ecstasy's affluence spelled.
Perhaps I here some slight excuse should frame
To those fair eyes, wherein I should attest
My gazing ever brings me wished-for rest.
But, who bethinks him that the living seals
Of every beauty brighten as they rise,
And that to them I had not turned mine eyes,

Will frame excuse which such neglect well heals,
And know that here truth's truthfullest word's employed
Because I had not that high bliss enjoyed
Which orb on orb and Heaven on Heaven reveals.

NOTES TO THE FOURTEENTH CANTO.

2, 6, 8. "From edge to centre ... from that circle choice
... from the centre outward." The voice of Thomas from
the circumference, and that of Beatrice from the centre,
suggested to Dante this simile of water in a bowl. Their
several speeches made currents and counter-currents of words
and thoughts.
Canto XIV.

Notes.

18. "Corporeal sight." The light of the heaven was of such brilliancy that the mortal organs of vision could not endure it. Dante needed, as we have already noted, special strengthening for the exigency.
34. "The most divine." Solomon.
39. "A vesture." The radiant spiritual body of the blest. See Purg. xxv. 82–108; and see the notes to the first Canto of the Inferno.
43. "Our flesh." The glorified fleshly body of the resurrection. See Inferno, vi. 94, and x. 10.
46. "Will increase and spread." The opinions of Pope Benedict the Twelfth, and the decree adopted by a Consistory called by him in the year 1336, are, on this point, in conformity with the opinion here expressed by Dante. This decree is considered as having forever settled this question.
73. "New subsistences." New spirits arising.
75. "The brilliant circles twain." The revolving discs described in the preceding Canto.
82. "Held in thrall." Lifted to Mars by gazing on the countenance of Beatrice.
102. "That sign mankind adore." The Cross. The adoration of the Cross forms part of the service for Good Friday. It is then that, in approaching the Cross, the priest takes his shoes from off his feet, and by priest and choir is sung the "Ecce lignum." Follow this the "Crucem tuam adoramus," the selections from Scripture called "the Reproaches," and the "Crux fidelis:

"Crux fidelis, inter omnes
Arbor una nobilis:
Nulla sylva talem profert,
Fronde, flore, germine;
Dulce lignum, dulces clavi;
Dulce pondus sustinet."

130. "Some slight excuse." The meaning of the conclusion of this Canto briefly stated is, that the ecstasy of the delight derived from the contemplation of the splendors of Heaven made Dante, for the moment, forget the eyes of Beatrice.
CANTO FIFTEENTH:

ARGUMENT:

Encouraged by the smiling eyes of Beatrice, Dante engages his ancestor in conversation, and learns from him the simple lives of the earlier Florentines.
Still the Heaven of Mars.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Dante. Cacciaguida.


A will benign, whereof doth never tire
The love that prompts to virtue, as, in vice,
Cupidity waits its victims to entice,
Silence imposed on that harmonious lyre,
And stilled the sacred chords which Heaven’s right hand
Doth loose or tighten at love’s own command.
How must they bend to just prayers ready heed,
Who, that they might my will for prayer allow,
Did to Heaven’s will, with one consenting, bow!
Good cause hath he for endless grief, indeed,  
Who, for the love of that which doth not last,  
Eternal joys hath from his destiny cast!

As, in a clear night, through heaven's ample space,  
There glides, sometimes, of fire a hidden trail  
That makes the observant eye its presence hail,  
And seems to be a star that changeth place,  
Only that in that part whence came it naught  
Is missed, and suddenly to an end 'tis brought;

So from the side that to the right doth wend  
Out of that constellation ran a star;  
And from the cross's foot it shone afar;  
Nor did the gem slip from its ribbon's end,  
But round the radiant edge kept its career,  
And seemed like fire in alabaster clear.

Thus did Anchises' pious shade reach forth,  
If faith our greatest Muse's words have won,  
When in Elysian fields he saw his son.

"O blood of mine! O grace of God on worth  
Well poured! To whom but unto thee was 't given  
To enter twice the portals fair of Heaven?"  
The effulgence thus; and its warm tears I felt;  
Then to my Lady I my sight turned round,  
And by them both was in amazement bound.

For in her eyes a smile so exquisite dwelt  
That with mine own the bottom touched I deemed  
Of what my grace and coveted Paradise seemed.
Then, to its proem joined the spirit's voice
Things grasped I not, so deep they were, although
Pleased me his tones and his enraptured glow;
Nor did it things obscure propound by choice,
But by necessity moved, for soared so far
'Bove mortals' mark the shafts that aimed this star.
And when, held lower his bow, its lesser reach
From transports high to planes inferior came,
And marks sought near to our restricted aim,

What first I understood of this his speech
Was "Be thou blest, O holy Three and One,
Who hast unto my seed such courtesy done!"
And further thus: "Thou hast, my son, allayed,
Here where I frame my words, within this light,
By grace of her who to this lofty flight
Hath plumed thee forth, sweet hungering though delayed
Drawn from the volume clothed with heavenly might
Wherein no change can come in black or white.

"Thou deemest that to me is sent thy thought
By Him, the First, as from the unit's sum,
If that be known, the other numbers come;
Thence who I am is not of me besought,
And why for thee more joyous rays me fire
Than any others of this joyous choir.
Thy deeming's true; because the small and great
Of all this company in the mirror seek
Thy mind's expression ere thou dost it speak.
"But that the love divine I watch elate
With sight perpetual, and whose sweet lament
Makes me to thirst, may have its full content,
Let now, secure and frank and glad, thy word
Proclaim thy wishes, thy desire make known,
To which an answer is decreed thine own."
To Beatrice then I turned me, and she heard,
Ere I had spoken, and her smiled delight
My wings more eager made for loftiest flight.

Then said I thus: "When on you dawned that state
Which equal makes all men, were you, in heaven,
Wisdom and love in equal measure given;
Because so equal in the Fountain great
From whence ye drew your radiance and your heat,
Whereof similitudes none the glory meet.
But will and power in mortals, for the cause
That well ye know, have wings with strength diverse,
Some with the better armed, and some the worse.

"A mortal I am bound by mortal laws,
And therefore give no thanks but in the heart
To this paternal greeting; but impart,
I pray thee, O thou living topaz, set,
A gem, within this precious jewel's frame,
Impart, what I shall e'er enjoy, thy name!"
"Thy root I am, O leaf! and pleased have met
The end of my long waiting for thee, son!"
Thus was his answer to my prayer begun.
Paradiso.

Then thus he said: "That one from whom thy race
Its name derives, and who a hundred years
The Mount's first terrace hath pursued with tears,
My son and thy great-grandfather may'st thou trace;
Well it behooves his long endurance there
Should be made shorter by thy works and care.
Chaste, quiet, temperate, Florence was, while yet
She was encircled by her ancient wall,
Whose bells her still to old devotions call.

"She chains of gold nor coronals wore gem-set,
Her ladies wore not broidered robes, nor higher
Regards their zones drew than their eyes' sweet fire.
Not from a daughter's birth did e'er arise
Within her father's mind the dread that dower
Might her delay, and strain his purse's power.
No houses had she void of family ties;
No Sardanapalus yet had shown how vice
Can weave in chambers follies fools entice;

"Not yet had Monte Mario's scene adored
Been passed by your Uccellatoio's, this
To sink as deep as high has been its bliss.
Bellincion Berti saw I walk abroad
In leathern belt bone-clasped, and from the glass
His dame unpainted in her beauty pass.
The sons of Nerli and of Vecchio clad
I saw in simple jackets short, of skin,
And saw their frugal wives sit down to spin."
"O happy women! Each assurance had
Of her own burial-place, and left no bed
Lords then who into France had basely sped.
Awake one stayed to keep the cradle tipped,
And, in her lullaby soft would songs repeat,
In idiom such as parents first find sweet;
Another, as the distaff's flax she nipped,
Among her family meekly listening, told
Of Troy and Rome and Fesole histories old.

"Then would have Lapo Salterello been,
Or Cianghella, wondrous as now would
Plain Cincinnatus or Cornelia good.
To such a brotherhood safe, so sweet an inn,
To citizenship so peaceful, fair, and true,
To equality which no flaunting haughtiness knew,
Did Mary, with loud cries invoked, me give,
And in your ancient Baptistery I became Christian, and Cacciaguida took for name.

"From folk whose race in Val di Pado live
Thy surname and my wife were; brothers mine
Eliséo and Moronto were in fine.
The Emperor Conrad's service I pursued,
And he on me the knightly sword did gird,
So much of my high prowess had he heard.
I, in his train, that wicked law and rude
Moved to attack, whose people make assault
And usurpation through your Pastor's fault.
"There, by that execrable race, release
I had from bonds of the deceitful world,
Whose love hath souls to deep perdition hurled,
And came from martyrdom unto this peace."

NOTES TO THE FIFTEENTH CANTO.


"And now when opposite him, the herbage green
Across, he saw Aeneas come, he held,
With glad alacrity, forth extended far,
Both hands. And down his cheeks tears poured. And fell
From out his lips his words: 'And art thou come
At last? And hath thy piety brave, as doubt
None had I that it would, fought out the way,
The rugged way unto thy parent loved?'

Sixth Æneid, 684.

27. "Our greatest Muse." Virgil.

53. "Volume." The Volume of the Divine Mind, wherein
no erasures nor interlineations can be made.

56. "The unit." The elements of numbers are all con-
tained in the first original one, the unit.

61. "The mirror." The spirits in Paradise see in God,
as in a mirror, even the thoughts of men.

79, 83. "Will and power . . . but in the heart." Dante has
the will, but not the power, to thank the spirit, except by the
thankful feeling of the heart.

85. "O thou." Dante uses the affectionate "thou," through-
out this Canto, but to encourage his ancestor to further con-
verse, uses the courteous "you" in the next.

99. "Whose bells her still to old devotions call." The same
bells call to the same devotions, morning, noon, and night.
It may be that a strain of satire lurks in the word "call," a
call which Dante is intimating is too seldom obeyed.

102. "Their eyes' sweet fire." Villani, Malespini, and
Pippino, in their respective works, give charming pictures of
the primitive manners of the early Florentines. Napier re-
produces them in his valuable Florentine History.
The ancient Florentines seem, indeed, to have well exemplified their Roman origin, and to be entitled to share the praises which Hannibal, in his soliloquy, gives to the parent state. See the soliloquy cited and translated in the notes to the Sixth Canto.

109, 110. "Monte Mario . . . Uccellatoio." The hills named furnish fine views of the respective cities. The splendor of the public and private edifices of Florence has drawn, perhaps exaggerated, praise from Ariosto:

"While gazing on thy villa-covered hills,
'T would seem as though the earth grew palaces
As she is wont by nature to bring forth
Young shoots, and leafy plants, and flowering shrubs;
And if within one wall and single name
Could be collected all thy scattered halls,
Two Romes would scarcely form thy parallel."

112. "Bellincion Berti." Him Villani calls "the best and most honored gentleman of Florence." In connection with his daughter, "the good Gualdrada," we have met mention of this worthy Florentine in the Sixteenth Canto of the Inferno, line 38 and notes.


127, 128. "Salterello . . . Cianghella." Salterello, a pestilent lawyer, dissipated, and having a turn for poetry. Doubtless Dante hated him both for his unprofessional methods and for his unpoetical verses.

Monna Cianghella della Tosa was a gay widow of Dante's time who gave occasion for unfavorable social comment.


133. "Mary." The invocation to the Blessed Virgin in the pains of childbirth. We have already seen an allusion to this invocation in the Twentieth Canto of the Purgatorio, line 19.

134. "Baptistery." That of Saint John's, the cathedral
church of Florence, known as the Duomo, which Dante calls elsewhere his beautiful Saint John's.

136, 137. "Folk... in Val di Pado... thy surname and my wife." The wife of Cacciaguida came from the Val di Pado, the Valley of the Po. Her family name was Aldighieri, which, by the loss of the "d," became shortened to Alighieri. This recalls the shortening of Dante's given name from Durante to Dante. We find that, in the rendering of the family name in Latin, it is "Aligherii," so that we may suppose that the original family name was "Aldigherii," the Aldigherians. The forms "Aligherii" and "Aligheri" suggest the "aligeri aves" with

"All their sounding ranks of wings,"


139. "Conrad." The Emperor Conrad the Third, who belonged to the Suabian line. Frederick Barbarossa was his nephew. Conrad joined the Second Crusade of which Saint Bernard was the great preacher. He died in 1152, after his return from the Crusade.

143. "Whose people." Dante blames the inactivity, the lethargy, of the Christian powers, especially of the papacy, in his time.

148. "And came from martyrdom unto this peace." Having died for the faith, he was spared the pains and delays of Purgatory. It will be remembered that we have met with the same expression in the 129th line of the Tenth Paradiso, applied to the spirit of the exiled Boëthius who was by Theodoric (Dietrich) king of the Ostrogoths, "chased up into heaven" for righteousness' sake:

"E da esilio venne a questa pace."

In the recent volume of the Poems of Pope Leo the Thirteenth, I find his lines on Constantius, the Martyr-Saint of Perugia:

"Te heroa, te fortissimum
Efferre cælo martyrem,
Notes.

Oblita laudes Cæsarum,  
Turrena gestit canticis."

Translation:

A hero thee and martyr bear to heaven,  
In pæans loud of praise, the tower-girt town;  
While hushed the homage is by voices given,  
Whose jubilant words the deeds of Cæsars crown.
CANTO SIXTEENTH.

ARGUMENT:

Dante, desiring to hear further from his relative, drops the "thou," and courteously uses the plural "you," a complaisance which brings from the listening Beatrice a smile, in the manner of the cough given by the Lady of Malehault, when Lancelot kissed Queen Guenever, meaning "I hear you" reproachfully. Cacciaguida proceeds, and goes at large into his personal history and that of his contemporaries, other illustrious Florentines, and endeavors to account for the misfortunes of Florence.

Still the Heaven of Mars.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Dante. Cacciaguida.


O NOBLE blood, full oft a boast in vain,
   If thou to thee dost worldly homage draw,
   Where praise is not the ever-glorious law,
Ne’er shall I marvel there to see thy reign;
   For where ne’er live debased, perverted, aims,
   In heaven itself, I’ve readily owned thy claims!
But yet a cloak thou art that quickly time
   Makes shorter with his shears, as, day by day,
   Around thine edge, they, nimbly clipping, play.
With You, first borne by Rome when in her prime
But somewhat by her nations disused since,
I once again addressed my family’s prime;
And Beatrice, distant but a little space,
Smiling, resembled that good dame who coughed
When Guenever gave of lapsing token soft.
And thus I spoke: “You are mine ancestor, grace
Of yours to speak me bolder makes, and lifts
Your favor me from my so humble rifts.

“So many rivulets fair with gladness swell
My mind within, that joy I have that holds
Its banks unburst the torrent it enfolds.
Then me, mine honored root ancestral, tell
Who were your ancestors great, and what, as boy,
The scenes were that did your own eyes employ?
Of Saint John’s sheepfold tell me, and each soul
Therein, and of its size, and those who seats
Most worthy had in its divine retreats.”

As, at the breathing of the winds, a coal
To flame is quickened, so, at compliments mine,
This light began with heightened ray to shine,
And, as more fair became its beauty, weaved
More tender sweetness with its voice and ways,
And me addressed, but not in modern phrase:
“From when ‘Hail, Mary!’ sounded till relieved
My birth my mother, now a saint, of care
And pain assuaged by many a holy prayer,
"Unto its Lion had this star returned
Five hundred fifty and thirty times, and seen
Was, bright o'er all, his paw's abundant sheen.
Born my forefathers were and I where learned,
First in the race, the last ward's boundary, those
Whose yearly rivalry yet in your game glows.
Let this of them enough be; who they were,
And whence they hither came, needs not to say;
Than speech is silence oft the better way.

"All those of age wherein men arms may bear,
Betwixt Mars and the Baptist, the fifth part
Of those were who now live in that their mart.
But then the citizens' blood, that now doth mar
Campi's, Certaldo's and Figghine's, flowed
Pure to the humblest artisan's chaste abode.
O to have neighbors had, how better far,
These people, and to have fixed your lines in peace
Where Trespiano's and Galuzzo's cease,

"Than have them in the town compelled to smell
Aguglione's stench and Signa's churl's,
Who by no means are known as honor's pearls.
Had but the class which most degenerates, well
Her duties to her son discharged, nor been
But Cæsar's step-dame arrogant, sharp, and thin,
Some who, as Florentines proud, discount and trade,
Would have returned to Simifonte's lanes,
Where beggary helped their fathers' sires to gains.
"At Montemurlo still the Counts had stayed,
The Cerchi kept Acone, and maybe
The Buondelmonti Valdigrieve’s lea.
Of intermingled tribes a city full
Doth ever pestilent maladies therein brood,
As doth in man varieties ill of food,
And plunges further forward a blind bull
Than a blind lamb; and often doth one lord,
Better than five, exert his single sword.

"On Urbisaglia, Luni, look thou back,
How they are gone; and after them how go
Chiusi and Sinigaglia, fast or slow;
And then how races run to rot and wrack.
Will seem to thee no novel thing to hear,
Seeing that even cities disappear.
All things ye have are to mortality given,
Even as yourselves; but ’t is concealed in some
That long endure; and some deaths quickly come;

"And as, perpetually, the lunar heaven
Covers and bares the shores, so Fortune deals
With Florence, which alternate flood-tides feels.
Therefore should none the tale with wonder awe
Of those great Florentines, son, whom I recall,
Whose fame was, in the hidden past, not small.
I saw the Ughi, Catellini saw,
Philippi, Greci, Ormani, Alberici, e’en
In their decline illustrious, never mean.
"And great as ancient La Sanella's lord,
And Arca's, chiefs like Soldanier, revered
Ardinghi and Bostichi battle-seared.

Over the gate, that like a ship aboard
Hath of new felony taken load so great
That jetsam from the bark must be such freight,
The Ravignani dwelt, in whom had start
The Guido Counts, and whoso'er the name
Of great Bellincione since doth claim.

"He of La Pressa knew the statesman's art
Already, and had Galigaio built
His house, where hung his hilt and pommel gilt.
The ermined column stood, Fifanti's might,
Sachetti's, Guiocchi's, names were famed,
And theirs who blush to hear the bushel named.
Galli, Barucci, and Calfucci's bright
Fair line, had risen, and curule chairs
The Sizii and Arriguucci filled with cares.

"How mighty them I saw, who since have wrought,
Through pride, their own destruction! How her halls
Showed Florence boastful of her Golden Balls!
Such glory to her those her patriots brought
Whose heirs, when vacant is your church's see,
Bide in consistory, fat with food and glee.
The insolent race that shows a dragon's greed
T'wards him who flees, but t'wards the one who wrath
Or gold them gives a lamb's demeanor hath,
“Already rising was, though of low breed: 118
Donati’s Ubertino felt disgrace
That his wife’s sister married in that race.
From Fesole, too, had Caponsacco’s thrift
Descended to the Market, and good men
Were Giuda and Infangato reckoned then.
’T is true, although it may thine eyelids lift:
The narrow circuit of your walls its name
Took from the Della Pera’s modest fame!

“Each one, the beautiful heraldry fair that wears 127
Of the great Baron, whose high name and halls
The festival great of Thomas e’er recalls,
Knighthood from him received, that man of prayers;
Though with the populace is to-day enrolled
One who it bordered wears with lustrous gold.
Had Gualterotti and Importuni rings
Then in the Borgo, which would well have spared
Such neighbors, had their feet elsewhither fared.

“The house which you blood, death and mourning brings, 136
Through just disdain in slaughter wreaked and strife,
The sources sapping of your joyous life,
Was honored in its company and its kin.
O Buondelmonte, how could counsel teach
Thee, rash, to make of marriage-promise breach!
Sad sounds would now not stifle pleasure’s din
Had God thee to the Ema given when curst
Thy baleful presence our fair city first.
"But now had come of peace her latest hour,
And meet it was a victim to the stone
Defaced which guards the bridge should bleed
and groan.
With families these and others and their power
I Florence saw in such repose that ne’er
Cause had she felt for grief, or strife, or care;
With all these families she had state displayed
So just and glorious that was never placed
Reversed the lily that her spear-head graced,

"Nor by division’s strategy vermeil made."

NOTES TO THE SIXTEENTH CANTO.

25. "St. John’s sheepfold." The Church of Saint John’s, the cathedral of Florence.

34, 38. "From ... till ... times." Between the date of the Annunciation and the date of Cacciaguida’s birth had intervened five hundred and eighty revolutions of Mars, each revolution being, according to Dante, in the Convito, somewhat less than two years. The birth of Cacciaguida was therefore in the year 1091, and at the beginning of the Crusade, in which he fell fighting for the faith, he was in his fifty-seventh year. A doubt haunted the interpretation of this passage, which yielded to the astronomical researches of Witte, and the familiarity enjoyed with all of Dante’s writings by King John of Saxony.

37. "Unto its Lion." The royal commentator last named says that astrology made Mars one of the lords of the constellation Leo.

41. "The last ward’s boundary." The ward called "St. Peter’s Gate," Porta San Pietro. In the Old Market in this ward Cacciaguida was born. The annual races were horse-races.
Notes.

47. "Betwixt Mars and the Baptist." That is, between the "Old Bridge," Ponte Vecchio, and the Cathedral.

50. "Campi ... Certaldo ... Figghine." Villages near Florence whose inhabitants contaminated the ancient blood. Cacciaguida is saying that these people, as well as those of Trespiano and Galuzzo, other villages, ought not to have been admitted to social equality with honest people, and that Florence should not have incorporated them in her territory. The remark is extended to two other villages, Aguglione and Signa, the former of which produced a virulent citizen named Baldo who had influence enough to obtain and perpetuate the decree that Dante should be burned. Thence the phrase "Aguglione's stench."

Simifonte, Montemurlo, Acone, and the Valley of the Grieve, are, a few lines further on, added to the unsavory list.

66. 140. "The Buondelmonti ... O Buondelmonte." In the year 1215, just a half-century before the birth of Dante, Buondelmonte, the then heir of this house, was engaged to a lady of the family of the Amadei. Passing, however, one day, the homestead of the Donati, he fell into conversation with a lady who would seem to have waited for an opportunity to converse with him. This lady's address and flatteries persuaded him to promise himself to her daughter. The daughter was called, and gave her consent, and the wedding-ring intended for the other girl was then and there placed upon the finger of the new aspirant for this doubtful honor. The inconstancy of the fellow deserved reproach but not death. The friends of the jilted girl waylaid him (a frequent tableau in those times) and left him dead upon the highway. The desperate Mosca Lamberti led the attack. This assassination embroiled all Florence, and served well to give new point and edge to the ever-ready weapons held in the hands of Guelph and Ghibelline, Black and White, Church and State.

72. "Single sword." Dante means imperial power, a single ruler, a principle in behalf of which he argues so zealously in his De Monarchia.
73. "Urbisaglia." Here cities are named, formerly of importance, but now decayed:

"Still as a city buried 'neath the sea, . . .
Idle as forms on wind-waved tapestry,"

LOWELL, To the Past.

"Generations pass while some trees stand, and old families last not three oaks. . . . Oblivion is not to be bribed. The greater part must be content to be as though they had not been, to be found in the record of God, not in that of man." Browne, Urn Burial, v.

85. "The tale." Dante, in the succeeding lines, is pleased to parade his accurate knowledge of the ancient families of Florence, and it may be presumed that, with his zest for political effect, nothing but the limits which he had prescribed for himself as to numbers of Cantos and lines in each, nothing but the necessity of condensation, prevented him from going into the detailed history of these ancient worthies.

88, 89. "Ughi, Alberici."

"What has become of Chihuapan?
Quantzintecomptzin brave,
And Cohualatzan, mighty man?
Where are they? In the grave."

Mexican Poem.

"Where is Napoleon the Great? God knows.
Where little Castlereagh? The devil can tell.
Where Grattan, Curran, Sheridan, all those
Who held the bar or senate in their spell?"

BYRON.

93. "Gianni del Soldanier." We have met Johnny among the traitors, in the Thirty-second Inferno.

95. "Bellincione." Berti, always named with exalted eulogy: Sixteenth Inferno; Fifteenth Paradiso.

102. "Hilt and pommel gilt." The insignia of knighthood.

103. "Column." Heraldry of the Billi, or Pigli, family.

105. "Bushel." The Chiaramontesi, one of whom, Durante,
a custom-house officer, falsified the bushel. Some say the offender was a member of the Tosinghi family. Dante makes allusion to this offence in Purgatorio, xii. 105.

111. "Golden Balls." The heraldry of the family of the Lamberti, who found their "destruction" in the felonious act of Mosca Lamberti mentioned in a note just above.

114. "Bide in consistory, fat with food and glee." Make themselves sure of a protracted frolic on each episcopal vacancy. This fashion has not yet expired. If it be not a fashion of the modern churchman, it certainly belongs to the methods of the modern juryman. He will hold his fellows out for days and nights, to offset his taxes by his per diem, and to eat meals furnished by cook-shop or tavern at the expense of the county.

115. "Dragon ... lamb." Dante's lines here are fiercely onomatopoetic:

"L' oltracotata schiatta, che s' indraca
Dietro a chi fugge, ed a chi mostra il dente,
O ver la borsa, com' agnel si piaca."

And for good reason: Boccaccio Adimari, one of this family, got possession of Dante's property in Florence when the Poet was banished, and always industriously opposed his return. Doubtless this robber of the absent had a good understanding with the torch-bearing Baldo. One of the Adimaris was "Silver Philip," to whom, it will be remembered, Dante has already administered a pointed rebuke in the Third Circle of Hell. Ubertino, of the Donati family, Dante says, felt disgrace that his sister-in-law should marry into such a family as the Adimaris.

121. "Caponsacco." The thrifty Caponsaccis lived in the Old Market, Mercato Vecchio. One of the daughters of this house was the wife of Folco Portinari and mother of Beatrice. We may imagine that the attitude of Beatrice lost none of its graces on hearing these praises of her mother's kith and kin.

124, 125. "Thine . . . your." Note that thee, thy, thine, mean Dante; your and yours the people of Florence.
126. "Della Pera’s modest fame." A family of modest worth were so honored by their simple and worthy neighbors as to have their name applied, in those primitive times, to a division of the city.

128, 129. "The great Baron... the festival great of Thomas." The great Baron, "that man of prayers," was the Marquis Hugo of Brandenburg. The festival was that of Saint Thomas the Apostle, December the twenty-first, on which day, of the year 1006, the great baron died. He was the ancestor, or patron, of five noble families who bore his heraldic insignia: the Pulci, Nerli, Giandonati, Gangalandi, and Della Bella. The latter family attached itself to the people, but yet retained its insignia, bordered with gold. Giano della Bella was the hero of one revolution, which has been already sketched in the notes to the conclusion of the Sixth Purgatorio.

Giano della Bella was a man of great nobility of mind and breadth of statesmanship, a man of merit thrown upon times destitute of merit, but in which greatness shone the brighter for its dark surroundings.

133. "Rings in the Borgo." Large iron rings in the walls of palaces, insignia of distinction and convenience, for the display of the banners or flags of the family, or party, or state. The flag-staffs are run through the rings, and lean from the wall. Below the rings are iron rests shaped so as to hold the ends of the flag-staffs.

Among the notes of a visit in 1867 to Florence are found the following:

"March 29th. Unusually fortress-like in appearance is the palace of Prince Stozzi; distinguished, too, it is by the large iron rings in the wall, and, below them, the rests for the banners."


143. "The Ema." "Blood, death, and mourning" would not have "cursed our fair City," if, on the day thou mad'st the journey from thy Castle of Montebuono, God had caused thee to be drowned in the intervening stream of the Ema.
146. "The stone." Buondelmonte was murdered at the foot of "the stone defaced," the mutilated statue of Mars on the Old Bridge, Ponte Vecchio, a victim to the God of War, the signal for the sacrifice of other victims.

153. "The lily ... reversed ... vermeil." After the expulsion of the Ghibellines, the Guelphs changed the lily from white to red, and the field from red to white. Never was such a thing done in the days of the honorable renown of Florence. The remark serves to indicate that Dante desired here to proclaim himself a Ghibelline.
CANTO SEVENTEENTH.

ARGUMENT:

Still encouraged by Beatrice, Dante urges Cacciaguida to forecast Dante's own history; whereupon Cacciaguida foretells Dante's expulsion from Florence, but urges him to write his whole vision, and all that he saw and heard in it, although his revelations may strike, like the winds, the proudest summits; that is, he urges him to write the Commedia. It is noticeable that Dante, in urging this disclosure of the future, returns to the familiar, affectionate, and earnest "thou!"

Still the Heaven of Mars.


Such as the youth who brought to Clymene's ear
The question of his lineage and his fate,
He who makes fathers their sons' powers debate,
E'en such was I, and such did I appear
To Beatrice and that lamp of heavenly grace
Who, to please me, at first had changed his place;
When thus my Lady: "Send thou forth the flame
Of thy desire, so marked that we may feel
It impress clear hath of the interior seal;
"Not that our vision may have surer aim
Thereby, but that thy thirst be made more clear,
And men may mingle for thee when they hear."
"O mine own tree beloved! Thou that dost soar
So high that, as, to minds terrene, 'tis plain
That angles two obtuse no triangle will contain,
So thou contingent things dost see, before
They in themselves exist, thine eyes that Point
Beholding, where all eyes become conjoint!

"I, while with Virgil I the Mountain sought
Where souls are healed, or by him kindly led,
Descended 'mongst the souls whose hopes are dead,
Alarmed as to my future history, caught
Some grievous words; although to Fortune's blows
I ready stand foursquared my force to oppose.
But for this reason 'tis I have desire
To know the worst, what doom me Fortune brings;
The shaft foreseen with less annoyance stings."

Thus did I say unto that sainted fire
That unto me before had spoken; and e'en
As Beatrice willed was my will plainly seen.
Not phrases vain wherein the foolish folk
Of old were snared, ere slain was man's high Stay,
The Lamb of God who taketh sins away,
But language clear and unambiguous broke
Forth from that love ancestral which concealed
Was by its smile, a smile which it revealed:
"Contingency, whose volume hath no place beyond your own material natures, seen Depicted is in God's own mirrored scene, But yet necessity thence ye cannot trace More than, when seest thou sail a ship, it draws Necessity from thine eye as motion's cause. From that high mirror, even as to the ear An organ's harmonies come, comes to my sight The time that thou must meet with that thy might.

"As forth from Athens fared Hippolytus drear His cruel step-dame's victim, so must thou, Thy Florence leaving, to like injury bow. Already this is wished for, and is sought, And soon the wish shall into act unfold, There where each day Christ's self is bought and sold. The just, as wont is, shall to blame be brought, But truth shall, in the vengeance it deals forth, A faithful witness find to its own worth.

"Thou shalt each dearly-loved thing leave; O dread This arrow, 'tis the first that leaps the bow, And will thee teach how deep 's an exile's woe! Thou shalt have proof what savor others' bread Of salt doth have, and how ne'er harder road Walked man than stairs where strangers have abode. But that which most shall thy wronged shoulders gall Will be the bad and foolish company's hail Which shall fall on thee in that straightened vale;
"For ingrate, all, aye, mad and impious, all,
Shall they against thee turn; but not long thence
Their scarlet brows, not thine, will own the offence.
The course they take of brutishness foul will win
Their condemnation; 't will be well for thee,
Therefore, a party by thyself to be.
Thine earliest refuge, thine immediate inn,
The courtesy of the Lombard great shall yield,
On whose high ladder God's own bird's revealed.

"He thee upon such kind regard shall shower,
That 'twixt ye two the granting shall forerun
The asking, which 'twixt men is rarely done.
Him also shalt thou see who by this star
So strongly, at his birth-hour, was impressed
That as war's darling he shall be caressed.
Not yet do people know his latent power,
So young he is, since for but nine years' time
Have these wheels round him rung their mighty chime.

"But ere the Gascon shall great Harry cheat,
Shall radiance some of his great worth unfold
In labors great and in contempt for gold.
So shall hereafter his magnificence greet
The general eye, that e'en his foes compelled
Shall be to own themselves by his deeds spelled.
On him rely; his benefits will thee fence;
By him reversed shall lots of many be,
Beggars shall ride, and rich men's wealth shall flee;
"And, written in thy mind, of him, bear hence, 91
But tell it not" — (and things he said which stun
All present shall, that such things could be done).
Then, thus he spoke: "My son, of things thou hast heard
These the interpretations are; the snares behold
Which revolutions few will soon unfold.
Yet let not envy in thy soul be stirred,
For doth thy life into the future pass
Long after perfidies theirs shall them harass."

When by its silence showed that holy soul 100
That it the woof had finished putting in,
Into that web which by me warped had been;
Began I, even as one whom doubts control,
And who for kindly counsel deeply yearns
From one who sees, and loves, and flattery spurns:
"My Father, well I see how me to harm,
Towards me strides the time with such a blow
As heaviest him assails whose heart is low;

"With foresight, therefore, well 'tis that I arm, 109
That if from me the dearest place take wrongs,
I may not lose the others by my songs.
Down through the World of Infinite Bitterness led,
And o'er the Mountain from whose perfumed height
My Lady's beauty led me with its light,
And thence thus far through heaven's high brilliants sped,
'Things have I learned, which if I tell, they will
Full many annoy and with resentment fill;
"And, if by treason to the truth restrained,
I fear lest I my fame may lose with those
Who this date old will call as history grows."
The light wherein the treasure was contained
Which I had found, with radiance flashed at first,
As sunshine might on golden mirrors burst,
Then said: "'Tis true a conscience dimmed by
Of its own acts or others' may find tart
Thy words, and 'neath thy faithful censures smart;

"But nevertheless make truth alone thine aim,
And make the vision show its meanings rich,
And just let them scratch whom afflicts the itch;
For if thy words at first be thought unkind,
Yet they who it, the first taste passed, digest,
Will thee, as furnishing vital nourishment, bless.
For shall thy song so smite as smites the wind,
Which doth the most exalted summits seek,
And this doth for thee no slight honor speak.

"Thence shown to thee within these orbits here,
Upon the Mountain, and in that sad Vale,
Are only souls that Fame's high sanctions hail;
For rests not one content when he doth hear,
Until his faith is by an instance fixed
Which not obscure is nor with queryings mixed,
Or, for some cause, not manifestly clear."
NOTES TO THE SEVENTEENTH CANTO.

1. "The youth." Phaëthon, son of Apollo, the Sun-God, and Clymene, an ocean-nymph. The boy had been publicly confronted with the insinuation that his origin was not divine. He sought his mother, that she might attest the truth. To the same youth his father trusted the guidance of the steeds of Heaven. The result was calamitous, and makes fathers "debate" the powers of their sons.

6. "Had changed his place." The spirit of Cacciaguida had glided from the upper part of the cross to its foot, that he might the more readily converse with Dante.

9. "The interior seal." "I am, beyond cavil, a son of Apollo; I, in this Canto, lay bare my soul; hereby will I draw the regards and the favor of dear Florence."

Dante thus stops, in the Central Canto of the Paradiso, in the midst of heaven, in the sphere of Mars, the abode of the spirits of holy warriors, martyrs, patriots, to address the Florentine people in a manner almost direct, sufficiently direct to let them know the purpose of his Poem, his hope thereby to pave the way for his return to their favor.

12. "That men may mingle for thee when they hear." This line is Cary's, and, as the present translator thinks, is not capable of improvement. It gives precisely the sense of Dante's

"Si che l' uom ti mesca."

13, 14. "Thou that dost soar so high."

"Si t' insusi."

Thou dost so in-height's thyself. Instances hereof have already been given in a note to the Fourth Canto, line 28. Another may be cited in the Canto preceding the present one, line 115: "s'indraca" that in-Dragon's itself, turns itself into a Dragon.

14. "To minds terrene." Thou beholdest events of the future as clearly as we recognize the most obvious propositions in the exact sciences.
17. "That Point." The final, loftiest height, God himself, in whom all things past, present, and to come are mirrored, and who is beheld by all eyes in Paradise.


27. "The shaft."

- "Nam prævisa minus ledere tela solent." (Proverb.)
- "Prævisus ante, mollior ictus venit." (Proverb.)
- "Praemonitus, praemunitus." (Proverb.)
- "Forewarned, forearmed." (Proverb.)


31. "Phrases vain." The ambiguous announcements of the ancient oracles, as: "Aio te Æacide Romanos vincere posse;" and another already given in these notes.

35, 36. "Love ancestral . . . smile." The lustre of its smile; the same lustre revealed its love — another characteristic of the body spiritual.

37, 40. "Contingency . . . necessity." Dante would seem to have derived these phrases and this philosophy from Boëthius, *Consolations*, v. 3.

46. "Hippolytus." Driven from Athens on account of the false accusations of Phædra his step-mother.

50. "And soon." The assumed date of the Poem is 1300, the expulsion came in 1302.

53. "Vengeance." Dante led, or accompanied, an armed expedition against Florence. And vengeance may refer to the troubles of Pope Boniface resulting in his death in 1303, and in the removal of the pontifical see to Avignon in 1309.

62. "The bad and foolish company." "Incipit Comedia Dantis Aligherii, Florentini, natione non moribus," he is said to have written at the head of the first page of the Commedia, in chastisement of the abominable manners of his native place. But words must have seemed inadequate to set forth
the rudeness and neglect of the darlings of society, the ill-bred, unlearned people, clothed with wealth, power, and conceit, whom he encountered abroad.

71, 72. "Lombard...ladder." A red field whereon a golden ladder was surmounted by a black eagle, constituted the arms of the Lords della Scala. Bartolommeo and his younger brother, Can Grande, are here referred to by Dante, the latter succeeding to the lordship in 1311. The generalissimo of the Ghibellines, Can Grande, made the exiled Florentines welcome to his court, his palace, his table. Dante's Latin letter to him, genuine or not, is often quoted. The Can died in the midst of his campaigns, in 1329, thus surviving Dante eight years.

These Lombard noblemen were sons of Alberto della Scala. Dante alludes to him in the 121st line of the Eighteenth Purgatorio. He died in 1301, the next year after the assumed date of the Commedia, and a year preceding Dante's banishment.

76, 77, 78, 91. "Star...darling...power...but tell it not." "History, tradition, and the after fortunes of Dante all agree that there was a rupture between him and Can Grande; if it did not amount to a quarrel, there seems to have been some misunderstanding between the magnificent protector and his haughty client." Balbo's Life of Dante, Mrs. Bunsbury's Tr. ii. 207. "He at first was held in much honor by Can Grande, but afterwards he by degrees fell out of favor, and day by day less pleased that lord." Petrarch.

82. "The Gascon...Great Harry." The Gascon is Pope Clement the Fifth; Great Harry is Henry of Luxemburg, Henry the Seventh of Germany, Dante's ideal statesman. Dante met him with much homage, on his arrival in Italy, in 1310.

110. "Take wrongs." This line the translator purposely makes Sophoclean, capable of two constructions.

114. "Beauty." "Occhi," eyes, is the Dantesque text. But not alone the eyes, the smile, the countenance of Beatrice, exalted Dante, and made him fit for celestial converse.
CANTO EIGHTEENTH:

ARGUMENT:

The bitterness in the prophecy of Cacciaguida is assuaged by the beauty and the words of Beatrice. Cacciaguida calls by name, and makes to appear in motion, among the stars which form or embellish the Cross, famous heroes. The beauty of Beatrice and of the Heavens increases, and Dante finds himself in the sixth Heaven, Jupiter, the abode of the souls of righteous rulers, and placed under the control of the Dominions of the Heavens. There the beatified spirits gradually assume the form of an eagle.


Now was that blessed spirit in its word
Rejoicing, and I, too, in mine; but meet,
In mortal savoring, bitter things with sweet.
And from my beauteous Guide to God I heard:
"On other thoughts muse thou; think thou how He
Near whom I dwell can from wrong's burdens free."
At these, my comfort's usual accents dear,
I turned me round, but that high love I leave
Untold wherewith those eyes did me receive;
Not only that my words might fail I fear,
   But that, so far above its plane, might miss
The unaided mind to imagine forth such bliss.
Yet may I on this wonder this much say,
   That, as I now again upon her gazed,
My heart felt every shrine but hers was razed.
And while the eternal pleasure, which its ray
   Direct to Beatrice sent, from her fair face
Made me content with its reflected grace,

Me conquering with a smile's gay golden shaft,
   She said: “More speech awaits thee, turn, and
own
   Thy Paradise rests not in mine eyes alone.”
And even as here below is sometimes quaffed
   The affection in the look, if that the sight
The soul intoxicate quite with rapt delight,
So, by the flaming of the effulgence blest
   To which I turned, I saw that somewhat more
It sought to say not touched upon before,
Joshua he named, and scarce was said the word
Than flamed athwart the cross a splendor bright
With purest scintillations fair of light;
And when the lofty Maccabee's name was heard,
Revolved another, caring not to stop,
For gladness was the whip unto that top.
So Charlemagne's, and so Orlando's name,
Both at one moment, caught my wondering sight
Intent as though it watched a falcon's flight.

Came William then, and Renouard flashing came,
And brilliantly Duke Godfrey shone, and graced
Athwart that cross was Robert Guiscard's haste.
Then did depart, to join that army bright,
The soul that had addressed me, and his part
Took in the chorus high of heavenly art.
Then unto Beatrice turned I, to the right,
My course to learn as set forth by her word,
Or from her queenly gestures kind inferred;

And clearness such of light shone in her eyes,
And pleasure such, that passed her countenance e'en
What there, of wont, I had aforetime seen;
And as, by feeling higher his pleasure rise,
A man from day to day becomes aware
How good deeds him for higher abodes prepare,
So saw I Heaven's broad scope, and progress mine
Made grandly greater, and adorned still more
That miracle born mid Heaven's high orbs to soar.
And such as is the change in shadings fine
That haunts a woman's face when fades away
The blush that on its bashful musings lay,
Such did it, when I turned, appear to me,
Its cause the whiteness of that temperate star,
The sixth, which me claimed, lifted now thus far.
And made that torch of Jove mine eyes to see
The sparkling bands of love that therein flew.
Form speech, by flight through that orb's stainless hue.

And as do birds lift from the shore the wing,
And, joyed at their rich feeding, deftly drill,
Now round, now long, their squadrons, stirred or still,
So, from within those lights each sacred thing
Flew, singing, here and there, and, as to tell
Their meaning, formed now D, now I, now L.
First, as they sung, they would their changes bring,
Then, one becoming of the letters, stayed,
And silent were, nor from that fixed form strayed.

O Pegasean Muse, by whose nod floats
To distant times fair genius' wing which fame
To states and cities gives of praise or blame,
With thyself kindle me, that with thy notes,
Those flights I may within my verses bring;
O let thy power me guide whilst them I sing!
Formed thus the radiant squadron five times seven
Of vowels and consonants; them I treasured, caught
As though to me had them their voices brought:
Canto XVIII.

The Eagle.

"D·I·L·I·G·I·T·E·J·U·S·T·I·A·M," thus spoke Heaven,
And what begun thus was with noun and verb,
"Q·U·I·J·U·D·I·C·A·T·I·S·T·E·R·R·A·M" closed superb.
And in the final M they fixed remained,
So that, in that part, Jupiter's white seemed rayed,
Like silver wherein burnished gold's inlaid.
Then other golden souls I saw had gained
The summit of the M, and thence a song
Sent to that Summit for whose heights they long.

Then, as, when logs that burn one briskly smites,
There rise innumerable sparks, whence fools
Draw auguries deep and life-directing rules,
Thence seemed to rise more than a thousand lights,
And to ascend, some higher and lower some,
Even as the Sun, their Fountain, bid them come.
And as each one did in its place abide,
Their form became an eagle's neck and head,
All formed of saints whence golden lustres sped.

He there who paints hath none to be His guide,
But Himself guides, and all the brilliant nest
Doth own its form it hath from his behest.
The sainted body that contented seemed
At first a lily on the M to bloom
The rest did of the eagle's form assume.
Sweet star serene! thy gems upon me beamed
To show me that our justice here on earth
Comes from thine heaven, comes from thy jewell'd worth!
Paradiso.
The Sphere of Jupiter.

Wherefore I pray that Mind whence have their source
Thy motion and thy virtue, there to mark
Where smoke thy rays hath troublous made and dark;
So that again his anger have its course
'Gainst those who in that temple buy and sell
Which martyrdoms built and miracles designate well.
Ye hosts of heaven, whose legion me confront,
O beg ye grace for those in earthly fray
All after ill example gone astray!

To war with swords in former times 't was wont;
But now war 's made by taking here and there
The bread the pitying Lord refuses ne'er.
Think thou, who writest but to cancel, they
Who for this vineyard which thou spoilest died,
Peter and Paul, do yet in life abide;
"So strong my longing," thus thou seem'st to say,
"Is unto him who solitude's paths preferred,
And went to martyrdom at a dancer's word,

"That Fisherman none I know nor Paul, to-day."

NOTES TO THE EIGHTEENTH CANTO.

2. "Rejoicing." Enjoying what Shakespeare, in his Thirtieth Sonnet, calls

"The sessions of sweet silent thought."
Notes.

8, 9. "I leave untold."

"T is a thing impossible, to frame
Conceptions equal to the soul's desires;
And the most difficult of tasks to keep
Heights which the soul is competent to gain."

Wordsworth.

37. "Joshua." The successor of Moses, in the leadership of Israel. Joshua i. 5.

40. "The lofty Maccabee." Judas Maccabæus, so called from the Hebrew makkab, a hammer. 1 Maccabees iii. 2.

42. "For gladness was the whip unto that top."

"Like to a top which boys
Drive with the lash in spinning swiftness round,
While it, urged keen, in circling spaces whirls,
And it the younger band amazed surveys,
With wonder at the nimble box-wood filled,
To which the lash lends life."

Seventh Aeneid, 378.

43. "Charlemagne ... Orlando." Charlemagne is, in Turpin's exaggerated Chronicles, ch. xx., following the mediæval imagination, described as a giant in size, and of fabulous strength: "He was so strong that he could, at a single blow, cleave asunder an armed soldier on horseback, from the head to the waist, and the horse likewise. He easily vaulted over four horses standing abreast, and could raise, on his hand, an armed man from the ground to his head."

Charlemagne's merits, moral and intellectual, should also not be forgotten.

Orlando, the famous Paladin, slain in the battle of Roncesvalles, has inspired three epics, those of Pulci, Bojardo, and Ariosto. It was he that wielded the sword Durandel and the horn Olivant.

46. "William ... and Renouard." The Ottimo Commento says this William was a Count of Orange in Provence. It was said that he was taken prisoner and carried to Africa by the Moorish king, Tobaldo, whose wife Arabella he converted to Christianity, and afterwards eloped with. He must have been, however, an unattractive lover, if he was, as is
alleged, identical with Guillaume au Court Nez, William of the Short Nose, so named because, in battle, a Saracen had eliminated that organ. He, however, fought for the faith, and finished his career as a holy hermit, earning the title of Saint William of the Desert. Butler and others incline to think him the ancestor of the princes of Orange who attained the throne of Holland.

Renouard was, it is said, a Moor, a captive of Saint Louis, under whose instructions he embraced Christianity and his daughter Alice in matrimony. He, too, ended his career in holy orders. The old romancers say that as an ecclesiastic he clung not too closely to the fast and the vigil; but he has the endorsement of Dante.

47. "Duke Godfrey." Of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, and leader of the First Crusade. Gibbon sketches his career in the fifty-eighth chapter of the Decline and Fall. He assigns to him the highest rank in war and in council, and describes him as a worthy representative of Charlemagne, from whom he was descended in the female line. "Godfrey," Gibbon says, "was the first who ascended the walls of Rome; and his sickness, his vow, perhaps his remorse for bearing arms against the Pope, confirmed an early resolution of visiting the holy sepulchre, not as a pilgrim, but as a deliverer." Valorous, prudent, pious, magnanimous, studious, he was a model, at once of the civic and of the warlike virtues.

48. "Robert Guiscard." Founder of the kingdom of Naples, a sort of mediæval Ulysses, and named Guiscard the Cunning, from his adroitness in diplomacy and adventure. An instance of his talent for strategy is given in connection with the history of Monte Cassino, in the notes to the Twenty-eighth Inferno. Gibbon says of him that even the reluctant praise of his foes has assigned to him heroic qualities. His voice has been compared to that of Achilles, which could impress obedience and terror amidst the tumult of battle. His eloquence has been compared to that of Cicero, which was equal to all the heights of statesmanship. He died fighting for the faith in an expedition against Con-
Canto XVIII.

Notes.

stantinople. Born about 1015, died 1085, his right to a place among the Crusaders rests on his fame as the liberator of Southern Italy from the dominion of the Saracens.

52. "To the right." An intimation of Dante's solicitude that nothing in Purgatory nor in Paradise should be sinister.

63. "That miracle." Beatrice, to whom Dante more than once applies the term. In the Vita Nuova, for instance, he says, "Many, when she had passed, said, 'This is not a woman, rather is she one of the most beautiful angels of heaven.' Others said, 'She is a miracle. Blessed be the Lord who can perform such a marvel!"' In the Twenty-first Sonnet he treats of her eyes, her voice, and her smile:

"What seems she when a little she doth smile
Cannot be kept in mind, cannot be told,
Such strange and gentle miracle is wrought."

78, 80. "Now D, now I, now L . . . one." They all joined in forming a single letter at a time. That letter being perfect, so remained for a moment, and then was dissolved, that the next might be formed.

82. "O Pegasean Muse." Calliope, the Muse of Epic Verse. The hoof-beat of Pegasus, a winged steed, bearer of the thunderbolts of Jupiter, or the arrows of Aurora, on Mount Helicon, produced the fountain named Hippocrene. Thence the Muses have their inspiration, and thence Dante gives them the title of Pegasean. And this title, in a special sense, belongs to the Muse of Heroic Poetry.

84. "Of praise or blame." The Good Fame and Evil Fame of Virgil seem to be here intimated.

91, 93. "Diligite justitiam . . . qui judicatis terram."
"Love righteousness, ye that be judges of the earth." Wisdom i. 1.

102. "Auguries deep." Divination, in a childish way, by fire. Cowper describes fire-divination, not as with a burning brand, but with a scrap of paper:

"So, when a child, as playful children use,
Has burnt to tinder a stale last year's news,
The flame extinct, he views the roving fire,—
There goes my lady! and there goes the squire!
There goes the parson! O illustrious spark!
And there, scarce less illustrious, goes the clerk!"

125. "Earthly fray." Another protest against the mad violence of the times.

129. "The bread." Refusal to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

130. "Who writest but to cancel." Some say that the words apply to Boniface, who is supposed to be accused just below, and elsewhere, of an overweening fondness for money. Others say the words are used in allusion to the vacillating policy of Clement the Fifth. The intimation is held to be that Boniface cancelled for pay, that he practised simony.

134. "Who solitude's paths preferred." The passage is satirical, and the meaning is, the image of Saint John the Baptist on the golden florin of Florence. See the description and history of the florin in the notes to the Thirtieth Inferno and Ninth Paradiso.

CANTO NINETEENTH.

ARGUMENT:

Dante listens, in rapt attention, to the discourse of the Eagle on the divine plan, and on events which are about to transpire in history.
The Heaven of Jupiter.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Dante. The Eagle.


And now the Eagle's wings before me gleamed,
That bird of beauty which those jubilant souls Held interwoven in its feathery folds.
A little ruby each of those souls seemed,
And upon each the burning sun's clear ray, Refracted, did in my glad vision play;
And that which now to shape in words I seek, Ne'er voice hath said, it ink hath written not, Nor fancy's shell e'er muttered in its grot;
For speak I saw, and heard discourse, the beak; 10
And I and My, not We and Our, of choice,
Came all divinely from his glorious voice.
"Being just and merciful," it said, "I here
Exalted am to summits such that higher
Cannot attain conception nor desire;
And all the earth my memory doth revere,
For precepts mine the wicked e'en commend,
Although their lives they do not to them bend."

As doth from many embers one sole heat 19
Itself make felt, so was, from out the bird,
Sent from its beak, one sole discoursing heard.
Wherefore I them: "O flowers perennial, meet
For Joy Eternal, that, in one breath sole,
Exhale the odors that my heart control,
By ye within me be the great fast riven
Which hath in hunger held me long and long;
Such potent food doth not to earth belong!

"This well I know that if there be in heaven 28
A realm whose mirror Justice high reflects,
Yours every veil that might it dim rejects.
By you my deep attention 's understood,
By you the doubt is known whose thirst hath me
So long a prisoner held that would be free."
As doth a falcon, issuing from his hood,
His head hold high, and make his wings him laud,
When, beauteous, he desires to sail abroad,
So saw I that high ensign stir, which grand
Was with Divinity's self, and in its breast
Held songs which know those realms and those
so blest.
And then it said: "He who his compass placed
Where ends earth's verge, and who devised
So much which see, and miss, our mortal eyes,
Could not on all the universe wide such seal
Of this omniscience make, but that should still
Remain an excess infinite of His will.

"And this the truth doth in clear light reveal,
How fell earth's paragon, victim first of pride,
For want of light to him as yet denied.
And hence, each minor nature we must feel
A scant receptacle is to measure Power,
Which its own standard is, and owns no hour.
Therefore your sight, which must its origin own
As but a single ray of that Mind whence
All things exist in spirit or in sense,

"Cannot deny that Source from whence 't is flown,
Cannot but humbly grant that much concealed
Exists beyond the things as yet revealed.
And therefore 't is that penetrate so men's minds
Into Eternal Justice, as the eye
Doth into deepest parts of ocean pry;
The eye the bottom near the margin finds,
But none can scan where billows billows race,
And yet 't is there, and depth conceals its place.
"Light none exists but what heaven's lamps supply,
Lamps ne'er o'ercast; else darkness 'tis, or shade
Of fleshly pomp, or poison intellect-made.
Wide open now that covert's portals fly,
Which hath from thee the living Justice hid,
Of doubts whereof thy mind thou seek'st to rid.
For thus thou saidst: 'Suppose on Indus' banks
A man is born, and none is there who speaks
Of Christ, nor reads, nor writes, and that he seeks

"'Right ways, and life accepts with reverent thanks,
Our human reason saith that without sin
His life was ended, and should honor win:
But unbaptized he dieth, and void of faith;
Where is the justice that condemns him? What Fault can be his if he believeth not?'
Now, who art thou that, as a chancellor, saith
Thou seest aright, a thousand miles removed,
An object, while a span your vision's proved?

"'Tis true, with him who subtleties thus prefers,
There might for doubting here be marvellous grounds,
If Scripture did not fix well-outlined bounds.
O flesh terrene, O intellect's pride that errs,
The primal Will, that good is ever shown,
Ne'er from the Source of Good hath erring flown.
So much is just as stands its faultless test;
It yields to influence none from good elsewhere,
For its own rays make that divinely fair."
Even as, when circling forth above her nest,
   The stork, when she hath fed her little ones, flies,
   And watch her flight the birdlings' well-pleased eyes,
So rose my brows, so rose the bird divine,
   And, by such counsels urged, above my head
   Its glorious wings in circling motion sped,
And sang: "As are these very notes of mine
   To thy foiled mind, which of them hath no ken,
   So are God's judgments unto mortal men."

Then paused the Holy Spirits' splendors there,
   And kept their posts within that ensign's lines,
   Whereby yet Romans hold in awe men's minds,
While it resumed: "Unto this kingdom ne'er
   Ascended one who hath not faith in Christ,
   Before or since was put to death that Christ.
But many, lo! there be, who call 'Christ, Christ,'
   Who, at the judgment, lower place far may claim
   Than they who never heard his misused name.

"Such Christians shall the Ethiop's deed condemn,
   When shall be severed those vast companies twain,
   To loss the one, the other endless gain.
Well may the Persians e'en your kings contemn,
   When they that volume opened shall behold
   Wherein shall be their failings all enrolled.
There shall be seen, among your Albert's deeds,
   That which ere long shall move th' historic pen
   When shall Prague's realm become a desert fen."
"There shall be seen the woe his false coin breeds
Upon the Seine, he who his being must
Surrender to a wild boar's mighty thrust.
There shall be seen the pride that causes strife,
And makes the Scot and Englishman so thirst
For mutual blood, they o'er their boundaries burst;
Be seen that luxury and effeminate life,
The Spaniard's bane, the base Bohemian's bait,
He who e'er worth beheld with fevered hate;

"Be seen the Cripple of Jerusalem,
His goodness representing, and an M
The token of his vices and his phlegm;
Be seen the greedy deeds and covert done
By him who guards the Isle of Fire, which blest
Anchises, who sought there his needed rest;
And let his record be in form that lacks
All nobleness, like his own pitiful self,
And let each letter lag, a limping elf.

"And shall appear, to all, the unrighteous acts
Whereby his uncle and his brother shame
Gave noble lands, else worthy held of fame.
And Portugal's king, and he of Norway too,
Shall there be known, and he of Rascia, born
From forging coins of Venice to reap scorn.
O Happy Hungary, if she wrongs ne'er knew
B'yond these! Happy Navarre, if charmed by hills
That gird her towers thus happily armed 'gainst ills.
“In earnest of that day, e’en now efface
Would Nicosia and Famagosta crimes
Which their own beast doth bring upon our times,
While by the others’ flank he keeps due pace.”

NOTES TO THE NINETEENTH CANTO.

1. “Wings.” The neck and head had been already formed. See the preceding Canto, line 107.

13. “Just and merciful.” A reminder that this, the sixth Heaven, is the sphere of Justice, and also that Justice should not be unattended by Mercy.

40. “Compass.” “When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: ...


115. “There shall be seen.” Remark the structure of line 115 and the following twenty-six lines. “Li si vedra,” and “Vedrassi,” and “E,” are repeated, each three times. Thus are made three groups of three tercets each, each group being distinguished by the initial word or letter of its tercets.

115. “Albert.” Albert I., Emperor of Germany, mentioned in the Sixth Purgatorio, line 97.

117. “Prague.” The Eagle predicts Albert’s invasion of Bohemia in the year 1303, only three years after the assumed date of the Commedia.

119. “Coin.” Philip the Fair of France, pressed by debt, fixed an increased value upon the coin of the realm. Philip came to his death in consequence of the sudden and violent fall of his horse to the ground occasioned by a wild boar running between the horse’s legs, in 1314.

125. "Spaniard . . . Bohemian." The Spaniard is by some of the commentators said to be Alonzo the Tenth, by some to be one of the Alphonsos. It is said his death was caused by intemperance. The Bohemian is Wenceslaus the Second, the son of Ottocar, mentioned in the Seventh Purgatorio as a luxurious monarch.

127. "Cripple." Charles the Second, King of Apulia and Jerusalem, who was lame.

131. "Isle of Fire . . . Anchises." Sicily was called "the Isle of Fire" from Mt. Etna, and the allusion is supposed to be to Frederic, son of Peter of Aragon, who held, or claimed, jurisdiction over Sicily. The Ottimo gives him praise, and it is by some supposed that Dante condemned him because he abandoned the Imperial cause.

In Sicily Anchises died:

"Hence me receives
Dread Drepanum's port and joyless shore. For here,
By such stress driven, and tempests of the sea,
I lose, alas! my father, him the stay
Of every care and hurt, Anchises dear."

Third Æneid, 707.

137. "Uncle . . . brother." The uncle of the Sicilian king was James, King of the Balearic Islands. He joined Philip the Bold of France in his disastrous invasion of Catalonia, an invasion which resulted in the loss of his own crown.

The brother was James of Aragon. He gave up Sicily which his father had acquired.

139. "Portugal . . . Norway." The Portuguese monarch is said to have been a contemporary of Dante, and to have held the throne from 1279 to 1325. He seems to have been inclined to the pursuits of peace, and not inclined to venture on crusades. The commentators generally condemn Dante's censure of this king.

The Norwegian is unknown. King John of Saxony, with Witte, thinks it may be Eric the priest-hater, or Hakon Longshanks.
Canto XIX.

Notes.

140. "Rascia." Or Ragusa, a city of Dalmatia. The allusion here is to Urosçius II. who married a daughter of the Emperor Michael Palæologus, and counterfeited the coin of Venice.

142. "Hungary." Here are denounced, according to the Ottimo Commento, a series of profligate kings, the contrast to whom was afforded in Dante's own time by the exemplary character of King Andrea.

143. "Navarre." The charm of her "hills," the Pyrenees, failed to preserve her from the ambition of Philip the Fair of France, who claimed the sovereignty in right of his marriage with Jeanne, granddaughter of King Thibault. The mention of Navarre is a thrust at Philip. Thibault is probably the crusader and poet of that name whom, with Dante, we worshipped, in the Twenty-second Inferno, as "Thibault, King adored."

147. "Beast." Benvenuto inveighs against the "meretricious, lewd, and fetid" manners of the people of Cyprus.

148. "The others." That is, the other vicious kings.

148. "Departeth not." This closing portion of the discourse of the Eagle may be considered, in a sort, a Dantean Dies Irae. A review of the European political situation seems to embarrass it, at the expense of the lofty generalizations which might have characterized it, and which distinguish the work of the writer of the Dies Irae (be he Franciscan monk or sainted pope), the great religious lyric of the generation preceding that of Dante, for the Dies Irae is supposed to have found its way to paper about fifteen years before his birth.
CANTO TWENTIETH.

ARGUMENT:

Songs of ravishing sweetness break forth from the blessed spirits, after which the Eagle continues his discourse, showing forth the merits of Ripheus, Trajan, and other righteous rulers.

Still the Heaven of Jupiter.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Dante. The Eagle. Voices in song.


When he who to the world dispenses light
Beyond our hemisphere's arc so far descends
That on all sides the glimmering daylight ends,
The heaven, that erewhile he alone made bright,
Itself again doth suddenly now reveal
Through many lights which his rays' splendors feel.

And to my mind was brought this heavenly scene
When silence came upon that blessed beak
Whence light the world and all its leaders seek,
Canto XX.

A River's Murmur.

Because those living stars of heaven were seen
To grow in beauty, and did songs begin
Which thought and memory fail again to win.

O gentle Love, thus by a smile inspired,
How lustrous in those gems didst thou appear
Filled with high thoughts as water fills the mere!

After those crystals so in light attired
With which this sixth orb was begemmed, there fell
Silence at length on each angelic bell.

And then I seemed the murmuring deep to hear
A river gives when, from a mountain's head,
O'er shelving rocks, its sparkling waves are led.

And as the gradual sound attains the ear
The lute's neck yields, or breath that seeks to fill
The shepherd's pipe with its responsive thrill,
Even thus, but with more readiness, seemed to seek
The eagle's neck that murmuring of the bird
Now as if through a hollow opening heard.

There it became a voice, and left its beak
In words which on my waiting heart I then
Wrote fully forth with adamant-pointed pen.

"That part in me which sees and bears the sun
In mortal eagles," such the words were, "place
Thine eyes upon, and its divisions trace.

For of the fires whence all mine outline's won,
Those whence mine eye doth sparkle place supreme
O'er all the rest assume and brightest beam.
"He who, as pupil, in the midst doth shine
Sung once the Holy Spirit's song, and bore
The ark about, and all its wondrous store.
Now knoweth he, glad, that those his songs divine,
As far as from his own design they soared,
Have here attained their fitting, fair reward.
Of five who round the interior circle dwell
The one that nearest is unto my beak
The widow heard her son's cause pleading meek;

"And now he of two opposite states can tell:
How sharp to abandon Christ the penalty falls;
How sweet the bliss that him to Paradise calls.
He that is seen in the superior arc
Of that circumference, death postponed and fear
By reverent deeds and penitence all sincere.
Now knoweth he well that ne'er through errors dark
The eternal judgment wanders, though through prayer
To-day may to to-morrow send its care.

"He who next follows, with the laws and me,
Bad fruit producing where he good did seek,
By ceding to the Pastor, reigned a Greek.
And that now harms him not, he well can see,
The ill from his good action brought, although
The world thereby may to destruction go.
And he who in the inferior arc hath place
Was William, whom the self-same land laments
Which tears on Charles and Frederick living vents.
"Now know' th he how turns heaven's approving face
   T'wards justice in a king; and, in that glow
Effulgent his, he gives it outward show.
Who would, in man's vain earth, deem such the case,
   That in this arc the Trojan Ripheus' soul
Could be the fifth? No man can see the whole
Of heavenly grace; but now knoweth he how awed
Will be his sight who that grace seeks to sound
Whereof the bottom never can be found."

Like as a lark that drives its wings abroad,
   And sings, but then to silence falls, content
With its last sweetness with the echoes blent,
Such seemed to me that image whereon threw
   The eternal pleasure its own image, glad
All beauteous things to see divinely clad.
And notwithstanding that my doubt a hue
Me gave as tint a color gives to glass,
It grudged that should an idle moment pass,

But from my lips "What things are these?" its might
   Extorted, whereupon of joy increased
Gave to my sight the heavens a glorious feast.
And while the eye showed yet a brighter light
   Response to me the blessed standard made,
That I might not in wonderment be delayed:
"I see that thou belief herein dost claim
On my word only, but that reasons none
For thy belief are by thy musings won."
"Thy thought as his is who a thing by name
Conceiveth clearly, but its quiddity lurks
Unknown until another's reason works.
Heaven's kingdom violence suffereth from deep love
And from that living hope that Heaven doth scale
And even God's own volition doth assail.
Not as man conquereth man is it above,
For there the conquest's sought, a thing of choice,
And Heaven's the conqueror by its loving voice.

"The first life and the fifth whom thou dost see
Give thee astonishment much because in them
The angels' region picture finds and gem.
Not as thou deem'st were they from earth set free
Gentiles, but Christians in the faith made fast
Of suffering feet, to come, or in the past.
For one from Hell, where no one turns back e'er
Unto good will, unto his bones returned,
And that by hope, as its reward, was earned,

"By living hope that placed its power in prayer,
In prayers to God made to restore him where
His will might act and have its purpose fair.
The glorious soul, my speech's present aim,
Unto the flesh returned, and while it stayed
Had faith sincere in His all-powerful aid;
And, in believing, rose unto such flame
Of generous love that, at the second death,
Worthy it was of heaven to breathe the breath.
The other, through the riches of that grace
That from so deep a Fountain wells, no soul
Hath reached the primal wave from whence they roll,
On justice set his mind, t'wards right his face,
Wherefore in fine did God to him unclose
The Source Divine whence our redemption flows,
Wherein believing he from that day forth
The stench of paganism suffered not, and lands Reproved that t'wards it raised adoring hands.

Those at the right-hand wheel thou sawest, of worth
Exalted, Maidens three, his baptism great
Became, a thousand years ere baptism's date.
O thou predestination! ever far
Thy root is from those eyes which, seeing, fail
To see entire the First Cause they so hail!
And ye, O mortals, give yourselves a bar
In judging; for ourselves, who God behold,
Know that to ourselves the elect are not all told;

And unto us this deprivation's sweet,
Because in God's good we our good fulfill,
For what He wills that do we also will."
Thus did that shape divine me meet and greet,
And, to extend the shortness of my sight,
A pleasant medicine give with all delight;
And, as we sometimes see the music reach
From voice to lute, whose chords accordant move,
Whereby the song doth more delightful prove,
So, while the voice spake, I recall that each
Of those blest lights, as eye with eye winks,
Danced,
With flamelets joyous, as the arrows glanced,
Which from the quiver came of that high speech.

NOTES TO THE TWENTIETH CANTO.

37, 44, 55, 61, 68. "He who as pupil ... the one that nearest
is unto my beak ... in the superior arc ... he who next follows
... in the inferior arc ... Trojan Riphæus." King David
brought the Ark of the Covenant from Kirjathjearim to the
house of Obed-Edom, and thence to Jerusalem, as related in
the sixth chapter of the Second Book of Samuel.

The one nearest the beak is the Emperor Trajan, who
owed his place in Paradise to the prayers of Saint Gregory.
The story of the poor widow has been given in the Tenth
Purgatorio.

He in the superior arc is King Hezekiah. Isaiah cured
him with a lump of figs laid on the boil; and to show his
power with God, turned the shadow on the dial of Ahaz ten
degrees backward; and God granted Hezekiah fifteen added
years of life, as a reward of prayer and faith; as related in
the twentieth chapter of the Second Book of Kings.

The next is Constantine who transferred the imperial
throne, laws, and standard to Byzantium, a city under Greek
influences.

He in the inferior arc is the lamented William the Second,
surnamed the Good, son of Robert Guiscard, and King of
Apulia and Sicily, kingdoms which, in Dante's time, were
deploiring the rulership of Charles the Lame, the "Cripple
of Jerusalem," King of Apulia, and Frederick of Aragon,
King of Sicily.

Trojan Riphæus. In a Canto devoted to the realm of
Justice there seems a peculiar appropriateness in making
prominent Virgil's "Most just of Trojan men."
40. "Now knoweth he." "Ora cognosce" is repeated after the mention of each of the worthies of the Eagle's eye.

41. "As far as from his own design they soared."

"In quanto effetto fu del suo consilio."

And partly from inspiration of God? Is here a hint of Dante's idea as to the character and extent of scriptural inspiration?

57. "Ceding to the Pastor." In continuation of a note to the Nineteenth Inferno, it might be added that there seems to be a mooted point as to what was the extent of Constantine's benefactions to the see of Rome. They certainly extended to lavish munificence towards the city; they included gifts of the Basilicas of Saint John Lateran, Saint Peter's, and other splendid structures, and of means for their adornment. But it seems to be on all sides admitted that Dante's phrase "cedere" (ceded) should not be understood in the sense of an absence from Rome brought about by unpleasant relations with the "Pastor," the Supreme Pontiff, or by ambition on the part of the Pastor.

On the contrary, those lines of Constantine's career which are most salient show that the establishment of the seat of government at Byzantium was, as Gibbon shows, dictated by Constantine's own ambition and his personal convenience. He was, himself, in some sort, an Asiatic, a native of a Danubian province; he had been placed in power by Britain, and he had but a low estimate of Italy. "The country of the Cæsars was viewed by Constantine with cold indifference, and the senate and people of Rome were seldom honored with the presence of their sovereign." _Decline and Fall_, chap. xvii. The same historian (chap. xiv.) records that "Trèves, Milan, Aquileia, Sirmium, Naissus, and Thessalonica were the occasional places of his residence, till he founded a New Rome on the confines of Europe and Asia." It may be added that he, perhaps, desired a capital which should bear his name, a City of Constantine; and, indeed, he may have shared in Cæsar's Asiatic leaning to rebuild, at his leisure, the City of Troy as the Capital of the Empire.
Dante's criticism on what is known in history or fable as the "Donation of Constantine," is that, while it redounds to his credit as an act springing from generous religious impulses, it was followed by ill results.

85. "The eye." Only one eye of the Eagle is seen; the head is, therefore, in profile; and we may well suppose that, with Dante's disposition to avoid things sinister, he gives the dexter eye.

94. "Heaven's kingdom violence suffereth." "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force." Matthew xi. 12.

100. "The first... and the fifth." Trajan and Ripheus.

105. "Suffering feet."

"Therefore, friends,
As far as to the sepulchre of Christ
(Whose soldier now, under whose blessed cross,
We are impressed and engaged to fight),
Forthwith a power of English shall we levy,
Whose arms were moulded in their mothers' wombs
To chase these pagans in those holy fields
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet,
Which, fourteen hundred years ago, were nailed,
For our advantage, to the bitter cross."

King Henry IV. i. 1.

106, 107, 108, 109, 111, 114, 116, 117. "One from Hell... returned... hope... in prayer... will... faith... at the second death... heaven." In the Lower World Trajan's will was deprived, and of no efficacy towards reversing the eternal doom: he was there without hope. The legend is, that, four hundred years after his death, the prayers of Saint Gregory effected his restoration to life, permitted efficacy to his heavenward will, and that he, then, after baptism, dying again, was admitted into Paradise. Mention of this legend, it will be remembered, has already been made in the note to line 73 of the Tenth Purgatorio.


130. "O thou predestination." "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Romans ix. 21.

148. "That high speech." Here the work closed, it is said, until Dante returned to the earth to point out, in a vision, to his son, the place where the remaining thirteen Cantos were to be found. The story is among the Illustrations to Longfellow's Inferno.
CANTO TWENTY-FIRST.

ARGUMENT:

Beatrice reminds Dante that they are now wafted into the Seventh Heaven, the sphere of Saturn, father of the Age of Gold, the abode of the spirits of the contemplative, and placed under the control of the Thrones of the Heavens. There silence prevailed, and, although her beauty is increased, Beatrice wore no smile. Dante is permitted to converse with Saint Peter Damian, who explains the silence, and imparts to the Poet his personal history and his reflections on the reigning Pope, Boniface the Eighth. After his discourse, a deafening outbreak of shouts from admiring spirits who gather around the saint disturbs the silence.


Again upon my Lady's face mine eyes
Were bent, and with them all my mind, for nought
Beside her face mine eyes or musings sought;
And she smiled not; and said she of this guise:
"Were I to smile thou wouldst like Semele burn,
Thou wouldst, like her, to lifeless ashes turn.
Because my beauty, that, as higher we mount
The stairs of this eternal palace, grows,
As thou hast seen, now with such glory glows
“That, unreduced, it thee would nimbly count 'nimbly count
'Gainst its effulgence, as the leaf smote down
What time the thunder leaps from skies that
frown.

Uplifted we the seventh great splendor find,
That 'neath the burning Lion's breast a shower
Of radiance sends commingled with his power.
Let seek thine eyes the same view as thy mind,
And of them make a mirror for the scene
That in this mirror's field shall come serene.”

He who could know how richly I had fed
Upon her blessed countenance, thus employed
In other care wherein I so much joyed,
Would comprehend how willingly I was led
To obey the mandate of my heavenly guide,
By weighing one against the other side.
Within that crystal which, as through space rolled,
Bears that loved monarch's earthly name sublime
'Neath whom vice died 'midst early births of
Time,

Like radiant sunshine crowned with bars of Gold
A ladder I beheld to such a height
Uplifted, that it 'scaped my vision's might.
And down the steps descending such display
Of splendors saw I, that I thought the lamps
Of all the heavens had ordered there their camps.
And as together rooks at break of day,
As is their wont, themselves with liveliness fill
To warm their feathers damped with morning's
chill,
Then some fly off to seek the distant air,
    Others return to points they left, while wheel
Others around, and love of home reveal;
Such fashion it appeared to me was there,
    Soon as that sparkling army's feet had found
Of that clear ladder's length a certain round.
And one that lingered near us waxed so bright
That said my thought: "I see, by this true sign,
    That thou a kindness dost to me design,

"But she from whom I guidance seek and light,
    In speech and silence, standeth still, whence word
From me, though anxious, shall not now be heard."
She thereupon, who saw my musing mood
    In sight of Him whose sight is infinite, said:
"Let thy warm wish through thy words' path be led."
And I: "No worth wherewith my soul's imbued
    Me worthy renders of thine answer, yet
For her good sake who hath my wishes met,

"Blest soul, whom thy beautitude doth conceal,
    Make known, that I may it devoutly hear,
What cause hath brought thee unto me so near;
And tell me why the symphony sweet this wheel
    Of Paradise lacks which through the rest below
Doth with such deep and rapt intentness flow."
"Thy vision thou, as hearing, mortal hast,"
It answer made to me: "For that same cause
    That Beatrice hath not smiled, from speech we pause."
"Downward thus far have I descending passed
This ladder rounds but with my words to greet
Thy presence here, and with my joy to meet;
Not that doth me invite excess of love,
For greater love in loftier orbits burns,
As well to thee this flaming ladder learns,
But this the Charity high that rules above
To me allots, the Charity that we serve
With promptitude glad, as thine own eyes observe."

"Full well I see," I said, "O lamp divine!
How in this court love's fetters none doth need
To follow where doth infinite Providence lead;
But this is what is hard to thoughts of mine,
Wherefore unto this service thou alone
Predestined wert; my wondering here I own."
Scarce had I ended when, as in a mill
A stone is whirled, around its centre, so,
In revolution swift, this lamp did glow.

Then answer made the love that it did fill:
"'T'wards me directed is a light supreme
Piercing this lamp from which extends my beam;
My vision joined therewith so far lifts me
Above myself, I gaze the essence on
Wherefrom my lustre, feeblcr far, is drawn.
Hence comes my lustre's joy, which thou dost see,
For with my vision's clearness keepeth pace
This radiant joy, and makes an equal race."
"But none can answer questions such as this; 91
No soul that doth through highest summits soar,
No Seraph most intent God's face to adore;
Because what thou dost ask hath so in th' abyss
Of the eternal statute its deep place
That none can here the true construction trace.
And when the mortal world thou dost regain
This there report, that t'wards so distant end
The feet of man may ne'er presume to tend.

"Earth wraps in mist the mind that here doth reign;
There will its strength in vain to that be given
Which ne'er for it can find e'en helping Heaven."
Such limit by that spirit's words was fixed
That I the question urged no more, but name
And state I humbly sought of that blest flame.
"Cliffs rise, each shore of Italy's bounds betwixt,
And not far distant from my native place,
And high beyond where leaves the levin its trace.

"They there a ridge form, Catria called, and reach 109
An hermitage o'er, an holy place of prayer,
Where rites divine and worship have due care."
This was the third time it me offered speech,
And then, continuing, thus it said: "Therein
Unto his service God did me so win,
That, on the juice of olives merely fed,
I easily passed the heats and frosts away,
Content midst heavenly musings there to stay.
Canto XXI.

The degenerate Clergy.

From that same cloister oft to heaven were sped Celestial souls, but now 't is empty grown, So that it must itself soon worldly own. I in that place was Peter Damian; claimed, On th' Adriatic shore, Our Lady's shrine Peter the Sinner also name of mine. My mortal strength was greatly shorn and tamed When sought I was and to the hat drawn forth That still recedes from bad to worse in worth.

"Lean and barefooted Cephas came, and came The Holy Spirit's mighty vessel, food Content to have from any tavern rude. The modern shepherds on each side will claim They need support, and, heavy, must be led, And by train-holders meek their way be sped. Their cloaks conceal their palfreys when they ride, So both the beasts are covered with one skin; O Patience, that hast so long-suffering been!"

Hereon I many little flames descried, Who, now revolving, gleamed from round to round, And, as their motion went, were fairer found. The space about this spirit then they filled, And forth so loud a shout gave that it here Could find no parallel fit, nor was I clear What it might be, so me its thunder thrilled.
NOTES TO THE TWENTY-FIRST CANTO.

1. "Again upon my Lady's face." In preparation for the ascent to another sphere.

5. "Semele." Granddaughter of Mars and Venus, and daughter of Cadmus and Hermione, and mother of Bacchus, she was beloved by Jupiter. Through her own curiosity, and the jealous management of Juno, Jupiter presented himself to her, clothed with his attributes of the Thunderer of the Skies. The mortal sank before the immortal; the presence of the terrible God was fatal to the divinely-descended maid, and the woman expired amidst the lightnings.

14. "The burning Lion." The Constellation Leo. Saturn was now in the sign of the Lion.

19. "How richly I had fed."

"La pastura
Del viso mio nell' aspetto beato."

The word "pastura" seems far-fetched, unless we consider its direct application, and renewal of reference, to the story of Glaucus in the First Canto. As Glaucus became a God by pasturing on the sea-weed, so Dante ascends to heaven by feasting on the countenance of Beatrice.

"A lily-girl, not made for this world's pain,
With brown, soft hair, close-braided by her ears,
And longing eyes half-veiled by dreamy tears,
Like bluest water seen through mists of rain;
Pale cheeks whereon no love hath left its stain,
Red under-lip drawn in for fear of love,
And white throat—whiter than the silvered dove—
Through whose wan marble creeps one purple vein;
Yet, though my lips shall praise her without cease,
Even to kiss her feet I am not bold,
Being o'ershadowed by the wings of awe,
Like Dante, when he stood with Beatrice
Beneath the flaming Lion's breast, and saw
The Seventh Crystal, and the Stair of Gold."

Oscar Wilde.
Notes.


"Which to the fields
Well ruled of Latium Saturn once did bring."
*Síxth Æneid, 793.

"The iron race shall cease,
And, wide throughout all lands, a golden one
Shall rise."
*The Pollio, 5.

43, 121. "And one . . . Peter Damian." Born 988. Died 1072. The day of his death is given as the twenty-second of February. His anniversary in the calendar is the twenty-third. He supported, with vigor and effect, the reformations inaugurated by Hildebrand (Pope Gregory the Seventh), and thereby incurred the enmity of the clergy of Milan, who availed themselves of the opportunity of his mission thither to set on foot against him a persecution. But the reformer gloried in his divine warfare, and, even in his old age, subjected himself to the voluntary discipline of fastings, vigils, and tortures.

44. "By this true sign."

"Above, delight is in effulgence shown,
As on the earth in laughter."
*Ninth Paradiso, 70.

46. "But she." Beatrice.

79. "As in a mill." We have met with the same simile at the beginning of the Twelfth Canto:

"Began to feel
The sacred millstone impulse strong to wheel."

95. "The eternal statute."

"Perocché sè innolta nell abisso
Dell’ eterno statuto quel che chiedì."

106. "Cliffs rise." Mount Catria, "the giant of the Apennines," is here described, the site of the monastery of Santa Croce di Fonte Avellana, founded by the blessed Ludolph about twenty years before it saw Saint Peter Damian. Here
Dante received hospitable entertainment in 1318, three years before the end of his Poem and his life. As may well be supposed, Troya and Ampère lingered long and lovingly at Avellana.

122, 123. "Peter the Sinner also name of mine." This the translation purposely makes equivocal, as Dante's passage is equivocal. Peter Onesti of Ravenna was another "Peter the Sinner," but whether Dante alludes to him here is matter of controversy. It depends on the question whether Dante wrote "fui" (I was) or "fu" (he was). Of twenty-eight commentators consulted by Barlow fourteen were arrayed against fourteen.

129. "From any tavern rude."

"Prendendo il cibo di qualunque ostello."

"The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children." Matthew xi. 19.

134. "Both the beasts." It seems observable that these sarcasms are calculated to be all the more effective, because made to come from the mouth of an ecclesiastic.

135. "O Patience."

"I like divine simplicity
In men who handle things divine."

Cowper.

"Simplicity tends towards God, whom alone it seeks to please; it renders us like to God, who is a being supremely and essentially simple." Saint Vincent de Paul.

We may in part imagine the annoyance which could not otherwise than be experienced by a brilliant man like Dante, accustomed to profound and serious thought, and compelled to listen with apparent approval to sermons horrible with absurdities or repulsive with improprieties. We have all
heard such sermons, but we have not all suffered from them as acutely as did Dante.

140. "A shout." The applause was deafening, and, we may suppose, was, in great part, from happy ecclesiastics.
CANTO TWENTY-SECOND.

ARGUMENT:

Saint Benedict addresses Dante on the personal history of the saint, and on the monastic state.

At the close of the saint's discourse Dante and Beatrice ascend with incredible swiftness to the eighth Heaven, the sphere of the Fixed Stars, the abode of the spirits of the metaphysicians and of the triumphal hosts of Christ, and placed under the control of the Cherubim. There Beatrice directs his eye upon the path of the planets which they have traversed, and the earth and its satellite reduced to mere points in space.


DAZED with amazement, I unto my Guide
Turned me as turns a little child whose fright
There drives him where is chiefly his delight;
And she, as would a mother who denied
Ne'er comfort to her pale and breathless boy,
In tones her soothing voice was wont to employ,
Said sweetly: "Knowest thou not thou art in heaven?
And knowest thou not that all is holy here,
And nought is done unless through zeal sincere?"
"Think now what unto thee their songs have given,
And smiles of mine, and changed thyself wilt find,
But, more abruptly, by their shouts designed;
Prayers more than shouts, which didst thou comprehend,
Thou wouldst already know the vengeance doomed
To meet thine eyes before thou art entombed.
The sword of heaven doth smite, but doth not send,
Or slow or swift, its timely stroke, howe'er
He who it waits may dwell in trust or care.

"But elsewhere now I bid thee turn thy view,
And thou illustrious spirits enough shalt see,
If shall thy view by me dictated be."
None other precept than her wish I knew;
And saw of little spheres an hundred rayed
With mutual beauties by them each displayed.
I stood as one who, fearing to presume,
Keeps down the point of his desire, and waits
To question later what his mind debates,

But earned my word exultant victory's plume,
When t'wards me came the pearl most large of all
And lustrous, thus his history to recall:
"If thou couldst see," I from within it heard,
"As well as I, that burning charity ours,
Thy curiosity soon had shown its powers; But that thy hope may not now be deferred,
But may the high end reach of thy desire,
I will thee serve as herald and as squire."
"That lofty crag whose slope Cassino shows
A people on its summit held of old
Whom haughtiness and delusion all controlled;
And I am he who first to that height rose
The name of Him to announce who in good time
The truths proclaimed which mortals make sublime.
And on me poured such copious floods of grace
That all the neighboring towns my counsel took,
And, glad, that impious worship old forsook.

"Within each fire thou seest doth find its place
A soul contemplative, by that heat's powers
Enkindled which fruits brings from holy flowers.
Here is Macarius, Romualdus here,
Here are my brethren who the cloisters' pale
Kept steadfastly midst joys that ne'er should fail."
And I to him: "Thy kindness shows sincere
In this thy speech; and the sweet welcome bright,
Which gives to all your flames increase of light,

"Hath raised in me such confidence as the rose
Doth from the sun receive when spreads in grace
Its consummate flower before his glorious face.
And, therefore, this I pray, and that oppose
The same thou wilt not, father, I beseech,
That to thy soul unveiled mine eyes may reach."
He thereupon: "Brother, thy high desire
Shall find fulfilment in the loftiest plane,
Where such shall mine and every other gain."
"There perfect is, and ripened, and entire  
Our every aim; within that plane alone  
Doth every part its former station own.  
For bounds it hath not fixed, nor on poles turns,  
And unto it our ladder leads the way,  
Whence thus doth from thy sight its summit stray.  
The Patriarch Jacob saw it as it burns  
To loftiest heights, what time to him it came  
So thronged with angels, joy, and heavenly flame.

"But now its lofty leading to attain  
None stirs or feet or soul, and rests the toil  
My Rule enjoins, mere parchment-rolls to soil.  
Mine Abbey, that of old the heavens would gain,  
A cave is now, and sacks of flour ill-milled  
The cowls, that once were with such holiness filled.  
For heavy usury doth not take its toll  
So much against God's liking, as demands  
Their foolish monkish avarice lately plans.

"And whatsoever doth the Church control  
Should be for those who ask it in God's name,  
And not for kin's sake or some cause of shame;  
So very soft is found the flesh of man  
That fails a good beginning down below  
Before the infant oak may acorns grow.  
Peter with gold nor silver none began;  
My Rule on prayers' and fastings' power I based;  
His convent Francis with meek lowliness graced;
Paradiso.

The Sphere of the Fixed Stars.

"But if, when thou hast such one's outset learned, thy career wilt onward follow down, the white thou shalt behold dimmed into brown. In very truth the Jordan backward turned; and was the Sea's flight 'neath God's mandate more a wonder than that help should reach our door."

Thus unto me he said; and then he sought his brethren, and with them his light combined; then all swept upward like an eddying wind.

Behind them o'er that ladder's rounds was brought myself, when gave the gentle Lady sign, so virtue hers did conquer nature mine. No natural motion here, or up or down, velocity such acquires, which way it fare, as may with my swift upward flight compare. Reader, as I my pilgrimage hope to crown with blest return to that high triumph pressed on all my thoughts when, sad, I beat my breast,

Thou hadst not thrust thy finger in the fire, and drawn it thence, before, being so impelled, the sign next Taurus saw I, that me held. O glorious stars! O Light that hath attire of mighty virtue! ye from whom I claim my genius all, whatever be its name!

With you arose, and with you sought his couch, he who is parent of all life below, when first on me thy Tuscan beams did glow;
And when permission grace did me avouch

The lofty wheel your revolutions own

To enter, mine, at once, was your sphere known.

To you devoutly sends my soul this hour

Its sighs, that it may calmly, firmly, meet

The gloomy pass which first its course must greet.

"So near's thy last salvation's hope and tower,"

Said Beatrice, "that thou shouldst now eyes have keen

And clear for what may by thee there be seen;

"And, therefore, ere thy further path's pursued,

Look downward, and the vast worlds see below,

That, passed already, 'neath thy rising, glow:

So that thine heart may, in its fittest mood,

Behold, rejoicing through this realm, the throng

Which here will soon triumphant pour along."

And my returning sight again addressed

The orbits seven, and I this globe beheld

So small a thing that it my smile compelled;

And I esteem that estimate of it best

Which doth it least regard; and him whose thought

Seeks other themes as by true wisdom taught.

The daughter of Latona saw I shine

Without that halo which I once believed

It had from rare and dense effects received.

I felt, Hyperion, on this face of mine

Thy son's hot sheen, and saw how moves he round

Where Maia's and Dione's stars are found.
I saw the temperate orb of Jove appear  
'Twixt son and father, and I noted well  
Their changes and the planes wherein they dwell;  
And of all seven it was to me most clear  
How each in relative bulk compared and speed,  
And how, though distant, they combined proceed.  
The threshing-floor wherefor we such pride own,  
By me from hill to harbor was discerned,  
As with the immortal Twins I there was turned;

Then sought I glad, those beauteous eyes alone.

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-SECOND CANTO.

7. "In heaven." In an especial and exalted sense, having passed beyond the bounds of our system, and entering upon the Infinite Beyond.

14. "The vengeance." It is supposed that this refers to the troubles of Pope Boniface the Eighth, his death, and the removal of the pontifical see from Rome. All these events occurred between the assumed date of the Poem and the death of Dante.

26. "Point." "Punta." Just below, it will be claimed that this word is used by Dante in its military sense. In line 16 he has just used a military metaphor: "the sword of heaven."

28. "Victory's plume." A military metaphor following the military metaphor of Dante just above.

32. "As herald and as squire." Other military metaphors following the military metaphor of Dante at line 26.

37. "Slope." In any mention of this mountain and its surroundings, attention should be drawn to its three divisions, base, slope, and summit. Each of these has its several history. At the base was a Roman amphitheatre, and is, at present, the town of San Germano, a station on the railroad
connecting Rome and Naples, and equidistant from both. On the slope, whence strategy afforded the choice of a sortie on the plain or a retreat to the summit, stood the ancient town of Casinum, now extinct, its material, in large part, probably, having been removed to the summit in the Middle Ages. On the summit of this “heaven-kissing hill” was found by Saint Benedict, in the year 529, an ancient temple devoted, even at that advanced date, to the worship of Apollo. This temple, as Pope Saint Gregory the Great has, with great animation of style, recorded (in the Second Book of his Dialogues, chapter viii.), Saint Benedict, who illustrated the maxim “laborare est orare,” utilized, establishing, in its place, the shrines of Saint Martin and Saint John. The valley is that of the Liris River, now called the Garigliano, and the view from the summit shines with points interesting in history. The industry of its inhabitants has given this part of Italy the name of the Land of Labor, Terra di Lavoro. Yonder you see Arpinum, the birthplace of Cicero; yonder Aquinum, that of Juvenal, and the scene of the school-days of the Angelical Doctor, Saint Thomas.

"Beautiful valley! through whose verdant meads
Unheard the Garigliano glides along;—
The Liris, nurse of rushes and of reeds,
The river taciturn of classic song.

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
And there, uplifted, like a passing cloud,
That pauses on a mountain summit high,
Monte Cassino’s convent rears its proud
And venerable walls against the sky."

LONGFELLOW.

40. "I am he." Saint Benedict, 480–543. In early youth he adopted the life of a recluse among the mountains of Subiaco, the scene, afterwards, of immense and successful labors on his part. Object of the jealousy and hatred of other ecclesiastics, he was now Abbot of Vicovara, now established at Subiaco, now driven therefrom, at last an adventurer at Monte Cassino. Here he gave evidence of the possession of gifts in the supernatural order. Here
"His pen become a clarion, and his school
Flamed like a beacon in the midnight air."

Muratori and Dantier devote many admirable pages to the history of this saint and his princely institution. "Law-giver and Patriarch," Montalembert calls him, "of the Monks of the West."

49. "Macarius ... Romualdus." Saint Macarius was the founder of the monastic rule in the East as early as the year 335. He derived infinite consolations from self-inflicted tortures.

Saint Romualdus was the founder of the order of Camaldoli or reformed Benedictines. Born about 956. The legend says that he attained the age of one hundred and twenty; and that in 1466, nearly four hundred years after his death, his body was found still uncorrupted; but that, when stolen from its tomb, four years afterwards, it turned into dust in the hands of its sacrilegious disturbers.

67. "Bounds it hath not fixed." That is, the extent upwards of the Empyrean is infinite.

67. "Nor on poles turns." That is, is immovable, a region of perfect repose. The Italian text is peculiar: does not impole itself; "non s'impola." This serves to remind us of the other similar phrases already remarked upon: in-Heaven, in-me, in-thee, and one or two others.

70. "Jacob." Genesis xxviii.

77, 79. "A cave ... flour ill-milled" "Spelonche" ... "ria farina." "Robber" caves, and sacks of "miserable" flour, are the terms usually employed by the translators. Personal observation of the majestic site of the Abbey of Monte Cassino would have left none of them in doubt as to the meaning of "spelonche" in Dante's use of the term.

It was used by him in contrast to that magnificent elevation, the most superb in the world, whereon the Abbey is situate, the summit of Monte Cassino; where, in Saint Benedict's time, the character of the monks corresponded with the topographical elevation of their monastery. Flour ill-milled, rather, than "miserable." It may not be declared fastidious to think that the use of "miserable" in dignified
rhetoric works a certain disparagement to its good effect. The thrust at avarice was presumably suggested to Dante by historical facts. The abbots, at one time, possessed the power of courts civil and criminal. These jurisdictions were, under certain abbots, felt as a heavy yoke. Here is material for the argument against the mingling of civil and religious jurisdictions, and doubtless Dante had all this well in view.

III. "The sign next Taurus." The sign next Taurus is that of Gemini, the Twins. It was under this constellation that Dante was born, on the 14th of May, 1265. On that day the sun entered this constellation. King John of Saxony, following the astrologers, says that under the influence of the Gemini were "learned men, poets, and prophets."

119, 120, 124. "The lofty wheel . . . to enter . . . thy last salvation." And he only this moment entered it; and thus hastens to claim it as his ultimate Heaven, his sphere in salvation.

132. "Triumphant pour along." Dante thus indicates the approach of the triumph of Saint Peter, which will be described at the close of the next Canto.

141. "Maia's and Dione's stars." The planets Mercury and Venus. Mercury was the son of Maia; Venus was the daughter of Dione.

151. "The threshing-floor." A convenient simile for a spot comparatively small. The threshing-floors of the Mediterranean countries are circular, and the circular shape may have made Dante think the threshing-floor a suitable simile. The present translator well remembers them, made of neatly-arranged flat stones. One is prettily visible from an ancient watch-tower on one of the loftiest walls of Hyères.

Basing an estimate on the zodiacal signs mentioned by Dante, it seems safe to conclude that he was somewhat, say about twenty degrees, to the eastward of Jerusalem. A diagram at the close of the Twenty-seventh Canto will explain the meaning of this remark in a clearer and fuller manner than can be conveniently done by the use of words.
Here the beams of a Sun, Christ, shone with a splendor which Dante's sight could not endure, and the heavenly vision was lifted higher up, to spare his overburdened powers. But the smile of Beatrice returned, Dante's powers now being prepared for its splendors. Beatrice points out to him the star representing the Blessed Virgin and the torch representing Gabriel; and melodies are heard of exquisite sweetness; and these splendors and melodies are declared by Dante to be a triumph introducing the appearance of Saint Peter.

The Heaven of the Fixed Stars.

**Persons speaking:** The triumphal hosts in song. Dante. Beatrice.


*Even as a bird, the leaves beloved among,*

*Quiet upon the nest her sweet brood holds,*

*Throughout the night which, darkling, us enfolds,*

*Who, that the grateful eye, the twittering tongue,*

*May greet her once again, and that, employed* 

*In cares for them, she food may find enjoyed,*

*Leaps to a spray, prevenient of the time,*

*And there, above their couch, with ardent heart,*

*Strains her fond gaze to watch dawn's gates apart:*
Even this my Lady standing was, sublime
  Upon her shining light from Southern skies,
Erect and vigilant she, with love-lit eyes;
So that, beholding her with wondering still,
  Such I became as one who loving yearns,
And in whom hope appeases that him burns.
But brief the space was When to When did fill,
  And not long waited I to see once more
Heaven more resplendent grow in roof and floor.

And Beatrice exclaimed: "The march behold
  Of Christ's triumphal hosts, and all the grain
Thy harvests in these rolling lustres gain!"
It seemed to me that o'er her face flame rolled,
  And shone so full of ecstasy pure her eyes
That, by them tried, my power of painting dies.
As in the calm, full moon, when Trivia smiles
  Among the nymphs eternal who the sky
With splendor tint through all its depths on high,

I saw above the lamps of myriad miles
  A Sun that o'er them all a radiance shed
As from our own o'er all our scenes are sped;
And through the living light shone forth so clear
  The lustrous substance, that bore not my might
Its power intense, but failed the o'erwearied sight.
"O Beatrice, thou my gentle Guide and dear!"
Then she: "The Splendor that now o'er thee trails
  A Virtue is 'gainst which no shield avails.
"The Wisdom and the Power are here that heaven
And earth betwixt the thoroughfares oped, wherefor
So long yearned men awaiting to adore."
As fire from out a cloud unlocked is given
Forth to the earth, because it doth dilate,
And that the cloud no longer holds its freight,
So did my mind, on aliments such fed large,
Forth issue from itself, and what it then
Became, in wandering, is beyond my ken.

"Thine eyes now open, my bewildered charge;
Things glorious thou hast seen which them prepare
The lesser splendors of my smile to bear."
I was as one when a forgotten dream
His mind recovers partially, but, then, shrinks
The fairy fragment, nor reveals its links,
When I this greeting heard; nor shall the stream
Of grateful feelings cease which mine it made,
Nor happiness such from memory's records fade.

If should be turned to praises every tongue
That Polyhymnia and her sisters nursed
With milk delicious deigned to poets' thirst,
Not of the truth a thousandth part were sung
Of homage due that sacred smile, nor hue
Of peerless beauty her expression knew.
And thus, in figuring Paradise, forth must leap
The sacred Poem o'er the chasm wide
Before its path, or own its powers defied;
And whoso such a theme upheld would keep,
Should not a mortal shoulder blame if weight
Like this should tremblings bring howe'er elate;
No lakelet is it for a tiny boat,
This mere my daring prow doth dash aside;
Here must the pilot's every nerve be tried.

"Why on my face do thus thy fancies float,
That thou no heed hast for the garden fair
Which, 'neath Christ's rays, doth such rare blossomings bear?

"The Rose is there, wherein the Word Divine
Incarnate was; and there the lilies bloom
Which showed the Good Way by their sweet perfume."

Thus Beatrice blest; and I, whose guidance mine
Hers ever was, myself began to arouse
To bear the battle of the feeble brows.

As have ere now mine eyes, in shadow held,
Seen through a fractured cloud the sun's pure ray
On ray in jubilance o'er a meadow play,

So, seeing not the source my being spelled,
I hosts of trooping splendors saw, which light,
Sent from above, made more divinely bright.

O thou kind Power, whose light so on them broke,
Thou didst thyself exalt more scope to give
To eyes of mine that could not otherwise live!

The name of that fair Flower I e'er invoke
Morning and evening, gave my soul in thrall
To gaze upon the greater fire of all.
And when in both mine eyes the living flame
Of that high Star whose glories there excel
As did they here, had formed its semblance well,
Lo! from within the sky a torchlet came,
And, in its radiant progress circling down,
Around it formed of fire a beauteous crown.
Whatever melody sounds on earth most sweet,
And most entrances there the listening soul,
Might seem a torn cloud through which thunders roll,

Compared unto the sounds those heavens did greet
When crowned that lyre the sapphire's beauty, far
In jewel'd skies denoting e'er that Star:
"I Love Angelic am, whose circling glow
The joy attends which breathes from out the womb
That gave to our Desire its inn and room;
And circle shall I, Lady of Heaven, so,
While still thy Son thou followest, and increased
By thy blest presence is this heavenly feast."

Thus did the circling melody find its close;
And, as it ended, all the lights beside
The strain took up and MARY'S name spread wide.
The robe that o'er space universal flows,
And fervid more than all is with the life
The immediate breath of God there maketh rife,
O'er us its inner border spread so far
That where I was the semblance of it yet
Had not with its clear folds my vision met,
Therefore did not mine eyes possess the power 118
Of following that crowned Star, whose unstained
flame
Those heights empyrean sought from whence it
came.
And as a babe, its lips with milk yet wet,
Towards its mother holds its arms, to bless
Its source of joy with one more fond caress,
So with its summit flaming as a jet,
Did each effulgence sway t'wars Mary, whence
I learned for her their fondness felt intense.

And then remained they full within my view, 127
In tones "Regina Cæli" singing, ne'er
From my delighted memory forth to fare.
O what abundant heavenly harvests knew
Those reapers glorious, and those following them
Will know, enriched for wheat with gem on gem!
For so converted they the treasure find
Which sown in tears was under Babylon's walls
Whereof their gold made glare the lordly halls.

And, 'neath God's sway, and Mary's auspices
kind,
And frondage, Old and New, the fruit, the bloom,
There he his mighty triumph holds to whom
The keys of such a glory were assigned.

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-THIRD CANTO.

29. "A Sun that o'er them all." Dante adopts the Ptole-
maic idea that all the stars of heaven derive their light from
our sun.
34. "O . . . dear." The ejaculation of a person smitten with sudden blindness, to his guide.

46. "Thine eyes now open." Beatrice speaks.


70. "Why on my face." Beatrice speaks again.

73, 88, 92. "The Rose . . . that fair Flower . . . that high Star." The Blessed Virgin.

74. "The lilies." The apostles who showed the way to heaven by the perfume of their holy lives.

78. "To bear the battle of the feeble brows."

"Alla battaglia dei debili cigli."

The struggle of his feeble eyesight against the brilliant light.


101. "Sapphire." The lapidaries attributed to the sapphire many mystic virtues. It is the color in which the old painters always arrayed the Madonna. Longfellow quotes a writer who says "it is the exact shade of the air or atmosphere in the climate of Rome."

105. "Our Desire." "The desire of all nations shall come." Haggai ii. 7.

112, 113. "The robe . . . fervid." The sphere of Primal Motion, which, being next to the Empyrean, is moved by vehement desire into motion more rapid than that of the other Heavens, and which enfolds the inferior Heavens as a robe enfolds the human form.

117. "Had not . . . my vision met." The Blessed Virgin Mary had ascended beyond the sphere of Primal Motion, the Primum Mobile, into the immediate presence of God—too far, Dante says, to make it possible for him to follow her ascension.

128. "'Regina Caei.'" It is related that, in the year 590, during the prevalence of a pestilence at Rome, Pope Gregory the Great, while leading a penitential procession to Saint Peter's Church, saw, as he approached the Mausoleum of
Canto XXIII.

Notes.

Hadrian, on its summit an Angel sheathing a bloody sword, and heard from heaven celestial voices chanting the words:

"Regina Coeli, lætare! Alleluia.
Quia quem meruisti portare, Alleluia.
Resurrexit, sicut dixit, Alleluia."

And that to these words the pope responded:

"Ora pro nobis Deum! Alleluia."

The words of the heavenly choristers and of the responding saint have become gems of the ritual; and the image of the Angel in the act of sheathing the sword occupies the summit of this most ambitious of the structures of ancient Rome, first a tomb, then a fortification, then the witness of a celestial event, and, to this day, perpetuating the memory of effectual prayer. The historian Gibbon, unusually flippant in this connection, attempts to throw discredit on the narration by the saint of this supernatural happening, and attributes it to the writer's "credulity or prudence." The author of the Decline and Fall is so unhappy, in this passage, that he, without necessity, but through a blunder, denies therein a fact of history among the most salient, namely, that Saint Gregory the Great was not the last pontiff to whom were conceded the honors of canonization.


138. "There he." Saint Peter. The closing lines of Wright's translation of this Canto seem to me to possess unusual merit:

"Here they rejoice, and taste the wealth of old
Acquired with many a tear in Babylon,
During their exile, where they spurned the gold:
Here shares the honor of the victory
Gained by the aid of God, and Mary's Son,
Among the old and recent Patriarchs, he
Who holds the keys, and this high glory won."
CANTO TWENTY-FOURTH.

ARGUMENT:

At Beatrice's suggestion, Saint Peter examines Dante on Faith, and commends the Poet for his answers. Still the Heaven of the Fixed Stars.


"O ye, elect the supper great to share
The blessed Lamb sets forth, whereon who feeds
Hath fulness to the utmost of his needs,
If should God's grace so much this man prepare,
Or ever death shall on him make his call,
Through taste of what may from your table fall,
Regard with favor this his great desire;
He seeks your dew; yours is fore'er the fount
Whereto his fondest aspirations mount!"
Thus Beatrice; and now those souls of fire
Revolved as spheres on firm-set poles, the guise
Of comets having whence keen radiance flies.
And as in clockwork, wheel on wheel's advanced,
So that the first hath motion none, but swift
The last one doth in ready leverage lift,
So, on those carolling bands of melody danced
In different measure, and each affluence so
Its gauge me gave by motion fast or slow.

From that sphere which to me did most abound
In beauty came a flame whereof the fire
Left none there that in splendor mounted higher;
And Beatrice now three several times around
It rapidly moved with so divine a song
That vainly it to keep my soul doth long,
And fails the pen and laboring fancy weak;
No tones imagination hath nor speech
The rhapsody high of that fair song can reach.

"O holy sister mine, who us dost seek
With such devotion, from this dance divine
Thou dost unbind me by this love of thine!"
So to my Lady did that blest flame turn
Its sacred breathing, when, its motion stayed,
It unto her its kind attention paid.
"O thou, of that great man the light eterne,
To whom," she said, "Our Lord the keys gave,
brught
By him to earth, of this joy miracle-fraught!"
"This one examine thou, on points, or light
Or grave, as thee may please, of Faith, which thee
Made walk erect upon the billowing sea.
If that his Love, and Hope, and Faith be right,
To thee it manifest is, for thou canst scan
That Mind which mirrors all the thoughts of man.
But since true Faith this realm hath peopled fair,
'Tis meet that to exalt its glory, word
Such as he hath thereon should here be heard."

As the collegian arms his mind with care,
And waits for what his master's lips may frame,
Discussion, not decision, being his aim,
So I, while she was speaking, sought
For every weapon caution might suggest,
When such the questioner was and such his quest.
"Speak, thou good Christian, as a Christian ought,
Say what is Faith?" Whereat my brow I raised
To face that radiant light which there so blazed,

Then unto Beatrice turned, and her consent
Saw in her looks that from mine inmost fount
Might to my lips the unlocked waters mount.
"May that same grace that liberty me hath lent
To make confession to the Church's head,
Be cause in me of utterance apt," I said;
Then added: "Father, as the unerring pen
Of thy dear brother wrote it, who, with thee,
Made Rome before her the true path to see,
Substance and Evidence.

"The substance Faith is of the things that men
Hope for, and th' evidence true of things not seen;
Its quiddity thus I from such sources glean."

Then heard I: "Very rightly hast thou deemed,
If well thou understandest why is placed
The substance first, to be then evidence-graced."

And thereon I: "The things profound which seemed
Always to my mind manifest, are from eyes
Concealed of all below not heavenly-wise,

"And so exist there only in Belief,
Whereon high Hope its sure foundation makes,
Whence Faith the nature of a substance takes.
And of our reasoning this is duly chief
Where opportunity none is given of sight,
And hence of evidence it attains the height."

Then heard I: "If whatever men acquire
By doctrine were thus clearly understood,
No sophist's subtlety more would pass as good."

Thus breathed that saintly brilliance of Love's fire;

Then added: "Thou dost very truly state
What 's of this coin the true alloy and weight;
But tell me, canst thou in thy purse it show?"

I answered: "Yes, so glittering and so round
That of its stamp no room for doubt is found."

And then there issued from the deep strong glow
That there resplendent was: "This jewel of grace,
Whereon hath every virtue its firm base,
"Whence hadst thou it?" And I: "Have moved
Outpoured upon the ancient scrolls and new
The Holy Spirit's bounties rich and true,
An argument forming, which unto me proved
This truth so sharply that appears obtuse
All demonstration else and vainly loose."
"The elder proposition and the new,"
I heard, "that have thy mind such impress given,
Why dost thou take them as the voice of Heaven?"

And I: "The proofs which show these things are true
Are the works following, for which Nature heat
To iron ne'er gave as yet, nor anvil beat."
'Twas answered me: "Say, that those works e'er were,
Who makes thee sure? The thing which proof requires
The witness is, warped by its own desires."
"That, through a world converted, forth should fare,"
I said, "Christ's doctrine without miracles, one
This were that would a hundred shamed outrun.

"E'en thou didst, poor and fasting, seek the field
Wherein by thee the goodly plant was sown,
Which was a vine, and is a bramble grown."
And then throughout that lofty court there pealed
Great cheer of voices from those lustrous spheres:
"One God we praise!" in tones heaven often hears.
And then that lord, who thus the outmost sprays
Reached of that lofty tree, our mighty theme,
Thus of its summit made the foliage gleam:
"The Grace that with thine intellect dallying plays
Thy mouth hath opened, answers ushering forth,
Up to this point, which show thy Christian worth,
And mine approval draw on them and thee;
But now express thou what thou dost believe,
And wherefrom thy Belief thou didst receive."

"O spirit, holy father, who dost see
What thou believedst, so that thou more fleet
To reach the sepulchre wert than younger feet,"

I said, "Thou dost here wish that I unroll
The form of this my ready Faith, combined
With cause thereof which fixed my steadfast mind.
In one God I believe, eternal, sole,
He who, himself unmoved, the Heavens moves all,
Desire and Love them bending to his call;
And of such Faith, plain as mine upraised palms,
Proofs physical and metaphysical rain
In plenty down, and truth from this high plane

"Through Moses, through the Prophets and the Psalms
And Gospel, sent, and through yourself, when nursed
Your writing mood the Holy Spirit first.
Holds Three Eterne my Faith's firm ark,
Of essence one, but threelfold even as one,
So that nor 'are' nor 'is' will their noun shun.
With this profound condition, which I mark
As all divine, my mind doth oft impress
The Evangel's doctrines with emphatic stress."
Paradiso.

The Benediction.

"This the beginning is, the kindling spark, Which afterwards broadens into flame, a star, Like one in heaven, whose lustre shines afar." Even as a master who in kind embrace His servant holds through joy for tidings good, Soon as, speech ended, he hath silent stood, So benediction giving me, when space Had followed silence mine, me circled round Three times that apostolic light, who found

In answers mine to him a pleasing grace.

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-FOURTH CANTO.

I. "The supper great." "And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." Revelation xix. 9.

II. "As spheres." "Spere." Having a horizontal motion, the same as suggested by the simile, heretofore employed, of the millstone.


64, 65. "Substance... evidence." "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Hebrews xi. 1.

66. "Quiddity." The whatness of a thing, the essence of a thing, the answer to the question, "Quid est?" What is it?

81. "Would pass as good."

"Non gli avria luogo ingegno di sofista."

The translator thus anticipates the metaphor which Dante will introduce in the next tercet.


125. "Thou more fleet." Says Dante, in the Third Book of his De Monarchia, Peter entered in suddenly, "subito," finding John delaying at the entrance. This account Dante had from John himself, xx. 4.
137. "Yourself." Note the courteous, perhaps the official, plural, "voi."

We may note here that to the awe which the character and example of Saint Peter have inspired is ascribed by Earle, in his Manual of the Lives of the Popes, the historical fact that none of Saint Peter's successors in the papacy have been willing to retain or assume that august name. There is no second Peter, and no Peter the Second.

137. "Almi." A beautifully affectionate and loyal word.

"Poichè l' ardente spirto vi fece almi."

141. "Nor 'are' nor 'is.'"

"Che soffera congiunto sunt et este."

Metri gratia for est. Many manuscripts say sono et este.

149. "His servant." Pope Saint Gregory the Great gave himself the humble title of "servus servorum," servant of servants, a title adopted by all his successors.

150. "Benediction." Dante will immediately again refer to this benediction in the beginning of the next Canto.
CANTO TWENTY-FIFTH.

ARGUMENT:

Dante begins this Canto, devoted to Hope, with the expression of his hope that the Commedia may bring about his return to Florence, and his coronation with the laurel crown, in the Duomo.

Guided by Beatrice, Dante enters into a conversation with Saint James on Hope. Beatrice and Saint John are delighted listeners. The effulgence of Saint John strikes Dante with blindness.

Still the Heaven of the Fixed Stars.


If e’er the Sacred Poem, whereto heaven
And earth have set their hand, so that as seen
The years are to pass on, it makes me lean,
O’ercome the cruelty harsh that hath me driven
From the fair sheepfold where a lamb I slept
Hateful to wolves that round it grimly crept,
With other voice, and shining fleecy rolls,
Poet will I return, and laurell’d be
At that blest font where baptism came to me,
Because into the Faith which trains all souls
To God there entered I, and for her sake,
Did Peter thus blest circles round me make.

Now from the company whence the first fruits came
Of vicars Christ behind him left, a light
Towards us moved, leaving those lustres bright.

And then my Lady, touched with ecstasy's flame,
"Look, look," to me said, "there that great one see
For whom crowds throng Galicia, shore and lea."

As when alights a ring-dove by his mate,
And, while each, circling round the other, wheels,
He, murmuring, cooes the fondness which he feels,

So saw I each of those lights high and great
The other glorify, and, welcoming, praise
The food that gives, above, unending days.

But when their happy greetings glad had ceased,
In silence each before me stood in flame
So densely bright my sight it overcame.

And, smiling, Beatrice thus renewed the feast:

"Illustrious soul, who hast the bounties great
Of this our Heaven described in tones elate,
Make Hope within this altitude's sphere resound;
Thou canst it figure in bright traits, as clear
As when did Jesus to the three appear."

"Lift up thine head; in trust do thou abound;
For that which, mortal, seeks our heavenly ways
We needs must ripen in these gladdening rays."
This comfort from the second fire me sought,
Whence to the hills mine eyes I lifted, late
Borne down and trembling with the too-great
weight.
"Since 't is our Emperor's will that thou be brought
Through grace of his, ere meets thee death, before
The noblest counsellors welcomed to his door,
So that, the truth of this Court having viewed,
Thou may'st of Hope, which love all souls below,
Aid, in thyself and others, too, the glow,

"Say what it is, and how far is imbued
Thy mind therewith, and whence to thee it came?"
Thus did again discourse the second flame.
And she, whose pitying love, in such high flight,
Was pilot to my plumage, made reply
Enabling me to pass one query by:
"Than him, among her sons, of Hope more bright
Hath the Church Militant none, as in that Sun
Is written plain, whose rays through Paradise run;

"Therefore, into Jerusalem to see,
It is permitted he from Egypt fare,
Ere yet is closed his term of service there.
The two remaining points, not that to thee
He knowledge may add on, are asked, but rise
From estimation Hope hath in your eyes;
These leave I him; not hard he will them find,
Not calling for self-praise; and may him aid
The helping grace of God upon him rayed!"
The Theody high.

As when a sedulous scholar well-inclined
Occasion fair of answering only asks
That he may show proficiency in his tasks,
"Hope," thus I said, "is expectation sure
Of future glory, the effect which grace
And merit preceding show in this high place.
Send many stars to me this radiance pure,
But he first made it in my nature strong,
Who to our Leader, leader was in song.

"'Let them in Thee have Hope, Thy name who
know,'"
So sings he in his Theody high; and who
Doth not it know who Faith like mine hath true?
Then, thou didst in me heighten the sweet flow
That came from him, in thine Epistle; rain
This me, and others through me, brought of
gain."
And, as I spoke, of that keen flame the breast
Showed, quivering, an effulgence rare of heaven,
Sudden and frequent, as doth flash the levin;

Then breathed: "Love for the virtue which me
blest,
Before the palm kind heaven to me did yield,
Before I left my blood upon the field;
Prompts me to urge that thou in Hope have joy;
And grateful will it be to me to hear
Thy hold on Hope, that foe that exiles fear."
And I: "The Scriptures, old and new, employ
Apt words the mark to show of that fair aim
You and all friends of God may safely claim.
"Isaiah saith that each one clothed shall be, 91
In his own land, with twofold garments, and
That this delightful life is his own land.
Thy brother, too, and far more clearly he,
This revelation brings before our sight,
There where his speech is of the robes of white."
And just before mine answer thus was done,
"Let them in Thee have Hope," above was heard,
While carrollings answered, all with rapture
stirred.

And brilliant, then, a crystal 'mongst them shone, 100
So that, if one such gemmed the Cancer's sign,
Throughout a winter's month would daylight
shine.
And, as her seat leaves, tripping to the dance,
A winsome maiden, favoring thus the bride,
And innocent as gay, and free from pride,
Even thus that brilliant gem I saw advance
To meet the other two, whose glowing wheels
Revolving showed the ardor love reveals.

Came it where song and music held their sway 109
And fixedly my Lady fair them eyed,
Silent and motionless eyed, as might a bride.
"This he is who, upon the bosom lay
Of our own Pelican, blest; this he, the voice
Sent from the cross declared Christ's friend of
choice."
My Lady thus; but therefore never free
A moment was her gaze from that bright throng,
A gaze that grew as grew the dance and song.
Even as a man who gazes, and to see
  The eclipsing of the sun a little tries,
  Whence vision leaves his overmastered eyes,
So I became before that lustre last,
  The while it said: "Why dost thou, dazed,
  persist
  To see a thing which doth not here exist?
Earth in the earth my body is; as fast
  Our number shall increase as God decrees,
  And destiny wide with His high will agrees.

"Sole with the garments two our cloister here
  Claims those, the two ascended from the earth:
  Report thou this, as due their glorious worth."
This utterance given, words from the flaming sphere
  No more were heard; no more the melody came
  That gave forth that sweet trinity's burst of flame.
Times come when tars, while threatening perils hiss,
  Drop in the mighty flood the laboring oars,
  While pipes the whistle, and wide ocean roars:

Ah, how much my anxiety seemed like this,
  When, turning round to Beatrice for joy's food,
I could not see her, although close I stood
  By her dear side, and in the World of Bliss!

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-FIFTH CANTO.

5, 8. "The fair sheepfold . . . laurel'd." Here is evidence
  of Dante's political, personal, purpose in writing the Commedia. The pastoral he addressed in Ravenna to Giovanni
del Virgilio is to the same effect. This pastoral was written after the Inferno was complete, but before the other divisions of the Commedia were written. Virgilio had desired him to come to Bologna, that in Bologna he might receive the laurelled wreath. "No," is, in substance the answer of Dante, "I prefer to wait, that, on the completion of my Poem, I may receive the coveted crown on the banks of my native Arno."

9. "At that blest fount." The mention of the Church of Saint John, in the opening lines of a Canto wherein Saint John is to be introduced, has a peculiar fitness.

11. "For her sake." For the sake of the Faith, the Church.


17, 18. "That great one ... Galicia." Saint James, brother of Saint John. They received, for their zeal and courage, the title of Boanerges, or Sons of Thunder. Christ himself gave them this title at the time of their ordination by him as apostles. Mark iii. 17. Saint James suffered martyrdom under Herod Agrippa. His heroic end converted his executioner, who was immediately also beheaded. An Angel protected and preserved his remains, and after the identity of their resting-place, in Galicia, had been forgotten, a supernatural message revealed it. He became the patron saint of Spain, and the historians of that country describe thirty-eight manifest apparitions of the saint descended from heaven to lead the Christian armies against the Moors. His tomb at Compostella became a resort for pilgrims from all Europe, their number, in a single year, sometimes amounting to a hundred thousand.

28. "The feast." The metaphor of the preceding Canto is thus renewed.

33. "To thee three." To Saint Peter, Saint James, and Saint John, in the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor.


38. "Hills." "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." Psalm cxxi. 1.

40, 42, 43. "Emperor ... counsellors ... court." Dante would intimate, even here, his imperialistic leanings.
55, 56. "Into Jerusalem ... from Egypt." From the Egyptian darkness and slavery of this world into the brilliancy and freedom of the heavenly Jerusalem; as Dante is supposed to have said, in his letter to Can Grande, "from the bondage of this corruption into the freedom of eternal glory." Dante herein has allusion to the initial verses of the one hundred and fourteenth Psalm.


58. "The two remaining points." "Say what it is" and "Whence to thee it came."

67. "Hope." A quotation from Peter Lombard, who, as we have seen, was one of the theologians accompanying Saint Thomas of Aquin in the Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth Cantos: "Est spes certa expectatio futuræ beatitudinis, veniens ex Dei gratia, et meritis praecedentibus."

73. "Hope in thee." Psalm ix. 10.

90. "God's friends." "Abraham believed God ... and was called the Friend of God." James ii. 23.

91, 92. "In his own land ... with twofold garments." The return of the soul to the heavens, its place of origin, is a doctrine at least as old as Plato. See, as to this, the notes to the Fourth Canto.

That the soul shall be united with the body in the resurrection is the doctrine of Christianity, a realization predicted by Isaiah: "Therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them." Isaiah lxii. 7.

The glorified earthly body of the resurrection is the subject of Dante's allusions in the Sixth and Tenth Infernos and Fourteenth and Thirtieth Paradisos.

94, 95. "Thy brother ... robes of white." Saint John, in Revelation vii. 9: "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands."

101. "Cancer." In the time of Dante, the constellation of Cancer occupied the sign of this name in the zodiac. Being opposite to the sign of Capricorn, the constellation was visible, in northern latitudes, during the nights of the entire month of February. The meaning of Dante is, that the spirit of Saint John shone with an effulgence equal to that of the sun, and prepares us for Dante's statement that by the intensity of this effulgence he lost his power of sight.

102. "Throughout . . . daylight."

"Elect of heaven, its wisdom still denied thee.
The path thy brothers trod -
That path, made holy by the master's footsteps,
Through martyrdom, to God."

FRANCES A. SHAW.

107. "The other two whose glowing wheels." The millstone and the sphere are now spoken of as wheels: "rota." These two are Saint Peter and Saint John.

113. "Pelican." Art and piety in the Middle Ages delighted to apply to the care of Christ for his flock the symbol or allegory of the Pelican.

Thibault the crusader, king and poet of Navarre, and whom Dante adored, is said by Longfellow to have written a chanson of unusual beauty on the subject of Christ as the Pelican.

114. "Christ's friend of choice." "Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home."

120, 138. "Overmastered eyes . . . I could not see her." Dante was blinded by the dazzling effulgence of the spirit of Saint John.

124. "Earth in the earth my body is," Saint John read the thoughts of Dante, who wondered if he indeed saw before him the earthly body of the Saint. Christ had said (John xxii. 22): "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? . . . Then went this saying abroad among the brethren that this disciple should not die." And, according
to a legend of the Greek church, Saint John died, but immediately rose again in bodily form, and ascended into heaven.

126. "His high will." "And it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." *Revelation* vi. 11.

127, 128. "Sole with the garments two . . . the two ascended." Christ and the Blessed Virgin alone ascended, bearing with them their spiritual bodies and also their glorified earthly bodies.

CANTO TWENTY-SIXTH.

ARGUMENT:

Saint John engages Dante in a conversation on Charity, in the sense of love. Dante now learns from Beatrice that they are in the presence of Adam. Adam and Dante conduct a conversation.

Still the Heaven of the Fixed Stars.


While doubted I as to mine eyesight lost,
Out of those blinding rays a breath I heard,
Which further now my deep attention stirred.

"Whilst thou regainest," thus did it me accost,
"The sense of sight on me consumed, let speech
Exchanged across space intervening reach.
Begin, then, say whereto thy soul doth steer,
And be assured, thy dazed sight is not dead,
It is o'ercome, and for the moment fled;
"Because the Lady that doth guide thee here 
    Doth in her look the power divine enfold 
Which in his hand did Ananias hold."
I said: "Or soon or late may aid be brought, 
    As deems she fittest, unto gates of sight, 
Where entering she her deathless fire did light.
The Good that doth illuminate all this Court, 
    The Alpha and Omega is of all 
The varying thoughts whereto Love doth me call."

And, yet again, the voice that did me give 
    Assurance in the terror blindness brought, 
That it might aid still further give my thought, 
Thus spoke: "In truth, with yet a finer sieve 
    'Tis meet that thou shouldst sift; thou shouldst me tell 
Who, at such targe, thine arrow aimed so well."
And I: "By philosophic arguments sound, 
    And by authority high this place doth wield, 
Such love must on my soul be deeply sealed;

"For Good, unto the extent it doth abound, 
    Love kindles, raising higher its kindled height 
The longer shines therein Love's radiant might. 
That Essence, then, which such advantage hath 
    That, if elsewhither aught good finds its way, 
It is but of its lustrous light a ray, 
Must in its mood most joyous find its path 
    In minds which, loving, are intent to trace 
The truth wherein Love's evidence hath its base."
Paradiso.

The loftiest Mystery of the Skies.

"Such truth he to my intellect doth make clear 37
Who unto me the Primal Love explains
Which to itself all things immortal gains.
Says it the truthful Author we revere
In speaking of Himself to Moses: 'See'
He said, 'shalt thou all Goodness pass 'fore thee.'
And, lastly, thou dost learn it me, as loud
Thy heraldry, at its outset, doth arise,
Voicing the loftiest mystery of the skies."

And heard I say: "By man's mind 't is avowed 46
And thereto do authority's mandates serve,
Thou shouldst thy highest love to God reserve.
But say thou, now, if do not cords yet more
Thee draw t'wards Him; what teeth, say, do thee bite,
Wherewith this Love doth show thee its fond might."

Christ's Eagle's purpose lay before the door,
Not veiled, and thence I readily took good heed
Whereeto his quest would mine avowal lead.

And I resumed: "Those loving teeth which turn 55
With power resistless all man's heart to God
Have met me in all paths where I have trod.
For Him all nature, mine own being, yearn,
Me draws that death He died that I may live,
And all that Hope doth to the faithful give,
All these, with others that I have confessed,
All, from the sea of Love perverse, have brought
Me to that shore of holy Love I sought."
"So much, the leaves that in the garden blest
Gleam 'neath the Eternal Gardener's care, of Good
As he gives them, so much of Love I would."
I ceased, and now I through the skies heard sweep
Words: "Holy, Holy, Holy;" and the voice
Of her my Lady joined the melody choice.
And as, on sudden light, one starts from sleep,
By reason of the visual ray that seeks
The splendor that through each tired membrane leaks,

And he who wakes in horror is and fright,
So all unconscious is he brought awake,
Until his judgment doth him rational make,
So from mine eyes did chase the radiant light
That Beatrice shed through thousand miles and more
The clouds that their clear vision overbore;
Whence saw I better than I had before,
And in a sort of wonder sought to know
About a fourth light's incandescent glow.

And said she now: "Within that lustre's core
Doth on its Maker gaze the first soul given
To live by virtue of the Will of Heaven."
Even as the bough that, when the blast's abroad,
Bows its lithe top, but when the tempest's passed,
Lifts by its innate strength its sprays at last,
Did I when then she spoke become so awed;
But then my curiosity made me strong,
And for discourse with eagerness great to long;
And thus I said: "O apple, that alone
Wast ripe when born, O lord of ancient life,
To whom is daughter and daughter-in-law each wife,
With all devotion I thy presence own,
And lofty converse seek; thou hast my prayer,
And I, to hear thy words, from speech forbear."

At times the covering which an animal wraps
Shows the interior impulse in its shape,
And thus its unvoiced meaning hath escape;

And, in like manner, throughout lapse on lapse
Of ray on ray round this primeval soul,
Delight I saw with pleasure's mood control.

Then breathed: "Without thine uttering it to me,
I better see whereto thy mind 's inclined
Than thou what thou most sure and fixed doth find;

For in Him, truth's own mirror, I it see,
Who all things of Himself a pattern makes
And to whom nought itself a pattern takes.

"This wouldst thou hear: how long ago God placed
Me in that garden high wherefrom to ascend
This Lady thee her gracious aid did lend;
And how long I was with its pleasures graced;
And why, with such disdain, God me so blamed;
And language what I used and therein framed.
Now, son of man, the tasting of the tree
Not in itself of banishment thence was cause;
Brought this mine overstepping of God's laws.
"There, whence thy Lady Virgil brought to thee, 
Desired I bliss while ran the sun's course through 
Four thousand and three hundred rounds and two;
And him I saw return through every light 
He claims, nine hundred, full, and thirty, rounds 
While I my life prolonged in earthly bounds.
The language that I spoke was obsolete quite 
Before the work interminable began 
Wherein the people followed Nimrod's plan;

"A plan which shows how vainly mankind seeks 
For permanent forms, because man's will doth change 
As it control the stars that o'er him range. 
'T is nature's prompting whence each mortal speaks; 
But whether thus or thus, doth nature leave 
From your own mood its fashion to receive.
Ere I to Hell's abyss descended, greet 
Did men on earth the Good Supreme as El, 
From whom comes all this joy wherein I dwell;

"Eli he then was called, and that is meet, 
Because is usage a deciduous leaf, 
And words their harvests bring of sheaf on sheaf.
Upon the loftiest Mount my life had run 
Or pure or sinful, there above the sea, 
From the first hour that held its terraces me, 
Till, changing quadrant, passed the sixth the sun."
NOTES TO THE TWENTY-SIXTH CANTO.


17. "The Alpha and Omega." This seems to be designed as an answer to Saint John's question: "Say whereto thy soul doth steer."

37. "Such truth he . . . doth make clear." What author Dante alludes to, in this instance, is not certain. The commentators are divided between Aristotle, Plato, and Pythagoras.


44. "Thou dost learn it me." The mystery of divine things is especially learned from Saint John himself in the sublime exordium of his gospel.

52. "Eagle." The eagle is the symbol of Saint John.

64. "The leaves." Mankind, the creatures of God.


92. "Ripe when born." "Some divines count Adam thirty years old at his creation, because they suppose him created in the perfect age and stature of man." Sir Thomas Browne, Religio Medici, sec. 39.

110. "That garden high." The garden of Eden, the terrestrial Paradise at the summit of the Purgatorial Mountain.

112. "This lady." Beatrice, it will be remembered, accompanied Dante from the terrestrial Paradise; Virgil accompanied him from Limbo; but Beatrice went to Limbo to find Virgil.

137. "Usage."

"Ut sylvæ, foliis pronos mutantis in annos,
Prima cadunt: ita verborum vetus interit ætas,
Et juvenum ritu florent modo nata vigentque.

. . . .

Multa renascentur quæ jam cecidere, cadentque
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus,
Quem penes arbitrium est et jus et norma loquendi."

Horace, Ars Poetica, 60.
139, 142. "The loftiest Mount . . . passed the sixth." The sixth hour of the day answers to our noon, and Adam was, therefore, in the Garden of Eden only seven hours. In this estimate Dante follows Peter Comestor, one of the theologians mentioned in the Twelfth Canto. According to the Talmud, Adam remained in Eden twelve hours.

It must be remembered that Dante's plan of the universe places the Garden of Eden, the Terrestrial Paradise, upon the top of the Purgatorial Mountain, the loftiest mountain in the world.
CANTO TWENTY-SEVENTH.

ARGUMENT:

At the close of Adam's discourse, voices sing the Glory be to the Father; and then silence ensued, wherein Saint Peter discoursed to Dante on the corruptions of the see of Rome, and enjoined upon Dante the duty of opening his lips on his return to this globe. Beatrice now directs him to look back over the space traversed; and, looking back, he is wafted onward with incredible swiftness to the ninth Heaven, called the Heaven of primal motion, or the Crystalline Heaven, the abode of the spirits of the moral philosophers, and placed under the control of the Seraphim.


THEN "Glory to the Father, to the Son,
    And to the Holy Ghost!" all Paradise sung;
And me inebriate made those harps so strung.

And as I gazed, it seemed to me had won
The universe pleased a smile; inebriation sight
And hearing both had brought with such delight.

O joy! O gladness in unmeasured store!
O perfect life of love and high content!
O wealth secure whereon no care is bent!
Before mine eyes yet stood the torches four,
High-kindled, and the one that earliest came
Began with ruddier radiance now to flame.
And even in semblance such its lustre grew
As Jupiter would become, were birds both he
And Mars, and they on change of plumage should agree.
That Providence wise, which here man's duties through
Season and service blendeth, in that throng
Divine had silence given to speech and song,

When heard I say: "Of wonder show no trace
If change I color, for while I shall speak
Shall all of these a change of color seek.
He who usurps upon the earth my place,
My place, my place, which in the presence pure
Of God's own Son is vacant, hath a sewer
Of blood and stench made of my cemetery, one
Perverse appeasing whose compelled flight hence
Made him 'gainst God's might harbor all offence!"

With the same color which the morning sun,
Or evening, paints upon the clouded skies,
Beheld I, mantling heaven, a redness rise;
And, as a blameless lady, who hath none
Of faults herself, yet when one faulty's named
Within her hearing, timorous is and shamed,
E'en thus did Beatrice countenance change; and such
Eclipse I deem was seen in heaven when Power Omnipotent suffered in that supreme hour.
And thence proceeded forth his words, so much 37
His voice transmuted from itself, that more
Was not the very semblance that he wore:
"The spouse of Christ hath not on blood been fed,
Mine own, and what from Linus, Cletus, rolled,
To be made use of in acquiring gold;
But that might souls to these high planes be led,
Sixtus and Pius bled, and midst much woe,
Calixtus, Urban, saw their life-blood flow.

"Ne'er thought we our successors would divide 46
The Christian folk, and some, kept down by might,
Move to the left, the rest seat on the right;
Nor that the keys God did to me confide
Should e'er be as a banner's heraldry prized
Which should lead men in war on the baptized;
Nor I be made a seal's design to sold
And lying privileges, whereat parts flame
From this my form, and reddening comes with shame.

"In garb of shepherds over every fold 55
Are seen from here wolves ravening tear the sheep!
O wrath of God, how long will last thy sleep?
To drink our blood Coarsines their plans have laid,
And Gascons haste; O thou beginning fair,
How threatens thee an ending vile to snare!
But Providence high, that did, with Scipio's aid,
At Rome the glory of the world defend,
Will, as I think, these wrongs all speedily end."
"And thou, my son, whose mortal weight recalls Thee to the earth again, things heard reveal; What I conceal not, do not thou conceal."
And then, as downward shimmering frozen falls In flakes our atmosphere's mist, what time hath borne To touch the sun the Goat her heavenly horn, So those triumphant vapors saw I rise, So flaky fill the array of ether there, They who round us had wreathed their radiance rare.

Their semblances thus wooed my wondering eyes, And held them, till the distance lengthened; then They passed beyond my fond, regretful ken.
And thereupon the Lady, who took heed That I no more gazed upward, said: "See thou On yonder Earth what circuit's ended now."
Since first I looked, and saw the orbs recede, Now saw I that I through the arc had passed From that first point towards Earth's limits cast.

So that I saw where rash Ulysses tacked Past Gades; and, this side, almost the shore Where Jove a burden sweet Europa bore. And of this threshing-floor less view had lacked, But that the sun beneath my feet had pressed A sign and more his journey t'wards the west. But still my mind enamored, which ne'er leaves Its raptured musings on my Lady, yearned To find mine eyes on her attractions turned.
And if or Art or Nature ever weaves
Meshes divine the eyes to catch and mind
In human flesh or portraits thence designed,
Either or all would seem as nought compared
With the divine delight which o'er me poured
When turned mine eyes to taste her smiles adored.
The strength wherewith her countenance me pre-
pared
Me from the plane where Leda's nestlings blazed
Into the swiftest Heaven divinely raised.

What part thereof for entrance Beatrice chose
I cannot say, because so uniform all
The parts are of that life-thronged lofty hall.
But she, within whose mind my longing rose,
Me speech vouchsafed with joy such in her smile.
That God seemed in her looks to glow the while:
"Hence doth that motion on its journey fare
Which leaves the centre quiet, but the rest
Moves all with its own restless energy pressed.

"And in this Heaven, there is no other Where
Than in the Mind Divine, wherein the love
That moves it is, and power rained from above.
Circling around it, light and love it span
As this the others doth, and its domain
He who encircles it doth sole restrain.
Its motion's nature measure none nor plan
From others gains; it shares to all, as when
By halves or fifths we portions make of ten.
"As to the mode whereby in such a pot
Time hath its roots, while share its leaves the rest,
This unto thee will suitably be expressed.
O Covetousness, our common mortal lot
Thee owns for master; naught us from thee saves;
We all are whelmed 'neath thine ingulfing waves!
In wills of men full blossoms fair abound,
But changes the incessant rain that comes
Into wild yieldings sour the promised plums.

"True constancy and innocence pure are found
In children only; but in vain one seeks
For these when seen is down upon their cheeks.
A Prattler, one will all the fasts observe;
But, loose his tongue, and, forthwith, he devours,
In any moon, all food with ravenous powers.
A lisper see his mother's wishes serve,
And to her helping lend; your praises save;
The round-voiced child will wish her in her grave.

"Thus like the sun doth human nature rise,
Whose child she is; the dawn is fair; the night
Makes swarthy that which in the morn was white.
And that this may not thee too much surprise,
Reflect that government none is on the earth;
Thence loses man his chance for heavenly worth.
But long before the little fractions' power
Shall January place within the bounds of spring
Shall indignation in these circles ring
“Until the tempest long-awaited lower,
Fierce whirling sterns where prows are, so that meet
Upon its course may sail the erring fleet,
And fruit nutritious follow forth the flower.”

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-SEVENTH CANTO.


13, 15. "Such...plumage." Saint Peter so looked as the white planet, Jupiter, would, were it to assume the sanguinary hue of the planet Mars.

22. "He who usurps." Boniface the Eighth, alleged to have obtained his elevation to the papacy by unrighteous methods, and therefore called a usurper.

25. "My cemetery." The Vatican Hill, to which the remains of Saint Peter were transferred from the catacombs.

41. "Linus, Cletus." Saint Linus was Peter’s immediate successor in the See of Rome.

Saint Cletus succeeded Linus.

44, 45. "Sixtus and Pius...Calixtus, Urban." Saint Sixtus was pope, 119-127; Saint Pius, 142-157; and there was no Pius the Second until after the time of Dante.

Saint Calixtus, the martyr, was pope 219-223. The church celebrates his death on the fourteenth of October.

Saint Urban, the martyr, was pope 223-230.

46, 47. "Divide the Christian folk." An allusion to the interminable quarrel between the crown and the mitre, and its inevitable results.

51. "War on the baptized." The campaigns against the Ghibellines, and especially that conducted against the family of Colonna, which involved the destruction of their city, Palestrina.

53. "Privileges." Indulgences, stamped with the pontifical seal.
57. "O wrath . . . how long?" Psalm xliv. 23.
58, 59. "Coarsines . . . Gascons." The allusion is said to be to Clement the Fifth and John the Twenty-Second, the first a native of Gascony, and made pope in 1305, the second a native of Cahors, a town in France, and made pope in 1316. The latter date makes it evident that the final Cantos of the Commedia were written between 1316 and 1321.
61. "Scipio." Dante treats these obnoxious popes as hostile invaders of Christendom, calling for the warlike strategy of another Scipio. The thrust is a keen one.
69. "The Goat." The season of snow, when the sun is in Capricorn, from the middle of December to the middle of January.
79, 80, 82, 84, 87. "Since first . . . the arc . . . rash Ulysses . . . a burden sweet Europa . . . t'wards the west." Butler's suggestion is adopted and the reading changed from "Che fa dal mezzo al fine il prima clima," to "Che va dal mezzo al fine del primo clima." And here more than one thing must be borne in mind. The middle, "mezzo," of the Earth was, in Dante's plan of the universe, Jerusalem, or a point relatively near to it; and the term first zone, torrid zone, "primo clima," applies only to the inhabited Earth. This construction, in Dante's time, made the torrid zone about ninety degrees. He sometimes, in a boastful spirit as to the Mediterranean, speaks of it, with poetic, not scientific, accuracy, as extending the entire length of this zone. The extent of the zone as ninety degrees Dante himself declares in his Convito, iii. 5. Since he stopped in the sign of the Gemini, at the close of the Twenty-second Canto, he had gone through the forty-five degrees remaining of the ninety. He had reached, with his eye, at least, "Gades," the modern Cadiz. He could see the Western Ocean, the scene of the mad voyage of Ulysses described at the close of the Twenty-sixth Inferno. To the eastward he saw almost to the shores of Phoenicia, the scene of the rape of Europa, the eastern limit of his beautiful and beloved Mediterranean; and he
Paradiso.

Notes.

would have seen further to the eastward, but the sun had advanced thirty degrees beyond his place of observation, more than a twelfth part of the heavens, a sign of the zodiac, and left the east in darkness. Dante stood forty-five degrees west of the place where he last looked back. This place, we found, at the end of the Twenty-second Canto, to be about twenty degrees east of Jerusalem. So, he is now twenty degrees east of the Pillars of Hercules; and the sun had advanced ten degrees west of the Pillars into the region of the waves. This would make his position about that of the meridian of Rome. This circumstance, if the supposition indulged in be correct, is apparently given by Dante to add force to the denunciation which he places in the mouth of Saint Peter. In full view, as it were, of the Eternal City, the Prince of the Apostles launches from heaven his invectives against Boniface.

The statement that since Dante first looked back, the sun had made ninety degrees, shows the interval to be six hours.

Dante's opportunities for elaborate geographical and astronomical allusions are becoming rare; the end of the Poem approaches; and he here "makes hay while the sun shines," or, to reject the agricultural metaphor for a sartorial one, he is cutting his garment "according to his cloth."

"Quae cuique est fortuna hodie, quam quisque secat sper,

Sua cuique exorsa laborem

Fortunamque feren."
The Unexplored Portion of the Globe supposed to be Water.

Dante's Places of Observation in the Heavens.
98. "Leda's nestlings." Gemini, the Twins, Castor mortal and Pollux immortal. Leda's mother was Eurythemis. By some accounts her father was Glaucus. Jupiter assumed the form of a swan, and thus made her the parent of the immortal. This sign of the zodiac is thence called the nest of Leda, "nido di Leda."

109. "This Heaven." The Primum Mobile, Primal Motion, the source of the motion of all the spheres below the empyrean. This Heaven is a starless one, and is thence called Crystalline. The Heaven of the Fixed Stars includes all the stars, even the constellations of the zodiac.

Dante has been supposed, in his statement of the causes of motion, to have anticipated by three hundred years the discoveries of Galileo. Dante, however, assigned, as the cause, desire of union to God in the empyrean. Galileo attributed motion to an impulse proceeding from the hand of God, an impulse calculated for the physical effect intended. But it is known that Galileo was an ardent student of the Commedia, and that he pursued the meanings of the Poem into laborious details.

120. "Will suitably be expressed." In the next Canto. Meanwhile Dante will bewail human infirmity as contrasted with celestial stability.

142. "Little fractions." The little fractions' power which might result in making January no longer a winter, but convert it into a spring, month, was a fault of the Julian calendar, corrected two hundred and sixty-one years after Dante's death, in the pontificate of Gregory the Thirteenth, who, in 1582, effected the correction by omitting ten nominal days after the fourth of October, and by adopting a rule for the omission of three leap years in every four hundred years. The British parliament adopted the Gregorian rule in 1752, and enacted that the third of September in that year should be called the fourteenth.

The change, as it is thus seen, would amount to about eight days in a thousand years; and, as Dante is speaking in irony, he says, in effect, that not a long, but a short, time will elapse.
CANTO TWENTY-EIGHTH.

ARGUMENT:

Drawn from the imparadised contemplation of Beatrice's beauty, as one may be drawn by seeing in a mirror before him a flambeau behind him, Dante turned to gaze upon the central Point in the universe, the Godhead. As he gazed upon the celestial scene, Beatrice explained to him the ten zones and the law of the motion of each.

The Heaven of Primal Motion.

PERSONS SPEAKING: The chorus of all the Heavens singing Hosannas. Dante. Beatrice.

PERSONS APPEARING: The Seraphim. The spirits of the moral philosophers.

When thus, against this mortal life's poor claim
To our respect the truth she did unroll
Whose truth and charms imparadise all my soul,
As in a mirror 's seen a torch's flame
By him who from behind receives its light
Before it comes within his thought or sight,
And turns to see if truth the brilliant glass
Have told, and finds it true as is a note
Which doth on harmony's wings serenely float,
So, doth it through my joyous memory pass,
Was my experience, meeting those fair eyes
Whereof Love made the snares for my surprise.
And drawn again to that new scope whence glowed,
Throughout its volume, that which, with due heed,
The attentive soul and awed would therein read,
A Point beheld I whence a radiance flowed
So keen it would the sight consume unclosed
And to such sharpened strength of light opposed,

And so minute that Point was that would seem,
Placed by its side, the smallest star the eye
Of mortal sees, a moon amidst our sky.
And, at such distance, as, perchance, doth gleam
The halo cincturing round its picturing light
When renders density there its pathway bright,
Remote thus from the Point a circle of fire
In speed surpassed, so swiftly was it whirled,
That moving sphere which first surrounds the world;

And this enclosed was in another gyre,
That by a third, the third then by a fourth,
And fifth, and sixth, in due succession forth;
In width the seventh belt followed thereupon,
So ample now that Juno’s messenger space
Less wide would need to beautify nature’s face.
The eighth and ninth succeeded, and each one
More slowly moved as cours ed its outward way
Remote the more from where the first had play.
Canto XXVIII.

And that one which was from the stainless spark 37
Less distant, had its crystalline flame most clear,
Because, I think, of Truth to it most near.
She, then, who on my face perplexed the mark
Of musing saw: "From that Point 'tis depend
The Heavens and Nature, wheresoe'er they tend.
Observe that circle nearest it, thou, and know
That swiftness such through burning love it hath
Which spurs it on its God-appointed path."

And queried I: "If would earth's circles flow 46
In order such as yonder wheels observe,
What I see here my mind to rest would serve;
But in the world of sense at once we find
That more divine the circles are the more
They from the centre outward swell and soar.
Wherefore if here shall find repose my mind,
In this miraculous and angelic fane
Which love and light alone in bounds restrain,

"I must yet learn how not in mode the same 55
Go copy and example; shuns it me;
Nor can I cause of such diversity see."
"If that thy fingers be for this knot lame
No wonder great it is; because, not tried
In method best, the thing 's to thee denied."
My Lady thus; then said she: "Thou may' st solve,
With this I give thee, this thy maze, and find
How fade ali doubts before thy subtle mind:
Paradiso.

The true celestial Norm.

"Through narrow paths or wide the orbs revolve, according to the virtue more or less Their several parts, as thus they move, possess. The greater excellence works the greater weal, The greater weal the greater orb sustains If every part the same perfection gains. Therefore this one which doth in its swift wheel The universe wrap, doth answer to the one Which hath the greater love and knowledge won.

"Wherefore if should thy measure virtue be, And not mere semblance and the rounding form, Thou wouldst apply the true celestial norm, And then wouldst an agreement marvellous see Of harmony strict betwixt the great and small Each ruled by that Intelligence guiding all." As when blows Boreas from his favoring cheek, And cleanses mantling clouds from out the sky, Which erst gave sign of darkling rain-drops nigh,

Serene the scene is now that was so bleak, And Nature smiles in all her pageantry fair Beneath the blue immensity bright of air; So did I seem, soon as my Lady wooed Response had given, and driven all doubting far, And on me truth gleamed as from heaven a star. And, when were ended all her words, was viewed A scintillation by each circle given, Which flashed like molten iron throughout all heaven.
And every flash its splendid fires renewed,
Till did they far outmillion the array
That would the king upon the chessboard lay.
And heard I echoing on, from choir to choir,
"Hosanna," unto that fixed Point, which still
Them holds, as erst, obedient to its Will.
I meditating stood, still touched with doubt,
When she, "The primal circles," said,
"Have 'fore thee Cherubims' powers and Sera-
phims' sped.

"Thus swift their bounding hoops they follow out,
Thus coveted likeness to the Point attain,
Attainment high as doth their vision reign.
The other Loves, that there beyond them speed
And gaze with ardor on the Point Divine,
Are Thrones; they end the primal triad's line.
And be assured that happiness doth them feed
As much as do they Truth Divine possess,
Wherein all intellect doth repose confess.

"And shows this readily how so high delight
Is on the faculty high of vision based,
Not that of love, which is beneath it placed.
And merit is the measure of such sight,
Merit by grace sped forward and good will,
And thus prepared to seek grades loftier still.
The second triad, which, in this fair spring,
Eternal buds puts forth, which may not fear
The mighty Ram, whose influence comes not here,
"Doth ever gratefully its hosannas sing
With threefold melody sweet from orders three
Of joy, which thus threefold is made to be.
The three in this hierarchy's zone which shine
Are, first Dominions, Virtues next, and showers
Of grace the third attend, of Powers.
Then, in glad round of dances intertwine
The Principalities and Archangels; last
The Angels, jubilant, taste a bliss so vast.

"These Orders all have vision high divine,
And influence wield on spheres that speed below;
Thus, drawn to God, they spread attraction's
glow.
So great desire in Dionysius wrought
These Orders to contemplate, that he ranged
Their stations thus, and them I have not changed.
But Gregory afterwards new arrangements brought,
Wherefore, as soon as here his eyes were used,
He at himself did smile, as disabused.

"And that so much of truth mysterious, man
On earth did proffer, wonder need not be,
For he it him revealed, it here did see,
With truth still more, that fills each circling span."

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CANTO.
3. "Imparadise."
"Thus these two,
Imparadised in one another's arms,
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
Of bliss on bliss."  
Paradise Lost, v. 505.
Notes.

10, 11, 12. "So . . . eyes . . . snares." Dante would have us understand that Beatrice's countenance was reflected in the sphere of the Seraphim, as a torch's light would be in a mirror.

15. "Would therein read." The translator thus continues the simile of the volume. The "volume" appears to be the whole volume of all the Heavens. Good is their common central Point.

32. "Juno's messenger." Iris, or the rainbow, Wonder's daughter.

42. "The Heavens and Nature, wheresoe'er they tend." The nine Heavens—the planes of the planets, the planes of the stars not of our system, the plane of the starless but restless crystalline space, or the plane of the motionless and infinitely-extending empyrean, with their several orders of celestial inhabitants, and their several hierarchies—all this has received attention in the notes to the First Canto, and to them the reader should have reference for the better understanding of the present Canto.

45. "God-appointed." Everywhere in the Paradiso swiftness indicates fervor.

70. "This one." The crystalline Heaven, the swiftest of all, wherein Dante and Beatrice now are.

78. "Each ruled." This profusion of verbiage (a sore affliction to the translators and commentators) appears to me merely and simply to mean that velocity and excellence are regulated by the amount of virtue imparted, and, the seat and source of virtue being God, He imparts velocity and excellence to the heavenly planes in proportion to their nearness to Him.

This is a hint towards, not a realization of, the scientific law announced by Galileo.

79. "Boreas from his favoring cheek." Boreas is the northwind, regarded in the Grecian mythology as a deity, and called by the poets the son of Astræus and Aurora. Dante here has reference, probably, to the saying that "fair weather cometh out of the north." Job xxxvii. 22.
91, 92, 93. "Flash . . . outmillion the array . . . upon the chessboard." The story is that the inventor of the game of chess exhibited it to a Persian king, who, in his delight, requested the exhibitor to name some present from the royal munificence. The inventor asked only one grain of wheat doubled sixty-four times, once for each square of the chessboard. The king was glad to comply, but the computation ran into millions of millions of bushels, the product of all the harvests of the globe since the beginning of time.

116, 117. "Eternal buds . . . the mighty Ram." The unchanging spring of Paradise, where the alternating seasons, and the influences of decay are unknown.

122, 123, 130, 133. "Dominions, Virtues, Powers . . . Dionysius . . . Gregory." Dionysius arranged the Celestial Hierarchy in triads as follows:

1. Angels, Archangels, Principalities;
2. Powers, Virtues, Dominions;
3. Thrones, Cherubim, Seraphim.

The arrangement made by Saint Gregory the Great was:

1. Angels, Archangels, Virtues;
2. Powers, Principalities, Dominions;
3. Thrones, Cherubim, Seraphim.

Dionysius was an Athenian converted by Saint Paul. Acts xvii. 34: "Dionysius the Areopagite." His work The Celestial Hierarchy is the great storehouse of all that relates to the denizens of the celestial spheres; but some are inclined to assign the work to a Dionysius of the sixth century.

138. "For he . . . it here did see." Saint Paul speaks of one who "was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." 2 Corinthians xii. 4. It is supposed that Saint Paul is here speaking of himself.
CANTO TWENTY-NINTH.

ARGUMENT:

Beatrice continues in discourse. She treats of the creation of Angels, matter, and men, and of the purposes and plans of God therein, and deals severely with pastors whose personal ambition leads them to forget the Gospel and to neglect their flocks. Still the Heaven of Primal Motion.

PERSONS speaking: Dante. Beatrice.

PERSONS appearing: The Seraphim. The spirits of the moral philosophers.

So long as do the babes, Latona's joys, The Ram and Scales the signs that o'er them soar, Upon the horizon's belt their radiance pour; So long as them the zenith holds in poise, Till from the brilliant girdle their quick change Of hemispheres doth that level disarrange; Not longer Beatrice silence kept; she stood Smile-painted, while upon the Point intent Her gaze she held, mine being with splendor spent,
And then resumed: "I speak, for that which would
By thee be sought I know, having seen it there
Where centres every When and every Where.
Not for increase unto Himself of good,
A thing impossible, but that might thus show
His beams his glory forth, in endless glow,
Beyond time's limit or aught limit more,
In His eternity, where His will controlled,
He did from His own love new loves unfold.

"Not as if torpid did He lie before;
For neither After nor Before had place
In goings forth of God through waves of space.
Out from his hands did free from defect pass
Unmingled, mingled, form and matter, winged
E'en as three arrows from a bow three-stringed.
And as doth flash in crystal, amber, glass,
A sunbeam so that from its coming nought
Of time elapses till its ray is caught,

"So from their Lord did His three arrows mixed
Flash into being forth with one effect
Which time's discrimination doth reject.
Order at once created was and fixed
In substances, and highest heights were those
Wherein pure form, through this creation, rose.
Mere passive power the lowest levels took;
Midway was form with power commingled found
In strict conjunction ne'er to be unbound."
"True, thou wilt find supposed in Jerome's book, That Angels ages long created were Before was made aught else; but look with care, And thou wilt see that this truth forms the aim In many places of inspired souls Whose spirit wise the Holy Ghost controls. And even reason somewhat grasps the same, For that these Motors could their skies neglect So long all probability doth reject.

"Thus, when and where, then, had these loves their Fount, And how, thou knowest; so that of thy desires Already lie extinct in thee these fires. Ere one in reckoning could to twenty count, A portion of these Angels, falling, brought Disturbance to your elements creature-fraught. Remained the rest, and then, as Motors, first Commenced their circling, with such depth of peace They ne'er from such delightful labor cease.

"What caused that fall the fatal pride accursed Of him was whom thou sawest constrained within The deepest depth of all the world of sin. And those thou seest the lowliness had to trace Their origin to His bounty free who made Their souls intelligent in angelic aid. And therefore was their vision, through His grace Enlightening and their own deserts, so raised That Him their full and ready wills give praise.
"I would thee shield from any grain of doubt
That to receive this grace hath merit great
As is his joy that welcomes it elate.
Now in this consistory round about
May'st thou gaze freely, and need prompting none,
If these my words thy favoring mind have won.
But since upon the earth your schoolmen teach
Of this angelic nature, and instil
The idea that memory 's theirs, hearing, and will,

"More will I say, that thou may'st easily reach
The truth that they confound in homilies there,
And shun equivocation's lurking snare.
These substances angelic, in the face
Of God rejoicing, ne'er have turned their sight
From that high Mirror's all-embracing light,
And doth none object thence their vision chase;
And hence no need have they of memory's aid,
Since 'fore their face is all that's known displayed.

"And thus, below, men walk in waking dreams;
Sincere in error some, and others rash;
And of rebuke the last deserve the lash.
Philosophy's one path should reach its themes;
But you transports a restless love of show
And that conceit to learning true a foe.
But even this fault celestial anger less
Provokes than when God's word is set aside,
Or from its meaning fair distorted wide."
"Reck they not, there, the blood and sore distress Its sowing cost, and what delight he gives Who with humility in its precepts lives. Each for appearance strives; each would display His own inventions strange; and while increase The preacher's tropes, the Gospel holds its peace. One saith, that, in Christ's Passion, went astray The moon, its disk turned backward, till it screened From earth the sun, its form so intervened.

"Another saith that of its own accord The sun withdrew, and did to all, to Jews, And Indian tribes, and Spain, its light refuse. Lapi and Bindi Florence doth afford In number less than fables such as these That every year her pulpit-orators please, Please so much that the lambs, poor ignorant souls, Come back from pasture fed alone on wind; And no excuse have these wise orators blind.

"Christ's history no such words as these unfolds: 'Go forth, my followers, preach ye idle tales,' But gave them a foundation that ne'er fails; And from brave lips so rang his mission plain That, in the war the fires of Faith to light, The Gospel served for shields and lances bright. Now men go forth with flippant jestings vain To preach, and if runs round the indulgent smile, The cowl puffs out, but questions nought the while.
"But in the cowl makes such a bird his nest
That, if the crowd it saw, they would perceive
What pardons given their consciences relieve;
For which on earth the folly's so confessed
That, without evidence, but on promises mock,
They would together on any occasion flock.
By this, Saint Anthony's school make fat his swine,
And plenty of others, yet more swinish, pay
Who give unstamped, their charges to defray.

"But our digression great is from the line,
To which turn back, forthwith, thy wandering eyes;
Short time short path would now to us advise.
Angelic natures throng so in this field
Celestial, that ne'er yet was mortal speech,
Nor fancy, that their numbers full could reach.
And if thou notest that which is revealed
By Daniel, thou wilt in his thousands find
A number infinite finite lurks behind.

"The Primal Light that nature makes divine
By modes as many is received thereby
As through heaven's vault angelic splendors fly.
Hence, inasmuch as on the heart's design
The affection followeth, love's diversely found
Fervid or lukewarm in a lengthening round.
Behold thou now the height and breadth unrolled
The Eternal Power commands, a Mirror, shared
In parts so many, yet in nought impaired,
"And One remaining, as in days of old."

NOTES TO THE TWENTY-NINTH CANTO.

1, 2, 3. "Babes ... signs ... radiance." The babes, Latona's joys, are Apollo and Diana, the Sun and Moon. They, when the Sun is in Aries, and the Moon in Libra, illuminate the horizon at the same moment, the Sun setting in the east, the full Moon rising, opposite, in the west. So long as they remain poised on the horizon, as by an invisible balance suspended from the zenith, so long did Beatrice remain silent.

16, 17, 18. "Time ... eternity ... new loves." "The angelic nature," says Saint Thomas of Aquin, *Summa*, i. 61. 3, "was made before the creation of time" and after the beginning of eternity. For *novi* amori, new loves, some editions read *novi* amori, the *nine* loves, the nine angelic bands who, as hierarchs of the Heavens, move their respective spheres. One of these editions is the Cassinese.

20. "After nor Before." In eternity there is no After nor Before. These are relative words which apply only to time.

23, 24, 28, 29. "Mingled form and matter ... three arrows ... three-stringed ... three arrows ... with one effect."

1. Form, the Angelic nature;
2. Matter, the elements;
3. The two mingled, the human being.

Saint Thomas of Aquin, as we have seen, defines form as the principle by which we think, whether that principle be denominated intellect or intellectual soul.

35, 36. "Midway ... form ... power ... n'er to be unbound."

1. Midway, that is, in the human nature;
2. Form, that is, the Angelic nature;
3. Power, that is, the thinking capacity, the intellectual soul.

Their union, that is, the union of angelic nature and soul, suspended by death, will be renewed and perpetuated at the resurrection.
37. "Jerome." Of Saint Jerome, Darras, History of the Catholic Church, i. 565, gives this exalted praise: "Saint Jerome brought to the service of the truth more learning than any other Father of the Latin Church. His immense labours on the Scriptures are equalled only by his incredible mortification, his love of retreat and poverty, and his burning charity, which moved the great Saint Augustine to compare him to Saint Paul." Born about 340. Died 420. The Church celebrates the festival of his death on the 30th of September.

38, 39. "Angels . . . before . . . aught else." Saint Jerome was not alone in this opinion. It was entertained by other Fathers of the Church. They assumed that the creation of the Angelic natures preceded by long ages the creation of the rest of the universe. Their opinion was refuted by other theologians. It is refuted by Saint Thomas of Aquin, Summa, i. 61. 3.

96. "Preacher . . . gospel." Saint Chrysostom, he of the Golden Mouth, in preaching to all audiences quite carried them away with his eloquence. His military audiences would beat the pavement with their swords, and salute him as the "Thirteenth Apostle." But, in discursing on this subject in his Homilies, he censures this and all other manifestations of applause, and says he is desirous to see the praise of his sermons in the improvement of the lives of his hearers.

103. "Lapi and Bindi." Familiar names in Florence, Lapo being the abbreviation of Jacopo, and Bindi of Aldobrandi.

115. "Flippant jestings vain."

"He that negotiates between God and man,
As God's ambassador, the grand concerns
Of judgment and of mercy, should beware
Of lightness in his speech. 'Tis pitiful
To court a grin, when you should woo a soul;
To break a jest, when pity would inspire
Pathetic exhortation; and t' address
The skittish fancy with facetious tales
When sent with God's commission to the heart!"

Cowper, Task, ii.

117. "The cowl puffs out." With conceit? Or with a responsive smile? Or with both?
124. "Saint Anthony's . . . swine." Saint Anthony, surnamed the Great, was a native of Egypt. Born 251. Died 356, at the age of 105. At the age of twenty he renounced the world, and acquired wide renown and reverence as the Patriarch of the Desert. An old tradition represents him as having humbled himself to the occupation of tending swine. This was the enforced occupation of Saint Patrick in a state of slavery.

125, 126. "Pay unstamped." Giving false indulgences, without the true stamp upon them, in return for offerings and alms.

129. "Short time short path." The end of the Poem approaches.

Dante's eyes being now unequal to the task of further contemplating the height of heaven, he turns to the contemplation of Beatrice, to treat of whom as her beauty deserves he confesses himself powerless. She calls his attention to their progress. They have now reached the tenth Heaven, the Empyrean, the immediate presence of God. In the midst of radiant fulminations like incessant lightning, he beholds a river of light, incredibly beautiful, of which, at the instance of Beatrice, he drinks. Then, his knowledge being amplified, he perceives that the sparkles which flash from the river, and the rubies and topazes which plunge and float and glory in it, are the Angels and other Heavenly Creations and the Souls of the Saints.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Dante. Beatrice.

PERSONS APPEARING: The immediate presence of God. The Rose of the Blessed. The eminently happy exalted to the Empyrean. The angelic creations.

Say that, six thousand miles from us remote,
   The sixth hour glows, and that this world in shade
   That's nearly level by the sun is laid,
And that, while we the mid-sky's oceans note,
   Fails, here and there, to send its rays, so far
   As to our depth, a dim, departing star,
And that, as comes, with her excelling rays,
   The handmaid of the sun, the pageant dies,
   And fades each brightest torch along the skies:
The exquisite Beauty of Beatrice.

E'en so that Triumph, which forever plays

About the Point which me o'ercame, and beams,
Enclosing that which it to circle seems,

Little by little from my vision fled.

Wherefore my love, and loss of other view,

Me back to Beatrice and her homage drew.

If what of her hath been already said

Were in one single eulogy grouped, 't would ill
Her meed of merit at this moment fill.

The beauty which in her I now beheld

B'yond mortals goes; her Maker, I believe,

Hath power alone its fulness to receive.

Myself I own by obstacles stronger spelled

Than in his labored theme was ever bard

Whose verses, light or grave, brought problems hard;

For, as of eyes quelled by the sun's bright burst,

E'en so the exquisite memory of that smile

Doth me of words and forming mind beguile.

Not from that day when on this earth I first

Her face beheld, up to this moment, song

Have I e'er failed to strew her path along,

But now I own my limping numbers lame;

An artist sometimes finds his powers surpassed,

And mine succumb to beauty's lance at last.

And I must leave her to a greater fame

Than any that my trumpet-gives, which sounds,

Now, hastening notes, which mark this labor's bounds,
Such as she then stood forth, with gesture meet
For leadership high, and words: "Stops now our flight,
From widest Heaven, in one that is pure light;
Light intellectual with love's rays replete,
Love of true good, with ecstasy's rounded joy,
Joy passing sweetness, and without alloy.
Here shalt thou look on either mighty host
That Paradise claims; one in the self-same guise
That at the judgment dread shall meet thine eyes."

As when terrestrial levin quells the boast
Of strongest eyesight, and all outlines fade
Where hath such nimble splendor's glory played,
So round me flashed a living splendor's levin,
And left me swathed in such a veil that nought
Mine eyes beheld, in its effulgence caught.
"The Eternal Love which stills this radiant Heaven
Salutes the coming soul with welcome such
As fits its candle flame divine to touch."

No sooner had I felt the assuring might
These brave words gave me, than my strength
was grown,
I felt, beyond all power that was mine own,
And knew I kindled in me newer light,
Such that exists no light whate'er so pure,
Light whose keen force mine eyes could not endure.
And light I saw that like a river flowed,
With sudden flushed effulgence, 'twixt two banks
Where joyous spring displayed her flowery ranks.
From out this river living sparkles glowed,
And sought the flowers, which them did so enfold
As doth a ruby its incasing gold;
And, then, as if inebriate with perfume,
They plunged again into the marvellous stream,
Where, going, coming, sparkles ever gleam.
"The burning wish, which makes thee now presume
Of what thou seest to have intelligence, me
Doth please the more, the more it flames in thee;

"But meet it is thou of this water taste,
Before be lessened in thee thirst so great,"
The Sunshine said, which made mine eyes elate,
And added this: "The river herbage-graced,
The topazes that go and come, the flowers,
Are laughing prefases clear of coming powers,
Not powers that labor bring to those who know,
For on thy side the failure is, the strain
The vision claims thine eyes cannot yet gain."

There is no babe his dimpled arms doth throw
Towards his mother's breasts, if he awake
Beyond the usual time her milk to take,
So suddenly as did I, that I mine eyes
Might aiding mirrors make, in waves which flow
That they, there entering, may thence better go.
I stooped; mine eyelids' eaves thence drank; the guise
It had was changed forthwith from long to round,
A lake it seemed with jewelled rivage bound.
Then, as a company masked, if they divest
Themselves of their disguises, forms quite far
They show from those the masks but seemed to mar,
So shone, in greater pomp, that company blest,
The flowers, the sparks, so that, made plain,
were given
Unto mine eyes both radiant Courts of heaven.
O Splendor of God! by means whereof I saw
The lofty Triumph of thy Kingdom; saw
Truth crowned; me aid to say how it I saw!

A light there is, above, a guiding law,
Which to each creature his Creator shows;
Each creature thence the peace of happiness knows;
Its circular form expands to such extent
That its circumference, placed around the sun,
Would be a girdle not to full length run.
Of rays it is in marvellous manner blent;
Which Primal Motion’s summit forth reflects,
Whose power and life derive thence their effects.

And, as a cliff, in crystal at its base,
Itself as in a mirror sees, as though
To admire of flowers and verdure its rich glow,
So, round about the light, in lofty place,
I mirrored saw, in thousand ranks and more,
All those returned from us to glory’s door.
And, if, within itself, so great a light
Collects the lowest row, what space receives
This ample Rose in its extremest leaves!
Canto XXX.

The Stoles of White.

My vision, in that amplitude vast, and height, 118
Lost not itself, but made its glad employ
To see how much and what was that great joy.
Nearness, as distance, there no difference shows,
For where doth God immediately hold sway,
No call there is awed nature's laws to obey.
Into the yellow of the Eternal Rose,
Far-spread, multiplied, and breathing praise
Of perfume to the Sun's ne'er-wintering rays,

As one who fain would speak yet silence keeps, 127
Me Beatrice onward drew: "Behold the stoles
Of white," she said, "how numerous midst these souls!
Behold how wide our city's circuit sweeps!
Behold our seats so thronged that few hence-forth
Are needed to make full the lists of worth!
Before thou in this wedding-feast take part,
On that great throne, already crowned, thine eyes
Regard with earnest look of pleased surprise,

"Shall sit the soul of one who from kind heart 136
Shall Italy lessons give ere ready she;
Henry he comes, and shall Augustus be.
But of blind covetousness ye feel the spell;
It hath you made like to a child perverse
Who dies of hunger yet drives off the nurse.
And, in the sacred forum then shall dwell
A Prefect such that on no road, or hid
Or high, will he to walk with him be bid."
"But not long time will God his presence bear
In the holy office; he shall find his place
Where Simon Magus shares deserved disgrace,
And make him of Alagna lower fare."

NOTES TO THE THIRTIETH CANTO.

1, 2. "Six thousand miles . . . shade." The sixth hour is the glowing hour of noon, and when noon is some six thousand miles "from us remote," the dawn is approaching, the sun is nearing our horizon, and each "dim, departing star," "each bright torch along the skies," disappears. "The handmaid of the sun" is Aurora, the Dawn, daughter of Hyperion and Theia.


43. "Here shalt thou look." Here Dante would realize what he had read in Holy Writ: "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding." Philippians iv. 7.

"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" . . . or, "in us all." . . . "He ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things." Ephesians iv. 1-16.

"O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens." Psalm viii. 1.

"The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens." Psalm cxiii. 4.

44. "One." The Angelic host.


"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Revelation xxii. 1.

63, 64, 66. "Flowery ranks . . . living sparkles . . . ruby . . . gold." The flowers are the souls of the blessed, shining as
Notes.

gold; the sparkles are the Angelic creations, brilliant as rubies.

66, 77. "Ruby ... topazes." The confusion attests Dante's intoxication.

89. "From long to round." The river had become a lake. Its "jewelled rivage" was the Angelic host. Venturi says the river symbolizes the outpouring of the divine nature upon the creatures of God; the lake, the change "from long to round," symbolizes the return of this outpouring to its divine Source, as to its origin and destination, its eternal abode.

97, 98, 99. "I saw ... saw ... I saw." "Vidi ... vidi ... vidi." Another peculiarity in Dante's rhymes: vidi rhymed with itself, "to express," says Longfellow, "the intenseness of his vision;" or, we might say, to represent, by the religious fervor of the threefold expression, the solemnity of his feelings.

136, 138. "Henry ... Augustus." A hint, at once, of the imperialism of the Poet, and of his devotion to Virgil, always identified with Octavian. Henry, Duke of Luxemburg, became, in 1308, Henry the Seventh, Emperor of Germany. Dante hailed him with enthusiasm as the deliverer of Italy, as a wise and rightful ruler, the herald of order, peace, justice, rectitude. Henry, to the infinite grief of Dante and all other good men, died in 1313, but this event, in view of the assumed date of the Poem, 1300, is spoken of prophetically. His throne is ready in heaven.

"On that great throne, already crowned,
... shall sit"

the soul of Henry.

139. "Ye," Ye, of Italy.

143. "A Prefect." Pope Clement the Fifth (1305-1314). See the notes to the Nineteenth Inferno. The text is an implied denunciation of the career of that pontiff in contrast with the admirable record of Henry the Seventh.

146. "Simon Magus." Simon we have met in the Nineteenth Inferno, third Pit of the Evil-Pits. Milman, History of Christianity, ii. 97, intimates that Simon claimed to be
God, or, at least, Adam, and that his companion, Helena, the possessor of wonderful beauty, was the Holy Spirit, or, at least, Eve. A self-deification was his; hers were the attributes of Psyche and Minerva. In other words, he was an arch-impostor, and Dante's allusion to him here, in connection with Boniface, is another vehement thrust at a political enemy.

148. "Him of Alagna." Pope Boniface the Eighth, a native of Alagna, now Anagni, whom is awaiting a place in the Evil-Pits, into which place he is to be pushed downwards into the crevices of the rocks, that Clement the Seventh may take his place.
CANTO THIRTY-FIRST.

ARGUMENT:

The saintly multitude was arranged like the leaves of a great white Rose, effulgent, and sharing the light of an effulgence of which the centre, infinitely glorious, was God; while the heavenly choirs now soared aloft to gaze upon God, now descended into the leaves of the Rose. Saint Bernard, approaching Dante, shows him Beatrice enthroned, and she rewards his gaze with a smile. The saint then directed his attention to the Blessed Virgin, from whose seat flashed radiance, while waved around her their banners thousands of Angels.

The Empyrean.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Saint Bernard. Dante.


And so, in form a snow-white Rose, these seats Displayed to me the saintly host allied By Christ's own blood to Him, and made His Bride.

But th' other host that, winged, with anthems greets His glory who doth fill it with his love, And gave it, kind, such noble birth above, Even as a swarm of bees that, now sunk deep In flowers, again through sunlight soars To where it all its labors' sweetness stores,
Into the mighty flower sank down, to reap
Its leaves' so lucent sweets, and then,
To where its love lives ever, rose again.

Of living flame their faces were, and gold
Their wings, and all the rest so white
No snow e'er shone with dazzling gleam so bright.

And as from tier to tier their legions rolled,
They somewhat kindled of that zeal and peace
Wherein wings fanning loins showed their increase.

Nor came of shadow aught, betwixt the flower
And that impending host, nor view
Impeding; shone its splendor through;
For hath the light divine such piercing power
The universe throughout, as merit claims,
That obstacle none defeats its arrows' aims.

This realm secure, replete with peace and joy,
And thronged with people ancient, and with new,
For all its gaze and love but one Point knew.

O Trinal Light, which doth their sight enjoy,
Let thy star's single glory cast its glow
Upon our frowning tempest here below!
If the barbarians, roaming from some land
Which sees forever Helice beam on high,
Pleased, with her son, to tread the polar sky,
Beholding Rome and all her structures grand,
Were wonder-struck, when was the Lateran fair
Above all things mortality may impair,
I, who from human to divine had passed,
From time unto eternity, the plain
That Florence holds to people just and sane,
What strong amazement held me fettered fast!
This, and my joy together, not to speak
My pleasure made it, nor discourse to seek.
And, as a pilgrim, whose delighted awe
Takes in the temple of his vow, his heart
In high hope some day all he sees to impart,

So, wheresoe'er the radiant ranks I saw,
Now up, now down, and to the furthest bound,
Those living lights mine eyes I compassed round.
I faces saw, where moved sweet charity's dance,
Faces which His light, and their own smile,
graced,
Gestures where every charm its seal had placed.
The general form of Paradise had my glance
Thus comprehended, and not yet my mind
Had been to any special part confined,

When turned I round again with kindling thought
To ask my Lady to renew her speech,
And me, not sure of things suspended, teach.
An answer came, but not from her I sought;
I deemed I should see Beatrice, but mine eyes
An Old Man saw, with vesture of the skies.
With joy benignant glowed his eyes and face,
His attitude seemed all made of pity kind,
Such as we in the tenderest fathers find.
And "She, where is she?" thus my words found place.

"Me Beatrice sends to thee from mine own seat,
That in her stead thy wishes I may meet.
And if thou dost the first rank's third round scan
Thou shalt her see where hath desert enthroned
Her merits high which Heaven's decree hath owned."

Replied I not, but swift mine eyesight ran,
And found her seated, and in guise so bright
She seemed a crown reflecting infinite light.

Not from the loftiest place where thunders roll
Is any mortal eye so distant, placed
Where are the deepest sea-floor's windings traced,
As mine from Beatrice was, but no control
Had distance here; here form was not obscure
Through medium made, but clear came down and pure.

"O Lady! Fount wherefrom my hope hath grown!
Thou who, that I might safe be, deemed it meet
In Hell to leave the imprint of thy feet!

"For all mine eyes have seen, I freely own
The virtue and the grace, as from thy power
And bounty coming, as a freshening shower.
To me, a slave, comes freedom in the end,
By all expedients brought, through ways divine
That power had yielded into hands of thine.
Do thou me still thy generous aid extend,
So that this soul of mine, by thee made fair,
May, to thee pleasing, from its body fare."
And she, so distant, seemed to make a smile
Her answer; and a look I further earned;
But then she to the Eternal Fountain turned.
"That close," my blest guide said to me the while,
"Of this thy journey thou may'st gain, have prayer
And love divine thee given into my care.
Let, then, thy vision fly, around, above;
To contemplate these beauties will prepare
Its mounting higher to radiant scenes more rare.

"And she, Heaven's Queen, whom I with all of love
Adore that ardor gives, will yield all grace;
She knows full well her faithful Bernard's face."
And, e'en as he whom some Croatian glade
Sends forth to gaze at our Veronica, known
To holy fame, and dear to pilgrims grown,
Says in his thought, the while it is displayed,
"And was like this thy very look adored,
O thou true God, Christ Jesus and my Lord?"

Such was I there, while I, of this blest man,
Gazed at the living charity, he whom here
Brought contemplation to that Peace so near.
"This glad life, son of grace," thus pleasing ran
His speech, "thou may'st not wholly know, if place
Thou shouldst thine eyes upon the lowest space;
But follow on the circles, far and far,
Until thou shalt the Queen enthroned behold,
Whom all her realm doth reverently enfold."
Paradiso.

The Oriflamme high.

I raised mine eyes; and, as the morning star
A lustre greater heralds that attends
The western skies when day's long journey ends,
Thus, as mine eyes their journey made elate
From vale to mount, I saw a part surpass,
Remote, the splendor of the greater mass:
And, even as there, where we the pole await
By Phaëthon illy-guided, blazes higher
The light, while slackens on the sides its fire,

So did that oriflamme high, which meek peace brings,
Gleam brightest in the centre, while became,
On either side, more dim the lessening flame.
And at that centre, with expanded wings,
Of jubilant Angels, thousands met my gaze,
Effulgent all, but graced in various ways.
I at their songs and sports saw Beauty smile
A smile which gladness gave to those redeemed
Shown in the light which from their faces beamed.

E'en had I wealth of speech and brilliant style
To mine imagination suited, ne'er would I
The smallest part of that enchantment try.
Bernard, as soon as he saw me intent
Upon that fervid fervor, turned his gaze
With such intense affection t'wards its rays,
That with my soul warmth yet unknown was blent.
NOTES TO THE THIRTY-FIRST CANTO.

2. "The saintly host." The blessed, the saints, the Church.
6. "Bees." We may easily suppose that Dante had here in mind the Fourth Georgic.
32. "Helice." The nymph Callisto, beloved and slain by Jupiter, was changed by him into the Great Bear, and her son into the Little Bear, constellations revolving around the northern pole.
60. "An Old Man." Saint Bernard, the leader of the Second Crusade. Born 1091, died 1153. Darras, History of the Catholic Church, speaks of him as "nature's favorite, ever winning the enthusiastic love of all." Hénault, Abrégé Chronologique, pronounces his sermons "chefs-d'œuvres de sentiment et de force," masterpieces of feeling and power. The Church celebrates his festival on the twentieth of August.
64. "And she, where is she?" Beatrice. She had returned to sit by the side of Rachel. Rachel is an emblem of Divine Contemplation. Inferno, ii. 101; Paradiso, xxxii. 8.
104. "Veronica." Each of the four piers supporting the dome of Saint Peter's is made the receptacle of a relic of inestimable value. One has the head of Saint Andrew the Apostle; another a portion of the True Cross; another the lance of the Crucifixion; another the Holy Face. The Holy Face is sometimes called the Veronica, or True Image, of Christ. The divine features are shown on a handkerchief said to have been handed to Our Lord on his way to Calvary, by a pitying woman whose identity is lost. It is said that Our Lord left, for a moment, to Simon the Cyrenian the burden of the Cross, applied the handkerchief to his face, and returned it to the woman, who found it marked with the exact imprint of his adorable countenance.
127. "Oriflamme." As the word imports, a combination of gold and fire, a war-banner of brilliant tintage. Dante says the oriflamme of peace "beams brightest in the centre."
CANTO THIRTY-SECOND.

ARGUMENT:

Saint Bernard explains the divisions of the Rose of the Blessed, and discourses on law and grace as controlling admission to the highest seats in heaven. Dante beholds the Empress of the Skies. Saint Bernard urges him to invoke by earnest prayer her intercession, that he may be accorded a view of the Almighty Father.

The Empyrean.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Saint Bernard. Dante.


FREELY the Sage contemplative, though rapt
In musings high, a teacher’s part assumed,
Wherein he thus his sacred words resumed:

"She, there, at Mary’s feet, in beauty lapped,
The wound both made and pierced which Mary sought,
And to which, closed, she perfumed ointments brought.

Within that order which the third tier makes
See Rachel seated, than the others lower,
With Beatrice; and yet below are more.
"Sarah, Rebecca, Judith, she who wakes
Remembrance of the Singer of her line,
Who, for his faults, sung: 'Show me mercy thine!'
These thou dost see from seat to seat descend
Down in gradation, as, with name of each,
I lead thee down the Rose's leafy reach.
And, from the seventh seat downward, wend,
As from above, the Hebrew women, so
The Rose's leaves dividing as they go;

"For these are a partition-wall whereby
The sacred stairs are severed, as divides
The date of Christ the Faith in severed sides.
Upon this side where every petal high
Its happy inmate hath, sit souls elate
Who faith in Christ had ere his era's date;
Upon the other, where the eye doth meet
With vacant thrones the semicircles hold,
Are those who did with faith Christ come behold.

"And, as, in this part, doth the glorious seat
The Lady of Heaven hath, and those below,
This great division's limit plainly show,
So doth, on the other opposite, that of John
Of desert fame, and martyrdom, and Hell,
Wherein he for two years confined did dwell.
And, under him, such severance carry on
Francis, and Benedict, and Augustine,
And down 'towards us the line to come is seen.
And note the ways divine high Providence hath,  
For shall the Faith's two sides fill equal space  
In this blest garden of celestial grace.  
And know that downward from that rank whose path  
Midway across the two divisions lies,  
Their bliss doth not from their own merit rise;  
But from another's, 'neath conditions fixed,  
For these are spirits all set free ere power  
Of choice their own was their celestial dower.  

Thou seest it in their little faces mixed,  
And childish voices, if thou seest them well,  
And hearest their melody sweet the chorus swell.  
Now dost thou doubt, and doubt thee silence brings,  
But I will for thee the strong tie unbind  
While holds a prisoner thine inquiring mind.  
Within this realm chance ne'er its pathway wings,  
It here, no more than grief, can claim abode,  
Or be here mortal thirst or hunger sowed;  

For here a changeless law all things controls,  
And all that thou beholdest doth here sit  
Adjusted close as rings to fingers fit.  
And therefore do these little hastening souls  
Not without cause in this true life possess  
Degrees of excellence, more some, and some less.  
The King, by means of whom this realm doth rest  
In love so great, in joy so absolute,  
That those perfections will nor mind dispute,
"Hath at his pleasure variously here blest
Each soul created in his joyous sight;
The effect attests the glory of his might.
And to this end doth Holy Writ prepare
An instance clear, where we of those twins read
Who in their mother gave their anger speed.
And so may rule the color of the hair,
And make decision as to who shall wear
The loftiest light created souls may bear.

"Not, then, desert their deeds have shown the grade
Of each hath fixed, their gifts alone do this,
The primal sharpening of their souls for bliss.
'Tis true, availed that innocence pure, with aid
Of faith their parents had, to save their souls
In times remote the distant past enfolds;
And that, when took the later ages place,
'Twas meet that should their innocence virtue seek,
And be through circumcision rendered meek;

"But after that had come the time of grace,
Without the baptism perfect given of Christ
Such innocence came not here. But now, where Christ
Hath most resemblance, look thou in that face.
It, by its exquisite brightness, thou wilt find
Will soon inform thy keen, adoring mind,
And this alone will help thee look on Christ."
Forthwith I saw so great a gladness poured
From forms angelic in that height that soared,
That whatsoever yet had met my gaze
Did not me thrill with admiration such,
Nor so near what I thought God might be touch.
And he who once above her showered his rays,
Spread now, in homage forth, his wings, and sang
"Hail, Mary, full of grace!" whereto there rang
Responses forth from all the sacred host,
And seemed each soul possessed of sight more clear
As went the anthem round from tier to tier.

"O holy Father, who dost leave thy post,
Thy place of honor by decree divine,
And dost endure this lower station mine,
Say who the Angel is, that with such joy
Into the eyes is looking of our Queen,
Enamored so that fiery seems his sheen?"
Thus I again the knowledge would employ
Of him who beauty caught from Mary far
As from the sun draws light the morning star.

And he to me: "Such grace and dignity calm
As may in Spirit or in Angel be,
All is in him; and thus we would him see,
For he that messenger is who bore the palm
Down unto Mary when God's Son decreed
That he for us upon the cross would bleed.
But, as we go, give me thy heedful eyes;
The great patricians thou shalt see of this
Most just and merciful Empire throned in bliss."
"Those two who o'er the rest enraptured rise,
Rejoiced to be Augusta near, two roots,
As 't were, are whence this Rose celestial shoots.
He who upon her left so near is placed
The general parent is, through whose rash taste
Mankind hath been by ills so many chased.
Up on the right that ancient Father's graced
Of Holy Church, to whom Christ gave the keys
Of all this flower, admitting to it these.

"And he who saw, ere death, the suffering days
Allotted to the beauteous Bride, whom won
The spear and nails and all on Calvary done,
Beside him sits; and by the other rays
That leader under whom the manna-fed,
Stiff-necked, ingrate, and fickle tribes were led.
To Peter opposite, see'st thou Anna, face
So happy bearing for her daughter's guise,
While she Hosanna sings ne'er move her eyes.

"And, opposite to the sire of all the race,
Lucia sits, she who thy Lady sent
When thou thy brows o'er ruin's precipice bent.
But, since soon fades the mighty vision's glow,
Desist we here (a tailor good will shape
According to his cloth the coat or cape);
And t'wards that Primal Love our gaze bestow,
That, seeing Him, thou may'st His lustre scale
As far as sight may unto thee avail."
"But now lest, while thy wings assail the air, 145
Advance defeat becomes, and progress vain,
'T is meet that prayer should grace for thee ob-
tain,
Grace from that one who can thy soul prepare;
And do thou, then, me follow, with thy mind
And heart unto my purpose well-inclined."
And spoke those honied accents then this prayer.

NOTES TO THE THIRTY-SECOND CANTO.

6. "She . . . at Mary's feet." Eve.
11. "She who wakes." Ruth, the ancestress of David.
12. "Mercy." "Have mercy upon me, O God, according
to thy loving kindness." Psalm li. 1.
22, 25. "Upon this side . . . upon the other." It is observ-
able that the Rose is equally divided between the best of the
two Dispensations, that of the pre-Christian age, and that of
the post-Christian age. In De Monarchia, iii. 3, Dante argues
that "those who have believed in Christ, whether to come,
or present, or as having already suffered, and who from their
faith have hoped, and from their hope have kindled into love,
will, burning with love, be made co-heirs with Him."
31. "On the other opposite . . . John." Saint John the
Baptist, classed among the saints of the Old Dispensation,
but, with appropriateness, placed on the boundary line. A
member of the Holy Family, the Elijah of the New Testa-
ment, he is worthily made prominent. He suffered martyr-
don "two years" before the Resurrection, and during that
term of time was in the Limbo, the Border-Land of the
Fathers.
40, 41, 46. "Downward . . . midway . . . little faces."
The centre a glow of golden light from "little faces" with
their freshness and beauty, the blonde curls, the beaming
eyes; on one side the multitudinous leaves, each a throne for
some saint of the Old Dispensation; on the other the multi-
tudinous leaves, partly filled by the saints of the New.
68. "Those twins." Jacob and Esau. Genesis xxv. 22; Romans ix. 11.

70. "The color of the hair." A suggestion seems in point here that "color" is of stress. Dante has just above referred to Jacob and Esau, in whose case the possession of hair conferred a promise. He now seems to say "Even the color of the hair may indicate the destiny of the soul in the eternal world."

76-88. "Innocence" three times repeated, and "Christ" three times repeated; following, in both instances, the text of Dante.

93, 94. "And he . . . spread now . . . his wings." Luke i. 28.


140. "A tailor good." Unfavorable comment has been made upon Dante's use of a sartoric simile: unjustly, as may be thought and as, we may suppose, Thomas Carlyle must have thought, and his admirers should think. Dante has betrayed a fondness for it; twice before he has used it: in the Fifteenth Inferno, line 21:

"As seeks a tailor old his needle's eye,"

and again in the Eleventh Paradiso:

"Cloth for their hoods slight charges knew."
CANTO THIRTY-THIRD.

ARGUMENT:

Saint Bernard addresses to the Blessed Virgin a prayer in behalf of Dante, that he may be allowed to look upon the Almighty Father. She grants his petition. Dante, with indescribable emotion, directs his eyes towards the everlasting Light of God, wherein he sees the triple orb of the Trinity and the figure of Christ Incarnate. The Poet prays that his tongue may have power to declare but one sole particle of God's glory to the future races of men.

The Poem closes on the first Sunday after Easter.

PERSONS SPEAKING: Saint Bernard. Dante.


"O Virgin Mother, daughter of thy Son,
Lowliest and loftiest of the race of man,
The end determined of the eternal plan,
'T is thou that hast for human nature won
Nobility such that its Creator deigned
To make Himself its creature so restrained.
Within thy womb rekindled, shone the love
By warmth whereof, in peace eternal sown,
This flower hath thus to such wide affluence blown.
A noon-day Torch. A Fountain pure.

"A noon-day torch thou art to us above,
Which Charity flames; below, for mortals' cure,
Thou art of Hope a living fountain pure.
Lady, so great art thou in power divine
That he who, seeking grace, thine aid foregoes,
From wings in flying no advantage knows.
Not only doth give aid benignity thine
To him who speaks, but oft it doth forerun
The prayer, and that we sought's already done.

"In thee compassion sweet, and mercy mild,
And large munificence, are; combined in thee
We excellence each of every creature see.
Now doth the man, who, from the Pit defiled,
Hath all the universe to this height reviewed,
And things immortal seen, so various-hued,
Thee pray for gift so great of virtue's power,
That, helped, his eyes to lift him may have might
Towards the last salvation's loftiest height.

"And I, who never for my vision's dower
Burned more than I for his, I thee exhort,
With all my prayers, and pray they come not short,
That thou wouldst from him every cloud dispel
Of his mortality so, with prayers of thine,
That he may see the Pleasure Chief Divine.
And further this I pray thee, Queen, who well
I know hast potent will, that thou insure,
After such vision great, his heart keep pure!
"Him from all human promptings O protect!
Lo Beatrice, and the rest, who clasped hands reach!
O let us not in vain thine aid beseech!"

Those eyes, of God beloved and elect,
Upon the orator fastened, made us know
How likes she prayers that with fond fervor glow;
Unto the Light Eternal then they turned,
Whereon incredible 't is e'er bent an eye
So clear, from creature, in or earth or sky.

And I, who to that end whereto I yearned
Was now approaching, brought, as meet was, close
To hope's desire, and gave my soul repose.
Bernard was beckoning to me, with a smile,
That I should upward look; but he my mind
Found all prepared without his gesture kind,
For was my vision, made all pure the while,
Into the radiance entering, by degrees,
Of that High Light whence Truth hath its decrees.

Thenceforward what I saw o'erpassed our speech;
Speech yields to such a vision; its excess
The memory quells; mind fails in such a press.
And even as he who from a dream's long reach
Awakes; the imprinted feeling bides; but all
The rest's dispelled whereto his sense was thrall;
So now am I; 't is scarce to me revealed
What then I saw; but through my heart distils
The sense of sweet, thence born, in trickling rills.
Thus in the sun's thaw is the snow unsealed;
   Thus on the wind the fickle leaves flew wide
The Sibyl sent, who their return denied.
O thou Eternal Beam, whose height so far
   Our mortal thought transcends, lend me again
A little gleam of that which rapt me then,
And make my tongue so sound on music's bar
   That of thy glory but a sparkle sole
May on its notes to future ages roll,

For thereby shall my tongue thy victory sound,
   In tones distinct more than my memory gives,
   In ardor pure wherein such vision lives!
Such keenness in the living fire I found,
   That had from it mine eyes been turned, quite
lost,
   I had in dire bewilderment's waves been tost.
And I recall that this me made more bold
   To bear this stress; wherefore I fixed my gaze
Upon the Glory of those Infinite Rays.

O grace abounding, which me so controlled
   To join the Light Eternal I presumed,
   So that my vision I therein consumed!
I saw that in its depths fond love prepares
   A volume wherein all resides, which else
The universe holds in leaves each tempest pelts;
Substance, and accident, methods, too, of theirs
   I saw compounded, blended, so the sight
That came to me was one integral light.
Paradiso.

Dante in Adoration.

I think I saw how was this mighty knot
All-comprehensive; for, when this I say,
I feel that joy doth in my memory play;
Whereof one moment’s lethargy hath forgot
More than have five and twenty centuries dimmed
The scene wherein dazed Ocean Argo skimmed.
With head intent, and breath and motion stilled,
I wondering gazed, and, as I gazed, the more
Did all my mind in admiration soar.

The mind becomes, in that light’s presence, filled
With adoration, such that its intent
Can ne’er from contemplation such be bent;
For all the good which will for object claims
Is here combined, and, out of its demesne,
The thing imperfect doth here perfect reign.
And feeblest falls my failing speech, which aims
To tell of what I yet recall, than would
Soft babyhood’s talk through milk not understood.

Not because more than one sole semblance rayed
In that keen, living light whereon I gazed,
For it, as ever, with one radiance blazed;
But through my sight, which strengthened was, and stayed,
By constant gazing, one appearance sole
Changed as I changed, as though ’neath my control.
In that subsistence clear and lofty came
Three circles, diverse each in hue, but planned
With one dimension; beautiful they, and grand.
The beatific Vision.

The second showed the first's reflected flame,
As rainbow might ray rainbow, and the third
Seemed fire, by breath from both the others stirred.

O how doth this conception all speech quell
Beneath its mighty import! And e'en thought
How less than little, near such wonders brought!

O Light Eternal, thou that dost sole dwell
Within thyself, and, unto thyself known,
Dost love and smiles to thyself give and own,

That circle which, in my conception, drew
Within thee light reflected, when mine eyes
Had somewhat rested on its heavenly guise,

Within itself, of its own proper hue,
To me seemed painted with our effigy; thence
I on it pored with interest most intense!

As one who, versed in geometric lore,
Would square the circle, but whose mind finds nought,

Long pondering, of the principle vainly sought,

E'en so did I survey this splendor o'er;
I would divine how found the image place
The round within, and their relations trace;

And had my wings assailed unyielding bars
Were it not then that came my mind upon
A flash of levin wherein my wish was won.

Came failure, then, which towering fancy mars;
But yet the will rolled onward, like a wheel
In even motion which that love doth feel.
Which moves the sun in heaven and all the stars.

NOTES TO THE THIRTY-THIRD CANTO.

1. "O Virgin Mother."

"O gloriosa virginum,
Sublima inter sidera,
Qui te creavit, parvulum
Lactante nutris ubere!"

"Quod Heva tristis abstulit
Tu reddis almo germine;
Intrent ut astra flebiles
Coeli recludis cardines!"

Of these classic stanzas an imperfect translation is attempted:

O Glory of the Virgin Choir,
Sublime amidst the starry skies,
Thy milk thine own Creating Sire
Sustained, a Babe whom Angels prize.

What hapless Eve had taken, thou
Through thy blest womb, restorest, glad
To help the grieved whom burdens bow,
And ope heaven's doors to pleadings sad.

8. "In peace eternal." That is, in the Empyrean, the motionless sphere.

66. "The Sibyl."

"When, then, the Cumæan town thou shalt approach,
The Lakes divine, and, with its voiceless woods,
Avernus, her, the prophet-priestess wild,
Thou shalt behold, who, 'neath a sombre rock,
Sings Fates, and unto leaves her notes and names
Commits, in order due. And these the maid
Aside within her cave lays by, where safe
And undisturbed they stay. But when the door,
Upon its hinges turned, the wind admits,
And fly the fragile leaves throughout the cave,
No care hath she their places to restore,
And join the scattered writings verse to verse."

The Prophecy of Helenus, Third Æneid, 441.
Notes.

77. "Had mine eyes been turned." "And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Luke ix. 62.

95. "Five and twenty centuries." It will be observed that, among the numerous constructions of this passage, the present translation follows that of Lombardi.

96. "All the good which will for object claims." "Since every art and every kind of knowledge, as well as all the actions and all the deliberations of men, constantly aim at something which they call good, good in general may be justly defined, that which all desire." Aristotle, Ethics, i. 1.

115. "Subsistence." "What exists by itself, and not in another, is called subsistence." Saint Thomas of Aquin, Summa, i. 29. 2.


143. "Wheel." A globe, one of the heavenly bodies. This use of the word "ruota" is Dantean.

144. "Motion." The motion of the heavenly bodies. In these words, "wheel" and "motion," it is conceived there lies great significance. The Poet's imagination fails. It is consigned to a confessed defeat. His will remains; and, like a celestial orb, it rolls onward with that evenness of motion which the Almighty has assigned to the heavenly bodies. The imagination and the will fitly represent the contemplative nature. In comparison therewith the personality of Dante is unimportant. It is believed that this reading and this construction are new.

With very great justice, as we must all think, Cardinal Manning has said, in a letter to Dr. Bowden, translator of Hettinger's Commentary on Dante, that no uninspired hand has ever written thoughts so high, in words so burning and so resplendent, as the last Canto of the present Poem.
GENERAL INDEX.

The abbreviations used are: Inf., Inferno; Pur., Purgatorio; Para., Paradiso; init., beginning; fin., end; n., note; q. v., which see; et seq., and following.

Passim means everywhere; et aliubi, and elsewhere; bis, twice; ter, thrice.

Usually, where a name or subject is indexed as in the text, mention will not be made of the name or subject to be found in the notes. Names and subjects found exclusively in the notes are indexed.

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