

**La divina  
commedia di  
Dante Alighieri**

**Dante Alighieri,  
Edward Clarke  
Lowe**





# LA DIVINA COMMEDIA,

DI DANTE ALIGHIERI,

*Done into English by*

EDWARD C. LOWE, D.D.,

*Canon of Ely.*

*Sappia ciascuno, che nulla cosa per legame musaico armonizzata si può della sua loquela in altra trasmutare, senza rompere tutta sua dolcezza e armonia.*

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ANSONUAD

DEDICATION.

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TO THE FRIENDS  
WHO IN THE WINTER EVENINGS OF 1891-2-3,  
UNDER THE PRESIDENCY  
OF  
ALWYNE, BISHOP OF ELY AND THE LADY ALWYNE COMPTON,  
MET AT ELY,  
IN THE HALL OF ALAN DE WALSINGHAM,  
(DANTE'S CONTEMPORARY),  
TO HELP ONE-ANOTHER  
IN BETTER APPRECIATION OF  
THE DIVINA COMMEDIA,  
AND  
TO A FULLER UNDERSTANDING  
OF ITS MYSTERIES,  
THIS ENGLISH VERSION IS SUBMITTED  
BY THEIR "*Cheerful Companion*,"  
AND AMANUENSIS,  
E.C.L.

COLLEGE, ELY,  
CHRISTMAS, 1902.



INFERNO.





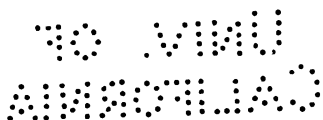


INFERNO.

CANTO I.

*The Procm—The Lost Path—The Wrong Road—The Safe Guide.*

**N**OW half way through the journey of our life,  
     In a dark wood I to myself came back ;  
     For lost had been the path of uprightness.  
 And ah ! as hard indeed it is to tell 4  
     How savage, rough and dense that forest was,  
     Whereof the very thought renews the dread,  
 So bitter 'tis, that death is hardly more ; 7  
     But to set forth the good that I found there,  
     I'll tell what other things I there beheld.  
 I cannot well recall how there I came, 10  
     So sunk was I in sleep the moment when  
     I at the first abandoned the true way ;  
 But when I'd reached the bottom of a hill, 13  
     • The point where to an end the valley came,  
     Which had with terror pierced me to the heart,  
 Upward I looked, and saw its shoulders now 16  
     Clothed with the garment of that planet's rays,  
     Which guides all others straight on every road.  
 Then was the fear a little quieted, 19



Which in the cistern of my heart had dwelt  
The livelong night I passed so piteously.  
And as the man, who with exhausted breath, 22  
Emerging from the sea, upon the shore,  
Turns round, and gazes o'er the perilous flood ;  
So did my soul, still hurrying in its flight, 25  
Turn back, again to contemplate the pass,  
From which no living man did e'er escape.  
When for a space I'd rested my tired limbs, 28  
Again I started for the lonely steep,  
So that the lower was my steadier foot.  
And lo ! almost as I began the ascent, 31  
A leopard, nimble and exceeding fleet,  
Which with a spotted skin was covered o'er ;  
Nor from before my face did she retire ; 34  
Rather she so impeded my advance,  
That to retreat I often turned me round.  
It was the time of morning's early dawn, 37  
And up the sun was mounting with those stars,  
Which were with him, what time that Love Divine  
First gave their motion to those beauteous things ; 40  
So that to me were cause of lively hope  
Anent the wild beast with the dappled skin,  
As well the hour, as the sweet season too. 43  
But yet not so, that fear did not arise  
At vision of a lion that appeared.  
'Gainst me he seemed to come direct, with head 46  
On high, and in a rage of hunger such,  
As seemed to fill the very air with fear ;  
And a she wolf, that in her leanness showed 49  
The load of ravenings that she bore within ;  
And many a life hath she ere now made sad.  
This beast oppressed me with such weight of care, 52  
Through terror issuing from her horrid mien,  
That hope I lost of making the ascent.  
And as is one who makes his gains with glee, 55  
And comes a time that sees him lose the whole,

And all his thoughts are only grief and gloom,  
 Such did that unrelenting beast make me ; 58  
 For as she came, she slowly thrust me back,  
 To where in silent gloom the sun is lost.  
 And while again I downward stumbled on, 61  
 Before mine eyes the form of one appeared,  
 Who from long silence seemed now faint in voice.  
 When him I saw in that wide wilderness, 64  
 " Have mercy on me," unto him I cried,  
 " Whate'er thou be, or shade or man indeed."  
 He answered me, " Not man—man was I once ; 67  
 And of a Lombard stock my parents were,  
 And Mantuans both by country of their birth.  
*Sub Julio* I was born, though somewhat late, 70  
 And under good Augustus lived in Rome,  
 In those days of the false and lying gods.  
 Poet I was, and sang of that most just 73  
 Son of Anchises, who came forth from Troy,  
 After proud Ilion had sunk in flames.  
 But why returning thou to such turmoil ? 76  
 Why not ascend the mountain of delight,  
 The primal source and cause of every joy ?"  
 " Art thou that Virgil then, that fountain head, 79  
 That poureth forth such floods of eloquence ?"  
 I answered him, my brow suffused with shame.  
 " Light of all poets else, their glory too, 82  
 May the long toil avail, and all the love  
 That prompted me to search thy volume through.  
 Thou art my master, and my model thou ; 85  
 'Tis thou alone from whom I did acquire  
 The graceful style which honour won for me.  
 See there the beast, from which I turned me back ! 88  
 Grant me thine aid against her, famous sage ;  
 She makes my veins throb and my every pulse."  
 " Another road behoves it thee to take," 91  
 His answer was, when he perceived my tears ;  
 " If from this savage place thou would'st escape.

For this wild beast, which makes thee call for help,	94
Ne'er lets another pass along her road,	
But meets him with such hindrance that he dies.	
Her nature so malignant is and curst,	97
Her greedy lust is never satisfied,	
And when well fed she's hungrier than before.	
Many the animals with which she mates,	100
And more they yet will be, until shall come	
The Greyhound, that will make her die in grief.	
He will not batten upon lands or pelf,	103
But will on wisdom, love and virtue feed ;	
'Twixt the two Feltros will his people dwell.	
Salvation of that humbled Italy	106
He'll be, for which the maid Camilla died,	
Turnus, Euryalus and Nisus bled :	
From every city will he hunt her forth,	109
Until he shall have sent her back to hell,	
Whence Envy at the first did let her loose.	
Better for thee then, so I think and judge,	112
To follow me, and I will be thy guide,	
And lead thee hence through an eternal place,	
Where thou wilt hear the wailing of despair,	115
And see the ancient spirits in their pain,	
As each with shriek proclaims the second death.	
And next shalt thou behold those, who in fire	118
Contented are, in hope to pass one day,	
Come when it may, unto the Blessed Ones ;	
To whom if after thou would fain ascend,	121
A soul there'll be, worthier than I for that ;	
With her I'll leave thee when I go away ;	
For He, who reigns the King of Kings on high,	124
Because I was rebellious 'gainst his laws,	
Wills not that I should to His city come.	
He governs everywhere, and there He reigns.	127
There His own City, there His lofty Throne :	
Happy the man, elected there to dwell ! ”	
And I to him : “ Poet I thee entreat	130

CANTO I.

5

In name of Him thou knewest not as God,  
That I may fly this and the worser ill,  
Conduct me whither thou but now didst say, 133  
That thus St. Peter's gate I may behold,  
And those thou showest in such woeful case."  
Then he moved on, and I behind him kept. 136

## CANTO II.

*Invocation of the Muses—Dante's Misgivings and their Relief—The Three Blessed Ladies—The Journey begins.*

**T**HE day was passing, and the darkling air  
 All living things upon the earth relieved  
 From their fatigues : and I the only one,  
 Was getting ready to sustain the fight 4  
 Both with the road, and with the pity too,  
 As memory shall retrace, that erreth not.  
 Ye Muses aid me, and high Genius now ; 7  
 O Memory, that what I saw didst write,  
 Here will be shown thine own nobility.  
 "O Poet," I began, " who guidest me, 10  
 Note well my natural force, if power it have,  
 Ere thou commit me to this arduous path.  
 Thou say'st that Silvius' father once went down 13  
 In mortal flesh to the immortal world,  
 And tarried there, his senses in full play.  
 And if the Mighty Foe of all that's ill, 16  
 To him was gracious, weighing the high effect,  
 That should from him proceed, both who and what,  
 To man intelligent 'twould seem but just ; 19  
 For he of sacred Rome and her empire  
 Was in the Emyrean chosen sire ;  
 Which both alike, as I would speak the truth, 22  
 Established were to be the holy place,  
 Where sits the greater Peter's successor.  
 Upon this journey, whence through thee he draws 25  
 His boast, things did he learn which brought about  
 His triumph and the Pope's investiture.  
 Thither the Chosen Vessel later went 28  
 To bring back confirmation of the Faith,  
 Which is the first step on Salvation's way.

But I—why go I there? or who permits? 31  
   Æneas I am not, nor Paul am I;  
   For this nor I, nor others deem me fit.  
 Wherefore if I surrender now, and come, 34  
   I fear the coming may my folly prove;  
   Thou know'st, as sage, better than I can state."  
 And as is one, who un-wills what he willed, 37  
   And with new thoughts changeth a previous plan,  
   So that from first inception he withdraws,  
 Such on that dark hillside myself became; 40  
   For while I thought, the fire of enterprize  
   I quenched, which at the outset burned so quick.  
 "If rightly I have understood thy words," 43  
   Replied that shade of the Magnanimous,  
   "Thy spirit is by cowardice assailed,  
 Which oft times so embarrasseth a man, 46  
   That from an honourable aim he swerves,  
   As through deceptive sight his horse will shy.  
 But that thou mayst relieve thee of this fear, 49  
   I'll tell thee why I came and what I heard,  
   What time my pity was first stirred for thee.  
 I was 'mong those, who live in long suspense; 52  
   And me a Lady called, saintly as fair,  
   Such that I prayed her tell me her behests.  
 Her eyes did glisten brighter than the star: 55  
   Sweetly and softly she began in voice  
   Angelical to tell her tale to me.  
 "Hail courteous soul! O son of Mantua, hail! 58  
   Whose fame endures in honour in the world,  
   And will endure long as the world runs on,  
 One who, if not good fortune's friend, is mine, 61  
   Upon the lonely hill is on his way  
   Obstructed so, that terror turns him back;  
 And he I fear already is so lost, 64  
   That all too late I rose to succour him,  
   By what concerning him in heav'n I've heard.  
 Bestir thee then, and with thine ornate speech, 67



- And all that is required to rescue him,  
Assist him so that I may be consoled.
- I, who would have thee go, am Beatrice : 70  
From whence I came there would I fain return :  
Love moved me first, and prompts me now to speak.
- When in the presence of my Lord I stand, 73  
Thee will I name in oft repeated praise."  
She then was silent and I next began :
- "Lady, whose virtue by itself alone 76  
Exalts mankind 'bove all the heaven contains,  
Which in the narrowest orbit circles round,  
To me so grateful is this charge of thine, 79  
That had I now obey'd, I'd been too slow ;  
No farther need thy wishes to disclose.
- But tell me why thou dost not hesitate 82  
To come down here into this central pit,  
From those broad realms for which thine ardour burns."
- "Since 'tis thy wish inly to learn so much, 85  
I'll briefly tell thee," she replied to me,  
"Why I am not afraid to enter here.
- Of those things only should we be afraid, 88  
That have a power to do another ill,  
Not of aught else ; elsewhere is naught to fear.
- I am made such by God, thanks be to Him, 91  
That your calamities affect not me,  
Nor flames of yonder burning me assail.
- In Heaven a noble Lady is, who grieves 94  
For this obstruction that I send thee to,  
So that on High stern judgment breaketh down.
- Lucia she besought, and in request 97  
Spake thus : "Of thee thy faithful votary now  
Hath need, and unto thee I him commend."
- Lucia, foe of all that cruel is, 100  
Sped off, and to the place she came, where I  
Was seated by the Rachel of old days.
- "O Beatrice, true praise of God," she said, 103  
"Why go not to his aid, who loved thee so,

That for thy sake he left the vulgar herd ?  
 Hearest thou not the anguish of his cry, 106  
 Nor seest him fighting hard with death upon  
 The flood, o'er which can ocean never boast ?"  
 Ne'er in the world were people found so keen. 109  
 To make a profit or escape a loss.  
 As I upon the utt'rance of such words.  
 Hither I came, down from my seat in bliss, 112  
 Confiding in thy stately eloquence,  
 Which honours thee, and those who it have heard."  
 And after she had pleaded with me thus, 115  
 She turned her eyes away, bright e'en in tears,  
 Whereby she made me readier yet to start.  
 And thus I came to thee, as she would have ; 118  
 I've borne thee from the presence of that beast,  
 Which to the fair hill barr'd the shorter way.  
 What is it then ? why halting thus, O why ? 121  
 Why in thy heart allow such cowardice ?  
 This lack of courage and of venture, why ?  
 When three such ladies from among the blest 124  
 In heaven's own court on thee bestow their care,  
 And my word voucheth thee so great a boon ?"  
 As little flowerets, nipped by frosts of night, 127  
 Droop and close up, but in the clear sunshine  
 Stand up erect and open on their stems,  
 Such I became from my faintheartedness ; 130  
 And courage such coursed up within my breast,  
 That I, as one enfranchisèd, began :  
 "O full of pity she, who succoured me ; 133  
 And courteous thou in prompt obedience  
 To the true words that she addressed to thee !  
 Thou hast inspired my heart with such desire 136  
 To go with thee by force of thine appeal,  
 That to my first resolve am I returned.  
 On then : for one sole will impels us both ; 139  
 Thou art my guide, my lord, my master, thou."  
 Such were my words to him, and as he moved,  
 I entered on the deep and savage road. 142

## CANTO III.

*The Gate of Hell—The Vestibule—Passage of Acheron.*

“**T**HROUGH me the way to City Dolorous,  
     Through me the way into eternal pain,  
     Through me the way amid the people lost.  
 Justice impelled my Maker in the height, 4  
     Omnipotence Divine created me,  
     The Highest Wisdom and Primeval Love.  
 Before me were there no created things, 7  
     Eternal all, and I eternal am.  
     All hope abandon, ye who enter here!”  
 These words in letters of a murky hue 10  
     I saw inscribed on lintel of a gate;  
     Whereon I said: “Master, their sense is hard.”  
 And he to me, as quick to apprehend: 13  
     “ All hesitation here must be dismissed;  
     All cowardice must here die utterly.  
 We to the place are come, where I have said 16  
     That in their suffering thou wilt see the race,  
     Who’ve lost the boon of their intelligence.”  
 And after he had placed his hand in mine 19  
     With cheering look, wherein I comfort found,  
     He set me in among the secret things.  
 Here sighs and lamentations, and deep groans 22  
     Resounded through the starless atmosphere,  
     Whereat myself at first was moved to tears.  
 Confused tongues, and horrid utt’rances, 25  
     Words full of woe, and accents of wild rage,  
     Shrill cries and hoarse, and sound withal of blows  
 Made up a tumult, that for aye whirls round 28  
     Through that dark air beyond the guage of time,  
     As rolls the sand before the whirlwind’s blast.  
 And I who felt my head with horror girt, 31

Said: "O my Master, what is this I hear?  
 What people is't that seems thus crushed in woe?"

And he to me: "This miserable state 34  
 The melancholy souls of those endure,  
 Who lived without disgrace or praise.  
 Mingled are they with all that caitiff band 37  
 Of angels, who not rebels, yet were not  
 Faithful to God, caring alone for self.  
 Hunted from heaven, lest heaven should be less fair, 40  
 The depth of hell receives them not, because  
 From them the guilty might some glory gain."

And I: "Master, what then so weighs on these, 43  
 That it should wring from them these loud laments?"  
 He answered me: "Thee will I briefly tell;  
 These spirits have not any hope of death, 46  
 And their blind life so abject seems to them,  
 That envious are they of all other lot.  
 The world allows no fame of them in it; 49  
 Mercy and Justice hold them in disdain:  
 Of them we speak no more; look and pass on."

And I, observant, an ensign beheld, 52  
 Which, as it whirled around, ran on so fast,  
 It seemed to me disdainful of repose.  
 And after it there came so long a trail 55  
 Of people, that I should not have believed  
 That death had e'er such multitudes undone.  
 And when among them some I recognized, 58  
 I saw, and knew again the ghost of him,  
 Whose coward heart the grand refusal made.  
 At once I understood, and was assured, 61  
 That this the party was of those caitiffs,  
 Hateful alike to God and to His foes.  
 These wretches, who had never lived a life, 64  
 All naked were, and goaded terribly  
 By wasps and monstrous flies, that there are found.  
 These caused their faces to run down in blood, 67  
 Which, mingled with their tears about the feet,

Was gathered up by worms of loathsome kind.  
 And when I turned the distance to survey, 70  
     People I saw on a great river's bank ;  
     Wherefore I said : " O Master, grant me now  
 To know who these are, and the rule that makes 73  
     Them seem so eager to be put across,  
     As I perceive them in this dusky light."  
 And he to me : " Plainer will these things be, 76  
     When presently our steps we stay upon  
     The melancholy shore of Acheron."  
 Then with mine eyes bow'd in confusion low, 79  
     Fearing my words to him were troublesome,  
     Far as the river I refrained from speech ;  
 And lo ! towards us in a boat there came 82  
     An old man hoary with the locks of eld,  
     Shouting : " A curse upon ye, wicked souls ;  
 Ne'er hope to look again upon the sky ; 85  
     I come to take you to the other side,  
     To everlasting night in fire and ice.  
 And thou, who standest there, a living soul, 88  
     Get thee away from these, for they are dead."  
     But when he saw that I departed not,  
 " Another way," said he ; " From other ports 91  
     Thou'lt reach the shore ; not here for thee to cross.  
     'Tis meet a lighter craft should carry thee."  
 To him my Guide : " Vex not thyself, Charon ; 94  
     Thus yonder is it willed, where Power avails  
     For what it wills ; and so enquire no more."  
 Quiet thereafter were the shaggy jaws 97  
     Of the old pilot on the livid pool,  
     Who round about his eyes showed wheels of fire.  
 But the souls there, which tired and naked stood, 100  
     Changed colour then, and chattered with their teeth,  
     At the first hearing of his cruel words.  
 God they blasphemed, and their own fathers cursed, 103  
     The human race, the place, the hour, the seed  
     Of their begetting, and their day of birth.

## CANTO III.

13

Then one and all together they repaired	106
With piercing shrieks unto the accursed shore, Which waits for every man that fears not GOD.	
Charon, with demon eyes, that blazed like brands,	109
Gives forth his signal and collects them all. Who-ever lingers, with his oar he smites :	
As when in autumn time the leaves drop off,	112
One thick upon another, till the bough Sees its full tale of spoil upon the ground, After like fashion, Adam's evil seed,	115
One after other, cast them from the shore, Each at his signal, as the bird at call.	
So all go off across the darkling wave ;	118
And ere they've landed on the other shore, Another throng assembles upon this.	
“ My son,” said then the Master courteous,	121
“ All they who die under the wrath of God, From every land must all assemble here ; And eager are they to cross o'er the stream ;	124
For Divine Justice doth so spur them on, That fear with them is turned into desire.	
This way ne'er passeth any good man's soul ;	127
And so, if Charon chafe about thee now, What his words mean, thou well canst understand.”	
As ended thus his words, the dusky plain	130
Trembled so fiercely, that its terrors still In memory bathe me in a stream of sweat :	
The land of tears exhaled a blast of wind,	133
Through which a vermilion light like lightning flashed, That all sensation overcame in me :	
To Earth I fell, as one surprised by sleep.	136

## CANTO IV.

*First Circle—Limbo.  
Innocents—Patriarchs—Illustrious Men.*

THE heavy slumber of my brain was broke  
 By a deep thunder crash ; upstarted I,  
 As one who is with violence awoke :

I turned mine eyes, now rested, round the scene, 4  
 Standing erect ; and careful survey made  
 To learn what place it was that I had reached.

In truth I found myself upon the brink 7  
 Of the sad vale, in whose abyss collects  
 The thunder roar of wailing infinite.

Obscure it was, profound and thick with cloud, 10  
 Such that with straining gaze adown its depth  
 No form could I discern of anything.

“ Descend we now to the blind world below,” 13  
 Began the Poet, pale himself as death.  
 “ I will go first, and second thou shalt be.”

Quick to observe his colour change, I said : 16  
 “ How shall I come if thou be terrified,  
 My wonted comfort in my every doubt ? ”

And he to me : “ It is the agony 19  
 Of those below, that on my face depicts  
 The pity, which thou takest to be fear.

Let us proceed ; the length of way constrains.” 22  
 Thus passed he in, and made me enter thus  
 The circle which first girds th’ abyss around.

And here, so far at least as reached the ear, 25  
 There was no plaint, only the sound of sighs,  
 That caused a tremor through the eternal air ;

And this from sadness without torment came, 28  
 That filled the many throngs that crowded there

Of children, and of women, and of men.  
 Said the kind Master : " Dost thou not enquire 31  
     What spirits these are, that thou seest here?  
     Now would I have thee know, ere thou proceed,  
 These sinned not, and if they some merits have, 34  
     'Tis not enough ; for Baptism they lacked,  
     Which of the Creed thou holdest is the gate.  
 And if before the Christian Faith they lived, 37  
     They did not with due worship honour God ;  
     And of these last myself am such an one.  
 For such defects, and not for other guilt, 40  
     Have we been lost ; only so far chastised,  
     That without hope we live in fond desire."  
 Great grief seized me at heart, when this I learned, 43  
     Seeing that persons of high worth, whom I  
     Did know, were in that Limbo in suspense.  
 " Tell me, O Master mine, tell me, my Lord : " 46  
     Thus I began in wish to be assured  
     About that Faith, which conquers all untruth ;  
 " Did ever any by his own desert, 49  
     Or others', hence go forth and join the Blest ?"  
     And he, who understood my covert speech,  
 Replied : " I was but new in this estate, 52  
     When I saw come to us a Mighty One,  
     Who with the sign of victory was crowned.  
 The shade of the first parent He withdrew, 55  
     And his son Abel's, that of Noah too,  
     With Moses too, Lawgiver, ever meek ;  
 Abram the Patriarch, David the King, 58  
     Israel with his father and his sons,  
     And Rachel, for whose sake he toiled so long ;  
 With many more, and made them blessed Saints : 61  
     And I would have thee know, that afore these  
     No human spirits were there that were saved."  
 We slackened not our pace, the while he spake, 64  
     But ever through the forest made our way,  
     Forest, I mean, of spirits crowded thick.



As yet we had not far advanced from where 67  
     I dropped asleep, when I observed a fire,  
     Which overspread a hemisphere of gloom.  
 A little distant from it were we still, 70  
     But not so far I could not partly see  
     That honourable persons held the spot :  
 " O Thou who honour bring'st to every art 73  
     And science, say who these are, that enjoy  
     An honour such as parts them from the rest."  
 And he to me : " The honour of renown, 76  
     That echoes of them in thy life above,  
     With heaven wins favour that promotes them thus."  
 In the meantime by me a voice was heard ; 79  
     " Due honour to our chiefest poet give ;  
     His shade comes back, that from us went away."  
 After the voice had ceased and all was still, 82  
     I saw four stately shades toward us approach ;  
     In semblance neither glad nor sorrowful.  
 The gracious Master then began to say : 85  
     " Him well observe, who bears that sword in hand,  
     And as their sire, precedes the other three.  
 Homer is he, of poets sovran Lord ; 88  
     Horace, the Satirist, as second comes ;  
     The third is Ovid, Lucan is the last.  
 Because with me all of them rightly share 91  
     The name that with one voice they all proclaimed,  
     They do me honour, and therein do well."  
 Assembled thus I saw the glorious school 94  
     Of that great lord of most exalted song,  
     Who as an eagle soars above the rest.  
 When they together briefly had conferred, 97  
     They turned to me and signs of welcome gave,  
     And my good Master kindly smiled thereat.  
 And greater honour still they paid to me, 100  
     For of their company they made me one,  
     And I was reckoned 'mid such wisdom sixth.  
 So walked we on as far as to the light, 103

Talking of things which silence here befits, As where we were, it seemly was to treat.	
Under a stately castle we arrived, Compassed by sevenfold girth of lofty walls, Which a fair streamlet guarded all around.	106
O'er this we went, as it had been dry land ; Through sevenfold gates I with those sages passed ; We reached a meadow of the freshest green.	109
Persons were there, whose grave eyes slowly moved ; Their mien was that of high authority : Seldom they spoke, and then with gentle voice.	112
Forth from one side we then withdrew ourselves Toward a wide space, raised up and full of light, So that the whole assembly was in view.	115
There straight before me on the enamelled green To me were shewn the mighty spirits, whom Once to have seen exalts me in myself.	118
I saw Electra and her many friends, And 'mong them Hector and Æneas knew, And hawk-eyed Cæsar in full armour clad :	121
On th' other side I saw Camilla and Penthesilea, and Latinus, King, Sitting beside his child, Lavinia.	124
I saw that Brutus, who drove Tarquin out, Cornelia, Julia, Marcia and Lucrece ; And by himself the Saladin apart.	127
Then, as I raised my brows a little more, I saw the Master of all them that " know," Seated amid the philosophic clan.	130
On him all gaze : honour all pay to him. There Socrates I saw and Plato, who, Before the others, nearest stand to him.	133
Democritus, who says chance made the world, The Cynic, Thales, Anaxagoras, Zeno, Empedocles and Heraclite ;	136
The good collector of the Qualities, Named Dioscorides ; Orpheus I saw,	139

Tully and Linus, moral Seneca,	
Euclid, geometer ; and Ptolemy,	142
Galen, Hippocrates and Avicen ;	
✓ Averrhoes, who the great comment made.	
I cannot write the catalogue of all,	145
In that my lengthy theme so hunts me down,	
That short of fact my record oft must fall.	
The company of six grows less by two :	148
The guiding Sage leads me, another way,	
Forth from that calm back to the trembling air ;	
And to a part I come, where no light shines.	151

## CANTO V.

*Second Circle—The Wanton.**Minos—Carnal Sinners—Francesca da Rimini.*

**F**ROM the first circle thus I lower went  
 Down to the second of a narrower girth,  
 But so much greater pain as goads to shrieks.  
 There Minos stands and horribly he grins: 4  
 He sifts all sins at entrance, judgment gives,  
 And sentences by coils around him wound.  
 I mean that when the soul of evil birth 7  
 Before him comes, a full confession's made;  
 And shrewdly knowing all the sins of men,  
 He notes what place in hell is its desert, 10  
 And girds him with his tail as many times  
 As mark the grade to which he wills it sent.  
 Before him numbers stand continuously; 13  
 For judgment in its turn each soul comes up;  
 They tell, they hear, and down are hurled below.  
 "O thou, who comest to this grim hospice," 16  
 Said Minos, as he caught the sight of me,  
 Suspending his high office for the nonce,  
 "Beware how here thou enter; whom thou trust: 19  
 Let not this spacious entrance play thee false."  
 My Guide replied: "From thee, too, why this cry?  
 His visit hinder not, ordained by fate: 22  
 So yonder is it willed, where power avails  
 For all that's willed; no further question then."  
 Already sounds of agony begin 25  
 To break upon mine ear; anon I reach  
 A place where great lamenting thrills me through.  
 I came unto a spot devoid of light, 28  
 Which bellows like a tempest-stricken sea,  
 When by conflicting winds it is assailed.  
 This hurricane of hell, which never rests, 31

Carries along the spirits in its sweep,  
 Whirling and smiting, as it harries them.  
 But when they come to face the shattered cliff, 34  
     Then shrieks break forth, and howls and great laments ;  
     The mighty power of God they there blaspheme.  
 To torment thus contrived I understood 37  
     That for their carnal sins are men condemned,  
     Who subject reason to the appetite.  
 And as the wings of starlings bear them off, 40  
     'Mid winter's cold, in flocks widespread and dense,  
     So with those evil spirits doth that blast.  
 This way and that it drives them up and down ; 43  
     Hope with its comfort never visits them,  
     Not of repose, but of diminished pain.  
 And as the cranes move on with dirge-like chant, 46  
     Forming in th' air a long protracted line,  
     So in a trail of woe I saw approach  
 Ghosts driven onward in that raging storm ; 49  
     Whereon I asked : " Master, what souls are these,  
     That here the blackened air chastiseth thus ? "  
 " The first of these, particulars of whom 52  
     Thou fain wouldst learn," said he thereon to me,  
     " An Empress was of many languages ;  
 Corrupted so in sensuality, 55  
     That by her edict lust was made the law,  
     Thus to escape the blast of her disgrace.  
 Semiramis is she, who as we read, 58  
     Was wife of Ninus, and his successor ;  
     She held the land that now the Soldan rules.  
 The next is she who slew herself for love, 61  
     And to Sichæus' ashes broke her faith ;  
     The wanton Cleopatra follows her.  
 See Helen, for whose sake so long a time 64  
     Of strife rolled on ; the great Achilles too,  
     Who to the end was fighting still for love.  
 See Paris, Tristan,"—and a thousand more 67  
     He with his finger marked, and named their names,

Whom love had parted from this life of ours.  
 And as I heard my Teacher close the roll 70  
 Of knights and ladies of the olden time,  
 Such pity rose, that I was well nigh lost.  
 "Poet," I next began, "gladly would I 73  
 Address the pair who hand in hand approach.  
 And seem to float so lightly on the wind."  
 And he to me: "Thou'lt see, when they shall draw 76  
 Nearer to us; and then conjure them by  
 The love which leads them on, and they will come."  
 Soon as the wind inclined their course to us, 79  
 I raised my voice: "O ye exhausted souls,  
 Come speak with us, if Other say not nay."  
 As doves at prompting of a soft desire, 82  
 Steady on open wing to their sweet nest  
 Speed through the air, by their own instinct borne;  
 So from the group, where Dido is, did these 85  
 Hasten toward us through the malignant air;  
 So mighty with them was the kindly call.  
 "O living soul, benign and full of grace, 88  
 Who in thy passage through the empurpled air  
 Dost visit us, who stained the earth with blood,  
 Were but the Sovran of the universe 91  
 Our Friend, Him would we pray to grant thee peace,  
 Since thou hast pity for our perverse fate.  
 What thou would'st learn, and what thou fain would'st say, 94  
 This will we hear, and that will tell to thee,  
 So long as now, the wind is hush'd awhile.  
 The land where I was born, is situate 97  
 Upon the sea shore where the Po comes down  
 With all his affluents to rest in peace.  
 Love, ever quick to seize a gentle heart, 100  
 Him by my side possessed for the fair form,  
 That they tore from me, and the mode still galls;  
 Love, that from love excuseth none beloved, 103  
 Possessed me in his charm with such delight  
 That as thou seest, he leaves me not e'en here.

Love led us both unto a common death ; 106  
     Caïna waits the man who quenched our life."  
     Such were the words borne from them unto us.  
 Soon as I'd learned who were those stricken souls, 109  
     I bowed my head, and so long held it down,  
     The poet said at last : " What is thy thought ? "  
 And as I answered, I began : " Alas ! Alas ! 112  
     What thoughts of sweetness, and what fond desire,  
     Must to this dolorous pass have led them on ! "  
 Again I turned to them, and as I spake, 115  
     Began : " Francesca, this thy punishment  
     Makes me weep tears of pity and distress ;  
 But tell me ; in the hour of those sweet sighs, 118  
     How and by what did Love grant you to know  
     The purport of desires not yet declared."  
 And she to me : " No pain more bitter is 121  
     Than to remember hours of happiness  
     In time of mis'ry, as your teacher knows. ]  
 But if to learn from its first root the growth 124  
     Of this our love, thou have so great a wish,  
     Like one who weeps and speaks, I'll tell it thee.  
 One day for pastime we together read 127  
     Of Lancelot, how by love he was enthralled.  
     We were alone without distrust of aught.  
 The reading oft times caused us to exchange 130  
     Glances that brought a flush upon the cheek ;  
     But one point only vanquished us at last.  
 When we read how the lady's longed-for smile 133  
     By such a lover was with passion kissed,  
     He who from me shall ne'er be separate,  
 Trembling the while, pressed on my lips a kiss. 136  
     The book and writer were our Galahad.  
     That day did we no further read in it."  
 The while one spirit thus her story told, 139  
     The other sobbed aloud, so that in sympathy,  
     I swooned away, as if about to die ;  
 And down I fell, as a dead body falls. 142

## CANTO VI.

*Third Circle—The Gluttonous.**Cerberus—Ciaccio and his Prophecy.*

**R**ETURNING to my senses, which had closed  
 Before the anguish of the kinsfolk twain,  
 So that with sadness I was wholly stunned,  
 I see new tortures, and new tortured souls 4  
 Around me on all sides, move where I may,  
 Or turn, or wheresoe'r I set my eyes.  
 In the third circle am I, in a rain 7  
 Eternal, cursèd, drenching, icy cold,  
 Its rule ne'er broken, quality ne'er changed.  
 Foul water, huge hailstones, and flakes of snow 10  
 Pour down in torrents through the darkened air ;  
 And the earth stinks, that sucks this deluge in.  
 There Cerberus, a fierce and uncouth beast, 13  
 With triple gullet, doglike barks and bays  
 Over the people, lying there submerged.  
 Eyes vermil red, a greasy beard he hath 16  
 And black, with belly huge and hookéd paws.  
 He claws the spirits, flays and quarters them.  
 In such a downpour they too howl like dogs : 19  
 Screen for one side they of the other make,  
 And oft the godless wretches change about.  
 When Cerberus, the monster worm, saw us, 22  
 He opened wide his mouths, and showed their fangs,  
 While not a limb of him could he keep still.  
 My leader spread the span of his two hands, 25  
 Caught up the earth, and from his well filled fists  
 Flung it right down into the ravening throats.  
 As hungry dog, that barking craves his food, 28



Grows quiet as he gnaws the bone, whereon  
 Intent he strains and fights alone with it,  
 Such did the foul and slobbering jaws become 31  
 Of demon Cerberus, whose thundering roar  
 So stuns the souls, that fain would they be deaf.  
 Over the ghosts we passed, whom the fierce rain 34  
 Beats to the ground, and set our feet upon  
 Their emptiness, which bore the form of men.  
 They all were lying stretched upon the ground, 37  
 Save one, which to a sitting posture rose  
 Quick, as he saw us pass in front of him.  
 "O thou," he said, "Who through this hell art led, 40  
 Own my acquaintance, if thou know me still.  
 Or ever I was unmade, thou wast made."  
 And I to him: "This agony of thine 43  
 Takes thee perchance beyond my memory's range,  
 So that meseems, I ne'er saw thee before;  
 But tell me who thou art, that to a place 46  
 Thus sad art sent, and to such punishment,  
 That e'en a greater not so noisome were."  
 And he to me: "Thy city which is full 49  
 Of envy, like an overrunning sack,  
 Held me within it in the life serene.  
 Ciaccio did you citizens call me: 52  
 For sin of gluttony most ruinous  
 Beneath this rain, as thou dost see, I pine;  
 Nor in this sorrow is my soul alone, 55  
 For these all lie under like penalty  
 For the like sin." No other word he spake.  
 "Ciaccio," I replied, "Thy grievous state 58  
 So weighs on me, that it invites to tears.  
 But tell me, if thou know, to what will come  
 The citizens of city thus distraught? 61  
 Is there a just man left? tell me the cause  
 Of discord such as hath assailed her."  
 And he: "After the tension of long strife 64  
 They'll come to bloodshed; and the woodsmen then

- Will hunt the others forth with great outrage.  
 Then soon, within three suns, must these again 67  
 Fall to the ground, their rivals be supreme,  
 By force of one who in the offing tacks.  
 Long time will they hold up their heads on high, 70  
 Keeping the others under heavy weights,  
 Howe'er they smart thereat, and inly chafe.  
 Two righteous men there are, unheeded there : 73  
 Pride, envy, avarice the three sparks are,  
 That set afire the hearts of all the rest."  
 Here ended he his melancholy dirge. 76  
 And I to him : " I would thou teach me more,  
 And further parley grant. Tegghiaio say,  
 And Farinata, worthies both, Mosca, 79  
 Iacopo Rusticucci, Arrigo,  
 And others who applied their minds to good,  
 Say where they are, and tell me about them, 82  
 For strong desire constraineth me to learn  
 Is heaven's own sweetness, or hell's poison theirs."  
 And he : " They are among the blackest souls : 85  
 Another crime sinks them to lower depths ;  
 If thou descend so far thou'lt see them there.  
 But when in the sweet world thou art once more, 88  
 To men's remembrance call me back I pray.  
 I tell no more, nor more do I reply."  
 From look direct he rolled his eyes askance ; 91  
 A moment's glance, and then he bowed his head,  
 And with it fell among the other blind.  
 My Leader said : " He riseth not again 94  
 On this side of the Angel's trumpet call,  
 When Sovran Justice as a foe will come,  
 And each find then his own sad tomb again ; 97  
 Again resume his flesh and form, and hear  
 The doom that echoes through eternity."  
 So passed we on with tardy step across 100  
 The noisome medley of the ghosts and rain,  
 Touching a little on the future life ;

Whereof I asked : " Master, will punishments                   103<sup>o</sup>  
After the great Doom's day for them increase,  
Or become less, or will they burn as now ?"  
And he to me : " Back to thy science go,                   106  
Which rules that as a thing more perfect is,  
Greater with it the sense of joy or pain.  
And now although these folk, for ever cursed,           109  
To true perfection never can arrive,  
Nearer than here they then expect to be."  
Onward we wound about that circling road,           112  
Speaking much more than I do now repeat :  
We reached the point where the descent begins :  
Here found we Plutus, the arch-enemy.               115

## CANTO VII.

*Fourth Circle—The Covetous and the Prodigal.*

*Plutus—The Penalty of the Miserly and the Prodigal—Fortune.*

*Fifth Circle—The Wrathful.*

“*PAPÈ Satan, papè Satan aleppe,*”

Plutus with hoarse and clucking voice began ;  
 Whereon that courteous Sage, who all things knew,  
 Said to encourage me : “ Let not thy fear 4  
 At all disturb thee, for whate’er his power,  
 He shall not bar thy way adown this rock.”  
 He turned him then to that inflated face, 7  
 And said : “ Be silent, thou accursèd wolf ;  
 In thine own vitals burn thy fury up :  
 Not without cause this journey to the deep : 10  
 Such is the Will on high, where Michael took  
 Due vengeance on the proud adultery.”  
 As sails of vessel, bellying in the wind, 13  
 Fall down in tangled heaps, when snaps the mast,  
 So fell the savage monster to the ground.  
 Thus to the fourth pit went we down, our steps 16  
 Gaining the more upon the doleful bank,  
 That shuts in all the sin of all the world.  
 Justice of God ! Who is’t that piles up toil 19  
 So strange, and torments such as I beheld ?  
 Why doth our sin such havock make of us ?  
 As yonder ’bove Charybdis rolls the surge, 22  
 That breaks on that which ’gainst it dashes in,  
 So here must folk keep up their counter dance.  
 Here more than any elsewhere saw I crowds, 25  
 From one side and the other, with loud yells,  
 Roll heavy weights by strain of chest alone :

With wild encounter dashed they in, and then 28  
     Each group turned backward, rolling to the rear  
     With cries, "Why hoarding," and "whysquand'ringye?"  
 So kept they turning in the dismal round 31  
     On either hand to the point opposite,  
     With still the cry of their reproachful gibe.  
 And then as to the circle's half-way point 34  
     They came, each for another joust wheeled round.  
     And I with heart in pity well nigh rent,  
 Said ; " Master, show me now what people here 37  
     These be, and say if clergy all of these,  
     Who on our left appear with shaven crowns,"  
 And he to me : " All these in their first life 40  
     Were in their mental vision so squint-eyed,  
     In spending they no just proportion kept.  
 Clearly enough their snarling cry says this, 43  
     When at the two points of their round they meet,  
     Where the offence contrariant parts them off.  
 Those, who no covering have of hair on head, 46  
     Where clerics, popes and cardinals alike,  
     'Mong whom works avarice its worst excess."  
 And I : " Master, among such forms as these, 49  
     Some ought I well myself to recognize,  
     Who were polluted by this kind of sin."  
 And he to me : " A vain conclusion thine ; 52  
     Th' ignoble life, that once befoulèd them,  
     Past recognition leaves them in the dark.  
 Ever in mutual buffets will they meet ; 55  
     Forth from the sepulchre will these rise up  
     With closèd fist, and those with hair cropped short.  
 Ill giving and ill saving have from them 58  
     Ta'en the fair world, and fixed them in this fray :  
     And what this is I need not dress with words.  
 Now can'st thou see, my son, how brief the puff 61  
     Of all the good that Fortune holds in charge.  
     For which mankind strives in such buffetings.  
 For all the gold that is below the moon, 64

Or ever was, could not to any one  
 Of these poor weary souls procure repose."  
 "Master," said I, "Speak yet again to me : 67  
 This Fortune, on which thou didst touch but now,  
 That holds the world's wealth in her clutch, what is't?"  
 And he to me : "O silly creatures, ye, 70  
 How vast the ignorance that trips you up !  
 Now will I that my doctrine thou chew well.  
 He, Who in wisdom doth all things transcend, 73  
 Did make the heavens, and set in each a guide,  
 So that all parts, each upon each, should shine  
 By equal distribution of the light. 76  
 And likewise for the splendours of the world,  
 One general minister and guide He gave,  
 Who, in due permutation, should vain wealth 79  
 'Mong nations share, and pass from house to house,  
 Beyond the wit of man to countercheck ;  
 'Tis thus one nation reigns, and one decays, 82  
 According to the sentence passed by her,  
 Who, as a snake in grass, lies hid from view.  
 Your wisdom cannot against her contend ; 85  
 She foresees all things, judges, and maintains  
 Her rule, as other Deities their own.  
 Incessant change with her knows no repose ; 88  
 Necessity keeps her on rapid wing ;  
 So quickly one arrives to claim his turn.  
 And this is she, to curses oft consigned 91  
 By those, who rather should accord her praise,  
 Than blame her wrongly with reproachful words.  
 Happy herself, she hears them not, and glad, 94  
 With all the other first created things  
 She rolls her wheel, rejoicing in her bliss.  
 But now descend we to more piteous scenes ; 97  
 Already sinks each star, that rose, as I  
 Set forth ; forbidden is too long a stay."  
 We crossed the circle to the other bank 100  
 Above a spring that boils and finds a vent

Along a runlet hollowed by itself.  
 Darker than any perse the water was : 103  
 And we alongside of its dusky waves  
 The bottom reached over an awkward path.)  
 A swamp, that bears the name of Styx, is formed 106  
 By this sad stream at point, where at the edge  
 Of those malignant, dark grey shores it falls.  
 And I, who stood intent upon the scene, 109  
 Saw people in the slough, o'erlaid with mud,  
 All naked, and of angry mien withal.  
 They fought with blows, and not with fist alone, 112  
 But with the head and chest and with their feet,  
 Rending each other piecemeal with their teeth.  
 Spake the good Master then : " Thou seest, my son, 115  
 The souls of those whom anger overcame :  
 And I would have thee well assurèd too,  
 That 'neath the water others are who sigh, 118  
 And make this water bubble on the top,  
 As the eye tells thee, turn it where you may.  
 Fixed in the mire they say : " Morose were we 121  
 In the sweet air, that sunshine maketh glad,  
 Harboured within the fumes of sullenness ;  
 Now sullen lie we in the black morass." 124  
 This is the dirge they gurgle in the throat,  
 Which they cannot in full formed speech express."  
 Thus round the noisome pool did we describe 127  
 A wide curve 'tween the dry bank and the swamp,  
 With eyes turned towards those who suck up the mire :  
 Beneath a tower we at the last arrived. 130

## CANTO VIII.

*Fifth Circle—The Wrathful.**Phlegyas—Filippo Argenti—The City of Dis—Resistance  
of Demons.*

**M**Y tale pursuing, long I say ere we  
 Had reached the basement of the lofty tower,  
 Our eyes towards its summit had been raised  
 By two small flames that we saw stationed there, 4  
 And from afar another signal back,  
 At distance that the eye could barely catch,  
 To the deep sea of all sound sense I turned, 7  
 Asking: "What saith this light, and what replies  
 That other fire, and by whom is it made?"  
 And he: "On surface of the slimy wave 10  
 What is expected thou mayst now discern,  
 If the swamp's mist conceal it not from thee."  
 Bow-string ne'er shot an arrow from itself, 13  
 That through the air as quickly made its way,  
 As did a little boat that I discerned  
 Coming that moment towards us o'er the pool, 16  
 Steer'd by a single boatman all alone,  
 Who cried: "Already come, thou felon soul?"  
 "Phlegyas, Phlegyas, thy cry is all in vain, 19  
 This time at least," was then my lord's reply:  
 "Thou'lt have us only while we cross the mire."  
 As one who hears that some great fraud hath been 22  
 Practised upon him, and who chafes thereat,  
 Such in his smothered rage was Phlegyas.  
 My leader then went down into the bark, 25  
 And made me enter by his side, and when  
 I was aboard, I seemed its only freight.  
 Soon as my guide and I were in the boat, 28



Off goes the ancient prow, cleaving its way,  
 Deeper in water than with other souls.

As through the dead canal we hurried on, 31  
 Uprose there one before me drenched in mire,  
 And said : " Who art thou, coming ere thy time ? "

And I to him : " I stay not, if I come. 34  
 But who art thou, changed to this hideous form ? "

He answer made : " Thou seest I'm one that weeps."

And I to him : " In weeping and in woe, 37  
 Accursèd spirit, do thou then remain ;  
 I know thee well, all filthy as thou art."

Then to the boat he stretched out both his hands : 40  
 Whereon the quick eyed Master thrust him off,  
 And said : " Hence, yonder to the other dogs."

And then around my neck he threw his arms, 43  
 And kissed my cheek ; " Rightly indignant soul,"  
 He said, " Blest be the mother that bare thee.

That man was in the world most arrogant ; 46  
 No deed of worth adorns his memory ·  
 And so his ghost in fury rages here.

How many up there deem themselves great kings, 49  
 Who here like swine will wallow in the mire,  
 Leaving behind them horrible dispraise."

And I : " Now Master, would I be right glad 52  
 To see the wretch immersed in this hell-broth,  
 Or ever from the lake we issue forth."

And he to me : " Or ever now the shore 55  
 Be in thy view, thou shalt be satisfied.  
 Right will it be to gratify such wish."

And speedily I saw him undergo 58  
 Such handling from the gentry of the swamp,  
 That to this day I thank and praise the Lord.

" Philip Argenti, have at thee," yelled all ; 61  
 And the fierce spirit of the Florentine  
 Turned on himself and rent him with his teeth.

There left we him ; of him I say no more. 64  
 But on my ears there fell such strains of woe,

That with wide open eyes I forward gaze.  
 "The City namèd Dis," the Master said, 67  
 "Is nigh, my Son, and mighty throngs within  
 Of citizens, sin-laden heavily."  
 And I: "Master, e'en now its minarets 70  
 Plain in the valley, yonder I discern,  
 Bright red, as though from furnace just put forth."  
 To me he said: "The fire eternal, which 73  
 Glows hot within them, shows them ruddy thus,  
 As thou dost see in this the nether hell."  
 At length within the deep moats we arrived, 76  
 Which compass round that land disconsolate;  
 The wall seemed to me as of iron made.  
 Not without fetching first a compass wide, 79  
 We reached a point, where loud the boatman called  
 To us: "Begone, yonder the entrance gate."  
 More than a thousand 'bove the gates I saw, 82  
 Once poured from heaven like rain, who savagely  
 Hissed out: "And who is this, that ere his death  
 Moves through the kingdom of th' already dead?" 85  
 My Master, ever wise, made them a sign  
 That secret parley he desired with them;  
 A little then they checked their high disdain, 88  
 And said: "Come thou alone, let him begone,  
 Who has presumed this realm to enter thus;  
 Let him return on his fool's road alone, 91  
 And prove if he know how: thou shalt remain,  
 Who hast through this dark land escorted him."  
 Think Reader, how I stood discomfited, 94  
 At the bare sound of these accursèd words;  
 For thought I to return no more to earth.  
 "O Guide beloved, who more than seventold times 97  
 Hast brought me safety, and hast rescued me  
 From peril that rose high in front of me,  
 Leave me not now," I prayed him, "in despair; 100  
 And if the farther passage be denied,  
 Let us retrace our steps together quick."

That Lord, who me had thither brought, replied : 103  
 “ Fear not, for this our course can none deny  
 To us ; by Such hath it been granted us.  
 But wait me here ; and with sure hope that I 106  
 Will not forsake thee in this nether world,  
 Thy wearied spirit comfort and refresh.”  
 And so he goes ; and me that father dear 109  
 Leaves all alone, and in suspense I stay ;  
 For “ yes ” and “ no ” keep on the stretch my brain.  
 I could not hear what he proposed to them, 112  
 But no long time among them did he stay,  
 For one and all rushed in as ’twere a race.  
 Right on my Lord’s own breast our enemies 115  
 Did close the gates, and he remained outside,  
 And back to me returned with tardy steps,  
 His eyes to earth were cast, his brow all shorn 118  
 Of show of boldness, as with sighs he said :  
 “ Who hath denied me these abodes of woe ? ”  
 And then to me : “ Be not dismayed that I 121  
 Should thus be wroth ; master this strife I will,  
 Prepare who may resistance from within.  
 This insolence of theirs is nothing new ; 124  
 They showed it once at a less secret gate,  
 Which to this day remains without a bolt :  
 On it thou saw’st the characters of death : 127  
 E’en now on this side of it down the steep,  
 Passing these circles without escort, one  
 Descends, by whom this place shall open fly.” 130

## CANTO IX.

*At the Gate of Dis—The Alarm—The Three Furies—  
 God's Messenger.  
 The Sixth Circle.  
 Heretics—Heresiarchs.*

THE pallor that betrayed my coward fear,  
 As I beheld my Guide come back, at once  
 With him repressed his own unwonted flush.  
 He paused attentive, as one listening hard ; 4  
 For there the eyes could travel little way  
 Through the black air and density of fog.  
 "Ours it must be this contest still to win," 7  
 'Gan he : " Unless . . . But one the offer made . . .  
 Still oh ! how long ere yet that other comes !"  
 Well did I note, as he again wrapped up 10  
 What he began in what came afterwards,  
 His later words were from the first diverse.  
 But none the less his utt'rance caused alarm, 13  
 Because I drew into his broken speech  
 A something worse perchance than what it meant.  
 " Far as the bottom of this dismal cone 16  
 Doth any from the first grade e'er descend,  
 Whose only penalty is bootless hope ?"  
 My question such : " Rarely is any found," 19  
 He said in answer, " who from out our ranks  
 Maketh the journey on which I am bound.  
 'Tis true that I another time was here, 22  
 Conjured by arts of that grim Erichtho,  
 Who to their bodies would the shades recall.  
 Short while had been my flesh deprived of me, 25  
 When she made me enter within that wall

To fetch a spirit back from Judas' ward.  
 That is the lowest and the blackest place, 28  
 Farthest from heaven that encircles all.  
 The road I know full well, so rest assured.  
 This swamp, which aye exhales the noisome stench, 31  
 Girdeth this City of distress all round,  
 Where without wrath we may not enter now."  
 And more he said, that I have not in mind ; 34  
 For now mine eyes had drawn me wholly to  
 The lofty tower with its crest of fire ;  
 Where in a moment suddenly up rose 37  
 Infernal Furies, Three, besmeared with blood,  
 Whose limbs like woman's had her attitudes.  
 With greenest hydras were their waists engirt, 40  
 Small serpents and horned snakes served them for hair,  
 Plaited in wreaths around their savage brows.  
 And he, well knowing the handmaidens, who 43  
 Wait on the queen of woe eternal, said :  
 " Before thee lo ! the fierce Erinnyes stand.  
 Megæra this upon the left hand side ; 46  
 Alecto weeping there upon the right ;  
 Tisiphone between." He said no more.  
 Each with her claws was tearing her own breast ; 49  
 Self smiting with their palms they shrieked so loud,  
 That in alarm I to the Poet clung.  
 " Medusa come : so him we'll turn to stone," 52  
 They all cried out, with faces fixed below,  
 " Theseus' assault but poorly we avenged.".  
 " Now turn thee backward ; keep thine eyes shut close, 55  
 For if the Gorgon shew herself, and thou  
 See her, no hope of a return above."  
 Such were the Master's words, and he himself 58  
 Turned me about, nor trusted to my hands,  
 But with his own as well blindfolded me.  
 O ye, who have a sound intelligence, 61  
 Note well the doctrine which conceals itself  
 Beneath the veil of my mysterious lines,

CANTO IX.

	37
As now across the turbid waves there swept	64
The crashing of a sound with terror filled, Whereat did quake the shores on either side ;	
Not otherwise than when a mighty wind	67
With rush impetuous 'gainst opposing heats, Strikes on the grove ; and held by no restraint,	
Crashes, breaks down, and whirls away the boughs ;	70
Onward it proudly sweeps in clouds of dust, And from it fly wild beasts, the shepherds too.	
Mine eyes set free, he said : “ Thy visual nerve	73
Now fix along that ancient foam towards The point when fiercest drives the stinging mist.”	
As frogs before their foe, the watersnake,	76
Are scattered everywhere across the pool, Until they lie all huddled in the mud,	
So did I see of ruined souls more than	79
A thousand, flying at the face of One, Who at the Ferry crossed the Styx dryshod.	
From off his brow drove he the close, thick air,	82
Waving his left hand oft in front of him ; And only by this trouble seemed distress'd.	
Well I perceived that he from Heaven was sent,	85
And to the Master turned ; who signed to me Calmly to stand, and in due reverence bend.	
Ah me ! how full of high disdain he seemed !	88
He reached the gate, and to his slender rod It open flew ; no fastening held it back.	
“ Outcasts of heaven, ye despised race,”	91
So on the horrid threshold he began, “ Why harbour ye such insolence within ?	
Why thus recalcitrant before His Will,	94
Which from its purpose never is disturbed, And which ofttimes hath made your pain more sharp ?	
What boots it thus to dash yourselves 'gainst fate ?	97
Your Cerberus, if well you recollect, For this still shows a jaw and gullèt peeled.”	
Then back he turned along the swampy way ;	100

No word he spake to us, but bore the look  
 Of one constrained, and spurred by other care  
 Than of the man present in fact with him. 103  
 On toward the City then we moved our steps,  
 At once secure after the holy words.  
 Without resistance entered we within ; 106  
 And I who was desirous to behold  
 What state of things such fortress might enclose,  
 When once within, let mine eyes range around, 109  
 And see on either side an open plain,  
 With anguish and with grievous torments filled,  
 E'en as at Arles, where stagnant spreads the Rhone, 112  
 And as at Pola near Quarnaro's gulf,  
 Which bounds Italia, and her frontier bathes,  
 The ground is all uneven made with tombs, 115  
 Just so on all sides was the aspect here,  
 Except that here the mode was sadder still ;  
 For mid the sepulchres spread flames of fire, 118  
 Wherein they glowed with so intense a heat,  
 That in no craft is more required for iron.  
 The lids of all of them were lifted up, 121  
 And forth there issued lamentations such  
 As plainly came from wretches in their pain.  
 And I : " Who, Master, may the people be, 124  
 That buried in recesses of these vaults,  
 Make themselves heard in sighs of such distress ?"  
 And he to me : " Here lie Arch-heretics 127  
 With their disciples of all sects, their tombs  
 More laden much than thou could'st have supposed :  
 Like here with like entombed lie ; and in 130  
 The monuments the heat is less or more."  
 Then turning to the right hand on we passed  
 Between the tortures and the lofty walls. 133

## CANTO X.

*The Sixth Circle—Heretics.*

*Farinata degli Uberti—Cavalcante de' Cavalcanti and the  
Emperor Frederick.*

NOW on his way along a secret path,  
     'Tween the tormented and the City wall  
     My Master goes, I in his steps behind.  
 "Virtue supreme, who round these godless paths                     4  
     Dost turn me," I began, "speak as to thee  
     It seemeth good, and satisfy my wish.  
 The people, who are lying in these tombs,                     7  
     Might they be seen? The lids already now  
     Are all upraised, and no one is on guard."  
 And he to me: "All will be closed up fast,                     10  
     When from Jehoshaphat they here return,  
     Bringing the bodies they have left up there.  
 On this side in their cemet'ry are housed                     13  
     With Epicurus all his followers,  
     Who with the body make the soul die too.  
 Therefore the question that thou askest me,                     16  
     Shall here within be quickly satisfied,  
     As the wish too whereon thou art silent."  
 And I: "My heart, dear Guide, nowise from thee                     19  
     I hide, except for brevity of speech;  
     Whereto already hast thou me disposed."  
 "O Tuscan, who through this City of fire                     22  
     In modest parlance movest on alive,  
     Thy pleasure be it at this place to halt.  
 The accent of thy speech declares thee well                     25  
     Native of that most noble Fatherland,  
     To which it may be I too harmful was."  
 These sounds quite suddenly had issued from                     28



One of those tombs ; whereon unto my Guide  
 Somewhat more closely in alarm I drew.  
 He said to me : " Turn round ; what doest thou ? 31  
 See Farinata there, who stands erect ;  
 Upward from belt thou'lt see him at full length."  
 Already I had fixed mine eyes on his ; 34  
 Upright he rose with brow and breast aloft,  
 As though he entertained great scorn of Hell.  
 My Guide with ready hands and resolute 37  
 Pushed me amid the sepulchres toward him,  
 Saying : " Explicit let thy words be now."  
 When at the foot before his tomb I stood, 40  
 Awhile he eyed me, and almost with scorn  
 He asked me then : " Who were thine ancestors ?"  
 And I, desirous only to obey, 43  
 Concealed them not, but told him of them all :  
 Whereat he somewhat lifted up his brows ;  
 Then said : " Fierce enemies indeed they were 46  
 To me, my fathers and my partizans,  
 So that twice over I put them to flight."  
 " If hunted forth, they from all sides again 49  
 Returned," said I, " the first and second time ;  
 That art your friends however learned not well."  
 Then there rose up to unobstructed view 52  
 A ghost beside him so far as the chin ;  
 I trow he'd raised himself upon his knees.  
 He looked all round me, as though with the wish 55  
 To see if any other were with me ;  
 But when he found his half-formed hope was vain,  
 With tears he said : " If now thou passest through 58  
 This darksome jail by force of genius high,  
 Where is my son, and wherefore not with thee ?"  
 And I to him : " I come not of myself ; 61  
 He who awaits me yonder, leads me here,  
 Whom in disdain perhaps your Guido held."  
 His words, and mode of punishment beside 64  
 Already had revealed to me his name :

So was mine answer fully thus expressed.  
 Full length he suddenly drew up, and cried :  
 " Held didst thou say ? then is he not alive ? 67  
 Upon his eyes doth not the sweet light fall ?"  
 And when he noted somewhat of delay,  
 And that in answer I did hesitate, 70  
 Backward he fell, and never re-appeared.  
 The other lofty soul, at whose desire  
 I halted first, changed not in look the while, 73  
 Nor turned his head, nor e'en inclined aside.  
 " And if," as he took up our first discourse,  
 " They have but poorly learned that art, 76  
 More torture 'tis to me than e'en this bed.  
 But fifty times shall not be re-illumed  
 That lady's face, who in this realm is queen, 79  
 Ere thou shalt know how heavy that art weighs.  
 An' would'st thou yet to the sweet world return,  
 Why, tell me, is that people so unjust 82  
 In all its several laws against my house ?"  
 Then I : " The slaughter and the grand defeat,  
 That crimson dyed the stream of Arbia, 85  
 A sanction give to such prayers in our church."  
 As with a sigh he shook his head, he said,  
 " There I was not the only one, and sooth 88  
 Not without cause might I have joined the rest :  
 But there I stood alone, when each of them  
 Agreed to raze Firenze to the ground, 91  
 And I with open face defended her."  
 " So may thy seed be yet sometime in peace,"  
 Him I besought, " Unloose for me this knot, 94  
 Wherein my judgment is entangled here.  
 It seems that ye foresee, if well I hear,  
 That in advance, which time brings with itself ; 97  
 And the things present ye see otherwise."  
 " We see, as men with sight imperfect see  
 Things," said he, " that from us are far removed ; 100  
 Such glimmering light the most High still vouchsafes :

As nearer they approach, or are, a blank 103  
     Is our perception then, and if none bring  
     The news, we nothing know of your estate.  
 Hence thou canst apprehend that utterly 106  
     Will all our knowledge from that moment die,  
     When of futurity the gate is closed."  
 Then in distress at thought of my mistake, 109  
     I said ; " Now shall you say to him who fell,  
     That 'mong the living still abides his son.  
 And if just now for answer I was mute, 112  
     Explain to him it was because e'en then  
     My thoughts were in the error you have solved."  
 And now my Master was recalling me ; 115  
     So I in greater haste the spirit prayed  
     That he would tell me who were with him there.  
 He said : " More than a thousand lie with me : 118  
     The second Frederick here within is set ;  
     Also the Cardinal : untold the rest."  
 Thereon he vanished ; and my steps I turned 121  
     Towards the ancient Bard, revolving still  
     The words which seemed disastrous to myself.  
 Forward he moved, and as we then walked on, 124  
     He said : " Why art thou thus in mind distraught ?"  
     His question I did fully satisfy.  
 " Let memory retain what thou hast heard 127  
     Adverse unto thyself," so urged the Sage ;  
     " And now take note ; " his finger then he raised :  
 " When thou shalt stand in her sweet radiance, 130  
     Unto whose lovely eye all things are clear,  
     From her shalt thou learn thy life's pilgrimage."  
 Towards the left anon he moved his foot ; 133  
     Quitting the wall, we for the centre made  
     Along a path, that to a valley struck,  
 Which far as to our heights sent up its stench. 136

## CANTO XI.

*Sixth Circle—Heretics.**Pope Anastasius' Tomb—Description of the Infernal Region.*

ON the extreme edge of a lofty bank,  
 Formed in a circle of huge broken stones,  
 We reached a prison house more piteous still.  
 And there by force of horrible excess 4  
 Of stench, which the profound abyss casts up,  
 We sheltered close behind an upraised lid  
 Of a great tomb, letters on which I saw, 7  
 That said : “Pope Anastasius I hold,  
 Whom from the way of Truth Photinus drew.”  
 “Needs must we in descent be slow, that sense 10  
 Be first a little used to the foul blast,  
 Which by and by we shall no more regard.”  
 Thus far the Master : and, “Some recompense” 13  
 Said I, “provide, that so the time pass not  
 As lost.” And he : “Thou seest my very thought,  
 My Son. Within the rocks before us here, 16  
 Three lessening circles in gradation fall,  
 Like those thou leavest now ; ” so he began ;  
 “They all are full of spirits reprobate : 19  
 But that mere sight may afterward suffice,  
 Hear how and why they are imprisoned thus.  
 Of all ill deeds, which Heaven the most abhors, 22  
 The end is injury, and all such end,  
 By force or fraud, leads to a neighbour's hurt.  
 But in that fraud is man's peculiar vice, 25  
 It more displeaseth God ; so lowest lie  
 The fraudulent, and theirs the greater pain.  
 All the first circle for the violent is :  
 But since three persons are subject to force, 28

It is constructed in three separate rounds.  
 'Gainst God, ourselves, our neighbour, violence 31  
     In person or on chattels can be done,  
     As thou shalt hear in open argument.  
 By violence and grievous wounds may death 34  
     Upon a neighbour fall ; and on his goods  
     Rapine or fire or tolls extortionate :  
 So whoso kills or deals malicious blows, 37  
     Freebooters, robbers, all in this first ring  
     Their torments find, each in his separate group.  
 A man against himself can lift his hand, 40  
     And 'gainst his goods ; and in the second ring  
     'Tis meet that he a bootless penance find,  
 Whoever of your world deprives himself, 43  
     Or substance wastes, or gambles it away,  
     Turning to grief what should have brought him joy.  
 Man too can outrage Deity Itself, 46  
     In heart denying and blaspheming Him,  
     And by despising Nature, and her Gifts.  
 So with its own signet the narrowest Round 49  
     Seals Sodom and Cahors and whosoe'er  
     Says in his heart's contempt there is no God.  
 Fraud, whereof each man's conscience feels some sting, 52  
     A man can practice on confiding friend,  
     And upon one who confidence withholds.  
 The latter method seems at least to snap 55  
     The link of love which nature makes 'mong men ;  
     Wherefore in second circle go to roost  
 Hypocrites, flatterers, dealers in witchcraft, 58  
     Forgers, and thieves, users of simony,  
     Pandors, extortioners and all such scum.  
 The other mode forgets both natural love, 61  
     And that which afterwards is joined to it,  
     From which is formed a personal good faith.  
 Hence in the straitest circle, central point 64  
     Of the whole universe, where Dis presides,  
     Whoe'er betrays, for ever is consumed."

And I : " Most clearly, Master, onward runs 67  
 Thy argument, and well distinguisheth  
 This gulf, and all such as inhabit it.  
 But tell me : those in the thick pool, and they 70  
 Whom the wind drives, and whom the rain beats down,  
 And those who meet exchanging bitter gibes—  
 Why in the flame-red City are not they 73  
 Tormented, if in anger God hold them ;  
 And if not so, why then in such a plight ? "  
 And he to me : " Why doth thine intellect 76  
 Thus from the line diverge beyond its wont ?  
 Or doth thy mind fix somewhere else its eyes ?  
 Doth not thy memory recall the words, 79  
 Wherein thy Ethics treat at length upon  
 The dispositions three, which Heaven wills not,  
 Incontinence and malice and a mad 82  
 Brutality ? and how incontinence  
 Offends God less, and censure less incurs ?  
 If thou keep well this principle in view, 85  
 And call to mind who those are up outside,  
 And now are undergoing chastisement,  
 Thou wilt see well, why from the felons here 88  
 They are withdrawn, and why less angrily  
 Justice Divine them with its hammer smites."  
 " O Sun, true salve of all distempered sight, 91  
 Thou so contentest me, solving my doubt,  
 That doubt is welcome, e'en as knowledge is.  
 Yet now again," I said, " Turn back thy thought 94  
 To what thou said'st of usury, that it  
 Offends God's goodness, and untie this knot."  
 " Philosophy," he said, " for him who hears, 97  
 Shows, and not merely in one case alone,  
 How Nature from Divine Intelligence  
 Derives her course, and by Its art proceeds. 100  
 And if thy Physics thou examine well,  
 Thou'lt find, ere many pages thou hast turned,  
 That your art follows too, as best it can, 103

Her art, as learner on the master waits,  
So that your art a grandchild is of God.  
From these two things, if to thy mind thou bring 106  
Some early words in Genesis, needs must  
Man work to live, and to advance his race.  
But as the usurer goes another way, 109  
Nature herself he scorns, and her handmaid,  
Because he sets his hope on something else.  
But forward, follow me, I fain would on : 112  
The Fishes quiver on the horizon line,  
And due Nor'West now lies the Greater Bear,  
And far on yonder we descend the mount. 115

## CANTO XII.

*Seventh Circle—First Ring—Outrage against Neighbours.*

*The Minotaur—The Ruins of Hell—Phlegethon and  
the Centaurs.*

*Various Characters.*

THE place we reached, whence to descend the steep,  
 Was Alpine, and, by what was there beside,  
 Such as would scare the eye of any man.  
 As in the landslip, which upon the flank, 4  
 On this side Trento, struck the Adigè  
 By earthquake, or the lack of underprop—  
 For from the mountain top, from whence it moved, 7  
 Down to the plain the cliff is shattered so,  
 It might to one above afford a way ;  
 Such the descent into the chasm there : 10  
 And at the point above the open slope,  
 There lay outstretched the infamy of Crete,  
 Which in fictitious heifer was conceived : 13  
 When he saw us, he rent him with his teeth  
 As one, whom fury inwardly consumes.  
 Loudly towards him shouted the Sage : “ Perhaps 16  
 Thou think’st the Duke of Athens may be here,  
 Who in the upper world brought death to thee.  
 Out of my way ! foul beast, for here comes one 19  
 Without tuition in thy sister’s art,  
 Who travelling here beholds your punishments.”  
 As is the bull that wildly breaketh loose, 22  
 The moment he receives the fatal blow  
 And cannot go, but staggers here and there,  
 So likewise did I see the Minotaur. 25  
 My wary Guide cried out : “ Make for the pass ;  
 While thus he raves, ’tis well thou get thee down.”  
 So sped we onward o’er that avalanche 28



Of stones, which ever and anon gave way,  
 Under th' unwonted burthen of my feet.  
 Wrapped in my thoughts I went, and he began : 31  
 "Thy thoughts are fixed perhaps upon this wreck,  
 O'er which the furious beast I've quelled, keeps guard.  
 Now would I have thee know, that other while 34  
 When to the lower hell I made my way,  
 This rock had not as yet beən shattered thus.  
 But if I judge aright, short while indeed 37  
 Before He came, Who carried off from Dis  
 The mighty spoil the upper circle held,  
 On all sides of the valley deep and foul, 40  
 Such quaking was, I thought the Universe  
 Thrilled with that love, which there are some who teach  
 Hath ofttimes into Chaos changed the world : 43  
 And at that moment this most ancient rock,  
 Both here and elsewhere, in this ruin fell :  
 But fix thine eyes below, for nigh at hand 46  
 The river runs of blood, wherein must boil  
 All who do others hurt with violence.  
 O blind cupidity, guilty and mad withal, 49  
 That in brief life so goadest us, and in  
 Th' Eternal seestest us in misery !  
 I saw a broad fosse fashioned like a bow, 52  
 As though it would embrace the plain all round,  
 Just as mine escort had described to me.  
 Between the basement of the cliff and it 55  
 Centaurs in file, equipped with arrows, rode,  
 As to the chace they went i'th' world above.  
 Perceiving us descend, they halted each, 58  
 And from the group detached, three forward came,  
 With bows and arrows chosen previously.  
 And at a distance one cried out : " To what 61  
 Torment come ye, who here descend the steep ?  
 Stand and declare : if not, I draw the bow."  
 My Master said : " In Chiron's presence there, 64  
 The answer we return you shall be made.

E'en to thy hurt thy will was ever prompt." 49  
 He touched me then, and said: "Tis Nessus this, 67  
     Who for the lovely Deianira died,  
     And his own vengeance for himself prepared:  
 The middle one with eye fixed on his breast, 70  
     Is the great Chiron, who Achilles reared:  
     Pholus the other, ever full of wrath."  
 All round the moat these in their thousands ride, 73  
     Shooting each soul that from the bloody pool  
     Emerges further than his crime permits."  
 Nearer to these fleet monsters we approached; 76  
     An arrow Chiron drew, and with its notch  
     Backward behind his jaws he tossed his beard.  
 When his great mouth he had exposèd thus, 79  
     He to his comrades said: "Have ye observed  
     The man behind makes what he touches move;  
 This dead men's feet are never wont to do." 82  
     And my kind Guide, who now had reached the breast,  
     Where the two natures find their common bond,  
 Replied: "He lives indeed, and right it is 85  
     Through the dark vale I guide him thus alone:  
     Necessity brings him, and no caprice.  
 From hymns of Alleluia came there one, 88  
     Who this strange office did to me confide.  
     No robber he, nor I a runaway.  
 But in that Virtue's Name whereby I move 91  
     My onward steps along this savage road,  
     Grant of thy troop some one of these at hand,  
 To show us where 'tis safe to take the ford, 94  
     And on the crupper set this man behind;  
     For he no spirit is to float through air."  
 Chiron then turning round towards the right, 97  
     Charged Nessus thus: "Go back, show them the way,  
     And bid what troop you chance to meet give place."  
 We with this trusty escort forward moved 100  
     Along the edge of that red bubbling pool,  
     Whence from the scalded issued rending shrieks.

People I saw up to their eyebrows plunged, 103  
 And the huge Centaur said: "Tyrants are these,  
 Who set their hands to rapine and to blood.  
 Here they bewail their merciless misdeeds: 106  
 Here's Alexander, Dionysius too,  
 Who years of suffering brought to Sicily;  
 And yonder brow, o'erhung by those dark locks, 109  
 Is Azzolin; the other fair one there  
 Obizzo is of Estè, whom in truth  
 His stepson murdered in the world above." 112  
 Then as to him I turned, the Poet said:  
 "Let him the first place take, the second me."  
 A little farther on the Centaur stopped 115  
 Beside a group, who far as to the throat  
 Seemed from the bubbling caldron to emerge.  
 A Ghost he showed us by himself apart, 118  
 Saying: "In God's own bosom he stabbed through  
 That heart, which on the Thames is still revered."  
 Next saw I people, who above the stream 121  
 Held head and chest entirely lifted out,  
 More than a few of whom I recognized.  
 And thus went on in ever sinking flood 124  
 The pool of blood, till but the feet it boiled:  
 And there our passage lay across the moat.  
 "Just as thou seest that ever at this end 127  
 The boiling flood grows shallower, even so,"  
 The Centaur said, "I would that thou believe,  
 That towards the other end with gradual fall 130  
 The bottom sinks, until it settles down,  
 Where it behoves that tyranny should mourn.  
 God's Justice there plagues with due recompence 133  
 The Attila, who was on earth a scourge;  
 Pyrrhus and Sextus too; and evermore  
 Drains off the tears, that boiling heat unlocks 136  
 From Rinier of Corneto, and Rinier  
 Named Pazzo, who on the highways waged such wars."  
 Then he turned back, and crossed the ford again. 139

## CANTO XIII.

*Seventh Circle—Second Ring.*

*Outrage upon Self—The Dolorous Grove—Pier della  
Vigne—Suicides.*

*Lano da Siena—Jacopo da San' Andrea—A Florentine  
Suicide.*

NOT yet had Nessus reached the other side,  
 When we had thrown ourselves into a grove,  
 Where not a vestige of a path was traced.  
 Not green the foliage, but of dusky hue, 4  
 Not smooth the branches, but twisted and gnarled;  
 No apples there, but only poisonous haws.  
 Thickets so rough and dense 'tween Cecina 7  
 And Corneto the wild beasts cannot find,  
 That shun with hate a cultivated space.  
 Here do the hideous harpies make their nests, 10  
 Who drove the Trojans from the Strophades,  
 Mid dire presages of impending woe.  
 Broad wings they have, faces and necks of men, 13  
 Claws on their feet, huge bellies feathered o'er,  
 And screech their dirges mid the strange tree tops.  
 And the good Master: "Ere thou farther go, 16  
 Know that thou art within the second ring,"  
 So he began to say, "and wilt be till  
 Unto a place of horrid sand thou come. 19  
 Wherefore take note, and so things thou wilt see,  
 Which did I tell thee would o'ertax belief."  
 On every side I heard continuous moans, 22  
 But saw I none from whom they might proceed:  
 Whereon I stood still in bewilderment.  
 I think that he was thinking that I thought 25  
 So many sounds amid those trunks must come

From some, who fain would hide themselves from us.  
 Wherefore the Master said: "If thou break off 28  
     Some little twig from any of these trees,  
     Idle surmises will thy thoughts be found."  
 Then forth I put my hand a little way, 31  
     And from a great thorn pluck'd a slender twig;  
     When loudly shrieked its trunk: "Why strip me thus?"  
 And when it had become all dark with blood, 34  
     It then renewed its cry: "Why rend me so?  
     Hast thou no spirit of compassion left?  
 Men were we once, but now are turn'd to stocks: 37  
     More pitiful thy hands might surely be,  
     If we'd been nothing but the souls of snakes."  
 As with green sapling which is set on fire 40  
     At one end, and the other drips in tears,  
     And hisses with the air that rushes out,  
 So from that fracture came there out at once 43  
     Both words and blood, whereat I let the tip  
     Droop toward the ground, and terror-struck I stood.  
 "O wounded soul," such answer made my Sage, 46  
     "Had he been able to believe at first  
     What he had seen though only in my verse,  
 'Gainst thee he would not have stretched out his hand; 49  
     But so incredible a thing made me  
     Suggest an act, of which I feel the weight.  
 But tell him who thou wast; so that to make 52  
     Thee some amends, he may thy name revive  
     Up in the world, where he may still return."  
 And then the tree: "Me thy sweet speech allures 55  
     Silence to break; and may it not tire you,  
     If to thy bait I rise for brief discourse.  
 I am the man, who erst kept both the keys 58  
     Of Frederick's heart, and them I used to turn  
     So deftly, locking and unlocking it,  
 That from his secrets I shut most men out. 61  
     At this high post I served so faithfully,  
     That sleep and energy alike gave way.

## CANTO XIII.

	53
The strumpet, who her eyes of wantonness	64
From palace of a Cæsar ne'er withdrew,	
The common vice and bane of every court,	
Inflamed 'gainst me the hearts of all around ;	67
And they inflamed, inflamed Augustus so,	
That my glad honours turned to dismal griefs.	
My soul in sentiment of high disdain,	70
Thinking by death it would escape disdain,	
Made me, though just, against myself unjust.	
By this tree's new-formed roots I swear to you,	73
That never from true fealty did I swerve	
To my liege lord, who honour aye deserved ;	
And if unto the world either of you	76
Return, restore my memory that still lies	
Smitten beneath the blow that envy struck."	
He paused awhile ; and then the Poet said :	79
" Silent he is ; lose not the moment then,	
But speak, and ask him if thou wouldst know more."	
And I replied : " Do thou again ask him,	82
What thou dost think will satisfy me most ;	
Self I cannot : pity so wrings my heart."	
Then he again began : " So may the man	85
For thee do gladly, what thy words implore,	
Spirit incarcerate, be pleasèd still	
To tell us how the soul imprisoned is	88
Within these knots ; and tell us, if thou may,	
Is ever any from such limbs set free."	
First with a rushing gust the trunk replied,	91
And next that wind changed to a voice like this :	
" Briefly my answer shall be made to you.	
Soon as the desperate soul in passion goes	94
Forth from the body, sever'd by wilful act,	
Minos remits it to the seventh gulf.	
Into the wood it drops, not on a spot	97
Chosen afore, but as chance haps to fling ;	
And there it germinates like grain of spelt.	
The sapling sprouts, and grows to forest tree :	100

The Harpies, feeding then upon its leaves,  
 Both cause a pang, and for the pang a vent.  
 Like others we shall seek the spoils we cast, 103  
     But none of us to clothe himself therewith ;  
     Not meet for man to don what man had doffed.  
 But hither shall we drag them, and throughout 106  
     The dolorous grove our bodies will be hung,  
     Each on the thorn of its tormented ghost."  
 Attentive at the tree we waited still, 109  
     Thinking that it had more it wished to say,  
     When by a rushing sound we were surprised ;  
 E'en as the man, who at his post, perceives 112  
     The boar approach, and in full cry the field,  
     And hears the bay of hounds and crash of boughs.  
 And lo ! upon our left the forms of two, 115  
     Naked, with scratches torn, and flying hard,  
     Dashed through the trellis of the tangled wood.  
 The one in front : " Now come, come quick, O death ! " 118  
     The other seeming to himself too slow,  
     Cried out : " Not nimble thus thy legs, Lano,  
 The day thou didst in joust of Toppo fight." 121  
     And then, perhaps because his breath ran short,  
     He crept in one heap, tangled with a bush.  
 Behind them was the wood, scoured by full pack 124  
     Of hounds, black, ravenous, and rushing on,  
     Like greyhounds which from leash have just been slipped.  
 As there he squatted, upon him they fixed 127  
     Their teeth, and tore him piecemeal limb from limb,  
     Which off they carried quivering in their pain.  
 Thereon mine escort took me by the hand, 130  
     And led me to the bush, which all in vain  
     Bewailed its fractures streaming forth in blood.  
 " James of S. Andrew," it cried out, " to thee 133  
     What boots it to make me thy hiding place ?  
     What blame have I for thy abandoned life ? "  
 And when my Master halted over it, 136  
     He said : " Who wast thou, who at all these points

CANTO XIII.

55

Breathest in blood thy dolorous appeal?"  
 And he to us: "Ye souls, who have arrived 139  
 To witness this foul outrage of disgrace,  
 Which hath from me my branches thus torn off,  
 Collect them at the foot of this sad bush: 142  
 Mine was the City, for the Baptist which  
 Changed her first Patron, who thenceforth for this  
 Will with his own art make her ever sad: 145  
 And did there not on Bridge of Arno stand  
 Some semblance of him yet in open view,  
 Those citizens, who built her up again 148  
 Upon the ashes left by Attila,  
 Had in their labour found a bootless task.  
 I of my own rooftree a gibbet made. 151



## CANTO XIV.

*Seventh*  
*Second Circle—Third Ring.*

*Outrage against God—Capaneus—The Old Man of  
Crete—The Rivers of Hell.*

**S**TIRRED by affection for my native place,  
 I gathered in a heap the scattered fronds,  
 And gave them him, whose voice began to fail.  
 From thence we reached the limit, where divides 4  
 The second round from third, and where indeed  
 Justice reveals her work most horribly.  
 The strange new scene more clearly to describe, 7  
 I say we came unto a barren plain,  
 Which on its surface not a blade allows.  
 The dolorous grove stands like a garland round, 10  
 As by the dismal fosse itself is girt ;  
 Here on its utmost edge our steps we stayed.  
 One deep and arid sand was all the expanse, 13  
 Nor formed in other fashion than was that,  
 Which by the feet of Cato once was trod.  
 Vengeance of God ! how fearful should'st thou seem 16  
 To every man, who in my story reads  
 What now unto mine eyes was manifest !  
 Of souls quite naked saw I many a herd, 19  
 Who all bemoaned a common misery ;  
 Yet seemed they subject to distinctive rules.  
 Some on the ground lay stretched upon their backs ; 22  
 Seated were some, huddled in crouching form,  
 While others wandered in continuous tramp.  
 They, who thus moved above, more numerous were ; 25  
 Those fewer, who in torment lay prostrate,  
 But to a fiercer wail their tongues were loosed.  
 O'er all the sand there fell in slow descent 28  
 A steady downpour of broad flakes of fire,  
 Like Alpine snow that falls when winds are still.  
 As Alexander on the heated plains 31

Of India saw descend upon his host  
 Flames that came down unbroken to the ground,  
 And so provided that with heel his troops 34  
 Should stamp the soil in, easier to put out  
 Each single flame, while it was still alone ;  
 E'en so fell evermore the eternal heat, 37  
 Which set the sand afire, as tinder is  
 'Neath flint and steel, to add a double woe.  
 In restless dance of blows their wretched hands 40  
 Sought first on this side, then on that to drive  
 Away from them the aye fresh falling fires.  
 " Master," 'gan I, " who all things dost o'ercome, 43  
 Save and alone the demons obstinate  
 That rushed against us at the entrance gate,  
 Who is yon giant that seems not to heed 46  
 The fire, and lies the while in brutal scorn,  
 Defiant so, no downpour softens him ?"  
 And he himself, who was aware that I 49  
 Was questioning the Master about him,  
 Cried out : " What when alive, such am I dead.  
 Though at the anvil Jove tire out his smith, 52  
 From whom in wrath he snatched the sharpened bolt,  
 Wherewith on my last day I was struck down ;  
 Or though in turn he tire out all the rest 55  
 In Mongibello at the dusky forge,  
 Crying : Good Vulcan, to the rescue come,  
 As erst he did on Phlegra's battlefield ; 58  
 Though with full force he hurl his shafts at me,  
 He shall not taste the pleasure of revenge."  
 Then spake my Guide with emphasis so stern, 61  
 I ne'er had heard such force from him before :  
 " O Capaneus, in that thy pride is still  
 Untamed, so greater grows thy punishment. 64  
 No torture, save the frenzy of thy rage,  
 Would for thy fury be due penalty."  
 To me he turned again with gentler look, 67  
 And said : " One of the seven kings was he,

Who Thebes besieged ; he held, and seems to hold  
 God in disdain, and count Him little worth. 70  
 But, as I said to him, his blasphemies  
 Are ornaments that well befit his breast.  
 Now follow me, and yet once more beware 73  
 Thou press not with thy feet the red-hot sand,  
 But keep them close within the forest verge."  
 In silence then we came where breaketh out 76  
 Forth from the grove a rivulet, so red,  
 Its tint e'en now makes my hair stand on end.  
 As from the Bulicamé starts a rill, 79  
 Which 'mong themselves the sinful women share,  
 Such downward through the sand that streamlet ran.  
 The bottom and the slopes on either hand, 82  
 And causeways 'long the side were petrified ;  
 Whereby I judged our passage lay that way.  
 " Amid all else that I have shewn to thee, 85  
 Since first we made our entrance through the gate,  
 Whereof the threshold is to none denied,  
 There hath not been unto thine eyes disclosed 88  
 A thing so notable as is this stream,  
 Which quenches all the flamelets over it."  
 Such were the words my Guide addressed to me : 91  
 Whereon I begg'd him grant the full repast,  
 For which he'd given me the appetite.  
 " Far out mid-sea there lies a wasted land," 94  
 Said he continuing, " which is known as Crete,  
 Under whose king the world was one time chaste.  
 A mountain rises there, which erst rejoiced 97  
 In stream and woodland ; Ida is its name ;  
 'Tis now deserted like a worn out thing.  
 Rhea once chose it as a cradle safe 100  
 For her young son, whom better to conceal,  
 She bade loud shouts be raised, whene'er he cried.  
 Within the mountain stands a grand Old Man, 103  
 Erect, his back to Damietta turned,  
 His eyes, as on his mirror, fixed on Rome.

	59
His head is fashioned of the finest gold ;	106
And of pure silver are his arms and chest,	
Thereafter bronze as far as to the fork ;	
From thence still downward of the choicest iron,	109
Save that the right foot is of baken clay,	
On which, more than the other, straight he stands.	
Each of these parts, except the gold, is by	112
A fissure cleft, that distils tears in drops.	
And these collected perforate that grot.	
Down to this valley o'er the rocks they run,	115
Form Acheron, Styx, Phlegethon, and then	
Through this contracted channel they descend	
At last to point where nothing lower sinks,	118
There form Cocytus ; and what that pool is,	
Thyself wilt see, so now 'tis not described."	
And I to him : " If the stream present here	121
Thus takes its rise within that world of ours,	
Why at this forest's edge is it first seen ? "	
And he to me : " Thou know'st this place is round,	124
And though thou now hast travelled far through it,	
Descending by the left to lower depths,	
Its circle hast thou yet not fully turned ;	127
Therefore if something do appear that's new,	
It need not spread amazement o'er thy face."	
And I again : " Where, Master, then are found	130
Lethe and Phlegethon ? silent on one,	
Thou say'st the other by this rain is formed."	
" With all thy questions truly am I pleased,"	133
He said, " But the red bubbling of the pool	
Should answer well that which thou makest now.	
Lethe thou'lt see, but outside this abyss,	136
There, where the souls repair to wash them clean,	
When sin repented of has been removed."	
He added then : " 'Tis time we turn aside	139
Now from the grove ; so follow me behind ;	
These causeways form our path, for they burn not,	
And over them extinguished is all fire."	142

## CANTO XV.

*Seventh Circle—Third Ring.*

*Outrage against Nature—Brunetto Latini—Francesco  
d'Accorso—Andrea de' Mozzi.*

**O**F the hard causeways one now carries us,  
 While the o'erhanging mist above the stream  
 Shelters from fire the water and the banks.  
 Just as the Flemings 'twixt Wissant and Bruges, 4  
 Fearing the tide which rushes in toward them.  
 Raise a defence to hold the sea in check ;  
 As too, along the Brenta, Paduans 7  
 Seek shelter for their castles and their farms,  
 Ere Chiarentana feels the summer heat,  
 So in like fashion were the structures here ; 10  
 Although, whoe'er he was, in height and breath  
 The Master built them to a smaller scale.  
 Already were we distant from the wood 13  
 So far that I should not have seen its place,  
 If backward I had thither turned my eyes,  
 When on our way we met a troop of souls, 16  
 Coming along the bank side ; and each one  
 Peered in our faces, as by night men may  
 Eye one another in a new moon's light ; 19  
 And looking towards us, these pursed up their lids,  
 Like an old tailor at his needle's eye.  
 Thus scrutinised by such a party, I 22  
 Was recognised by one, who on my skirt  
 Laid hold, and loudly cried : " What marvel's this ?"  
 And, when towards me he had outstretched his arm, 25  
 I fixed mine eyes hard on his baked aspect,  
 So that his smoke-dried visage hindered not  
 The recognition of him in my mind ; 28

And I, stooping my hand down to his face,  
 Made answer : " Ser Brunetto, are you here ? "

And he : " My son, let it not thee displease, 31  
 If now awhile Brunetto Latini  
 With thee return, and let his file go on."

I said : " With all my heart I pray you come : 34  
 And if you will that I sit down with you,  
 'Tis well, if he agree with whom I go."

" My Son," he said, " Whoever of this herd 37  
 One moment halts, lies then a hundred years  
 Without a sheltering screen, when strikes the fire.  
 Wherefore proceed ; I at thy skirts will come, 40  
 And afterward my company rejoin,  
 Which goes lamenting their eternal loss."

I did not dare to step down off the path 43  
 To walk beside him, but I kept my head  
 Bow'd low, as one who goes respectfully.

'Gan he : " What destiny, or fortune what, 46  
 Ere thy last day, doth hither bring thee down ?  
 And who is this that shows thee thus the way ? "

" Yonder above us in the life serene," 49  
 I answered him, " ere yet my full tale told  
 Of years, I in a valley lost myself ;

On it but yestermorn I turned my back ; 52  
 Then, ready to relapse, this one appeared,  
 Who homeward now conducts me by this path."

And he to me : " But follow thine own star, 55  
 And thou a glorious haven canst not miss,  
 If in the fairer life I judged aright.

And had not death called me too soon away, 58  
 Seeing that heaven to thee is so benign,  
 In all thy work would I have cheered thee on.

But that ungrateful people and malign, 61  
 Which from Fièsolè came down of old,  
 And savours still of mountain and of rock,  
 Will for thy good deeds be thine enemy : 64  
 With reason too : for midst the harsh wine-sours

It is not seemly that the sweet fig fruit.  
 By old repute the world held them as blind, 67  
     A people greedy, envious and proud ;  
     From all their habits see that thou keep clean.  
 Reserved for thee Fortune such honour holds, 70  
     That either side will hunger after thee ;  
     But from the goat the grass must be far off.  
 Let beasts of Fièsolè their litter find 73  
     Among themselves, nor let them touch the plant,  
     If on their dunghill any should spring up,  
 In which once more the holy seed revives 76  
     Of Romans, such as 'mong them still were left,  
     When it became the nest of so much sin."  
 " If what I prayed for had been all fulfilled," 79  
     My answer was " you would not yet have been  
     Thus banished from the race of living men.  
 For in my mind is fixed, and wounds my heart 82  
     The image of your goodness in the world,  
     As of a father dear, when hour by hour  
 You taught me how the man eternal grows : 85  
     And while I live the gratitude I feel  
     For this 'tis right my tongue should well declare :  
 What of my future you foretell I write, 88  
     And keep it with like words for her to solve,  
     If I a Lady reach, who will explain.  
 Thus much I would make manifest to you ; 91  
     If only conscience do not me upbraid,  
     Come Fortune as she will, ready am I.  
 Such earnest to my ear is nothing new, 94  
     Therefore let Fortune turn her wheel about  
     At will, and let the boor his mattock ply,"  
 My Master then, turning upon his right, 97  
     Behind him looked, and fixed his eye on me ;  
     Then said : " He listens well, who makes his note."  
 And talking none the less I onward go 100  
     With Ser Brunetto ; and I ask who 'mong  
     His comrades are the highest and best known.

## CANTO XV.

63

And he to me : 'Tis well that some you know ; 103  
     Others 'tis better we in silence leave,  
     For time would fail to tell the roll of all.  
 In fine however know they all were clerks, 106  
     Great men of letters, and of great repute,  
     But in the world all with the same sin stained.  
 Priscian tramps on in that unhappy gang, 109  
     Francesco d'Accorso with him ; and if  
     For such a scurvy rascal thou should'st care,  
 Him mayst thou see, whom *Servus Servorum* 112  
     From Arno to Bacchiglione sent,  
     Where in ill plight he left his misused limbs.  
 More could I name, but our discourse and walk 115  
     May not be now prolonged, and that I see  
     New smoke arising yonder from the sand.  
 Persons approach, with whom I may not be : 118  
     To thy care let me my *Tesoro* leave ;  
     In it I'm still alive ; no more I ask."  
 Then he turned round, and seemed like one of those, 121  
     Who at Verona for the green cloth run  
     Across the plain ; and seemed withal the one  
 That wins the race, and not the one that fails. 124



## CANTO XVI.

*Seventh Circle—Third Ring—Outrage against Nature—  
Guido Guerra—Tegghiaio Aldobrandi and Jacopo  
Rusticucci—The Cataract and Geryon.*

ALREADY I was where upon mine ear  
 The sound of water tumbling to the round  
 Below boomed like the humming of a hive ;  
 When three ghosts all together started forth, 4  
 Running at speed, from out a group that passed  
 Beneath the downpour of the torturing fire.  
 Toward us they came, and loudly each cried out : 7  
 "Halt thou, who by thy raiment seem'st to be  
 A denizen of our depravèd land."  
 Ah me ! what wounds I saw upon their limbs, 10  
 Recent and old, burnt in by scorching fire !  
 It pains me still even to think of them.  
 My Teacher paused, attentive to their cries ; 13  
 He turned his face toward me, and "Wait awhile,"  
 He said : "To these some courtesy is due.  
 But for the fire indeed, which in this place 16  
 Nature shoots forth, I should have said for thee  
 'Twere fitter than for them to hasten on."  
 As now we paused, again did they renew 19  
 Their old refrain, and coming up to us,  
 They formed themselves all three into a wheel,  
 As champions stripped and oiled are wont to do, 22  
 Watching to get their vantage and a grip,  
 Before they yet have come to blows or thrusts.  
 So each with face fixed steadily on me, 25  
 They wheeled in course continuous with neck  
 Ever outstretched reversely to the feet.  
 "And if the misery of this shifting plain," 28

So one began, "and our black, blistered forms  
 Bring us and our entreaties to contempt,  
 Let our past fame incline thy heart to us, 31  
 And tell us who thou art, that safely thus  
 On living feet art tramping on through hell.  
 This one, in whose footsteps thou seest me tread, 34  
 Blistered and naked though he travel on,  
 Was once of nobler rank than thoud'st suppose.  
 Of good Gualdrada he the grandson was : 37  
 Guida Guerra his name, who in his life  
 Did much by prudence and no less with sword.  
 And he, who through the sand follows my track, 40  
 Is Tegghiaio Aldobrandi, name  
 That should be welcome in the upper world.  
 Myself, the partner of their torment, was 43  
 Jacopo Rusticucci ; whom indeed  
 A savage wife wounds the most cruelly."  
 Had I but been protected from the fire, 46  
 I would have flung myself mid them below,  
 And think the Master would have suffered it.  
 But as I should have been there baked and broiled, 49  
 Terror o'ercame my kindlier desire,  
 That made me greedy to embrace them all.  
 Then I began : "It was not scorn, but grief, 52  
 Such that I do not quickly shake it off,  
 That your condition inly pierced me with,  
 Soon as from this my Lord I heard the words 55  
 From which I did in thought divine that some,  
 Such as yourselves, were on the way to us.  
 Of your own land am I ; and at all times 58  
 Your exploits and your honoured names have I  
 Recalled and listened to with love sincere.  
 Flying from gall, I seek the sweeter fruit, 61  
 Promised by this my truthful guide ; but first  
 Down to mid centre must I make my plunge."  
 "So may thy soul for long years still direct 64  
 Thy mortal limbs," said he in answer then,

"And so thy fame shine glorious after thee,  
 Tell me, do courtesy and valour dwell 67  
     Within our city, as was wont of yore,  
     Or are they utterly cast out of her?  
 For William Borsierè, who but now 70  
     Joined us in woe, and yonder with our mates  
     Moves on, doth by his tidings vex us sore."  
 "The upstart people and their sudden gains 73  
     Pride and extravagance have bred in thee,  
     For which e'en now, O Florence, thou dost weep."  
 Such was my cry, raising my face aloft: 76  
     The three, who took this for my answer, stared  
     One at the other, as one stares at Truth.  
 "If other times as little it cost thee," 79  
     Answered they all, "others to satisfy,  
     Happy art thou, thus speaking at thy will.  
 So if from these dark regions thou escape, 82  
     Returned to see the lovely stars again,  
     When thought 'I was there once' will joyous be,  
 Mind to our neighbours that thou mention us." 85  
     Then breaking up their ring, away they fled;  
     Rapid as wings their legs appeared to us.  
 An "Amen" could not one more quickly say, 88  
     Than from our view they vanished out of sight;  
     Wherefore the Master thought it well to move.  
 I followed him, and short way had we gone, 91  
     When now the water sounded so near us,  
     That had we spoken, scarce had we been heard.  
 E'en as the stream that from Mount Viso first 94  
     Holds its own course towards the Eastern shore,  
     Flowing on left hand of the Apennines,  
 Called Acquacheta in the upper heights, 97  
     Ere in the vale it finds a lower bed,  
     And at Forlì loses its previous name,  
 Above St. Benet of the Alp resounds, 100  
     As in one leap it tumbles to the plain,  
     Where full a thousand might be houséd well;

## CANTO XVI.

67

So from the bottom of a broken cliff	103
We heard the echoes of the lurid flood	
In tones that quickly would have stunned the ear.	
A cord I carried girt around my waist ;	106
Once on a time I thought I might with it	
Have caught the leopard with the dappled hide.	
When I had quite unloosed this from myself,	109
As had my Leader bidden me to do,	
To him I held it, rolled and twisted up.	
Thereon he turned him to the right, and then	112
At some slight distance outward from the edge,	
He flung it down into the deep abyss.	
Now something strange I thought within myself,	115
Must to so strange a signal answer make,	
Which with his eye the Master follows thus.	
Ah ! Ah ! how very cautious men should be	118
With those who see not outward acts alone,	
But with discernment scan the inner thought.	
He said to me : " Soon to the top will come	121
What I await ; and what thou dreamest of,	
Should to thy vision soon disclose itself."	
Always should man to truth, that hath a form	124
Of falsehood, close his lips long as he can,	
For it without his fault may bring him shame.	
But silent here I cannot be, and swear,	127
Reader, by rhymes of this my Comedy,	
So may they not be void of lasting fame,	
Through that obscure and heavy air I saw	130
The figure of a swimmer upward rise ;	
A marvel even to a steadfast heart ;	
Just as a man returns, who sometime dives	133
Below to clear an anchor, which has caught	
A reef, or something hidden in the sea,	
With head erect, and feet well gathered up.	136

## CANTO XVII.

*Seventh Circle—Third Ring—Outrage on Social Life—  
Geryon—Scrovigno—Buiamonte—Descent into the Eighth  
Circle.*

“**B**EHOLD the savage beast with pointed tail,  
That scales the heights, through wall and weapon  
bursts,  
Behold him, who with taint infects the world.”  
Thus did my Guide begin his speech to me, 4  
And motioned it with sign to come ashore,  
Near where the stone-built quay we'd traversed ends.  
And onward came that loathsome image of 7  
Deceit, and landed with his head and breast ;  
But to the bank he drew up not his tail.  
His face was face as of an honest man ; 10  
So kindly seemed its surface outwardly,  
But trunk and all the rest was serpent-like.  
Two paws he had, shaggy to shoulder blade ; 13  
The back, the breast, and both the two sides were  
Painted with nooses and with little wheels.  
More colours upon web and woof of cloth 16  
Never did Turk or Tartar interweave,  
Nor tissues such Arachne overlay.  
As boats sometimes upon the beach are hauled, 19  
And half on land and half in water lie,  
And as down there where guzzling Germans dwell,  
The beaver squats to carry on his war, 22  
So this most evil beast planted himself  
On the stone kerb that holds the sand in check.  
In empty space he twirled his length of tail, 25  
Twisting in th' air aloft its venom'd fork,  
Wherewith like scorpion's it was armed at point.  
My Leader said : “ Needs must we now somewhat 28

Divert our course so far at least as where  
 That savage beast across it lies outstretched."  
 And therefore to the right hand we went down, 31  
 And moved ten paces to the utmost verge,  
 Careful to clear alike the sand and fire.  
 And when to him we now had nearly come, 34  
 A little farther off upon the sand  
 I see folks seated near the open space.  
 The Master then : " In order that a full 37  
 Acquaintance with this Round thou bear away,  
 Go now," he said, " and their demeanour note ;  
 There let thine intercourse with them be brief. 40  
 Till thou return, I will persuade this beast  
 To lend his brawny shoulders to our use."  
 Thus once again at now the farthest point 43  
 Of this the seventh circle I, alone  
 Moved toward the persons who in sorrow sat.  
 From out their eyes was gushing forth their woe : 46  
 Waving their hands on this side and on that,  
 Shelter they sought from flame or burning soil.  
 Just as in summer season do the dogs 49  
 With paws or muzzle, when they feel the bite  
 Of fleas, or are by flies and hornets teased.  
 On certain faces when I'd set mine eyes, 52  
 On whom the dolorous fire is raining down,  
 None did I recognize ; but I observed  
 That from the neck of each there hung a pouch, 55  
 Of hue distinctive with a special badge,  
 Whereon their eyes seem greedily to gloat ;  
 And as I pass along them, noting each, 58  
 On yellow purse I saw an azure sign,  
 Which of a lion bore the face and form.  
 And as I push my observation on, 61  
 Another I beheld, as red as blood,  
 Display a goose whiter than butter far ;  
 And one who bore in azure the device 64  
 On his white satchel of a pregnant sow,

Said to me : " What in this ditch dost thou here ?  
 Now go thy way, and since thou livest still, 67  
     Know that Vitaliano, my neighbour,  
     Shall here sit down beside me on my left.  
 With these Florentines Paduan am I ; 70  
     Oft and again they deafen quite mine ears,  
     Shouting, " Come, sovran prince of all of us,  
 Who wilt with thee the pouch and three beaks bring." 73  
     Then twisted he his mouth awry, and forth  
     He shot his tongue, like ox that licks his nose.  
 In fear that longer stay might him displease, 76  
     Who of a short stay had admonished me,  
     I turned my back upon those weary souls.  
 I found the Leader mounted even now 79  
     Upon the crupper of the savage beast ;  
     He said to me ; " Now brave and bold be thou ;  
 By stair-way such must we just now descend : 82  
     Mount thou in front ; I in the midst would sit ;  
     So shall the tail do thee no injury."  
 As one who feels so near the shivering fit 85  
     Of quartan ague that his nails are blanched,  
     And shudders merely at the sight of shade,  
 Such I became at utterance of these words ; 88  
     But his reproach brought me the shame that makes  
     A servant brave before a valiant lord.  
 Upon those monstrous shoulders I sat down ; 91  
     " Only," I would have said, but no words came,  
     As I had hoped, " be sure thou hold me fast."  
 But he who had helped me in other straits 94  
     At other times, soon as I mounted now,  
     Clasped me within his arms, and held me up,  
 " Now Geryon," said he, " forward, and move off ; 97  
     Thy sweep be wide, and gentle thy descent ;  
     Think what a strange load thou upon thee hast."  
 As from its mooring backs a little boat, 100  
     Stern first, so he likewise got off from thence.  
     But when he felt he now could make good play,

## CANTO XVII.

71

To where his breast was, twisted he his tail, 103  
 Then thrust it out and worked it like an eel,  
 And with his paws drew to himself the air.  
 No greater fear, I deem, could that have been 106  
 Of Phaeton, when away he flung the reins,  
 And th' heaven caught fire, as to this day is seen :  
 Nor when from off his back poor Icarus 109  
 Felt his wings fall, as melted the hot wax,  
 While cried his father : "Thou art going wrong,"  
 Than was my own, when on all sides I found 112  
 Only the air, and all things visible  
 Vanish from view, except the beast alone.  
 Slowly it swims, slowly it onward goes, 115  
 Wheels and descends, but nought do I perceive,  
 Save that a wind drives upward on my face.  
 Already on my right I heard the pool 118  
 Raging beneath us with a horrid roar,  
 Whereat with head outstretched I downward gazed.  
 With greater fear the precipice filled me : 121  
 For fires I saw and lamentations heard,  
 And in alarm more tightly gripped my seat.  
 And then I saw, what I had not before, 124  
 How we went down in curves, by the sad scenes,  
 That from alternate sides came into view.  
 As falcon, which hath been long time on wing, 127  
 And seen no bird nor lure of any kind,  
 Makes falconer cry : "Stooping already, Eh?"  
 And weary drops, with many a hundred curves, 130  
 At point, whence she had been so keen to start,  
 And far from falconer sullenly alights,  
 So at the bottom Geryon landed us, 133  
 Close by the basement of the jagged rock,  
 And having now discharged him of our load,  
 As arrow from the string, he disappeared. 136



## CANTO XVIII.

*Eighth Circle—First Crevasse—Pandors and Seducers—  
Venedico Caccianimico—Jason—Second Crevasse—  
Flatterers—Alessio Interminai.*

A PLACE there is in hell, Sin-pouches called,  
 All of hard rock, in hue ferruginous,  
 Like the engirding zone that round it curves.  
 Right in the centre of this sinful garth 4  
 There yawns a pit both very wide and deep :  
 Of its construction I in place will speak.  
 The precinct then, which 'tween this pit remains 7  
 And foot of the high, rocky cliff is round ;  
 Its surface by ten separate valleys cleft.  
 As is the form presented to the eye 10  
 By places, where for safety of their walls  
 Our castles are by many moats girt round,  
 Such here the aspect, which by these was borne ; 13  
 And as from threshold of such fortresses,  
 Small bridges run far as the outmost bank,  
 So from the base of cliff ran shelving reefs, 16  
 That crossed the banks down to the pit,  
 Which finally collects and cuts them off.  
 'Twas in such place, shaken off Geryon's back, 19  
 That we did find ourselves ; and to the left  
 The Poet held his way, I after him.  
 On the right hand new sufferings I beheld, 22  
 New torments, and new executioners,  
 With whom the first crevasse was overrun.  
 Naked the sinners were down in the depth : 25  
 Our side the midway they came facing us ;  
 On 'th 'other went our way, at quicker pace.  
 In year of Jubilee the Romans thus, 28

By reason of the hosts upon the bridge,  
 Arranged for passengers to make their way :  
 On one side all who to St. Peter's go, 31  
     Pass with their faces toward the Castle set ;  
     But on the other to the Mount proceed.  
 On either side over the murky stone, 34  
     Demons with horns I saw, armed with huge whips,  
     Wherewith they scourged them fiercely from behind.  
 Ah ! how they made them nimble on their shanks 37  
     At the first lash ; not one of them there was,  
     Who for a second stayed, still less a third.  
 As on my way I went along, mine eye 40  
     Encountered one, and on the spot I said :  
     " Not for the first time see I this man now,"  
 Wherefore I stopped his features to observe, 43  
     And with me my kind Leader too remained,  
     And gave me leave to fall a little back.  
 The one thus lashed thought to conceal himself 46  
     By bending low his face ; 'twas no avail ;  
     For I began : " Thou, that dost droop thine eyes  
 To earth, if these thy features cheat me not, 49  
     Venedico Caccianimico art ;  
     But what brings thee to pickling such as this ?"  
 And he to me : " With no good will I speak ; 52  
     But thy clear idiom constraineth me.  
     Recalling to my mind the ancient world.  
 I was the man, who the fair Ghisola 55  
     Did to the marquis for his pleasure bring ;  
     However else the scandal may be told.  
 Nor I, the only Bolognese, that here 58  
     Doth wail ; nay this place is so full of us,  
     That not so many tongues now learn between  
 Savena and Reno to say : "*Sipa* ;" 61  
     And would'st thou proof on evidence demand,  
     Call to thy mind our covetous desires."  
 As thus he spake, a demon with his thong 64  
     Lashed him, and said : " Base pander, hence away ;

Here are no women to be hired for coin."  
 Back to my escort's side I made my way ; 67  
 And with a few steps afterwards we came  
 Where from the bank there juttet out a ridge.  
 Nimble enough we mounted to the top, 70  
 And turning to the right, o'er a jagged reef,  
 We left th' eternal wall of cliffs behind.  
 When we had reached a point, where, underneath, 73  
 A space is left as passage for the scourged,  
 The leader said : " Hold hard, and with thine eye  
 Try 'mong these other miscreants to catch 76  
 Some faces thou hast not examined yet,  
 Seeing their line of road was one with ours."  
 From the old bridge above we watched the file, 79  
 That came towards us on the other side,  
 In the same manner driven by the lash.  
 'Gan the good master, ere I asked of him, 82  
 " Observe the giant form approaching us,  
 That seems not for its pain to shed a tear.  
 How royal a presence this he still retains ! 85  
 'Tis Jason, who by wit and courage too  
 The Colchians left defrauded of the Ram.  
 He by the isle of Lemnos passed along, 88  
 After the daring women ruthlessly  
 Had all their male kind giv'n up to death.  
 With signs of love and by his specious words 91  
 He there deceived Hypsipyle, the girl,  
 Who all her sisters had before deceived.  
 With child he left her there in solitude ; 94  
 Such sin condemns him to such penalty ;  
 And vengeance due requites Medea's wrong.  
 With him goes whosoe'er, as he, deceives ; 97  
 And of the first crevasse suffice it this  
 To know, as well as whom its fangs hold fast."  
 Already were we, where the narrow path 100  
 Runs on across the second bank, which forms  
 The pier from which another arch is thrown.

## CANTO XVIII.

75

There heard we people moaning heavily 103  
 I'th' next crevasse, snorting from nose and mouth,  
 And with their hands inflicting heavy blows.  
 Encrusted were the banks with moisture, which, 106  
 Exhaled below, did there condense, and cling  
 In substance noisome both to sight and smell.  
 So deep the bottom lies, that to look down 109  
 There is no place save at the crown of arch,  
 Where at its highest point the rock o'erhangs.  
 Thither we came, and thence down in the moat 112  
 People I saw all stifing in one filth,  
 Which from men's privies might have been removed.  
 And as I peer down to the depth below, 115  
 A head I saw with ordure so o'erlaid,  
 That none could say was he lay man or clerk.  
 He shrieked at me : " Why stare thus greedily 118  
 At me, more than at others as befouled ? "  
 And I to him : " If I remember well,  
 Thee have I whilom seen with cleanly locks ; 121  
 Alessio Interminei of Lucca thou ;  
 Therefore I watch thee closer than the rest."  
 And he with blows upon his poll replied ; 124  
 " Down here those flatteries have plunged me deep,  
 With which my tongue was never surfeited."  
 And then my leader : " Farther on now try 127  
 Thy vision to extend," he said, " that so  
 The better with thine eyes thou catch the face  
 Of that dishevelled hussy and obscene, 130  
 Who yonder rends herself with filthy nail,  
 Now crouching down, and now on foot erect.  
 Thais the harlot 'tis, who answer made 133  
 Unto her lover, when he asked, " do I  
 Great thanks deserve from thee ? " Prodigious ay."  
 Herewith our visions may be satisfied." 136

## CANTO XIX.

*Eighth Circle—Third Crevasse—Simony—  
Pope Nicolas III.*

**O** SIMON Magus, and thy wretched train,  
 Who in your greed for silver and for gold  
 Do prostitute the things of God, that ought  
 The Brides of Holiness to be, meet 'tis 4  
 That now for you the trumpet sound its call,  
 Since in the third crevasse your portion is.  
 We to the tomb that next in order came 7  
 Had climbed, far as the point of rock, which in  
 Plumb-line o'erhangs the middle of the moat.  
 Wisdom Supreme, how great thy skill, revealed 10  
 In heaven, and earth, and in the evil world !  
 Thy power how just in Its award to each.  
 Along its sides and over all its floor 13  
 I saw the dusky rock pierced full of holes,  
 All of one size, and each of them was round.  
 Not less, nor greater, did they seem to me, 16  
 Than those in mine own beautiful St. John,  
 Which for the priests in baptism are made.  
 'Twas one of such, not many years ago, 19  
 I broke to save a child drowning therein ;  
 Be this a seal to undeceive all men.  
 Forth from the orifice of each the feet 22  
 Protruded of a sinner, and his legs  
 Far as the calves ; the rest enclosed within.  
 The soles of all were both of them afire, 25  
 Whereby their joints in such contortions writhed,  
 As would have broken withes and plaited bands.  
 As with things unctuous the flame is wont 28  
 Only to flicker on the outer side,

So was it there from heel to point of toe.  
 "O master, who is it tormented thus, 31  
 There writhing more than any of its mates,"  
 Said I, "and whom a ruddier flame sucks dry?"  
 And he to me: "If willing that adown 34  
 That bank, which easier slopes, I carry thee,  
 Thou'lt learn from him his story and his sins."  
 And I: "What pleaseth thee, to me is good; 37  
 Thou art my lord, and know'st I ne'er depart  
 From wish of thine; and know'st what I speak not."  
 Thereon upon the fourth rampart we came; 40  
 We turned, and to the left went down far as  
 The narrow bottom, which was drilled with holes.  
 Nor off his hip did the good master me 43  
 Set down, till we had reached the orifice  
 Of him, whose shank bespoke such agony.  
 "Whoe'er thou art, thus standing upside down, 46  
 Unhappy soul, fixed like a stake in th' earth,"  
 Thus my address began, "If able, speak."  
 There like the friar I stood, called in to shrive 49  
 The treach'rous murderer, who, now fixèd down,  
 Calls him once more, delay from death to gain.  
 And he shrieked out: "Already standing here? 52  
 Already here, I say, O Boniface?  
 By many a year the book of fate's belied.  
 Art thou so soon contended with the pelf, 55  
 For which thou didst not fear by fraud to wed  
 The Lady Fair, and then dishonour her?"  
 I stood like those, who do not understand 58  
 Some answer made to them, and think themselves  
 Bemocked and at a loss how to reply.  
 Then Virgil said "Tell him the truth at once: 61  
 Say I am not that man, the man thou think'st."  
 And as directed, such was my reply.  
 Whereat the spirit writhed with both his feet, 64  
 And then with groans and lamentable voice,  
 Ask'd me: "What is't then thou would'st have of me?"

If to know who I am thou have such care, 67  
 That for this purpose thou hast crossed the bank,  
 Know that I was with the great mantle clothed ;  
 And truly son of the She-Bear I was, 70  
 So eager to enrich the cubs, that there  
 My wealth, but here myself I stowed away.  
 Beneath my head down are the others dragged, 73  
 Who before me in simony transgressed,  
 Now in the fissures of the rock laid flat.  
 And down there I shall one day drop, whene'er 76  
 He comes, whom I supposed thee to be,  
 When so abruptly I my question put :  
 Already longer are my feet in flames, 79  
 And I in this inverted posture placed,  
 Than planted will he stand with feet afire.  
 For after him, with deeds still uglier, 82  
 Shall from the west a lawless shepherd come,  
 One justly fit to cover him and me.  
 A second Jason he ; of such we read 85  
 In Maccabees, and as to him his king  
 Gave way, e'en so the King of France to this."  
 I know not if too foolish I was then 88  
 In framing the reply I thus returned :  
 " Ah ! tell me now what treasure did our Lord  
 Demand at first from Blessed Peter, when 91  
 He handed over to his charge the keys ?  
 Surely, He asked for nought save, Follow Me ;  
 Nor gold nor silver from Matthias asked 94  
 Peter and all the rest, when fell by lot  
 To him the place lost by the guilty soul.  
 Here stay thou then, for thou art punished well ; 97  
 Keep safe the money thou didst ill take up,  
 Which prompted thine audacity 'gainst Charles ;  
 And if it were not that I am withheld 100  
 E'en still by rev'ence for the keys supreme,  
 Which thou didst carry in the happier life,  
 Words would I utter heavier than I speak : 103

For avarice like yours saddens the world,  
 Crushing the good and lifting up the bad.  
 Shepherds like you were those th' Evangelist 106  
 Perceived, when on the waters he beheld  
 The woman sit, the paramour of Kings ;  
 Who at her birth was crowned with seven heads, 109  
 And her credentials in ten horns displayed,  
 Long as her virtue pleasèd well her spouse.  
 Of gold and silver ye have made a god, 112  
 And from idolaters how differ ye,  
 Save that they one invoke, and hundreds ye ?  
 Ah Constantine ! parent of how great ill, 115  
 Not thy conversion, but that dowry was,  
 Which from thy hand the first rich father took !"  
 And while before him in such strain I sang, 118  
 Either in anger, or by conscience stung,  
 He with both feet in fierce convulsion writhed.  
 Well I believe it pleased my guide to hear 121  
 The sound of words expressive of these truths,  
 Wheretò he listened with contented smile.  
 And so in both his arms he caught me up ; 124  
 And when he'd raised me high upon his breast,  
 Again he mounted by the way he came ;  
 Nor weary was he of this close embrace, 127  
 Until he'd reached the summit of the arch,  
 Which from the fourth unto the fifth bank leads.  
 There did he gently set his burthen down, 130  
 Gently by reason of the rugged steep,  
 Where e'en a goat had found the passage hard :  
 Thence a broad valley opened to my view. 133



## CANTO XX.

*Eighth Circle—Fourth Crevasse—Diviners—Amphiaräus—  
Tircsias—Aruns—Manto—Eurypylus—Michael Scott.*

OF a new punishment my verse must speak,  
 And furnish matter for the twentieth book  
 Of the first lay, which tells of the submerged.  
 Already had I set myself to gaze 4  
 With all my force into the open depth,  
 Which in the tears of agony was steeped ;  
 And round the curve of the vast valley saw, 7  
 Weeping in silence, people come at pace,  
 At which in this world litanies proceed.  
 And as mine eyes fell to still lower depths, 10  
 Each seemed to be distorted wondrously  
 Between the chin and where the chest begins :  
 For to the loins the face was twisted round, 13  
 And backward only needs could they advance,  
 Because in front all sight was ta'en away.  
 Perchance already in paralysis 16  
 Some may have been wholly distorted thus,  
 But such I have not seen, nor think there be.  
 So may God grant thee, Reader, to collect 19  
 Fruit from thy reading, think within thyself,  
 How an unmoistened face I could retain,  
 When our own image close to me I saw 22  
 So twisted round, that from their eyes the tears  
 Ran down the spine and bathed the hinder parts.  
 I wept indeed, as 'gainst a point I leaned 25  
 Of the hard rock, so that my escort said :  
 " Art thou too one among the other fools ?  
 Here piety revives, when pity dies. 28  
 For who can be more impious than the man,

Whom God's just judgments stir to sympathy ?  
 Raise, raise thy head, and see the man for whom 31  
 Earth opened once before the Thebans' eyes,  
 And with one shout they cried : Where dost thou fall,  
 Amphiaräus ? why the battle leave ?" 34  
 Yet stayed he not his headlong rush below,  
 Till Minos he had reached, who all arrests.  
 See, of his shoulders he hath made a breast ; 37  
 Because he fain would see too far ahead,  
 Backward he looks ; advance is retrograde.  
 Tiresias see, who his appearance changed. 40  
 When for a man's a woman's form he took,  
 Transformed entirely in his every limb ;  
 And needed after that he first should smite 43  
 The pair of twisted serpents with his rod,  
 Ere plumes of manly sex he could resume.  
 His belly Aruns with his back confronts, 46  
 Who on the Luni hills, where now are fields,  
 Tilled by the Carrarese that dwells below,  
 Mid the white marbles occupied a cave, 49  
 From whence, surveying sea and stars alike,  
 His vision swept in unimpeded range.  
 And she, who with her tresses flowing down 52  
 Hides from thy sight her breasts, and hath her form  
 On th' other side veiled 'neath a robe of hair,  
 Was Manto, who, first searching many lands, 55  
 At last there settled, where myself was born ;  
 Wherefore I would thou hear me yet awhile.  
 When from this life her father passed away, 58  
 And Bacchus' city into bondage came,  
 She for a long time roamed about the world.  
 Up in fair Italy there lies a lake, 61  
 Beneath the Alp that locks Germania in,  
 Above the Tyrolese, Benaco named.  
 'Tween Garda and the Val Camonica 64  
 More than a thousand springs water, I trow,  
 Mount Apennine, and in that lake collect.

Midway a spot there is, where bishop from 67  
     Brescia, Verona, Trent a blessing might  
     Pronounce, if on his way he take that road.  
 And where the shore around it lowest falls, 70  
     Sits Peschiera, fortress fair and strong,  
     Confronting Brescia, and the Bergamasks.  
 There finds an outlet all such water as 73  
     Benaco cannot in his bosom hold,  
     And flows below, a river through green fields.  
 Soon as the current on its course makes head, 76  
     No more Benaco, Mincio it is called,  
     Far as Governo, where it joins the Po.  
 Nor runs it far, ere it a level finds, 79  
     O'er which it spreads, and forms a swampy pool,  
     That doth in summer breathe unwholesome airs.  
 As thereby passed the harsh, ungenial maid. 82  
     Midway across the marsh she spied a spot,  
     A barren waste, void of inhabitants ;  
 There to escape all human intercourse, 85  
     She halted with her slaves to ply her arts,  
     There lived, and there she left her empty corse.  
 Men afterwards from scattered points around 88  
     Collected in this place, as one secure,  
     By reason of the swamps on every side.  
 They built the city over her dead bones, 91  
     And after her, who first chose out the place,  
     They called it Mantua without augur's aid.  
 Already dwelt in it a numerous race, 94  
     Or ever Casalodi's folly had  
     Been played upon by Pinamonte's guile.  
 So I apprize thee, if thou ever hear 97  
     My native home had other origin,  
     That never can a lie gainsay the truth."  
 "Master," said I, "these arguments of thine 100  
     So cogent are, and so constrain my faith,  
     That other would with me be but spent coals.  
 But tell me of these people passing by, 103

If any thou observe of special note ;  
 For only unto such my mind responds.  
 He said to me : " He yonder, from whose cheek 106  
 The beard o'er his brown'd shoulders floweth down,  
 What time Greece was of sons so far bereft,  
 That scarce in cradle was a manchild found, 109  
 Was augur, and with Chalcas fixed the hour  
 At Aulis to let slip the cable first.  
 Eurypylos his name, and thus of him 112  
 In one place sings my owu high tragedy ;  
 This thou know'st well, thou, who dost know it all.  
 The other, so contracted in the flank, 115  
 Was Michael Scott, who in good sooth knew how  
 To play the trick of a magician's fraud.  
 Guido Bonatti see ; Asdente see, 118  
 Who now to leather and to twine would fain  
 Have stuck, but his repentance comes too late.  
 The wretched women see, who witches turned, 121  
 And needle, spool and spindle cast away  
 To work black arts with images and herbs.  
 But onward now, for with his thorns doth Cain 124  
 Now touch the confine of both hemispheres,  
 And below Seville dips into the wave,  
 And only yesternight the moon was full, 127  
 As thou should'st well recall, for no ill friend  
 Was she ofttimes to thee in the dark wood."  
 So spake he to me, as the while we moved. 130

## CANTO XXI.

*The Eighth Circle—Fifth Crevasse—Swindlers and Rogues—  
A Magistrate of Lucca—A Constabulary of Demons—  
A Comedy of Hell.*

DISCOURSING upon other things whereof  
 My Comedy cares not to sing, we thus [height.  
 From bridge to bridge advanced and reached the  
 Where paused we to observe the next crevasse 4  
 Of the Sin pouches, and their vain laments.  
 And this I saw in wondrous darkness wrapped.  
 As the Venetians in their arsenal 7  
 In winter time boil the tenacious pitch  
 Their unsound shipping to repair, which they  
 Dare not send out to sea; or in its stead 10  
 A new ship one constructs, while one recaulks  
 The ribs of that which many a trip has made,  
 One hammering forward, and another aft; 13  
 And fashion some the oars, or twine the shrouds,  
 And others patch the mizzen or mainsail;  
 So not by fire, but power of art Divine, 16  
 There boiled below a pitch-like substance thick,  
 That, as with glue, besmeared the banks all round.  
 This I beheld, but nothing else therein 19  
 Save bubbles, which the boiling brought to top,  
 And watched the whole swell up, contract and sink.  
 While I was gazing hard down on the depth, 22  
 My Leader with the cry "Beware, Beware,"  
 Dragged me, from where I stood, up to himself.  
 I turned me then as one who hastes to catch 25  
 A sight of what he rather would escape,  
 Whom sudden fear leaves in bewilderment;  
 Who, while he looks, is hurrying to begone. 28

For a black devil I behind us saw  
 Running above us o'er the bridge of rock.  
 Ah me! how savage in aspect was he! 31  
 And in his gestures no less fierce he seemed,  
 With wings outspread, and nimble on his feet:  
 His shoulder, high and pointed sharp, was with 34  
 A sinner charged, whose either haunch he held,  
 Gripped tightly by the tendons of the feet.  
 "Ho! Bloodyclaws," he cried, "that keep our bridge, 37  
 One of St. Zita's elders hither comes;  
 Send him well under, for I now go back  
 To that place, which is full of such, where, save 40  
 Bonturo, all are venal knaves and rogues.  
 Where for a penny yes will change to no."  
 He tossed him down, and over the hard rock 43  
 Himself returned, and ne'er was mastiff slipp'd  
 At greater speed upon a robber's track.  
 Down sank the wretch, and rose all doubled up! 46  
 The demons, under cover of the bridge,  
 Yelled out: "No Santo Volto for thee here;  
 Folks swim not here as in the Serchio; 49  
 So, an' thou would'st escape our grappling-hook,  
 Don't let thyself appear above the pitch."  
 Then tearing him with more than hundred rakes, 52  
 "Here under cover," said they, "thou must dance,  
 And so, if able, filch thy stealthy gains."  
 Just so the cooks unto their scullions give 55  
 Orders within the cauldron to keep down  
 The flesh with prongs, lest to the top it float.  
 Said the good Master: "That it may not be 58  
 Observed, that thou art here, crouch down behind  
 Some jutting rock, which may a screen afford;  
 And for offence that may to me occur, 61  
 Be not alarmed; I understand it all;  
 In such a scuffle have I been before "  
 O'er the bridge head then went he on his way; 64  
 And when upon the sixth bank he arrived,

Need had he then a steadfast front to show. 67  
 With all the fury and the storm of rage  
     With which dogs rush upon a beggarman,  
     Who, as he halts, begins his tale of want,  
 So rushed they from beneath the little bridge, 70  
     And turned against him all their grappling hooks ;  
     But shouted he : " Let none be mischievous ;  
 Ere with your hooks ye make attack on me, 73  
     Let one of you advance to hear my words ;  
     And then advise ye how ye use your forks."  
 They all cried out : " Tailstinger, now go thou : " 76  
     Whereon one moved ; steady the rest remained ;  
     Said he, as he came up : " What use is this " ?  
 " Tailstinger, dost thou think thou'dst see me here 79  
     Arrived," said then my master, " thus far safe,  
     Despite the violence of your rude attacks,  
 Save by the Will Divine and favouring fate ? 82  
     For me make way ; in heaven 'tis willed that I  
     Should to another show this savage road."  
 Then in his pride was he crest-fallen so, 85  
     That to his feet forthwith down dropped his prong ;  
     And to the rest he said : " No blows just yet."  
 To me my Guide called out : " Thou, who dost sit 88  
     Crouching amid the juttings of the bridge,  
     Rejoin me now in full security."  
 At once I rose and quickly came to him ; 91  
     And in a line the devils all advanced,  
     So that I feared they would the compact break.  
 In like alarm I saw the soldiers once 94  
     Forth from Caprona coming under bond,  
     Finding themselves among so many foes.  
 With my whole person I drew closely to 97  
     My Leader's side, nor did I take mine eyes  
     From off the looks which boded me no good.  
 They sloped their prongs ; and, " Shall I touch him up 100  
     Over the crupper," said they 'mong themselves.  
     " Ay, Ay, let fly at him," they answered all.

But then the demon, who my Leader held 103  
     In parley with him, turned him sharply round.  
     And said : " Now quiet, Bullybrawl, keep still."

And then to us : " Farther advance across 106  
     This rock there cannot be, for the sixth arch  
     In utter ruin at the bottom lies.

But an it please ye forward still to go, 109  
     Then up along this causeway lies your path,  
     When soon another reef will put you o'er.

But yesterday later five hours than this, 112  
     A thousand years, two hundred, sixty-six  
     Were told in full, since broken was this road.

Thither I send these pursuivants of mine 115  
     To see who may be snuffing fresher air.  
     Go ye with them ; not spiteful will they be.

Wingflapper to the front and Frostyfoot," 118  
     So he began to call, " Uglydog next,  
     And Frizzlybeard, be captain of the ten.

Step forward Gorymoor and Dragonsnout, 121  
     Dogskinner and Hogbristle with thy tusks,  
     Cockchafer and mad Ruddyface the last.

All round the seething glue make careful search ! 124  
     Convey these safely to the other reef,  
     Which all unbroken spans the dens beneath."

" Master, woe's me ; what is it I behold ?" 127  
     Said I, " O without escort let us go,  
     For I ask none, if thou but know the way.

If thou art now quick to observe as erst, 130  
     Dost thou not see them grimly grind their teeth,  
     And threaten with their frowns our injury."

And he to me : " I would not have thee fear : 133  
     Leave them to grind their teeth, as pleaseth them ;  
     Such signs they mean for wretches boiling there."

Along the left embankment they wheeled round, 136  
     But first each one, with tongue squeezed tight between  
     The teeth, thus to his Leader gave a sign,  
 And from the rear with trumpet he replied. 139





But as towards them Frizzlybeard approached,  
 Beneath the bubbles quick they darted in.  
 And one I saw, and shudders still my heart, 31  
 Who waited, e'en as it might happen that  
 One frog remains, while dives another down.  
 Dogskinner then, who nearest was to him, 34  
 Caught with his hook the hair besmeared with pitch,  
 And held him like an otter up to view :  
 I had already learned the names of all, 37  
 For I had noted them as they were picked,  
 And after marked how each addressed his mate.  
 "Now, Ruddyface, be sure that in his back 40  
 Thou fix thy claws, and strip him of his skin ;"  
 So shouted all the accursèd fiends at once.  
 And I : "O Master if thou can, by all means do 43  
 Find out who this unlucky wight may be,  
 That thus has fallen into adverse hands."  
 My Leader to his side drew near, and asked, 46  
 From whence he came : to him the other said :  
 "My birthplace was the kingdom of Navarre.  
 My mother placed me servant to a lord, 49  
 For by a ribald had she me conceived,  
 Who all his substance and himself destroyed.  
 Domestic to good King Tybalt then I was ; 52  
 To bribery there and fraud I gave myself,  
 For which in this stew now I give account."  
 Hogbristle then, from out whose mouth there thrust, 55  
 On each side one, a pair of hoglike tusks,  
 Let him feel well how one of these could rend.  
 The mouse had fallen among cruel cats ; 58  
 But in his arms him Frizzlybeard snatched up :  
 "Stand off," he said, "long as he's in my grip ;"  
 And to my Master he then turned his face : 61  
 "Ask him again," he said, "if more thou'dst learn,  
 Before another gives him his dispatch."  
 My Leader then : "Among thy fellows here 64  
 In guilt, know'st thou if any Latin be

Beneath the pitch ?” And he: “ But now I left  
 One, who erewhile was living near those parts. 67  
 And would I were with him well covered up,  
 So should I fear neither their hooks nor claws !”  
 And Gorymoor: “ Too long have we been kept,” 70  
 He said, and with a prong he caught his arm,  
 And tore it so, he carried off a slice.  
 And Dragonsnout wished too to give a tweak 73  
 Down on the legs, but the decurion  
 With angry glance turned round upon them all :  
 And when they had somewhat been pacified, 76  
 From him, who still was looking at his gash,  
 My Leader promptly asked without delay :  
 “ Who was the man, that in an evil hour 79  
 Thou say’st thou left to land thee on this shore ?”  
 And answered he: “ Friar Gomita ’twas ;  
 He of Gallura, vessel of all fraud, 82  
 Who kept his master’s enemies in hand,  
 And so dealt with them that they bless him all.  
 He took their coin, and let them slip away ; 85  
 Such his expression, and in other ways  
 He was no petty jobber, but a prince.  
 Michael Zanche, of Logodoro lord, 88  
 Is his companion, and their tongues ne’er tire  
 While of Sardinia they together talk.  
 Ah me ! see there another grinds his teeth : 91  
 More would I say, but fear me now that he  
 His preparation makes to scratch my skin.”  
 Then said th’ Arch-Provost, to Cockchafer turned, 94  
 Who rolled his eyes as if about to strike,  
 “ Bird of ill omen, yonder stand aside.”  
 “ If ye do wish to see, and also hear,” 97  
 Thereon resumed the terror stricken wretch,  
 “ Tuscans or Lombards, I’ll make some appear ;  
 But let the Bloodyclaws draw off a space, 100  
 That those may fear no chastisement from them ;  
 And I here seated on this very spot,

For one that I am, will make seven come, 103  
     Soon as I whistle, which is here our use,  
     When one of us makes bold to get outside."  
 At these words, Uglydog pricked up his ears, 106  
     Shaking his head and said : " Hark at the trick,  
     His own device for jumping in again !"  
 And he thereon from his great store of frauds 109  
     Replied : " Too tricksome verily I am,  
     When for my friends I scheme their greater woe."  
 Wingflapper then could not refrain, but said, 112  
     At variance with the rest, " If now thou stoop,  
     I will not come at gallop in thy rear,  
 But o'er thee 'bove the pitch I'll flap my wings : 115  
     Leave we the hill, and make its ridge a screen ;  
     We'll see can'st thou alone outwit us all."  
 A novel sport, O Reader, now thou'lt hear ! 118  
     Each turned his face toward the other side,  
     He first, who for the plan was least disposed.  
 The Navarrese chose well his time ; with feet 121  
     Firm planted on the ground, he in a trice  
     Sprang forward, and eluded thus their schemes.  
 They, one and all, were with vexation galled, 124  
     But he the most, who the mishap had caused,  
     And up he started with a cry " Thou'rt caught."  
 But no avail : the wings ill matched 'gainst fear, 127  
     Made little way. Down went the one below,  
     The other raised his breast in upright flight.  
 Not with more rapid plunge the duck, when stoops 130  
     The falcon from above, dives down below,  
     While up the latter mounts, ruffled and spent.  
 But Frostyfoot in fury at the trick 133  
     Kept after him on wing, not sorry he  
     In this escape to find pretext to fight ;  
 And as the broker disappeared from view, 136  
     On his own comrade he his talons turned,  
     And o'er the pool grappled the two in strife.  
 The other proved a true bred sparrow hawk, 139

And gripped him tight, and both together rolled  
Into the middle of the boiling pool.  
A sudden mediator was the heat ; 142  
But to rise up again they had no means,  
So well besmeared and clogged their pinions were.  
Then Frizzlybeard chafing like all the rest, 145  
Sent four of them on wing to th' other side,  
All with their rakes, and quick enough they went,  
This way and that to their appointed posts : 148  
Their hooks they stretched out to the pitch-bound pair,  
Who through their skins were now well nigh par-boiled :  
And of them in this plight we took our leave. 151

## CANTO XXIII.

*Eighth Circle—Sixth Crevasse—Hypocrites—Frati Godenti—  
Caiaphas—Fra Catalano.*

SILENT, alone, and without escort now,  
 One in the front and one behind we went,  
 As Minor Friars travel on the road ;  
 The while, by reason of the recent fray, 4  
 On Æsops' fable were my thoughts engaged,  
 Wherein he tells the tale of frog and mouse.  
 For " *Mo* " and " *Issa* " mean as much the same 7  
 As these two cases are coincident,  
 If first and last we well compare them both.  
 And as from one thought will another spring, 10  
 So out of this another had its birth,  
 Whereby my first fear in me double grew.  
 My thought was this: these demons have through us 13  
 Been flouted, and with hurt and ridicule  
 So great, that they, I deem, are sorely vexed.  
 If with their evil will wrath be conjoined, 16  
 In mood more savage they will follow us,  
 Than greyhound seizing on the leveret.  
 Already every hair I felt on end 19  
 With fear; and said, as halting I looked back,  
 " Master, if speedily thou do not hide  
 Thyself and me, I very greatly dread 22  
 The Bloodyclaws: we have them in our rear;  
 I fancy I can hear them even now."  
 And he replied: " Were I of leaded glass, 25  
 Thine outward form I could not sooner catch,  
 Than of thine inner mind I am possessed.  
 E'en now thy thoughts run evenly with mine, 28  
 In action and resemblance uniform,  
 So that from both one counsel I have formed.

If on the right this steep should so incline, 31  
     That to the next crevasse we can descend,  
     We shall escape the chase thy fancy fears.”  
 His plan he had not yet set forth in full, 34  
     When on extended wings I saw them come,  
     And not far off, with will to capture us.  
 In haste my Leader caught me up, e'en as 37  
     A mother, who awakened by their roar,  
     Sees, close upon her, flames of blazing fire,  
 Catches her boy, and flies so quickly off, 40  
     Of him so much more careful than of self,  
     That e'en her smock she barely stays to don.  
 And from the summit of the rugged bank, 43  
     Supine he slid adown the hanging rock,  
     Which on one side shuts in the next crevasse.  
 So swiftly never stream through conduit ran 46  
     To turn the wheel of any mill on land,  
     Where nearest to the paddles it pours in,  
 As did my master o'er that boundary edge, 49  
     Bearing me with him to his bosom clasped,  
     Not as companion, but his very son.  
 Scarce with his feet had he now touched the bed 52  
     Of depth below, when they the summit reached  
     Just overhead, but nought had he to fear ;  
 For Providence on high, Who willed that they 55  
     In the fifth pit His ministers should be,  
     Withdraws from all the power of quitting it.  
 People we found down there disguised with paint, 58  
     Who at a creeping pace pursued their round,  
     Seeming in tears both tired and overcome.  
 Mantles they wore with large hoods drawn down low 61  
     Before their eyes, and cut in fashion such  
     As those that in Cologne are made for monks.  
 Gilded outside were these, dazzling to see, 64  
     But underneath of lead, and of a weight,  
     That Frederick's cowl had seemed to them of straw.  
 And oh ! the eternal burthen of that cloak ! 67

We, as before, turned with them to the left,  
 Intent to hear their melancholy plaint.  
 But by the weight they bore, these weary folk 70  
 So slowly came, that at our every step  
 We found ourselves in a new company.  
 So to my Guide I said : "Try now to find 73  
 Some one, well known by name or by his deeds,  
 And as thou goest, cast thine eyes around."  
 And one that understood the Tuscan speech, 76  
 Cried out behind us : "Stay awhile your feet,  
 Ye who run thus athwart the dusky air ;  
 Perchance thou'lt have from me what thou dost seek." 79  
 Thereon my Guide turned round, and "Wait," to me  
 He said, "and by his pace then measure thine."  
 I stopped ; and two I saw display in look 82  
 A mind to get to me with all their speed,  
 But by their load and the strait path were slow.  
 When they came up, askance they fixed their eyes 85  
 Long time on me, but uttered not a word ;  
 Then to themselves they turned, and spoke aside :  
 "By movement of the throat that man's alive ; 88  
 And by what license, if they both are dead,  
 Do they pass on without the heavy cloak ?"  
 To me they said then : "Tuscan, who art come 91  
 Unto the college of sad hypocrites,  
 Disdain not to declare who thou may'st be."  
 And I to them : "Born was I and grew up 94  
 In the great City on fair Arno's stream,  
 And bear the body I have ever had.  
 But who are ye, from whom, so far as I 97  
 Can see, such sorrow down your cheeks distils ?  
 And what the penalty that sparkles thus ?"  
 And one replied to me : "These orange cloaks 100  
 Are made of lead ; so heavily they weigh,  
 They make the balances thus harshly creak.  
 We Joyous Brothers were, and Bolognese, 103  
 I Catalano, he Loderingo named,



Whom, both of us at once, your City chose,  
 Where commonly but one elected is, 106  
 To keep the peace; and were in office such  
 As round Gardingo may be seen to-day.”  
 “Fрати,” ’gan I, “your sins,” but said no more; 109  
 For on mine eyes there fell a sight, which showed  
 One crucified with three stakes in the ground,  
 Who, when he saw me, writhed in every limb, 112  
 Breathing out heavy sighs into his beard:  
 And Catalan, the friar, who noted this,  
 Told me: “The man thou seest thus transfixed,  
 Counsell’d the Pharisees that expedient ’twere 115  
 That one should suffer for the nation’s sake.  
 Naked he lies, outstretched across the road,  
 As thou dost see, and needs must he first feel 118  
 The weight of each that passes over him.  
 And his wife’s father likewise in this ditch 121  
 Is stretched with all who in that council sat,  
 Which to the Jews proved but the seed of woe.”  
 Then saw I Virgil in astonishment 124  
 Gaze on the man extended on the cross,  
 Thus shamefully, in exile evermore.  
 And to the Friar he next addressed himself: 127  
 “Be pleased, if ’tis allowed, to tell us now  
 If to the right some outlet there may lie,  
 Whereby we both may make our way outside, 130  
 Without constraining the black angels’ aid  
 To extricate us from this deep defile.”  
 He answered him: “Much nearer than you hope, 133  
 A reef runs from the great encircling cliff,  
 And all these sad crevasses bridges o’er:  
 Save that here shatter’d, it no passage gives; 136  
 Yet o’er the ruins you can clamber, which  
 Slope down the side, and form at base a pile.”  
 The Leader stood awhile with head bent down; 139  
 Then said: “He told us wrong what we required,  
 Who yonder claws the sinner with his hook.”

CANTO XXIII.

97

And then the Friar: "'Twas in Bologna said 142  
The devil's sins are many, and 'mong them  
Liar is he, and father too of lies."  
At once with mighty strides my Guide moved on, 145  
Perturb'd somewhat by anger in his look.  
The sufferers 'neath their load I left behind,  
Treading in prints of the beloved feet. 148

## CANTO XXIV.

*Eighth Circle—Seventh Crevasse—Robbers—Vanni Fucci.*

**W**HILE still the year is young, what time the sun  
 Warmeth his locks beneath Aquarius,  
 And long nights now are moving to the south,  
 When on the ground the hoar frost would portray 4  
 The outline of her whiter sister's face,  
 Though brief the endurance of her pencil's point :  
 The husbandman, whose fodder 'gins to fail, 7  
 Rises, looks out, and sees the countryside  
 Whiten'd all round, and smiting on his thigh,  
 Returns indoors, and grumbles up and down, 10  
 Like the poor wretch that knows not what to do ;  
 Then looks again, and in his budget finds  
 Fresh hope, seeing the world has changed its face 13  
 Within the hour, and straightway takes his staff,  
 And forth to the pasture drives his little flock :  
 So did the Master strike me with dismay, 16  
 When I beheld his much disturbèd brow,  
 While to my wound, as soon the plaster came.  
 For when we reached the ruins of the bridge, 19  
 My Guide turned toward me with the same sweet look  
 That at the mountain foot I first beheld.  
 Brief counsel with himself he took ; anon 22  
 The ruins carefully surveyed, and then  
 His arms he opened wide, and me embraced ;  
 And like the man who works, and calculates, 25  
 And ever seems in thought to look ahead,  
 So, as he raised me upward toward the top  
 Of one great block, his eye another caught. 28  
 " Lay hold of yonder next," he said ; " but first  
 Make trial if it can support thy weight."

No road was this for any clad in cope ;	31
For scarce could we, light as he was, and I, Pushed upward, make from point to point our way.	
And had not here the slope of this precinct	34
Been shorter much than on the other side, I say not he, but I had been o'ercome.	
But as Sinpouches with continuous slope	37
Sinks to the entrance of the lowest pit, Each hollow in position is so placed, That one bank rises and the other falls.	40
At length we reached the summit at the point, From which the last stone had been broken off.	
My breath from out my lungs was so drained off,	43
When I was up, no farther could I go, But rather on arrival sat me down.	
"Now must thou needs throw off all slothfulness,"	46
Said then the Master ; "on a bed of down, Or under coverlets, no man wins fame ; Withouten which whoso doth spend his life,	49
Leaves of himself on earth such trace behind, As smoke in air, and on the water foam.	
Then raise thee to thy feet ; surmount fatigue	52
With spirit such as every battle wins, If it succumb not to the weight of flesh.	
A longer ladder thine ascent awaits :	55
Those yonder to have left sufficeth not. My meaning if thou catch, use it for good."	
Then I arose in form as if equipped	58
With stock of breath that I by no means felt ; "Go on," I said ; "I'm stout and resolute."	
Up o'er the reef we set forth on our way,	61
Which rugged was, narrow and difficult, And steeper far than was the one before :	
Talking I went, my weariness to hide ;	64
And from the next crevasse came forth a voice, Broken in speech and inarticulate.	
I know not what it said, although I'd reached	67

The keystone of the arch that crosses there :  
 But he who spake, seem'd as if stirred in wrath.  
 Downward I'd bent the while ; but living eyes 70  
 Might such obscurity ne'er penetrate.  
 Therefore I said : " Try, Master, and make for  
 The other bank, and from this wall descend, 73  
 For as I hear, and nothing understand,  
 So I look down, and nothing can discern."  
 " No answer I return," he said, " save that 76  
 I do thy will ; a just demand should aye  
 Be followed by prompt action silently."  
 We from the bridge went down hard by the head, 79  
 Where with the eighth rampart it doth unite,  
 And open there lay the crevasse in view.  
 Within I saw in mass most horrible 82  
 Serpents entwined, and so diverse in form,  
 They even now in memory chill my blood.  
 No more may Libya of her sands make boast ; 85  
 For if they swarm with hydras, vipers too,  
 And amphisbænas, asps and rattlesnakes,  
 Ne'er did they show reptiles so pestilent, 88  
 And fierce, with Ethiopia to boot,  
 Nor all the land along the Red Sea shore.  
 Amid this savage and most dismal swarm 91  
 Were people running, naked, terrified,  
 No hope of hiding place, nor heliotrope.  
 Upon their backs their hands were bound with snakes ; 94  
 These with the head and tail pierced through the loins,  
 And in the front were twisted into knots.  
 And lo ! on one, who stood upon our side, 97  
 Outrushed a serpent, and transfixed him there,  
 Where to the shoulders is the neck attached.  
 Nor e'er was *I* or *O* so quickly writ, 100  
 As he caught fire and burned ; and as he fell  
 A heap of ashes needs must he become.  
 When on the ground he wholly was consumed, 103  
 His dust all of itself together came,

And he at once returned to his own form.  
 E'en so by sages great it is confessed 106  
 The Phoenix dies, and then is born again,  
 As it approaches the five hundredth year.  
 Nor blade nor grain doth it in lifetime eat, 109  
 But tears of incense and amomum juice ;  
 And myrrh and spikenard are its shroud at last.  
 And as is one who falls, and knows not how, 112  
 By demon force that drags him to the ground,  
 Or some obstruction that may seize a man,  
 Who when he rises, gazes all around, 115  
 Wholly bewildered by the great distress  
 He had endured, and sighs, as he looks up,  
 Such was that sinner after he arose. 118  
 Almighty God ! Thy Power how sternly just,  
 Which in its Vengeance deals such strokes as these ! 121  
 My Leader asked him then, who once he was ;  
 And he replied : " From Tuscany I fell  
 But short while since into this cruel gulf.  
 A brutish, not a human life pleased me, 124  
 Mule as I was I Vanni Fucci am,  
 A beast ; Pistoia was my fitting den."  
 And to my Leader I : " Bid him not budge ; 127  
 And ask what crime it was that sent him here ;  
 For him I've seen, a man of wrath and blood."  
 The sinner understood, made no pretence, 130  
 But straight on me he fixed his thought and face ;  
 And with a melancholy shame suffused,  
 He said : " More painful 'tis that thou'st found me 133  
 In misery, wherein thou seest me here,  
 Than what I felt, when torn from former life.  
 What thou demandest I may not refuse : 136  
 My place is thus deep down because I once  
 Stole from the Sacristy its precious things,  
 And this upon another falsely laid. 139  
 But that this sight may never make thee glad,  
 If from these haunts of gloom thou e'er emerge,

TO YOU  
ADDRESS

102

INFERNO.

Ope to my message now thine ears, and hear : 142  
Pistoia first thins out from her the Black ;  
Florence adopts new men, reforms her laws :  
From Val di Magra Mars a vapour draws, 145  
Which comes envelopèd in turbid clouds,  
And amid tempest fiercely raging o'er  
Piceno's plain a battle shall be fought : 148  
Forth from the mist the sudden vapour bursts,  
And every White by it is smitten down.  
And this I've said to gall thee all the more." 151

## CANTO XXV.

*Eighth Circle—Seventh Crevasse—Robbers—Cacus—  
Five Robbers of Florence and their Transmutations.*

THE robber, ending thus his words, upraised  
 Both fists, and with the foulest gestures yelled :  
 " Take that, O God, which I square up at Thee."  
 From that day unto this have serpents been 4  
 To me as friends, for round his neck coiled one,  
 As if 'twould say : " I will thou speak no more."  
 Another on the arms doubled his bonds, 7  
 Knotting itself in front upon his breast,  
 So that with them he could not even twitch.  
 Pistoia, ah Pistoia ! why no law 10  
 That thou to ashes turn and cease to be,  
 When now thy sons in sin outrun their sires ?  
 Through all the circles of infernal gloom 13  
 No spirit saw I of such pride toward God ;  
 Not him who fell down from the walls of Thebes.  
 So swift he fled, he spake no other word : 16  
 And I beheld a furious Centaur come,  
 Shouting aloud . " Where is the savage, where " ?  
 I do not think Maremma's self contains 19  
 So many snakes as on his loins he bore,  
 Far as the point where 'gins our human form.  
 Upon his shoulders just behind the nape 22  
 There lay a dragon with extended wings,  
 Which sets on fire whome'er it haps to meet.  
 To me my Master said : " Cacus is this, 25  
 Who underneath the rock of Aventine  
 Made oftentimes the place a pool of blood.  
 Not with his comrades on one path goes he, 28  
 By reason of the stealthy theft he made



Of the great herd, that near his quarters lay ;  
 For which his double dealings were cut short 31  
   'Neath club of Hercules, who dealt perchance  
   Some hundred blows of which he felt not ten.  
 While thus he spake, lo ! he had passed us by ; 34  
   And spirits three had risen at our feet,  
   Of whom my guide and I were not aware,  
 Until they shouted to us : " Who are ye ? " 37  
   Whereon our further converse we broke off,  
   And then attended only unto them.  
 I knew them not, but so it followed now, 40  
   As oft will follow by an accident,  
   That one had need to drop another's name,  
 Saying : " Where has Cianfa stopped behind ? " 43  
   Whereat, that on the watch my Guide should stand,  
   I raised my finger up from chin to nose.  
 If Reader, thou be slow now to believe 46  
   What I shall tell, will it no wonder be,  
   For I, who saw it, scarce allow it now.  
 While I towards them kept my eyebrows raised, 49  
   Behold a serpent with six feet springs up  
   In front of one, and fastens on him close.  
 Its middle feet it fixed upon his paunch, 52  
   And with the foremost held him by the arms,  
   And then in both cheeks set at once his teeth.  
 The hinder feet it stretched out o'er its thighs, 55  
   And thrusting 'tween the two its tail, it drew  
   It high upon the back across the loins.  
 Never more tightly did the ivy grip 58  
   The trunk of tree, than did this horrid beast  
   Its limbs upon the other intertwine.  
 Then each the other penetrating, like 61  
   Hot wax, their several colours blent in one,  
   And neither seemed what it had been before ;  
 Just as with paper, ere it catches fire, 64  
   A brownish tint creeps on and over it,  
   And 'tis not yet full black, but the white dies.

The other two looked on, and each cried out :	67
“ Agnello, ah what change is this we see ! Lo ! even now thou art nor two nor one.”	
Already two heads had in one conjoined,	70
And doubled features mingled in one face, Common to both, wherein the two were lost.	
The four lines of their joints were merged in two :	73
The thighs and legs, the belly with the chest Became such limbs as ne'er were seen before.	
All trace of previous aspect disappeared :	76
It seemed the form of two, and yet of none ; Distorted thus it slowly moved away.	
As when a lizard 'neath the burning scourge	79
Of dogday heat, shifting from hedge to hedge, Like lightning seems to flash across the way,	
Such a small reptile seemed, which all afire,	82
Made for the bellies of the other two, Livid and black as any peppercorn	
And at that part wherein man first receives	85
His aliment, it one of them transfixed, Then down it dropped, stretched out in front of him :	
The one transfixed in silence stared at it ;	88
His feet unmoved, half drowsily he yawned, As though by sleep or fever he were caught.	
He on the serpent gazed, and it on him :	91
One through the wound, the other from the mouth Poured out dense smoke in intermingling clouds.	
Silent be Lucan now, where he tells of	94
Wretched Sabellus and Nassidius, And wait to hear what now my bow shoots forth.	
Of Cadmus and of Arethusa must	97
Ovid be silent ; if in fable he Change one to serpent and to fountain one,	
I grudge it not : two natures, front to front,	100
He ne'er so metamorphosed, that they both Were ready to exchange their substances.	
Such correspondence 'tween them wrought by rule,	103

That as the serpent's tail was cleft fork-like,  
 The wounded ghost's two feet grew into one ;  
 The legs and thighs together did cohere 106  
 In fashion such, that speedily they left  
 No trace of their conjunction visible.  
 The cloven tail withal assumed the form 109  
 The other lost, and while its skin at once  
 Grew soft, the other's hardened into scales.  
 I saw the arms up through the armpits drawn ; 112  
 The two feet of the reptile, which were short,  
 Lengthened inversely, as the others shrank.  
 The hinder feet next, twisted into one, 115  
 Became the part which men conceal from view ;  
 And with the wretch that part split into two.  
 The while the smoke forms for them both a veil 118  
 Of colour new to each, the hair upon  
 The one sprouts forth, and off the other peels ;  
 The one stood up ; prostrate the other fell ; 121  
 The savage glare unaltered in their eyes,  
 Underneath which their muzzles each exchanged.  
 He who stood up, his toward the temples drew ; 124  
 And from excess of swollen substance there  
 The ears protruded from the unfurnished cheeks.  
 So much as ran not back and still remained, 127  
 Of that remainder gave the face a nose,  
 And made the thicker lips that were required.  
 He who lay prostrate, pushes forth a snout, 130  
 And back into his head withdraws his ears,  
 As with its horns a snail is wont to do ;  
 The tongue, which was before entire, and apt 133  
 To speak, divides ; and with the other one  
 The forkèd fangs close up ; smoke ceaseth now.  
 The soul that had become a brute takes flight, 136  
 And through the valley hissing speeds its way ;  
 The other splutters, calling after it.  
 His new made shoulders then he turned on it, 139  
 And to the other said : " Let Buoso run,

CANTO XXV.

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As whilom I, on all fours 'long the road."  
The seventh hold thus its ballast did I see 142  
Shift and reshift: in my excuse I plead  
These marvels, if my pen have run afield.  
And though mine eyes were in no small degree 145  
Confused, and all my mind bewildered,  
Those spirits could not part so secretly  
That Puccio Sciancato I should miss: 148  
And of the three, who first in company  
Appeared, he only had not been transformed.  
The other one, Gaville, dost thou lament. 151

## CANTO XXVI.

*Eighth Circle—Eighth Crevasse—Fraudulent Counsellors.  
Ulysses and Diomed—Voyages and death of Ulysses.*

**E**XULT Firenze, in that thou so great,  
 Canst flap thy wings o'er land and sea alike,  
 And that thy name expands itself through hell.  
 Among the thieves five of thy citizens 4  
 I found of station such as brought me shame,  
 And no great honour dost thou reach by them.  
 But if the dreams of early morn come true, 7  
 Only a short while hence, and thou wilt feel  
 What Prato, others not to name, for thee  
 Doth crave: and none too soon, if soon it come; 10  
 And would e'en now 'twere come, since come it must!  
 For more 'twill grieve me, as I age the more.  
 Thence we moved on; and o'er the steps, which first 13  
 The jutting rocks had made for our descent,  
 My Guide remounted, drawing me with him.  
 And as along the lonely way we went 16  
 Among the stones and splinters of the rock,  
 The foot without the hand made small advance.  
 Grieved was I then, and now again I grieve, 19  
 As memory recalls the sight I saw;  
 And tighter than my wont my genius curb,  
 Lest it run on where Virtue guides it not; 22  
 So that if some good Star or better thing  
 Have given me good, myself I grudge it not.  
 As oft the peasant resting on the hill, 25  
 What time the orb, that all the world illumes,  
 Hides his face from us for the shortest space,  
 When now the fly gives way unto the gnat, 28  
 Sees countless fire-flies in the vale below,  
 There, where perchance he ploughs, or gathers grapes,  
 With flames as many, all in brightest glow, 31

The eighth crevasse was shining in full view,  
 Soon as I came, where open'd out its depth.  
 And as the prophet, whom the bears avenged, 34  
 Beheld the parting of Elijah's car,  
 When up to heaven the horses mounted straight,  
 And he could only follow with his eye, 37  
 So that he saw nought but the flame alone,  
 Which like a little cloud floated aloft,  
 E'en so each flame along the moat's gorge moved ; 40  
 For none discloses whom it steals away,  
 And yet each flame a sinner hides within.  
 Tiptoe upon the bridge I stood to view, 43  
 And if I had not clutched a jutting stone,  
 I should have fallen in without a push.  
 My Guide, who saw me thus intent, said then : 46  
 " Within the fires the spirits are contained ;  
 Each wraps himself in that wherein he burns."  
 " My Master," answered I, " in hearing thee, 49  
 I am the more assured ; I thought but now  
 That thus it was, and wished e'en now to ask,  
 Who in that fire may be, which comes so cleft 52  
 At top, that from the pyre it seems to rise,  
 Where with his brother Eteocles was laid."  
 And he : " Tortured within Ulysses is, 55  
 With Diomede ; in company they go  
 To vengeance now, as erst to deeds of wrath ;  
 And in their flame enveloped, they bewail 58  
 The ambush of the horse, that made the gate,  
 Through which passed forth the noble stock of Rome.  
 Therein they weep the fraud, which still in death 61  
 Makes Deidamia for Achilles mourn ;  
 And forfeit pay for the Palladium."  
 " If, Master, from within those fires they are 64  
 Allowed to speak at all," said I, " I pray,  
 And beg this prayer may for a thousand stand,  
 Refuse me not thy leave to stay awhile, 67  
 Until the hornèd flame shall this way come ;



My comrades now and I were stiff and old,	106
When to that narrow strait we came, where stand	
The landmarks, which by Hercules were fixed,	
That man no farther should presume to pass.	109
On my right hand I left Seville, and had	
Already on the other Ceuta passed.	
“ Brothers, who through a hundred thousand risks,”	112
I said to them, “ have reached the western main,	
For such brief span as still remains to you	
To try your senses’ vigilance, grudge not	115
A hearty will to make behind the sun	
Acquaintance with the lands untrod by man.	
Consider now the stock from whence ye spring :	118
Ye were not made to live the brute beasts’ lives,	
But knowledge to pursue and valour’s fame.”	
So keen I made my comrades to push on	121
A farther voyage by this brief appeal,	
That scarce could I have after held them back.	
And with stern set against the morning sun,	124
We made our oars the wings of our fools’ flight,	
Always advancing with the helm to port.	
The stars already of the other pole	127
At night I saw ; our own was sunk so low,	
It rose no more above the ocean floor.	
Five times enkindled, and as oft extinct	130
Had been the light shed from beneath the moon,	
Since we had entered on our arduous course ;	
When darkly to our view in distance far	133
A mountain rose, that seemed to me so high,	
Methought the like I never had beheld.	
Great was the joy ; a joy soon turned to grief :	136
From the new land a hurricane burst forth,	
And smote upon the fore part of our ship.	
Three times the swirl of water whirled her round ;	139
The fourth on high raised up the poop in air,	
Down went the prow, such was Another’s Will.	
Until above us all the sea closed in.”	142



## CANTO XXVII.

*Eighth Circle—Eighth Crevasse—Fraudulent Advisers—  
Guido da Montefeltro.*

**E**RECT and steady pointed up the flame,  
 Speaking no more, about to move away,  
 As our sweet Poet his permission gave ;  
 When yet another, that behind it came, 4  
 Caused us to turn our eyes toward its tip,  
 By a confused sound that issued thence.  
 As the Sicilian bull, which bellowed first 7  
 With roar of him ('twas just it should be thus)  
 Who with his file himself had tuned it so,  
 Bellowed with moanings of its sufferers, 10  
 Such, that although 'twas only made of brass,  
 It seemed itself transfixed with agony ;  
 So, from the lack of exit and a vent, 13  
 At their beginning in the fire the words  
 Of grief came rendered in the fire's own speech ;  
 But when they had their passage forced up through 16  
 The point, giving to it vibration such  
 As in their course the tongue had given them,  
 We heard : " O thou, towards whom I now direct 19  
 My voice, and who in Lombard phrase just now  
 Didst say, ' Now go, I trouble thee no more,'  
 Though I perchance may somewhat late arrive, 22  
 Begrudge me not to halt and talk with me ;  
 Thou seest I grudge it not, although on fire,  
 If thou, but lately on this blind world cast, 25  
 From Latium hail, the sweetest of all lands,  
 From whence my load of guilt I hither bring,  
 Say, have the Romagnoles or peace or war ; 28  
 For from the heights between Urbino and

The ridge, where Tiber is unlocked, I come."  
 I was the while attentive bending down, 31  
 When my Guide touched me lightly on my side,  
 Saying: "A Latian this, so speak thyself."  
 And I, who ready was with the reply, 34  
 Without delay began at once to speak:  
 "O soul, that in yon depth art hid below,  
 Thine own Romagna in her tyrants' hearts 37  
 Now is not, nor was ever without war;  
 But open warfare 'twas not, when I left.  
 Ravenna stands, as she long years hath stood; 40  
 The eagle of Polenta hovers there,  
 So that his pinions shadow Cervia.  
 The city, which so long was put to proof, 43  
 And of the French piled up a gory heap,  
 Under the Green Paws finds itself as yet.  
 The Mastiffs of Verrucchio, old and young, 46  
 Who to Montagna sorry jailers proved,  
 Still as they're wont, like augers, ply their teeth.  
 The towns Lamone and Santerno lave 49  
 The lion-cub on argent field directs,  
 And as the seasons change, he changes sides.  
 The City too, whose flank the Savio bathes, 52  
 As between plain and mountain she is set;  
 So between tyranny and freedom lives.  
 Now say, I pray thee, who thou art: nor be 55  
 More hard than has another been to thee;  
 So may thy name on earth hold up its front."  
 After the flame awhile had roared again 58  
 In its own way, it waved its sharpened point  
 This way and that, and thus gave forth its breath.  
 "If I supposed I answer had to make 61  
 To one who should some day return to earth,  
 Without more quiverings should this flame abide:  
 But in that never from this depth did one 64  
 Return alive, if what I hear be true,  
 I answer without fear of infamy.

A man of arms I was ; then Cordelier,	67
Trusting, so girt, to make the full amends ;	
And certes well nigh was this trust made good,	
But for the Great High Priest, whom ill betide,	70
That sent me back to my first evil ways :	
And how and why, I would thou hear from me.	
While yet I bore the form of flesh and bone	73
My mother gave to me, mine were the deeds	
Not of a lion, rather of a fox.	
All stratagems and every covert path	76
I knew full well, and so employed these arts,	
The sound of them went out to the world's end :	
But when I found that I had that point reached	79
Of life, where it behoves men, one and all,	
To shorten sail, and gather tackle in,	
That, which before was pleasant, now displeased ;	82
Repentant, to confession I repaired,	
And might, wretch that I am, have saved myself.	
But of your modern Pharisees the Prince,	85
Engaged in war hard by the Lateran,	
And not with Saracens, nor yet with Jews,	
(For all his enemies were Christian men ;	88
Not one had been at capture of Acre,	
Nor e'en a trader in the Soldan's land,)	
His Supreme Office he regarded not,	91
His Holy Orders, nor in me the cord,	
Which used to make those girt with it more lean.	
But as within Soractè Constantine	94
Prayed Sylvester to heal his leprosy,	
So this man prayed me as a tried expert,	
To heal him of the fever of his pride :	97
Advice he sought from me ! I held my tongue ;	
For as one drunk with wine he seemed to speak.	
'Let not thy heart misgive thee,' said he then ;	100
'This moment I absolve thee ; only show	
How Penestrino I may lay in dust.	
Heaven can I or ope or shut to thee,	103

As thou dost know ; therefore the keys are two,  
 Held by my predecessor not too dear.'

His weighty arguments thus pushed me on, 106  
 Till silence seemed my less wise course.  
 So then I said : If, Father, from this sin,  
 Wherein I now must fall, thou wash me clean, 109  
 A promise large and its observance small  
 Will bring thee triumph on thy lofty Chair."

So soon as I was dead, came Francis then 112  
 For me, but one of the black cherubim  
 Cried out : ' Take him not thou, nor me defraud.  
 He must come down among my slaves below, 115  
 Because he offered counsel of deceit,  
 For which since then I've held him by the hair.

Absolved is none, who is not penitent ; 118  
 And none can both repent and lust at once :  
 Such contradictions never can agree.'

What anguish then ! what an awakening mine ! 121  
 When he laid hold of me, and said : ' Perhaps  
 Thou didst not think I was so logical.'

He bore me off to Minos, who entwined 124  
 Eight times his tail upon his stubborn back,  
 And as he bit it in sheer rage, he said :  
 ' This is a sinner for the thievish fire.' 127  
 So as thou seest, here for ever lost,  
 And clothèd thus, I wander in remorse."

When he his story had completed thus, 130  
 The flame moved off with shrieks of agony,  
 Twisting and tossing up its pointed horn.

Onward we passed, my Guide and I, along 133  
 The reef, up to the other arch which spans  
 The fosse, where the due wage is paid to such  
 As sow discord, and house a load of guilt. 136

## CANTO XXVIII.

*Eighth Circle—Ninth Crevasse—Disseminators of Discord—  
Mahomet—Fra Dolcino—Pier da Medicina—Curio—  
Mosca—Bertram del Bormio.*

**W**HO could prevail, e'en in unfettered prose,  
 To tell in full by oft repeated tale  
 The sum of what I saw of wounds and blood?  
 All tongues together would indeed fall short, 4  
 For neither speech expressed, nor silent thought,  
 Has the capacity to embrace so much.  
 If were collected once again all those, 7  
 Who in old times lay groaning in the blood  
 Poured out upon Apulia's fateful plains  
 By Trojans, and in that protracted war, 10  
 Wherein the heavy spoil of rings was ta'en,  
 As Livy writes, who never goes astray;  
 As well as they, who felt the smart of blows, 13  
 That Robert Guiscard dealt in strenuous fight;  
 And they whose bones are picked up still to-day  
 At Ceperanno, where Apulians each 16  
 Proved false; and there at Tagliacozzo too,  
 Where old Alardo conquered without arms;  
 And all, who limbs, or maimed, or wounded, can 19  
 Display, would no way be equivalent  
 To th' hideous aspect of the ninth crevasse.  
 A barrel by the loss of central or 22  
 Side stave ne'er gaped so wide, as one I saw  
 Cleft from the chin down to the fundament.  
 Between his legs hung his intestines down, 25

Exposed the liver and the dismal bag,  
 Which what is swallowed turns to excrement. 28

While on the sight of him I stand engaged,  
 He looked at me, and open tore his breast  
 With his own hands ; " See how I rend myself,"

He said : " See Mahomet dismembered thus. 31  
 Before me Ali goes his way in tears,  
 His visage from the chin to forelock cleft.  
 And all the others that thou seest here 34  
 Sowers of scandal and schismatics were  
 In life, and therefore now are thus split up.  
 A devil here behind this schism makes 37  
 In us, remitting to the cruel edge  
 Of his sharp sword each one of this our band,  
 Oft as the dismal circuit we complete, 40  
 By reason that the wounds have healèd up,  
 Before we pass again in front of him.  
 But who art thou, there pensive on the rock, 43  
 Perhaps awhile the sentence to delay,  
 Adjudget upon thine own acknowledgement ?"  
 " Death hath not reached him yet, nor him doth guilt 46  
 Bring here to torment," so my Master said ;  
 " But to give him a full experience,  
 To me, who now am dead, appointed 'tis 49  
 From round to round to lead him here through hell :  
 And this is true, as that I speak to thee."  
 More were they than a hundred, who upon 52  
 Such words paused in the moat to gaze at me,  
 Forgetting torture in astonishment.  
 " Thou, who perchance ere long wilt see the sun, 55  
 Tell Fra Dulcino, if he would not soon  
 Follow me hither, to provide himself  
 With store of victual, lest the stress of snow 58  
 Should leave a victory to the Novarese,  
 Not easy for them otherwise to gain."  
 With one foot ready to resume his round, 61  
 This charge did Mahomet address to me ;

Then to proceed he set it on the ground.  
 Another who appeared with throat pierced through, 64  
 Whose nose down from the eyebrows had been slit  
 And of whose ears but one alone remained,  
 Pausing to gaze in wonder upon me 67  
 With all the rest, in presence of them all,  
 Open'd his wesand, vermil-red outside,  
 And said : "Thou, whom no guilt hath sentenced here, 70  
 And whom I saw above on Latian soil,  
 If a too strong resemblance cheat me not,  
 Remember Pier da Medicina, if 73  
 Once more to see the fair plain thou return,  
 That from Vercelli slopes to Mercabò ;  
 And let the two best men in Fano know, 76  
 Lord Angiolello and Guido I mean  
 That if prevision here be not in vain,  
 They from their ship will be cast overboard, 79  
 And near Cattolica be drowned in sacks,  
 Through the betrayal of a felon prince.  
 'Twixt isle of Cyprus and Majolica 82  
 Never hath Neptune witnessed crime so foul,  
 No not by pirates nor by Argives e'en.  
 That traitor, who with but one eye doth see, 85  
 And holds the land, which one near me could wish  
 He'd hunger'd long ere he had ever seen,  
 Will make them come to conference with him, 88  
 And then will do a deed, that will require  
 No prayer nor vow against Focara's gales."  
 And I to him : "Show and declare to me, 91  
 An' thou would'st have me mention thee above,  
 Who is't that found that land a sorry sight ?"  
 He laid his hand then on the jaw of one 94  
 Of his own company, and open'd wide  
 His mouth, and cried : "He's here, and he is dumb :  
 An exile, he in Cæsar overcame 97  
 All doubt, affirming that, if well prepared,  
 A man by waiting turns his chance to loss."

Indeed dumbfounded did he seem to me	100
With tongue from wesand sever'd utterly, The Curio of old so bold in speech !	
Another who was maimed of both his hands,	103
Raising their stumps athwart the dusky air, So that his face was foulèd with their blood,	
Cried out : " The Mosca too thou'lt recollect,	106
Who said, <i>Alas! What's done is ne'er undone,</i> Which for the Tuscans proved a sorry seed."	
" And death," I added, " unto all thy father's race."	109
Whereon in sorrow upon sorrow heaped, In melancholy madness he moved off.	
But I remained, observing still the crowd,	112
And saw a thing, that I should be afraid Without a voucher to relate myself ;	
If not by Conscience reassured, which aye	115
The good companion is, that sets man free Beneath the breastplate of a clean record.	
I saw indeed, and think I see it still,	118
The headless trunk of one advance, who walked E'en as the others of the dismal herd.	
The sever'd head, held by the hair, swung in	121
The hand, just as a lantern's wont to swing : And as on us it gazed, it said : " Ah me !"	
Of his own self he made for self a lamp,	124
And two there were in one, and one in two ; How which can be, He knows, Who so ordains.	
And when he stood erect below the bridge,	127
He lifted high his arm, with it the head, Nearer to bring its utterance to us,	
Which was : " See now this grievous penalty,	130
Thou, who, yet breathing, visitest the dead ; See if there be any as great as this.	
And that thou mayst bear news of me above,	133
Know that Bertram dal Bormio am I, Who to the young king did ill counsel give.	
Father and son rebels to each I made :	136



Ahitophel by base suggestions ne'er  
To Absalom and David wrought worse ill.  
Because I severed men so near allied, 139  
My brain I carry, severed ah ! from its  
Initial root, planted within this trunk ;  
*Lex Talionis* thus in me observed." 142

## CANTO XXIX.

*Eighth Circle—Ninth Crevasse—Disseminators of Discord—  
Geri del Bello—Tenth Crevasse—Forgers of every kind—  
Alchemists—Griffolino and Capocchio.*

THOSE many people and their diverse wounds  
 Had made mine eyes so drunken with their tears,  
 That all their wish was to stay there and weep.  
 But Virgil said : “ Why gazing still ? 4  
 Thy vision why thus resting here, upon  
 These mutilated ghosts in gloom below ?  
 Not such thine action in the pits we’ve passed. 7  
 Think if thou hope to count them all, that yet  
 This valley winds for two and twenty miles ;  
 And ’neath our feet already is the moon ; 10  
 Short now the time that is allotted us,  
 And more there is to see than what thou seest.”  
 “ If thou had turned,” such was my prompt reply, 13  
 “ Thy thought unto the cause, that fixed my gaze,  
 Thou hadst perchance a longer stay allowed.”  
 My Leader was already moving on, 16  
 And I behind him walked, as I replied,  
 Adding withal : “ In yonder den, on which  
 I kept mine eyes in such attention fixed, 19  
 I think a spirit of my own kin weeps  
 The sin, which there below costs him so dear.”  
 Then said the Master : “ Let not now thy thoughts 22  
 Henceforth be harassed any more by him :  
 Elsewhere give heed, and let him there remain ;  
 For at the foot of the small bridge I saw 25  
 His finger mark thee with fierce menaces,  
 And Geri del Bello I heard him called.  
 Thou at the moment wast so deep engaged 28

With him, who once did Altaforte hold,  
 Thou didst not look that way ; so on he passed." 31  
 "O Leader mine, the outrage of his death,  
 Still unavenged," said I, "by anyone,  
 Who is, as kinsman, partner in his shame,  
 Made him disdain me ; wherefore he withdrew 34  
 Without a word to me, as I suppose ;  
 And so has made me pity him the more."  
 Such our discourse up to the point first reached, 37  
 Which from the rock commands the next crevasse  
 To bottom quite, had light been fuller there.  
 When 'bove the cloister now we stood, which is 40  
 Of Sinpouches the last, so that within  
 Our ken its lay brethren were visible,  
 Divers laments like arrows pierced me through 43  
 With winged shafts, that came with pity barbed,  
 Such that with both mine hands I stopped my ears.  
 If 'twixt July and September from forth 46  
 The hospitals of Valdichiana, and  
 Maremma and Sardinia, all the sick  
 Were in one ditch together laid, what pain 49  
 Were there, such was it here ; and stench came up,  
 Such as from gangrened limbs is wont to rise.  
 Downward we passed over the final ridge 52  
 Of the long cliff, yet ever to the left ;  
 And clearer then became my vision down  
 Towards the bottom, where the minister 55  
 Of the High Lord, Justice infallible,  
 Visits the forgers, here enregister'd.  
 I trow it was no sorrier sight to see 58  
 The people of Egina, all plague struck,  
 When the whole air so reeked with pestilence,  
 That living things, down to the little worm. 61  
 All dropped ; and the whole race was afterward,  
 As sing the Poets in full confidence,  
 Anew created from the seed of ants, 64  
 Than 'twas to see through that lugubrious vale

The spirits wasting in their several heaps.	
One on the other lay, on belly one,	67
One on his neighbour's back, while yet a third	
Upon all fours dragged on his dismal way.	
On went we step by step, without a word,	70
Watching and listening to the sick, who were	
Unable quite to lift their bodies up.	
Two I beheld, seated and leaning each	73
'Gainst each, like plates set down before the fire,	
From head to foot spotted with noisome scab.	
And never saw I curry-comb so plied	76
By groom, awaited by impatient lord,	
Or 'gainst his will detained from longed for bed,	
As each upon himself plied oft the scrape	79
Of nail in fury at the maddening itch,	
For which by other means was no relief.	
So from the skin the nails scraped down the scabs,	82
As a knife scrapes the scales of a great carp,	
Or of a fish of a yet coarser grain.	
"O thou, whose fingers thus dismantle thee,"	85
My Guide to one of them began to say,	
"And who to pincers turnest them at times,	
Tell us if any Latian be of these	88
Enclosed therein, so may thy nail be found	
Sufficient through all ages for such toil."	
"Latians are we, whom wasted thus thou seest,	91
Here, both of us," so one replied in tears.	
"But who art thou, that askest this of us?"	
My Leader said: "One am I that descends	94
From ledge to ledge here with this living man,	
And purpose to show him the realms of hell."	
Their mutual support forthwith gave way:	97
Trembling, each of them turned him round to me,	
With those, whom echoes of our words had reached.	
Close to my side my kindly Master drew,	100
And said: "Speak to them as thy will suggests."	
And as he willed it so, I thus began:	

“ So your remembrance ne'er shall fleet away	103
In the first world from memory of men,	
Rather may live through many suns afresh,	
Say who ye are, and of what family ;	106
Your penalty, noisome and foul as 'tis,	
May not deter you from declaring this.”	
“ I of Arezzo was, whom,” so said one,	109
“ Albert the Sienese burned at the stake :	
But what I died for does not bring me here.	
'Tis true I said to him, speaking in jest,	112
That I knew how to fly i' th' air ; and he	
With curious eagerness and little wit	
Would have me shew the trick ; and but that I	115
Did not make him a Dædalus, he made	
One, whom he accounted as his son, burn me.	
But to this evil pouch, last of the ten,	118
For alchemy I practised in the world,	
Minos, who may not err, did sentence me.”	
I to the Poet then : “ Now was there e'er	121
A race more vain than are the Sienese ?	
Certes they leave the French long way behind.”	
The other leper hearing then my words,	124
Replied to them : Stricca thou must except,	
Who simple living understood so well ;	
And Niccolò, the first to introduce	127
Luxurious use of clove-pink flavour from	
The garden, where its seed unbidden springs ;	
Except the club too, where his vineyard and	130
Broad forests Caccia d'Asciano lost,	
And the Abbagliato flashed his wit.	
But that thou know who seconds thee against	133
The Sienese, sharpen thine eye on me,	
So that my face may give a true response,	
And thou wilt see I am Capocchio's ghost,	136
Whose alchemy the metals falsified ;	
And if mine eye tell true, thou must recall,	
How good an ape I was of Nature's work.	139

## CANTO XXX.

*Eighth Circle—Tenth Crevasse—Falsifiers of every kind—  
Personators—Gianni Schicchi—Mirra—Three Coiners—  
Master Adam—Four Liars.*

WHAT time that Juno 'gainst the Theban race  
 In fury raged, because of Semele,  
 As she once and again made manifest,  
 In frenzy Athamas became so mad, 4  
 That as he saw his wife pass by in charge  
 Of their two boys, one in her either hand,  
 He shrieked : " Spread we the nets that I may catch 7  
 The lioness and cubs, as they pass out ; "  
 And then stretched forth his unrelenting claws,  
 And seizing one, Learchus was his name, 10  
 He whirled him round, and dashed him 'gainst a stone ;  
 And with her other charge she drowned herself :  
 And when the wheel of Fortune overturned 13  
 The vaulting loftiness of Trojan pride  
 And king and kingdom in one ruin fell,  
 Sad Hecuba, a wretched captive now, 16  
 After she saw Polyxena was dead,  
 And broken hearted on the sea-shore had  
 Made the discovery of her Polydore, 19  
 In stress of hapless fate barked like a dog,  
 Her grief had so her reason overborne.  
 But not in Thebes nor Troy were furies seen 22  
 At any time on anything so fierce  
 In torturing beasts, not to say limbs of men,  
 As in two ghosts I saw, naked and wan, 25  
 Who gnashing with their teeth, in fashion ran  
 As of a hog that from the sty escapes.  
 One on Capocchio seized, and at the nape 28

Fixed in the neck his tusks, so that he dragged  
 Him on, grazing his belly on the ground.  
 Said then the Aretin, who trembling stood : 31  
 " This goblin is Gian Schicchi ; and he goes  
 In fury dressing any hide he meets."  
 " Ah," said I, " so may ne'er the other fix 34  
 Its teeth into thy back, grudge not to tell,  
 Who may it be, ere hence it slip away."  
 And he to me : " This is the old world soul 37  
 Of that abandoned Mirra, who in love  
 Unnatural was her father's paramour.  
 She to her sin with him did only come 40  
 In false disguise, bearing a stranger's form ;  
 As did the other, who goes there, when he  
 To win the prize mare of the stud, made bold 43  
 Buoso Donati's person to assume,  
 Forging a will in all the forms of law."  
 When the two furies now had passed away 46  
 On whom the while I'd kept mine eye intent,  
 I turned it to the other sons of sin.  
 One did I see in fashion of a lute, 49  
 If only at the groin, where man is fork'd,  
 The lower limbs had there been taken off.  
 The load of dropsy, which, with humours ill 52  
 Digested, doth the members so distort,  
 That face and belly no proportion bear,  
 Caused him to keep his lips apart, as doth 55  
 The hectic patient, who in thirst droops one  
 Towards the chin, and curls the other up.  
 " O ye, who come exempt from punishment, 58  
 Wherefore I know not, to this gruesome world,"  
 Said he to us : " look well, and give good heed  
 To Master Adam in his misery : 61  
 Plenty in life had I of all I wished ;  
 And ah ! one drop of water now I crave.  
 The rivulets, that from the verdant hills 64  
 Of Casentino to the Arno run,

Keeping their channels always, cool and moist,  
 Before me ever stand ; and not in vain ; 67  
 For greater thirst their image doth excite,  
 Than the disease which wastes my cheeks away.  
 And thus stern justice, which torments me here, 70  
 Finds in the place, wherein I sinned, a means  
 To force these sighs of mine in swifter flight.  
 There stands Romena, where in counterfeit 73  
 I coined the money with the Baptist's stamp,  
 For which I left my body at the the stake.  
 But might I see the wretched soul of Guy, 76  
 Or Alexander, or their brother here,  
 For Branda's fount I'd not forego the sight.  
 Already one is here within, if those 79  
 Fierce Ghosts that ever made the round, speak true ;  
 But with my pinioned limbs what boots me this ?  
 If I were only now so light of foot, 82  
 That in a hundred years I could one inch  
 Advance, e'en now were I upon his track,  
 In search of him through these misshapen folk, 85  
 With its full circuit of eleven miles,  
 Nor less in breadth than half a mile across.  
 Through them I'm here amid this company : 88  
 'Twas they persuaded me to stamp florins,  
 That did three carats of alloy contain."  
 And I to him : " Who are the abject pair 91  
 That steam like moist hand on a winter's day,  
 Lying together, near thee on the right ? "  
 " I found them here, and since they have not turned," 94  
 He said, " what time I sank into this ditch,  
 Nor will they, I suppose, for evermore.  
 The traitress one, who did accuse Joseph ; 97  
 The other, Sinon, the false Greek from Troy :  
 Burning in fever they exhale this stench."  
 The one of them, who took it ill perchance 100  
 That he should be thus darkly spoken of,  
 Smote him with fist on his distended paunch,



Which rattled then, as though it were a drum ; 103  
 And Master Adam struck him with his arm,  
 Which seemed to be not less hard, on the face,  
 Saying to him : " Though power be gone from me 106  
 To move with these o'erweighted limbs of mine,  
 I have an arm free for such use as this."  
 And he replied : " But on thy journey to 109  
 The stake, thou had'st it not so ready then ;  
 Though ready thus, and readier still to coin."  
 He with the dropsy then : " Thou say'st the truth ; 112  
 But witness true as this, thou didst not bear,  
 When of the truth they questioned thee at Troy."  
 " If I spake falsely, thou false coin didst make," 115  
 Said Sinon, " and for one sin I am here,  
 But thou for more than any devil else."  
 " But recollect, thou perjured soul, the horse," 118  
 Was his reply, who bore the swollen paunch,  
 " And be't thy doom that all the world knows this."  
 " Thy tortue be the thirst that cracks thy tongue," 121  
 Rejoined the Greek : " and thy foul humours swell  
 Thy belly as a hedge before thine eyes."  
 The Coiner then : " As is its wont, thy mouth 124  
 Gapes only to let out insulting words ;  
 Yet if I thirst, and water puff me up,  
 Fever burns thee, and racks thine aching head ; 127  
 Few words indeed were needed to invite  
 Thee to drink up Narcissus' looking glass."  
 Listening to them I had been all intent, 130  
 When said my Master : " An thou wilt, stare on ;  
 But little more, and 'tween us there'll be strife."  
 When thus I heard him in displeasure speak, 133  
 Towards him I turned, so utterly abashed,  
 That in remembrance haunts me still the shame.  
 And as is one who dreams of some mishap, 136  
 And dreaming, wishes it were but a dream,  
 So that he craves what is, as though 'twere not,  
 Such was myself, unable to find words, 139

Wishing to make excuse, and all the while  
Excusing, though I thought I did it not.  
“Less shame doth wash away a greater fault,” 142  
The Master said, “than this hath been of thine ;  
So of all sadness now unload thyself ;  
And take account that ever at thy side 145  
Am I, if chance again should set thee where  
Folks are engaged in wrangle of this sort :  
The wish to hear it is a vulgar wish.” 148

## CANTO XXXI.

*Descent into the Ninth Circle—The Giants around the Well—  
Nimrod—Ephialtes—Antæus—.*

ONE and the self same tongue first stung me so,  
 That both my cheeks with blushes it suffused,  
 And then again the remedy supplied.  
 Thus do I hear it said Achilles' spear, 4  
 His father's heirloom, had the power to give  
 At first a sorry, then a gracious boon.  
 Our backs we turned on the great vale of woe, 7  
 Up o'er the bank that girdles it about,  
 And made our way across without a word.  
 Here it was less than night, and less than day, 10  
 So that my vision reached short way ahead ;  
 But the loud winding of a horn I heard,  
 Such as had made thunder itself seem faint ; 13  
 And to one point it drew my straining eyes,  
 As counter to it, they traced back its course.  
 No blast so terrible Orlando blew, 16  
 After the dolorous rout upon that day,  
 When great Charles lost his holy warrior-band.  
 Thither had I a short while turned my head, 19  
 When many lofty towers I seemed to see :  
 Then I : " What city, Master say, is this ?"  
 And he to me : " In that thy sight runs on 22  
 Through dimness from a distance too remote,  
 It happens that thy fancy goes astray.  
 Well wilt thou see, if thither thou arrive, 25  
 How much the sense by distance is deceived :  
 Wherefore push on somewhat more briskly now."  
 Then tenderly he took me by the hand, 28

And said : " Before much farther we advance,  
 So that the fact may after seem less strange,  
 Know that no towers are these, but Giants they : 31  
 Around the bank, each in the pit, they stand,  
 From navel downwards buried out of sight."  
 As when the fogs disperse, the eye once more 34  
 Can by degrees discern in outline what  
 The vapour in the thickened air conceals,  
 So piercing through that heavy atmosphere 37  
 Obscure, as slowly I approach the brink,  
 My error fled, and greater grew my fear.  
 For as above its circular precinct 40  
 The towers of Montereaggio crown-like rise,  
 So on the bank that girdles round the pit,  
 With bodies half exposed, uprose like towers 43  
 The dreadful Giants, whom, when he thunders,  
 Jove from high heaven still threatens with his bolts.  
 Already I discerned the face of one, 46  
 His chest, his shoulders, of his belly much,  
 And both his arms down hanging by his sides.  
 Certes, when Nature from the art surceased 49  
 Of making creatures such, she did right well  
 To take from Mars such ministers of war.  
 And if of elephants and of great whales 52  
 She still repents not, whoso closely looks,  
 Holds her in them more just and more discreet :  
 For where the force of mind intelligent 55  
 To power is added with an ill design,  
 No place of refuge then can man provide.  
 His face appeared to me as long and broad, 58  
 As at St Peter's is the Pine at Rome,  
 And all his limbs to it proportioned well ;  
 So that the bank, which as an apron served 61  
 From middle to the feet, still showed above  
 So much, that to reach high as to his hair,  
 'Twere vain for Frisons three to 'tempt th' exploit. 64  
 Thirty full palms of him did I behold

Down from the point where men their mantles clasp.  
 "*Rafel mai amech zabi almi,*" 67  
 That savage mouth began to bellow forth,  
 To which no sweeter psalms were suitable.  
 My Guide towards him turned : "Thou stupid soul, 70  
 Keep to thy horn ; with it relieve thyself,  
 When wrath or other passion seizes thee.  
 Feel round thy neck, and thou wilt find the cord, 73  
 Which holds it tied to thee, thou muddled soul,  
 Where it encompasses thy monstrous breast."  
 And then to me : "A self accuser this ; 76  
 Nimrod it is, by whose accursed scheme  
 A common language to the world is lost :  
 We pass him by ; on him we waste no words, 79  
 For unto him all speech is as his own  
 To others, which by none is understood."  
 Our farther journey then we onward pushed, 82  
 Turned to the left, and at a cross-bowshot  
 We found the next, more fierce, and huger far.  
 Whose was the master hand to bind him first, 85  
 I cannot tell, but tightly lashed in front  
 Was his left arm, the right upon his back,  
 With chain, which kept him pinioned from the neck 88  
 Low down, so that in parts exposed above  
 Five times it twisted round his frame.  
 "He in his pride once wished to put to test 91  
 His own prowess against high Jove himself,"  
 Thus spake my Guide, "so this reward he earned,"  
 Ephialtes is his name, and his grand proof 94  
 Was made, when Giants roused the fear of Gods :  
 The arms he lifted then, he ne'er moves now."  
 And I to him : "If so might be, I would 97  
 That of stupendous Briareus himself  
 Mine eyes their own experience might have."  
 And he replied : "Antæus thou wilt see, 100  
 And not far hence ; he speaks and is not bound.  
 To depth of all guilt he will let us down.

- Far hence is he, whom thou wouldst fain behold ; 103  
 He stands in bonds, and is like this in form,  
 Save that in aspect he seems fiercer still.”
- Ne'er did impetuous earthquake in its mightiest throe 106  
 Make steeple rock with a like vehemence,  
 As forthwith Ephialtes shook himself.  
 Greater than ever was my dread of death, 109  
 And for my death that fear had well sufficed,  
 Had I not seen the bonds that held him fast.
- Onward advancing, we proceeded then, 112  
 And to Antœus came, who five good ells,  
 Without the head, rose up above the pit.
- “ O thou, who in that fateful valley once, 115  
 Where Scipio found himself the heir of fame,  
 When Hannibal and all his host took flight,  
 For booty took'st a thousand lions once, 118  
 Of whom some think, hadst thou the battle joined,  
 When war against high heaven thy brothers made,  
 The sons of earth had won the victory ; 121  
 Set us below, and show thyself no churl,  
 Where cold locks up Cocytus ; send us not  
 On to Typhœus, nor to Tityos. 124  
 What most is here desired, this man can give :  
 So stoop to us, nor curl thy lip in scorn.
- Still can he in the world restore thy fame ; 127  
 He is alive, and length of days expects,  
 If ere his time Grace call him not to her.”
- So spake the Master, and the other prompt 130  
 Put forth the hands, of which once Hercules  
 Felt the tight grip, and in them took my Guide.
- When Virgil felt himself thus held, to me 133  
 He said : “ Come near that I take hold of thee,”  
 And made me then one bundle with himself.
- E'en as the Carisend appears to one 136  
 Who stands beneath her slope, when clouds pass o'er  
 From quarter opposite to her incline,  
 Such did Antœus seem to me, who stood 139

Watching him stoop ; and for the nonce  
I could have wished to go some other way.  
But gently in the depth, that swallows up 142  
Judas and Lucifer, he set us down ;  
Nor long did he remain thus bending low,  
But as ship's mast erect he rose again. 145

## CANTO XXXII.

*Ninth Circle—Traitors and Betrayers of Trust.*

*First Round—Caina.*

*Traitors to Kinsmen—Conti di Mangona—Camicion de' Pazzi.*

*Second Round—Antenora—Betrayers of their Country—*

*Bocca degli Abati—*

*Buoso da Duero—Ugolino.*

IF rhymes I had as strident and as harsh,  
 As would befit the dismal vault, whereon  
 The weight of all the other rocks collects,  
 The juices of my thoughts I would express 4  
 More fully still, but since I have them not,  
 Not without fear I bring myself to speak.  
 For to describe the whole world's lowest depth 7  
 Is no emprise to undertake in sport,  
 Nor with a tongue that "Daddy, Mammy" lisps.  
 But may those Ladies now assist my verse 10  
 That helped Amphion raise round Thebes her walls;  
 So shall my story to its facts respond.  
 Ah, misgotten herds, beyond all else, 13  
 Fixed in the place whereof to speak is hard,  
 Better had ye on earth been sheep or goats.  
 When in the darksome pit below we stood 16  
 Beneath the Giant's feet, much lower down,  
 And I still gazing at the lofty wall,  
 A voice I heard: "Take heed, how here thou pass; 19  
 Move on, that with the feet thou tread not on  
 The herds worn out in brotherhood of woe."  
 Whereon I turned, and saw in front of me 22



And underfoot a lake, which, frozen hard,  
 In glass, not water, had its counterpart.  
 So thick a covering ne'er upon its stream 25  
 In winter time did Austrian Danube form,  
 Nor Tanais yonder 'neath the frozen zone,  
 As there was seen ; for e'en had Tambernich, 28  
 Or Pietrapano fallen upon it,  
 At the mere edge it had not made a crack.  
 And as the frog its station takes to croak, 31  
 With snout outside the water, when oftentimes  
 The housewife dreams of gleaning in the fields ;  
 Livid as far as where the blush of shame 34  
 Is seen, were moaning ghosts within the ice,  
 While their teeth chattered like the bills of cranes.  
 The countenance of each was downward held ; 37  
 Of cold the mouth, of sadder heart the eyes  
 With all are forward to give evidence.  
 When from a rapid glance around I turned, 40  
 Down at my feet two did I see, so locked,  
 The hair upon their heads was intermixed.  
 "Tell me, O ye with breasts thus close compressed, 43  
 Who are ye?" said I: they bent back their necks ;  
 And when their faces were towards me raised,  
 Their eyes, till then moistened alone within, 46  
 Welled over through the lids, and frost congealed  
 The tears betwixt, and locked them up again.  
 Never did clamp two beams together bind 49  
 In grip so tight ; and then, as might two rams,  
 They butted one the other, in fierce rage.  
 And one, who was bereft of both his ears, 52  
 Frost bitten, said (he too with face down cast)  
 "Why dost thou closely thus examine us ?  
 If't be thy wish to know who these two are, 55  
 The valley, whence Bisenzio floweth down,  
 Their father Albert and themselves once owned.  
 Born of one mother both, Caïna through 58  
 Shalt thou search well, and never find a ghost,

More worthy in this jelly to be fixed ;  
 Not him, whose breast and shadow by the hand 61  
 Of Arthur once were shattered at one blow ;  
 Not e'en Focaccia, nor yet him, whose head  
 Obstructs me so, that nought beyond I see, 64  
 And Sassal Mascheroni was his name ;  
 If Tuscan, thou know'st well what sort he was.  
 And that thou need no more from me, know that 67  
 Camicion de' Pazzi I was once,  
 And wait for Carlin my excuse to plead."  
 A thousand faces then I saw, like dogs 70  
 Grinning with cold : a shiver through me runs,  
 And ever will at sight of frozen pools.  
 And while towards the centre we advanced, 73  
 Whereto the weight of all things gravitates,  
 And I stood shivering in the eternal chill,  
 Whether 'twere will, or destiny, or chance 76  
 I know not, but as 'midst the heads I passed,  
 I struck with heavy foot the face of one,  
 Who in reproach cried out : " Why spurn me thus ? 79  
 Unless thou come the vengeance to enhance  
 Of Mont 'Aperti, why molest me here ?"  
 And I : " Await me, Master, here awhile, 82  
 So shalt I solve a doubt anent this ghost ;  
 Then will I make what haste shall be thy will."  
 My Leader stopped ; and to the ghost I said, 85  
 Who roundly still assailed me with abuse,  
 " Who art thou thus a stranger to revile ?"  
 " And what art thou, that Antenora wouldst 88  
 Pass through, smiting the cheeks of others so  
 That wert thou living, such deed were too much ?"  
 " I am alive, and it may serve thee well," 91  
 My answer thus, " if fame be thy desire,  
 That mid my other notes I write thy name."  
 And he to me : " My wish is the reverse ; 94  
 Take thyself hence ; torment me now no more ;  
 Useless thy skill in flattery in this hole."

By nape of neck I caught him up, and said : 97  
 " Now must and shalt thou tell thy name to me,  
 Or on thy head shall not a hair be left."  
 Then he to me : " Tear from its roots my hair, 100  
 I will not tell nor show thee who I am,  
 Though on my head thou fall a thousand times."  
 His hair e'en now I'd twisted in my hand, 103  
 And more than one tuft from it had I plucked,  
 While with his eyes downcast he howled aloud ;  
 When, " Bocca," cried another, " what ails thee? 106  
 Is't not enough to chatter with thy jaws ?  
 Need'st bark as well ? what devil hath thee now ?"  
 " Ah, now," I said, thy name I need no more, 109  
 Malicious traitor, for unto thy shame,  
 A true report of thee I'll carry off."  
 " Begone," he said, " and what thou wilt relate : 112  
 But be not silent, if thou get out hence,  
 Of him, whose tongue but now so ready was.  
 He for the Frenchmen's "*argent*" weeps ; and thou 115  
 Can'st say, ' Him of Duera once I saw  
 There, where the sinners in a cold bath sit.'  
 And if some one should ask, who else was here, 118  
 Beside thee he of Beccheria lies,  
 For whom Firenze once did slit the throat.  
 Gian Soldanier, I trow, is farther on, 121  
 With Ganellon, and Tribaldello too,  
 Who did unbar Faenza, while men slept."  
 From him had we already gone away, 124  
 When two I saw close frozen in one hole ;  
 The head of one served for the other's cap.  
 And just as bread in hunger is devoured, 127  
 The one atop in th' other set his teeth,  
 Just where the brain doth with the nape unite.  
 Not otherwise did Tydeus once the brows 130  
 Of Melanippus gnaw in high disdain,  
 Than did this ghost the skull and all the rest.  
 " O thou ! who by such bestial sign dost show 133

CANTO XXXII.

139

Thy hate for him, whom thou devourest now,  
Tell me," I said, "why this? and I agree,  
If thou with reason do complain of him,  
When I know who ye are, and his offence,  
I will requite thee in the world above,  
If that I speak with, be not then dried up."

136

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## CANTO XXXIII.

*Ninth Circle—Betrayers of Confidence—Second Round—  
Antenora.*

*Betrayers of Country—Death of Count Ugolin—Third  
Round—Tolomea—Betrayers of Comrades—Frate Alberigo  
and Branca d' Orio.*

THAT sinner from his savage meal raised up  
 His mouth, and wiped it on the hair of him,  
 Whose head he had behind to pieces torn.  
 Then he began : "Thou wouldst that I revive 4  
 The desperate grief, that in mere thought alone  
 Crusheth my heart, ere I its story tell.  
 But if my words be seeds of infamy 7  
 Unto the traitor on whose bones I feed,  
 Thou then shalt see me speak and weep at once.  
 I know not who thou art, nor by what means 10  
 Thou cam'st down here, but Florentine in truth  
 To me thou seemest, as I hear thee speak.  
 And thou must know I was Count Ugolin, 13  
 And Ruggieri, the Archbishop, this ;  
 Now why to him a neighbour such I'll tell.  
 That, as the outcome of his ill designs, 16  
 While fully trusting him, in prison I  
 Was cast, and murdered there, no need to say.  
 But still, what thou as yet canst not have heard, 19  
 And that is, how malignant was my death,  
 Thou shalt hear now, and know if he wronged me.  
 A narrow slit within that wallèd cage, 22  
 Which after me is called Starvation Tower,  
 And in which others must be yet shut up,  
 Already through its chink had shown to me 25  
 The light of many moons, when the bad dream

I had tore off the veil of what should be.  
 This man appeared to me as lord and chief, 28  
 Hunting the wolf and whelps upon the heights,  
 That shut out Lucca from the Pisans' view.  
 With rav'nous hounds, eager and well in hand, 31  
 Gualandi, Sismondi and Lanfranchi  
 He had dispatched before him to the front.  
 After short run the sire and cubs appeared 34  
 To me tired out, and with well whetted fangs,  
 Methought I saw the hounds rip up their flanks.  
 When, ere the morrow dawned, myself awoke, 37  
 I heard my children moaning in their sleep,  
 For they were with me, and they asked for bread.  
 Right cruel art thou, if not wrung with grief, 40  
 Thinking already what my heart surmised :  
 And if thou weepest not, when dost thou weep?  
 They now had woke, and it was nigh the hour, 43  
 When food was wont to be served out to us,  
 Yet doubted each by reason of his dream.  
 Below I heard the nailing of the door 46  
 Of the dread tower, and looked thereon into  
 The faces of my boys without a word.  
 I did not weep ; within I was as stone ; 49  
 They wept, and darling little Anselm said,  
 " Father, thou lookest so ; what aileth thee ? "  
 But I wept not, nor answer made to him 52  
 That livelong day, nor e'en th' ensuing night,  
 Until the next sun on the world came forth.  
 As with thin ray the sun stole in athwart 55  
 Our doleful cell, and I discovered then  
 In their four faces what my own look was,  
 I bit my own two hands in agony, 58  
 They thinking that I did this in distress,  
 And pang of hunger, suddenly sprang up,  
 And cried ; " Father, less pain to us by much, 61  
 If thou eat us ; with this our wretched flesh  
 Thou didst clothe us ; then from us strip it off."

I calmed me then, to heighten not their woe. 64  
 That day and next in silence we remained.  
 Hard hearted Earth ! Why opened not thy mouth ?  
 But when unto the fourth day we had come, 67  
 At full length Gaddo fell down at my feet,  
 And cried : " Why, Father dost Thou not help me ? "  
 And there he died ; and as thou seest me now, 70  
 I saw the three drop down, one after one,  
 Between the fifth day and the sixth : whercon  
 Already blind, I 'gan to grope towards each, 73  
 And for two days called them by name, though dead :  
 Hunger at last prevailed, where grief could not."  
 His tale was told ; he with distorted eyes, 76  
 Seized on the wretched skull again with teeth,  
 That fastened on the bone, strong as a dog's.  
 Ah Pisa ! shame indeed of every tribe 79  
 In that fair land where sound of " *Si* " is heard ;  
 Since to chastise thee neighbours are too slow.  
 Let the Caprara and Gorgona shift, 82  
 And dam up Arno at its very mouth,  
 So may each living soul in thee be drowned.  
 For if 'twere rumoured that Count Ugolin 85  
 Betrayed thy fortresses, thou should'st not have  
 Exposed his children upon such a cross,  
 O younger Thebes ! their young days guiltless left, 88  
 Uguccion, Brigata and the two  
 Whose names are written in my song above.  
 Further we went, where still the frozen pool 91  
 In rigorous bonds holds yet another tribe,  
 Not downward bent, but all thrown on their backs.  
 Weeping with them allows them not to weep, 94  
 And grief which finds a block upon the eyes,  
 Turns inly to increase their agony.  
 For in hard clusters first their tears collect, 97  
 And, as with visors of clear crystal, thus  
 Fill up the hollows underneath the brow.  
 And now although by reason of the cold 100

All my sensations, as if callous grown,  
 Had from position in my face withdrawn,  
 Me thought already that I felt a breeze. 103  
 Whereon I said: "Master, who stirreth this?  
 Is not all vapour quite exhausted here?"  
 And he to me: "Right soon wilt thou arrive, 106  
 Where to thy question shall thine eyes reply,  
 Seeing the cause that pours this current down."  
 And from the wretches in the frozen crust 109  
 Cried one to us: "O souls, so cruel that  
 To you this lowest post hath been adjudged,  
 Lift from mine eyes the hardness of these veils, 112  
 So that awhile I may discharge the pain  
 Which swells my heart, ere freeze my tears again."  
 Wherefore I said: "If thou would have mine aid 115  
 Say who thou art, and if I ease thee not,  
 To bottom of the ice 'twere fit I sink."  
 He answered then: "Fra Alberigo I; 118  
 Fruit of sin's orchard here am I, as one  
 Who for a fig with date am recompensed."  
 "Oh," said I, "art thou then already dead?" 121  
 And he to me: "How fares my body in  
 The world above, no knowledge I possess.  
 Such privilege this Tolomea hath, 124  
 That oftentimes a soul will drop down here,  
 Ere by the push of Atropos impelled.  
 And that thou mayst more readily for me 127  
 Remove from off my face these glazed tears,  
 Know that soon as a soul a traitor proves,  
 As did my own, its body then is seized, 130  
 And by some demon is thereafter held,  
 Until its own time hath run out its course.  
 The soul itself into this cistern drops; 133  
 And still perhaps the flesh is seen above  
 Of this ghost too which winters in my rear.  
 Him thou should'st know, if but just now arrived; 136  
 Ser Branca D'Oria 'tis, and years not few



Have passed away, since he was thus shut in."  
 "I trow," said I, "herein thou play'st me false ; 139  
 For Branca Doria never yet hath died ;  
 He eats, he drinks, he sleeps and weareth clothes."  
 "Into the moat above of Bloody claws," 142  
 Said he, "where bubbling boils the sticky pitch,  
 Michael Zanche had not as yet arrived,  
 When this one in his stead a devil left 145  
 In his own body, as with the kinsman too,  
 Who with him did the deed of treachery.  
 But hither now to me extend thine hand, 148  
 And ope mine eyes." But then I opened not,  
 And courteous 'twas with him to play the churl.  
 Ah Genoese! strangers are ye to all 151  
 That's good in practice, full of every vice!  
 Why are ye not hunted from off the earth?  
 For with the vilest of the Romagnese, 154  
 One of yourselves I found, whose soul e'en now  
 By its ill deeds is in Cocytus plunged,  
 Who in the flesh above seems yet alive. 157

## CANTO XXXIV.

*Ninth Circle—Betrayers of Confidence—Fourth Round—  
Guidicca.*

*Traitors to Benefactors—Lucifer—The Mouths of Lucifer—  
Lèse-Majesté—Judas Iscariot—Brutus—Cassius—From the  
Centre of the Universe to the Southern Hemisphere.*

“ *VEXILLA regis prodeunt inferni*  
Toward us,” the Master said, “ so forward turn  
Thy looks, and see if thou discernest him.”

As when the breath of mist is thickly spread, 4  
Or in our hemisphere when night draws on,  
A mill appears far off, turned by the wind,  
Such structure then methought came into view ; 7  
Whereon by rush of wind I backward shrank  
Behind my Guide, no other shelter there.

Already I, (with fear I write the verse) 10  
Stood where the ghosts were wholly cover’d o’er,  
Transparent in the ice like straws in glass.

Some lie full length, others stand up erect : 13  
This on its head, and that upon its feet :  
A third its face bows archwise to the toes.

When we had made advance so far, that now 16  
It pleased my Master to point out to me  
The being, who had once been beauty’s type,  
From front of me he stepped, and bade me halt : 19  
“ See here is Dis,” he said ; “ the place behold,  
Where thou need’st arm thyself with fortitude.”

How icy cold I grew, and faint in speech, 22  
Ask not, O Reader ; this I cannot write ;  
For language would be all inadequate.

I did not die, nor yet remain alive. 25  
Think, if a grain of fancy thou possess,  
What I became, of either state deprived.

The emp’ror there of all the realms of woe 28

Forth from the ice with half his breast emerged ;  
 And better with a giant I compare,  
 Than giants with the measure of his arms : 31  
 Judge then how vast the whole of him must be,  
 Framed thus in due proportion to such parts.  
 If once as glorious as he now is foul, 34  
 And 'gainst his Maker lifted up his brow,  
 All tribulation must from him proceed.  
 And oh ! what marvel it appeared to me, 37  
 When faces three I saw upon his head !  
 One fronted us, and this was vermil red ;  
 The other two, which were with it conjoined, 40  
 Above the middle of each shoulder rose,  
 And all united in the crown at top.  
 That on the right 'twixt white and yellow seemed ; 43  
 The left to look on bore the tint of such  
 As come from regions whence the Nile descends.  
 Underneath each issued two mighty wings, 46  
 Of size befitting bird of such estate.  
 No sail afloat I've seen of sweep so broad.  
 They were not feather'd ; rather like the bat's 49  
 In form ; and these he fan-like flapped in air ;  
 So that from him three winds in currents rushed,  
 Whereby Cocytus was all frozen o'er. 52  
 Forth from six eyes rolled tears, which o'er three chins  
 Trickled slow down in slaver mixed with blood.  
 In every mouth he with his teeth crunched up 55  
 A sinner's bones, like hemp-stalks crushed by brakes,  
 So that he thus tormented three at once.  
 The munching of the mouth for him in front 58  
 Was naught compared to clawing, when the spine  
 Was left at times denuded of the skin.  
 " That soul up there in fiercest agony," 61  
 The Master said : " Judas Iscariot is,  
 His head within, his legs convulsed outside.  
 Of those two with their heads towards the ground, 64  
 Brutus is he, who from the black jaw hangs ;

Mark how he writhes, and utters not a sound :  
 And Cassius is the other with huge limbs. 67  
 But once again night rises, and 'tis time  
 Now to depart, for we have seen the whole."  
 Then as desired, I clasped him round the neck ; 70  
 Thereon he marked with care both time and place,  
 And when the wings were widest spread apart,  
 He fastened tight upon the shaggy flanks ; 73  
 And downward then descended tuft by tuft,  
 Between the thick hair, and the frozen crusts.  
 But when we reached the point, whereat the thigh 76  
 Hinges exactly on the thickest haunch,  
 My Guide with effort and with hard fetched breath  
 Turned his head round to where the heels had been, 79  
 And grappled with the hair as one who climbs,  
 So that I thought him bound for hell again.  
 " Hold tightly on, for by such stairs as these," 82  
 The Master said, panting as one tired out,  
 " Must we escape from ill so great as this."  
 Then through a cleft within a rock he passed ; 85  
 And having seated me upon its edge,  
 Up to my side he came with cautious step.  
 I raised mine eyes, and Lucifer I thought 88  
 To see, as I had left him at the first,  
 And saw his legs hanging above my head.  
 And that I felt myself then sore perplexed, 91  
 Let stupid folk suppose, who do not see  
 What point it is that I had overpassed.  
 " Rise up," the Master said, " upon thy feet : 94  
 Long is the journey, and the road unkind ;  
 The sun e'en now returns half way from tierce."  
 No saunter was it through palatial halls, 97  
 Where we then were, but through a natural cave,  
 With floor uneven, and but scanty light.  
 " Ere from th' abyss I now make my escape, 100  
 O Master mine," said I, as to my feet I rose,  
 " A word I pray mine error to correct :

Where is the ice? and how hath he become 103  
     Thus upside down? and how in space so brief  
     Has the sun passed from evening into morn?"  
 And he to me: "Thou think'st thyself to be 106  
     On that side of the centre, where I caught  
     The foul worm's hide, that perforates the world.  
 While I descended, there indeed thou wast: 109  
     But when I turned, then thou hadst passed the point,  
     Whereto all weights from every quarter tend;  
 And now beneath that hemisphere art come, 112  
     Right opposite to that, o'er which spreads out  
     The great dry land, below whose highest point  
 Was slain the Man, sinless in birth and life. 115  
     Thy foot now stands upon a little sphere,  
     Which is the counterface of Giudecca.  
 Here it is morning, when 'tis evening there; 118  
     And he, whose hair for us a ladder formed,  
     Remains still fixed just as he was before:  
 'Twas on this side that down from heaven he fell: 121  
     The land which formerly extended here,  
     In fear of him veiled itself 'neath the sea;  
 Entered your hemisphere; and then perchance 124  
     Him to escape, that, which on this side shows,  
     Left here an empty space, and rose aloft."  
 A place there is below, from Beelzebub 127  
     Removed as far as depth of his own tomb,  
     Which not by sight is known, but by the sound  
 Of a small rivulet, that hither falls 130  
     Through cleft in rock which it has worn away,  
     As on its course it winds in gentle slope.  
 My Guide and I upon that hidden path 133  
     Entered, to reach the world of light again;  
     And without thought of taking any rest,  
 We climbed, he first, and after him myself, 136  
     Until through a round aperture I saw  
     Some of those beauteous things that heaven bears on,  
 And thence came forth once more to see the stars. 139

