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**THE INFERNO  
OF DANTE**



THE  
INFERNO  
OF DANTE

Translated with Plain Notes by  
EUGENE LEE-HAMILTON  
AUTHOR OF 'THE NEW MEDUSA,' 'IMAG-  
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WINGLESS HOURS,' ETC. ETC.

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**TO**  
**EVELYN WIMBUSH**



## P R E F A C E

THE following translation of Dante's *Inferno* needs but few prefatory remarks.

There are in the Divine Comedy three main metrical factors :—

1. The spirit of the Terzina, or intellectual division of the verse into groups of three, or of multiples of three. Dante *thought* in threes and sixes, and sometimes even in nines and twelves, the groups being expressed by the punctuation.

2. The chain of the rhyme.

3. The eleventh, or as we should call it with respect to iambic verse, the feminine syllable, at the end of each line—a syllable characteristic of Italian verse in general, and without which no verse translation can reproduce the effect of the original.

Of these three factors I have preserved the first and

the third, and have omitted the second. Most other translators, while sometimes preserving the second, and not always preserving the first, have disregarded the third as unimportant. Now, to my mind, the eleventh or feminine syllable is absolutely essential, if the object is to reproduce the effect of the original on the ear. And this was the view of one of the best foreign translators, perhaps the best foreign translator, of Dante—Philalethes (King John of Saxony).

The rhyme is comparatively unimportant. Its maintenance precludes the English translator from keeping the feminine syllable, and forces him to depart from closeness of meaning and literalness of expression. No rhymed translation of Dante can be more than an approximation; and the rhyme in the original is so unimportant that he whose mind is bent upon the meaning scarcely notices it at all.

Quite apart from my own performance, of whose deficiencies I am but too fully aware, I believe that in selecting the two factors out of three which could alone reproduce in their combination the sense and sound of the original, I have adopted the only plan

that can secure a comparatively satisfactory line-for-line translation.

With regard to the Notes, I lay no claim to originality or novelty of view. My sole object has been to facilitate the rapid reading of this version, and I have made the explanations as short and simple as possible. The Reader must consider them merely as the brief notes which I have made for my own use while reading the *Inferno* as edited by those more learned than myself. But such as they are, they will, I hope, serve the purpose of the reader of this version better than a more original and more elaborate commentary.

E. L.-H.



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**THE INFERNO**

# THE INFERNO

## CANTO I

The gloomy Forest—The Mountain—The Leopard, the Lion, and the She-Wolf—Meeting with Virgil; prophecy about the sleuth-hound (*Veltro*).

MIDWAY upon the footpath of our lifetime  
I found myself within a dusky forest,  
For the straightforward way had been lost sight of.  
Ah me, how hard the task is to describe it,  
That forest, wild and briary and mighty, 5  
Which, in mere thought, reneweth all the terror!  
So bitter 'tis, that death is little more so;  
But, to set forth the good that there I met with,  
I will relate what other things I saw there.  
I scarce can tell you how I came within it, 10  
So full was I of slumber at the moment  
That I departed from the true direction;  
But when I reached the foot o' th' elevation  
That formed the termination of that valley,  
Which had o'ercome my heart with apprehension, 15





In the time's hour and in the gentle season ;  
But yet not so as to prevent my fearing  
The sight, which came upon me, of a lion. 45  
The latter seemed about to come against me  
With lofty head and with a raging hunger,  
So that the very air appeared to tremble :  
And a she-wolf, that seemed to have been laden  
With every sort of yearning in her leanness, 50  
And once made many peoples linger wretched.  
This creature caused me such a weight of trouble  
With the alarm that followed on its aspect  
That I dismissed all hope to reach the summit ;  
And like a man who takes delight in gaining, 55  
And who, when comes the time that bringeth losses,  
In all the thoughts he hath doth weep and sorrow :  
So was I rendered by the peaceless creature  
Which coming ever by degrees towards me,  
Impelled me back to where the sun is silent. 60  
While I was falling to a lower level,  
Before my eyes behold there was presented  
One who seemed voiceless from protracted silence.  
When I beheld him in the mighty desert,  
'Take pity on me,' I exclaimed towards him, 65  
'Whiche'er thou art, a real man or shadow.'  
He answered me, 'Not man : I once was human,  
And my progenitors, they once were Lombards,  
And both of them were Mantuans as to birthplace.

*Sub Julio* was I born, though late it might-be, 70  
 And lived at Rome and under good Augustus,  
 In times when there were gods, false and mendacious.  
 I was a poet, and I sang the righteous  
 Son of Anchises, him who came from Troja  
 After the burning of the haughty Ilion. 75  
 But thou, why go'st thou back to what's so weary?  
 Why climb'st thou not upon the pleasant summit,  
 Which is the source and reason of all gladness?  
 'Oh, art thou e'en that Virgil and that fountain  
 Which poureth forth so broad a stream of language?'  
 I answered him, with shame upon my forehead. 81  
 'O light and honour of the other Poets,  
 Let the long study and the great affection,  
 That made me turn unto thy book, avail me.  
 Thou art for me the Master and the Author, 85  
 And thou alone art he from whom I gathered  
 The noble style that is my source of honour.  
 Behold the beast on whose account I turned me;  
 Give me thy help against it, famous wizard;  
 For it doth make my veins and pulses tremble.' 90  
 'Thou needs must change the tenor of thy journey,'  
 He answered, when he saw that I was weeping,  
 'If thou wouldst get thee from this wild place safely:  
 For this same beast, on whose account thou criest,  
 Letteth no other pass along its passage, 95  
 But doth prevent him so, that it doth kill him ;

And hath so evil and so fell a nature  
That it can never quench its eager yearning,  
And, after food, is hungrier than ever.  
A many are the beasts with which it coupleth, 100  
And more will they beget, until there cometh  
The sleuth-hound that shall make it die of anguish.  
He shall not feed on either land or treasure,  
But feed on wisdom and on love and virtue ;  
His place of birth shall be between two Feltros. 105  
He'll be that lowly Italy's salvation  
For whom once died the virginal Camilla,  
Euryalus and Turnus and maimed Nisus.  
The same shall hunt it down through every city  
Till he shall into Hell again have put it, 110  
Whence Envy brought it forth in the beginning.  
So for thy good I think and judge it fitting  
That thou come with me : I will be thy leader,  
And take thee hence, across eternal regions,  
Where thou shalt hear the shrills of desperation, 115  
And thou shalt see the ancient suffering spirits,  
Each one of whom invokes the second dying.  
And thou shalt look on those that are contented  
In fire itself, because they hope a meeting,  
Sooner or later, with the blessed people : 120  
To whom, if thou wouldst fain go up thereafter,  
A worthier soul than I will be selected ;  
To her I shall commit thee when I leave thee :

For that Imperial One who reigns above us,  
Because I was rebellious to His dictate, 125  
Alloweth none through me to reach His city.  
He ruleth everywhere, and there He reigneth.  
There is His city ; there His lofty throne is.  
O blest is he whom He selecteth to it.  
And I to him : ‘ O Poet, I implore thee, 130  
By that same God that thou didst never know of,  
So I may ’scape this evil and worse evils,  
That thou shouldst lead me whither thou hast told me,  
That I may see the portal of St. Peter,  
And those whom thou describest as so wretched.’ 135  
Then he moved on, and close I kept behind him.

## CANTO II

The Three Ladies of Heaven (the Virgin Mary,  
St. Lucy, and Beatrice).

THE day was waning, and the dusky twilight  
Was freeing all the creatures on the earth here  
From their fatigues; and I, alone of all men,  
Was now preparing to sustain the struggle  
Not only of the way but of compassion, 5  
As shall be told by the unerring spirit.

O Muses, O high genius, now assist me;  
O Mind that registered what things I witnessed,  
E'en here shall thy nobility be proven.

I then began: 'O Poet that dost lead me, 10  
Look to my virtue, whether it be doughty,  
Before thou trust me to the high endeavour.

Thou say'st that the progenitor of Silvius,  
While still corruptible, to everlasting  
Realms found his way, and 'twas with full sensation.

So if the Adversary of all Evil 16  
Was gracious to him, thinking what high fortunes  
Would spring from out him—even who and what  
like—



Which oft indeed encumbereth man's progress  
So that it turneth him from noble purpose.  
As when a creature seeth wrong and shieth.  
That thou mayst free thyself from such a terror,  
I'll tell thee why I came and what was told me 50  
In my first moment of compassion for thee.  
I was in midst of those that are suspended,  
And there a blest and beauteous Lady called me,  
Such, that I did entreat her to command me.  
Her eyes were shining brighter than a star doth, 55  
And she began to softly say and gently,  
With an angelic voice in her own language :  
"O courteous Mantuan soul of whom the glory  
Still lasteth in the world, and will continue  
As far down time as e'en the world itself will: 60  
One who is friend of mine though not of Fortune's,  
Along the desert shore is so obstructed  
Upon his path, that he hath turned in terror ;  
And much I fear lest he have strayed already  
So far, that I have come too late to help him, 65  
From all that I have heard of him in Heaven.  
Now stir, and with thine own adorned language,  
And with whate'er is needful for his safety,  
So help him, that I be consoled about him.  
Myself am Beatrice, that urge thy going ; 70  
I come from forth a place I fain would back to ;  
Love prompted me, which makes me now address thee,

When I shall be again in my Lord's presence  
     I shall repeat thy praises to him often."  
 Then she was silent, and 'twas I 'gan speaking: 75  
 "O Lady of all virtue, through whom only  
     Mankind exceedeth all that is encompassed  
     Within that sky that hath the minor circles,  
 So welcome unto me is thy commandment,  
     That my obedience, e'en fulfilled, were tardy. 80  
     Thou need'st no further to disclose thy wishes.  
 But tell me why thou hast no hesitation  
     In thus descending down into this centre  
     E'en from the ample place thou fain wouldst back to."  
 "Since thou wouldst know so deep within the matter, 85  
     I will inform thee briefly," she responded,  
     "The reason why I fear not here to enter.  
 Those things alone are to be apprehended  
     That have the power of doing one some evil ;  
     Not other things ; for they are not alarming. 90  
 I am—by God and through His grace—so fashioned,  
     That never can your wretchedness affect me ;  
     Nor doth the flame of yonder fire assail me.  
 There is a Gracious Dame in Heaven who grieveth  
     For this obstruction unto which I send thee. 95  
     So that up there she breaketh the hard judgment.  
 This Lady summoned Lucy to her presence,  
     And said : ' Behold, thy faithful one now needeth  
     Thy help, and unto thee I recommend him.'



Lucy, the foe of every one that's cruel, 100

Bestirred herself and sought the place where *I* was ;

For *I* was sitting with the ancient Rachel.

She said : ' O Beatrice, God's true laudation,

Wilt thou not succour him who so did love thee,

Who came from forth the vulgar herd for *thy*  
sake ? 105

Hearst thou not the pity of his weeping ?

Seest thou not death that combateth against him

Beside the tide that Ocean cannot boast of ?'

Never on earth was any one so eager

To seek his interest and to shun his damage 110

As *I* was, after hearing such words uttered ;

*I* came down hither from my seat of glory,

Confiding in the fairness of thy language,

That doth thee honour, and all those that heard  
thee."

So soon as ever she had thus addressed me, 115

Weeping she turned away her eyes that glistened,

Whereby she made me quicker in my coming.

And then *I* came to thee as she desired,

And from in front of that wild beast *I* took thee,

That kept thee from the fair mount's rapid access.

Therefore what is it ? Wherefore, wherefore stay'st  
thou ? 121

Why harbour such base fear within thy bosom ?

Why hast thou neither hardihood nor boldness,

After thou know'st that three such blessed Ladies  
Are caring for thee in the court of Heaven, 125  
And what I say doth promise thee such profit ?'  
Even as flowerets that are bent and folded  
By nightly frost, when whitened by the sunshine,  
Lift themselves up upon their stems wide open,  
Just so did I from my exhausted virtue, 130  
And such good courage flowed into my bosom  
That I began, as might a new-freed person :  
'Oh full of pity she who came to help me ;  
And courteous thou that didst obey so quickly  
The words of truth which unto thee she uttered. 135  
Thou hast communicated to my bosom  
So great a wish to come, with what thou sayest,  
That I've returned unto my earlier purpose.  
Now go, for one sole will is ours in common.  
The leader thou ; the lord thou, and the master.' 140  
Thus I addressed him ; and, upon his moving,  
I entered on the deep and tangled pathway.

### CANTO III

The Gate of Hell—The Indifferent—Acheron and Charon.

*THROUGH me ye go within the aching City ;  
Through me ye go to everlasting Anguish ;  
Through me ye go amid the forfeit people.  
Justice it was that prompted my high Maker ;  
It was Divine Authority that made me, 5  
The highest Wisdom and the first Affection.  
Before I was, no things were yet created,  
Save things eternal ; and I last, eternal.  
Leave every hope behind you, ye who enter.*

Such were the words which in a dusky colour 10  
I saw inscribed up high above a gateway ;  
Whereat I said : ‘ Their sense is hard, my Master.’  
And he to me, like one who understandeth :  
‘ Here it behoves thee to dismiss all doubting ;  
All cowardice must here be dead within thee. 15

We now have reached the place of which I told thee,  
That thou wouldst see the lamentable people  
Who’ve forfeited the intellect’s advantage.’

And when his hand had taken mine within it,  
With joyful face, whereat I gathered comfort, 20  
He introduced me to the things yet secret.  
Here sighs and sobs and high-raised lamentations  
Re-echoed through the starless air together,  
So that at first I took thereat to weeping.  
All sorts of tongues, yea, horrible discourses, 25  
And words of agony and wrathful accents,  
Loud or faint cries, and sound of hands amid them,  
Made up a din which as it were rotated  
For ever in that air for ever murky,  
Even as the sand on which the whirlwind bloweth.  
And I, whose head was girt about with horror, 31  
Said : ' Master, what is this I hear about me ?  
What folk are these that seem so cowed by anguish ?'  
And he to me : ' This miserable condition  
Is suffered by the melancholy spirits 35  
Of those who lived with neither shame nor honour.  
They have been mingled with that evil chorus  
Of angels who were neither once rebellious  
Nor true to God, but who for self were only.  
The Heavens turned them out to lose no beauty ; 40  
Nor will the depths of Hell consent to take them,  
For they would add no glory to the guilty.'  
And I : ' My Master, what is laid so heavy  
Upon them, that they make such loud lamenting ?'  
He answered : ' I will tell thee very briefly. 45

They are deprived of every hope of dying,  
And their blind life is of so base a nature,  
That they are envious of all other fortune.  
The world alloweth not they should be famous ;  
Mercy and Justice equally despise them : 50  
Let us not speak of them ; but look, and pass them.'  
And I who looked about me saw an ensign  
Which, while it whirled, was running on so quickly,  
That it appeared to hold in scorn all stopping.  
And in its rear so long a train of people 55  
Was coming on, that I could scarcely credit  
That death had ever yet undone so many.  
When I had recognised a few among them  
I looked and saw the shade of him approaching  
Who made through fear the great renunciation. 60  
I straightway understood, and I was certain  
That this was the community of caitiffs,  
Unpleasing both to God and His opponents.  
These wretches that had never been quite living,  
Were naked and were mightily tormented 65  
By great big flies and wasps that were about them.  
They made the blood run trickling down their faces,  
Which then, commingled at their feet with tear-  
drops,  
Was gathered up by worms of nauseous aspect.  
And when I took to looking further round me, 70  
I noticed people by a mighty river,

Which made me say : ' My Master, now allow me  
 To know who they may be ; and say, what custom  
 Maketh them seem so eager to be crossing,  
 If I discern by this faint light correctly.' 75  
 And he to me : ' These things will be explained thee  
 When we have brought our footsteps to a stand-still  
 By Acheron's most melancholy margin.'  
 Then with my eyes all full of shame and lowered,  
 From fear lest what I uttered might be irksome, 80  
 Until the river I refrained from speaking.  
 And lo, there came along by boat towards us  
 An old man who from aged hair was hoary,  
 And crying : ' Woe to you, ye souls of evil :  
 Hope never more to set your eyes on heaven ; 85  
 I come to take you to the yonder margin  
 Into eternal dark, where heat and frost are.  
 And thou that standest there, thou soul still living,  
 Get thee away from these that all are dead-men.'  
 But when he saw that I was not departing, 90  
 He said : ' By other ways, by other ferries,  
 Shalt thou reach shore ; not here : for crossing over  
 'Tis fitting that a lighter boat should bear thee.'  
 Then said my Leader : ' Charon, don't get angry ;  
 It thus is willed where all that's willed can  
 straightway 95  
 Be carried out ; so ask for nothing further.'  
 And thereupon the woolly cheeks grew quiet

Of that same boatman of the livid marshes,  
Around whose eyes were gathered fiery circles.  
But all those souls, that were worn-out and naked, 100  
Changed colour, and they gnashed their teeth together  
So soon they heard the cruel words he uttered ;  
Blaspheming against God and their own parents,  
Against mankind, space, time—yea, and the sowing  
Of their seed's seed and of their own begettings. 105  
Then all of them departed in a body  
With mighty weeping to the evil margin  
That waiteth each that feels for God no terror.  
The demon Charon, with his eyes like embers,  
By signs collecteth all of them together 110  
And with his oar he striketh all that linger.  
As in the Autumn all the leaves come dropping  
One after th' other, till at length the tree-branch  
Give back to earth its spoils in all their fulness,  
In similar way, the evil seed of Adam 115  
Cast themselves one by one from that shore  
straightway,  
Each at a sign, as birds might, at his bidding.  
So they depart along the dusky billow,  
And ere they've landed on the further margin,  
On this side too a new array hath gathered. 120  
'My son,' then said to me the courteous Master,  
'All those that perish in the Lord's displeasure

Are here collected, and from every country ;  
And they are fain to pass across the river,  
Because they are so goaded by God's Justice 125  
That even terror turneth unto yearning.  
Along this way no worthy soul e'er passeth :  
And so, if Charon picketh quarrel with thee  
Thou well mayst gather what his words betoken.'  
When this was over, lo, the gloomy country 130  
Trembled so mightily that from sheer terror  
The sweat still batheth me as mind recalleth.  
The tear-besprinkled earth gave forth a wind-gust  
That flashed abroad a light of crimson colour  
Which overcame me and my every feeling, 135  
And down I fell, like one that slumber seizeth.



## CANTO IV

FIRST CIRCLE.—Limbo—The Unbaptized—The Noble Pagans.

THE deep-set slumber in my head was broken  
By a great thunder-clap, so that I started  
Like one who hath been violently wakened ;  
And I revolved my rested eye around me,  
Now bolt upright, and fixed my gaze intently 5  
To recognise the place where I was standing.  
In sooth I found myself upon the border  
Ev'n of the pain-filled vale of the abysm,  
Which getteth thunder of unnumbered groanings.  
Dark was it, yea, and deep, and it was misty, 10  
So that my eyes, deep though they sought the  
bottom,  
Failed to discern a single thing within it.  
'Now let's down here into the world that's sightless,'  
Began the Poet, with his face discoloured ;  
'I'll be the first, and thou wilt be the second.' 15  
And I, who had perceived his change of colour,  
Said : 'How shall *I* come, if thyself art quailing,  
That hitherto hast comforted my doubting ?'



Were in suspense, there in that very limbo. 45  
 ‘Tell me, my Master, O my Lord, now tell me’—  
 Thus I began, desiring to be certain  
 About that faith which conquereth all error—  
 ‘Did any ever leave it by his merit  
 Or by another’s, and was blest thereafter?’ 50  
 And he, who understood my covert question,  
 Answered: ‘I still was new to this condition,  
 When I beheld a Mighty One arrive there—  
 One who was crowned with victory’s own emblem.  
 He drew from thence the shade of the first parent, 55  
 And that of his son Abel; and that of Noah  
 With that of Moses, lawgiver, obedient;  
 Of Abraham the patriarch and King David;  
 Of Israel, with his father and his children;  
 And Rachel, for whose sake he did such labour; 60  
 And many others; and he made them blessed;  
 And thou must know that, previously to *these* here,  
 No souls of men came ever to salvation.’  
 We never ceased to walk, though he was speaking,  
 But still were passing on across the forest,— 65  
 The forest, that ’s to say, of crowded spirits.  
 The path that we were on was not yet distant  
 From the hill-top, when I perceived a fire  
 Which overcame a hemisphere of darkness.  
 We still were at a little distance from it, 70  
 Yet not so far but that I noticed partly

What honourable folk possessed that region.  
 ‘O thou that honourest each art and science,  
 Who may these be that have such honour shown  
 them,  
 As to divide them from the others’ status?’ 75  
 And he to me: ‘The honourable mention  
 Made of their names, up there in thy existence,  
 Hath grace in Heav’n, and giveth them this vantage.  
 Meanwhile there came a voice that struck my hearing:  
 ‘Give honour to the all-transcendent Poet: 80  
 His shade is now returning, which had left us.’  
 After the voice had ceased and had subsided  
 I saw four mighty shades approach towards us;  
 They had an aspect neither sad nor joyous.  
 The worthy Master then began to tell me: 85  
 ‘Observe him yonder in whose hand the sword is,  
 Who comes before the three just as a prince might,  
 For he is Homer, sovereign of all poets.  
 The next is Horace, satirist, who cometh;  
 The third is Ovid, and the last is Lucan. 90  
 Since, one and all, they have with me in common  
 The name with which their single voice hath hailed  
 me,  
 They do me honour, and in that do wisely.’  
 Thus I beheld the noble school assemble  
 Of that same lord of most exalted singing 95  
 Who soareth o’er the others like an eagle.

Then, when they had conversed a while together  
They turned to me with sign of salutation,  
On which account I saw my Master smiling.  
And yet much greater honour did they show me, 100  
For they admitted me among their number,  
So that I was the sixth in such great wisdom.  
Thus we proceeded till the light was come to,  
Talking of things which now are best kept silent,  
Though where I was, it then was well to speak them.  
We reached a spot beneath a noble castle, 106  
Encircled seven times by lofty ramparts,  
Defended round about by a fair streamlet.  
This we crossed over, as on ground that's solid ;  
By seven gates I entered with those wise ones ; 110  
We came upon a lawn of dewy verdure.  
There we found folk whose eyes were slow and earnest ;  
Of great authority in their appearance ;  
They spoke but seldom, and with gracious voices.  
So we withdrew a little on one side there 115  
To an open spot both luminous and lofty  
So that they could be seen in their full number.  
There, straight before us, on the green enamel  
The spirits of the mighty ones were shown me,  
To have seen whom doth inwardly exalt me. 120  
I saw Electra with a many comrades,  
'Mid whom I noted Hector and Æneas,  
Cæsar full armed, with eyes as of a falcon.

I saw Camilla and Penthesilea

On th' other side, and saw the King Latinus, 125  
Who there was sitting with his child Lavinia.

I saw that Brutus who expelled the Tarquin ;  
Lucretia, Julia, Martia, and Cornelia,  
And I saw Saladin, apart and lonely.

On raising then my eyebrows somewhat higher 130  
I saw the Master of all those who 've knowledge,  
Seated amid his philosophic kindred.

All give him admiration, give him honour.  
Here I beheld both Socrates and Plato,  
Who stand before the others nearest to him. 135

Democritus, who founds the world on hazard ;  
Diogenes, Anaxagoras, and Thales ;  
Empedocles, Heraclitus, and Zeno ;

And saw the good observer of things' nature,  
I mean Dioscorides ; and I saw Orpheus, 140  
Tully and Livius ; Seneca the moral ;

The geometrician Euclid ; Ptolomæus ;  
Hippocrates and Avicen, and Galen,  
And Averroes, who made the mighty comment.

I cannot here enumerate them fully, 145  
Because the lengthy theme so spurreth onward,  
That words are oft unequal to the subject.

The company of six to two doth dwindle.  
The sapient Guide leads me another pathway  
From air that 's quiet into air that trembleth, 150  
And then I reach a place where nothing shineth.

## CANTO V

SECOND CIRCLE.—Minos—The Lascivious—Francesca and Paolo.

THUS I descended from the primary circle  
Down to the next, which girdeth less enclosure,  
And all the more of pain, that goads to groaning.  
There Minos standeth horribly and gnasheth,  
Examining the sins of those that enter ; 5  
He judgeth and he sendeth as he bindeth.  
I mean that when the luckless soul appeareth  
Before him there, it maketh full confession,  
And that same expert of the sins committed  
Noteth what place in Hell is fitting for it : 10  
He whips his tail as many times about him  
As the degrees he wanteth it sent under.  
Before him there are always many standing ;  
Each in its turn, they go along to judgment.  
They speak ; they hear ; and then are hurried down-  
ward. 15  
'O thou that comest to the painful guest-house,'  
Cried Minos unto me, when he perceived me,  
Desisting from the act of his high office,

' Beware how thou com'st in, and whom thou trustest.  
 Let not the broadness of the entrance cheat thee.' 20  
 But said my Guide to him : ' Why cry'st thou also ?  
 Impede not thou his fated coming hither :  
 It thus is willed where all that 's willed can straight-  
     way  
 Be carried out ; so ask for nothing further.'  
 Now are the lamentable sounds beginning 25  
     To press upon my ear ; now I am standing  
     Where I am stricken by a deal of wailing.  
 I reached a place in which all light was silent,  
     Which bellowed as the sea doth in a tempest,  
     When it is fought by Winds from hostile quarters. 30  
 The infernal hurricane that never pauseth  
     Sweepeth away the spirits with its fury,  
     And whirling them and buffeting doth plague them.  
 As soon as they arrive before the cliff-ledge  
     Then there are cries and wailing and lamenting ; 35  
     Then they blaspheme against divine perfection.—  
 I understood that unto such-like torment  
     Are wont to be condemned the carnal sinners  
     Who sacrifice their reason to their longing.  
 And as their pinions bear along the starlings 40  
     In chilly weather, in a broad full squadron,  
     So doth that storm-gust bear the evil spirits.  
 Now here, now there, now down, now up, it leadeth ;  
     No hope whatever have they got to cheer them,



Not only of repose, but of less torment, 45  
And like the cranes that flying sing their ditty,  
And form a long-drawn line in air above us,  
So I saw coming, heaving lamentations,  
Shades that were carried by the gust in question ;  
Whereat I said : ‘ My Master, who are yonder 50  
Folk that the sable air is so chastising ? ’  
‘ The first of those ’bout whom thou fain wouldst gather  
Some information ’—so he then addressed me—  
‘ Was once the empress of a many idioms.  
To lechery’s vice she was so much addicted, 55  
That, in her law, she made the lustful lawful,  
To wipe away the blame she was incurring.  
She is Semiramis, of whom one readeth  
That she succeeded Ninus and espoused him.  
She held the land that now the Soldan ruleth. 60  
The next it she who slew herself from loving,  
And broke her faith to th’ ashes of Sichæus :  
And then it is luxurious Cleopatra.  
See Helen too, on whose account such evil  
Times came about, and see the great Achilles, 65  
Who had with Love himself his final combat.  
See Paris ; Tristan’ ; . . . and above a thousand  
Shades did he show me, naming them with finger,  
Which Love had hurried out of this existence.  
As soon as I had listened to my teacher 70  
Naming the bygone ladies and the knights there,

Pity o'ercame me, and I was half 'wildered.  
 I then began : 'O Poet, very gladly  
     Would I address those two who go together  
     And in the wind appear to be so buoyant.' 75  
 And he to me : 'Thou 'lt note when they have gotten  
     A little nearer us, and then entreat them  
     By love that wafteth them ; and they will hearken.'  
 So when the wind deflected them towards us,  
     I raised my voice : 'O heavy-stricken spirits, 80  
     Come speak to us, if Some One Else forbid not.'  
 As doves that are attracted by a yearning  
     Fly back to their sweet nest on wide still pinions  
     Across the air, borne onward by their purpose,  
 So did they leave the troop wherein is Dido, 85  
     Coming across the evil air towards us,  
     So mighty was the loving exclamation.  
 'O creature that art gracious and benignant,  
     Who comest through the lurid air to visit  
     Us who once dyed the world above with life-blood : 90  
 If but the Universe's King were friendly,  
     We would entreat him for thy peace in prayers,  
     Since thou hast pity on our woe's perverseness.  
 Whate'er it pleaseth thee to hear and speak of  
     We now will listen to, and speak of with you, 95  
     So long the wind is lulled, as 'tis at present.  
 The place in which I saw the light is seaced  
     Upon the shore to which the Po descendeth

In search of peace with all his streams that follow.  
Love, that soon fasteneth on a gentle bosom, 100  
Possessed this man here for the comely person  
Ta'en from me ; and the mode still doth me outrage.  
Love, that remitteth loving to no loved one,  
Possessed me with the charm of him so strongly,  
That, as thou seest, he doth not yet desert me. 105  
Love brought us both to one same death together :  
Caïna waiteth him who stamped our life out.'  
These words were wafted from the two towards us.  
When I had listened to these injured spirits,  
I bent my head, and held it so long lowered, 110  
Until the Poet said to me : ' What think'st thou ?'  
When I made answer I began : ' O pity !  
How many thoughts of sweetness, how much yearning,  
Impelled these two to take the step of sorrow !'  
Then I turned round to them, and I addressed them, 115  
And I began : ' Francesca, these thy tortures  
Fill me with awe and sadness unto weeping.  
But tell me : at the time of the sweet sighings,  
Wherefore and how did Love accord permission  
That ye should know the questionable yearnings ?'  
And she to me : ' There is no greater anguish 121  
Than to remember time that hath been happy,  
In wretchedness ; and that thy Teacher knoweth.  
But if to understand the earliest rootlet

Of this our love, thou hast so great a longing, 125  
I'll do like one who weepeth and who speaketh.  
We two one day were reading for amusement  
Of Lancelot,—the way in which Love grasped him ;  
We were alone, and quite without suspicion.  
Then more than once that reading made us lower 130  
Our eyes, and made our faces change their colour ;  
But one sole point it was that overcame us :  
When we were reading of the smile so cherished,  
How it was kissed by such a mighty lover,  
He who shall never from my side be parted 135  
Kissed me upon the mouth all in a tremble.  
The book was Gallehaut, and he who wrote it ;  
Upon that day we read no further in it.  
While one of the two spirits thus was speaking,  
The other wept so bitterly, that from pity 140  
I swooned away, as if I had been dying,  
And down I fell, as falleth a dead body.

## CANTO VI

THIRD CIRCLE.—The Gluttons—Cerberus—Ciaccio.

ON consciousness returning, which had folded  
In presence of the woe of the two kinsfolk,  
Which utterly bewildered me with sadness,  
New tortures, and new people being tortured,  
I saw around me, howsoe'er I shifted, 5  
And howsoe'er I turned or stared about me.  
I am in the third circle of the rain now,  
Eternal and accurst and cold and heavy ;  
Its rule and quality are never altered.  
Big hail and dark-dyed water and a snow-drift 10  
Come pouring down through air that is in dark-  
ness ;  
The very ground is stinking that doth catch it.  
Here Cerberus, the strange and cruel creature,  
With his three throats doth bark in dog-like fashion  
Over the folk that here are under water. 15  
His eyes are crimson and his black beard greasy ;  
And broad his belly, and his hands are clawy ;  
He claweth the souls ; he flayeth them and rendeth.

The rain compelleth them to howl as dogs do ;  
 They labour with one side to shield the other ; 20  
 The miserable reprobates keep shifting.  
 When Cerberus, the mighty reptile, saw us,  
 He opened all his mouths and showed his fang-teeth,  
 And not a single limb could he keep quiet.  
 And then my Leader stretched his arms wide open ; 25  
 He took some earth, and filling both his fists full,  
 He threw it straightway in the hungry gullets.  
 Just like that dog which in its barking yelleth,  
 And calmeth down, so soon the food is bitten,  
 Striving and struggling only to despatch it— 30  
 Such, even such, became the filthy faces  
 Of Cerberus the demon, who bethund'reth  
 The souls so loud, that they would fain be deafened.  
 We passed across the shades that are prostrated  
 By heavy rain, and planted there our foot-soles 35  
 Upon their emptiness, which seemeth substance.  
 They each and all were lying on the ground there,  
 Save one alone, who rose and sat up straightway,  
 So soon it saw us passing there before it.  
 'O thou that art conducted through this Hell here,' 40  
 It said, 'now recognise me, if thou knowest :  
 Thou wast, before I was unfashioned, fashioned.'  
 And I to it : 'The anguish that thou suff'rest  
 Perhaps withdraweth thee from my remembrance,  
 So that it seemeth that I never saw thee : 45

But tell me who thou art, that in so painful  
     A place art put, and torment of such nature,  
     That though there 's greater, none is so revolting.'  
 And he to me : ' Thy city, which is even  
     So full of envy that the sack o'erfloweth,           50  
     Held me within it in the bright existence.  
 You that were citizens then called me Ciacco :  
     Through the disastrous sinning of the gullet,  
     As thou canst see, I languish in the rain here.  
 And I am not the only soul in sorrow,           55  
     As all of these are doomed to the same torment,  
     For the same fault.' And nothing more he uttered.  
 I answered him : ' O Ciacco, this thy anguish  
     So grieveth me, that I would fain be weeping ;  
     But tell me, if thou knowest, what will hap to   60  
 The citizens of the divided city ;  
     If any there be just ; and tell the reason  
     For which such mighty discord hath assailed it.'  
 And he to me : ' After a long contention  
     They'll come to bloodshed, and the " rustic " party  
     Will drive the other out with mighty outrage.   66  
 Then after that, itself to fall is fated  
     Within three suns, and that the other conquer  
     With help of one who at this moment tacketh.  
 High will it hold its head for a long season,       70  
     Keeping the other under heavy burdens,  
     However much that other weep and hate it :

Two men are just ; but they can get no hearing.  
Vaingloriousness and avarice and envy  
Are the three sparks that have inflamed men's  
bosoms.' 75

Here he desisted from the tearful utt'rance.

And I to him : ' I still would have thee teach me,  
And have thee make me gift of further parley.  
Farinata and Tegghiaio, both so worthy,  
James Rusticucci, Mosca, and Arrigo, 80  
And others who were bent upon good actions,  
Now tell me where they be, and let me know them,  
As a great yearning pusheth me to ask thee  
If Heaven's sweet be theirs or Hell's own venom.'

And he : ' They be among the blackest spirits : 85  
A different sin is weighing them down pitward ;  
If thou descendest so far down thou 'lt see them.

But when thou standest in the world that 's pleasant,  
Prythee recall me to the minds of others.

I tell thee nothing more, nor answer further.' 90  
He then exchanged straight eyes for eyes that slanted.  
A while he scanned me ; then his head he lowered,  
And with it fell where lay the other blind ones.

The Leader said to me : ' He ne'er will waken  
Until the sound of the Angelic trumpet. 95  
Upon the coming of the hostile Power,  
Each one will find again his sad tomb straightway ;  
Will take again his flesh and take his figure ;



Will hear what through eternity doth echo.'  
So we passed on, across the loathsome mixture 100  
Of shadows and of rain, with slackened footsteps,  
Touching upon the future life a little.  
Wherefore I said: 'My Master, will these torments  
Grow even greater, after the great sentence,  
Or will they then be less, or just as dreadful?' 105  
And he to me: 'Go get thee to thy science,  
Which hath it that the more a thing is perfect,  
The more it feeleth good, and likewise evil.  
Although 'tis true that this accursed people  
Is never to attain to true perfection, 110  
It hath more hope of it beyond than *this* side.'  
We went all round that pathway in a circle,  
Talking much more than I am here repeating;  
We reached the point at which you go down step-  
wise;  
Here we encountered Plutus, the great en'my. 115

## CANTO VII

FOURTH CIRCLE.—Plutus—Misers and Spendthrifts. FIFTH  
CIRCLE.—The Wrathful and the Sullen.

‘*PAPE Satàn, pape Satàn aleppe,*’

Plutus began to say with cackling voice :

And that right courteous sage who knew of all things  
Said for my comfort : ‘ Be thou not prevented

By thy alarm ; for howsoever potent, 5

He will not stop thy going down this rock-cliff.

Then he turned round to that inflated visage,

And said, ‘ Be silent, thou accursed wolf there ;

Consume thyself inside thee with thy fury.

Not without cause is this descent to darkness. 10

It so is willed on high, up there where Michael

Took vengeance for th’ o’erweening violation.’

Just as the sails that in the wind are swelling

Fall down entangled, when the mast unstraineth,

So fell upon the ground the cruel creature. 15

Thus we descended into the fourth ring-ledge,

Advancing further, through the painful shore there

Which gath’reth all the Universe’s evil.

Ah me, God's justice, who is it that crowdeth  
Such new fatigues and pains as I beheld there? 20  
And wherefore doth our sin so rend and tear us?  
Just like the billow, there above Charybdis,  
Which breaketh 'gainst another that it meeteth,  
So must the people that are here be whirling.  
Here I saw people more than elsewhere crowded, 25  
From hither and from thither with great howlings  
A-rolling weights by dint of stress of shoulder.  
They struck against each other, and then straightway  
They each turned round again, and facing backwards  
Shouted: 'What makes thee hoard?' 'What makes  
thee squander?' 30  
Thus they returned around the murky circle  
From either side, towards the opposite quarter,  
Shouting their shameful sing-song at each other;  
Then each turned back again, when he had reached it,  
Round his half circle, to the other tilt-point: 35  
And I, whose heart was wellnigh quite afflicted,  
Said, 'Master mine, now give me explanation  
What folk these be; and if they all were clerics,  
These tonsured people, on our left hand yonder?'  
And he to me: 'They all were so distorted 40  
In mind, when they were still in the first lifetime,  
That they spent nothing there in moderation.  
Clearly enough their voice doth even bark it,  
When they attain the two points of the circle,

Where th' opposite sin compelleth them asunder. 45  
 These once were clerics, those who've not the cover  
 Of hair upon their heads, and popes and card'nals ;  
 On whom excess of avarice is vented.

And I : ' My Master, out of such as these are,  
 I ought right well to recognise some, surely, 50  
 Who were once filthy with these very evils.'

And he to me : ' Thou put'st vain thoughts together :  
 The ignoble life that made them once so shameful,  
 Now darkeneth them to every recognition.

For ever will they meet in the two tiltings : 55  
 These will arise from out of their entombment  
 With tight-clenched fist, and those with close-  
 cropped tresses :

Ill giving and ill keeping made them forfeit  
 The lovely world, and set them in this tussle ;  
 What it is like, no words of mine need heighten. 60

Now thou canst see, my son, the short vagary  
 Of goods that are intrusted unto Fortune,  
 For which the human race is wont to wrangle.

Not all the gold that is beneath the moonbeams,  
 Or ever was, could make one weary spirit, 65  
 Of all that here are gathered, rest a moment.'

' Master,' I said to him, ' now tell me also :  
 This Fortune, unto whom thou art alluding—  
 What is she, that so graspeth the world's blessings ?'  
 And he to me : ' O feeble-witted creatures, 70

What ignorance is that which doth beset you !  
 Now I would have thee well take in my verdict.  
 He whose omniscience overtoppeth all things  
     Fashioned the skies, and gave them those that guide  
     them,  
 That every part might shine to every other ;      75  
 Distributing the light in equal measure :  
     So, in like fashion, over worldly splendours,  
     He set a general mistress and leader,  
 Who should permute in time each vain advantage  
     From race to race, and from one blood to th' other, 80  
     Beyond prevention by our human reason.  
 So one race lordeth and another pineth.  
     According to the judgment of this goddess,  
     Which is as hidden as a snake in grass is.  
 Your wisdom hath no power that can oppose her.      85  
     For she foreseeeth, judgeth, and maintaineth  
     Her government, as other gods theirs likewise.  
 Her alternations are devoid of respite :  
     Necessity compelleth them be speedy ;  
     So, oft it chanceth some one's lot is altered.      90  
 And she it is, who is reviled so often  
     Even by those who ought to give her praises,  
     And wrongly give her blame and evil mention.  
 But she is pleased with self, and never heareth ;  
     With other primal beings she doth gaily      95  
     Revolve her sphere and feeleth herself happy.

But let us now descend to greater pity :

Now every star is sinking which was rising  
When I set out ; and tarrying is forbidden.'

We cut the circle to the other shore there, 100

Above a spring that bubbleth and that poureth  
Adown a channel that doth lead from out it.

The water was much darker than a perse tint ;

And there, together with the greyish billows,  
We entered downwards by a broken pathway. 105

A swamp to which the name of Styx is given

This sad rill maketh, when it hath descended

Down to the foot of those same grim grey stretches ;

And I, who was intent on looking round me,

Saw miry people in that same morass there, 110

All of them naked and with outraged aspect.

These struck each other with their hands not merely,

But with their heads and with their chests and feet  
too,

Rending each other with their teeth by morsels.

The worthy Master said : ' My son, thou seest 115

The souls of those that wrath once got the best of,

And I would also have thee know for certain

That under water there are people sighing,

Who make this water bubble at the surface,

As thy own eye doth show, where'er it sweepeth. 120

Stuck in the mud, they say : " We once were joyless

In the sweet air that joyeth in the sunshine,

And brought within it merely sullen fuming.  
Now we are pining in the blackish ooze here.”  
This is the strain they gurgle in their gullet, 125  
Which they can ne'er express in words completely.  
We thus went circling round a mighty segment  
Of that foul fen, between dry shore and marsh-land,  
Keeping our eyes on those that swallow mud there:  
We reached at last the bottom of a tower. 130

## CANTO VIII

FIFTH CIRCLE (*continued*).—The Wrathful (*continued*)—Phlegyas—  
Filippo Argenti—City of Dis—Closing of the gates in Virgil's  
face.

I SAY, continuing, that a good while previous  
To our attaining to the tall tow'r's basis,  
Our eyes went upward even to its summit,  
Because of two small flames that we saw set there,  
And of another, answering from such distance 5  
That it was difficult for the eye to seize it.  
And turning to the ocean of all wisdom,  
I said: 'What saith this light, and what respondeth  
That other fire? And who are those that light it?'  
And he to me: 'Upon the filthy billows 10  
Thou canst already see what we're awaiting,  
Unless the mist of the morass doth hide it.'  
String never yet propelled an arrow from it,  
That fled across the air with such a swiftness  
As I beheld a very tiny vessel 15  
Come o'er the water then and there towards us  
Under the steerage of a single boatman,  
Who cried, 'Now art thou come, thou guilty spirit?'



'O Phlegyas, Phlegyas, verily thou art wasting,'  
My Lord and Master said, 'for once thy shouting :  
Thou 'lt have us only while we pass the mire.' 21  
Like one who listeneth to some great deception  
That 's tried upon him, and is wrathful at it,  
So Phlegyas seemed, in his increasing anger.  
My Leader then stepped down into the boat there 25  
And made me enter after he had done so,  
And not till I was in it seemed it laden.  
As soon as he and I were in the ferry,  
The ancient prow pursued its way, dividing  
More water than 'twas wont to do with others. 30  
While we were hurrying through the stagnant dam-pool  
One who was full of mire appeared before me  
And said, 'Who art thou, coming ere thy hour?'  
And I to him : 'Although I come, I stay not ;  
But who art *thou*, that art so foul to look at?' 35  
He answered : 'As thou seest, I 'm one that weepeth.'  
And I to him : 'With weeping and with mourning,  
Spirit that art accurst, abide for ever ;  
For well I know thee, though thou be all filthy.'  
Then forth he stretched both hands towards the ferry,  
Whereat the Master, on his guard, repelled him, 41  
Exclaiming : 'Get thee with the other dogs there.'  
And then his arms about my neck he folded ;  
He kissed my face, and said : 'Disdainful spirit,  
Blessed be she who in her womb conceived thee. 45

This once was in the world a haughty person ;  
     There is no virtue to adorn his mem'ry.  
     And thus it is that here his shade is furious.  
 How many now are deemed up there great monarchs  
     Who shall be kept down here like hogs in pig-sties,  
     Leaving but horrible contempts behind them !' 51  
 And I : ' My Master, I would very gladly  
     Behold them duck him under in this hell-broth,  
     Before we make our way from out the lake here.'  
 And he to me : ' Before the further margin 55  
     Shall meet thy eyes, thy wish shall have been  
     granted ;  
     If such thy fancy, thou shalt soon enjoy it.'  
 Soon after that I saw the miry people  
     Make such a havoc of this very fellow  
     That to this day I bless the Lord and thank him.  
 They all cried out : ' At Filippo Argenti !' 61  
     And thereupon the Florentine crazed spirit  
     Turned his own teeth against himself there straight-  
     way.  
 We left him there ; and more I'll not tell 'bout him.  
     But, lo, my ears were stricken by a wailing 65  
     Which made me strain my widening eyes before me.  
 The worthy Master said : ' My son, by *this* time  
     The town that hath the name of Dis is near us,  
     With its stern citizens, with its great muster.'  
 And I : ' My Master, surely I already 70

Behold its minarets within the valley,  
All crimson red, as if they had come lately  
From out the fire.'—And he: 'The fire eternal  
That's kindled in them maketh them seem ruddy,  
As thou perceivest, in this lower Hell here. 75

We duly entered into the deep trenches  
That gird about that melancholy city;  
The walls appeared to me to be of iron.  
Not without making first a mighty circuit  
We reached a spot where, with loud voice, the  
boatman 80  
Cried out to us: 'Get out, for here's the entrance.'  
I saw above a thousand on the gates there,  
Rained down from Heav'n, who in their irritation  
Said: 'Who is this, who thus, and without dying,  
Doth cross the kingdom of the Lifeless People?' 85  
And here my wise Instructor made a signal  
That he desired to speak to them in secret.  
Then they restrained a little their great anger,  
And said: 'Come thou alone, and let him leave  
thee,  
Who hath so rashly trespassed on this kingdom;  
Alone let him turn back on his mad journey. 91  
Yea, let him try; for here thou hast to tarry,  
Thou that hast led him on so dark a pathway.'  
Judge, Reader, if I felt my courage fail me  
On listening to the words of evil omen; 95

For never did I think I should return there.  
 ‘O my loved Leader, who on more than seven  
     Occasions hast restored me safe, and snatched me  
     From the deep peril that was set against me,  
 Desert me not,’ I said, ‘in plight so sorry;      100  
     And if our further progress be forbidden,  
     Let us retrace at once our steps together.’  
 And that same Lord, he who had led me thither,  
     He said to me: ‘Fear not; for our way onward  
     None can prevent; so great a One hath let us; 105  
 But wait me here; and let thy fainting spirit  
     Be comforted and fed with worthy hoping,  
     As I’ll not leave thee in this nether world here.’  
 So off he goeth, leaving me alone there,  
     The gentle father, while I wait distracted—      110  
     For no and yes were in my head contending.  
 I could not hear the words that he addressed them;  
     But he had stood but very little with them  
     Before they all fled back inside together.  
 They shut their gates, those enemies of ours,      115  
     In my Lord’s face, who there remained outside  
     them,  
     And turned again towards me with slow footsteps.  
 His eyes were on the ground; his brows were free  
     too  
     Of all assurance; and he said, with sighings:  
     ‘Who hath debarred me from the homes of dolour?’

And said to *me* : ' Do thou, if I be angry,           121  
    Not feel surprise ; for I'll o'ercome the test yet ;  
    Whoe'er be those who there inside resist us.  
This insolence of theirs is nothing novel,  
    For once they tried it at a gate less secret,           125  
    Which still is there without a lock to shut it.  
Above it thou hast seen the dead inscription :  
    Even now, this side it, down the steep is coming,  
    And passing through the circles with no escort,  
One by whose means the city shall be opened.       130

## CANTO IX

City of Dis (*continued*)—The Furies—The Angel. SIXTH CIRCLE.  
—The Heresiarchs—The Fiery Tombs.

THAT colour which my cowardice forced outward,  
On seeing that my Leader was retreating,  
Drove in *his* novel colour all the quicker.  
He stopped, attentive, like a man who list'neth,  
For he could strain his eye to no great distance, 5  
Through the black air and through the heavy fog  
there.

‘ Yet we are bound to conquer in the struggle,’  
(Thus he began): ‘ unless . . . with such a helper.  
Oh how I yearn me for another’s coming!’

I saw right well how he had interrupted 10  
His first remark by what had followed after,  
Which was in words quite different from the first ones.  
But, none the less, his utterance caused me terror,  
Because I gave the interrupted sentence  
Perhaps a worse conclusion than he purposed. 15

‘ Into this bottom of the sorry vat here  
Do any of the first degree come ever,  
Whose only punishment is loss of hoping?’

This question did I put: And he: 'But seldom  
It happeneth,' he answered me, 'that any 20  
Of us should take the path by which I'm going.  
'Tis true that I descended once down hither,  
Conjured by that same pitiless Erichtho,  
Who used to call shades back into their bodies.  
The flesh had been stripped bare of me but lately 25  
When she compelled me down inside that wall there,  
To fetch a spirit from the ring of Judas.  
That is the lowest region and the darkest,  
And furthest from the sky that circleth all things.  
Well do I know the way: so feel in safety. 30  
This marsh, which giveth forth the mighty stench,  
Doth form a girdle round the aching city  
Where now we cannot enter without anger.'  
And he said more, which I have now forgotten,  
Because my eyes had altogether drawn me 35  
To the high turret with the glowing summit,  
Where, at one point, there suddenly were standing  
Three hellish Furies, sprinkled o'er with bloodstains,  
Who had the limbs of women and their gestures.  
And they were girdled round with greenest hydras; 40  
Small serpents and horned vipers formed their tresses,  
With which their cruel temples were encircled.  
And he, who was familiar with the handmaids  
Who serve the Queen of Everlasting Wailing,  
'Behold,' he said to me, 'the fierce Erinnyes: 45

That is Megæra in the left-hand corner ;  
 She who is weeping on the right 's Alecto ;  
 Tisiphone is between ' : then spoke no further.  
 Each with her nails was ripping up her bosom,  
 Ever they slapped themselves and cried so loudly 50  
 That in my fear I shrank against the Poet.  
 ' Call for Medusa ; so we 'll make him stone yet ,'  
 They all cried out, while looking down upon us ;  
 ' We ought to have avenged the attack of Theseus !'  
 ' Turn round at once, and keep thy eyelids tightened : 55  
 For if the Gorgon come, and thou behold it,  
 There 'll be no hope of e'er returning upwards !'  
 Thus did the Master say ; and he himself then  
 Turned me right round ; nor deemed my hands  
 sufficient,  
 Till he had closed my eyes with *his* hands also. 60  
 O ye of whom the intellects are healthy,  
 Consider well the doctrine that is hidden  
 Beneath the veil of the mysterious verses.  
 And now along the turbid waves was coming  
 The crashing of a sound all full of terror, 65  
 And which was making both the banks to tremble ;  
 In no wise differing even from a wind-gust,  
 Impetuous on account of hostile heat-tides,  
 Which striketh on the forest and, increasing,  
 Doth snap the branches, hurl them and expel them, 70  
 Proceedeth on its dusty way superbly,



And setteth fleeing all the beasts and shepherds.  
He freed my eyes, and said, 'Direct the nerve now  
Of sight along that ancient foam out yonder,  
Towards the part in which the smoke is direst.' 75  
Just as when frogs, in presence of the hostile  
Snake, in the water one and all take refuge,  
Till each of them hath fastened to the bottom,  
I saw above a thousand perished souls there  
Now taking flight from one who, walking slowly, 80  
Was crossing over Styx with feet unwetted.  
He pushed the greasy air from off his features,  
Stretching his left hand frequently before him,  
And seemed with that mere effort to be weary.  
I saw right well that he was sent by Heaven 85  
And turned towards the Master, and he beckoned  
To me to hush, and bow me low before him.  
Ah me, what mighty scorn appeared to fill him!  
He reached the gate and with a little baton  
He opened it, for there was no resistance. 90  
'O castaways of Heaven, abject people,'  
(He thus began upon the hideous threshold),  
'Whence is this insolence that dwelleth in you?  
Why are ye thus rebellious to that purpose  
Whose ends it is impossible to baffle, 95  
And which hath more than once increased your  
torment?  
What use is it to butt against the fated?

Your Cerberus, if ye but well remember,  
Still hath therefrom a hairless chin and gullet.  
Then he resumed again his filthy pathway, 100  
And spoke no word to *us*, but had the semblance  
Of one whom other cares oppress and gnaw at  
Than those of him who standeth in his presence ;  
And then we moved our feet towards the city,  
Secure when we had heard the holy utt'rance. 105  
We entered in, without a further warring ;  
And I, who was desirous of observing  
The state of things such fortalice encloseth,  
As soon as I was in it, looked about me  
And saw to right and left a great plain stretching, 110  
All full of wailing and of cruel torment.  
Just as at Arles, there where the Rhone is stagnant,  
Just as at Pola, near to the Quarnáro,  
Which closeth Italy and doth bathe its limits,  
The sepulchres make all the ground unequal,— 115  
So even did they here all round about us,  
Save that the manner of it was more bitter.  
For here, between the tombstones flames were scattered,  
By which they were so wholly set a-glowing,  
That there's no craft hath need of hotter iron. 120  
The lids of every one of them were lifted,  
And out of them there came such dire lamentings,  
That well they told of wretched folk and plagued  
ones.

And I: 'My Master, who may be these people,  
Who, being thus immured within these coffers, 125  
Make themselves audible in painful sighings?'  
And he to me: 'These here are the heresiarchs  
With all their train of every sect; and very  
Much more than thou wouldst think the tombs are  
crowded.  
Here similar with similar is buried; 130  
And more and less the monuments are heaped.'  
And when he had inclined him to the rightwards,  
We passed between the torments and high ramparts.

## CANTO X

SIXTH CIRCLE (*continued*).—The City of Dis (*continued*)—The Epicureans—Farinata degli Uberti—Cavalcante dei Cavalcanti.

Now went his way along a narrow footpath  
Between the city's rampart and the torments  
My Master, while I followed close behind him.  
'O highest virtue, that across fell circles  
Dost whirl me,' I began, 'what way thou pleasest, 5  
Now speak to me, and satisfy my yearnings.  
The people that are lying in these tombs here,  
Might I behold them? Every lid already  
Is lifted off, and nobody is watching.'  
And he to me: 'They'll all of them be fastened 10  
When from Jehoshaphat they come back hither,  
Bringing the bodies with them, which they left there.  
Here in this quarter is the place of burial  
Of Epicurus and of all his scholars,  
Who deem the soul to perish with the body. 15  
So now, as to the question thou hast put me:  
Inside this place thy wish shall soon be granted,  
Yea, ev'n the wish that thou art hiding from me.'

And I : ‘ Good Leader, I am not concealing  
My heart from *thee*, save that I speak but little, 20  
And thou hast led me more than once to do so.’—  
‘ O Tuscan, who across the fiery city  
Dost go thy way alive and so fair spoken,  
Be pleased a while to tarry in this spot here.  
Thy mode of speaking proveth thee most clearly 25  
To be a native of that noble birthplace  
To which, perhaps, I once was over irksome.’  
These words appeared to issue of a sudden  
From one of those same tombs, so that I sidled  
In fear a little closer to my Leader. 30  
And he cried out, ‘ Turn round ; what art thou doing ?  
Look there at Farinata who hath risen ;  
Thou ’lt see the whole of him from girdle upwards.’  
I had already fixed my eyes on his there,  
And he was rising with his chest and forehead, 35  
As though he had for Hell a great despisal.  
And the Leader’s energetic hands and ready  
Pushed me among the sepulchres towards him,  
The while he said, ‘ Now let thy words be numbered.’  
As soon as I was close beneath his tomb there, 40  
He looked at me a while, then, almost scornful,  
He put the question : ‘ Who have been thy forbears ?’  
I, who was very willing to obey him,  
Kept nothing hid, but laid it all before him,  
At which he slightly lifted up his eyebrows. 45

Then he retorted : ' Fiercely were they hostile  
 To me and to my kin and to my party,  
 So that on two occasions I dispersed them.'  
 ' If they were banished, they returned from all sides,'  
 I answered him, ' on each and both occasions : 50  
 But you and yours have learnt that art but badly.'  
 Then there rose up before my eyes uncovered  
 A shade along his side, until its chin showed :  
 I think that it had risen to its knees there.  
 It looked all round me, even as if wishing 55  
 To ascertain if some one else were with me ;  
 But when that prying look was all exhausted,  
 It then said weeping : ' If across this sightless  
 Dungeon thou goest by the height of genius,  
 Then where 's my son, and why is he not with thee ?'  
 And I to him : ' I come not unassisted, 61  
 He who is waiting there hath brought me hither—  
 He whom your Guido, maybe, had a scorn for.'  
 His words, together with the kind of torment,  
 Had told me clearly this man's name already, 65  
 And that was why my answer was so ample.  
 Immediately upstarting, ' What,' he shouted,  
 ' Thou say'st " he *had* " ? Is he no longer living ?  
 Doth the sweet daylight strike his eyes no longer ?'  
 When he perceived a certain hesitation 70  
 On *my* part, ere I gave him back an answer,  
 He staggered back, and showed himself no further.

But that other lofty-soul'd one at whose summons  
I'd stopped upon my way, ne'er changed his aspect,  
Nor moved his neck, nor yet inclined his body. 75  
'And if' (continuing the previous subject),  
'They've learnt,' he said, 'that art to little purpose,  
That tortureth me more than doth this bed here.  
But yet, not fifty times shall be rekindled  
The visage of the Lady who here ruleth, 80  
Ere thou thyself shalt learn how hard that art is.  
And as thou hopest for the sweet world's sight still,  
O tell me why that people is so impious  
Against my kin in every law it passeth?'  
To which I said: 'The havoc and great slaughter 85  
By which the river Arbia was dyed crimson,  
Hath led to that oration in our temple.'  
When with a sigh he'd shaken his head sadly,  
'I did it not alone,' he said, 'nor truly  
Without good cause would I have helped the others ;  
But I was all alone where every other 91  
Consented to the rooting out of Florence,  
And where I pleaded openly to save her.'  
'Oh, if your seed is ever to have quiet,'  
I begged him then, 'untie for me the tangle 95  
Which even here hath wrapped about my judgment :  
It seemeth that you see (if I hear rightly)  
Beforehand that which time is bringing with it,  
Though in the present you've another fashion.'

‘ We see like one who hath but scanty daylight 100

The things,’ he answered, ‘ which are distant from us :

So much the Highest Guide still shineth on us :

When things are nearing, or are there, all useless

Is our intelligence : save news be brought us,

We have no knowledge of your human status. 105

So thou canst understand how wholly lifeless

Will be our comprehension from the moment

At which the gateway of the Future closeth.’

Then as it were in sorrow at my error,

I said : ‘ So now you ’ll tell the one that ’s fallen

That still his son ’s united to the living. 111

And if I kept him waiting for the answer,

Tell him that ’twas because my mind already

Was under the mistake from which you ’ve freed me.’

And now my Master was already calling : 115

So I more pressingly implored the spirit

That he would tell me who were those now with him.

He answered : ‘ With a thousand more I ’m lying :

Within this circle is the Second Fred ’rick ;

Ay, and the Cardinal : I name no others.’ 120

Then he concealed himself ; and to the ancient

Poet I turned my steps, meanwhile revolving

The utt’rance which appeared to me so hostile.

He moved to go ; and as we were proceeding

He said to me : ‘ Why art thou so bewildered ? ’ 125

And thereupon I satisfied his query.



‘Now let thy mind keep well what thou hast heard here  
Against thyself,’ that sage thereafter bade me:  
‘And now heed *here*’: and then he raised his finger.  
‘When thou shalt be before the gentle radiance 130  
Of her whose beauteous eye beholdeth all things,  
By her thou shalt be told of thy life’s journey.’  
Then, after that, he turned his footsteps leftwards:  
We left the wall, and turned towards the centre,  
Along a path that leadeth to a valley 135  
Which ev’n up there offended with its stench.

## CANTO XI

SIXTH CIRCLE (*continued*).—The tomb of Anastasius—Virgil's explanation of the following Circles and of the sins punished therein.

AT the extremity of a high embankment,  
Formed by great stones all broken in a circle,  
We came upon a yet more cruel crowding.  
And here, by reason of the hideous power  
Of the great stench the deep abyss emitteth,      5  
We sought a refuge close behind the cover  
Of a great tomb, on which I saw a writing  
Which said : *Pope Anastasius am I keeping,*  
*Whom once Photinus drew from the straight path-*  
*way.*  
' Here our descent must be retarded somewhat,      10  
So that our sense may first get used a little  
To the vile smell ; and then we'll need no caution.'  
So the Master said. And I : ' Some compensation  
Do thou now find, so that the moments may not  
Be lost.' And he : ' Ay, that is what I'm think-  
ing.      15  
My son, in the enclosure of these boulders'—

He then began to say—‘are three less circles,  
From ledge to ledge, like those that thou art come  
from.

They one and all are full of cursed spirits :

But so that the mere looking may suffice thee, 20

Give ear to how and why they are confined there.

Of every malice that in heaven is hated,

The object is to harm ; and each such object

Either by force or fraud doth injure others.

But even as fraud is man’s peculiar evil, 25

It most displeaseth God ; and so, placed lower

Are those who cheat, and greater pain doth rack  
them.

With violent souls the nearest circle’s crowded ;

But violence being done against three persons, 29

In three great rings ’tis parcelled and constructed.

’Gainst God, ’gainst one’s own self, and ’gainst one’s  
neighbour

Can fraud be used ; ’gainst them and their belong-  
ings,

As thou shalt hear with manifested reason.

Thus violent death and painful wounds are given

Unto one’s neighbour ; and to his possessions 35

Ruin and arson and oppressive taxes.

So murderers and every one who woundeth,

Destroyers and despoilers all are tortured

In this the first great ring, in various herdings.

A man can lay a violent hand on self too, 40  
     And on his goods ; and therefore in the second  
     Great ring 'tis meet that vainly should repent him  
 Whoever doth deprive himself of *your* world,  
     Or gambleth with and squandereth his possessions,  
     And weepeth where he ought to be rejoicing.— 45  
 Then violence can be done against the Godhead,  
     Denying it in one's heart and by blaspheming,  
     And by despising Nature and His goodness ;  
 And so the smallest of the hell-rings setteth  
     Its mark on Sodom and upon Caorsa, 50  
     And him whose words of scorn for God are heartfelt.  
 As to deceit, which gnaweth every conscience,  
     A man may practise it on those who trust him,  
     Or else on those who do not take his pledges.  
 This last-named way would seem to be destroying 55  
     Only the bond of love which Nature formeth ;  
     Wherefore within the second circle nestle  
 Dissemblings, flatteries, yea and all enchanters,  
     And forgery and simony and thieving,  
     Panders and barrators, and suchlike vermin. 60  
 By th' other way, both *that* love is forgotten  
     Which Nature formeth, and the one that's added,  
     From out of which especial trust is fashioned.  
 So in the smallest circle, in the centre  
     O' th' universe, and whereupon Dis sitteth, 65  
     Whoe'er betrayeth is consumed for ever.'

And I: 'My Master, very clear proceedeth  
Thy reasoning; and well doth it distinguish  
This pit and all the folk contained within it.  
But prythee tell me: Those in the fat swamp there, 70  
Those whom the wind doth whirl and the rain batter,  
Who meet each other there with tongues so cruel;  
Why is it not inside the lurid city  
That they are punished, if they share God's anger;  
And if they don't, then why are they so treated?'  
And he to me: 'What maketh thy thought wander 76  
So much more wildly than hath been thy habit?  
Or is thy mind intent, perhaps, elsewhither?  
Hast thou no more remembrance of the phrases  
In which thy Ethics fully treat the subject 80  
Of those three dispositions God forbiddeth—  
Incontinence and malice and the crazy  
Bestiality? And how the first-named giveth  
God less offence, and how it is less blameful?  
If thou but well consider that same sentence, 85  
And but recall to mind what class of sinners  
Up there, outside, are subject unto penance,  
'Thou'lt understand why they and those fell spirits  
Are kept apart; and wherefore, in less anger,  
The heavenly justice striketh them less sternly.' 90  
'O sun that healest every troubled vision,  
Thou dost content me so when thou explainest,  
That doubting pleaseth me no less than knowledge.

Prythee turn back again,' I said, ' a little,  
     To where thou say'st that usury offendeth            95  
     God's excellence, and solve the knotty point.'  
 'Philosophy,' he said, 'for those who grasp it,  
     Noteth not in a single quarter only  
     The manner in which Nature's course proceedeth  
 From the Divine intelligence and art-work ;            100  
     And, if thou only note thy Physics rightly  
     Thou wilt perceive, before a many readings,  
 That your own art doth even follow that one  
     Whene'er it can, as pupil doth his teacher ;  
     So that your art is as it were God's grandchild. 105  
 From these same two (if only thou remember  
     The *Genesis* from its outset) it behoveth  
     That folk should earn their living and should profit ;  
 And as the usurer taketh other courses,  
     He scorneth Nature for itself, as well as            110  
     For art its fruit ; since hope he elsewhere setteth.  
 But now, come on ; for I would fain be wending ;  
     For, lo, the Fish glide up on the horizon ;  
     And all the Wain is lying over Caurus ;  
 And the descent is down the steep out yonder.        115

## CANTO XII

**FIRST RING OF SEVENTH CIRCLE.—The Minotaur—The Violent against others—The Tyrants—The Centaurs—Guy de Montfort.**

**THE** place we came to, to descend th' embankment,  
Was alpine, and, from what was in it also,  
Was such, that sight would gladly have escaped it.  
Even as is that landslip which in flank once,  
Upon the hither side of Trento, struck the Adige, 5  
Either through earthquake or from want of prop-  
ping ;  
Where, from the hill-top, whence it once was loosened,  
Down to the plain, the rock is all so broken  
That it would yield some path to one upon it :  
Such now was the descent adown that gully ; 10  
And on the margin of the broken hollow  
The Infamy of Crete was lying outstretched,  
Which was conceived in th' artificial heifer ;  
And seeing us, it bit its own self straightway,  
Like one whom an internal wrath subdueth. 15

My Sage cried out towards it : 'Peradventure  
Thou thinkest that it is the Duke of Athens  
Who, in the world above, once put thy life out ?  
Be off, thou beast, for *this* one is not coming  
Instructed by the teachings of thy sister,           20  
But goeth only to behold your torments.'  
Just as a bull who 'scapeth at the moment  
That it already hath received the death-blow,  
And cannot run, but here and there still boundeth,  
So I perceived the Minotaur was doing ;           25  
And *he*, alert, cried : 'Run towards the passage ;  
While he's in fury, thou hadst best descend it.'  
So down we went our way along the down-shoot  
Of those same stones, which frequently kept moving  
Beneath my feet, from the unwonted burthen.   30  
Walking I pondered ; and he said : 'Thou 'rt thinking,  
Perhaps, about this landslip which is guarded  
By yonder bestial wrath I've just extinguished ?  
Now thou must know, that on the first occasion  
That I came down to this low depth of hell here, 35  
This mass of rock had not yet fallen headlong.  
But some short time before—if I judge rightly—  
The coming down of Him who took from Dis here  
The mighty booty of the Upper Circle,  
On every side the deep foul valley shook so,           40  
That I conceived the universe was feeling  
That love on whose account some think that often



The world hath been converted into chaos :

And it was then these ancient rocky masses

Here and elsewhere came crashing down in *this* way.

But fix thy eyes down there : for we are nearing 46

The river all of blood, in which are seething

Those who through fury have done wrong to others.'

O blind cupidity, O senseless anger,

That dost so spur us in the shorter lifetime, 50

And in the eternal bathest us so foully !

I saw an ample trench that was bent bow-wise,

Like that by which the total plain is girdled,

Just as my escort had already told me :

And in a file, 'twixt it and the bank's basement, 55

Centaur's were running, who were armed with arrows,

As once they hunted in the world above us.

On seeing us come down, they all then halted,

And three came forth from out the troop together,

With bows and arrows which they first selected ; 60

And one cried out still distant : 'To what torment

Do ye now come, ye who descend the slope there ?

Say it from where ye stand, or else I shoot you !'

My Master said : 'We will return the answer

Ourselves to Chiron, even close by yonder ; 65

Thy impulse, to thy cost, was ever hasty.'

He nudged me then and told me : 'This is Nessus

Who perished for the beauteous Dejanira,

And who himself effected his own vengeance.

And yonder mid one, looking at his bosom, 70  
Is mighty Chiron, he who nursed Achilles.  
That other's Pholus, once so full of anger.  
Around the trench go thousands and yet thousands,  
Shooting with arrows every soul that leaveth  
The blood-stream further than its sin permitteth.'  
We then went nearer to those nimble creatures: 76  
And Chiron took a dart, and with its notch-end  
He brushed his beard away from off his jaw-bones.  
When he had got his mighty mouth uncovered,  
He said to his companions: 'Did ye notice, 80  
The hind one moveth everything he touches?  
The dead men's feet are never wont to do so.'  
And my good Leader, who was near his chest now,  
Where the two natures are together blended,  
Replied: 'He's live indeed; and thus alone here 85  
I have to show him over the dark valley:  
Necessity compelleth it, not pleasure.  
'Tis one who ceased from singing *Halleluia*  
Who hath intrusted me with this new office.  
No robber's he, nor I a stealing spirit; 90  
But by that Virtue, thanks to which I'm setting  
My footsteps here, upon so wild a pathway,  
Now give us one of thine, whom we may follow,  
One who may show us where we may be fording,  
And who may carry this one on his crupper, 95  
As he's no spirit who can fly the air here.'

Then Chiron turned upon his right breast straight-  
way,

And said to Nessus : 'Turn again and guide them  
And clear the way, if other squadrons meet you.'

We then proceeded with the trusty escort 100

Along the margin of the crimson hot-spring  
In which the seethed were uttering their shrill  
yellings.

There I saw people plunged as high as eyebrow,  
And the great Centaur said : 'They all are tyrants  
Who filled their hands with blood and men's posses-  
sions. 105

Here all the ruthless injuries are wept for :

Here's Alexander, and fell Dionysius,  
Who caused to Sicily such years of anguish.

And yonder brow, whose hair doth seem so swarthy,  
Is Azzolino's ; and that fair-haired other, 110

Obizzo, he of Este, whom most surely

His stepson murdered in the world above us.'

I then turned to the Poet, who said straightway :  
'Consider *him* the first, and me the second.'

A little further on, the Centaur halted 115

Above some folk, who from about the gullet  
Appeared to be emerging from that seething.

He showed a shade alone and in a corner,

And then said, 'That one clove in God's own bosom  
The heart that on the Thames is still held holy.' 120

Then I beheld some people who were holding  
Their head above the stream, and the trunk also :  
And recognised a many of these clearly.  
And so the blood grew lower and yet lower,  
Until it covered nothing but the ankles, 125  
And that was where we found a passage over.  
' Now just as thou beholdest in this quarter  
The seething liquid growing less and lesser,'  
The Centaur said, ' I fain would now convince thee  
That on the other side its bottom groweth 130  
Deeper and deeper, till it even reacheth  
Where tyranny is sentenced to be moaning.  
The heavenly Justice goadeth in this quarter  
That Attila who was a scourge on earth once,  
And Pyrrhus—ay, and Sextus ; and distilleth 135  
The tears for ever which the seething freeth  
From Rinier of Corneto and Rinier Pazzo,  
Who waged so fierce a war upon the highways.'  
Then he turned round and passed again the fording.

## CANTO XIII

SECOND RING OF SEVENTH CIRCLE.—The Violent against Self—  
The Harpies—The Wood of Suicides—Pier delle Vigne—  
The Hell-hounds—Lano of Siena—Jacopo of Sant' Andréa.

Not yet had Nessus made his way across it,  
When, lo, we found ourselves within a thicket  
In which there was no sign of any pathway.  
Not verdant foliage, but of gloomy colour ;  
Not straight free branches, but with knots and  
twisted ; 5  
Not fruits were there, but only twigs with venom.  
No offshoots half so pointed or so tangled  
Have those wild beasts which hold in detestation,  
'Twixt Cecina and Corneto, all tilled places.  
In here the ugly Harpies come and nestle 10  
Who drove from out the Strophades the Trojans  
With sorry presage of approaching evil.  
Broad pinions have they, human necks and faces,  
And taloned feet and mighty feathered bellies ;  
They utter wailings on the wondrous branches. 15  
And the good Master : ' Ere thou enter further  
Know that thou standest in the second hell-ring'  
(So he began to tell me), ' and thou'lt stay there

Until thou comest to the awful sand-plain ;  
Therefore look well, and even so thou 'lt witness 20  
Things that would make my words appear unlikely.'  
I heard a sound of sighs from all directions,  
And yet I saw no person there who did it,  
On which account I halted all bewildered.  
I fancy that he fancied that I fancied 25  
That all those sounds were uttered 'mid those  
brambles  
By people who were hiding themselves from us.  
Therefore the Master said : ' If thou but sunder  
A little branch from one of these same plants here,  
The thoughts thou hast will be cut short com-  
pletely.' 30  
Then I advanced my hand a little forwards  
And plucked a little twig from a great thorn-tree ;  
And, lo, its trunk cried out : ' What makes thee  
rend me ?'  
When it had got all dark with blood upon it,  
It 'gan again to cry : ' What makes thee tear me ?  
Hast thou no mercy in thy soul whatever ? 36  
We once were men, and now we're changed to branches :  
Well might thy hand show proof of greater pity  
If we had been the very souls of serpents.'  
As from a log, still green, that hath been lighted 40  
At one o' th' ends, and hisseth at the other,  
And crackleth from the wind that is escaping,

So from that splintered bough came forth together  
Both words and blood, which made me let the  
bough-tip  
Drop, and I stood there like a man that feareth. 45  
'If only he could have believed beforehand,'  
Replied my Sage, 'O soul that hast been wounded,  
What he hath seen as yet but from my rhyming,  
He wouldn't have stretched out his hand against  
thee :  
But being incredible, the matter made me 50  
Lead him to do what I myself now grieve at.  
But tell him who thou wast ; so that by way of  
Amends, he may refresh thy reputation  
In the world above, which he can still return to.'  
And then the trunk : 'Thy pleasant words so lure me  
That I can't hush ; and let it not fatigue you 56  
If somewhat I involve myself in talking.  
I am the man who had both keys in keeping  
Of Frederick's heart ; and I am he who turned  
them,  
Both locking and unlocking it, so gently, 60  
That from his trust I almost drove all others.  
I was so faithful in the glorious office,  
That, for its sake, I lost both sleep and life-blood.  
The harlot then, who never from the dwelling  
Of Cæsar bent aside her wanton glances, 65  
The common death and common vice of courtiers,

Inflamed the minds of every one against me ;  
 And the inflamed then so inflamed Augustus,  
 That the glad honours changed to sorry mourn-  
 ings.

My mind, impelled by a disdainful spirit, 70  
 Thinking by dying to escape dishonour,  
 Made me unjust towards myself, a just one.

By the new-sprouted rootlets of this wood here  
 I swear to you my faith was never broken  
 Towards my Lord, who was so fit for honour : 75

And if ye ever reach the world above us,  
 Do justice to my memory, that still lieth  
 Beneath the blow that Envy dealt against it.’

A while he paused, and then : ‘ Since it is silent ’  
 (The Poet said to me), ‘ ne’er lose the moments, 80  
 But speak and ask it any more thou carest.’

So I to him : ‘ Do thou then ask him further  
 Whate’er thou think’st would give me satisfac-  
 tion ;  
 For I ’m unable, I ’m so full of pity.’

So he began again ; ‘ If the man do thee 85  
 Of his free will, that which thy words have begged  
 him,  
 Incarcerated spirit, still be pleased, then,  
 To tell us in what way the soul gets fastened  
 Within these knots ; and tell us, if thou ’rt able,  
 If any soul get free from such limbs ever.’ 90



On that the trunk blew mightily, and straightway  
That wind was then converted to this utterance :  
‘ Your question shall be answered very briefly :  
When the ferocious soul hath left behind it  
The body it hath torn itself from out of, 95  
Minos doth send it to the seventh gullet.  
It falleth in the wood, its place not chosen,  
But wheresoever fortune may have hurled it  
There up it sprouteth like a grain of barley.  
It riseth as a shoot and forest sapling ; 100  
The Harpies, feeding then upon its foliage,  
Give rise to pain, and give the pain a window.  
Like others we shall come to seek our bodies,  
But not, indeed, that any of us may don them,  
For none may justly have what he ’s discarded. 105  
Here we shall drag them back, and in the dismal  
Forest our bodies shall be all suspended,  
Each to the thorn-tree of its sorry shadow.’  
We were still listening to the trunk intently  
In the belief that it had more to tell us. 110  
When we were overtaken by a noise  
Like that which striketh him who heareth coming  
The boar and hunters from his place of lurking,  
And heareth animals and branches crashing.  
And, lo, two men, adown the slope to leftwards, 115  
Naked and torn, were fleeing with such swiftness  
That they were breaking all the forest tangle.

The one ahead : ' Now Death, O hasten, hasten !'  
     The while the other, who had fain run faster,  
     Was crying : ' Lano, thou hadst not such nimble  
 Legs on occasion of the jousts of Toppo ' :           121  
     And then, perhaps because his breath was failing,  
     He made one heap of self and of a bush there.  
 Behind them, all the forest was full crowded  
     With swarthy bitches, eager and a-running       125  
     Like sleuth-hounds that at last have slipped their  
     leashes.  
 They stuck their fangs into the one who 'd fallen,  
     And they proceeded bit by bit to tear him,  
     And then they carried off those aching members.  
 My Escort took me by the hand thereafter,           130  
     And led me to the bush there that was wailing,  
     Through all its bleeding fractures, to no purpose.  
 ' O Jacopo,' it said, ' of Sant Andréa,  
     What hast thou gained by making me a bulwark ?  
     What share had *I* in thy nefarious living ?'   135  
 Then, when the Master stopped and stood above it,  
     He said : ' Who wast thou, who from all those tips  
     there  
     Dost breathe with blood thy utterance of anguish ?'  
 And it to us : ' O souls that are come hither  
     To set your eyes upon the sorry rending       140  
     That thus hath parted these my branches from  
     me,

Collect them at the foot of the sad bush here :

I once was of the town which for the Baptist  
Changed its first patron ; who, for that mere reason,  
Will ever with his art now make it wretched. 145

And were it not, that at the Arno's crossing  
Some vestige of his presence still remaineth,  
Those citizens who afterwards rebuilt it  
Upon the ash that Attila had left there,  
Would have performed their labour to no purpose.  
I made myself a gibbet of my houses.' 151

## CANTO XIV

THIRD RING OF SEVENTH CIRCLE.—The Violent against God—  
The Burning Sand-plain—The Fiery Rain—Capaneus—  
Colossus of Crete—Rivers of Hell.

As the compassion of a common birthplace  
Compelled me, I picked up the scattered branches,  
And gave them back to him who now was speechless.

Then we attained the limit which divideth  
The second ring there from the third, which showeth  
A hideous ingenuity of justice. 6

In order to set forth the new things clearly,  
I say that we arrived upon a heath there,  
Which driveth from its bed all vegetation.

The Wood of Pain is, as it were, its garland 10  
All round, just as the sorry trench the wood's is :  
Here we stood still, upon the very margin.

The ground was sand, both arid and heaped thickly ;  
Not formed in other fashion than the one which  
Was whilom trodden by the feet of Cato. 15

O God's own vengeance, in what mighty terror  
Shouldst thou be held by whosoever readeth  
That which was manifested to my vision !

Of naked souls I saw a many herds there,  
Who all were very miserably weeping ; 20  
And different laws appeared imposed upon them.  
Some of the people lay upon their backs there ;  
Others were sitting in a heap together,  
And others were continually in motion. 24  
Those who were wand'ring round were most in number,  
And those were fewer who were stretched in torment ;  
But to express their pain their tongues were looser.  
Upon the whole great sand-plain, falling slowly,  
Dilated folds of fire were ever raining,  
Like flakes of snow upon the windless mountain. 30  
As Alexander in those torrid regions  
Of India, once, saw falling on his army  
Flames that were solid till the very earth there ;  
So that he straightway had the ground be-trampled  
By all his regiments, because the vapour 35  
Was best put out in isolated patches :  
Even so the everlasting blaze was falling,  
By which the sand took fire, as doth the tinder  
Beneath the flint, to double all the anguish.  
Without a moment's respite was the flutter 40  
Of wretched hands, now hither and now thither,  
To toss away the ever newer burning.  
I then began : 'O Master, that o'ercomest  
All things that be, except the hardened demons  
Who, at the entrance gate, came forth against us ; 45

Who's yonder tall one, seeming not to notice  
     The fire, but stretched defiant and contorted  
     So that the rain doth not appear to rack him?'  
 And then that same one, who no doubt had noticed  
     That I was questioning my Guide about him,     50  
     Cried: 'What I was in life am I in death here.  
 Were Jove to try and weary out his blacksmith,  
     From whom, in wrath, he took the pointed light-  
         ning  
     With which, upon the final day, he struck me,  
 Or weary out the others in succession,             55  
     In Mongibello at the swarthy smithy,  
     Shouting: "O Honest Vulcan, help me, help me,"  
 Just as he shouted in the fight of Phlegra,  
     And hurl his darts with all his might against  
         me,  
     He would derive no merry vengeance from it.'     60  
 Thereat my Leader spoke with such a vigour  
     That I had never heard him speak so strongly:  
     'O thou Capaneus, just because thou wilt not  
 Abate thy pride, thou all the more art punished.  
     No torture save thy rage itself would ever         65  
     Be adequate tormenting for thy fury.'  
 Then turning to myself with better language,  
     He said: 'That man was one of seven monarchs  
     Who leaguered Thebes, and held (and seemeth hold-  
         ing)

God in contempt, and to esteem Him little : 70  
    But as I told him now, his fits of passion  
    Are for his bosom very meet adornments.  
Now come behind me ; and beware thou never  
    Set foot again upon the burning sand here,  
    But ever keep close up against the thicket.' 75  
In silence we then came to where there shooteth  
    From forth the belt of wood a little streamlet  
    Whose crimson hue still filleth me with horror.  
As from the Bulicam a brook doth issue,  
    Which then the sinful women share between them, 80  
    So through the sand did that one trickle downwards.  
The bottom there, as well as both the shelvings  
    Had turned to stone, and, on the sides, the margins ;  
    Whence I perceived our way to be along it.  
' Of all the other things that I have shown thee 85  
    Since we have found admittance through the gateway  
    Whose threshold is forbidden unto no one,  
Thy eyes have been attracted unto nothing  
    So notable, as is the present rill here,  
    Which, on its surface, quencheth all the flamelets.' 90  
These words were spoken to me by my Leader ;  
    Whereon I begged him to bestow the diet  
    For which he had bestowed the inclination.  
' Far in the sea there lieth a waste country,'  
    He then went on, ' which calleth itself Creta, 95  
    Beneath whose king the world was whilom sinless.

There is a mountain there, which once was gladsome  
 With waters and with leaves, whose name is Ida ;  
 It now is desert like a thing forbidden.  
 Rhea once chose it as the safest cradle 100  
 To hold her son ; and better to conceal him,  
 Whene'er he cried, she had a shouting raised there.  
 Within the mount a great old man is standing,  
 Who hath his shoulders turned to Damietta,  
 And scanneth Rome as if it were his mirror. 105  
 The head of him is fashioned of pure gold-work,  
 And arms and breast are of the purest silver.  
 Then 'tis of copper till the trunk divideth.  
 Thence downwards it is all of chosen iron,  
 Save the right foot, which is of terra-cotta ; 110  
 And he standeth more on that than on the other.  
 Each of the parts, except the gold, is broken  
 As by a crack, from which the tears are dropping,  
 Which, when collected, penetrate this cavern.  
 Their course along this valley is rock-splintered, 115  
 Whence Acheron, Styx, and Phlegethon are fashioned ;  
 Then they go down, along this narrow conduit  
 Until the place where none descendeth lower :  
 They form Cocytus ; what that pool resembleth  
 Thou soon shalt see ; so here I do not tell thee.' 120  
 And I to him : ' If then the present streamlet  
 Hath got its source in our own world in this way,  
 Why do we see it only on this limit ? '



And he to me : 'Thou know'st this place is ring-shaped.  
And far though thou hast made thy way already, 125  
For ever to the left, towards the bottom,  
Thou hast not yet gone round the total circle ;  
So that, if some new thing appeareth to us,  
Thou must not show a wonder on thy features.'  
And I again : 'My Master, where are hidden 130  
Lethe and Phlegethon ? of one thou speak'st not,  
While saying that this rain doth form the other.'  
'In all these questions thou dost truly please me,'  
He answered : 'but the seethe of the red water  
Ought to have solved one of the two thou putttest. 135  
Thou shalt see Lethe, but outside this pit here,  
There where the souls are wont to seek ablution  
When the repented sin hath been remitted.'  
And then he said : 'Tis time we should be leaving 139  
The neighbourhood of this wood : so keep behind me :  
The banks will form the road, which are not burning,  
And on them every vapour is extinguished.'

## CANTO XV

THIRD RING OF SEVENTH CIRCLE (*continued*).—The Violent against Nature—Brunetto Latini—Francis of Accorso—Andrea de' Mozzi.

Now one of the hard brinks doth bear us further ;  
And the brook's vapour, overhead, so shadeth,  
That from the fire it saveth dykes and water,  
Just as the Flemings, 'twixt Wissánt and Bruggen,  
Fearing the tide that cometh on towards them, 5  
Construct a screen to keep away the sea there ;  
And as the Paduans make one on the Brenta  
In order to defend their steads and castles,  
Ere Chiarentana feeleth the hot weather,  
In suchlike manner were those here constructed ; 10  
Though neither quite so lofty nor so thickset,  
The maker, whosoe'er he was, had made them.  
We were so distant from the wood already,  
That I should not have known where it was standing  
However oft I might have turned me backwards, 15  
When we encountered an array of souls there,  
Coming towards us on the dyke, and each one  
Was looking at us, even as at nightfall

Men scan each other when a new moon shineth ;  
And they were bending hard their brows towards us  
As aged tailor doth in eye of needle. 21  
Thus eyed so closely by the troop in question,  
I soon was recognised by one, who plucked me  
Then by the hem, exclaiming, 'What a wonder !'  
And I, when he stretched forth his arm towards me, 25  
Fastened my eyes upon his scorched appearance  
So hard, that the burnt features did not shield him  
From recognition by my understanding,  
And bending down my face to his I straightway  
Did make reply : 'Are *you* here, Ser Brunetto ?' 30  
And he : 'My son, O let it not displease thee  
If Brunetto Latini with thee somewhat  
Now turneth back, and letteth wend the file there.'  
I said to him : 'With all my heart I beg it ;  
And if you wish me to sit down beside you, 35  
I will—if this one pleaseth, whom I go with.'  
'O son,' he said, 'whoever of this herd here  
Stoppeth at all, shall lie a hundred years then  
Unfanned, while he is stricken by the fire.  
Yet go thy way ; I'll keep beside thy cloak-skirts ; 40  
And then I shall catch up again my gang there,  
Which goeth weeping its eternal losses.'  
I did not dare descend from off the roadway  
To go along beside him ; but kept holding  
My head bent low, like one who goeth awe-struck.

He then began : ' What hazard or what foredoom, 46  
     Ere the last day, is bringing thee down hither ?  
     And who is this, who showeth thee the way here ?'  
 ' Up there, above us, in the bright existence,'  
     I answered him, ' I strayed into a valley 50  
     Before the measure of my age was full yet.  
 But yestermorn I turned my back upon it ;  
     This one appeared, as I returned within it,  
     And then he led me homeward by this pathway.'  
 And he to me : ' But follow thou thy star still, 55  
     And thou'lt not fail to reach a glorious haven,  
     If I saw clearly in the lovely lifetime ;  
 And if I had not chanced to die so early,  
     Beholding heaven so benign towards thee,  
     I should have comforted thee in thy labour. 60  
 But that ungrateful and malignant people,  
     Who once came down from Fiesole of olden,  
     And still have much of mountain and of granite,  
 Will on account of thy good deeds be hostile.  
     And right it is ; for mid the bitter crab-trees 65  
     It is not meet the gentle fig should ripen.  
 Old fame amid the world doth call them sightless ;  
     A greedy folk, an envious and vainglorious ;  
     See that thou cleanse thyself of all their customs.  
 Thy fortune doth reserve for thee such honour 70  
     That each of the two parties shall be hungry  
     For thee ; but from the goat the grass is distant ;

So let the beasts of Fiesole make dung-straw  
Of their own selves, nor let them touch the plant there  
(If any such still sprouteth in their litter) 75

In which the holy seed again reviveth  
Of those old Romans who remained, whenever  
The nest of so much malice first was founded.  
'If all my prayer could but obtain fulfilment,'  
I answered him, 'you would not at this moment 80  
Be yet an outlaw from our human nature ;  
For in my mind is fixed and wakes my pity  
The dear and kindly and paternal image  
Of you, when, in the world, from hour to hour  
You taught me how man maketh himself lasting ; 85  
And how I prize it while my life endureth,  
'Tis meet that you should gather from my language.  
What you relate about my fate, I note it,  
And keep it to explain, with other matter,  
For a lady who 'll know how to, if I reach her. 90  
This much I wish to lay before you clearly  
(Provided that my conscience never chideth),  
That I am ready for what Fortune willeth.  
Not new unto my ears is such a presage ; 94  
Let Fortune therefore turn the wheel she holdeth,  
As best may please her, and the clown his mattock.'  
My Master then, towards the right hand turning  
His cheek, looked back, and fixed his eyes upon me,  
And then he said, 'He listeth well who noteth.'

And none the less did I, meanwhile, keep talking 100  
     With Ser Brunetto, asking him the names of  
     His chiefest and most notable companions.  
 And he to me : ' Ay, some 'tis well to know of.  
     About the others silence will be fitter, 104  
     As time would be too short for so much speaking.  
 Know, in one word, that once they were all clerics  
     And mighty men of letters, very famous,  
     Stained, in the world, by one same kind of sinning.  
 There Priscian goeth with that evil cohort, 109  
     And Francis of Accorso ; and thou 'dst see there  
     (If thou 'dst a wish for any suchlike vermin)  
 Him also whom the servant of the servants  
     Transferred from Arno to the Bacchiglione,  
     Where he then left his ill-directed sinews.  
 I'd mention more ; but neither walk nor talking 115  
     May be extended further ; for out yonder  
     I see new smoke that 's rising from the sand-plain.  
 People are coming whom I may not go with ;  
     I recommend my *Treasure* to thy keeping,  
     In which I live once more ; and more I ask not.'  
 Then he turned round, and looked like one of those  
     who 121  
     Run at Verona with the green cloth mantle  
     Along the fields ; and looked like him among them  
 Who winneth, and not like the one who loseth.

## CANTO XVI

THIRD RING OF SEVENTH CIRCLE (*continued*).—Burning Sand  
(*continued*)—The Violent against Nature (*continued*)—Guido  
Guerra—Tegghiaio Aldobrandini—Jacopo Rusticucci—Bor-  
siere—Geryon.

I NOW was in a place which caught the booming  
Of water falling in the other circle,  
Just like the humming that is made by bee-hives ;  
When, lo, three shades detached themselves together,  
Fast running, from a gang that then was passing 5  
Beneath the rainfall of the bitter torture.  
They were approaching us, and each was crying :  
'Stop, thou that seemest to us from thy garment  
To be a native of our evil country.'  
Ah me, what sores I saw upon their limbs there, 10  
Both old and recent, which the flames had branded !  
It still doth grieve me, if I think it over.  
Then, at their cries, my Leader stopped and listened ;  
He turned his face towards me, and : 'Now wait  
thou,'  
He said ; 'to these 'tis proper to be civil ; 15

And were 't not for the fire, which, just like arrows,  
     The nature of the place doth shoot, I'd tell thee  
     That haste were fitter for thyself than *them* now.'  
 They then began anew, while we were waiting,  
     Their ancient sing-song ; and, so soon they 'd reached  
         us, 20  
     They formed a sort of wheel of their three selves  
     there,  
 Just as the wrestlers do, all stripped and oiled,  
     Watching to take their grip and their advantage,  
     Before there be both blows and thrusts between  
         them. 24  
 Thus wheeling round, each one of them kept turning  
     His face towards me, and their necks kept making  
     A journey aye opposed to what their feet did.  
 ' Oh, if the horror of this sandy region  
     Inspireth scorn for us and our entreaties ' 29  
     (So one began), ' and this our dark-flayed aspect,  
 Yet let our former fame incline thy spirit  
     To tell us who thou art, who sett'st so safely  
     Thy living feet amid this Nether World here.  
 This one, whose footprints thou behold'st me treading,  
     However naked and unhaired he goeth, 35  
     Was of a higher station than thou thinkest.  
 He was the grandson of the good Gualdrada ;  
     His name was Guido Guerra, and, in lifetime,  
     He did a deal with mind as well as falchion.



The other who doth tread the sand behind me      40  
     Is Tegghiai Aldobrandi, one whose message  
     Should still be welcome in the world above us.  
 And I, who thus am put to torture with them,  
     Was Jacopo Rusticucci once ; and truly  
     A savage wife, more than ought else, hath harmed  
     me.'      45

If I had been protected from the fire,  
     I should have cast myself adown among them ;  
     And I believe the Teacher would have let  
     me ;

But as I should have been both burnt and roasted,  
     My terror got the best of my desire,      50  
     Which made me very eager to embrace them.

Then I began : ' Not scorn but rather sorrow  
     Did your condition introduce within me  
     ( So much so, that it 's slow to be got rid off ),  
 As soon as e'er this Lord of mine addressed me      55  
     Words on account of which I was persuaded  
     That persons like unto yourselves were com-  
     ing.

Of your own land I am ; and with affection  
     I've ever told and ever heard related  
     The work you did, and your respected titles.      60  
 I leave the gall, and pleasant fruits I go for,  
     Now promised me by my veracious Leader ;  
     But first I must descend into the centre.'

'As thou art hopeful of thy soul long leading  
 These limbs of thine,' that one then made me  
 answer, 65  
 'And of thy fame, when thou be gone, still shin-  
 ing,  
 Say whether courtesy and valour linger  
 Within our city still, as once they used to,  
 Or whether they be wholly gone from out it:  
 For Guglielmo Borsier, who's been mourning 70  
 With us not long, and goeth with his troop there,  
 Doth grieve us greatly with the words he speaketh.'  
 'New people and the over-sudden earnings  
 Have given birth to pride and disproportion,  
 Florence, within thee, so that now thou mournest':  
 'Twas thus that I exclaimed with upturned visage; 76  
 And then the three who heard, by way of answer,  
 Stared at each other as the truth is stared at.  
 'If it at all times costeth thee so little,'  
 They all replied, 'to grant the wish of others, 80  
 O happy thou, that speakest thus by choice!  
 So, if thou 'scapest from these sunless regions  
 And goest back to see the lovely starlight,  
 When thou wilt say "I was" with satisfaction,  
 See that thou speak about us to the people.' 85  
 Therewith they broke their wheeling, and in  
 fleeing  
 Their nimble feet seemed even to be pinions.

Not even an *Amen* could have been uttered  
As quickly as they vanished from before us.  
So that the Master thought we 'd best be leaving.  
I kept behind him, and we 'd scarcely started 91  
When water made a sound so close beside us  
That we had scarce been heard, if we had spoken.  
Just as that stream which earliest hath a channel  
To its own self, from Monte Veso eastwards, 95  
Descending from the Apennine's left ridges,  
Whose name, above, is Acquacheta, previous  
To its descent into a lower basin,—  
While, at Forlì, it hath that name no longer—  
Re-echoeth above San Benedetto 100  
From mountain heights, to fall in one cascade there,  
Where there should be a lodging for a thousand :  
So downwards from a shore that was all broken  
We found that dusky-tinted water sounding  
So loud, that soon the ears would have been deafened.  
I had a rope wrapped round about my body, 106  
And with its help I had bethought me sometimes  
Of capturing the gaudy-hided leopard.  
When I had loosed it all from round about me,  
According as my Leader had commanded, 110  
I held it out towards him looped and folded ;  
Whereon he turned himself towards the right-hand,  
And standing somewhat distant from the margin  
He cast it down within that deep abyss there.

‘Surely some unexpected thing must answer,’ 115  
I said unto myself, ‘this novel signal  
Which the Master’s eye is following so closely.’  
Ah me, how cautious men must be in presence  
Of one of those who see not only action,  
But read with their intelligence thought also. 120  
He said to me: ‘That soon will rise up yonder  
Which I expect; and what thy fancy dreameth  
Must shortly be discovered to thy vision.’  
Now, ever to the truth that hath lie’s semblance  
A man must shut his lips when he is able, 125  
Because, though not his fault, it will disgrace him.  
But here I cannot hush: and by the verses  
Of this my Comedy, I swear thee, Reader  
(As I’d not have them void of lasting favour),  
That I beheld, in th’ air all thick and murky, 130  
A figure that came swimming up towards us,  
Miraculous for every steadfast bosom,  
Like one who cometh up after descending  
To loose some anchor that hath chanced to grapple  
A rock or other thing the sea encloseth; 135  
His upper limbs stretched out, but feet contracted.

## CANTO XVII

THIRD RING OF SEVENTH CIRCLE (*continued*).—Description of Geryon—The Usurers—Scrovigno, Vitaliano, and Buiamonte—Descent into the Great Abyss on Geryon's back.

‘BEHOLD the creature with the tail that’s pointed ;  
Which leapeth hills and breaketh walls and weapons,  
Behold the one through whom the whole world  
stinketh.’

Such were the words my Leader now addressed me,  
And made a sign to it to come to land there,     5  
Close to the margin of the trodden marbles :  
And then that filthy image of Deception  
Approached and landed with its head and bosom,  
But on the shore it did not drag its tail yet ;  
Its face was like the face of one who’s righteous,     10  
So tender was the skin’s external semblance.  
And the remaining trunk was all a serpent’s.  
Two paws it had, all hairy to the arm-pits.  
The back and breast and both the sides moreover  
Were painted as with knots and little targets ;     15  
More colours in the web and woof were never  
Emblazoned into cloth by Turks or Tartars,  
Nor suchlike webs e’er woven by Arachne.

Just as you see the barges sometimes landed

Half on the shore, and half still in the water ; 20

And as, out there, among the greedy Germans,

The beaver squatteth down to wage his warfare,

So was the very evil creature sitting

Upon the brink of stone which girt the sand-  
plain.

Its tail's whole length was gliding into space there, 25

Twisting meanwhile the venomous fork above it,

With which the point was armed, just like a  
scorpion's.

The Leader said : 'Our path must now twist side-  
ways

A little way, until it reacheth yonder

Pernicious beast that squatteth there before us.' 30

So down we went towards its right-hand nipple,

And on we sped ten steps along the margin,

Avoiding well the sand and rain of flamelets.

And when we had come up, and were beside it

A little further on the sand I noticed 35

Some people sitting near the empty place there.

The Master then : 'In order that thou gather

A full experience, even of this hell-ring'

(He said to me), 'now go, and see their doings.

Let thy confabulations there be short too ; 40

Till thou returnest I will speak with *this* one,

That it may lend us now its mighty shoulders.'

So once again, until the furthest limit  
Of that same seventh circle, all alone there,  
I went, to where the sorry folk were sitting. 45  
Out of their eyes their wretchedness was bursting ;  
Now here, now there, they used their hands to help  
them,  
Now 'gainst the steams, now 'gainst the heated  
ground there.  
Not otherwise do dogs in heat of summer,  
Now with their snout, now with their foot, when  
bitten 50  
Either by fleas or common flies or gadflies.  
When I had fixed my eyes upon the faces  
Of some on whom the painful fire was falling,  
I recognised not one ; but yet I noticed  
That from the neck of each there hung a pocket 55  
Which had a certain tint and certain mark too,  
And so it seemed their eye took pleasure in it.  
And as, observing them, I came among them,  
Upon a yellow purse I saw some azure  
Which had the face and bearing of a lion. 60  
Then, on my glance proceeding in its course there,  
I saw another, redder far than blood is,  
Which showed a goose that was as white as butter.  
And one, who had an azure sow and pregnant  
Emblazoned there upon his small white pocket 65  
Said unto me, ' What dost thou in this pit here ?





I took my seat upon those horrid shoulders.

‘Now,’ I had said (if but my voice had sounded  
As I had wished), ‘see that thou hold me tightly’;

But he, who at another time had helped me

Above, now grasped me, soon as I had mounted, 95

Firmly with both his arms, and so sustained me;

And he said, ‘Geryon, now thou must bestir thee;

Be wide thy wheelings, gradual thy descending:

Think of the novel burthen thou art bearing.’

Just as a little boat doth leave its station 100

By backing and by backing; so it started;

And when it felt it had free play for motion,

There where the breast had been it turned its tail now,

And having stretched it, moved it as an eel doth,

And with its wings it drew the air towards it. 105

I think there could have been no greater terror

When Phaëthon had let the reins escape him,

Whereby the sky, as still is seen, took fire;

Nor when the wretched Icarus was feeling

His back unfeathering as the wax grew hotter, 110

His father crying out: ‘Thy path’s the wrong one,’

Than then was mine, on seeing air about me

On every side, and seeing every outlook

Extinguished, save the vision of the creature.

It went its way, and floating slowly, slowly, 115

Wheeled and descended, but I did not note it,

Save from my face, fanned by the wind from under.

Already on the right I heard the whirlpool  
    Making a hideous roaring underneath us,  
    So that I stretched my head with eyes bent down-  
        wards. 120

Then I became more fearful at the chasm,  
    Because I saw the fires and heard the wailings,  
    And, all a-trembling, tightened in the saddle.  
And then I saw (what I till then perceived not)  
    How we went down and circled, from great tortures  
    That were approaching us from many quarters. 126  
Just like the falcon that's been long on pinion,  
    And which, though seeing neither lure nor quarry,  
    Doth make the falconer say: 'Alas, thou sinkest,'  
Descending worn, where briskly it had started, 130  
    With countless wheelings, and from far returneth  
    Unto its lord, contemptuous and sullen:  
So now did Geryon take us to the bottom,  
    To the very basis of that rough-hewn rock-wall;  
    And having rid itself of our two persons, 135  
It disappeared, as fast as shaft from bowstring.

CANTO XVIII

THE EIGHTH CIRCLE, or Evil-Pouches (*Malebolge*).—First Hell-pouch (*bolgia*), containing Panders and Seducers: Venedico Caccianimico; Jason.—Second Hell-pouch, containing Flatterers and Parasites: Alessio Interminai; Thaïs.

THERE is a place in Hell called Evil-Pouches,  
 All made of stone and of the hue of iron,  
 Just like the zone by which it is surrounded.  
 Right in the middle of that plain of evil  
 Gapeth a pit of ample breadth and deepness,      5  
 Whereof elsewhere I'll tell you the arrange-  
 ment.  
 The girdle that is left is therefore ring-shaped,  
 Between the pit and the lofty hard cliff's basis,  
 And hath its bottom mapped into ten valleys.  
 Such plan as where (for warding of the ramparts)      10  
 A lot of moats are girt about the castles,  
 The part in which they are is wont to show us,  
 Such semblance was presented here by these ones;  
 And as, in suchlike strongholds, from their thresh-  
 olds  
 To the external bank are little bridges,      15

So from the summit of the steep the reefs came,  
 Which cut across the embankments and the trenches,  
 Until the pit should lop them and collect them.  
 There, in that place, when shaken from the shoulders  
 Of Geryon, we were standing ; and the Poet 20  
 Led to the left, while I went on behind him.  
 Upon my right I saw new things to pity,  
 New sets of tortures and new sets of scourgers,  
 Which this the nearest hell-pouch was all full of.  
 The sinners at the bottom all were naked, 25  
 Walking towards us, 'twixt us and the middle ;  
 With us beyond it, but with quicker stridings.  
 Just as the Romans, 'cause of the great crowding,  
 The year of Jubilee, upon the bridge there,  
 Provided for the passing of the people ; 30  
 So that on *one* side, all men turned their faces  
 Towards the Castle, going to St. Peter's,  
 But from the other bank were going hillwards :  
 Hither and thither, on the swarthy stone-work  
 I noticed the horned devils, with great scourges 35  
 Beating them from behind in cruel fashion.  
 Ah me, how they compelled them lift their shanks up  
 With the first blows they dealt them ; truly no one  
 Waited to get the second nor the third ones !  
 While I was wending, lo, my eyes encountered 40  
 One who was there : and therefore I said straightway,  
 ' Of this man's face I'm not without experience.'

Therefore, to look at him, I checked my footsteps ;  
And my sweet Leader also halted with me,  
Consenting to my turning back a little. 45  
And then that scourged one thought to 'scape my notice  
By bending down his face ; but it availed not,  
Because I said : ' O thou, whose eye is downcast,  
If but the badge thou wearest be not spurious,  
Thou 'rt Venedico Caccianimico : 50  
But what hath brought thee to such pungent Sauces ?'  
And he to me : ' Unwillingly I say it ;  
But I am forced by thy explicit language,  
Which bringeth to my mind the world that's bygone.  
Through me it was that Ghisola the lovely 55  
Was led to do the pleasure of the Marquess,  
Howe'er the sorry story be related.  
Nor am I th' only Bolognese who weep here ;  
Indeed this place is now so crowded with them  
That fewer are the tongues that learn to utter 60  
*Sipa* betwixt Savena's stream and Reno's.  
And if thou askest proof and witness for it,  
Recall to mind our avaricious bosom.'  
While he was speaking thus, a demon struck him  
With leather thong, and said to him, ' Be off now ;  
Here, pander, are no women for thy coining.' 66  
I then proceeded to rejoin my Escort ;  
And after some few steps we reached a place where  
A mass of rock protruded from th' embankment.

We climbed it with but very little effort, 70  
And turning to the right along its ridgeway  
From those eternal ramparts we departed.  
When we had reached the place where it is hollowed  
Beneath, so as to let the scourged pass under,  
The Leader said : ' Now wait and let the faces 75  
Of all those other ill-begotten strike thee,  
Whose countenances thou hast not yet noticed,  
Since they have even come together with us.'  
From that old bridge we looked at the long convoy  
That came towards us from the other zone-strip 80  
And whom the scourge was similarly hounding.  
The worthy Master, whom I had not questioned,  
Said to me : ' See that tall one who is coming  
And seemeth in his pain to shed no tear-drop ;  
How royal is the look he still retaineth ! 85  
That one is Jason, who by heart and judgment  
Once dispossessed the Colchians of the wether.  
He made his way across the isle of Lemnos,  
When the audacious unrelenting females  
Had put beforehand all their males to death there.  
Here both with signs and ornamented phrases, 91  
He then deceived Hypsipyle the maiden,  
Who first herself had cheated all the others :  
Then there he left her, big with child and lonely :  
Which sin doth now condemn him to this torture ;  
And vengeance too is taken for Medea. 96

Along with *him* go all who so have cheated :  
And let this be enough of the first valley  
For thee to know, and those it hath its grip on.'  
We were already where the narrow footpath 100  
Doth cut across the second o' th' embankments  
And maketh it a prop for the next archway,  
Then we heard people who were gently moaning  
In the next pit, and with their snouts were puffing,  
And with their hands were beating themselves also.  
The banks were all encrusted with a mildew 106  
Formed by the steams below that make a paste there,  
Which had a skirmish with the eyes and nostril.  
The bottom is so dark that eyes suffice not  
To see, without one's climbing to the summit 110  
O' th' arch, and where the rock most overhangeth.  
Thither we came; and thence, down in the pit there,  
I saw some people weltering in a cesspool  
Which seemed to be derived from human privies.  
And while my eye was seeking down below there, 115  
I saw one with a head so foul with fæces,  
That it was doubtful was he lay or cleric.  
He cried to me: 'What maketh thee so eager  
To look at me, more than at th' other foul ones?'  
And I to him: 'Because, if I mistake not, 120  
I've seen thee with thy hair dry, once already,  
And thou'rt Alessio Interminei of Lucca;  
That's why I eye thee more than all the others.'





## CANTO XIX

**EIGHTH CIRCLE** (*continued*).—Third Hell-pouch, containing  
Simonists : Pope Nicholas III. ; Boniface VIII. ; Clement V.

O SIMON MAGUS, O ye sorry pupils,  
Who take God's things, which ought to have been  
only  
The brides of righteousness, and then, rapacious,  
Debase them for the sake of gold and silver ;  
Now it behoveth that the trump should call you, 5  
Since you are even here in the third hell-pouch !  
Already we had climbed to the next tomb there,  
Up to that very portion of the rock-reef  
Which hangeth o'er the middle of the chasm.  
O Highest Wisdom, how immense the art is 10  
Thou show'st in Heav'n, on earth, and in the ill-  
world,  
And how impartially thy virtue shareth !  
I saw that on the slopes and at the bottom  
The livid stone was marked by many holes there,  
All of the selfsame width, and round was each one.  
They neither seemed to me less large nor larger 16  
Than those within my own fair San Giovanni  
Fashioned as places there for the baptizers,

And one of which, not many years ago yet,  
     Myself I broke, to save one drowning in it.      20  
     And let this be a proof to set right all-men.  
 Out of the mouth of each of them protruded  
     A sinner's feet, and so much of the legs too  
     As reached the calf, and all the rest was hidden.  
 They all of them had both their soles on fire,      25  
     On which account their ankles writhed so greatly  
     That they'd have burst both osier-bonds and grass-  
         ropes.  
 Just as the flaming of a thing that's oiled  
     Is wont to run along the surface only,  
     So did it there, from heel as far as toe-tips.      30  
 'Who is the one, my Master, who is fretting  
     And wriggling more than all his other comrades,'  
     Said I, 'and whom a redder flame is licking?'  
 And he to me: 'If thou wilt let me bear thee  
     Down there by yonder bank which is more sloping,  
     He'll tell thee of himself and of his sinnings.'      36  
 And I: 'All's fair to me which *thou* deem'st fit-  
     ting;  
     Thou art the lord, and know'st that I depart not  
     From thy command, and knowest what I speak  
     not.'  
 Then we got up upon the fourth embankment;      40  
     We turned and we descended to the left then,  
     Down in the bottom filled with holes and narrow,

And the good Master did not from his hip yet  
There set me down, till we had reached the op'ning  
Of him who was lamenting with his shanks so. 45  
'Whoe'er thou be, who hold'st the top part downward,  
Thou sorry soul, implanted like a stake there'  
(So I began), 'now speak, if thou art able.'  
I stood there, like the friar that's confessing  
The treacherous assassin, who, when stuck there, 50  
Doth call him back, whereby his death's retarded;  
And he called out: 'Art standing here already,  
Art standing here already, Bonifazio?  
By several years what's written hath deceived me.  
Art thou so soon aweary of those riches 55  
For which thou didst not fear to cheat and marry  
The lovely Dame, and treat her then with outrage?'  
Then I became as those become who stand there  
(From understanding not the answer made them)  
As if bescoffed, and know not what to answer. 60  
Then Virgil said: 'Thou 'dst better tell him straightway,  
"I am not he, I am not he thou thinkest";'  
And I replied according as he bade me.  
At that the spirit writhed his feet completely;  
Then with a sigh, and in a voice of wailing, 65  
He said to me: 'Well, what is it thou wantest?  
If knowing who I am is of such int'rest  
That thou on that account hast crossed this shore here,  
Know that I once was clothed in the great mantle,

And truly was I offspring of the she-bear, 70  
So keen for the promotion of the bear-cubs  
That wealth up there, here self, I put in pocket.  
Beneath my head the others are drawn downward,  
Those who committed simony before me,  
Flattened within the fissure of the stone here. 75  
Down there I too shall have to fall as soon as  
*He* shall arrive that I believed that *thou* wast,  
When I addressed to thee the sudden question.  
For now my feet have burnt already longer,  
And longer have I stood thus upside downward, 80  
Than he shall be kept stuck with reddened foot-soles;  
For after him shall come, through uglier doings,  
From western parts, a shepherd wholly lawless,  
One fit to cover him and me together.  
He shall be a new Jason (him we read of 85  
In Maccabees); and as his king to that one  
Was kind, so shall the lord of France to *him* be.'  
I know not if I here was too presuming,  
But I made answer to him in this tenor:  
'O tell me now, I pray thee, how much treasure 90  
Our Lord did stipulate for from St. Peter  
Before he placed the Keys in his dominion?  
He surely asked no more than "Come behind me."  
Nor Peter nor the others asked of Matthew  
Or gold or silver, when he was elected 95  
To fill the place the guilty soul did forfeit.

So stay thou here, for rightly art thou punished,  
     And keep thou well the evil-gotten money  
     Which made thee against Charles so full of boldness;  
 And were it not that I am still prevented      100  
     By the respect the Mighty Keys inspire,  
     Which thou once heldest in the glad existence,  
 I should make use of words that were yet graver,  
     Because your greed hath filled the world with sadness,  
     Spurning the good and raising up the evil.      105  
 Shepherd, of you th' Evangelist took notice,  
     When she who sitteth high above the waters  
     Was seen by him to fornicate with monarchs—  
 She who was once with seven heads begotten,  
     And who from the ten horns derived her sanction,  
     So long as Virtue satisfied her bridegroom.      111  
 You've made yourself a god of gold and silver,  
     And what from the idolater doth part you,  
     Save that he serveth one, and you a hundred?  
 Ah, Constantine, of how much woe was mother,      115  
     Not thy conversion, but that old dotation  
     Which from thy hands the first rich Father gathered?  
 And while I sang him sounds of this description,  
     Whether from wrath, or being pricked by conscience,  
     He kicked out mightily with both his foot-soles.  
 I fancy that my Leader found some pleasure      121  
     (So placid was the smile with which he waited)  
     In the expression of my truthful utt'rance.

On that account in both his arms he took me,  
And when he had me wholly on his bosom, 125  
He climbed again the path he had descended.  
Nor grew he tired of having clasped me to him,  
But carried me upon the archway's summit,  
Which leadeth on from fourth to fifth embankment.  
Here gently he deposited the burden,— 130  
Gently upon the steep and rugged rock-ridge,  
Which even goats would think a weary passage :  
And here a new great valley met my vision.

## CANTO XX

**EIGHTH CIRCLE** (*continued*).—Fourth Hell-pouch, containing  
Diviners and Sorcerers: Amphiaraüs; Tiresias; Aruns;  
Manto; Eurypylyus; Michael Scott; Bonatti; Asdente.

**ABOUT** new torment I must now make verses,  
And furnish matter for the twentieth Canto  
Of the first Lay, which is of the deep-sunken.  
I had already set myself entirely  
To gazing down upon th' uncovered depth there, 5  
Which now was being washed with tears of anguish  
And saw some people in the great round valley  
Coming with silent weeping at the pace which  
Processions in our world are wont to keep to.  
As soon as I could gaze upon them lower, 10  
Most wondrously each one of them seemed twisted  
Round, from the chin to where the trunk beginneth;  
For lo their face was turned towards their haunches,  
And they were forced to come towards us backwards  
Because they were prevented looking forwards. 15  
Perhaps it was through power of the palsy  
That some had thus been twisted round completely,  
But that I didn't see, nor do I think it.

H

If God should grant thee, Reader, to get profit  
By this thy reading, set thyself to thinking 20  
If I was able to preserve my face dry,  
When I beheld our image close before me  
So twisted, that the tears the eyes were shed-  
ding  
Now bathed the hinder quarters and their fissure.  
Indeed I wept, while leaning on a crag there 25  
Of the hard reef; so much so that my Escort  
Said: ' Art thou still as foolish as the others?  
Here piety's alive when pity's deadest.  
Who is more criminal than is the person  
Who feeleth a compassion at God's judgment? 30  
Lift up thy head; quick, lift it, and see that one  
For whom earth opened in the Thebans' pre-  
sence,  
So that they all cried out: "Where go'st thou  
headlong,  
Amphiaräus? Why dost quit the warfare?"  
And never did he cease his rolling downward 35  
Till he reached Minos, who doth seize on all-men.  
Observe, he's made a bosom of his shoulders  
Because he chose to look too far before him.  
He looketh backward, making hindward progress.  
Behold Tiresias, him whose aspect altered 40  
When from a male he turned into a female,  
Exchanging each and all his limbs for others.





A place is in its midst, where the Tridentine  
Pastor, with those of Brescia and Verona  
Could sign the cross, if but they made that journey.  
Peschiera hath its seat, a fair strong fortress, 70  
Facing the folk of Bergamo and Brescia,  
Just where the neighbouring shore descendeth lowest.  
There everything is forced to rush down headlong  
Which cannot lie within Benaco's lap,  
Forming a river, down through verdant pastures. 75  
So soon the water setteth head to flow,  
'Tis called no more Benaco, but the Mincio,  
Until Governo, where it meeteth Po.  
In a short run it findeth out a hollow  
Where, broadening out, it maketh it all swampy 80  
And in the summer often is pernicious.  
Here as she went her way, the cruel virgin  
Perceived a spot in midst of the morasses,  
Devoid of culture and bereft of dwellers.  
There, to escape from every human commerce, 85  
She tarried with her slaves to do her magic,  
And lived, and left at last her empty body.  
Whereon the men, who were dispersed around it,  
Collected in that place, which was a strong one,  
Thanks to the swamp that lay all round about it. 90  
They built the city over those dead bones there,  
And on account of her who first had chose it,  
They called it Mantua, with no further omen.

The folk were once more numerous within it  
    Before the foolishness of Casalodi                   95  
    Met with deceit at hands of Pinamonte.  
So now I warn thee, if thou ever hearest  
    My town to have begun in other fashion,  
    Ne'er let the truth be made obscure by falsehood.'  
And I: 'My Master, all thy explanations               100  
    Appear so sure, and captivate my faith so,  
    That any others would be lifeless embers.  
But tell me of the folk who go along there,  
    If thou perceivest any worth thy notice,  
    Because my mind is bent upon that only.'           105  
On that he said: 'The one from whose cheek falleth  
    A beard that resteth on his dusky shoulders,  
    Was once—when Greece was so bereft of male-folk  
That there were scarcely any in the cradles—  
    An augur; and he gave the sign with Calchas, 110  
    In Aulis, for the cutting the first cable.  
Eurypylus his name was; and so singeth  
    My lofty Tragedy in a certain passage:  
    That *thou* know'st well, who know'st its every portion.  
That other one whose flanks appear so scanty,       115  
    Was even Michael Scott, who very truly  
    Had learnt the play of magical deceptions.  
See, yonder, Guy Bonatti, see Asdente,  
    Who wisheth he had stuck to skin and shoe-string,  
    While still he could; but who too late repenteth. 120

Behold the sorry wives who left the needle,  
Spindle, and distaff, and became diviners.  
They cast their spells by means of herbs and image.  
But come along, for now upon the confine  
Of both the hemispheres, and on the water 125  
Beneath Sevilia, Cain is with his brambles.  
Already yesternight the moon was rounded ;  
Thou ought'st to mind it well, because it helped thee,  
And more than once, amid the mazy forest.'  
So he addressed me, and the while we wended. 130

## CANTO XXI

**EIGHTH CIRCLE** (*continued*).—Fifth Hell-pouch, containing  
Barrators and Traffickers in office—the Boiling Pitch—  
The Fiends called Evil-Talons (*Malebranche*).

So, bridge by bridge, discussing other matters  
My Comedy is not inclined to sing of,  
We went our way ; and we were on the summit,  
When we stopped short, to look on the next fissure  
Of Evil-Pouches, and the next vain wailings ; 5  
And I beheld it wonderfully gloomy.  
As, in the Arsenal of the Venetians,  
The sticky pitch is boiling in the winter  
For the recaulking of their unsound vessels,  
That cannot sail ; and so, in lieu of sailing, 10  
One maketh his ship new, and one repluggeth  
The ribs of that which made a many cruises ;  
One mendeth it at prow and one at stern-end ;  
One maketh oars, and one retwisteth cordage ;  
One setteth right the mizen-sail and main-sail : 15  
So, not with fire, but by divine arrangement,  
A heavy pitch was boiling underneath us,  
Which oversmeared the bank on every side there.

I looked at it, but could not see within it  
     Ought save the bubbles that the seething lifted ; 20  
     And saw it heave all through, and sink contracted.  
 While I was watching it down there intently,  
     My Leader, crying out, ' Look, yonder, yonder !'  
     Drew me towards him from the spot I stood on.  
 Then I turned round, as might a man desirous      25  
     To see a thing which it were well to flee from,  
     And whom a terror suddenly unmanneth ;  
 Who, fain to see, delayeth not departure ;  
     And I beheld behind us a black devil  
     Come running up, along the reef of rock there.      30  
 Ah me, how mighty fierce he was of aspect !  
     How vehement he seemed to me in gesture,  
     With pinions that were spread, and how light-footed !  
 Upon his shoulder, which was sharp and lofty,  
     A sinner, grasping with both thighs, was riding, 35  
     The tendon of whose foot the other grappled.  
 From off our bridge he said : ' O Evil-Talons,  
     Behold one of the Elders' of Saint Zita :  
     Here, pop him in, for I must be returning  
 For others to the town where I 've so many :      40  
     There every man 's a barrator but Bonturo,  
     And *no* for money can be changed to *yes* there.'  
 He cast him down ; and on the hard rock straightway  
     He turned, and never was an unleashed mastiff  
     As quick as he, when catching up a burglar.      45

The other sank, and rose again all twisted :

But then the Fiends, who by the bridge were sheltered  
Cried out : ' This isn't where the Holy Face is ;

It's different swimming here from in the Serchio :

So, if thou hast no wish to feel our scratches, 50

Don't show thyself upon the pitch's surface.'

Then, seizing him with o'er a hundred pole-hooks,

They said : ' Here thou must do thy dancing covered,  
And, if thou canst, extort thy sums in secret.'

Not otherwise do cooks oblige their menials 55

To thrust into the middle of the caldron

The meat by help of prongs, to stop its floating.

The worthy Master : ' So that they mayn't notice

That thou art here,' he said to me, ' crouch yonder

Behind a boulder, which may somewhat shield thee ;

And on account of no attack that's made me 61

Be thou in fear ; I know this sort of thing here,

As I was once before in such a scrimmage.'

Then straightway he passed on beyond the bridge-head,

And after he had reached the sixth embankment, 65

He had good need to have a dauntless forehead.

With such a fury and with such a tempest

As dogs come forth with, to assail a beggar,

Who calls for alms at once, just where he stoppeth,

They now come forth beneath the little bridge there 70

And turned against him all the hooks they carried ;

But he cried out : ' Let none of you mean mischief.

Before ye seize upon me with your pole-hook  
     Let one of you come forward, who shall hear me,  
     And then ye may hold counsel how to hook me.' 75  
 All of them cried, 'Let Malacoda go there.'  
     So one came forth, while all the others waited,  
     And went to him and said: 'What doth't avail him?'  
 'Thinkest thou, Malacoda, that thou seest me  
     Having come even hither,' said my Master,       80  
     'Already safe from all your oppositions,  
 Without the Will of God and fate propitious?  
     Let me go on; for it is willed in heaven  
     That I should show another this wild pathway.'  
 Thereon his arrogance was so much humbled       85  
     That he allowed his hook to drop before him  
     And told the rest: 'Now let him not be wounded.'  
 And then my Guide to me: 'O thou that sittest  
     Among the bridge's crags there, squatting, squatting,  
     Lo, now thou mayst return to me in safety.'     90  
 So I got up, and went towards him straightway;  
     And all the devils thereupon came forwards,  
     So that I feared they wouldn't keep their bargain.  
 And so I once beheld the soldiers tremble  
     Who came from out Caprona on a promise,       95  
     When they beheld so many foes around them.  
 I therefore sidled up with all my body  
     Close to my Guide, and never took my glances  
     From off their aspect, which was not a good one.



And they inclined their prongs ; and ‘ Shall I touch him ’  
    (One to the other said) ‘ upon the buttock ? ’ 101  
    And they replied : ‘ Yes, see thou plant it in him.’  
But then that demon who was holding converse  
    There with my Leader, faced about right quickly  
    And said : ‘ Nay, tarry, tarry, Scarmiglione.’ 105  
Then said to *us* : ‘ To go on this rock further  
    Will not be possible, as the sixth bridge-arch  
    Is lying there all broken at the bottom :  
And if you ’ve still a mind to go yet further,  
    Then better go your way along this crag here : 110  
    Hard by, another rock affordeth passage.  
Yestreen (but five hours later than at present)  
    One thousand and two hundred six-and-sixty  
    Years were fulfilled, since here the road was broken.  
I ’m sending some of mine in that direction, 115  
    To see if any try to take an airing :  
    Go ye with *them* ; for they will not be vicious.  
Come forward, Alichin and Calcabrina,’  
    (Thus he began to say), ‘ and thou, Cagnazzo ;  
    And then let Barbariccia lead the ten there. 120  
Let Libicocco come and Draghignazzo ;  
    Ciriatto with the fangs, and Graffiacanë,  
    And Farfarel, and Rubicant the crazy.  
Investigate all round the seething pitch-ponds.  
    Let these be safe, until the other rock-reef 125  
    Which crosses o’er the beast-lairs all unbroken.’

‘Woe’s me, my Master, what do I behold there?’  
I said: ‘Oh let us go alone and guideless,  
If thou know’st how; as for myself I ask none.  
If thou art as observant as thy wont is, 130  
Dost thou not see the teeth that they are gnashing,  
And how their brows are threat’ning us with evil?’  
And he to me: ‘I wouldn’t have thee tremble:  
Let them gnash teeth as much as they’ve a mind to;  
Because they do it at the tortured seethed ones.’ 135  
They turned their steps along the left embankment;  
But first they each of them had bit their tongue-tips  
Between their teeth, in signal to their leader;  
And he had made a trumpet of . . .

## CANTO XXII

**EIGHTH CIRCLE** (*continued*).—Fifth Hell-pouch (*continued*)—Ciam-polo the Navarrese and his trick ; Fra Gomito ; Don Michael Zanche.

I HAVE seen horsemen shifting their encampment  
And starting to assault, and making muster,  
And sometimes setting out for their retreating :  
Scout-riders have I seen across your country,  
O Aretines, and forage-parties roving, 5  
And tourneys fought and tiltings being ridden,  
At times with trumpets and at times with war-bells,  
With drums and with the signals made from castles,  
And both with native things and with things foreign :  
But never with so very queer a bagpipe 10  
Have I seen horsemen setting off, or footmen ;  
Nor vessel by a land-light or by starlight.  
We were upon our way with the ten demons :  
Ah, fearful company !—*but in the chapel*  
*With saints, and in the hostelry with gluttons !* 15  
But solely on the pitch were my eyes fastened,  
To witness all the doings of the hell-pouch  
And of the people who were burning in it.

Just as the dolphins, when they give a warning  
     To mariners by arching up their back-fin      20  
     To have a care and put their ship in safety :  
 So ever and anon, to ease his torture,  
     One of the sinners let his back be seen there,  
     And hid it then again more quick than lightning.  
 And as upon the edge of ditch-held water      25  
     The frogs keep nothing but their snout protruding,  
     So that they hide their feet and bigger portion,  
 So did the sinners do in all directions :  
     But on the coming near of Barbariccia  
     They similarly shrank beneath the seethings.      30  
 I noticed—and my heart still feels a shudder—  
     One who so waited (as it often chanceth  
     That one sole frog will stay while th' others scuttle),  
 And Graffiacan, who was the nearest to him,  
     Uphooked him by his pitch-entangled ringlets      35  
     And drew him up as if he'd been an otter.  
 I knew the names of all of them already.  
     (So well I noted them when they were chosen,  
     And when they called each other, I took notice.)  
 'O Rubicant, take special care to fasten      40  
     Thy claws upon him so as well to flay him,'  
     The cursèd ones kept shouting all together.  
 And I: 'My Master, manage, if thou 'rt able,  
     To ascertain for certain who the wretch is  
     Who thus hath fallen in his foemen's clutches.'      45

My Leader then went closer up beside him,  
    Asked him whence he was, and he made answer :  
    ‘I was a native of Navarra’s kingdom.  
My mother placed me as a Lord’s domestic,  
    For she had borne me to a ribald fellow,           50  
    Destroyer of himself and of his substance.  
Then was I knave to worthy King Tebaldo :  
    There I betook myself to trade in office,  
    Which I am now atoning in this heat here.’  
And Ciriatto, from whose mouth was sticking,           55  
    On either side, a tusk like those a pig hath,  
    Soon made him feel how one of them could rip  
    him.  
The mouse had got among right evil kittens ;  
    But Barbariccia with his arms enclosed him  
    And said : ‘Remain out yonder while I prong  
    him.’  
And then he turned his face towards my Master ;   61  
    ‘Ask him,’ he said, ‘again, if thou desirest  
    To hear him further, ere the others rend him.’  
My Leader : ‘Tell, then, of the other sinners :  
    Know’st thou of any one who is a Latin,           65  
    Beneath the pitch?’—And he : ‘I lately parted  
From one who was a neighbour to that quarter ;  
    Would that I were still with him, lying covered,  
    That I might shrink from neither claws nor pole-  
    hook.’

And Libicocco : ' Over long we 've waited,' 70  
     He said ; and caught his arm then with the gaff-hook  
     So that he tore it, dragging off a sinew.  
 Then Draghignazzo also chose to catch him  
     Down by the legs ; whereat, then, their decurion  
     Turned round and round them with an evil aspect. 75  
 As soon as they were quieted a little,  
     To him who still was gazing at his wound there  
     My Leader put this question of a sudden :  
 ' Who was the one from whom thou say'st thou tookest  
     A sorry leave, to land upon the bank here ?' 80  
     And he made answer : ' It was Fra Gomita,  
 He of Gallura, vessel of all cheating,  
     Who 'd in his hands the foemen of his master,  
     And who so treated them, that they all praise him.  
 He took their coin, and let them go unhindered, 85  
     Ev'n as he saith ; and in his other posts too  
     He was no petty barrator, but sov'reign.  
 With him consorteth much Don Michael Zanche  
     Of Logodoro ; and about Sardinia  
     They never feel their tongues becoming weary. 90  
 Ah me, behold the other who is gnashing :  
     I would speak further ; but I fear lest *he* too  
     May be preparing to bescratch my itching.'  
 And the great headman, stopping Farfarello,  
     Who rolled his eyes as if he purposed striking, 95  
     Said, ' Get thee over yonder, bird of evil.'

'If ye have any wish to see or hark to'  
 (The frightened one began again thereafter),  
 'Tuscans or Lombards, I will bring some hither ;  
 But let the Evil-Claws stand off a little, 100  
 That they may feel no fear of their reprisals ;  
 And I, while sitting in this very place here,  
 For me, who 'm one, will hither summon seven,  
 When I shall whistle as it is our habit  
 To do, when any cometh to the surface.' 105  
 Cagnazzo lifted at these words his muzzle,  
 Shaking his head, and said: 'Just hark the trick  
     now  
 That he 's conceived, to cast himself down yonder.'  
 On which the sinner, who had tricks in plenty  
 Replied: 'Yes, I am wily and too much so, 110  
 When I prepare great sorrow for my fellows.'  
 Alichin held not out; and in despite of  
 The others, said to him: 'If down thou leapest,  
 I shall not come behind thee at a gallop,  
 But I shall beat my wings above the pitch there. 115  
 Let's leave the ridge, and let the bank conceal  
     us,  
 To see if thou alone canst overmatch us.'  
 O thou that read'st, shalt hear of a new pastime!  
 Each turned his eyes towards the other slope  
     then ;  
 He first who'd been most stubborn in the matter. 120

The Navarrese selected well his moment,  
     Planted his soles 'gainst ground, and in an instant  
     Bounded, and freed himself from their intention.  
 Whereat they all were stricken with vexation.  
     But he the most, who was the cause of failure. 125  
     So up he rose and cried: 'Thou 'rt overtaken!'

But 'twas small use: wings, pitted against terror,  
     Did not avail: he dived beneath the surface,  
     And th' other, flying, rose with lifted bosom.  
 Not otherwise the duck all of a sudden, 130  
     So soon the hawk approacheth, diveth under,  
     The hawk returning upward balked and angry.

Then Calcabrina, wrathful at the trick played,  
     Straightway pursued him flying, much desiring  
     The fellow might escape, to have a shindy. 135  
 And when the barrator had disappeared there,  
     He therefore turned his talons on his comrade,  
     And with him even o'er the pit he tussled.

But th' other proved himself a moulted falcon  
     In clawing him right well, and both together 140  
     Fell in the middle of the seething pitch-pool.  
 The heat became a separator straightway,  
     But to rise upward was no easy matter,  
     So thickly had they oversmeared their pinions.

Then Barbariccia, woeful with his others, 145  
     Sent four a-flying to the other ridge-slope  
     With all the gaffs, and thereupon right quickly



This side and that, they settled to their station.

They stretched their hooks towards the two be-  
pitched ones,

Who were already baked beneath the crust  
there ;

150

And then we left them, even so entangled.

## CANTO XXIII

**EIGHTH CIRCLE** (*continued*).—Sixth Hell-pouch, containing Hypocrites—The Leaden Stoles—The Frati Godenti or Joyous Friars; Fra Catalano and Fra Loderingo; Caiaphas; Annas.

SILENT and lonely and without companions  
We went, the one in front, the other after,  
Just as the Minor Friars go on journeys.  
Intent upon the fable of Æsopus  
Was now my thought, by reason of this scuffle, 5  
The one in which he spoke of frog and mouse once.  
For 'mo' and 'issa' do not tally better  
Than doth the one with th' other, if you couple  
Beginning and conclusion with attention.  
And as one thought oft springeth from the other, 10  
So from the first a second was begotten,  
By which the fear I had at first was doubled.  
I reasoned thus: These demons by our doing  
Are put to shame, and both with loss and outrage,  
Such that, methinks, it greatly must annoy them. 15  
If anger to ill-will be superadded,  
They'll come upon our traces yet more cruel,  
Than is the hound towards the hare it seizeth.

Already I could feel my hair on end now,  
Through fear, and I was all intent behind me, 20  
When I said : ‘ Master, if thou fail in hiding  
Thyself and me right quickly, I fear greatly  
The Evil-Claws ; already they ’re behind us :  
I fancy them, as if I even heard them.’  
And he : ‘ If I were made of glass that ’s leaded 25  
I should not draw thy outer form towards me  
More quickly than I stamp thy inner on me.  
Just now thy thoughts came mingling with my own ones,  
With selfsame gesture and with selfsame visage,  
So that of both I made a single counsel. 30  
If it should chance that so the right slope lieth  
That we can down it to the other hell-pouch,  
We shall escape the chase that thou supposest.’  
Scarce had he ended uttering this counsel  
Before I saw them coming with spread pinions, 35  
At no great distance, with intent to seize us.  
My Leader, losing not a moment, caught me,  
As might a mother whom the sound awaketh,  
And who, close by her, seëth the flames kindled ;  
Who catcheth up her child, and never stoppeth, 40  
Having more care for his than her own safety,  
So that a shift is all she wrappeth round her.  
And downward from the hard embankment’s ridge then  
He slid upon his back along the rock-slope  
Which closeth up one side of the next hell-pouch. 45

Never ran water through a duct so quickly,  
     To make the wheel go round of any land-mill,  
     When getting ever nearer to the paddles,  
 Than did my Master all along that edge there,  
     Bearing the weight of me upon his bosom,           50  
     As if I were his son and not his comrade.  
 Even before his feet had reached the bottom  
     Of that same depth, the fiends attained the ridge-  
     top  
     Just over us; but there was now no danger,  
 For the high Providence which had thought proper 55  
     To make them ministers of the fifth hell-pit  
     Deprived them of the liberty to leave it.  
 Down there we came upon a painted people,  
     Who wandered round with very tardy foot-  
     steps,  
     Weeping, and of an aspect worn and downcast. 60  
 They all were wearing capes with hoods descending  
     Upon their eyes, and cut upon the pattern  
     Which at Cologne is chosen for the monks there.  
 They outwardly are gilt, and so they sparkle;  
     But all are lead within, and are so heavy           65  
     That those that Frederick made were straw beside  
     them.  
 O everlastingly fatiguing mantle!  
     We turned about yet once again to leftward,  
     Close by their side, intent on their sad wailing.

But, from the heavy weight, those weary people 70  
Came on so slow, that we were ever finding  
New company, with every step the hip took.  
So to my Guide I said: 'Try to discover  
Some who by deed or name may be notorious,  
And as we walk on thus, look round about thee.' 75  
And one of them, who heard the Tuscan wording,  
Behind us shouted out: 'Retard your footsteps,  
O ye who cross the murky air so quickly;  
Perhaps thou 'lt get from *me* what thou art seeking.'  
On that, the Leader turned, and said, 'Await him,  
And then according to his step walk onward.' 81  
I stopped, and saw a couple show great yearning  
Of spirit, on their faces, to be with me;  
But the great weight and narrow path delayed them.  
When they 'd come up, awhile with furtive glances 85  
They looked at me, though never word they uttered;  
Then, turning to each other, said in private:  
'This man appears alive from his throat's motion;  
And if they 're dead, in virtue of what licence  
Go they uncovered by the heavy mantle?' 90  
Then said to me: 'O Tuscan, who hast come here  
To the fraternity of sad dissemblers,  
Disdain not to inform us what thy name is.'  
And I to them: 'I was both born and nurtured  
By Arno's lovely stream, in the great city, 95  
And I've the body that I've had at all times.'

But who are you, adown whose cheeks are trickling,  
 As I perceive, such heavy drops of anguish?  
 And what's the torture in you that so sparkleth?'  
 And one of them replied: 'These orange capes here 100  
 Are lined with lead so thickly, that the burthens  
 Compel their balances to make such creaking.'  
 We once were "Joyous Friars" and of Bologna:  
 I Catalano; this one Loderingo  
 By name, and taken by thy town together, 105  
 As they are wont to choose one single man there  
 To keep its peace; and we behaved in suchwise  
 As still is visible around Gardingo.'  
 I then began: 'O Friars, your unrighteous . . .' 109  
 But said no more; because my eyes caught sight of  
 One crucified with triple stake on th' earth there.  
 On seeing me he was convulsed all over,  
 Hard blowing in his beard with many sighings;  
 And Friar Catalano, who perceived it,  
 Said unto me: 'Yon nailed one that thou eyest 115  
 Counsell'd the Pharisees that it was needful  
 To put a man to torture for the people.  
 Walked o'er and bare he lieth on the pathway,  
 As thou canst see; and he must needs experience  
 Of every one who passeth what he weigheth. 120  
 And, in like way, the father-in-law acheth  
 Down in this pit, and others of the Council  
 Which for the Jews was once a seed of evil.'

I thereupon perceived that Virgil marvelled  
Over the one stretched out upon the cross there, 125  
So shamefully in sempiternal exile.  
Then he addressed the Friar the words that follow :  
‘ Be good enough, if you ’re allowed to tell us,  
Whether upon the right be any outlet  
By means of which we both might find an exit 130  
Without compelling any dusky angels  
To come and let us out from forth this pit here.’  
So then he answered : ‘ Nearer than thou hopest  
There is a rock, which, forth from the great rampart  
Starteth, and crosseth all the cruel valleys 135  
Save this one, where ’tis reft and doth not close it.  
Ye can climb up upon the mass of ruins  
Which rest against the slope and heap the bottom.’  
The Leader stood a little with head lowered,  
Then said : ‘ Right ill did he inform us 140  
Who, over yonder, hooketh up the sinners.’  
And then the Friar : ‘ I ’ve heard them at Bologna  
Say that the Fiend hath many a vice : ’mong others  
That he ’s a liar and father of all falsehood.’  
The Leader then with longer strides passed onward, 145  
A little troubled as by wrath in aspect ;  
Whereon I parted from the heavy-laden,  
Upon the traces of the cherished footsoles.

## CANTO XXIV

**EIGHTH CIRCLE** (*continued*).—Seventh Hell-pouch, containing  
Thieves and Snakes : Vanni Fucci.

**ABOUT** that period of the youthful twelvemonth  
When the sun's locks are tempered 'neath Aquarius,  
And when the nights already pass to southward ;  
In which the hoar-frost on the ground doth copy  
The outer image of her snowy sister 5  
(Although her pencil's temper lasteth little),  
The countryman, whose provender is lacking,  
Doth rise and look, and noticeth the country  
Growing all white, whereat his hip he slappeth.  
He goeth home, and here and there lamenteth, 10  
Like a poor wight, not knowing what to take to ;  
Then cometh back, and storeth up his hoping,  
On seeing that the world hath changed its aspect  
In one short hour ; and taketh up his sheep-crook  
And driveth forth his flock of sheep to pasture : 15  
So even did the Master make me wonder  
When I observed his brow to grow so clouded,  
And when the evil got its balm so quickly :



For when we reached the bridge that had been broken,  
The Leader turned to me with that sweet manner 20  
Which I had at the mountain's foot first noticed.  
He opened out his arms, and after holding  
Some counsel with himself—first scanning closely  
The ruined mass—he caught me in them straightway.  
And even as one who worketh and computeth, 25  
Who seemeth aye providing all beforehand,  
So he, uplifting me towards the summit  
Of a great rock, espied another boulder,  
Saying: 'Now scramble up and get on that one ;  
But first make sure that it is fit to bear thee.' 30  
It was no path for wearing a caped garment,  
For scarcely we—he light and I supported—  
Could clamber from projection to projection.  
And were it not that there upon that rampart  
The slope was shorter than upon the other, 35  
I know not as to him, but *I*'d been conquered :  
But as the whole of 'Evil-Pouches' slopeth  
Towards the entrance of the lowest hell-pit,  
The shape of every valley there implieth  
That one scarp riseth and the other sinketh. 40  
Yet we pushed on as far as to the point  
From which the endmost stone is jutting forward.  
The breath within my lungs was so exhausted,  
When I was up, that I could go no further ;  
Indeed, I sat me down so soon I reached it. 45

'It now behoveth thee to shake thy sloth off,'  
The Master said ; 'for if we lie in feathers  
We never reach to fame, nor under quilting,  
Without the which, he who consumeth lifetime  
Leaveth such trace of self upon the earth here 50  
As smoke in air, or foam upon the water.  
And therefore get thee up, o'ercome the anguish  
With such a soul as winneth every battle  
Unless it yieldeth to its heavy body.  
A longer stair thou now wilt have to clamber ; 55  
'Tis not enough that those are left behind us :  
If thou dost hear me, see that it avail thee.'  
Then I arose, and showed myself more furnished  
With store of breath than I in truth was feeling,  
And said : 'Go on, for I am strong and daring.' 60  
So up the rock we made our way together,  
Which was uneven, narrow, and obstructed,  
And far more steep than was the one before it.  
I talked while walking, not to seem exhausted,  
Whereon a voice rose up from th' other pit there, 65  
For forming words but very ill adapted.  
I know not what it said, though I was over  
The back o' th' arch already, that here<sup>e</sup> crosseth,  
But he who spoke appeared stirred up to anger.  
I was intent below ; but living pupils 70  
Could not attain the bottom through the darkness ;  
So I said : 'Master, manage to get over

To the next rampart : we'll descend the wall there ;  
For as I listen here and understand not,  
So also I look down and make out nothing.' 75  
'No other answer,' he replied, 'I'll make thee,  
Except to do it : a request that's proper  
Ought to be followed by the deed in silence.'  
We thereupon descended by the bridge-head,  
Where it uniteth with the eighth embankment, 80  
And then the hell-pouch was exposed before me :  
And I beheld therein a fearful crowding  
Of serpents, and of such egregious nature  
That still the mem'ry maketh my blood curdle.  
Let Libya boast about her sand no longer : 85  
For though chelydri, dart-snakes, and phareæ  
Breed there, and cenchri too and amphibænaæ,  
No plagues so great in number or so cruel  
Hath she yet shown, with total Ethiopia  
Nor with whatever on the Red Sea lieth. 90  
Among this cruel and most sorry legion  
People were running naked and in terror,  
Hopeless of hiding-hole or heliotropia.  
Their hands were bound behind their backs with serpents ;  
These in the middle of their loins were sticking 95  
Their tails and heads, and hung in front in bunches.  
And lo, to one who stood against our bank there,  
A serpent made its way, and straightway pierced him  
Just where the neck attacheth to the shoulders.

Never was *O* or *I* so quickly written 100  
     As he took fire and burnt ; and all to ashes  
     He was obliged to turn, just as he fell there :  
 And when he lay destroyed upon the ground so,  
     The ash of its own self again collected  
     And then and there he re-became the same one. 105  
 So hath it been attested by great sages  
     Even that the phoenix dieth and reviveth  
     As oft as its five-hundredth year approacheth.  
 It eateth neither grass nor grain in lifetime,  
     But only tears of incense and amomum, 110  
     And nard and myrrh become its final swathing.  
 And like the man who, knowing not how, down-falleth  
     Through some fiend's strength, that pulleth him  
     down earthward,  
     Or other oppilation man is bound by,  
 And when he riseth, gazeth round about him, 115  
     All in a daze because of the great anguish  
     That he hath had to bear, and staring sigheth,  
 Such was the sinner risen up, thereafter.  
     O God's own justice, how tremendous is it,  
     Which striketh blows of this sort in its vengeance !  
 The Leader asked him then what name he went  
     by; 121  
     And he replied, 'From Tuscany they rained  
     me  
     A little while ago, in this fell gorge here.

A bestial life once lured me, one not human,  
Just like the mule I was. I'm Vanni Fucci, 125  
The beast, and worthy was my lair, Pistoia.'  
And I unto the Leader: 'Bid him 'scape not,  
And ask him what transgression pushed him hither.  
I knew him once a man of blood and anger.'  
And then the sinner, who had heard, concealed naught;  
But turned towards me both his mind and visage, 131  
And with a sorry bashfulness he coloured.  
Then said: 'I am more pained that thou hast caught me  
Here in this wretchedness in which thou seest me  
Than when I was deprived of th' other lifetime. 135  
I cannot well deny what thou dost ask me.  
Down here I'm set so low because of having  
Plundered the Sacristy of the Fine Jewels.  
And falsely 'twas imputed to another.  
But lest thou shouldst enjoy the sight thou seest, 140  
If ever thou art out of the dark regions,  
Open thy ears unto my words and listen:  
Pistoia first doth thin itself of Black ones;  
Then Florence renovateth men and manners.  
Mars draweth up a steam from Val di Magra, 145  
Which is enveloped round by turbid storm-clouds;  
And with impetuous and incisive tempest  
On the Picenian Field there will be fighting:  
Then he will of a sudden burst the mist there  
So that each White one shall forthwith be smitten:  
And I have said it but to cause thee sorrow.' 151

## CANTO XXV

EIGHTH CIRCLE (*continued*).—Seventh Hell-pouch (*continued*):  
Cacus—Transformations with Reptiles: Agnello de Brunel-  
leschi; Buoso; Puccio Sciancato; Cianfa; Guercio.

At the conclusion of his words, the robber  
    Raised up his hands, and made with both the fig-  
        sign,  
    Shouting, 'Take *that*, God; for at *Thee* I point  
        them.'

Thenceforth the snakes were amicable to me,  
    For one of them crept round about his collar      5  
    As if to say, 'I'll have thee speak no further';  
And then another round his arms, and bound him,  
    Twisting itself in such a way before him,  
    That with them he could hardly give a head-shake.  
Pistoia, ah Pistoia, why enact not      10  
    To burn thyself to ash, and end existence,  
    Since, in ill deeds, thou topp'st the seed thou spring'st  
        from?

Through all the Nether Regions' gloomy circles,  
    I saw no spirit so to God rebellious,  
    Not even him, who fell from Thebes' wall headlong. 15

He took to flight ; nor further word he uttered ;  
And I beheld a Centaur full of fury  
Come crying out, 'Where, where is he, the fierce one?'  
I doubt me if Maremma hath so many  
Adders as he had there upon his crupper, 20  
As far as where our human form beginneth.  
Upon his shoulders, and behind his neck-nape,  
With open wings, a dragon lay upon him  
That setteth fire to everything it meeteth.  
Then said my Master : 'That one there is Cacus, 25  
Who underneath the Aventine Mount's rock-mass  
Made, more than once, a very lake of bloodshed.  
He goeth not with his brothers in one pathway,  
By reason of his fraudulent purloining  
Of the great herd of cattle which was near him : 30  
On which account his shady deeds were ended  
Beneath the club of Hercules, who maybe  
Gave him a hundred blows, and scarce ten felt he.'  
While he was speaking thus the other vanished ;  
And then three spirits came and stood beneath us, 35  
Whom neither I nor yet my Leader noticed,  
Until they shouted out to us, 'Who are you ?'  
On which account our story straightway halted,  
And we gave heed to none but them thereafter.  
I had no knowledge of them ; but it happened 40  
As it is wont to do in certain cases,  
That one of them pronounced a name to th' other,

Saying, 'What ever hath become of Cianfa?'  
 Whereat (to make the Leader pay attention)  
 I placed my finger 'twixt my chin and nose-tip. 45  
 If thou be slow, O Reader, in believing  
 What I shall tell thee, it will be no wonder,  
 Since I who saw it realise it scarcely.  
 While I was lifting up my eyebrows at them,  
 Behold a serpent with six feet sprang forward 50  
 In front of one, and stuck to him completely.  
 Then with its middle feet is grasped his belly,  
 And with its front ones by the arms it seized him;  
 Then bit his cheeks—the two of them together.  
 It laid its hinder limbs against his thighs then, 55  
 And next it interposed its tail between them,  
 And twisted it right up behind his loins.  
 Never was ivy so securely rooted  
 To trunk of tree, as that terrific creature  
 Then intertwined its own limbs with another's. 60  
 Then they cohered together, as if fashioned  
 Of heated wax, and intermixed their colours,  
 And neither seemed itself now any longer:  
 Just as, before the flame, there creepeth upward  
 Along a burning paper, a brown colour 65  
 Which is not black as yet, while the white dieth.  
 The other two looked on, and both together  
 Cried out, 'Ah me, Agnello, how thou changest!  
 See, thou art neither two, nor art thou one now!'



So the two heads had changed to one already, 70  
When there appeared to us two mingled faces  
In one sole visage, where the two were merging.  
There grew two arms instead of four extensions ;  
The thighs and legs, the belly and the trunk then  
Changed into limbs that never eyes had seen yet. 75  
There all original aspect now was cancelled ;  
Both two and none appeared the monstrous image.  
And such it then departed, striding slowly.  
Just as the lizard, under the great blazing  
Of passing dog-days, when it changeth hedges, 80  
Seemeth a flash, while traversing the pathway :  
Such now appeared, as it approached the bodies  
Of th' other two, a little snake, all fiery,  
As black and livid as a grain of pepper.  
And then that part through which we first are given 85  
Our nourishment, in one of them it punctured,  
And then fell down, extended there before him.  
He who was pierced stared at it, but said nothing ;  
Indeed he stood with rooted feet and yawning,  
Just as if sleep or fever had o'ercome him. 90  
He scanned the serpent, and the serpent scanned  
him.  
One from his wound, and th' other from its  
mouth now  
Were smoking hard, and both the smokes were  
meeting.

Let Lucan now be silent where he treateth  
     Of sorrowful Sabellus and Nasidius,                   95  
 And stop and list to what I'm shooting off now ;  
 Let Ovid of Cadmus hush and Arethusa ;  
     If *him* into a snake and *her* a fountain  
     He changeth in his verse, I feel no envy ;  
 For never hath he face to face transmuted               100  
     Two natures, in such way that both the figures  
     Were nothing loath to interchange their substance.  
 Both answered one another in such fashion  
     That in a fork the serpent's tail divided,  
     And the wounded man compressed his feet together.  
 His legs and thighs were welded with each other   106  
     So tight, that in a little time the joining  
     No longer left a mark that could be noticed.  
 The cloven tail assumed the selfsame aspect  
     As *there* was being lost ; and lo, its skin too   110  
     Was growing soft, while the other's skin grew harder.  
 I saw the arms retreat into the armpits,  
     And the two feet of the creature that were stumpy  
     Grow longer by as much as those grew shorter :  
 And then the hind-feet, twisting up together,   115  
     Were changed into the limb that man concealeth,  
     And the sad wight saw his in two converted.  
 The while the smoke was veiling one and th' other  
     With a new tint, engend'ring hair all over  
     In the one case—unhairing in the other,           120

The one got up, while dropped to ground the other ;  
Yet ne'er they turned aside the impious lanterns  
Beneath whose power they both were changing  
muzzle.

The erect one drew it up towards the temples,  
And from the surplus substance that was heaped  
there, 125  
The ears grew out of his ungarnished cheek-  
bone.

What did not gather back, and was retained there,  
Of that excess, became the face's nose then,  
And thickened out the lips as much as needful.

The one who lay projected a snout forward, 130  
And drew his ears within his head together,  
Just as a snail is wont to do its feelers.

And then the tongue, which had been smooth and  
ready  
At first for speech, grew forked, the while the forked  
one  
Closed up in th' other ; and the smoke then  
ended. 135

The soul that had been changed into a beast there,  
Fled with a hissing noise along the valley,  
And th' other on his traces spat in speaking.  
Then after that he turned his new back t'wards it,  
And said to th' other, 'I'd have Buoso run there, 140  
As I've done, on all-fours, upon this pathway.'

In this way I beheld the seventh riffraff  
Change and re-change ; and let the novel subject  
Be my excuse, if somewhat my pen wander.  
And even though my eyes were not a little 145  
Confused, and though my mind was puzzled,  
Those two could not escape so wholly hidden,  
But that I clearly saw Puccio Sciancato :  
And he alone, of all the three companions  
Who came at first, had known no alteration. 150  
Th' other was he whom thou, Gavillè, mournest.

## CANTO XXVI

**EIGHTH CIRCLE** (*continued*).—Eighth Hell-pouch, containing dishonest Counsellors—The flame-wrapped Souls ; Ulysses and Diomed.

**REJOICE**, O Florence, since thou art so mighty  
That thou dost flap thy wings o'er sea and land now,  
And that thy name in Hell itself is spreading.  
Amid the thieves, I came on certain five there,  
All citizens of thine, whence shame doth seize me, 5  
And thou thyself dost get small rise in honour.  
But if we dream the truth as morning neareth,  
Thou shalt experience, ere a short time passeth  
What Prato, and a many others, wish thee.  
And were it even now, 'twere not too early. 10  
Would it so were, since anyhow it *must* be!  
For more 'twill grieve me as I grow the older.  
We then passed on ; and up the selfsame stairways  
Down which we 'd come with help of the projections.  
My Leader climbed again and drew me after, 15  
And following the solitary footpath  
Among the jags and boulders of the rock-reef,  
The foot, without the hand, made little progress.

Then I felt grief, and now again I feel it,  
    When I direct my mind to what I saw there,      20  
    And I rein in my genius more than ever,  
Lest it run on, and virtue cease to guide it ;  
    That if my lucky star, or something better,  
    Hath given the boon, I may myself not waste it.  
As are to the boor, who resteth on the hill-side      25  
    (AT the time when he by whom the world is lighted  
    Doth keep his visage least secreted from us,  
And when the fly doth yield to the mosquito),  
    The fire-flies that he watcheth in the valley,  
    Perhaps where he's been vintaging and ploughing: 30  
Not fewer were the flames with which was gleaming  
    The whole eighth hell-pouch, as I clearly noted  
    As soon as I was where I saw the bottom.  
And even as he who wreaked his wrath with bears once,  
    Beheld Elijah's car as it departed,      35  
    When in the sky the rearing steeds were rising,  
And could not with his eyes pursue their progress  
    So as to see aught else beside the flame there  
    As it was rising like a little cloudlet :  
So each of them was moving in the gullet      40  
    Of that same pit, for none doth show its prey there—  
    And every flame doth hide from sight a sinner.  
I stood on tiptoe on the bridge to see them ;  
    So, had I not caught hold of a projection,  
    I should have fallen down, though no one pushed me.

And then the Leader, seeing me so watchful,      46  
     Observed, 'The spirits are inside the fires ;  
     Each one is wrapped in that by which he 's burning.'  
 'My Master,' I replied, 'by what thou sayest  
     I'm made more certain ; but I saw already      50  
     That it was thus, and was about to ask thee  
 Who is in yonder fire that's so divided  
     Above, as to seem rising from the pyre  
     In which they put Etéocles with his brother.'  
 He answered me: 'In there are being tortured      55  
     Ulysses linked with Diomed, who together  
     Thus go to chastisement as once to anger.  
 And there inside their flame they keep bewailing  
     The treachery of the Horse, which made the breach  
         once  
     Whence issued forth the Roman's noble lineage. 60  
 In it the fraud is mourned for which, though dead  
         now,  
     Deidamia still complaineth of Achilles,  
     And pain for the Palladium is endured there.'  
 'If they are able, even in those sparks there,  
     To speak,' I said, 'my Master, much I pray thee, 65  
     Yea, and re-pray thee — each prayer worth a  
         thousand—  
 That thou deny me not thy leave to wait here  
     Till the horned flame shall even come up hither ;  
     Thou seest, I bend towards it from mere longing.'

And he to me : 'That prayer of thine is worthy      70  
     Of no small praise, and therefore I accept it :  
     But manage that thy tongue be kept in bridle :  
 Leave me to speak, as I have formed a notion  
     Of what thou wishest ; for they might be scornful,  
     As they were Greeks, it may be, of thy utt'rance.' 75  
 Then after, when the flame had come up thither,  
     When time and place seemed fitting to my Leader,  
     I heard him speaking to it in this fashion :  
 'O ye who now are two within one fire,  
     If I deserved well at your hands when living,      80  
     If, at your hands, I much deserved or little  
 When in the world I wrote my lofty verses,  
     Move not away ; but one of you inform us  
     Whither, when lost, he went away to perish.'  
 The larger horn of that same ancient flame then      85  
     Began to sway a while, utt'ring a murmur  
     As might have done a flame the wind tormenteth.  
 And then the tip, which hither waved and thither,  
     As if it were the tongue that now were speaking,  
     Cast out of it a voice, and said : 'As soon as      90  
 I went away from Circe, who delayed me  
     More than a year, out there hard by Gaëta  
     (Before it had been named so by Æneas),  
 Nor gentleness of son, nor the devotion  
     To an old father, nor the due affection      95  
     That should have made Penelope so happy,



Could, in my heart, get better of the ardour  
Which I then had to see the world and know it,  
And all the vices of mankind and virtues.  
But I set out upon the deep wide sea there 100  
With one sole vessel, and with that same escort  
Of scanty number, which did not desert me.  
This shore and that, I saw as far as Spain then,  
Till Morocco and the Isle of the Sardinians  
And all the others that that same sea washeth. 105  
I and my comrades, we were old and sluggish,  
When we arrived at last at that tight outlet  
Where Hercules had once set up his landmarks,  
That man might never venture out beyond them.  
Upon the right I left behind me Seville ; 110  
Upon the left I'd left already Ceuta.  
"O mates," I said, "who, through a hundred thousand  
Perils, have made your way into the west here,  
To this so very limited a vigil  
Of your sensations, which is still remaining, 115  
Insist not on denying the experience,  
On the sun's track, of yon unpeopled world there.  
Consider what the seed is you are sprung from :  
Ye were not made to live like lower creatures,  
But to pursue both excellence and knowledge." 120  
I rendered my companions all so eager,  
By this short exhortation, for the voyage,  
That I could scarce thereafter have restrained them,

And turning round our poop towards the morning,  
We changed our oars to wings for the mad flitting,  
Encroaching ever further to the larboard. 126

Already all the stars of th' other pole now  
I saw at night, and ours was sunk so low now  
That it no longer rose above the sea-floor.  
Five times re-lit, and yet as oft extinguished, 130  
Had the light been, upon the moon's sub-surface  
Since we had entered on the deep-sea passage,  
When there appeared to us a mountain, dusky  
From the great distance, and which seemed so lofty,  
That I had never seen another like it. 135

We all rejoiced; but soon it changed to wailing,  
For from the new-seen land there rose a whirlwind  
And struck the forward quarter of the vessel.  
Three times it whirled it round with all the waters,  
And at the fourth it made the poop go upward 140  
And the prow down—for so it pleased Another—  
Until the sea had closed again above us.'

## CANTO XXVII

**EIGHTH CIRCLE** (*continued*).—Eighth Hell-pouch, containing other Dishonest Counsellors—The towns of Romagna—Guido da Montefeltro.

Now was the flame erect again and quiet,  
Having no more to say, and we were leaving,  
With the permission of the gentle Poet,  
When, lo, another one, which came behind it,  
Forced us to turn our eyes towards its summit. 5  
By a vague sound that made its way from out it.  
As the Sicilian Bull (which first had bellowed  
With the complaint of him—and 'twas but fitting—  
Who with his file had given it its temper)  
Once bellowed with the voice of the afflicted, 10  
So that, although it was but made of copper,  
It yet appeared to be thrilled through with anguish ;  
So too, because there was nor vent nor outlet  
At first, within the fire, to fire's own language  
The miserable words were now converted. 15  
But after they had made their way there upward  
Into the tip, and given it that vibration  
The tongue had given them as they were uttered,

We heard this said : ‘ O thou to whom I ’m raising  
     My voice, and who, just now, wert speaking Lom-  
         bard, 20  
     Saying, “ Now go ; I ’ll not excite thee further ” :  
 Though I perhaps am somewhat late in coming,  
     Be thou not loath to stay and with me parley ;  
     Thou seest that I ’m not loath, though I am burn-  
         ing.

If thou but lately in this sightless world here 25  
     Hast fallen from that pleasant Latin country  
     Whence I have brought my guilt in all its fulness,  
 Say if Romagna’s folk have peace or warfare,  
     As I was of the hills there ’twixt ’Urbino  
     And the divide from which the Tiber floweth.’ 30

I still was giving heed and bending downward,  
     When, lo, my Leader nudged me with the elbow,  
     And said, ‘ Do *thou* speak now ; this man is Latin.’  
 And I, who had my answer ready waiting,  
     Began to speak without deferring further : 35  
     ‘ O spirit that art hidden down below us,  
 Thy own Romagna’s not, nor was it ever,  
     Sans war within the bosom of its tyrants ;  
     But I have left no open war there raging.

Ravenna standeth as it hath long seasons : 40  
     The Eagle of Polenta broodeth on it,  
     So that it shadeth Cervia with its pinions.  
 The place that whilom bore the long ordeal

And made a gory hillock of the Frenchmen,  
Now findeth itself held in the green clutches. 45  
And the old Verrucchio mastiff, and the new one,  
Who wrought the evil treatment on Montagna,  
There, where their wont is, stick their fangs like  
gimlets.

The towns of the Lamónë and the Santerno  
Follow the lion's cub in the White nest there, 50  
Who changeth sides from summer-time to winter.

And the town whose flank is watered by the Savio,  
Just as it lieth 'tween the plain and mountain  
Liveth 'twixt tyranny and free republic.

Now who thou art, I pray thee to inform us, 55  
Be not more obstinate than have been others,  
If in the world thy name shall hold its station.'

Then, when the fire a while had gone on roaring,  
In its own way it moved the pointed summit  
Now here, now there, and then gave forth this voice :

'If I believed my answer was directed 61  
To one who may return into the world yet,  
This flame would have no further oscillations.

But inasmuch as no one from this pit here  
Ever returned alive, if I'm told truly, 65  
I'll answer thee without the fear of stigma.

I was a man of arms, then rope-girt friar,  
Believing that so girdled I did penance ;  
And surely my belief had proved well founded,

Wert not for the High Priest (whom evil light on) 70  
     Who thrust me back into my first transgressions ;  
     And how and wherefore I would have thee hear me.  
 So long I had the shape of bones and muscles  
     My mother had bestowed on me, my doings  
     Were never leonine, but they were fox-like. 75  
 The machinations and the hidden by-ways,  
     I knew them all, and worked the art so fully  
     That to the end of earth the fame extended.  
 When I perceived that I had reached that portion  
     Of my existence, when it fitteth all-men 80  
     To furl the sails and tighten down the rigging,  
 What first had been my joy I now regretted,  
     And, penitent and shriven, I turned friar.  
     Ah wretched me ! and it would have availed me.  
 The Prince of all the modern Phariseans 85  
     Who round about the Lateran had warfare  
     (And not with Saracens, nor yet with Jew-folk ;  
 For each and every foe of his was Christian,  
     And none of them had been to conquer Acre,  
     Nor as a merchant to the Soldan's country) 90  
 Minded nor supreme post nor sacred orders  
     In his own self, nor yet in *me* that waist-roped  
     Which used to make the men it girdled leaner.  
 But just as Constantine besought Sylvester,  
     Inside Soracte, for a cure when leprous, 95  
     So *he* then sent for *me*, to be his teacher

How to get cured of his ambitious fever.

He asked me for advice, and I was silent

Because the words he uttered seemed unsober.

And then he said: "Be not thy heart suspicious: 100

From henceforth I absolve thee; do thou teach me

The means by which to level Penestrino.

I have the power to lock and unlock heaven,

As thou well know'st; and so the keys are double,

For which my predecessor cared so little." 105

On that his weighty arguments impelled me

To a point where silence seemed the course least  
prudent,

And I said: "Father, since thou dost absolve me

Of this same sin, in which I now must tumble,

An ample promise and a scant fulfilment 110

Will make thee triumph in thy lofty station."

Then later Francis came, when life was over,

To take me up: but one of the dark Cherubs

Said to him: "Take him not, and do not wrong  
me:

He hath to come down there among my menials, 115

Because he gave the surreptitious counsel,

Ever since which I've had him by the nape-  
lock.

For there is no absolving th' unrepenting,

Nor can a man at once repent and crave for,

Because the contradiction that forbiddeth." 120

Ah me in torture! How I shrank together  
When he then took me saying, "Peradventure  
Thou didst not dream that I was a logician?"  
He carried me to Minos, who then twisted  
Eight times his tail about his stubborn loins, 125  
And who, when from great fury he had bit it,  
Said, "This one is a sinner for thieves' fire."  
On which account I'm lost, here where thou seest me,  
And so clothed round I go my way repining.'  
And soon as he had said his say so fully, 130  
The flame with all its suffering departed,  
Twisting and flapping with its pointed horn there.  
We passed beyond, myself and my Conductor,  
On the reef's crest, until the nearest bridge-arch  
Spanning the pit, wherein their due is meted 135  
To those who, by disjoining, heap their burthen.



## CANTO XXVIII

**EIGHTH CIRCLE** (*continued*).—Ninth Hell-pouch, containing Schismatics and Sowers of Discord: Mahomet; Fra Dolcino; Pier da Medicina; Curio; Mosca; Bertram de Born, holding his own head.

Who ever could, with even unrhymed phrases,  
Tell fully of the blood and of the maimings  
Which I now saw, however oft he told it?  
No tongue but would most surely prove unequal  
Both from our language and the understanding 5  
That have not grasp enough for such a subject.  
If all the people could again assemble  
Who once, upon the too-eventful soil  
Of the Apulias, sorrowed for their lifeblood,  
Thanks to the Trojans, and the long-drawn warfare 10  
Which made such lofty trophies of the rings once,  
As Livy hath described, who never erreth;  
With those who felt the pain of many smittings  
In order to make head 'gainst Robert Guiscard;  
And th' others—those whose bones are still collected  
At Ceperan, where proved himself a liar 16  
Every Apulian; and at Tagliacozzo,  
Where, weaponless, the old Alardo conquered;

And though one showed a limb run through, and th'  
other

A limb lopped off, it would be naught to equal 20  
The hideous character of the ninth hell-pouch.

No cask, from loss of centre-trap or end-board,  
Was ever yet so cleft as one I noticed,  
Ripped downward from the chin to where one  
[ . . . ]eth.

Between his legs were hanging his intestines; 25  
The heart-case was exposed, and the sad pocket  
That maketh filth of that which hath been swal-  
lowed.

While I was wholly riveted upon him,  
He scanned me, opening with his hands his bosom,  
And said, 'See, how I'm ripping myself open.' 30  
See in what fashion Mahomet is crippled.

Out there, before me, Ali goeth weeping,  
Split in the face from chin as high as fore-lock.

And all the others that thou here beholdest  
Were sowers both of scandal and of schism 35  
During their life, and therefore are thus cloven.

A devil is behind here, who doth cleave us  
Thus cruelly; beneath the falchion's sharpness  
Replacing every one of this array here,

As soon as we've gone round the painful journey; 40  
Because the wounds have closed once more together,  
Ere any of us come again before him.

But who art thou, who musest on the rock there,  
To put off, doubtless, going to the torture 44  
Which is adjudged to what thou art accused of?’  
‘Death neither hath him yet, nor sin hath brought  
him,’  
Replied my Master, ‘that he should be tortured ;  
But that he may be given full experience,  
I, who am dead, am now obliged to lead him  
Down through the Nether World from ring to ring  
here, 50  
And this is true as that I now address thee.’  
There were a hundred quite, who, when they heard  
him,  
Came to a standstill in the pit, to scan me,  
Forgetful of their torture in their wonder.  
‘So now tell Fra Dolcino to assemble 55  
(Thou who perhaps wilt see the sunlight shortly),  
Unless he wish to follow me here straightway,  
Such store of victuals that a heavy snowdrift  
May not bring victory to the Novarese there,  
Which otherwise would not be easy getting.’ 60  
When he had lifted up one foot for going,  
This was the word which Mahomet addressed me ;  
Then set it on the ground to go on further.  
Another, who had got a cloven gullet,  
And nose cut off to just beneath the eyebrows, 65  
And only had a single ear remaining,

Having remained to look at me from wonder,  
 With th' others, opened, ere the rest, his windpipe,  
 The whole of which externally was crimson,  
 And said : ' O thou, whom not a sin condemneth,     70  
 Whom once I saw, up there in a Latin country ;  
 If overmuch resemblance doth not cheat me ;  
 Recall to memory Pier of Medicina,  
 If thou shouldst see again the sweet plain ever  
 That from Vercelli to Mercabò is sloping ;     75  
 And make it known to two—the best in Fano—  
 To Messer Guido and to Angiolello,  
 That if the second sight is not a cheat here,  
 They shall be both cast forth from out their vessel,  
 And drowned at the Cattolica or near it,     80  
 Thanks to the treachery of a savage tyrant.  
 Between the isles of Cyprus and Majorca  
 Never did Neptune see so great an outrage,  
 No, not by pirate nor Argolic people.  
 That traitor who can see with one eye only,     85  
 And hath the land which one, who here is with me,  
 Would fain be inexperienced of beholding,  
 Will summon them to come and parley with him ;  
 Then he 'll so do, that to Focara's storm-wind  
 They 'll need to make nor prayer nor votive offer.'  
 And I to him : ' Explain to me and tell me,     91  
 If thou wouldst have me take up news about thee,  
 Who is the one that hath the bitter vision.'

On that he laid his hand upon the jaw-bone  
Of a companion there, whose mouth he opened, 95  
While crying: 'This is he; and see, he's speechless.  
This one, when banished, overcame the doubtings  
Of Cæsar, telling him that one who's ready  
Is ever the worse off for hesitation.'

Oh, how confounded he appeared before me, 100  
There, with his tongue so cloven in his gullet,  
That Curio who had been so bold in speaking!  
And one who there had both his hands fresh-severed,  
Uplifting both the stumps in the dark air then,  
So that the blood-drops made his visage hideous,  
Cried out: 'Thou'lt call to mind that Mosca also, 106  
Who said, alas, "A thing that's done is over";  
Which proved the Tuscan people's seed of evil.'  
To which I added: 'And thy race's death too.'  
Whereat, upheaping sorrow upon sorrow, 110  
He walked away, like one both sad and crazy.

But I remained to look upon the gang there,  
And saw a thing which I should now be fearful,  
Without more evidence, to tell of even,  
Were't not that conscience giveth me assurance, 115  
The good companionship that freeth mortals  
Beneath the habergeon of feeling stainless.

I clearly saw, and seem to be still seeing,  
A body walk without a head, and just as  
The others of that sorry herd were walking, 120

And by the hair it held the head so severed,  
     A-dangling from its hand, as were 't a lantern,  
     And *it* was watching us, and saying, 'Heigh-ho !'  
 Of self he made a lamp unto himself there,  
     And they were two though one, and one though  
         double 125  
 (How that could be, He knoweth who so ruleth).  
 When he had reached the bridge's foot exactly,  
     He raised his arm aloft with that same head there,  
     To bring more near to us the words it uttered,  
 Which were, 'Now thou behold'st the cruel penance,  
     Thou who, though breathing, com'st to see the  
         dead-men ; 131  
 See if thou findest any great as this one.  
 And so that thou mayst carry news about me,  
     Know that I'm Bertram of the Born, the same one  
     Who gave the Young King once the evil counsels.  
 I made the sire and son each other's foemen. 136  
     Ahitophel did not do more for David  
     And Absalom, with his malignant goadings.  
 Since I divided persons thus united,  
     I carry my own brain, alas, divided 140  
     From its beginning, which is in this trunk here.  
 Thus may be seen in me the retribution.'



Meantime he went his way, with me behind him,  
The Leader ; even while I made my answer,  
And while I added : ‘ There inside yon cavern,  
On which my eyes were riveted so firmly,  
I think a spirit of my blood is mourning            20  
The sin which costeth such a price down yonder.’  
Then said the Master : ‘ Do not thou be racking  
Thy thought henceforth about him any longer ;  
Give heed to something else and let him stay there ;  
For, underneath the little bridge, I saw him            25  
Pointing thee out, fierce-threatening with his finger,  
And heard them call him Geri of the Bello.  
Thou wast engrossed so wholly at the moment  
On him who once was lord of Altaforte,  
Thou didst not look that way, so he departed.’    30  
‘ O my Conductor,’ I replied, ‘ his murder,  
For which no vengeance hath as yet been taken  
By any one who shareth the dishonour,  
Rendered him scornful, and he therefore left me  
Without a parley, if I judge it rightly,            35  
And even so hath made me kinder t’wards him.’  
Thus we talked on, until the nearest point  
Which, from the reef, discloseth the next valley,  
If there were but more light, to quite the bottom.  
When we had got upon the furthest cloister            40  
Of Evil-Pouches, so that its lay brothers  
Could then become apparent to our eyesight,



I was shot through by many lamentations,  
That had their arrows feruled with compassion,  
So that I raised my hands to stop my hearing. 45  
Such pain as there would be, if from each pest-  
house  
Of Valdichiana, from July to September,  
And Maremma and Sardinia, the diseases  
Should all be gathered in one pit together,  
There now was here; and such a stench was rising  
As doth proceed from limbs in putrefaction. 51  
We then descended on the last embankment  
From the long reef, and ever to the leftwards;  
And then my sight went down with greater keen-  
ness  
Towards the lowest depth, in which the stew'rdess 55  
Of the supreme Liege Lord, unfailing Justice,  
Chasteneth the tricksters that she here inscribeth.  
I do not think it was more sad to witness  
The folk all struck with sickness in Egina,  
When in the air there was so much malignance 60  
That animals, yea, even the small maggot,  
All dropped to ground, and when the ancient  
dwellers,  
According to what poets hold as certain,  
Were renovatèd with the seed of ants there,  
Than 'twas to see, along that gloomy valley, 65  
The spirits languishing in many heapings.

Some on the belly, others on the shoulders,  
     Of one another lay, and some were crawling  
     To change their place upon the sorry pathway.  
 From step to step we went without conversing,      70  
     Looking and listening to the murrain-stricken  
     Who were unable to lift up their bodies.  
 I saw two sitting, leaning on each other,  
     As stew-pan, to keep hot, is propped on stew-pan,  
     From head to foot all spotted o'er with scabbings. 75  
 And ne'er I saw a curry-comb so handled  
     By stable-lad for whom his master waiteth,  
     Or one who sitteth up at night unwilling,  
 As each of them now exercised the sharpness  
     Of his nails upon himself in the great fury      80  
     Of itching which can get no better comfort :  
 Yea, and the nails were peeling off the scabbings,  
     Just as a knife might draw a bream's scales off it,  
     Or of some other fish that hath them larger.  
 ' O thou that dost unpick thee with thy fingers,'      85  
     Began my Guide to one from out their number,  
     ' And that dost use them now and then as tweezers,  
 Tell me if any Latian is among them  
     Who are in here,—so may thy nails suffice thee  
     Eternally to carry out thy labour !'      90  
 ' Latian are we, whom thou behold'st so mangled,  
     Here both of us,' said one of them then weeping ;  
     ' But who art *thou* who thus hast asked about us ?'

And the Conductor said : ' I 'm one who goeth  
     With this live man from rock-ledge down to rock-  
     ledge, 95  
     And to show Hell to him is my intention.'

Then was their leaning on each other broken,  
     And, trembling, each of them then turned towards  
     me  
     With others who had heard by repercussion.

The worthy Master turned towards me wholly, 100  
     Saying, ' Now tell them anything thou likest.'  
     And I began in this wise, since he willed it :  
 ' If ye would have your memory not perish  
     In the first world, from out men's minds com-  
     pletely,  
     But last undying under many suns there, 105  
 Inform me who ye are and of what people :  
     Let not your foul and sickening infliction  
     From showing yourselves unto me dismay you.'

' I was of Arezzo ; Albert of Siena,'  
     One answered, ' had me given to the fire ; 110  
     But 't isn't what I died for brought me hither.

'Tis true I said to him by way of joking :  
     " I could uplift myself in th' air by flying " :  
     And he, with more curiosity than judgment,  
 Bade me expound the art to him ; and merely 115  
     For making him no Dædalus, he had me  
     Burnt by a man who deemed him his own offspring.

But to the furthest of these ten hell-pouches,  
For th' alchemy which in the world I practised,  
Minos condemned me, who 's allowed no error.' 120  
And I addressed the Poet: 'Now, was there ever  
So vain a folk as this one of Siena?  
Surely not e'en the French, and by a long way.'  
Whereon the other leprous one, who heard me,  
Answered my words by saying, 'Ay, save Stricca, 125  
Who plunged into the moderate expenses;  
And Nicholas, by whom the princely habit  
Of cloves in meat was first of all invented  
Amid the garden where such seed now sprouteth;  
And also save the band, in which was squandered, 130  
By Caccia of Asciano, vine and forest;  
And where the Dazzled One displayed his wisdom.  
But if thou 'dst know who 't is who thus doth back thee  
Against the Sienese, observe me closer,  
So that my face may give thee a right answer; 135  
So shalt thou see that I'm Capocchio's shadow,  
Who once, by Alchemy, debased the metals;  
And thou 'lt recall, if I descry thee rightly,  
How excellent an ape I was of nature.'

## CANTO XXX

**EIGHTH CIRCLE** (*continued*).—Tenth Hell-pouch (*continued*):  
Myrrha ; Gianni Schicchi ; Master Adam ; Sinon of Troy.

**ABOUT** the time when Juno was in dudgeon  
For Semele against the Theban lineage,  
As she had proven once or twice already,  
King Athamas became so full of madness  
That seeing his own wife with both her children 5  
Going encumbered upon either side there,  
He cried, ‘Let’s set the nets that I may capture  
The lioness and her cubs upon their passage’ ;  
And then he stretched his impious claws towards  
her,  
Taking the one who bore the name Learchus 10  
And rolled him round, and struck him on a  
boulder,  
While she then drowned herself with th’ other  
burthen :  
And afterwards, when Fortune had hurled headlong  
The Trojans’ haughtiness that ventured all things,  
So that the King was shattered with his kingdom ; 15

Hecuba, sad and wretched and a captive,  
     After she saw Polyxena lie lifeless,  
     And when her Polydorus was discovered  
 Upon the sea-beach by the mourning woman,  
     Insanely then she barked just as a dog might,   20  
     So greatly did her pain distort her spirit.  
 But neither Theban ragings, nor yet Trojan,  
     Were ever seen so terrible in any,  
     Whether in goading beasts or men's limbs even,  
 As I beheld in two shades wan and naked,   25  
     Which, biting, ran along in such a manner  
     As doth a hog, escaping from the pig-sty.  
 One of them reached Capocchio, and it caught him  
     By nape of neck, in such a way that, dragging,  
     He scraped his belly on the solid bottom.   30  
 And then the Aretine, who stood there trembling,  
     Said unto me, 'That madcap's Gianni Schicchi,  
     And runneth in his rage, thus crippling others.'  
 'Oh,' I replied, 'if but the other stick not  
     Its teeth in thee, be good enough, I pray thee,   35  
     To tell me who it is, ere it go further.'  
 And he to me: 'That is the antique spirit  
     Of execrable Myrrha, who became once,  
     Outside all normal love, her father's mistress.  
 She came to do her sin with him in this way,   40  
     That she did counterfeit another's semblance;  
     Just as the other—fleeing yonder—promised

(With the intent of winning the herd's fairest)  
To counterfeit the person of Donati,  
And make a will, and give the will due action.' 45  
And after the two rabid ones had passed us,  
On whom I had been keeping my eye fastened,  
I turned it to observe the ill-starred others.  
I noticed one whose body was of lute-shape,  
If only you had lopped him at the groin, 50  
About the point at which a man's shape forketh.  
The heavy dropsy which so much mismatcheth  
The limbs (through humours which it ill converteth)  
That face and belly correspond no longer,  
Was forcing him to keep his two lips parted, 55  
As doth the hectic man, who, in his thirsting,  
Turneth one chinwards and the other upwards.  
'O ye who go thus free of any torment  
(And why I know not) in the world of anguish,'  
He said to us, 'look well and pay attention 60  
Unto the wretchedness of Master Adam :  
I had in life enough of what I wanted,  
And now, alas, I crave a drop of water.  
The little rills which from the verdant ridges  
Of Casentino hurry down to Arno, 65  
Making their channels ever cool and moist,  
Are ever 'fore my eyes, and not for nothing,  
Because their image drieth me up more sadly  
Than the disease which maketh my face fleshless.

The rigid justice which doth now torment me           70  
     Findeth occasion from the place I sinned in  
     To make my sighs escape me ever quicker.  
 There is Romena where I once perverted  
     The metal with the impress of the Baptist,  
     Through which I left my body burnt on earth there.  
 But if I could see here the sorry spirit                 76  
     Of Guy or Alexander, or their brother,  
     I'd not exchange the sight for Fonte Branda.  
 One of them 's in already, if the furious                 79  
     Shades that go wandering round but tell me truly ;  
     But what's the good to me whose limbs are bounden?  
 If I were only light of foot sufficient  
     To go one inch within a hundred twelvemonths,  
     I should have started on the path already  
 To seek him out among this filthy people,             85  
     Despite the eleven miles the hell-pouch windeth,  
     And 'tis not less than half a one across it.  
 Through them it is that I'm in such a gang now,  
     And it was they that made me forge the florins  
     That had full three carats of baser metal.'         90  
 And I to him : ' Say, who are those two wights there,  
     Who steam as might a hand that's wet in winter,  
     And lie close up against thy right-hand quarter ?'  
 ' I found them here, and, since, they 've made no motion,'  
     Quoth he, ' when I was rained into this chasm ;     95  
     Nor do I think they will, for time eternal.



The one is the false woman who charged Joseph ;  
The other 's the false Sinon, Greek of Troy.  
'Tis from sharp fever that they thus are reeking.'  
And one of them, who took offence, it may be, 100  
On hearing himself mentioned so obscurely,  
Smote him with fist upon his leathery belly.  
It gave a sound as if it were a drum-skin,  
And Master Adam struck him on the face then,  
With his own arm, which did not seem less sturdy,  
And said to him : ' Although I am prevented 106  
From moving by the limbs that are so heavy,  
I have an arm that 's free for such occasions.'  
To which he made reply : ' When thou wast going  
Towards the stake, thou hadst it not so nimble, 110  
But quite as much and more when thou wast coining.'  
And he with dropsy : ' Thou say'st truly so-far ;  
But thou wast not so credible a witness  
When thou wast asked to speak the truth at Troy.'  
' If I spoke false, *thou* falsified'st the coinage,' 115  
Said Sinon, ' and I 'm here for one transgression,  
And thou for more than any other demon.'  
' Remember, O thou perjurer, the horse now,'  
Replied the one who had the swollen belly,  
' And rue the fact that all the world doth know it.' 120  
' Rue thou the thirst which even now is cracking,'  
The Greek went on, ' thy tongue; and the foul water  
Which hedgeth up thy paunch before thy eyes there.'

The coiner then : ' In *this* way thou 'lt rip open  
Thy mouth with evil-speaking, as thy wont is ; 125  
For if I'm thirsty and am stuffed with water,  
*Thou* hast the burning and the head that's aching,  
And to lick up the mirror of Narcissus  
Thou 'dst need, I trow, few words of invitation.'  
I was intently heeding what they uttered 130  
When, lo, the Master said to me, ' Ay, watch them ;  
For very soon I'll pick a quarrel with thee.'  
When thus I heard him speak to me with anger,  
I turned towards him in such great confusion  
That still it circleth in my recollection. 135  
And like to him who dreameth his own damage,  
And, as he dreameth, hopeth he is dreaming,  
Thus craving that which is as if 'twere not so,  
Such I became, unable to speak further,  
Who wished to plead excuse, and even did so, 140  
Yea, all the while, although I did not know it.  
' Less shame would wash away a fault that's greater,'  
The Master said, ' than that which thou com-  
mittedst ;  
So cast the burthen of all sadness from thee ;  
And so suppose that I am still beside thee, 145  
If it should hap again that fortune bring thee  
Where there be people in a tiff of *this* sort,  
Because the wish to hear them is a base one.'

## CANTO XXXI

The Brink of the lowest Pit.—The Giants : Nimrod, Ephialtes ;  
Antæus, who takes them down to the Ninth Circle.

ONE selfsame tongue proceeded first to sting me,  
So that it put in both my cheeks a colour,  
And then it reapplied the healing balsam.  
Thus, I have heard it said, the spear belonging  
Unto Achilles and his sire, was often 5  
The cause of sorry, then of happy, treatment.  
We turned our back upon the great sad valley,  
There, on the bank that is a girdle round it,  
And crossed it with no further conversation.  
Here it was less than night and less than daylight, 10  
So that my sight preceded me but little,  
But lo I heard a mighty horn resounding,  
Compared with which all thunder had been feeble ;  
Which, while it made my eyes go forth to meet it,  
Directed them entirely on one point. 15  
After the melancholy rout, whereafter  
The mighty Charles gave up his holy venture,  
Roland himself did not blow blast so awful.

Scarce had my head been turned in that direction,  
I thought I saw a many lofty towers, 20  
So that I said, 'My Master, what's yon city?'  
And he to me: 'Because thou now art straining  
Across the darkness at too great a distance,  
It happeneth that thou errest in thy fancy.  
Thou wilt perceive, if thou but reachest yonder, 25  
How much the sense is cheated at a distance;  
So therefore spur thyself a little faster.'  
Then with affection by the hand he took me  
And said: 'Before proceeding any further,  
So that the truth may seem to thee less wondrous, 30  
Know that they are not towers, but are giants;  
And they are in the pit, all round th' embankment,  
Each from the navel downwards, one and all, there.  
Even as in a fog, when it is clearing,  
The eye by gradual degrees perceiveth 35  
That which the vapour-laden air is hiding,  
So, piercing through the dense and gloomy medium,  
Approaching more and more towards the margin,  
The error fled, and terror overtook me:  
For (just as on its circular enclosure 40  
Montereggió doth crown itself with towers)  
The parapet by which the Pit is girdled  
Was overtopped by half the height of body  
Of those terrific giants that are threatened  
By Jove from heaven still, whene'er he thund'reth. 45

And I already saw of some the faces,  
Shoulders and chest, and greater part of belly,  
And down along their sides their two arms also.  
Most surely Nature, when she gave up forming  
Creatures of this sort, acted very wisely, 50  
In thus depriving Mars of suchlike slayers ;  
And even though of elephants and whale-fish  
She doth not yet repent, one looking closely  
Will deem her all the juster and discreeter :  
For where intelligence of mind is added 55  
To wickedness of purpose and to power,  
People can make themselves no shield against it.  
His face appeared to me as long and burly  
As the St. Peter's fir-cone that at Rome is ;  
And all the other bones were in proportion : 60  
So that the ledge, which formed a sort of kirtle  
Down from his waist, exposed so much above it,  
That, had they wished to reach to where his hair was,  
Three Frisians might have made vain boast to do so ;  
Since I could see some thirty ample palm's-breadths  
Down from the point at which a cloak is buckled.  
'Raphel, maï, amek, izabi, almi,' 67  
The savage mouth began at once to bellow,  
Which sweeter melodies but ill befitted.  
And unto him my Guide : 'Thou idiot soul there, 70  
Keep to thy horn, and vent thy feelings with it,  
Should anger or some other passion stir thee.

Seek round thy neck, and thou wilt find the strap there  
     By which it's fastened, O thou blund'ring spirit ;  
     And the horn itself, surrounding thy great bosom.' 75  
 Then said to *me* : ' He is his own accuser :  
     That one is Nimrod, through whose evil counsel  
     The world no longer speaketh one sole language.  
 Let's leave him there, and waste our words no longer ;  
     For every language unto him is even                 80  
     As his is unto others, which none knoweth.'  
 So we proceeded further on our journey,  
     Turning to leftward ; and at crossbow-distance  
     We found the other, far more fierce and bigger.  
 To bind him down, who may have been the master 85  
     I cannot tell you ; but his arms were pinioned—  
     The left in front of him, the right behind him—  
 By means of a chain, which held him there encompassed  
     From his neck downward ; so that on the naked,  
     It wound about him till the fifth volution.         90  
 ' This haughty one did even think to challenge  
     A trial of strength against the supreme Jove once,'  
     Said my Conductor, ' whence he hath such guerdon.  
 He's named Ephialtes, and he showed his prowess  
     What time the giants filled the gods with terror. 95  
     The arms he lifted never more he moveth.'  
 And I to him : ' If possible, I pray thee,  
     That even with the measureless Briaréus  
     These eyes of mine may now become acquainted.'

To which he answered : 'Thou shalt see Antæus, 100  
Not far from this, who speaketh and is unfettered,  
Who 'll take us to the depth of all that's guilty ;  
He whom thou fain wouldst see is far out yonder,  
And he is bound, and like in shape to this one,  
Excepting that his face is more ferocious.' 105  
No earthquake was at any time so mighty  
And of such strength in shaking of a tower  
As was Ephialtes in his sudden shaking.  
Then was I more in fear of death than ever.  
And terror would have been sufficient for it, 110  
If I had not at once beheld the shackles.  
We then proceeded on our journey further,  
And reached Antæus, who by five ells fully  
(Without the head) projected from the cavern.  
'O thou who whilom in the fateful valley 115  
Which rendered Scipio heritor of glory,  
When Hannibal and all his men turned tail there,  
Didst get a thousand lions as thy booty ;  
And who, if thou hadst shared the lofty warfare  
Thy brethren waged (so some still seem to fancy),  
Hadst made the Children of the Earth victorious ; 121  
Bear us below, nor show repugnance to it,  
There where the cold is locking the Cocytus,  
Lead us not unto Tityus nor Typhoeus ;  
This one can give the thing which here is yearned for ;  
So bend thee down, and wrinkle not thy muzzle. 126

He still can in the world restore thy credit,  
For he's alive, and still long life expecteth,  
If Grace do not recall him prematurely.'  
So said the Master; and the other quickly 130  
Stretched out his hands (and with them seized my  
Leader),  
From which once Hercules had felt great pressure.  
Virgil, on feeling himself being taken,  
Said unto me: 'Draw near, that I may take thee';  
Then of himself and me he made one bundle. 135  
As seemeth Carisenda when 'tis looked at  
From 'neath its slant, and when a cloud is passing  
Above, so that its leaning is inverted,  
So seemed to me Antæus, as I waited 139  
To see him stoop; and there was then a moment  
When I should have been glad to change my pathway.  
But lightly to the bottom that devoureth  
Both Lucifer and Judas, down he set us;  
Nor did he tarry longer there, so stooping;  
But rose just like a mast upon a vessel. 145



## CANTO XXXII

NINTH CIRCLE.—Frozen Cocytus and the Traitors.—First Ring (*Caïna*), containing Traitors to their Kinsfolk : the Counts of Mangona ; Camicion de' Pazzi.—Second Ring (*Antenora*), containing Traitors to their Country : Bocca degli Abati ; Buoso da Duera ; Ugolino.

IF only I had rhymes both harsh and husky,  
Such as were suited to the sorry chasm  
Above whose depth abut all other rock-reefs,  
I should squeeze forth the juice of my conception,  
More fully yet ; but as I have not got them,      5  
Not without fear I bring myself to speaking.  
For 'tis no enterprise to take at random,  
This sketching of the depth of all creation,  
Nor fit for tongue that calleth dad and mammy.  
But may those Ladies help me with my rhythm,      10  
Who in encircling Thebes once helped Amphion,  
That words may not diverge from what is real.  
O o'er all others ill-created rabble,  
That fill the place which it is hard to tell of,  
'Twere better ye had been or sheep or goats here !  
As soon as we were down in the dark well-shaft,      16

Beneath the giant's feet, and down much lower,  
And I was staring still at the high wall there,  
I heard this said to me : ' Mind how thou treadest,  
Walk so as not to stumble with thy footsoles 20  
Against the heads of the sad weary brethren ' ;  
Which made me turn, and there I saw before me,  
And 'neath my feet, a lake which, being frozen,  
Had got the look of glass and not of water.  
Never so thick a veil across its current 25  
Did wintry Danube make in Austericch,  
Nor Tanais out there beneath chill heavens,  
As there was here ; for even if Tabernicch  
Had fallen on to it, or Pietrapana,  
It scarce upon the brink would have made ' crick.'  
And as the frog doth sit and take to croaking 31  
With muzzle out of water, at the hour  
At which the boor's wife dreameth of much gleaning ;  
So, livid till the part where shame appeareth,  
The aching shades were sticking in the ice there, 35  
Setting their teeth to something like a stork's note.  
Each one of them was holding his head downwards ;  
Cold through their mouths, and heartache through  
their gazes,  
Bore witness to its presence there among them.  
When I had looked a little while around me, 40  
I noticed at my feet two locked so closely  
That their heads' hair was all mixed up together.

‘Tell me, ye two, whose breasts are locked so tightly,’  
Said I, ‘your names’; and back they bent their  
necks then;

And after they had raised their face towards me, 45  
Their eyes, which first were moistened inside only,  
Uprickled through the lids, and the frost clotted  
The tears between them, and again fast locked them.  
Clamp never girdled wood with wood together  
So tight as that; and so, as might two he-goats, 50  
They took to butting—such the wrath that seized  
them.

And one, whose head had even lost both ear-lobes,  
By reason of the cold, with face still down-turned,  
Said: ‘Wherefore mirror thyself so within us?  
If thou’st a mind to know who those two men are, 55  
The valley whence Bisenzio’s stream descendeth  
Was once their father Albert’s, and theirs also.  
They issued from one body; all Caïna  
Mightst thou seek through, and never find a shade  
there

More worthy to be sticking in this jelly;— 60  
Not he whose breast and shadow both were broken  
At one same stroke, and by the hand of Arthur;  
Nor yet Focaccia; nay, nor he who’s clogged me  
So with his head, that I can see no further,—  
Even he whose name was Sassol Mascheroni; 65  
If thou’rt a Tuscan, well know’st now who *he* was.

And that thou mayst not make me make more speeches,  
     Know that I once was Camicion de' Pazzi,  
     And that I wait Carlino to acquit me.'

Then I beheld a thousand faces purple 70  
     There from the cold ; from which I have a horror,  
     And always shall have, of all frozen waters.

And while we were proceeding t'wards the centre  
     To which each thing that hath a weight convergeth,  
     And I was shivering in th' eternal shadow ; 75

Whether from purpose, destiny, or hazard,  
     I cannot tell ; but, walking 'mong the heads there,  
     My foot hit one with violence in the visage.

Wailing, he chid : ' Why tramplest thou upon me ?  
     Unless thou comest to increase the vengeance 80  
     For Mont' Aperti, why dost thou molest me ? '

And I : ' My Master, wait me here a little,  
     While I remove a doubt respecting this one ;  
     Then thou canst make whatever haste thou pleasest.'

The Leader stopped ; and then I said to that one 85  
     Who still continued direly his blaspheming,  
     ' Who mayst thou be, who so abusest others ? '

' Now, who art *thou*, who crossest Antenora  
     Striking,' he answered, ' other people's faces,  
     So that, if thou wert living, 'twere excessive ? ' 90

' Living I am ; and glad be thou to hear it,'  
     Was my reply, ' if wantest reputation,  
     And that I add thy name to th' other notes here.'

And he to me : ‘ I crave the very converse.

Get thee from hence, nor give me further trouble : 95  
 Ill know’st thou how to flatter in this hole here.’

Then thereupon I took him by the neck-scruff,

And said, ‘Thou ’lt have to tell me what thy name is,  
 Or not a hair shall there be left upon thee.’

So he to me : ‘ Though thou shouldst leave me hairless,

I ’ll neither tell thee who I am, nor show ’t thee. 101

Nay, though thou fall a thousand times upon me.’

I ’d screwed his hair within my hand already

And several tufts had I already taken,

While he was barking with his eyes held downward ;

When, lo, another cried : ‘ What is it, Bocca ? 106

Is ’t not enough to clatter with thy jaw-bones,

But must thou bark as well ? What fiend hath  
 touched thee ?’

‘ Now,’ quoth I then, ‘ I ’ll have thee talk no further,

Thou cursed traitor ; for, to thy discredit, 110

I ’ll carry back a true account about thee.’

‘ Go,’ he replied, ‘ relate what things thou carest ;

But don’t suppress, if from in here thou ’scapest,

About the one whose tongue hath been so ready ;

He mourneth here the silver of the Frenchmen. 115

“ I saw ”—thou then canst say—“ him of Duéra,

Where it is cool and pleasant for the sinners.”

If thou be asked what others were there also,

Thou ’st at thy side the man of Becchería

Whose collar-cloth was cut in two by Florence. 120  
 Gianni del Soldaniér, I think, is standing  
     Out there with Ganellón and Tribaldello,  
     Who oped Faenza's gates when all were sleeping.'  
 We had already left him there behind us,  
     When I perceived two frozen in a hollow      125  
     So that one head was as a hat to th' other.  
 And just as bread is eaten from sheer hunger,  
     The upper's teeth were fastened on the lower,  
     Just where the brain and nape are fixed together.  
 Not otherwise might Tydeus have been gnawing      130  
     The brows of Menalippus in his hatred,  
     Than this one did the skull and other portions.  
 'O thou who showest in such beast-like manner  
     Thy hatred of the one whom thou art eating,  
     Tell me the cause,' I said, 'with this condition, 135  
 That if thou hast good ground of plaint against him,  
     I, knowing who ye are and what his crime is,  
     Shall then repay thee in the world above us,  
 If that with which I'm speaking be not withered.'

## CANTO XXXIII

NINTH CIRCLE (*continued*).—Second Ring (*Antenora*) *continued* :  
Count Ugolino and Archbishop Ruggieri.—Third Ring  
(*Ptolomæa*), containing Betrayers of Friends and Guests :  
Fra Alberigo ; Branca d'Oria ; Souls whose bodies are still  
apparently alive on earth.

HE raised his mouth from the terrific morsel,  
That guilty soul, and wiped it on the hair-locks  
Of the head which at the back he had been mangling ;  
Then he began : 'Thou 'dst have me re-awaken  
A desperate woe, that maketh my heart tighten 5  
At the mere thought, before I even tell it :  
But if the words I speak are to be grain-seed  
To breed the traitor's shame whom I am gnawing,  
Speaking and weeping shalt thou see together.  
I know not who thou art, nor in what manner 10  
Thou 'st made thy way down here ; but one from  
Florence  
Thou seemest to me truly when I hear thee.  
Thou must know, I was the County Ugolino,  
And this was the Archbishop Ruggiéri.  
Now will I tell thee why I'm such a neighbour. 15

That through the working of his evil plottings,  
Confiding in his pledges, I was taken,  
And then was killed, there is no need to tell thee.  
But what thou canst not possibly have heard yet,  
That is, to what extent my death was cruel, 20  
Thou now shalt hear, and judge if he hath wronged  
me.  
A narrow opening, there inside the bird-mew,  
Which now, through me, hath got the name of  
hunger,  
And inside which yet others must be prisoned,  
Had shown me through its orifice already 25  
More moons than one, when came the evil slumber  
Which rent for me the veil that hid the future.  
This man appeared to me a lord and master,  
Hunting the wolf and wolf-cubs on the mountain,  
Because of which the Pisans can't see Lucca. 30  
With lean, and eager, and attentive bitches,  
Gualandi, and Sismondi, and Lanfranchi  
Had been sent out before him to the front there.  
After a little while they seemed exhausted,  
That father and his sons; and with sharp fangs then  
Methought I saw the flanks of them ripped open. 36  
When I awoke, before the break of morning,  
I heard my children wailing in their slumber,  
Who were beside me, and entreating bread there.  
Cruel indeed art thou, if thou lament not 40



At the mere thought of what my heart foretold me ;  
And if thou weep'st not, what art wont to weep at ?  
Now they had waked ; and th' hour was approaching  
At which the food had hitherto been brought us ;  
And from his vision, each of us was doubting. 45  
And then I heard them locking, down below us,  
The frightful tower's door ; at which I fastened  
My eyes on my sons' faces without speaking.  
I did not weep, inside I grew so stony ;  
But *they* were weeping ; and my sweet small Anselm  
Said, " Father, thou art staring so : what is it ? " 51  
Yet still I shed no tear, nor did I answer  
All through that day, nor yet the night that followed,  
Till the next sun came forth upon the world there.  
As soon as something like a ray had entered 55  
The melancholy dungeon, and I noticed  
Upon four faces even my own aspect,  
I bit my hands—yea, both of them—from anguish ;  
And they, conceiving that it was from craving  
For food to eat, all of a sudden rose then, 60  
And said, " O father, greatly less 'twill grieve us  
If thou wilt feed on *us* ; for thou didst clothe us  
In this sad flesh : so strip it off us also. "  
I calmed me then, to not increase their sadness ;  
That day and all the next, we all sat silent ; 65  
O stony earth, O why didst thou not open ?  
When we had reached unto the fourth day's dawning,

Then Gaddo cast himself before my feet there,  
 Exclaiming, "Father, why wilt thou not help me?"  
 And then he died; and even as thou seest me, 70  
 So I beheld the three drop one by one there,  
 'Twixt the fifth day and sixth; and I betook me,  
 Already blind, to groping over each one,  
 And two days long I called them when they'd died  
 there;  
 Then fasting was more powerful than sorrow.' 75  
 When he had spoken thus, with oblique eyeballs,  
 He seized again the wretched skull and gnawed it  
 With teeth as strong as on the bone a dog's are.  
 Ah, Pisa, thou invective of the peoples  
 Of the fair country where the *si* is uttered: 80  
 Since neighbour states are tardy to chastise thee,  
 Let Capraia and Gorgóna shift their places  
 And make a fence across its mouth for Arno,  
 That every being may be drowned within thee;  
 For even though the County Ugolino 85  
 Was said to have betrayed thee of thy castles,  
 Thou shouldst not have so crucified his children.  
 Devoid of guilt, because of age still tender,—  
 New Thebes!—were Uguccone and Brigata,  
 And th' other two my verse above hath told of. 90  
 We passed beyond, to where the frozen water  
 Doth ruggedly enclose another people,  
 Not turned face down, but all of them face upward.

There weeping's self admitteth not of weeping ;  
And woe, which findeth in their eyes a barrier, 95  
Doth there turn inwards to increase the anguish,  
Because the first tears shed become a cluster,  
And even like a vizor made of crystal,  
Fill the whole cavity beneath the eyebrow.  
And even though, as in a part that's callous, 100  
Because of the great cold there, all sensation  
Had on my face departed from its station,  
It yet appeared as if I felt some wind there,  
So that I said : ' My Master, who doth move this ?  
Is not all steam extinguished down below here ? ' 105  
But he to me : ' Anon thou 'lt reach a place where  
Thy eye will yield an answer in this matter,  
When thou shalt see the cause of the blast's stream-  
ing.'  
And one of the sad wights of the cold ice-crust  
Cried out to us : ' O souls that are so cruel 110  
That the last place of all hath been assigned you,  
Lift off the rigid ice-veils from my eyeballs,  
That I may vent the pain my heart is full of,  
A little, ere the tears again be frozen.  
So I to him : ' If thou wouldst have me help thee, 115  
Say who thou art ; and if I do not free thee  
May I attain the bottom of this ice here.'  
So he replied : ' I'm brother Alberigo ;  
I'm he who culled the fruit of the ill garden ;

Who am repaid a date for every fig here.' 120  
 'O,' said I then, 'and art thou dead already?'  
 And he to me then: 'How my body fareth  
 There in the world above I have no knowledge:  
 This is the vantage of this Ptolomæa,  
 That oftentimes the soul is cast within it 125  
 Ere Atropos hath given it its impulsion;  
 And so that thou more willingly mayst wipe me  
 These glass-converted tears from off the visage,  
 Know that as soon as any soul betrayeth  
 (As I once did), its body's taken from it 130  
 By a demon, who doth govern it thereafter,  
 Until its time shall be accomplished fully.  
 Itself is cast headlong into this cistern;  
 And still the body's seen perchance above there,  
 Of yonder shade that wint'reth here behind me: 135  
 Thou oughtst to know it, if thou'rt just come down  
 here.  
 He is Ser Branca d'Oria; many twelvemonths  
 Have passed away since he was thus imprisoned.'  
 'I think,' I said to him, 'that thou deceiv'st me,  
 For Branca d'Oria hath not died at all yet, 140  
 But eateth, drinketh, sleepeth, donneth garments.'  
 'In the pit above,' quoth he, 'of Evil-Talons,  
 The place in which the sticky pitch is seething,  
 Nothing had yet been seen of Michael Zanche,  
 When this one left a demon to replace him 145

In his own body, and inside a kinsman's,  
Who helped to carry out the treason with him.  
But now stretch out thy hand in this direction ;  
Unclose my eyes ' ;—and I did not unclose them ;  
And rudeness was a courtesy towards him.      150

Ah Genoese, ye men who are abnormal  
In every wont, and full of every trespass :  
Why have ye not been scattered from the world yet ?  
For with the worst of all Romagna's spirits,  
I came on one of you, who, for his doings,      155  
In soul is bathed already in Cocytus,  
And in the flesh doth seem on earth still living.

## CANTO XXXIV

**NINTH CIRCLE** (*continued*).—Fourth Ring (*Judecca*), containing Betrayers of their Benefactors—Description of Lucifer; Judas Iscariot; Brutus and Cassius.—The Centre of the World—Inversion of the Force of Gravitation, and Ascent of Virgil and Dante to the Southern Hemisphere.

‘*VEXILLA Regis prodeunt Inferni*

Towards us now : so therefore look before thee,’

My Master said, ‘and see if thou discern him.’

As, when a very heavy fog is spreading,

Or when our hemisphere approacheth night-time 5

A far mill loometh, which the wind is turning,—

Methought that now I looked on such a structure.

Then, from the wind, I drew myself to rearward

Of my Conductor : for he was my sole shelter.

Now (and with fear I put it into metre) 10

I was where all the shades were covered over

And were seen through, just like a mote in  
crystal.

Some lie about, and others stand erect there ;

One with its head, another with its feet up ;

Another, bow-like, turneth its face footward. 15

As soon as we had got so far in front there,  
 That now my Master thought it fit to show me  
 The Creature that once had the fair appearance,  
 He shifted from before me, and he stopped me,  
 And said, 'That's Dis; and we have reached the  
 place now 20  
 Where it were well that thou be armed with firm-  
 ness.'

How frozen and how faint of heart I grew then,  
 Ask me not, Reader, for I cannot write it,  
 Because all speech would be unequal to it.  
 I did not die, and yet remained not living: 25  
 Think for thyself now, if thou'st aught of judg-  
 ment,  
 What I became, deprived of one and th' other.

The Emp'ror of the ever-aching kingdom  
 From half-breast up, projected from the ice there,  
 And I myself match better with a giant 30  
 Than giants tally with his mere arms even.  
 Now judge from this how mighty must the whole be,  
 Which hath to tally with such parts as these are.

If he was once as fair as now he's hideous,  
 And once raised up his brow against his Maker, 35  
 Well may all mourning have proceeded from him.  
 O what a mighty prodigy I thought it,  
 When I perceived his head had got three faces!  
 One was in front, and that one was of crimson:

Of the two others, which were joined to this one      40  
     Right o'er the very middle of each shoulder,  
     And were united at the crest together,  
 The right one seemed to me 'twixt white and yellow :  
     The left one was, to look at, like the faces  
     Of those who come from whence the Nile descendeth.  
 From under each there issued two great pinions,      46  
     Such as were suited to a bird so mighty :  
     No sea-sails did I ever see to match them.  
 They had no feathers ; but were like to bats'-wings  
     As to their outer shape ; and aye he flapped them,  
     So that three winds were ever coming from him. 51  
 On this account Cocytus was all frozen.  
     He wept from out six eyes, and down three chins  
     too  
     The tears were dropping with a gory slobber.  
 In every mouth his teeth were ever crunching      55  
     Some sinner in the manner of a hemp-brake,  
     So that he tortured three of them in this way.  
 To the one in front, the biting was as nothing  
     Matched with the clawing ; for the back was some-  
     times  
     Completely stripped of all the skin upon it.      60  
 'That soul up there that hath the greatest tor-  
     ment,'  
 The Master said, 'is Judas Ischariotes,  
     Whose head's inside, and legs outside are jerking.



Of the two others—those who hang head downwards—

He, hanging from the swarthy jowl, is Brutus; 65

See how he's writhing, though he speaketh nothing;

And th' other, Cassius, who doth seem so thickset.

But night once more is rising, and by *this* time

We ought to leave, as we have seen the whole now.'

At his request I grasped him by the neck then, 70

And he took note of moment and position,

And when the wings were adequately open,

He grappled tightly to the hairy flanks there,

From tuft to tuft then let himself go downward,

Between the shaggy hair and frozen ice-crust. 75

When we had reached the point at which the thigh-bone

Revolveth, even where the hips are thickest,

The Leader with much trouble and exhaustion

Turned himself round, with head where shanks were

lately,

And grappled to the hair like one who climbeth, 80

So that I thought we were returning Hellwards.

'Now keep firm hold, for by this sort of ladder,'

The Master said, while panting like one weary,

'We have to take our leave of all this evil.'

Then through a rocky orifice he issued, 85

And placed me on its brink in sitting posture,

And then he stretched a cautious step towards me.

I raised my eyes, expecting to be seeing

Lucifer there, as I had even left him :

But I beheld him with his legs turned upward : 90  
 And whether at that sight I was bewildered,  
 Let the dense folk imagine, who perceive not  
 What was the point through which I had been  
 passing.

‘Lift thyself up,’ the Master said, ‘erect now :  
 The way is long, and difficult the footpath ; 95  
 And now the sun ’s returning to the mid-third.’

It was no presence-chamber of a palace  
 Which we had got to, but a natural dungeon,  
 Which had bad flooring and much want of lighting.

‘Before I heave myself from out this chasm, 100  
 O Master mine,’ quoth I when I was straightened,  
 ‘To spare me error, talk to me a little.

Where is the ice? And why is this one sticking  
 Thus upside down? And how, in so few moments,  
 From eve to morning hath the sun crossed over?’ 105

And he to me : ‘Thou think’st thyself still standing.  
 On th’ other side the centre, where I grappled  
 The hair of that curst worm by whom the world ’s  
 pierced :

There thou wast only while I was descending :  
 When I turned round, thou crossedst o’er the  
 point 110

To which all weights are drawn from every quarter ;  
 And now beneath that hemisphere thou standest  
 Which is opposed to that which the great dryness

Doth cover, and beneath whose apex perished  
The Man whose birth and lifetime both were sinless.  
Thou hast thy feet upon the little sphere now 116  
Which formeth th' other face of the Judecca.  
Here it is morn when over there 'tis even ;  
And this one here, whose hair hath been our ladder,  
Is sticking still, as all along he stuck there. 120  
This was the side on which he fell from Heaven ;  
And then the land, which spread at first on *this* side,  
From fear of him, did screen itself with ocean,  
And came towards our hemisphere, and doubtless  
To escape from him a vacuum was left here 125  
By the land that's seen on *this* side, which rushed  
upwards.  
A spot's down there from Beelzebub as distant  
As is the whole extension of the tomb there,  
Which is not known by sight, but by the murmur  
Of a small rivulet, which there descendeth 130  
Down through a rocky hole that it hath bitten,  
With tortuous course and sloping very little.'  
The Leader and I, by that secreted pathway,  
Proceeded to return to the bright world then,  
And never giving thought to any resting, 135  
We clambered up, he first and I behind him,  
Till I caught sight of some of the fair objects  
Which heaven holdeth, through a round pertusion ;  
And we emerged, to see once more the planets.



## NOTES

### CANTO I

Verse

2. The Forest of *Sin*.
13. The Hill of Virtue.
16. The Sun.
- 32-34. The Leopard probably symbolises Sensuality. Some, taking it in a political sense, have thought that it meant Florence, and that its spots meant the Florentine factions.
45. The Lion apparently means Pride or Ambition; or (if the meaning is political) the House of France.
49. The She-Wolf symbolises Cupidity; or, politically, the Papacy.
63. Virgil.
70. Julius Cæsar.
74. Æneas.
101. This future liberator may be either Christ, or, more probably, some Pope or German Emperor, or Can Grande, Lord of Verona, not to mention others.
107. The death of the Soul itself.
127. As a Pagan.

### CANTO II

13. Æneas.
15. *i.e.* was removed alive to the other world.
16. God.
18. *Who*, the Roman People; *what*, the Roman Empire.
21. I have followed the reading *alta*, not *alma*.

## Verse

26. The cause of his success over Turnus, and, indirectly (centuries later), of the Papacy ('the Papal mantle'); *i.e.* Æneas, in the unseen world, heard things which led to his success, which led to the foundation of the Roman Empire, which led to the Papacy.
28. Thither, *i.e.* to the other world; the 'Vessel of Election,' *i.e.* St. Paul.
44. Virgil.
52. In suspense; neither damned nor saved, but in Limbo, as being a Pagan.
53. Beatrice, Dante's first love, then dead.
71. From Paradise.
76. Here Beatrice appears to symbolise Theology or Grace.
78. The Heaven of the Moon, which, according to Dante's astronomy, was the narrowest of the heavenly spheres.
83. The centre alluded to is Hell, which is the central spot of the Earth, which is itself the centre of the Universe.
93. The flame of Hell.
94. The Virgin Mary.
97. St. Lucia. Allegorically, illuminating Grace.
108. On the stormy flood of Life.
134. 'Courteous thou,' *i.e.* Virgil.

## CANTO III

1. A detailed mapping out of Dante's Hell and computation of its distances does not enter into the scope of these Notes. Suffice it to say here that Dante conceives Hell as an enormous funnel-shaped cavern, whose apex or lowest point is the centre of the earth, and which is divided into concentric ledges or terrace-like expanses whose diameter gets ever smaller as they approach the bottom. Of these circles there are nine, themselves subdivided into concentric zones or rings. Between the sixth and seventh circles there is an exceptionally deep drop, and a yet deeper one, known as the Great

## Verse

Abyss, between the seventh and eighth. The eighth circle is divided into ten immense trenches or Hell-pouches (bolgias) separated from each other by ramparts or embankments, and crossed by bridges of reef. Although the distances (by whatever system they be computed) must be presumably measured by hundreds of miles, Dante and Virgil accomplish the total descent in twenty-four hours—an obviously miraculous performance.

- 5-6. The Power of the Father ; the Wisdom of the Son ; the Love of the Holy Ghost.  
 18. The Knowledge of God.  
 60. Generally supposed to mean Celestine v., who resigned the Papacy in 1294.

## CANTO IV

68. I have followed the reading *sommo*, not *sonno*.  
 131. Aristotle.  
 141. Tully, *i.e.* Cicero.

## CANTO V

21. As Charon had.  
 54. Of many peoples speaking different languages.  
 74. Paolo and Francesca. The latter was the daughter of the Lord of Ravenna, and was married to the ugly and crippled son of Malatesta, Lord of Rimini. She fell in love with her brother-in-law, Paolo Malatesta. Dante makes her relate in this Canto the story of the fatal kiss which led to her seduction and death. Her husband stabbed her and her lover together about the year 1284.  
 81. Some One Else, *i.e.* God.  
 86. The evil air, *i.e.* the stormy hell-gust which tormented them.  
 87. Of Dante.  
 97. Ravenna.

## Verse

103. I have endeavoured to translate this celebrated line so as to leave its meaning as ambiguous as in the original. It may mean either: 'Love that exempts no one who is loved from loving in return'—which makes questionable sense—or, 'Love which exempts no one who is loved from the consequences of loving back again.'
107. Caïna is the name given by Dante to one of the Rings in the ninth or lowest circle of Hell, and is the abode of treacherous murderers. The name is derived from Cain.
121. These lines have been challenged by Alfred de Musset in his own famous verses to Georges Sand (*Souvenir*):—
- 'Dante, pourquoi dis-tu qu'il n'est pire misère  
Qu'un souvenir heureux dans les jours de douleur?  
Quel chagrin t'a dicté cette parole amère,  
Cette offense au malheur?'
- There is much to be said for each point of view.
123. 'Thy Teacher,' i.e. Virgil. But it has been supposed by some to mean Boëthius.
137. That is, the book played the part of Gallehaut, who was the go-between of Lancelot and Queen Guinevere.

## CANTO VI

1. The idea is that the mind, in swooning, folds up as might a flower.
42. Thou wast born before I died.
44. By making his features unrecognisable.
49. Florence.
52. Ciacco is pronounced as a dissyllable, the Italian *cia* being the equivalent of the English *cha*.
64. This prediction refers to the state of things in Florence about the year 1300, when Dante presumably wrote this Canto. The 'Rustic' party was that of the *Whites*, and was so called because its leading family, the Cerchi, had lately come from the country.



## Verse

66. The other party, *i.e.* the *Blacks*.  
 68. Three suns, *i.e.* three years.  
 69. 'One who tacketh,' *i.e.* one who favours now one side and now the other. This was the Pope (Boniface VIII.).  
 71. The other, *i.e.* the *Whites*.  
 73. Two men are just, etc. Probably Dante himself and his friend Cavalcanti, or Dino Compagni.  
 79. All Ghibelline leaders.  
 86. 'A different sin.' Farinata degli Uberti (see Canto x.) is in a lower circle for heresy; Tegghiaio and Rusticucci for sin against nature (Canto xvi.); Arrigo and Mosca as disseminators of discord (Canto xxviii.).  
 96. The hostile power, *i.e.* hostile to sin, is Christ.  
 106. Thy science, *i.e.* theology.  
 111. More hope of perfection after the Day of Judgment than before it.  
 115. Plutus, the god of riches.

## CANTO VII

1. *Pape Satàn*, etc. These words are jargon in which some resemblance to Greek and Hebrew words has been found, and would seem to be a cry of warning to Satan.  
 3. The courteous sage, *i.e.* Virgil.  
 12. The violation of Heaven implied in the rebellion of Satan. The Italian word *strupo*, here used by Dante, is believed by some to mean not violation, but troop or cohort (of rebel angels). I have followed the commoner interpretation.  
 22. Charybdis, the whirlpool of the Straits of Messina.  
 25-35. Each of the two troops, respectively composed of misers and spendthrifts, kept swinging round half the circle, and on their meeting, each was hurled back again by the other, to clash again together at the opposite point of the diameter.  
 46. Tonsured priests.

## Verse

- 55. At the two points of the circle, as explained above.
- 74. Angelic intelligences guiding the stars.
- 78. Fortune.
- 80. From nation to nation and family to family.
- 95. The Angels.
- 96. Her sphere, *i.e.* her wheel.
- 97. To what will excite greater pity.
- 103. 'Perse' is a blackish purple colour.

## CANTO VIII

- 7. Virgil.
- 19. Phlegyas, a figure from Greek mythology. He was king of the Lapithæ. He set fire to the temple of Apollo, who had made love to his daughter Coronis, and Apollo killed him and condemned him to the nether world.
- 27. Because Dante, being alive, was heavy; while Virgil, being a disembodied soul, was weightless.
- 30. Because of the weight of Dante.
- 43. 'He,' *i.e.* Virgil.
- 46. Filippo Argenti, a Florentine knight, famous for his violence and his ostentation. He belonged to the Adimari family, political opponents of Dante.
- 50. Up there, *i.e.* in the world of life.
- 89. Come thou (Virgil) alone; and let him (Dante) turn back.
- 96. To the upper world.
- 103. That same lord, *i.e.* Virgil.
- 105. God.
- 125. The fiends were believed to have tried to prevent Christ's descent into Limbo at the outer gate of Hell.
- 127. The 'dead' inscription. Here the word 'dead' probably means dusky.
- 128. There has been much uncertainty as to who this is; but the general opinion is that it is an angel sent by God.

## CANTO IX

## Verse

1. That is to say, the pallor which my cowardice forced upon my cheek, being seen by Virgil, put an end to the flush (of indignation) which had just appeared upon his own face.
- 7-9. These broken thoughts of Virgil's refer to Beatrice ('such a helper'). The word 'unless' probably implies the thought that Virgil may have mistaken the way. The words 'another's coming' refer to the expected angel.
- 16-18. He means, whether any of the souls in Limbo (to which part of Hell Virgil belonged) ever come down into this nether region.
23. Erichtho was a Thessalian sorceress, a contemporary of Virgil's, who perhaps outlived him, and who is mentioned in Lucan. Who the spirit was, who, according to this passage, was fetched from the nether Hell by Virgil, has never been explained.
25. 'My flesh had but lately been stripped of my soul.'
41. I follow the reading *serpentelli e ceraste*.
43. Virgil.
44. Proserpine.
45. The Greek name for the Furies.
55. Notice the rapidity with which Virgil makes Dante turn round, and closes his eyes for him, to prevent his being petrified by the sight of the gorgon Medusa.
62. There has been much controversy respecting the hidden doctrine here alluded to; and remorse, symbolised by the Furies, doubt symbolised by the petrifying face of Medusa, and philosophic help symbolised by the hands of Virgil, have all been discussed to elucidate the point. Some, like Fraticelli, believe that Dante's mysterious *terzina* applies to what follows, and not to what precedes it, and connect it with the coming of the angel described in the following forty lines.
79. *Al passo* may mean either 'at the ferry,' or 'at a foot's pace.' I follow the latter meaning, with Fraticelli and

Verse

- others. Some, for instance the late Duke of Sermoneta, have sought to prove that this figure crossing the Styx is Æneas; others, that it is Mercury; but the majority see in it an angel.
98. This is an allusion to Hercules' treatment of Cerberus, who opposed his entrance into the nether world.
112. Arles appears to have been remarkable in the Middle Ages for the great number of its tombs; and the same was apparently the case with Pola on the Gulf of Quarnaro in the Adriatic. This line is interesting as showing Dante's view of the boundaries of Italy.
131. According to the degree of guilt.

## CANTO X

1. I follow the reading *stretto calle*, not *secreto calle*.
4. 'O highest Virtue,' etc. He means Virgil.
10. It was commonly believed that the seat of the Last Judgment would be the Valley of Jehoshaphat.
16. The desire that Dante was concealing was doubtless that of seeing Farinata, whom he indeed comes upon almost immediately afterwards.
22. The suddenness of this apostrophe is one of the finest things in the *Inferno*; as indeed may be said of the whole wonderful dialogue between Dante and Farinata, interrupted as it is with consummate dramatic art by Cavalcante's question.—'Thy mode of speaking,' *i.e.* Thy Tuscan accent.—'That noble birthplace,' *i.e.* Florence.
32. Farinata degli Uberti, a noble Florentine leader of the Ghibelline party, and belonging to the generation immediately preceding that of Dante. In 1250 he and the leading Ghibellines were exiled from Florence, and ten years later, with the help of the Sienese, utterly defeated the Florentine Guelphs at the battle of Montaperti, near the little river Arbia, capturing the war-chariot of Florence. Dante's ancestors (and he himself at this period) were Guelphs.

## Verse

39. Of the two meanings attributed to the word *conte*, viz. 'distinct' and 'numbered, counted,' I have chosen the latter as more natural in this case.
51. 'That art,' *i.e.* the art of returning from exile. It is hard to say which is the finer, the haughtiness of Farinata's ghost, or that of Dante, as testified by his answer.
52. The shade that so strangely interrupts the dialogue between Farinata and Dante is that of Cavalcante Cavalcanti, the father of Dante's friend Guido Cavalcanti.
62. 'He who is waiting there,' *i.e.* Virgil. Dante, in saying that Guido Cavalcanti had had a scorn for Virgil, probably means merely that he had neglected the study of Latin in favour of Italian.
73. 'That other lofty-souled one,' *i.e.* Farinata. Nothing can be finer, from a dramatic point of view, than the way in which Farinata continues his previous dialogue with Dante without seeming even to have noticed Cavalcante's interruption.
79. 'The Lady who here ruleth,' *i.e.* Proserpine, mistress of the nether world, identified with Diana, and therefore meaning the moon—a curious bit of ancient mythology. Farinata here prophesies to Dante that the face of the moon shall not be rekindled fifty times (that is, that fifty lunar months, or a little less than four years, shall not elapse) before he himself (Dante) shall learn how difficult an art is that of returning from exile. And in fact Dante, with others of his party, made an unsuccessful attempt to return to Florence about four years after 1300, which is the presumable date for his descent into Hell and his dialogue with the spirit of Farinata.
83. 'That people,' *i.e.* the Florentines, who pursued the family of Farinata with merciless persistence.
- 85-88. After the battle of Montaperti, near the little river Arbia (see note to verse 32), a prayer to God against the family of the Uberti seems to have been repeated in the church of San Giovanni, the present baptistery of Florence.

## Verse

- 89-93. This superb rejoinder refers to Farinata's opposition to the attempt made by the other leaders after the battle of Montaperti to have Florence razed to the ground and its population transferred to Empoli.
97. Dante here conceives the souls in Hell to have the power of foreseeing the future with regard to the world of life, but not that of seeing what was going on there in the present. 'You 've another fashion,' *i.e.* 'you have not that power.'
- 106-108. From the Day of Judgment. The souls in the nether world will then lose their power of mental vision.
110. Cavalcante, who had fallen back into the red-hot tomb, on understanding Dante to say that his son was dead.
112. The error, namely, of supposing that spirits in Hell know what is going on in the world of life.
119. The Suabian Emperor, Frederick II., had died exactly fifty years before, that is to say in 1250. Dante places this semi-Sicilian, semi-German dilettante and famous adversary of the Papacy among the Epicureans on account of his free life and his religious indifference.
120. By 'the Cardinal' is meant the Ghibelline Cardinal Ottaviano degli Ubaldini. He seems to have expressed doubts as to the existence of the soul, on which account he is placed among the Epicureans.
121. 'Concealed himself,' *i.e.* sank back into the tomb.
127. 'What thou hast heard against thyself,' *i.e.* Farinata's prediction of evil (verses 89-91, above).
131. Beatrice.

## CANTO XI

8. There has been much controversy as to whether Dante did or did not confound Pope Anastasius II. with the Greek Emperor of the same name, both of whom were suspected of heresy towards the end of the fifth century. Photinus was a deacon of Thessalonica, supposed to be guilty of

## Verse

- the heresy of believing that the Holy Ghost did not proceed from the Father, and that the Father was greater than the Son.
13. Dante means that his companion should find something—say some subject of talk—to compensate them for their loss of time, while they wait on account of the stench; and so Virgil takes the opportunity to explain to him the composition of the lower circles into which they are about to descend.
43. Deprive himself of the world of life, *i.e.* commit suicide.
49. Caorsa, *i.e.* Cahors, a town of the South of France, which, in Dante's time, was famous for the number of its usurers.
50. That is, on him who blasphemes in all sincerity, and not merely in thoughtlessness.
- 61-63. He means that, in the case of treachery, not only are mere human good faith and affection forgotten, but also the special agreements by which the traitor has bound himself.
65. *Dis* here means Satan.
73. The city of Dis.
80. The *Ethics* of Aristotle.
101. The *Physics* of Aristotle.
110. He means that Genesis teaches that man must earn his living through Nature (agriculture) and Art, both of which the usurer despises.
106. 'These same two,' *i.e.* God's art and man's art.
- 113, 114. The constellations of Pisces (the Fishes) and of the Wain or Great Bear. The Caurus was a wind that blew from the north-west. The authorities explain that this position of the stars would imply that it was some two hours before sunrise in the world of life.

## CANTO XII

## Verse

12. The Minotaur. See *Classical Dictionary*.
17. 'The Duke of Athens,' *i.e.* Theseus. 'This one,' *i.e.* Dante. 'Thy sister,' *i.e.* Ariadne. 'Your torments' means 'the torments in this nether world of yours.'
26. He, *i.e.* Virgil.
30. 'Unwonted,' because they were never trodden by the feet of live men.
- 34-39. Virgil had told Dante in Canto IX (verses 22-30) that he had once already, shortly before Christ's death, been down to this lower part of Hell. 'He who took from Dis (Satan) the mighty booty' means Christ, who was supposed to have carried away from Hell a great number of souls who were in the highest circle (Limbo).
- 40-43. This is an allusion to the doctrine of Empedocles, according to which a condition of chaos might be produced by the world's atoms reuniting, like with like. 'That love' therefore means the love of the homogeneous atoms for each other.
47. The river Phlegethon.
67. The story of Hercules, Nessus, and Dejanira will be found in the *Classical Dictionary*.
72. Pholus, killed by Hercules.
81. Dante.
84. The chest, where the human and equine natures are blended in the Centaur.
88. Beatrice.
107. This Alexander would seem to be, not Alexander the Great, but Alexander of Pheræ in Thessaly.—Dionysius the First of Syracuse.
110. Usually called Ezelino or Ezelin of Romano, tyrant of Padua and Imperial Vicar of Frederick II. of Suabia. He extended his power over the greater part of North Italy. A crusade was preached against him by the Pope, and he was killed in 1260. His cruelties left an indelible



## Verse

impression on men's minds, and gave rise to the tradition that he was the son of Satan. Shelley alludes to another tradition respecting him in the *Lines written in the Euganean Hills* :

'Son and Mother, Death and Sin,  
Played at Dice for Ezelin,  
Till Death cried "I win! I win!"'

111. Obizzo of Este, who succeeded to the marquisate of Ferrara, Modena, and Reggio, the year before Dante's birth. He took the Guelph side, and got, perhaps unjustly, the reputation of great cruelty. He was believed to have been smothered by his son in 1293. Dante seems to call him stepson in the sense of 'unnatural son.'
114. Virgil means that he gives up for the moment to Nessus his part as leader. Some think that the words *first* and *second* refer to their relative position on the Centaur's back.
- 119-120. Guy de Montfort, who in 1270 killed Prince Henry, nephew of our Henry III., in the church of Viterbo, while he was hearing mass ('in God's bosom'). Prince Henry's heart is said to have been placed in a casket on London Bridge.
125. Some mss., instead of *copria* (covered), have *cocea* (scalded).
135. Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, who fought Rome in the third century B.C.—Sextus, the son of Pompey the Great, placed here as a famous pirate.
137. Two famous robber barons of Tuscany in the middle of the thirteenth century.—Pazzo for Pazzi.
139. 'He,' *i.e.* Nessus.

## CANTO XIII

9. The little river Cecina and the town of Corneto respectively mark the boundaries of the Tuscan Maremma, then famous for its dense tangles filled with wild beasts.
11. Virgil's *Æneid*, Book iii. 210-228.
46. Virgil is addressing the speaking tree. The words 'as yet

Verse

but from my rhyming' refer to the similar miracle of a soul imprisoned in a tree in the *Aeneid*, iii. 26-42. 'Rhyming' stands for verse, there being of course no rhymes in the *Aeneid*.

51. That is, to hurt thee by breaking off one of thy twigs.

58. Pier delle Vigne, of Capua, one of the most learned jurists of his time, and Chancellor of the Emperor Frederick II., who, after raising him to the highest summits of his confidence, listened to false accusations and had him blinded. He committed suicide in 1249 by dashing his head against a wall—if the story is true.

58. The one that opened and the one that closed it.

63. I follow the reading *sonno*, not *vene*.

64-69. The harlot, *i.e.* Envy; 'Cæsar,' *i.e.* Frederick; 'Augustus,' also Frederick.

73. 'This wood here,' *i.e.* the wood of the tree in which his soul is imprisoned.

79. 'He paused,' *i.e.* Virgil paused; 'it,' *i.e.* the speaking tree.

82. 'To him,' *i.e.* to Virgil.

85. 'He,' *i.e.* Virgil; 'the man,' *i.e.* Dante.

96. The seventh gullet,' *i.e.* the seventh circle.

100-103. The harpies hurt the tree which has a soul in it by feeding on its leaves; and by breaking its twigs they enable it to vent its pain in words ('give the pain a window').

104. At the Day of Judgment.

105. The soul, by committing suicide, has forfeited the right to its own body at the resurrection of the dead.

106-108. The body of each soul that has committed suicide will be hung to the tree in which that soul is imprisoned.

115. In order to realise the following scene, which is at once grotesque and terrible, the reader must understand that two men, the foremost of whom is called Lano, are running before the hell-hounds; Lano makes good his escape, or at least is not further mentioned; the second tumbles into a bush, and in so doing tears it; and then the hell-hounds eat him up. But the torn bush has a

## Verse

soul in it, which begins to wail aloud and to upbraid the wretch who has torn it and who is being eaten up, and whose name was Jacopo of Sant' Andréa. Then Dante asks him (the bush) who he was when on earth; and he tells him that he was a Florentine who took his own life. He does not tell his name, and has been supposed to be either Rocco dei Mozzi or Lotto degli Agli, Florentines known to have hanged themselves.

As to the other two, Lano of Siena and Jacopo of Sant' Andréa, the former was a famous spendthrift, who, after having lost all, took part, in 1280, in the battle of Pieve del Toppo ('the jousts of Toppo,' verse 121), where the Aretines defeated the Sienese, and who was believed to have wilfully got himself slain to escape poverty. The latter was another mad spendthrift who, among other eccentricities, was believed to have burnt down some of his workmen's cottages in order to dry his and his hunting guests' clothes.

134. By sheltering thyself under me.
143. Mars was believed to have been the first patron of Florence (a temple of his having stood there); and Christianity gave it a new one in the person of St. John the Baptist. Dante, in these verses, assumes that Mars, on that account, will punish Florence by perpetual wars, and that some supposed vestiges of Mars' statue, still remaining near the bridge of the Arno, alone save it from destruction. In Dante's time Attila (Totila?) was believed to have destroyed Florence.
151. He means that he hanged himself in one of his palazzi.

## CANTO XIV

- 10-11. The wood of the suicides; the river of blood.
15. The Libyan desert, across which Cato of Utica marched in 47 B. C.

## Verse

- 30-36. This story about Alexander and the falling flames was current in Dante's time.
45. Of the city of Dis.
46. Capaneus, one of the seven kings who besieged Thebes. He defied the gods to help the Thebans, and was blasted by Jove's thunderbolt.
48. The rain of fire. Of the two readings for the last word of this line, *maturi* and *marturi*, I follow the latter, with Bianchi and others.
56. Mongibello is the modern name for Etna, supposed to be Vulcan's smithy.
58. The scene of the battle between the gods and the Titans.
79. A pool of boiling water at Viterbo, whence issued a streamlet which would seem to have flowed through the quarter inhabited by prostitutes, and to have been divided among their houses.
- 92-93. He means the intellectual food and the inclination for it; in other words, satisfy his curiosity.
- 94-96. By the king of Crete is meant Saturn.
100. Her son, *i.e.* Jupiter, whom she was concealing from his father Saturn.
103. The description of this Cretan colossus seems to have been suggested by that of the image in the Book of Daniel, ii. 31-33. The allegory which it represents has been understood in many ways. The most likely interpretation is that Dante meant the colossus to represent the human race in its various ages (age of gold, of silver, of iron, etc.). It turns its back to Damietta (Egypt) and its face to Rome, to indicate the course of general history.
123. On the limit between the second and third hell-rings.
135. Virgil means that the red water is Phlegethon, and that Dante will see Lethe elsewhere than in Hell, *i.e.* after crossing Purgatory.

## CANTO XV

Verse

1. Before the snows of Chiarentana are melted by the heat.  
But opinions differ as to the meaning of Chiarentana. Some think that it stands for Carinthia, others that it stands for a mountain near Trent, called Carenzana.
29. Of the two readings *fuccia* and *mano*, I follow the first. *Ser* means Sir.
32. A Florentine who had been for some time Dante's teacher. He was notary of the Republic and a Guelph. While in exile in Paris after the battle of Montaperti, he wrote in French a philosophical medley called the *Treasure*. He apparently practised vice of a shameful description, and died at Florence in 1294.
61. The people of Florence were believed to be a mixture of Romans and of men who came down from Fiesole, the smaller and older town which looks down upon the city from the olive-covered hills above it; and these two classes of inhabitants were supposed to be represented by the hostile factions.
70. He means that both the Black and the White factions will try and win him over.
73. A proverbial expression implying difficulty.
81. You would not yet be dead.
90. Beatrice.
109. Priscian, a Cappadocian grammarian of the sixth century.
110. Francis of Accorso, a Florentine jurist and professor in the Universities of Bologna and Oxford, who was protected by our Edward I.
112. Bishop Andrea de' Mozzi, who was transferred from the See of Florence ('the Arno') to that of Vicenza ('the Bacchiglione') by the Pope ('the servant of servants,' or *servus servorum*). He died in 1296. He would seem to have been famous for the unmentionable vices punished in this circle of Hell.
119. See note to verse 32 above.
121. The foot-race which was run annually on the first Sunday in Lent for the *Pallio* or green mantle.

## CANTO XVI

## Verse

6. Beneath the fiery rain.
9. Florence.
20. Their old monotonous wailing.
22. I follow the reading *suolen*, and not *soleano*, and the punctuation of Bianchi.
- 37, 38. Guido Guerra, a Guelph leader who commanded the army which in 1255 drove the Ghibellines out of Arezzo. He had a great share in the victory of Charles over Manfred at Benevento in 1266. Gualdrada was a Florentine lady who had a great reputation for beauty and goodness. She was the daughter of Bellincione Berti de' Ravignani. Boccaccio relates that as a girl she refused to let the Emperor give her a kiss.
40. A knight of the Adimari family, who tried to dissuade the Florentines from their attack on the Sienese, which led to their defeat at the Arbia.
44. A rich, and in many respects eminent, citizen of Florence. He means that his separation from his shrew of a wife led indirectly to the abominations for which he is being punished.
46. 'I,' *i.e.* Dante; 'the Teacher,' *i.e.* Virgil.
61. The bitterness of sin.—'Pleasant fruits,' *i.e.* what he will find in Paradise.
- 70-72. He means that he grieves them with the account he gives them of the state of Florence. Guglielmo Borsier was a Florentine man of the world mentioned by Boccaccio in the *Decameron* (Giorn. i. Nov. 8.)
73. 'New people' may either mean upstarts, *nouveaux riches*, or immigrants.
84. When thou wilt be glad to remember the past.
94. The Acquacheta is a stream which changes its name to the Montone near Forli, and is the only one which, east of Monteviso, does not fall into the Po, but goes straight to the Adriatic. A little below San Benedetto it falls in

Verse

a single leap. Here there was a monastery which apparently held but a few dwellers, whereas it ought, according to Dante, to have lodged a thousand, what with monks and strangers.

106. The cord is probably that of a Franciscan friar, which, according to tradition, Dante wore in his youth. The leopard represents the lusts of the flesh.

## CANTO XVII

*a monster of Hesiod with 3 heads killed by Hercules*

1. Geryon. For an account of this mythological monster I must refer the reader to the *Classical Dictionary*. Dante appears however to have here created a Geryon of his own, which he gives us as a personification of Fraud.
6. 'Marbles' for 'stones.'
35. These are the usurers.
- 59-63. A lion azure on a field or, was apparently the arms of the Gianfigliuzzi; and a goose argent on a field gules, those of the Ubbriacchi—both of them Florentine families noted for usury. The sow azure was the arms of the Scrovigni of Padua, also usurers. Two persons, Vitaliano del Dente and Vitaliano di Jacopo Vitaliani have been identified with the Vitaliano mentioned here. The one whom Dante called the 'Sovereign Knight' (*i.e.* sovereign among usurers) appears to have been the Florentine usurer Giovanni Buiamonte, whose arms were three eagles' beaks, and who was still living.
95. I follow the reading *ad alto, forte*, not *ad altro forse*. 'Above' means in an upper circle of Hell.
101. 'It,' *i.e.* Geryon.
108. 'As still is seen,' *i.e.* in the Milky Way.
- 108-110. For Phaëthon and Icarus, see the *Classical Dictionary*.
121. '*Lo Scoscio*' is sometimes taken as meaning 'the dismounting,' from *Coscia*.
- 125, 126. The tortures towards which they were circling down appeared to rise up towards them.

P



## CANTO XVIII

Verse

- 10-18. The reader must conceive an immense wheel, of which the circumference is a wall of rock and the hub of which is a mighty pit. The pit is united to the circumference by spoke-like reefs which cut across concentric ramparts, each of which has a trench or 'pouch,' the reefs forming bridges wherever they cross a trench.
- 28-33. The dividing of the bridge longitudinally so that the people passed in two streams in opposite directions refers to the Jubilee of the year 1300. The bridge is that of Sant' Angelo over the Tiber, and the Castle is the castle of the same name. The hill is either the Janiculum or the Capitol.
50. Venedico was a member of the Bolognese family of the Caccianimici, and was said to have been bribed by the Marquis of Este to admit him into the bedroom of his sister, the beautiful Ghisola, for which abominable crime Dante now places him in Hell.
51. It is difficult to believe that this is not a pun. Le Salse (the Sauces) was the name of a spot outside Porta San Mammolo at Bologna, where executions took place; and I have, by spelling the word with a capital, endeavoured to retain both its senses as in the Italian.
61. *Sipa* is a Bolognese verb meaning 'may be.' He means that there are more Bolognese with him there in Hell than there are on earth. The two rivers Reno and Savena form the boundaries of the Bolognese territory.
66. No women out of whom to make money.
87. The Golden Fleece.
121. Alessio Interminei, a celebrated flatterer of Lucca.
133. It is not easy to understand why Dante has chosen this Athenian Thais (Terence, *Eunuchus*, Act iii. Sc. 1) as an especial type of the flatterer. She had been made a present of a female slave, whence the question and the answer.



## CANTO XIX

Verse

1. It seems scarcely necessary to explain that Simony, or the selling of religious benefices, is so called after Simon Magus, who offered St. Peter money for the gifts of the Holy Ghost.
7. 'The next tomb,' *i.e.* the next bolgia or hell-pouch.
17. The Church of San Giovanni at Florence, commonly known as the Baptistery. Round about the font there were formerly circular holes like little wells, in which the priest stood knee-deep when baptizing, and where he was protected from the jostling of the crowd.
21. He means: 'Let this statement of mine be a proof to undeceive those who may think that I broke it sacrilegiously.'
45. I have thought it better to translate this line literally, as it is at once so grotesque and so expressive.
49. Treacherous assassins used in Dante's time to be buried alive head downwards. By recalling the confessor, the victim could delay death a little.
52. The soul sticking legs upward in the hole, and with whom Dante is speaking, is that of the simoniacal Pope, Nicholas III., who had died in 1280, and who mistakes Dante for his own successor, Boniface VIII., also a great seller of benefices, who was still alive at the moment the talk is supposed to take place (in 1300). When he says, 'By several years what's written hath deceived me,' he means that Boniface has come sooner than was fated; for he was to die only in 1303. Boniface obtained the Papal tiara by shamefully forcing Celestine V. to abdicate. 'The lovely Dame' means, of course, the Church.
- 69-72. 'The great mantle,' *i.e.* the Papal cope.—'Offspring of the she-bear.' He (Pope Nicholas III.) was an Orsini, whose crest was a she-bear. By 'That wealth up there,' etc., he means that in the world above he pocketed money, and here in Hell pocketed *himself* (*i.e.* got himself put into that hole of torture).

Verse

73. Dante conceives that as each successive simoniacal Pope arrives, his predecessor sinks deeper into the hole to make room for him. Nicholas will have to drop lower when Boniface comes; and in verses 79 to 84 he means that Boniface will not have to wait so long as he himself for the arrival of a successor; for there will come a yet worse simonist, viz., Clement v. — In this prophecy Clement is compared to the high priest Jason, and his patron, the French king Philippe-le-Bel, to Antiochus, king of Syria.
- 90-96. St. Matt. xvi. 17-19; St. John xxi. 22; Acts i. 25, 26. —The guilty soul, *i.e.* Judas Iscariot.
- 98, 99. Nicholas III., trusting to his ill-gotten wealth, sought to marry his niece to the king of Sicily, Charles of Anjou, who haughtily refused, and then the Pope turned against him for money.
106. Revelation xvii. 1-3. Dante applies the passage to the simoniacal Pope. She who sitteth above the waters thus becomes the Church. The seven heads doubtless mean the seven sacraments, and the ten horns the ten commandments.
115. According to mediæval tradition, the Emperor Constantine in the middle of the fourth century bestowed the so-called Patrimony of St. Peter, *i.e.* the territorial possession of Rome and of its province, upon Pope Sylvester the First, who had cured him of leprosy. This dotation has been historically disproved.

## CANTO XX

1. The first Lay, *i.e.* the *Inferno* as distinguished from the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*.
28. In Italian there is but one word for *pity* and *piety*.
34. One of the seven kings who besieged Thebes.
40. Tiresias. See *Classical Dictionary*.
45. 'The virile feathers.' I have translated the word literally;

## Verse

- Dante evidently chose it for the sake of the rhyme. The meaning is 'sex attributes.'
46. 'His belly,' *i.e.* that of Tiresias. For the Etruscan augur Aruns see *Classical Dictionary*.—Luni is the ancient Etrurian city of Luna, below the marble mountains of Carrara.
52. For the soothsayer Manto, daughter of Tiresias, see *Classical Dictionary*. Her head being twisted round, her hair falls on her breast instead of down her back.
56. 'Where I was once begotten.' It is Virgil who is speaking, and he alludes of course to Mantua.
59. 'Her sire,' *i.e.* Tiresias.—Bacchus' city, *i.e.* Thebes.
66. Pennino. This word has led to much controversy, being sometimes written Apennino. It would seem to be the name of a single mountain near the Lake of Garda, which has nothing to do with the Apennines.
67. This place was an islet in the lake, where the three dioceses of Trent, Brescia, and Verona met; so that the three respective bishops might have made the sign of the cross there.
- 95, 96. The Casalodi were masters of Mantua since 1272.—Pinamonte de' Buonacossi, a Mantuan lord, persuaded Alberto da Casalodi to banish to their castles certain enemies of his own, which enabled him to seize the government for himself.
106. Eurypylus, the augur who gave the moment for the departure of the Greek fleet for Troy.
113. 'My lofty Tragedy,' *i.e.* the *Aeneid*.
116. Michael Scott appears to have been the Scotch astrologer of the Emperor Frederick II., and was probably known to Dante also as a translator of Aristotle. Like most mediæval men of science, he dealt largely in occult knowledge; and as 'the wondrous wizard' of Sir Walter Scott, he is credited with having cleft in three the Eildon Hills.
118. Bonatti was astrologer to Guido da Montefeltro, lord of

## Verse

Forli. He is said to have been also consulted by Frederick II.—Asdente was a Parmesan cobbler who obtained some celebrity as a soothsayer in the time of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa.

123. 'Image,' *i.e.* of wax.  
 126. In Italy the 'man in the moon' took the form of 'Cain on a bundle of brambles.'—'Below Seville,' *i.e.* to the west of it. The words mean little more than 'in the west.' Of course here, as in other passages, Virgil refers to moon and stars without seeing them, as he is speaking in the nether world.

## CANTO XXI

37. He addresses all the devils there by the name of Evil-Talons (Malebranche).—By the 'Elders of Saint Zita' are meant the rulers of the city of Lucca, whose patron that saint was considered. Bonturo was a famous barrator or trafficker in public offices, so that the words about him are ironical. 'No and yes' mean the ayes and noes of the votes.
- 48, 49. The Holy Face of Lucca is a famous relic kept in the cathedral there: an effigy of Christ, probably of the eighth century, and of Byzantine workmanship. Our William Rufus is said to have sworn by it. The Serchio is the river which flows by Lucca.
63. When he (Virgil) had come to the Nether Hell at the bidding of Erichtho (Canto ix. 22-24).
95. Caprona was a castle whose garrison, in 1289, capitulated to the Pisans under promise of their lives being spared. It is uncertain whether the promise was kept or not.
- 109-111. This is a lie on the part of Malacoda.
112. The road was presumably broken by the earthquake (already mentioned in Canto xii. 37-45) which took place in Hell when Christ descended there. Taking Good Friday 1300 as the moment of Dante's visit to the nether world,

## Verse

1266 years would have elapsed since the death and descent of Christ in the year 33, as then understood, if we add the months between his conception and his birth. As to the difference of five hours, it would extend this note overmuch to discuss it, and I must refer the reader to Mr. Vernon's *Readings on the Inferno*, vol. ii. p. 170.

116. *i.e.* venture to rise above the surface of the seething pitch.

## CANTO XXII

10. As that mentioned in the last line of the preceding Canto.

14, 15. A proverbial expression.

32. Tradition has identified this sinner with a certain Ciampolo, a famous Spanish speculator in the service of Navarre.

52. Apparently Thibault II., who acceded in 1253.

65-67. A Latin, *i.e.* an Italian; 'a neighbour,' etc., *i.e.* from a place near Italy, viz. from Sardinia.

74. Decurion, *i.e.* the leader of the ten.

81. A Sardinian friar, who, in the employ of Nino dei Visconti, Lord Justiciary of Gallura in Sardinia, sold offices, and governed with peculation and corruption, and took a bribe to release some prisoners who were enemies of Nino's.

83. Another Sardinian Justiciary (of Logodoro) and Seneschal to King Enzo, the natural son of the Emperor Frederick II. He afterwards married Enzo's widow. He was famous for his corrupt government. He was murdered by his son-in-law in 1275.

101. 'They,' *i.e.* the Tuscans and Lombards that he offers to bring.

100-105. Ciampolo the barrator has a stratagem in his mind. He offers to whistle for his fellow-sinners who are in the pitch, so that the devils may have some sport, if only the latter will stand aloof. He means to take advantage of their doing so to escape.

114. *i.e.* I shall catch thee by flying, not by running.

## Verse

120. The devil Cagnazzo.  
 125. The devil Alichino.  
 133. Calcabrina hopes that the barrator Ciampolo may escape,  
       so that he himself may have an excuse for fighting  
       Alichin.

## CANTO XXIII

4. Dante mistakes in attributing this fable to Æsop. Mr. Vernon tells us that it is found in a *Life of Æsop* by Maximus Planudes, a monk of the fourteenth century.— The frog persuaded the mouse to let itself be tied by a thread to his leg. The frog then dived and the mouse was drowned. But it was avenged by its dead body floating up to the surface, and being pounced upon by an eagle, who drew up the frog into the air at the same time.
7. 'Mo' and 'issa' are two words which both mean *now*. The one is Tuscan and the other Lombard.
25. 'If I were a mirror, I could not receive the impression of thy features better than I now receive that of thy thoughts'; *i.e.* I guess them.
47. To distinguish it from a mill in a moored river-barge.
66. The Emperor Frederick II. was said to have had leaden stoles made for the torturing of traitors.
80. 'The Leader turned and said' (to Dante).
84. 'The great weight' of their leaden stoles.
95. 'The great city,' *i.e.* Florence.
100. Orange, *i.e.* golden.
102. By 'balances' he means the limbs that stagger under the weight of the leaden stoles.
- 103-108. The 'Joyous Friars' (*Fрати Godenti*) was a nickname for the members of a certain religious order, whose official title was 'Knights of St. Mary,' or *Militēs Dominæ*, founded by Urban IV., and who became famous for their hypocrisy and profligacy. The two here mentioned were

Verse

elected, as an exception, joint City Captains of Florence. They governed shamefully, and it was owing to them that the palaces of the banished Ghibelline nobles were burnt, especially those of the Uberti, situated in a street called the Gardingo, which was where the Church of San Firenze now stands.

115-117. Caiaphas.

121. Annas.

123. The Council, *i.e.* the Sanhedrim.

131. Demons.

140. 'He,' *i.e.* the devil Malacoda, who had misled them.

## CANTO XXIV

1. The month when the sun shows itself in Aquarius would be February.
4. When the hoar-frost apes the snow, and thaws quickly.
31. This probably means 'for wearing one of the leaden cloaks.'
- 35-40. As the whole region was funnel-shaped, each concentric rampart lay lower than the next one, as the central pit was approached; and the bridges leading from one to the other followed this downward direction. Thus the scarp of each 'hell-pouch' towards the centre was less high than the scarp towards the circumference.
41. They pushed on (up the mass of ruins of the broken bridge) as far as the point where the last unbroken stone projected.
49. That is, without fame.
56. 'Those yonder,' *i.e.* the hypocrites.
72. By getting on to the next rampart, which was lower (as explained in note to verses 35-40) they would be nearer the bottom of the hell-pouch, and would hear and see better what was going on in it.
- 85-87. Snakes mentioned in Lucan (*Phars.* ix. 706-721).
93. A magical gem which was supposed to render the wearer invisible.

## Verse

122. 'Rained,' *i.e.* his soul was hurled down into Hell like a drop of rain.
125. Vanni Fucci was the bastard of Fuccio de' Lazzari, a noble of Pistoia (wherefore Dante calls him a *mule*). In 1293, with two others, he committed a sacrilegious burglary in the sacristy of the Church of San Jacopo at Pistoia; for which an innocent man—one Rampino—was on the point of being executed.
143. This malignant and enigmatic prophecy of Vanni Fucci's respecting the coming defeat of the White party, to which Dante belonged, must be understood as follows: First Pistoia shall expel those of the Black party. These, uniting with the Florentine Blacks, shall get the upper hand in Florence and change the government there. Then war (Mars) shall burst out in the Val di Magra (the home of Moroello Malaspina, leader of the Blacks) and rage on the plain of Pescia (Picenian field); and every man of the White party shall be discomfited. The predicted battle was fought in 1302.

## CANTO XXV

2. An obscene and insulting sign, made by pointing the thumb through the forefinger and middle finger.
5. The collar of Vanni Fucci.
12. There was a tradition that Pistoia had been originally founded by defeated soldiers of Catiline.
16. 'He,' *i.e.* Vanni Fucci.
19. The Maremma is a wild and unhealthy coast-region stretching south of Leghorn towards Rome.
25. It is Dante who makes the robber Cacus a Centaur. In the *Aeneid* (viii. 190-197) he is described as *semihomo*, merely a monster.
33. That is, he was dead by the time he had got the tenth.
34. 'While he,' *i.e.* Virgil.



Verse

43. Cianfa must be pronounced as a dissyllable, as if it were spelt (in English) *Chanfa*.
- 49-78. Here is described the transformation of Agnello de' Brunelleschi (a man who had been celebrated for his thievishness), who is attacked by a six-footed reptile who is Cianfa de' Donati (a famous cattle-thief). They blend into a single monster which is neither man nor reptile, and which walks away.
79. Here begins a new transformation, that of Buoso degli Abati (a peculator of whom little is known), who is bitten by Guercio Cavalcanti (another peculator), who is in the shape of a small serpent. As a consequence of the bite they change shapes; Buoso becomes the serpent and the serpent resumes the shape of a man, viz. that of Guercio Cavalcanti.
80. 'Changeth hedges,' *i.e.* darts from the hedge on one side of the road to the hedge on the other.
85. 'That part,' etc., *i.e.* the navel.
94. For the fate of the two soldiers Sabellus and Nassidius, bitten by serpents, see Lucan (*Phars.* ix.).
97. Ovid, *Metam.* iv.
- 103-120. The reptile's tail split and formed two legs; the man's two legs coalesced and formed a reptile's tail, etc. etc.; each turning into the other.
122. 'Lanterns,' *i.e.* eyes.
124. 'The erect one,' *i.e.* the reptile-become-man.  
'It,' *i.e.* his muzzle or face.
138. 'And the other,' *i.e.* the reptile-become-man, who turns his back on the departing man-become-reptile, and says to the third soul, as yet untransformed: 'I'd have,' etc. It is from this verse (140) that the man-become-reptile is called Buoso.
142. 'The seventh riffraff,' *i.e.* the scoundrels of the seventh circle.
148. Puccio Sciancato (pronounced as three syllables, the *Sci* being equivalent to English *sh*). Nothing seems to be known about him.

Verse

151. Gaville (which I have written Gavillè, to secure its being pronounced as a trisyllable) was a town in the valley of the Arno. Guercio Cavalcanti (the soul who first appears in the shape of a serpent (verse 84) and resumes human form) had been killed there, and his family in consequence massacred many of the inhabitants; whence Guercio Cavalcanti is called 'the one whom Gaville mourns.'

## CANTO XXVI

- 7-10. Soon after the opening of the fourteenth century Florence experienced great calamities, among which may be mentioned civil discord, a great fire, and the falling of a bridge on the Arno when crowded with people watching a theatrical representation of Hell.
14. I follow the reading *borni*, not *buior*.
23. 'Something better,' *i.e.* the grace of God.
- 21-24. I rein in my thought, so that I may not through presumption forfeit the boon of intellect which has been given me.
- 26-28. In summer and at nightfall.
34. Elisha : 2 Kings ii. 23, 24.
40. 'Each of them,' *i.e.* of the flames.
- 54-63. For the legend of the twofold flame on the pyre of the hostile brothers Eteocles and Polynices, I must refer the reader to the *Classical Dictionary*; as also with respect to the Homeric allusions that follow, if, as is not probable, he does not understand them.—'The Roman's noble lineage' means, of course, the seed of Æneas.
75. This is a line of very disputed meaning. On the whole I incline to think that it means that, having been ancients, they would look on him as a barbarian. It cannot mean that they can be spoken to only in Greek; because, if Virgil had then spoken Greek to them, Dante would

Verse

have been unable to record the conversation. In point of fact we are not told in what language Virgil addresses them. The whole scene being supernatural, we must not push our desire for consistency too far.

82. When he wrote the *Æneid*.  
 92. The ancient Caieta, to the north of Naples.  
 107. At the present Straits of Gibraltar.  
 114-117. Do not deny to the small amount of life and sensation which you still have before you the discovery of the unpeopled world which can be reached by following the track of the sun.  
 124. *i.e.* turning our backs upon the east.  
 127, 128. The other pole, *i.e.* the antarctic; 'ours,' *i.e.* the arctic pole.  
 130. Meaning that they had already sailed for five months.  
 133. The mountain of Purgatory, according to Dante's ideas, emerged from the ocean in the other hemisphere.  
 141. 'Another,' *i.e.* God.

## CANTO XXVII

7. See *Classical Dictionary*, art. 'Phalaris.'  
 19. The soul enveloped in flame who now speaks is that of Count Guido of Montefeltro in Romagna, the great Ghibelline leader who had died two years before, in 1298.  
 41. The eagle on the shield of the Polentas, lords of Ravenna.  
 42. The Polenta family had added the town of Cervia, twelve miles from Ravenna, to their territory.  
 43-45. 'The place,' etc., *i.e.* Forli. Martin iv. sent an army composed mainly of Frenchmen to besiege it in 1282; but Guido of Montefeltro entirely defeated it.—'The green clutches,' *i.e.* the paws of the green lion on the shield of Sinibaldo degli Ordelaffi, the lords of Forli.  
 46-48. These lines refer to the city of Rimini. The Malatestas, father and son, who were its tyrants, were Counts of

Verse

- Verrucchio. — Montagna was a young leader of the Rimini Ghibellines, whom the Malatestas had cruelly put to death.
49. Faenza on the Lamone and Imola on the Santerno. They were ruled by Mainardo dei Pagani, whose arms were a lion azure on a field argent (the lion's cub in the white nest).
52. The town on the Savio is Cesena, which had maintained a fair amount of self-government.
70. Pope Boniface VIII.
94. The tradition, based upon the false Decretals of the ninth century, was that Constantine went to Pope Sylvester, who was hiding in Mount Soracte, near Rome, to implore him to cure him of the leprosy with which God had afflicted him for his persecution of the Christians.
102. Penestrino, *i.e.* Palestrina, which the Pope had besieged in vain.
105. A cruelly ironical allusion to the abdication of Celestine V., whom he had himself subsequently imprisoned.
110. Acting upon this advice of Guido's, the Pope took Palestrina by treachery, and had it razed to the ground, building it up again at a little distance.
112. St. Francis, who came to claim him for heaven as one of his friars.
115. 'Down there,' *i.e.* to Hell.
125. To indicate that Guido was to be taken down to the eighth circle of Hell.
129. 'Clothed round,' *i.e.* with fire.
136. To those who, by sowing discord, heap up their burthen of guilt (or of punishment).

## CANTO XXVIII

10. 'Trojans,' *i.e.* the Romans supposed to be descended from them. I follow the reading *Trojani*, and not *Romani*, which would seem to be only a marginal gloss in the

Verse

mss.—‘The rings,’ those gathered by Hannibal in such quantities on the field of Cannæ.

14. For the defeat and slaughter of the Apulians by the Norman Guiscard in the eleventh century, see Gibbon, *Hist.* chap. lvi.
16. Ceperan : a place between Rome and Naples which played a great part in the campaign of Benevento, when Manfred, king of Sicily, was defeated in 1266 by Charles of Anjou. ‘Where proved himself a liar,’ etc., *i.e.* where the principal Apulians broke their word to Manfred and deserted him for Charles.
17. Tagliacozzo in the Abruzzi, where Manfred’s nephew Conradin was defeated and captured by Charles of Anjou in 1268, thanks to the advice of Alardo (Ehrhard) de Vallery, one of Charles’s adherents, who counselled him how to annihilate the enemy by a stratagem (‘weaponless.’)
32. Ali, the husband of Mahomet’s daughter Fatima, and who reigned as Caliph from 655 to 661.
37. The word *accisma* is of doubtful sense. Some take it as meaning *to treat*.
55. Fra Dolcino was a heretical communist who, about this time, preached in North Italy, and with more than three thousand followers was driven into the mountains between Novara and Vercelli, where the people of Novara, helped by friends of the Church from all the neighbouring countries, but mostly by the snow, surrounded him. He was burnt with his beautiful mistress Margherita in 1307.
70. ‘O thou,’ *i.e.* Dante.
- 73-75. Pier da Medicina is placed here as a sower of political discord. He was especially believed to have fanned the feud between the Polentas of Ravenna and the Malatestas of Rimini.—‘Vercelli to Mercabo.’ These two places mark the breadth of Lombardy from west to east.
76. Fano is on the Adriatic, thirty miles from Rimini. Mala-

Verse

- testino, who was lord of Rimini, coveted its possession, and treacherously invited its two chief citizens, Guido del Cassero and Angiolello da Cagnano, to meet him at La Cattolica, between Rimini and Fano. They went by sea, and he had them attacked by another vessel and drowned. This happened about 1304.
82. Between Cyprus and Majorca, *i.e.* the whole breadth of the Mediterranean. 'Argolic,' *i.e.* Greek.
85. That traitor,' *i.e.* Malatestino;—'the land,' *i.e.* Rimini;—'One who,' etc., *i.e.* Curio, about to be introduced;—'inexperienced of beholding,' *i.e.* would fain never have seen.—'Focara's stormwind': Focara is a neighbouring mountain from which blew a wind dangerous to ships.
93. 'Who hath the bitter vision,' *i.e.* who wishes he had never seen Rimini (verse 86 above).
98. When Cæsar was about to cross the Rubicon.
103. Caius Scribonius Curio. According to Lucan, he urged Cæsar to decisive action; but the story would seem to be untrue.
106. In 1215 Messer Bondelmonte, a Florentine, had given great offence by jilting an Amidei for a Donati; and Mosca dei Lamberti hounded on his enemies to murder him by the words in question, which led to bloody tumults between the Guelphs and Ghibellines of the city.
134. The famous troubadour and friend of Prince Henry, son of our Henry II. The Prince was commonly known as 'the young King,' from having been crowned at Westminster during his father's life; and Bertram set the son against the father. I follow the reading *Re Giovane*, and not *Re Giovanni*.
137. 2 Sam. xv. and xvii. 1-24.

## CANTO XXIX

18. Cavern, *i.e.* the hell-pouch.
29. Bertram, who had been holding his head as a lantern. He

Verse

- was Viscount of Hautefort in Gascony.—Geri del Bello, placed here as a sower of discord, had been the son of Dante's granduncle. Himself a murderer, he had at last got himself stabbed, and his death had apparently never been avenged by his relatives.
47. The Valdichiana was one of the most unhealthy parts of Tuscany, especially in summer, owing to the swamps formed by the Chiana near its mouths. The same was (and to a great extent still is) the case with the wild coast district known as the Maremma, and with large parts of the island of Sardinia.
64. For the story of the creation of the Myrmidons from ant-seed, see Ovid, *Metam.* vii. 623-660, and *Classical Dictionary*, art. 'Æacus.'
78. Who has been kept sitting up at night for his master's return.
109. This shade is that of Griffolino of Arezzo, an alchemist and physicist, who persuaded one Alberto or Albero that he could teach him to fly. On his failing to do so, Alberto had him burnt by his reputed father, the Bishop of Siena.
- 125-132. In these lines are enumerated ironically several contemporary Siennese, celebrated for their vanity and reckless squandering; viz. Stricca, about whose identity there is some doubt; Nicholas of the Salimbeni ('the garden,' i.e. Siena); Caccia d'Asciano; and one Meo dei Ranieri dei Folcacchieri, nicknamed l'Abbagliato (the Dazzled One).
136. Capocchio was a fellow-student of Dante's, who took to falsifying metals.

## CANTO XXX

- 1-21. For the Theban and Homeric allusions in these verses the reader is referred to the *Classical Dictionary* under the various names.

Q

## Verse

28. Capocchio and the Aretine. See preceding Canto, 109-136.
38. For Myrrha see *Classical Dictionary*.
42. 'The other,' i.e. Gianni Schicchi, mentioned above (verse 32).  
He was a clever Florentine mimic, who persuaded the son of Buoso Donati, who had just died intestate, to let him get into the dead man's bed and personate him and dictate a will, by which, with other property, a certain very valuable mare or mule ('the herd's fairest,' literally the herd's lady) was bequeathed to himself (Schicchi), while the son was left residuary legatee.—I have left out the first name of *Buoso Donati*, from the impossibility of making the two names fit into English iambic verse.
61. A famous coiner who was burnt in 1280 for counterfeiting Florentine florins stamped with the effigy of St. John the Baptist. He worked at the instigation of Guy, Count of Romena, and of his brothers, Alexander and Aghinolfo.
65. The Casentino is a hilly and beautiful district of the Upper Arno.
78. There are three fountains of this name: one at Borgo alla Collina, one near the Castle of Romena, and one at Siena.
79. 'In already,' i.e. in the hell-pouch.
95. 'Rained.' See Canto xxiv., note to verse 122.
97. Potiphar's wife.
98. For Sinon, see Virgil, *Aeneid* ii. 57.
101. 'So obscurely,' i.e. so unworthily.
120. That all the world knows the story of the falsehood by which the Trojans were induced to admit the wooden horse.
125. I follow the reading *per dir mal*.
128. The mirror of Narcissus, i.e. any spring.
138. That is, craving that it be a dream (which it is), as if it were not one.
140. He means that his very inability to excuse himself was the fullest possible amends.



## CANTO XXXI

## Verse

1. The tongue of Virgil.
4. The wound made by his lance could be healed only by the rust scraped from its point.
16. At Roncesvalles, where Charlemagne was defeated by the Saracens.
41. A castle some six miles from Siena. It was pulled down in the sixteenth century.
59. This is a huge bronze fir-cone, which once stood on the top of the Mausoleum of Hadrian, and in Dante's time was set up in the outer court of St. Peter's. It now stands in the Vatican gardens. Its height is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  braccia, or about 6 feet 3 inches. This comparison of the giant's face to the pine-cone would give a height of something like 56 feet for his whole body.
67. These words would seem to be gibberish, though many attempts have been made to find Hebrew, Arabic, or Syriac elements in them.
- 94-100. For the Titans Ephialtes, Briareus, and Antæus, see *Classical Dictionary*.
115. The valley of the Bagrada, in which Scipio Africanus afterwards defeated Hannibal at Zama.
121. The Children of the Earth, i.e. the Titans.
123. The river of Hell congeals at the bottom of the Pit into a lake of ice, under the name of Cocytus.
124. Two other Titans.
125. What the souls in Hell yearn for is to be recalled to the memory of the living.
136. The Carisenda is one of the leaning towers of Bologna, which, in Dante's time, was higher than it is now, having since been partially pulled down.

## CANTO XXXII

10. 'Those Ladies,' i.e. the Muses.
11. See *Classical Dictionary*.

## Verse

25. *Austerricch*, *i.e.* Austria.—The *Tanaïs*, *i.e.* the Don.—*Tabernicch*: this is either a mountain near Tovanicho in Slavonia or the Javornick mountain in Carniola.—*Pietrapana* or *Pietra Apuana*, a group of mountains in the *Garfagnana*, between Modena and Lucca.
34. Opinions differ as to the sense of this line. It means either the face, or the etc.—probably the face.
52. ‘And one whose head,’ etc. Why this is will appear from the note to verse 68.
54. Why stare at us so?
55. ‘Those two men.’ These are two brothers, Napoleon and Alessandro degli Alberti, Counts of Mangona, one a Ghibelline, and the other a Guelph, who ended by murdering each other about the possession of certain castles in the valley of the *Bisenzio*, a tributary of the Arno.
58. For the explanation of this word see note to Canto v., verse 107.
61. Mordred, whom King Arthur, his father, on account of his treachery, pierced with his spear, so that the sun shone through him, and made a break in his shadow.
63. *Focaccia dei Cancellieri*, a noble youth of Pistoia, who lopped off the hand of his cousin and murdered his uncle, which was believed to have been the origin of the feud between the White and Black factions, first at Pistoia and then at Florence.
65. *Mascheroni* was a Florentine who, it is said, was rolled in a barrel studded with nails, and then beheaded, for murdering an old man for his money.
68. *Camicion de’ Pazzi* treacherously murdered his relative *Ubertino*.
69. *Carlino*, another of the Pazzi family, who in 1303 betrayed for money the Castle of Piano di Trevigne and its inhabitants to the Blacks, and afterwards sold it back again to the Whites.—‘To acquit me,’ *i.e.* by comparison; *his* treachery being a much greater one.

## Verse

70. The meaning of the word *Cagnazzi* is doubtful. I follow Tommasseo, Buti, Bianchi, Di Siena, and others.
73. 'The centre,' *i.e.* of the earth, which is the apex of the funnel of Hell, and to which all weights gravitate.
81. For the battle of Montaperti see note to Canto x., verse 86.
88. Dante and Virgil have now reached that part of the Pit which is named Antenora (after Antenor of Troy) and where traitors of their country are punished.
90. Not knowing that Dante is a live man, he cannot understand how the foot of a shade can have struck him so hard.
- 91-96. Whereas the souls in the upper circles of Hell desire to be remembered to those on earth, the traitors in this lower depth desire oblivion.
106. Bocca degli Abati, who, at the battle of Montaperti, treacherously cut the arm of the standard-bearer of his own party (the Guelphs), so that the standard fell and the battle was lost.
114. The one who had named him (verse 106), *viz.* Buoso da Duera, commanding the Ghibelline forces, let himself be bribed by the French to allow them to cross the Oglio on their way through Lombardy to join Charles of Anjou in his campaign against Manfred.
119. Tesauro dei Beccheria, the Papal Legate, was beheaded by the Florentines on an accusation of betraying their interests to the Ghibelline exiles.
121. Gianni del Soldanieri, a Ghibelline noble, who in 1266 passed over to the Guelphs.
122. Ganellon was he who through whose treachery Charlemagne is said to have been defeated at Roncesvalles.—Tribaldello de' Manfredi betrayed Faenza to the forces sent by Pope Martin iv. in 1280.
125. These are Ugolino and the Archbishop Ruggieri. See next Canto.
- 130, 131. For Tydeus, king of Chalydon, and his gnawing of the skull of Menalippus, see *Classical Dictionary*.
135. On the understanding that if I find thou hast good ground

Verse

for thy hatred, I will repay thee for thy explanation by bearing news of thee to the world of life, if I be still alive (if my tongue be not withered by death).

## CANTO XXXIII

1. Count Ugolino della Gherardesca, whom Dante describes as gnawing the head of his enemy in Hell, was City Captain of the Pisans, whose castles he was rumoured to have betrayed to the Florentines. He was locked up with his two sons and two grandsons in 1288 in the tower which was afterwards called the Tower of Hunger. There they remained till, in March of the following year, the Archbishop of Pisa ordered its doors to be locked and nailed up and the keys to be thrown into the Arno, that they might die of hunger.
26. I follow the reading *lune*, as more obvious and more poetical than *lume*.—‘The evil slumber,’ *i.e.* the evil dream.
29. Monte San Giuliano, a mountain which lies between Pisa and Lucca. The wolf and wolf-cubs of course represent Ugolino and his sons.
32. Three partisans of the Archbishop.
35. ‘That father and his sons,’ *i.e.* the wolf and his cubs, representing Ugolino and his children.
68. Gaddo was the fourth son of Ugolino.
75. The reader must suit himself in interpreting this much disputed line. The majority of critics take it as meaning that hunger put an end to Ugolino’s life, not that it made him feed on the bodies of his children.
80. Italy.
82. Two islands off the coast of Tuscany.
- 89, 90. The first Thebans were supposed to be descended from Vipers.—Uguccione was Ugolino’s youngest son; Brigata was his grandson. The other two mentioned above were his other son, Gaddo, and his other grandson, Anselm.
94. Because the tears are frozen at once.

## Verse

105. Dante could not conceive how wind could be produced so far from the action of the sun.
117. This is a mean trick on Dante's part, as he is in the full intention of going to the very bottom; and he cheats the soul into giving an explanation by promising to free his eyes of the ice, and then refuses to do so.
- 118-120. Alberigo de Manfredi of Faenza was one of the *Frati Gaudenti*, and had his own brother treacherously murdered at a banquet which he offered him in 1286.—The fruits of the ill garden perhaps mean the fruits which Alberigo called for at the feast, as a signal for the assassins to come in.—To get a date for a fig is a Tuscan proverbial expression, which means to get more than one has bargained for.
124. Ptolomæa, the name given by Dante to this ring in Hell, where betrayers of guests are punished, is derived either from the king of Egypt who murdered Pompey, or from Ptolomæus, who murdered the high priest Simon (1 Maccabees xvi.). Dante, in order to put into it the souls of some who were still alive in the year 1300, imagines the theory which is explained in the next few verses.—Atropos is the Parque who cuts the thread of life.
137. Branca d'Oria was the son-in-law who, in 1275, treacherously murdered Michael Zanche of Logodoro in Sardinia. See Canto xxii. 88.
145. This one, *i.e.* Branca d'Oria. He means that when Branca murdered Michael Zanche, his own soul had already preceded his victim's to Hell; and it was only his body, possessed by a demon, which did the deed. This was also the case with a kinsman who helped him.
150. He apparently means that to such a traitor rudeness was sufficient courtesy.
- 154-157. 'The worst of Romagna's spirits,' *i.e.* Alberigo. 'One of you,' *i.e.* Branca d'Oria.

## CANTO XXXIV

## Verse

1. This Latin line, translated into English, would be :  
     '*The standards of the King of Hell are coming.*'
  12. 'Seen through,' *i.e.* through the ice.
  18. Lucifer, beautiful before his fall ; Dante identifies him, two lines lower, with the antique Dis.
  27. 'Deprived of one and th' other,' *i.e.* of death and of life.
  70. 'At his request,' *i.e.* at that of Virgil.
  73. To the hairy flanks of Lucifer.
  79. 'Turned himself round.'—The middle of Lucifer's body marks the centre of the earth ; and therefore, wanting to go further, they have to turn upside down, in order to accommodate themselves to the altered force of gravitation and their descent turns into an ascent. They now begin to climb towards the other hemisphere. This they can only do by climbing between Lucifer's legs (towards the feet) and the ice in which they are stuck. The whole of Dante's theory of gravitation at the centre of the earth is false when judged by modern science.
  - 88-90. As they are now climbing *up* towards the other hemisphere, Lucifer's legs now appear to point upwards. The whole conception is immensely grotesque.
  93. 'The point,' *i.e.* the centre of the earth.
  96. 'The mid-third.' The day and night were each divided by the Church into four parts of three hours. The first division after sunrise was called *Terza* (third), and, at that season of the year, would be from 6 to 9. So the mid-third would be 7.30 A.M.
- It does not enter into the scope of these Notes to discuss the very complicated time-references of Dante : the reader is referred to Dr. Moore's book on the subject, and to Mr. Vernon's *Readings on the Inferno*.
103. 'This one,' *i.e.* Lucifer. 'The great dryness,' *i.e.* the hemisphere of dry land whose apex was supposed to be

Verse

Jerusalem. 'The Man,' *i.e.* Christ. 'The Judecca' is the ring of ice in which the upper half of Lucifer's body is sticking, and is so called after Judas Iscariot.

118. He means that it is morn in one hemisphere when it is evening in the other.
- 121-126. Dante conceives that when Lucifer fell from Heaven to earth the Antarctic hemisphere was all dry land and the Arctic one was all water. His fall reversed this order. The whole of the southern hemisphere then became covered with water, except where the earth, which fled from his contact, heaped itself up and formed the Mountain of Purgatory in the middle of the vast Antarctic Ocean.
127. 'A spot.' This must be taken to mean a cavity, winding away towards the Mountain of Purgatory, as far from Lucifer in one direction as the entrance of Hell (the Tomb) stretches away in the other direction.
129. Because of the darkness.

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