

Readings on the Inferno of Dante

William Warren
Vernon, Dante
Alighieri, ...



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\\ READINGS
ON THE
INFERNO // OF DANTE

CHIEFLY BASED ON

THE COMMENTARY OF BENVENUTO
DA IMOLA

BY THE

HON^{BLE}. WILLIAM WARREN VERNON M.A.

With an Introduction

BY

THE REV. EDWARD MOORE DD. Hon. D. Litt. Dublin
Principal of St. Edmund Hall, Oxford.

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I " 1 "

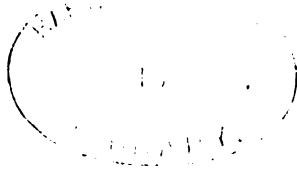
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To the Memory

OF THE VERY REVEREND

RICHARD WILLIAM CHURCH, D.C.L.

Dean of St. Paul's,

DEDICATED,

WITH A DEEP SENSE OF GRATITUDE AND REVERENCE,

BY

WILLIAM WARREN VERNON

January, 1894.



PREFACE.

My *Readings on the Purgatorio* (London, Macmillan, 1889, 2 vols.)* as therein explained, grew out of a series of lectures to a few private friends at Florence. The kind reception given to that work since its publication has encouraged me to produce the present book, which deals with the *Inferno*, and I trust that life and ability may be vouchsafed me to cope with the mystic beauties of the *Paradiso*, and to complete this attempt to make plain to a beginner the difficulties of the three immortal *cantiche*.

* The first edition of the *Readings on the Purgatorio* being now exhausted, I have begun to prepare a second edition, which will be re-modelled and almost entirely re-written.

In printing these volumes, my intention has not been to enter into rivalry with the many excellent prose translations now accessible to the English reader, but I venture to claim the merit of a certain novelty of plan and execution. The *Readings on the Purgatorio*, as the late Dean Church pointed out in his beautiful Introduction, are practically lectures to students. They take the English reader for the first time step by step with the poet throughout his dread pilgrimage. They endeavour to make clear the difficulties of language, the obscurities, the vague historical and literary references, and to afford a clue to the extraordinary topographical embarrassments which meet the reader at every turn. My method has been to deal with the text a few lines at a time, and to give a literal translation of it, while a running commentary and a plentiful supply of parallel passages, with notes and illustrations drawn from ancient and modern commentators, show the order and method of the narrative, as

well as the general plan of the Poem in relation to the other writings of Dante.

There is a close connexion between the three *cantiche*, which were intended by the writer as one harmonious work, in which each action, speech and scene, has a settled meaning in relation to the entire Poem. "This comprehensive mastery over the whole," says Dean Church, "is just what a learner, struggling with the difficulties of translation, and the perpetually recurring interruption and entanglement of notes, so easily loses. Striking or hard passages arrest or interest him; but the transitions are so abrupt, and the explanations are so condensed and concise, that he often finds it a hard matter to follow the continuous line of the poet's thought. But Dante certainly did not intend to be read only in fine passages: with his immense and multifarious detail, he meant us to keep in view the idea which governs the whole from the first part to the last."

Dante used the Italian language as an instru-

ment for conveying human thought with a direct force and a conciseness of expression beyond even the might of Tacitus. The translation is offered as a fair representation of the poet's meaning for the use of those whose knowledge of Italian is limited. I do not pretend to convey the full beauty and power, the marvellous and restrained energy of Dante's chiselled language. That impossible task must be left for abler pens than mine. My chief aim has been to show the beautiful symmetry of the *Divina Commedia*, planned by its designer on a scale of magnificence and loftiness of purpose, perhaps unrivalled in the literature of any age or country. We find in the *Divina Commedia* not only a complete system of civil and ecclesiastical government, but also a microcosm of the thoughts, the aspirations, the learning, the arts, the sciences, the hopes and the fears, the loves and the hates of the Middle Ages.

My *Readings* are based generally on the famous lectures in Latin of Benvenuto da Imola

(A.D. 1375), which have only lately been printed. These lectures were delivered by one who lived close to Dante's own time, and Benvenuto's remarks on the living persons mentioned in the Poem are therefore particularly valuable. His observations on the subtle allegorical meanings also deserve serious attention as coming from one who may be said to speak in the full light of tradition. The ordinary reader may feel repelled at the enormous bulk of Benvenuto's Commentary (in five large volumes) of which I have endeavoured to give the pith and substance. I have also made full use of the other early commentators, from Pietro di Dante, the son of the Poet, down to Gelli, the quaint old hosier of Florence, the Tuscan of Tuscans, who by patient study raised himself to become the lecturer on Dante in his native city, during the cultivated age of Leo X.

Above all, and on this I cannot lay too much stress, I have always kept in view the fact, so often lost sight of, that Dante was a Florentine,

and wrote for Tuscans. Let any one well acquainted with Italy contrast the harshness of the accent and the poverty of the language, spoken both in Piedmont and in Lombardy, with the matchless beauty of the pronunciation, and the boundless wealth of idioms, to be found among the peasantry of the hill country of Pistoja, and they may then be able to understand that every word that Dante wrote had a set purpose, and must always be investigated from the Tuscan point of view.

After much thought I have decided to follow Witte's text (*La Divina Commedia* di Dante Allighieri, *Berlino*, 1862), with occasional exceptions.

Here, as before, I feel a pleasure in expressing my sincere acknowledgments to that great Dantist, Dr. Scartazzini. All students of Dante owe him a deep debt of gratitude for the vast erudition and originality of thought displayed in his invaluable commentaries. I have made much use of his published writings,

but I have further to thank him for personal friendship, for many kind and encouraging letters, and for the ready help which he has at all times ungrudgingly given me.

I must moreover offer my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Moore, Principal of St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, whom I am proud to call my friend, and to whom few will deny the position of our leading Dantist in England. I thank him for the generous aid he has been good enough to give throughout the progress of my work ; for the friendly and constant care with which he has ever been willing to supervise it ; and for the admirable Introduction with which he has enriched my labours.

I should indeed be ungrateful were I not here to record my unfeigned sense of obligation to another friend, Mr. H. R. Tedder, the Secretary of the Athenæum Club. He has done far more than I could possibly expect of him in revision, while the patience and attention with which he has always granted me the assis-

tance of his great literary experience merit the cordial thanks which I hereby tender him.

To my Wife is due the credit of the ample Index. Throughout the four years I have been engaged upon the book, her sympathy, help and encouragement, have been of priceless value to me.

From my cousin, the Hon. George Elliot, I have frequently received much valuable advice and assistance.

My long intimacy with Sir James Lacaita has been no less than an education to me in all subjects connected with Dante from an unequalled master.

I must not forget one to whom I owe it that I have any knowledge of Italian at all, and who more than fifty years ago gave me the example of Dante study. I mean my Father. My early recollections of life in Florence commence at a time when the great philologist, Vincenzo Nannucci, and Giunio Carbone, the translator of the *Vocabolario Dantesco* of Blanc, were in suc-

cession my Father's secretaries ; and when his house was constantly frequented by such men as Baron Seymour Kirkup, Pietro Fraticelli, Brunone Bianchi and other distinguished Dantists. And I must also pay a small tribute of grateful remembrance to my aged master Signor Tommaso Gordini (still alive at Florence) who first taught me Italian in the year 1840.

My sister-in-law the Dowager Lady Vernon ; the Dowager Duchess of Sermoneta ; Signor Agnelli, author of the *Topo-Cronografia Dantesca*, and his publisher the Commendator Hoepli of Milan, have kindly permitted me to reproduce illustrations which I hope will add to the usefulness of my work.

Among other modern scholars by whose labours I have profited, I may mention the names of Bartoli, Blanc, Bowden, Butler, Camerini, Carlyle, Cary, Cayley, Fay, Ford, Fraticelli, Haselfoot, Hettinger, Lamennais, Longfellow, Lubin, Molbeck, Norton, Philalethes, Plumptre,

Poletto, Pollock, Di Siena, Tommasèo, Wright,
and Witte.

In making these special acknowledgments I have not exhausted the list of those to whom I have been indebted, as I have borrowed words, expressions, illustrations and notes, from many more learned than myself. To quote the words of Brunetto Latini, Dante's beloved teacher :
" Et si ne di je pas que cist livres soit estrais de mon poure sens, ne de ma nue science ; mais il est autressi comme une bresche de miel cueillie de diverses flors ; car cist livres est compilés seulement de mervilleus diz des autors qui devant nostre tens ont traité de philosophie, chascuns selonc ce qu'il en savoit partie."

WILLIAM WARREN VERNON.

The Athenæum,

Pall Mall, S.W.

January, 1894.



INTRODUCTION.

TO the great majority of ordinary readers Dante is known only or chiefly as the author of the *Inferno*. To a large number indeed, only as the author of selected episodes, and those selected naturally as presenting some of the most vivid descriptions, the most original conceptions, the most highly coloured scenes in that division of the Poem which offers most scope for episodes of this particular kind. Obviously, the result is a most distorted and one-sided conception of the genius, and also of the character of the poet. Hence many shallow criticisms and off-hand condemnations, and that even on the part of such eminent writers and critics as Voltaire, Goethe, and Landor. These when spontaneously occurring to a casual or superficial reader are excusable, and in some sense almost natural. But when they are pressed upon us by professed teachers or critics, we suspect that our would-be guides have consciously or unconsciously been following the method urged

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upon Balaam by Balak in reference to the Israelites :
 “ come . . . unto another place whence thou shalt see
 but the utmost part of them, and shalt not see them
 all, and curse me them from thence.”

The first and most necessary corrective step is to remove from any such isolated position, and before pronouncing judgment to endeavour to see something more than “the utmost part” of the poet’s mind and heart, by the study of the other co-ordinate divisions at least of the great poem, if of no more of his writings.* There are, happily, now abundant facilities for such a study provided for students of every degree, and not the least in respect of the *Purgatorio* by the earlier labours of the indefatigable author of the present work. It is not too much to say, that anyone familiar with the *Purgatorio* only, or with the *Paradiso* only, would form a conception of the poet and of the man Dante so totally different from that formed by a reader of the *Inferno* only, that it would seem inconceivable that both portraits could possibly belong to the same individual.† But it would be beyond the purpose of these few pages to dwell further upon this. The

* The importance of this, in the case of Dante, arises from the fact that, as Mr. Lowell has observed, “all his works (with the possible exception of the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*) are autobiographic, and all of them, including that, are parts of a mutually related system of which the central point is the individuality and experience of the poet.”

† Mr. Ruskin boldly declares that it is only “shallow people who think Dante stern.” *Modern Painters*, vol. iii, p. 164.

readers of this book are concerned for the present with the *Inferno* only. It may be worth while then to suggest to such readers some considerations which may prevent the conception formed of the Poet from this partial study of his great work from being wholly false, or at least grievously distorted, though it must necessarily remain imperfect and one-sided.

It will not be needful to give detailed references to the passages in Dante which form the main grounds of the adverse criticisms to which I have referred. The general result may be briefly summarised thus: Dante, it is urged, often describes the sufferings of the lost with details which to our notions are coarse and revolting (this is a censure as old as Machiavelli). Such details, moreover, are sometimes so grotesque and contemptuous as to imply utter heartlessness on his part; nay more, he goes out of his way, both in his language and in the actions which he attributes to himself, to insult some of the helpless and hopeless victims, and even to aggravate their sufferings. But let us allow some recent writers to speak for themselves, that it may be seen that the misconception against which we are protesting is not imaginary. Here are some samples: "His treatment is constantly heartless and vindictive." "There are few rays of Christ's spirit, and little echo of His voice." "In his glorious melodrama a terrible spirit of intolerance is with us *from first to last* (!)." The writer of the last two extracts seems not to have heard of the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*. He, at any rate, had seen but "the utmost part"

of the author he presumes to criticise. "One side of Dante's nature," says another (who at least has the grace to admit this limitation) "is passionate, vindictive, demonic! His use of the Almighty thunders for all who happen to displease him (an absolutely false statement, by the way, as we shall see) "is persistent and methodical!" Much more of this sort might be added. This is enough to show that those who still claim for the author even of the *Inferno* the office of a leader and teacher of men in this 19th century, and as we dare to add, for all time, would do well to deal with, and if possible to dissipate, these clouds of error and misconception.

Let it be clearly understood once more that the considerations which follow are addressed not to mature students or scholars, but rather to that large and, it is believed increasing, class of readers who certainly (as well as those who are far advanced in the study of Dante) will derive the most valuable help from this work of Mr. Vernon, and in particular will find the copious historical illustrations full of life and interest and instruction. I refer, in particular, to persons who have but little or moderate proficiency in Italian, and who probably lack the leisure or opportunity for a study of the contemporary or precedent literature, without which Dante (not only like other authors, but perhaps to a degree beyond almost all other authors) cannot be adequately appreciated. Many persons thus situated have a keen and a most natural desire to know and understand some-

thing of the work of the man whom Mr. Ruskin has ventured, though perhaps with exaggerated enthusiasm, to characterize as "the central man of all the world, representing in perfect balance the imaginative moral and intellectual faculties, and all at their highest."

(1) First of all, as I have just hinted, no poet can be adequately judged "out of his context," if we may so put it; or in other words without regard to the age and conditions in which he lived and worked. There is an average level in every age of accepted ideas, feelings and beliefs, on religious, moral and social questions, just as there is in physical knowledge, above which indeed a great poet or prophet is bound to some extent to rise, but out of which he cannot wholly emerge. Due allowance must always be made for this inevitable atmosphere of contemporary thought and habits; or, as an old writer has happily expressed it, for the different "climates of opinion" peculiar to different ages. We must not criticize a writer or teacher of the thirteenth or fourteenth century by the canons and ideas of the nineteenth.

"Molto è lecito là, che qui non lece."*

No one, for example, would condemn the pious Nicias in ancient times,† or the pious Newton in later days, for being a slave holder, in the way that

* *Par. i, 55.*

† *Freeman's History of Sicily, vol. iii, p. 157.*

a pious Christian of the nineteenth century would justly be condemned for such a practice. Now what were the surroundings, or, to use a phrase now much in fashion, the "environment" in which through many a long year the great poem was gradually and laboriously wrought out?*

It was an age of grossest corruption of Church and State, when spirituality seemed to be well nigh extinct in the one, and patriotism in the other. It was an age of cruelty, treachery, lawlessness, violence and general unrest. What is more, Dante himself was no student or recluse, but was whirled along in the very thick of the turbid stream. Remembering this, we are no longer surprised if there are dark passages in the *Inferno* marked, or, it may be, stained, by some of the prevailing ferocity of the age. We should rather wonder that it includes passages of such pathos as the episodes of Francesca, Brunetto Latini, and Pier delle Vigne. But the sustained tenderness, calm and brightness of the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* remain the greatest marvel of all. That such a plant (to use a metaphor of Dante's own) could be produced in so deadly a swamp † is little less than phenomenal.

(2) But there is another "context" in connexion with which the Poet's work must be viewed, viz., his own fundamental beliefs and deeply rooted convictions

* See *Par.* xxv, 1-3.

† Compare *Inf.* xv, 74-75 :

—“la pianta,
S' alcuna surge ancora in lor letame.”

respecting the great problems of Providence and of human life. These form the frame-work by which all the products of his thought in matters speculative or practical are shaped and regulated. This is the more important in proportion to the depth and earnestness of such convictions ; and surely, if ever a man were "terribly in earnest," if ever there were a man who felt that he had "a mission," that he was

else erring greatly,

A consecrated spirit,*

that man was Dante. He had much more in common with the Hebrew prophet than with the modern poet. One of the most axiomatic and fundamental beliefs in Dante's mind (as is abundantly clear from the pages of the *De Monarchia*) was that God had declared in unmistakeable tones his purpose for the right conduct of the world ; viz., that there should be one Universal Emperor for things temporal, one Universal Pope for things spiritual, co-operating with one another in harmony and without jealousy. Dante felt no more doubt of this (whatever we may think of it) than of his own existence or that of the world itself ; nor could he imagine any reasonable or unprejudiced Christian entertaining any such doubt. Feeling and believing this, and regarding any hesitation about it as involving moral perversity rather than, or in addition to, intellectual obliquity, those who in practice opposed the development of this

* Wordsworth.

Divinely revealed plan, he "found to be fighting against God." The spirit so vigorously expressed by the Psalmist was aroused in like manner in Dante. Through his zeal for God and God's service (as it presented itself to him) he "hated them right sore even as though they were his enemies."* Triumphant exultation over the vindication of God's justice in the punishment of His foes follows naturally. And this feeling also seemed to have received the sanction of the Psalmist: "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance, he shall wash his footsteps in the blood of the ungodly":† and again, "When the ungodly shall perish thou shalt see it."‡ As a further corollary, the suppression of any movements of natural pity became a religious duty, for

Chi è più scellerato che colui
Che al giudizio divin passion porta ? §

I am not defending this attitude as right, but from such a standpoint as that of Dante it was inevitable. The explanation is nothing more or less than that unhesitatingly accepted as sufficient in respect of the so-called "imprecatory Psalms," by thousands of readers who have no difficulty in believing their author to have been "inspired" in a sense which no one has ever claimed for Dante.

(3) If this be true, it goes far to remove the gross misconception or misrepresentation referred to above,

* *Ps.* cxxxix, 22.

† *Ps.* lviii, 10.

‡ *Ps.* xxxvii, 35.

§ *Inf.* xx, 29-30.

that Dante uses the Almighty thunders for all who happened to displease him! It is clear that much at least of the scorn and hatred which is exhibited in the *Inferno* is (I am far from saying justified) but certainly lifted on to an entirely different level from the display of private animosity or spite. But I have no hesitation in going further than this, and maintaining that there is absolutely no evidence whatever, in any single case, of Dante having used the opportunities offered him for gratifying personal enmity or gibbeting private foes. Nor, on the other hand, has he allowed personal affection to open the gates of Heaven to his friends, since there is only one in Paradise (Carlo Martello of Hungary) who could perhaps fall under this description.

His distribution both of rewards and punishments offers many strange anomalies, but, however they may be explained, personal likes and dislikes do not provide the key to them. When critics denounce Dante's condemnation of those whom they most misleadingly describe as "political opponents," we must remember the totally different meaning which would attach to this term under the circumstances of those times, and from the religious point of view of Dante himself. It is the most transparent fallacy thus to employ a familiar modern term which has widely different associations.

(4) We next deal with another common fallacy scarcely less mischievous. Dante is often credited or discredited—as no man, and least of all no poet,

ought to be—with the full realization and formal belief of any statement or description to be found in his writings; nay more—and this is no uncommon practice in ordinary life, and still more in theological controversy—with the *logical consequences* of any such statements, without the slightest proof of these having been consciously realized or thought out by the author himself. But let us ask this question. Except that everything is set forth by Dante with a vividness of detail and intensity of imagination which is quite unique; and further that—as a fundamental part of the plan of the Poem—everything is presented under the form of a supposed personal experience of his own, does he go beyond the theological beliefs and professions, I will not say of his own days, but of much later and even recent times? Have not many modern Christians, of undoubted piety and sincerity, used language and expressed beliefs of equal severity in regard to not only classes of sinners, but even individuals known to themselves in public or in private life, whom they have held to be (often on most insufficient grounds) at enmity with God? Have they not, sadly but surely, anticipated for them an eternal future no less horrible, if perhaps, thanks to some growth in general refinement, somewhat less grotesque in its details, than anything imagined by Dante? The fact is, that men in all ages are better than their creeds or professions, and ought not to be strictly judged by them. As I have elsewhere observed, many things are uttered with the lips which are not in any

effective sense *believed*; and much is *believed*, and so sincerely that men would even suffer and die for it, which has never been fully *realised*, much less thought out into its logical consequences.

(5) Another consideration must be specially addressed to those whose acquaintance with Dante is limited to the *Inferno*, viz. that this division of the Poem deals with the *Inferno* and nothing else. It is the detailed description of hell, and further of the most typical and conspicuous sinners in hell, those guilty of the most odious or contemptible or pernicious crimes, the greatest enemies or oppressors of the human race or of society, in the then recent memory of man, those whose bad pre-eminence in evil places them in a position like that of the saints, when the poet's theme is Paradise. As Dante says himself, it is useless to waste words on any others.

Però ti son mostrate in queste rote,
Nel monte, e *nella valle dolorosa*,
Pur l' anime che son per fama note.

Par. xvii, 136-8.

The nature of the subject matter being once realized, one scarcely needs to cite such anticipatory apologies as Dante has occasionally made:—

Qual ella sia, parole non ci appulcro.

Inf. vii, 60.

or again :

nella chiesa

Coi santi, ed in taverna coi ghiottoni.

Inf. xxii, 14-15.

(6) After all, Dante makes no claim to infallibility. We certainly will not do him such ill service as to

claim it for him. We must never let profound admiration degenerate into an irrational worship. Much harm has been done in his case, as in that of some scriptural writers or characters, by such indiscriminate zeal. In one case as in the other, we must not forget, even in the enthusiasm of a moment, that we are dealing with men, who, however exalted in genius or in character, are men of like passions with ourselves; and we need not attempt to conceal or deny in Dante the possession of fervid and even impetuous passions, which he shares with many great, many saintly, many inspired characters of all ages. But while we are not concerned to deny his faults and imperfections, we must protest vigorously against their exaggeration or misrepresentation. Such faults as he had are likely to have been present in strength, for there was nothing weak or hesitating about Dante. And if so, we may console ourselves, if consolation be needed, with the reflection of the moralist: "Il n'appartient qu'aux grands hommes d'avoir de grands défauts!"

All who are familiar with Mr. Vernon's excellent Readings on the *Purgatorio*, which have been so much appreciated that a second edition is already in preparation, will know the sort of help they may look for from him now in respect of the *Inferno*, and they will certainly not be disappointed. Those who are beginning the study of Dante, will find a singularly careful, clear and accurate prose translation. Further help is given to the reader, by the occasional insertion

of a word or two in brackets (like the italicised words in the Authorized Version of the Bible), by which the sense is often rendered clearer, and the translation is made to run more smoothly without any sacrifice of its literal exactness. Moreover the text is broken up into portions of a few *tersine* at a time, for separate translation, and the connection of these portions is brought out by a few intermediate sentences of paraphrase or explanation. Mr. Vernon has spared no pains in collecting from a large range of commentators, ancient and modern, a great wealth of illustrations of the historical and other allusions which abound everywhere in Dante. The copious extracts which he has given, from a variety of authors, are full of interest and instruction for every class and degree of students of the Divine Poem. Yet the whole is presented in such an unartificial and even familiar manner, that the reader is pleasantly carried along without any feeling that he is being lectured to.

E. MOORE.

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RECORRECTED ERRATA.

VOL. I.

- Page 36 (line 18). For "Zaini" read "Zani."
" 107 (footnote †). For "Edward Waller" read "Edmund Waller."
" 160 (last two lines). For "he was hospitably entertained by Guido, the great Lord of Polenta, Francesca's father," read "he was hospitably entertained by Guido Novello, the great Lord of Polenta, Francesca's nephew."
" 164 (line 11). For "E nominciai" read "E cominciai."
" 255 (In translation at bottom of page). For "with sin-laden denizens, with mighty garrison," read "with its sin-laden denizens, with its mighty garrison."
" 308 (line 25). For "Caroccio" read "Carroccio."
" 334 (line 18). For "sè empio" read "sì empio."
" 432 (footnote, line 1). For "from the *Vulg.*" read "from the *De Vulg.*"
" 438 (lines 18, 19). For "pictured them running," read "pictured the shades running."
" 447 (line 1). For "after Attila, they would" read "after Attila, would."
" 516 (lines 24, 25). For "than the goat" read "than to the goat."
" 572 (line 4). For "Petti" read "Pelli."
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PROLEGOMENA.

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I.—THE COSMOGRAPHY OF DANTE.

BEFORE readers of the *Divina Commedia* can form a just comprehension of the many allusions Dante makes to the structure of the universe, it is necessary for them to have some notion of the system of cosmography that prevailed in his days. This was known as the Ptolemaic system, so called after Ptolemy of Pelusium, the celebrated astronomer, who died A.D. 161.

To this system Dante added certain creations of his own, and we shall find that he has linked the astronomical, or, as they were then styled, the astrological, doctrines of the scholiasts with an allegorical system, that is mainly the fruit of his own imagination.

The Ptolemaic system supposes the Earth to be stationary in the centre of the universe, and the planets to revolve round it, within concentric spheres, and in the following order: (I) The Moon; (II) Mercury; (III) Venus; (IV) the Sun; (V) Mars; (VI) Jupiter; and (VII) Saturn. In addition to these seven spheres, there are three others still more vast, namely, (VIII) that of the fixed stars; (IX) the Crystalline Heaven, more generally known as the *Primum Mobile*; and last of all (X) the Empyrean, or *Cielo Quieto*. Besides these there are two spheres supposed to belong to the earth itself, namely, the sphere of air, and the sphere of fire.

c

The Empyrean, or *Cielo Quietò*, is motionless, but the other nine spheres revolve in their respective orbits, their movements being directed by as many choirs of angels, whom Dante styles *Intelligenze celesti*, and who are of a greater or less hierarchical order, corresponding to the precedence of that heavenly sphere which they set in motion. The first sphere, that of the moon, is moved by the angels; the second by the archangels; the third by the principalities; the fourth by the powers; the fifth by the virtues; the sixth by the dominations; the seventh by the thrones; the eighth by the cherubim; the ninth by the seraphim (*Par.* xxviii, 98-126).

“ I cerchi primi
T' hanno mostrati i Serafi e i Cherubi.”

.
Quegli altri amor, che intorno a lor vonno,
Si chiaman Troni

.
L' altro ternaro, che così germoglia
.
Prima Dominazioni, e poi Virtudi ;
L' ordine terzo di Podestadi ee.

Poscia nei due penultimi tripudi
Principati ed Arcangeli si girano ;
L' ultimo è tutto d' Angelici ludi.”

To the above order of the heavens and the hierarchies of angels, Dante adapted an allegorical system of his own, which is shown in the following table. We shall see in it that the so-called sciences of the *Trivium* and the *Quadrivium*, the philosophical and the theological sciences, are severally represented in the ten separate heavens which in their concentric orbits surrounded the earth.

The Cosmical System according to the teaching of the Scholiasts. The Allegorical System according to the conception of Dante, in *Conv.* ii, 14, 6, in which he says we must reflect upon a comparison between the order of the heavens and that of the sciences.

The Earth.	}	The	Four Elements.		
The Waters.					
Sphere of Air.					
Sphere of Fire.					
1. The Heaven of the Moon.	}	The 7 Planets.		Grammar.	} Sciences of the
2. " Mercury.			Dialectic.	} <i>Trivium.</i>	
3. " Venus.			Rhetoric.		
4. " the Sun.			Arithmetic.		} Sciences of the
5. " Mars.			Music.	} <i>Quadrivium.</i>	
6. " Jupiter.			Geometry.		
7. " Saturn.			Astrology.		
8. The Heaven of Fixed Stars.		Physics and Metaphysics.			
9. The Crystalline Heaven, or <i>Primum Mobile.</i>		Moral Science.			
10. The Empyrean, Firmament, or Quiet Heaven.		Theology.			

The earth is round, and divided into two hemispheres, the one inhabited by Man, and the other, which Dante, following the belief of the time and the opinions of St. Augustine, believed to be wholly uninhabited. In *Inf.* xxvi, 117, he calls this Southern Hemisphere, "il mondo senza gente."

In the *Convito*, Tr. iv, cap. 8, Dante describes the earth as having a diameter of 6,500 Italian miles, so that each degree, according to the data of Archimedes, consisted of fifty-six and one-third miles, and the earth's circumference extended to 20,400 miles.

Jerusalem is situated in the very middle of our hemisphere.

" Già era il Sole all' orizzonte giunto,
Lo cui meridian cerchio coperchia
Jerusalem col suo più alto punto." (*Purg.* ii, 1-3).

In *Ezekiel* (v, 5) we read: "Thus saith the Lord God, This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her."

Dante imagines the Mountain of Purgatory to be on an island in the midst of the ocean in the southern hemisphere, precisely at the Antipodes to Jerusalem. The two are referred to in the following passages:—

"E se' or sotto l' emisperio giunto

Ch' è contrapposto a quel che la gran secca

Coperchia, e sotto il cui colmo consunto

• Fu l' uom che nacque e visse senza pecca."

(*Inf.* xxxiv, 112-115).

Dentro raccolto immagina Sion

Con questo monte in sulla terra stare

Sl, che ambo e due hanno un solo orizzon,

E diversi emisperi." (*Purg.* iv, 68-71).

According to these views, a diameter of the earth which would have Mount Sion for one of its extremities, would have the Mountain of Purgatory for the other. Precisely half way between the two, and in the very central point of the terraqueous globe, Lucifer stands fixed, with his head towards Jerusalem, and his feet towards Purgatory.

HELL.

When Lucifer was expelled from Heaven, the velocity with which he fell, and the weight of sin he bore, caused him to strike the globe so violently as to *invert its conditions*, the land of the southern hemisphere being forced to the north, and the waters changing in their turn to the south. For, to avoid so grievous a sinner, the very earth recoiled in horror, and the matter displaced by his passage through the

southern hemisphere rushed upwards and became the Mountain of Purgatory. In the void thus caused in the bowels of the earth was Hell (see canto xxxiv). Dante has followed the great writers of antiquity in placing Hell in the regions beneath the earth, but with this difference, that whereas Homer, Ovid, Virgil, and others have been content to leave the form of the Lower World to their readers' conjecture, Dante has given to his Hell determinate shape, plan, and size.

Dante imagines that Hell is situated beneath the surface of the northern hemisphere, as we have just noticed, in an immense empty space in the form of an inverted cone. The apex of this cone is supposed to be the relatively small sphere of ice called *Giudecca*, into the centre of which Lucifer is frozen; some have maintained that his navel was the centre of the Universe. The base of the cone is towards the surface of the Northern Hemisphere, but at what depth below it is not stated, nor do commentators agree.

The Hell of Dante would seem to be approached from the surface of the earth by a descending hollow way until the gate is reached, on passing through which an enormous subterranean cavern is found, having possibly at its upper edge a circumference of over a thousand miles. From the gate the cavity, being funnel-shaped, narrows more and more at each descending stage, until at last it closes fast round the waist of Lucifer at that point to which all weights are drawn. (*Al qual si traggon d' ogni parte i pesi*).

Along the sides of the funnel-shaped void run a number of concentric terraces of immense extent,

called by Dante circles, and these by successive degrees narrow down to the bottom of Hell.

Before, however, arriving at the first of these circles, Dante imagines there to be a kind of debateable land within the territory of Hell, but not within Hell proper, which latter only begins after the river Acheron has been passed in Charon's ferry boat. Here is the vestibule of Hell, usually spoken of as the *Antinferno*, and this, added to the nine circles of Hell, gives in all ten, the symmetrical and perfect number to which Dante aspired.

Opinions have greatly differed as to whether the funnel-shape of Hell narrowed down gradually and evenly, or whether it did so by more abrupt interruptions of its regular order. There seems rather to be a preference for the latter alternative, and if this view be adopted, then we must imagine that about half-way down the funnel there exists a sort of diaphragm with an immense chasm in the centre; and below this, again, a second of lesser size, but of tremendous depth, and a third smaller both in diameter and in depth. The first would be the descent from the city of Dis to the River of Blood; the second, the Great Abyss (*Burrato*) down to the Circles of Fraud; and the third, the Pit (*Pozzo*) leading from the Circles of Fraud down to the ice of Cocytus.

Let us now consider the classification by Dante of the sins punished in Hell. His classification is by divisions, sub-divisions, and sub-divisions of sub-divisions.

There are two main divisions of Hell proper, namely, the circles outside the City of Dis, in which sins of Incontinence are more lightly punished, and the

circles within the city of Dis, which form nether hell, and at the bottom of these Lucifer is fixed.

The *Antinferno*, or vestibule of hell, is devoted to the punishment of those who have been alike indifferent to good and evil. Canto iii.

The sins of Incontinence are dealt with in five circles, namely :

Circle I, called Limbo, in which the unbaptized but blameless heathen abide without punishment. Canto iv.

Circle II. The Unchaste. „ v.

Circle III. The Gluttonous. „ vi.

Circle IV. The Avaricious and Prodigal. „ vii.

Circle V. The Wrathful and the Sullen or Slothful.

Cantos vii and viii.

As Dante considered the sins of Incontinence to be sins of the weakness to which human flesh is liable, the five circles representing that class undergo comparatively light penalties.

Circle VI is the city of Dis itself, which is reached after crossing the Stygian Marsh. This is a class by itself, being in fact the vestibule of nether Hell. In it are those guilty of heresy and the epicurean philosophers. (Cantos ix and x.) It is here we reach the first great chasm which separates upper from lower Hell.

Below this point there are two great classes :

(a) Crimes of Violence. Circle vii ; and

(b) Crimes of Fraud. Circles viii and ix.

Circle VII. Violence is sub-divided into three rounds. (*Gironi*) :

First Round. Violence against one's neighbour.

Here are punished Murderers and Tyrants.

Canto xii.

Second Round. Violence against oneself. This class contains Suicides and absolute Dissipators of their wealth. Canto xiii.

Third Round. This class has three sub-divisions :

(*α*) Violence against God ; *i.e.* Blasphemy. Canto xiv.

(*β*) Violence against Nature ; *i.e.* Unnatural crimes. Cantos xv. and xvi.

(*γ*) Violence against Art, by which Usury is meant. Canto xvii.

We now come to the great Abyss (*Burrato*) at the bottom of which Fraud is sub-divided into two great classes, namely :

(*a*) Ordinary Fraud, where no trust has been given. Circle viii ; and

(*b*) Aggravated Fraud, where trust has been given ; *i.e.* Treachery. Circle ix.

Circle VIII. Ordinary Fraud is further sub-divided into ten classes, namely :

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| <i>Borgia</i> 1. Seducers. | Canto xviii. |
| <i>Borgia</i> 2. Flatterers. | „ xviii. |
| <i>Borgia</i> 3. Simonists. | „ xix. |
| <i>Borgia</i> 4. Diviners. | „ xx. |
| <i>Borgia</i> 5. Barrators or Traffickers in public offices. | Cantos xxi. and xxii. |
| <i>Borgia</i> 6. Hypocrites. | Canto xxiii. |
| <i>Borgia</i> 7. Robbers. | Cantos xxiv. and xxv. |
| <i>Borgia</i> 8. Fraudulent Counsellors. | Cantos xxvi. and xxvii. |
| <i>Borgia</i> 9. Disseminators of discord. | Canto xxviii. |
| <i>Borgia</i> 10. Falsifiers of all kinds. | Cantos xxix. and xxx. |

Each of these ten sub-divisions is called a *Bolgia*, or pouch, and the whole group of ten is called *Malebolge*, evil pouches.

After this the third chasm occurs, and at the bottom of it we find the place of punishment of

Circle IX. Aggravated Fraud, or Treachery.

This is again sub-divided into four classes, or rings :

First Ring. *Caina.* Betrayers of kindred.

Canto xxxii.

Second Ring. *Antenora.* Betrayers of their country.

Cantos xxxii. and xxxiii.

Third Ring. *Tolomea.* Betrayers of guests.

Canto xxxiii.

Fourth Ring, the small sphere. *Giudecca.* Betrayers of Benefactors.

Canto xxxiv.

PURGATORY.

The Mountain of Purgatory is represented as being very similar in form to the great cavity of Hell. It is like a truncated cone, and, while not having quite such huge proportions as Hell, is yet of so great an elevation as to soar beyond the spheres of air and of fire, and to terminate only in the sphere of the moon. It is here that I would venture to enter a protest against the graphic illustrations which seem to represent Purgatory as a small hill or peak, of which the top might easily be seen, with some half dozen human figures on each terrace.

Immensity is the key-note of all Dante's conceptions, and whereas his Paradise extends into the undefined and boundless expanse of the most distant

heavens, so must we picture to ourselves his Hell and his Purgatory occupying the widest limits that the finite proportions of our planet will allow.

The divisions of Purgatory are described in *Readings on the Purgatorio* (London, 1889. 2 vols. cr. 8vo), and those of Paradise will at some future time be discussed in *Readings on the Paradiso*.

DIMENSIONS OF HELL.

It is obvious that any ideas as to the dimensions of Dante's Hell must be mainly conjectural. The diameter of the Earth from Jerusalem to the Mountain of Purgatory is not much less than 6500 miles; and he represents himself as having traversed this vast space in a period of 45 hours; namely, 24 hours in descending from the Entrance Gate of Hell down to Lucifer in the Arctic Hemisphere, and 21 hours in re-ascending in the Antarctic Hemisphere from Lucifer to the shores of the Mountain of Purgatory.

The *Divina Commedia* is a vision, and allowance must therefore be made for the marvellous and the impossible. Dante has, however, given his readers certain *data* from which some approximate deductions may be formed, of his ideas of the dimensions and measurements of Hell.

In *Inferno* xi, 16-18, Virgil, in explaining to Dante the nature of the various circles of Hell, while they are on their way down from the Sixth to the Seventh Circle,

“ Figliuol mio, dentro da cotesti sassi,
 son tre cerchiatti
 Di grado in grado, come quei che lassi.”

In *Inferno* v, 1-3, Dante says :

“ Così discesi del cerchio primaio
Giù nel secondo, che men loco cinghia,
E tanto più dolor.”

These two passages seem to show that the circles are formed upon a principle of regular proportion, and upon an evenly diminishing scale. Dante has also given us two measurements in *Malebolge*, where he and Virgil are in nearly the narrowest regions of Hell. When we compare the two and carry on the comparison upwards from circle to circle to the uppermost ring of all, we are able to form an idea of the enormous size of the Hell he imagined.

In canto xxix, 8-9, Virgil, reproving Dante for taking too much notice of certain personages among the disseminators of discord in the ninth *Bolgia*, tells him that, if he thinks of counting them, he had better remember that the *Bolgia* has a circuit of 22 miles.

“ Pensa, se tu annoverar le credi,
Che miglia ventidue la valle volge.”

In *Inf.* xxx, 84-87, Maestro Adamo tells Dante that if he could only move along, dropsical as he is, an inch in a hundred years, he would already be on the road to see his former employer, the hated Count of Romena, suffering like himself, but in another part of the *Bolgia*, which is half a mile broad, and has a circuit of 11 miles.

“ Io sarei messo già per lo sentiero,
Cercando lui tra questa gente sconcia,
Con tutto ch' ella volge undici miglia,
E men d' un mezzo di traverso non ci ha.”

Therefore, proceeding from these *data* by arithmetical progression, if the circuit of the Tenth *Bolgia* is 11 miles, and that of the ninth 22 ; then that of the eighth will be 33 ; of the seventh 44 ; of the sixth 55 ; of the fifth 66 ; of the fourth 77 ; of the third 88 ; of the second 99 ; and of the first 110, with a radius equal to $17\frac{1}{2}$ miles. If these $17\frac{1}{2}$ miles be multiplied by 9, we get $157\frac{1}{2}$ miles of radius, and nearly a thousand miles of circumference for the *Antinferno*, just within the gates of Hell.

But it is evident from various passages in the *Inferno* that a vast space exists between the Circles of Incontinence and those of Violence, and an infinitely greater one between the Circles of Violence and those of Fraud, and Professor Agnelli in his valuable work, *Topo-Cronografia Dantesca*, Milan 1891, says he feels that he will not be deviating too far from Dante's intentions, in assigning about one fourth of the whole depth of Hell to the complex descent of the first six circles ; and an equal distance between the sixth and the seventh circle. The remaining half of all Hell can then be apportioned to the two classes of Fraud in the eighth and ninth circles. In other words, we may consider the upper half to be from the gate of Hell to Geryon on the verge of the Great Abyss, and the lower half from Geryon to Lucifer. We must however remember that any attempts to determine the depth of this Hell in a precise manner are impossible. We have absolutely no information to guide us as to the thickness of the crust of the earth overhanging this gigantic chasm, and although we can calculate the distance of the semi-diameter of the

earth from the surface of one of its hemispheres to its centre, we have no means of calculating the distance from the earth's surface to the beginning of the first circle.

This subject was a favourite one among students of Dante in the sixteenth century, and several geometricians of eminence made the most elaborate computations and imaginary plans of Hell, which, however ingenious, all break down in some important detail. One of them calculates such a comparatively thin crust of earth above the opening of Hell, as would infallibly have caused the whole mass to fall into the chasm. Another gravely asserts that the distance Antaeus lifted down the Poets was eighty miles.

The first to deal with the above details was Antonio Manetti, a geometrician of Florence, who wrote at some date previous to the publication, in 1481, of the Commentary of Cristoforo Landino, who in his turn states that he follows in Manetti's footsteps, although he arrives at very different results. Manetti was also followed by Pier Francesco Giambullari, 1544, and by the great Galileo Galilei in 1632, although there are doubts as to the authenticity of the authorship of the two lectures attributed to him in which he supports Manetti.

It would seem to be the opinion of Professor Agnelli that Manetti only worked out his plan as far as the Seventh Circle, after which, for some unknown reason, the completion was left to others, who fulfilled their duty so very imperfectly, that, mechanically speaking, the vast fabric of Hell, as conceived

by Manetti, rests upon a base so flimsy as to be crushed down at once.

As the system, then, of Manetti remains defective, we will not further consider it, nor the many others that are either servile imitations, or which differ from it only in unimportant details ; and let us rather turn our attention to that of Alessandro Vellutello of Lucca, the author of an illustrated dissertation upon the topography of the *Inferno*, which was published at Venice in 1596, at the beginning of the joint commentary of the *Divina Commedia* by himself and Landino. This system of Vellutello is the one which, on the whole, Prof. Agnelli prefers ; and principally for the reason of the great divisions that it makes between the Incontinent, the Violent, and the Fraudulent, with far more marked separations of their places of punishment than any other commentator has done.

According to Vellutello the diameter of Hell at the entrance gate is 315 Italian miles, and he computes precisely the same distance as the depth from the inside arc of the vault of Hell down to Lucifer.

This depth is distributed as follows :

From the gate of Hell to the inside arc of the vault of Hell, 19 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

The Circles of Incontinence, *i.e.*, from the gate of Hell to the descent from the city of Dis, at the point where the Poets encounter the Minotaur, 70 miles.

From the Minotaur to the Circle of the Violent, 70 miles.

From the Circle of the Violent, at the point where

they mounted upon the back of Geryon, to the bottom of the Great Abyss, where they enter *Malebolge*, 140 miles.

From the topmost edge of *Malebolge* to the central point of the Earth at the bottom of Hell, $15\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

Thus we get :

$19\frac{3}{4} + 70 + 70 + 140 + 15\frac{1}{4} = 315$ miles for the depth of Hell.

As regards the width of the Circles and Chasms, Vellutello distributes them thus :

		MILES.
<i>Antinferno</i> and Acheron	Half diameter	$17\frac{1}{2}$
First Circle	<i>Limbo</i>	$17\frac{1}{2}$
Second Circle	Sensual	$17\frac{1}{2}$
Third Circle	Gluttonous	$17\frac{1}{2}$
Fourth Circle	Avaricious and Prodigal	$17\frac{1}{2}$
Fifth Circle	Descent to the Styx 17 miles	} 35
"	Passage of the Styx 17 miles	
Sixth Circle	In the City of Dis 1 mile	} 17 $\frac{1}{2}$
Seventh Circle	First round 5·83 miles	
"	Second round 5·83 miles	} 17 $\frac{1}{2}$
"	Third round 5·83 miles	
"	Half diameter of the first seven	—
	Circles	140
"	The other half diameter	140
"	Diameter of the Great Abyss	35
"	Diameter of all Hell	315

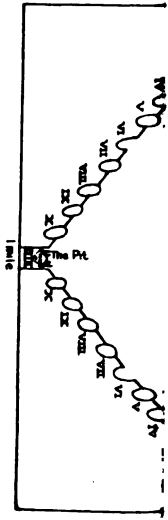
The diameter of the Eighth and Ninth Circles is contained in that of the Great Abyss. Each of the first nine *Bolge* is 1 mile across, and each rampart $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile. The tenth *Bolgia*, we know (*Inf.* xxx, 84-87), is only $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile across, and Vellutello gives $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile to the last rampart from *Malebolge* to the edge of the Pit where the Giants stand.

Therefore we get for *Malebolge* :

First <i>Bolgia</i>	Half diameter	1	mile
First Rampart	"	$\frac{3}{4}$	"
Second <i>Bolgia</i>	"	1	"
Second Rampart	"	$\frac{3}{4}$	"
Third <i>Bolgia</i>	"	1	"
Third Rampart	"	$\frac{3}{4}$	"
Fourth <i>Bolgia</i>	"	1	"
Fourth Rampart	"	$\frac{3}{4}$	"
Fifth <i>Bolgia</i>	"	1	"
Fifth Rampart	"	$\frac{3}{4}$	"
Sixth <i>Bolgia</i>	"	1	"
Sixth Rampart	"	$\frac{3}{4}$	"
Seventh <i>Bolgia</i>	"	1	"
Seventh Rampart	"	$\frac{3}{4}$	"
Eighth <i>Bolgia</i>	"	1	"
Eighth Rampart	"	$\frac{3}{4}$	"
Ninth <i>Bolgia</i>	"	1	"
Ninth Rampart	"	$\frac{3}{4}$	"
Tenth <i>Bolgia</i>	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"
Tenth Rampart bordering the Pit	"	$\frac{3}{4}$	"
		<hr/>	
Half diameter of the Pit or Cocytus		17	"
		$\frac{1}{2}$	
		<hr/>	
The other half diameter of the whole Abyss, including <i>Malebolge</i> and the Pit		17 $\frac{1}{2}$	"
		<hr/>	
		17 $\frac{1}{2}$	"
		<hr/>	
Total		35	"

Each division or ring of Cocytus has a half diameter of 125 metres, which, multiplied by 4, gives 500 metres or the half mile quoted above. The total diameter then of Cocytus would be 1 mile, but already included in the above calculations.

N.B.—The miles in these calculations are Italian miles.



Alessandro Velluttoland Malacchi

(on a larger scale)
 From Agnelli's *Rosa Cromosomica*
 del *Vedigo Danese*,
 Milano (Hoepfl) 1891.

II.—THE SYMMETRICAL PLAN OF THE *DIVINA COMMEDIA.*

In all the divisions of his poem Dante scrupulously observes a symmetrical order. Each of the three *Cantiche* has thirty-three Cantos, inasmuch as the first Canto of the *Inferno* must be considered as the Introduction or Preface to the whole Poem. And, in fact, in the *Inferno*, the Invocation is not in the first Canto, as it is in the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, but in the second.

It is evident that Dante in his preliminary plan allotted a definite proportion of space to each of his three great Divisions. In *Purg.* xxxiii, 139-141, he distinctly states that he cannot exceed his own prescribed limits.

“ Ma perchè piene son tutte le carte
Ordite a questa Cantica seconda,
Non mi lascia più ir lo fren dell' arte.”

The hundred Cantos of the *Divina Commedia* consist of 14,233 verses of which

The *Inferno* has 4,720 verses.

The *Purgatorio*, 4,755 verses.

The *Paradiso*, 4,758 verses.

A parallel case is noted by Professor Charles Eliot Norton, as regards the poems in the *Vita Nuova* which Dante has constructed with the most perfect symmetry, namely :—10 Minor Poems, 1 Canzone, 4 Minor Poems, 1 Canzone, 4 Minor Poems, 1 Canzone, 10 Minor Poems.

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III.—THE DATE WHEN THE *INFERNO* WAS WRITTEN.

Mr. James Russell Lowell (*Essay on Dante, Literary Essays*, London, 1890, vol. iv., page 156) observes on this subject: "All that is certainly known in regard to the *Commedia* is that it was composed during the nineteen years which intervened between Dante's banishment and death (1302-1321). Attempts have been made to fix precisely the dates of the different parts, but without success, and the differences of opinion are bewildering." Scartazzini's remarks (*Prolegomeni*, ch. III, pp. 417-435) are deeply interesting. He is strongly of opinion that Dante did not sit down and write, first the *Inferno*, then the *Purgatorio*, and thirdly the *Paradiso*, one after the other, but rather that in the first instance he projected his Poem of one hundred cantos, and that he began doing so at the time when he wrote these concluding words of the *Vita Nuova* (Norton's Translation, Boston, 1867, pp. 96-97): "I saw things which made me resolve to speak no more of this blessed one (Beatrice), until I could more worthily treat of her. And to attain to this, I study to the utmost of my power, as she truly knoweth. So that if it shall please Him through whom all things live that my life shall be prolonged for some years, I hope to say of her what was never said of any woman. And then may it please Him, who is the Lord of Grace, that my soul may go to behold the glory of its lady, namely, of that blessed

Beatrice, who in glory looketh upon the face of Him, *qui est per omnia sæcula benedictus.*" From this we see that Dante's work of preparation had already commenced. Scartazzini thinks that the preparation was undoubtedly the drawing out the plans of the architecture of the edifice which he purposed to erect. But this framework alone was not a thing he could accomplish in one year or even two. He had probably sketched out the intended argument of every Canto. Scartazzini does not deny that the *Commedia* was worked out to its completion during the last eight years of Dante's life, but such a supposition, he contends, does not in the least preclude long years of previous preparation. He thinks the skeleton framework of the whole had been reared; vast stores of materials had been collected; here and there episodes had been already put in, as it were, to clothe the bones of the skeleton with flesh. Scartazzini recalls the story of the first seven cantos of the Poem having been found in a secret cupboard in Dante's house by his nephew, after he had gone into exile, and having been sent on to him at the Castle of the Malaspinas. The story relates Dante's joy at regaining possession of the MS., and his saying that now he could go on with his work. Scartazzini doubts whether this manuscript consisted of the first seven Cantos, as he feels sure that, from Ciaccio's words, canto vi. was written after Dante's exile. He thinks rather that what was found was the precious outline plan and materials for the whole *Commedia*, and if one believes that, one can more easily believe the story, which would then only err as to small inaccuracies. Dr.

Karl Witte (*Dante-Forschungen*, Heilbronn, 1868, vol. i, pp. 134-140), after examining the conflicting opinions which assign to the *Inferno* a date varying from 1308 to 1318, admits that he must confess the impossibility of tracing at every step the date of a work which was only published after reiterated corrections and interpolations. The only place in which Dante gives the slightest hint as to the time of his conceiving his majestic poem is the passage (quoted above) at the end of *Vita Nuova*. We have therefore good grounds for concluding that he did not commence the work before 1300. Witte observes that the chronicler Dino Compagni, who wrote in 1312, makes no sort of allusion to the *Divina Commedia*. If he had known it, he would have found it full of passages to gall and sting the Florentines, which no doubt he would have used to good purpose. But there is besides another convincing argument. In *Inf.* vi, 68, Ciaccio predicts that within three years (*Infra tre soli*) of the expulsion of the *Neri* (which took place in the summer of 1300), the *Bianchi*, whom he calls *la parte selvaggia*, would also have a fall. Besides this it was well known that in 1310 there occurred a tremendous landslip in the Valley of the Adige, which tallies better with Dante's description in *Inf.* xii, 6, than that of the Slavino di Marco, which is said to have occurred in the ninth century. In *Inf.* xxi, 41, there is an allusion to Bonturo. Witte records in his commentary that this person was believed to be still alive in 1314. Still Witte admits that all the above instances quoted may possibly be open to some objections, and he will therefore cite another which to him appears quite con-

clusive. In *Inf.* xix, 79, Pope Nicholas III tells Dante that Boniface VIII, when he dies, will take his place at the mouth of the fiery oven, but will remain there for a shorter period than he himself has done, inasmuch as Clement V, the successor of Boniface, would, at his death, come down and take his place. Nicholas III died in August, 1280, and at the time of Dante's vision, he had been "roasting his feet" for nineteen years and eight months. In October 1303 Boniface died, and replaced Nicholas, who dropped into the bottom of the oven. But Clement V died in April, 1314, so that the period Boniface remained at the mouth of the oven was ten years and seven months, a shorter period than that of Nicholas. For Dante to speak so positively he must have known the date of Clement's death. Therefore Witte thinks 1314 was somewhere about the date of Dante's publication of the *Inferno*, for not only does Dante in his Latin Eclogues (written it was believed about 1319) speak of the *Inferno* as being completed, but, from that time forwards, other authors make frequent allusions to episodes in the *Inferno*. Ceccho d'Ascoli, who wrote his *Acerba* in Dante's life-time, mentions, often with abuse, nearly all the most stirring episodes in it.

About the same time Passera della Gherminella of Lucca, in a sonnet published by Crescimbeni (*Storia della volg. poesia*, vol. iii, p. 116) wrote :

"Già di prodezza non se' il vecchio Alardo. (*Inf.* xxviii, 78.)

Nè 'l comte Guido quel da Monte Feltro. (*Inf.* xxvii).

Nè Uguccio da Faggiuola, o Mainardo. (*Inf.* xxvii, 50).

Non val la vita tua un grosso di peltro. (*Inf.* i, 103).

Alle guagnele, che tu se' più codardo,
 Che non e un coniglio a petto un veltro. (*Inf.* i, 101)."

Cino da Pistoja, in one of his sonnets written while the lady of his love, Selvaggia (who died soon after 1313), was still alive, makes allusion to the episode in the *Divina Commedia* of Francesca da Rimini.

". . . . Dille, che un sol rimedio ha 'l tristo cuore,
 Che, secondo uman corso di natura,
 A nullo amato amar perdona Amore."

But by far the most important argument, in Witte's opinion, which supports the date proposed by him (1314) is one which can only be convincing to those who, like him, see in the *Veltro*, Can Grande della Scala. Witte observes that, although in quite recent times very ingenious treatises have been written, displaying great historical erudition, to prove that Uguccone della Faggiuola, or Pope Benedict XI, or some other personage, was intended by the *Veltro*, yet he believes that the opinion held by the early commentators, and which prevailed, with good reason he thinks, for three centuries and a half, is the right one, that by the *Veltro* Dante meant Can Grande. Up to A.D. 1308 Can Grande was far too young to have merited such a prediction as is made by Dante respecting the *Veltro*. Nor had he any opportunity till after the death, in October, 1311, of his brother Albuino, of concentrating on himself all the hopes of the Ghibellines. But as soon as Henry VII, in September, 1309, announced his intention of crossing the Alps, and fulfilled that intention in October, 1310, the Italian Ghibellines, who after such a long period of adversity had been reduced to so subject a condition as

for Dante to speak of *quell' umile Italia*, would then look with ardent hope upon the Luxembourg prince as their sole salvation (*salute*), and would think no more of any Municipal Dynasty. Only when the great Henry (*l' alto Arrigo*) died in August, 1313, Dante, seeing all the hopes of the Ghibelline party nipped in the bud, could well substitute for Henry, his Imperial Vicar, Can Grande della Scala, saying of him

“Di quell' umile Italia fia salute.”

Therefore let us consider that the *Inferno* was probably completed after the death of Henry VII, at some date between 1314 and 1319.

IV.—BEAUTIES OF THE INFERNO.

Although perhaps there are more beautiful passages in the *Purgatorio*, yet the *Inferno* contains episodes of unsurpassed splendour; and among them two which are admittedly among Dante's greatest masterpieces. These are the love-tale of Francesca da Rimini (canto v), and the tale of horror related by Count Ugolino (canto xxxiii). Including these two we may note: The description of nightfall (canto ii); the entrance gate of Hell, and the torments of the wretches who were rejected both by Heaven and Hell, with the comparison of them to autumn leaves (canto iii); the majestic advance of the four great Poets in *Limbo* to meet Virgil and Dante (canto iv); the whirlwind and the melancholy tale of the sorrows of Francesca da Rimini (canto v); the approach of the angel to open the Gates of the city of Dis (canto ix); the conversations, with Farinata degli Uberti, and in a lesser degree with Cavalcante dei Cavalcanti (canto x); the episode of Pier delle Vigne (canto xiii); the beautiful lines in which Dante's old master Brunetto Latini commends the promise of Dante's early life, and predicts his ill-treatment at the hands of his countrymen (canto xv); the fall of the Phlegethon into the Great Abyss, and the ascent of Geryon (canto xvi); the descent of Geryon compared to the wheeling of a falcon (canto xvii); Dante's severe censure of the Simoniacal Popes (canto xix); the story of Manto (canto xx); the description of the Arsenal at Venice

(canto xxi); the marvellous transformation of two robbers, the one from a human form into that of a serpent, and the other from a serpent into a human being (canto xxv); the shipwreck of Ulysses in the Southern Hemisphere (canto xxvi); the singularly beautiful episode of Guido da Montefeltro (canto xxvii); the allusion to the Casentino (canto xxx); the crowning horror of the *Inferno* in Count Ugolino's narrative of the starvation of himself and his family (canto xxxiii); the description of Lucifer (canto xxxiv).

No greater contrast can be conceived than the comparative serenity of Purgatory and the glorious radiance of Paradise on the one hand; and on the other the gloom and the horror which in Dante's downward journey increase at every step. All his senses seem to be assailed at once. Even his own better feelings in several regrettable instances appear to be in abeyance, and his violent repulse of Filippo Argenti, followed by the malicious complacency with which he sees him soused in the marsh, reaches a climax of inhumanity when he tears out by tufts the hair of Bocca degli Abati, and refuses to extend a pitying hand to wipe away, as he had promised to do, the frozen tears from the eyes of the traitor Fra Alberigo.

From the moment Dante enters the City of Dis he is continually encountering fiends. Well does he rejoice, in the *Purgatorio*, at the songs of angels in the place of the yells of demons (*Purg.* xii, 112-114).

“Ahi ! quanto sono diverse quelle foci
Dalle infernali ; chè quivi per canti
S' entra, e laggiù per lamenti feroci.”

DANTE'S ITINERARY THROUGH HELL.

Canto I.

- A. D. 1300.
7th April,
Thursday,
all night.
- Good Fri-
day, 8th
April sun-
rise.
- And all day.
1. Dante loses his way in a forest.
" Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura."
 2. He reaches the foot of a mountain.
" Ma poi che fui al piè d' un colle giunto."
 3. He encounters a leopard.
" Ed ecco, quasi al cominciar dell' erta,
Una lonza leggiara, etc."
 4. And a lion.
" Ma non sì, che paura non mi desse
La vista, che mi apparve, d' un leone.
 5. And a wolf.
" Ed una lupa, che di tutte brame
Semiava carca."
 6. He meets Virgil.
" Dinanzi agli occhi mi si fu offerto
Chi per lungo silenzio pareva fioco."
 7. He follows Virgil.
" Allor si mosse, ed io li tenni retro."

Canto II.

- 8th April,
nightfall.
8. Dante's hesitation being overcome, the poets commence their journey.
" Entrai per lo cammino alto e silvestro."

Canto III. Antinferno.

9. Dante reads the inscription above the Gate of Hell.
" Queste parole di colore oscuro
Vid' io scritte al sommo d' una porta."

10. Virgil leads him into Hell.
 "Mi mise dentro alle segrete cose."
 A.D. 1300.
 8th April,
 nightfall.
11. The negligent, despised both by heaven and hell.
 "Fama di loro il mondo esser non lassa,
 Misericordia e giustizia gli sdegna:
 Non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda e passa."
12. The Poets reach the Acheron, and encounter Charon.
 "Infino al fiume di parlar mi trassi.
 Ed ecco verso noi venir per nave
 Un vecchio bianco per antico pelo."

Canto IV. First Circle.

13. They enter the First Circle, *Limbo*.
 "Così si mise, e così mi fe' entrare
 Nel primo cerchio che l' abisso cigne."
 Good Fri-
 day, night.
14. They meet a noble band of poets.
 "Vidi quattro grand' ombre a noi venire ;
 Sembianza avevan nè trista nè lieta."
15. They reach a castle.
 "Venimmo al piè d' un nobile castello."
16. Within its walls they see the spirits of the great men of old times.
 "Mi fur mostrati gli spiriti magni,
 Che del vederli in me stesso n' esalto."
17. Virgil leads Dante away, and they wend their way to a region of tempest and darkness.
 "Per altra via mi mena il savio duca,
 Fuor della queta, nell' aura che trema;
 E vengo in parte, ove non è che luca."

Canto V. Second Circle.

18. They descend into the Second Circle and see the punishment of those who sinned against Chastity.
 "Così discesi del cerchio primaio
 Giù nel secondo."

27. From this rivulet is formed the Stygian marsh, A. D. 1300.
8th April,
midnight.
submerged in which are the shades of the Angry
and the Slothful or Sullen

“Una palude fa, che ha nome Stige,
Questo tristo ruscel, quando è disceso
Al piè delle maligne piaggie grige.”

28. They arrive at the foot of a tower.
“Venimmo appiè d' una torre al dassezzo.”

9th April,
Easter Eve,
but still
night.

Canto VIII. On the Styx.

29. They see a cresset from the tower answered by a
signal in the far distance.

“assai prima
Che noi fussimo al piè dell' alta torre,
Gli occhi nostri n' andar suso alla cima,
Per due fiammette che i' vedemmo porre.”

30. The signals cause the ferryman, Phlegyas, to come
for them in his boat.

“. . . io vidi una nave piccioletta
Venir per l' acqua verso noi.”

31. They cross the marsh in the boat.

“Tosto che il duca ed io nel legno fui,
Secando se ne va l' antica prora.”

32. They are intercepted by one covered with mud,
who is Filippo Argenti.

“Mentre noi corravam la morta gora,
Dinanzi mi si fece un pien di fango.”

33. Virgil announces their approach to the City of Dis.

“Omai, figliuolo,
S' appressa la città che ha nome Dite.”

34. They encounter a countless host of fiends at the
gates of the city

“Io vidi più di mille in sulle porte
Da' ciel piovuti.”

A.D. 1300.
Easter Eve,
early hours
of darkness
before
morning.

35. The Fiends close the gates in Virgil's face.
" Chiuser le porte que' nostri avversari
Nel petto al mio signor."

Canto IX. City of Dis.

36. Appearance of the Furies.
" l' occhio m' avea tutto tratto
Ver l' alta torre alla cima rovente,
Dove in un punto furon dritte ratto
Tre furie infernal di sangue tinte."
37. They hear the crash of thunder announcing the
approach of the Messenger of God.
" E già venia su per le torbid' onde
Un fracasso d' un suon pien di spavento."
38. The Messenger opens the gate.
" Venne alla porta, e con una verghetta
L' aperse."
39. The poets approach the city and enter therein.
" E noi movemmo i piedi in ver la terra,
Dentro v' entrammo senza alcuna guerra."

Canto X. Sixth Circle.

40. They proceed along a narrow path between the
city walls and the fiery tombs, in which are
tormented the Heresiarchs.
" Ora sen va per un secreto calle
Tra il muro della terra e li martìri
Lo mio Maestro, ed io dopo le spalle."
41. Appearance of Farinata.
" Vedi là Farinata che s' è dritto."
42. Farinata's haughty demeanour.
" Com' io al piè della sua tomba fui,
Guardommi in poco, e poi quasi sdegnoso
Mi dimandò: 'Chi fur li maggior tui?'"

43. Cavalcante Cavalcanti appears and enquires after his son the poet Guido Cavalcanti. A.D. 1300.
9th April,
Easter Eve,
early hours
of darkness
before
morning.
- “Allor surse alla vista scoperchiata
Un ombra lungo questa infino al mento :
- ‘Mio figlio ov’ è, e perchè non è teco?’”
44. They quit the wall and strike right across the circle preparatory to descending into the Seventh Circle.
- “Lasciammo il muro, e gimmo in ver lo mezzo.”

Canto XI.

45. To avoid a foul odour they take refuge behind the tomb of Anastasius.
- “E quivi, per l’orribile soperchio
Del puzzo,
Ci raccostammo dietro ad un coperchio
D’un grande avello.”
46. Virgil indicates the hour by describing certain movements in the skies, which in their subterranean journey are hid from the Poets’ view. 9th April,
about 4 a.m.
Easter Eve.
- “i Pesci guizzan su per l’orizzonta,
E il Carro tutto sopra il Coro giace.”

Canto XII. Seventh Circle.

47. They encounter the Minotaur. between
4 a.m. and
6 a.m.
- “E in su la punta della rotta lacca
L’infamia di Creti era distesa.”

First Round of Seventh Circle.

48. They see the river of blood in which are the Violent against their Neighbour.
- “Ma ficca gli occhi a valle ; che s’ approccia
La riviera del sangue.”

A.D. 1300.
9th April,
Easter Eve,
between
4 a.m. and
6 a.m.

49. Escorted by the Centaur Nessus they skirt the edge of the river of boiling blood.

“Noi ci movemmo colla scorta fida
Lungo la proda del bollor vermiglio.”

50. They cross the river by a ford, from the First to the Second Round.

“Così a più a più si faceva basso
Quel sangue sì, che cocea pur li piedi:
E quivi fu del fosso il nostro passo.”

Canto XIII. Second Round of Seventh Circle.

51. The Forest of the Suicides.

“ . . . noi ci mettemmo per un bosco,
Che da nessun sentiero era segnato.”

52. Among the Suicides converted into trees they converse with Pier delle Vigne.

“Io son colui, che tenni ambo le chiavi
Del cor di Federico.”

Canto XIV.

53. They reach the Third Round of Seventh Circle in which are punished under a rain of Fire:—

The Violent against God—Blasphemers.
The Violent against Nature.
The Violent against Art—Usurers.

“Indi venimmo al fine, ove si parte
Lo secondo giron dal terzo.”

54. They reach the river Phlegethon.

“divenimmo là ove spiccia
Fuor della selva un picciol fiumicello,
Lo cui rossore ancor mi raccapriccia.”

55. The rivers of Hell flow down from the image of a Great Old Man, “the Colossus of Ida,” who is immured in a cavern under Mount Ida in Crete.

“ In mezzo mar siede un paese guasto,
 che s' appella Creta,

 Una montagna v' è,
 , che si chiamò Ida ;

 Dentro dal monte sta dritto un gran veglio,

 Ciascuna parte è rotta
 D' una fessura che lagrime goccia,
 Le quali accolte foran quella grotta.
 Lor corso in questa valle si diroccia :
 Fanno Acheronte, Stige e Flegetonta.”

A.D. 1300.
 9th April,
 Easter Eve
 between
 4 a.m. and
 6 a.m.

56. Virgil tells Dante that the hardened margins of the Phlegethon are alone safe to walk upon in that region of fire.

“ Li margini fan via, che non son arsi.”

Canto XV.

57. Dante meets his old teacher Brunetto Latini.

“ Fui conosciuto da un, che mi prese
 Per lo lembo

 E chinando la mano alla sua faccia,
 Risposi : ‘ Siete voi qui, ser Brunetto ? ’”

58. Brunetto foretells Dante's renown, which he had foreseen when he drew his horoscope.

“ Se tu segui tua stella,
 Non puoi fallire al glorioso porto,
 Se ben m' accorsi nella vita bella.”

59. But he also foretells the ill-treatment Dante will receive from his countrymen.

“ Ma quell' ingrato popolo maligno,

 Ti si farà, per tuo ben far, nimico.”

e

65. Dante and Virgil mount upon the back of Geryon, who wheels downwards in a spiral descent and sets them at the foot of the lofty cliffs that encircle *Malebolge*.

A.D. 1300.
9th April,
Easter Eve,
between
4 a.m. and
6 a.m.

“ Io m’ assettai in su quelle spallacce :

• • • • •
Ella sen va nuotando lenta lenta ;
Rota e discende,

• • • • •
Così ne pose al fondo Gerione
A piè a piè della stagliata rocca.”

Canto XVIII.

Eighth Circle called Malebolge. Bolgia I.

66. On dismounting from the back of Geryon, they look down into the first *Bolgia*, and see the shades of seducers scourged by demons.

“ In questo loco, dalla schiena scossi
Di Gerion, trovammoci:

• • • • •
Alla man destra vidi nuova pieta ;
Nuovi tormenti e nuovi frustatori,
Di che la prima bolgia era repleta.”

67. Venedico Caccianimico of Bologna.

“ Venedico se’ tu Caccianimico ;
Ma che ti mena a sì pungenti salse ?”

68. They come to the first of the bridgeways that cross the *Bolge*, which they ascend.

“ Poscia con pochi passi divenimmo,
Là dove un scoglio della ripa uscia.
Assai leggieramente quel salimmo.”

69. They pass over the rampart dividing the First *Bolgia* from the Second, ascend the Second Bridgeway and look down into the Second

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Easter Eve,
between
4 a.m. and
6 a.m.

Bolgia, where they see among the flatterers immersed in filth the shade of Alessio Interminei of Lucca.

“Vidi gente attuffata in uno sterco,

Vidi un col capo sì di merda lordo,
Che non pareva s' era laico o chercò.

‘ se ben ricordo,

Già t' ho veduto coi capelli asciutti,
E sei Alessio Interminei da Lucca.”

Canto XIX. Third Bolgia of Eighth Circle.

70. They cross the Third Bridgeway and descend on to the Fourth Rampart to get a nearer view of the Third Bolgia, in which are tormented the Simoniacal Popes. Virgil carries Dante down into the *Bolgia*.

“Allor venimmo sull' argine quarto ;
Volgemmo, e discendemmo a mano stanca
Laggiù nel fondo foracchiato ed arto.”

71. Dante converses with Pope Nicholas III.

“Sappi ch' io fui vestito del gran manto :
E veramente fui figliuol dell' orsa,
Cupido sì, per avanzar gli orsatti,
Che su l' avere, e qui me misi in borsa.”

72. Dante sternly reproves greed of gain.

“Fatto v' avete Dio d' oro e d' argento :
E che altro è da voi all' idolatre,
Se non ch' egli uno, e voi n' orate cento ?”

73. Virgil takes Dante again in his arms, carries him up the side of the precipice, and sets him down in the centre of the next bridge from which he can see down into the Fourth *Bolgia*.

“ . . . poi che tutto su mi s' ebbe al petto,
Rimontò per la via onde discese ;

Si mi porto sopra il colmo dell' arco,
Che dal quarto al quinto argine è tragetto.”

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9th April,
Easter Eve,
between
4 a.m. and
6 a.m.

Canto XX. Fourth Bolgia of Eighth Circle.

74. They witness the penalty of the Diviners.

“ . . . vidi gente . . .
Venir tacendo e lagrimando, . . .

Mirabilmente apparve esser travolto
Ciascun tral mento el principio del casso :
Chè dalle reni era tornato il volto.”

75. Virgil summons Dante to leave the Fourth *Bolgia*. Daybreak in the world,

“ Ma viene omai, chè già tiene il confine
D' amendue gli emisperi, e tocca l' onda
Sotto Sibilia, Caino e le spine,
E pur iernotte fu la luna tonda.”

about
6.15 a.m.

Canto XXI. Fifth Bolgia of Eighth Circle.

76. They look down from the centre of the fifth bridge into the Fifth *Bolgia* and see a flood of boiling pitch.

“ . . . non per foco, ma per divina arte
Bollia laggiuso una pegola spessa
Che inviscava la ripa da ogni parte.”

9th April,
Easter Eve,
between 6
and 7 a.m.

77. The black-winged demon.

“ . . . vidi dietro a noi un diavol nero
Correndo su per lo scoglio venire.

Con l' ale aperte, e sopra il piè leggiero.”

78. On seeing a large troop of hostile demons armed with prongs, Virgil makes Dante hide behind a

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9th April,
Easter Eve,
between 6
and 7 a.m.

rock, crosses the bridge and meets the demons
on the Sixth Rampart.

“ Poscia passò di là dal co del ponte,
. . . . giunse in su la ripa sesta.”

79. Virgil having partly pacified the demons, summons
Dante to come forth from his hiding-place.

“ E il Duca mio a me: ‘ O tu, che siedì
Tra gli scheggiòn del ponte quatto quatto,
Sicuramente omai a me tu riedi.’
Perch’ io mi mossi, ed a lui venni ratto.”

Easter Eve, 80. The chief demon, Malacoda, tells them that 1266
7 a.m. years ago, on Good Friday, five hours later than
the time in which their conversation is taking
place, the bridge from the Sixth to the Seventh
Rampart fell into ruins. He means at the
moment of the death of Jesus Christ.

[This is considered to be the most important
time-reference in the whole of the *Divina Com-
media.*]

“ E se l’ andare avanti pur vi piace,
Andatevene su per questa grotta ;
Presso è un altro scoglio che via face.
Ier, più oltre cinqu’ ore che quest’ otta,
Mille dugento con sessanta sei
Anni compìè, che qui la via fu rotta.”

81. Malacoda promises the safe escort of ten demons
to show the Poets the way, and they set out
along the Sixth Rampart.

“ ‘ Io mando verso là di questi miei
A riguardar
Gite con lor, ch’ ei non saranno rei.’
.
Per l’ argine sinistro volta dienno.”

Canto XXII. Fifth Bolgia of Eighth Circle.

82. Dante and Virgil pass along the shore of the flood of pitch, in which are tormented the Barrators or Traffickers in public offices.

A.D. 1300.
9th April,
Easter Eve,
7 a.m.

“Noi andavam con li dieci dimoni :
Ahi fiera compagnia !

Pure alla pegola era la mia intesa,

E della gente ch' entro v' era incesa.”

Canto XXIII. The Sixth Bolgia of the Eighth Circle.

83. Dante confides to Virgil his terror of being pursued by the *Malebranche*.

Easter Eve,
7 a.m. and
in the
forenoon.

“ i' ho pavento

Di Malebranche : noi gli avem già dietro :”

84. Seeing the Fiends approaching, Virgil catches up Dante, and, by supernatural power, slips down the side of the precipice into the Sixth *Bolgia*, into which *Malebranche* may not follow them.

“ . . . io gli vidi venir con l' ali tese,

Non molto lungi, per volerne prendere.

Lo Duca mio di subito mi prese,

E giù dal colle della ripa dura

Supin si diede alla pendente roccia,

Che l' un dei lati all' altra bolgia tura.”

85. The Poets see the Hypocrites marching slowly along, enveloped in cloaks and cowls of lead, gilt on the outside.

“ O Tosco, ch' al collegio

Degl' ipocriti tristi se' venuto,

Le cappe rance

Son di piombo sì grosse, che li pesi

Fan così cigolar le lor bilance.”

A.D. 1300.
9th April,
Easter Eve,
7 a.m. and
in the
forenoon.

86. On finding out how false Malacoda's information had been about the existence of a means of exit from the *Bolgia*, Virgil hastens away in great wrath, followed by Dante.

" Appresso il Duca a gran passi sen g),
Turbato un poco d' ira nel sembiante :
Ond' io dagl' incarcati mi parti'
Dietro alle poste delle care piante."

Canto XXIV.

The Seventh Bolgia of the Eighth Circle.

87. On reaching the ruins of the bridge that used to cross the Sixth *Bolgia*, Virgil lifts Dante up some crags, and they clamber up till they attain the rampart that leads to the Seventh *Bolgia*.

" . . . come noi venimmo al guasto ponte,
Lo Duca a me si volse con quel piglio
Dolce
. e diedemi di piglio.
.
levando me su ver la cima
D' un ronchion."

88. They reach the crest of the bridge that spans the Seventh *Bolgia* in which are the Robbers.

" Non so che disse, ancor che sopra il dosso
Fossi dell' arco già che varca quivi."

89. They descend on to the Eighth Rampart, and see the *Bolgia* swarming with serpents.

" Noi discendemmo il ponte dalla testa,
Dove si giunge coll' ottava ripa,
E poi mi fu la bolgia manifesta :
E vidivi entro terribile stipa
Di serpenti."

Canto XXV.

90. The blasphemy of Vanni Fucci avenged by the serpents.

A. D. 1300.
9th April,
Easter Eve,
forenoon.

“ il ladro

Le mani alzò con ambedue le fiche,

Gridando : ‘ Togli, Iddio, chè a te le squadro.’

Da indi in qua mi fur le serpi amiche,

Perch’ una gli s’ avvolse allora al collo,

Ed un’ altra alle braccia, e rilegollo.”

91. The Poets see the spirits of the Seventh *Bolgia*, whom he styles “the Seventh lot of rubbish,” continually interchanging forms with serpents.

“ . . . vid’ io la settima zavorra

Mutare e trasmutare.”

Canto XXVI. Eighth Bolgia of the Eighth Circle.

92. The Poets remount the bridge, and ascend the bridge that overhangs the Eighth *Bolgia* wherein are Fraudulent Counsellors, who, enwrapped in flames, resemble fireflies.

“ Noi ci partimmo, e su per le scalee

Rimontò il Duca mio, e trasse mee.

Quante il villan,

Vede lucciole giù per la vallea,

Di tante fiamme tutta risplendea

L’ ottava bolgia.”

93. Dante is told that a certain double-pointed flame contains the shades of Ulysses and Diomed.

“ Là entro si martira

Ulisse e Diomede, e così insieme

Alla vendetta vanno come all’ ira.”

Canto XXVII. Eighth Bolgia (continued).

A.D. 1300.
9th April,
Easter Eve,
forenoon.

94. Guido da Montefeltro.

“ Romagna tua non è, e non fu mai,
Senza guerra ne cor de' suoi tiranni ;
Ma 'n palese nessuna or vi lasciai.”

95. They quit the Eighth *Bolgia*, ascending the bridge from which they look down into the Ninth, wherein are the Disseminators of Discord.

“ Noi passammo oltre, ed io e il Duca mio,
Su per lo scoglio infino in sull' altr' arco
Che copre il fosso, in che si paga il fio
A quei che scommettendo acquistan carico.”

Canto XXVIII. Ninth Bolgia of Eighth Circle.

96. They see the Disseminators of Discord being perpetually slashed by the sword of a Demon.

“ E tutti . . . che tu vedi qui,
Seminator di scandalo e di scisma
Fur vivi ; e però son fessi così.”

Canto XXIX. Tenth Bolgia of Eighth Circle.

9th April,
Easter Eve,
1 p.m.

97. Virgil tells Dante, as they are leaving the Ninth *Bolgia*, that the moon is now beneath their feet, *i.e.* early in the afternoon about 1 p.m.

“ . . . già la luna è sotto i nostri piedi :
Lo tempo è poco omai che n' è concesso,
Ed altro è da veder che tu non vedi.”

98. They cross the last bridge to the lower level of the last rampart. There they see the Falsifiers of all kinds, tormented by loathsome disease.

“ Noi discendemmo in sull' ultima riva
Dell lungo scoglio, . . .

Giù ver lo fondo, là've la ministra

Dell' alto Sire, infallibil giustizia,
 Punisce i falsator che qui registra.

 Passo passo andavam senza sermone,
 Guardando ed ascoltando gli ammalati."

A.D. 1300.
 9th April,
 Easter Eve,
 1 p.m.

Canto XXX. Conclusion of Malebolge.

99. The Coiner, Maestro Adamo, recalls the cool rills of the hills in the Casentino, where he used to dwell.

" Li ruscelletti, che dei verdi colli
 Del Casentin discendon giuso in Arno,
 Facendo i lor canali freddi e molli,
 Sempre mi stanno innanzi, e non indarno ;
 Chè l' imagine lor vie più m' asciuga,
 Che il male ond' io nell volto mi discarno."

Canto XXXI. The verge of the Pit.

100. The Poets turn their back on *Malebolge*, and cross the intermediate plateau between it and the *Pozzo*.

" Noi demmo il dosso al misero vallone
 Su per la ripa che il cinge dintorno,
 Attraversando"

101. On the verge of the *Pozzo* they encounter the Giants, whom Dante mistakes for towers.

" Poco portai in là volta la testa,
 Che mi parve veder molte alte torri."

102. Virgil corrects the mistake.

" Però che tu trascorri
 Per le tenebre troppo dalla lungi,
 Avvien che poi nel 'maginare aborri.
"

Sappi che non son torri, ma giganti,
 E son nel pozzo intorno dalla ripa
 Dall' umbilico in giuso tutti e quanti."

A.D. 1300.
9th April,
Easter Eve,
1 p.m.

103. They approach Antaeus.

“ Noi procedemmo più avanti allotta,
E venimmo ad Anteo.”

104. At Virgil's request Antaeus takes the Poets up in his hands, and lifts them from the verge of the Pit down upon the frozen surface of Cocytus.

“ quegli in fretta
Le man distese, e prese il Duca mio,
.
. lievemente al fondo, che divora
Lucifero con Giuda, ci sposò.”

Canto XXXII. The Ninth Circle. Cocytus.

9th April,
Easter Eve,
in the
afternoon.

105. They are now upon the first Ring of the Ninth Circle, called *Caina*, in which are frozen Traitors to Kindred.

“ Come noi fummo giù nel pozzo scuro
.
. mi volsi, e vidimi davante
E sotto i piedi un lago, che per gelo
Avea di vetro e non d' acqua semblante.”

106. One of the shades, speaking of two others, says that there are none worse in all *Caina*.

“ Se vuoi saper chi son cotesti due,
.
D' un corpo uscìro : e tutta la Caina
Potrai cercare, e non troverai ombra
Degna più d' esser fitta in gelatina.”

107. Further on, they pass into *Antenora*, the second Ring, wherein are Traitors to their country.
Bocca degli Abati.

“ Or tu chi se', che vai per l' Antenora
Percotendo . . . altrui le gote ?”

108. In *Antenora* they find Count Ugolino frozen

close up to his enemy Archbishop Ruggieri, whose head he is gnawing.

“ Noi eravam partiti già da ello,
Ch' io vidi due ghiacciati in una buca.”

A.D. 1300.
9th April,
Easter Eve,
in the
afternoon.

Canto XXXIII.

Antenora first, and then Tolomea.

109. Count Ugolino tells the story of his death by starvation.

“ Che
Fidandomi di lui, io fossi preso
E poscia morto, dir non è mestieri.
Però quel che non puoi avere inteso,
Ciò è come la morte mia fu cruda,
Udirai.”

110. After listening to Ugolino's heart-rending tale, the Poets pass on into *Tolomea*, the third Ring, the place of torment for betrayers of Guests.

“ Noi passamm' oltre, là 've la gelata
Ravidamente un' altra gente fascia,

Cotal vantaggio ha questa Tolomea
Che spesse volte l' anima ci cade
Innanzi ch' Atropòs mossa le dea.”

Canto XXXIV.

The Fourth Ring. The Centre of the Earth.

111. They now reach the last ring of the Ninth Circle called *Giudecca* after Judas Iscariot, who is here tormented by Lucifer himself. Here are the souls of Traitors to Benefactors.

“ Già era (e con paura il metto in metro)
Là, dove l' ombre eran tutte coperte,
E trasparean come festuca in vetro.”

A. D. 1300.
9th April,
Easter Eve,
in the
afternoon.

112. Virgil discloses Lucifer to Dante.

“Quando noi fummo fatti tanto avante,
Ch’ al mio Maestro piacque di mostrarmi
La creatura ch’ ebbe il bel sembiante,
Dinanzi mi si tolse, e fe’ restarmi,
‘Ecco Dite,’ dicendo.”

113. Having now to pass out of Hell, Dante at Virgil’s command clasps him round the neck, and they clamber down Lucifer’s hairy sides.

“Com’ a lui piacque, il collo gli avvinghiai ;
E, quando l’ ale furo aperte assai,
Appigliò sè alle vellute coste :
Di vello in vello giù discese poscia.”

114. When Virgil, with Dante clinging to him, has got down to Lucifer’s hip, he turns himself upside down, but to Dante’s wonder, is seen to go upwards instead of down.

“Quando noi fummo là dove la coscia
Si volge appunto in sul grosso dell’ anche,
Lo Duca
Volse la testa ov’ egli avea le zanche.”

115. With difficulty overcoming the excess of attraction supposed to exist in the centre of the earth, Virgil issues forth from the spherical mass of rocks which form the base of Giudecca, and the Poets sit down to rest.

“Poi uscì fuor per lo foro d’ un sasso,
E pose me in sull’ orlo a sedere.”

Easter Eve,
7.30 morn-
ing over
again.

116. The Poets are now in the Southern Hemisphere, and it is morning in place of the evening they had only just left. [We have chosen the view which puts the clock back again, and it is there-

forefore 7.30 over again on the morning of A.D. 1300.
Easter Eve.] 9th April,
Easter Eve,
7.30 morn-
ing over
again.

“ ‘ Levati su,’ disse il Maestro, “ ‘ in piede :
La via è lunga, e il cammino è malvagio,
E già il sole a mezza terza riede.’ ”

117. They re-ascend to the surface of the earth in the opposite hemisphere to that in which they descended, by a dark spiral path, extending as far from Satan as he does from the surface from which they descended.

“ Loco è laggiù da Belzebù remoto
Tanto, quanto la tomba si distende,

.
Lo Duca ed io per quel cammino ascoso
Entrammo a ritornar nel chiaro mondo.”

118. They complete their ascent, and issue forth into the Southern Hemisphere; “ again to see the stars.” 10th April,
Easter Day,
morning
about 5 a.m.

“ Salimmo suso
Tanto che
. per un pertugio tondo,
. uscimmo a riveder le stelle.”

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES

Dante.	Popes, Emperors and Kings.	Other Personages mentioned in the <i>Divina Commedia</i> .
<p>1265. Dante Alighieri, born at Florence in May or June, baptized in San Giovanni (<i>Par.</i> xxv, 8.)</p>	<p>1216 to 1272. Henry III (England).</p> <p>1226 to 1270. Louis IX (France).</p> <p>1249 to 1285. Alexander III (Scotland).</p> <p>1250. The Emperor Frederick II dies at Finzuola in Apulia.</p> <p>1250. Interregnum till 1312.</p> <p>1250. Thibault II, King of Navarre, distinguished French Poet.</p> <p>1254. Pope Alexander IV (Rainaldo de' Conti di Segni ed Anagni).</p> <p>1257. Richard, Duke of Cornwall elected King of Germany by one faction.</p> <p>Alfonso the Wise, King of Castille, elected King of Germany by another faction. Important republics still exercised their right in the election of the Roman Emperor.</p> <p>1265. Pope Clement IV (Guy Foulquois de St. Gilles sur Rhone).</p>	<p>1249. Pier delle Vigne (<i>de Vineis</i>) Chancellor of Frederick II dies. (<i>Inf.</i> xiii.)</p> <p>1250. Jacopo da Lentino surnamed <i>Il Notajo</i>, fl. (<i>Purg.</i> xxiv).</p> <p>1258. Manfred, son of Frederick II, crowned King of Sicily at Palermo.</p> <p>1259. Manfred excommunicated.</p> <p>1264. Farinata Degli Uberti dies.</p> <p>1266. Beatrice born between May and June (<i>Vit. N.</i> § ii.)</p>

OF THE AGE OF DANTE.

Florence.	Italy and Sicily.	Europe.
<p>1250. Defeat of the Ghibellines at Figline by the fugitive Guelphs from Florence.</p>	<p>1250. Guido delle Colonne fl. Guido Bonatti, astronomer, fl.</p>	<p>1253 Sorbonne founded at Paris.</p>
<p>1251. The Guelphs re-enter the City, create new municipal offices, and change the municipal arms from a white lily on a red field, for a red lily on a white field (<i>Par.</i> xvi, 152.)</p>	<p>1260. Battle of Montaperti. The Ghibelline forces under Provenzano Salvani (<i>Purg.</i> xi.) totally defeat the Guelphs, expel them from Florence, and then take possession of that city in the name of King Manfred.</p>	
<p>About this time the Palazzo del Podestà (<i>Barcello</i>) built, it is supposed, by the architect Lapo, master of Arnolfo di Cambio. All the towers of the nobility reduced to a height of 50 <i>braccia</i> (ells).</p>	<p>Congress of Empoli. Farinata Degli Uberti prevents the destruction of Florence, meditated by the victorious Ghibellines (<i>Inf.</i> x.)</p>	<p>1262. Barons' wars in England.</p>
<p>1252. The first gold florins coined, eight to an ounce, stamped on one side with the lily, on the other with St. John the Baptist.</p>	<p>1266. Battle of Benevento. Defeat and death of Manfred (<i>Purg.</i> iii) by Charles of Anjou, who becomes King of Apulia and Sicily.</p>	<p>1263. Balliol College, Oxford, founded.</p>
<p>1258. The Ghibellines expelled from Florence. The palaces of the Uberti razed to the ground.</p>		<p>1264. Battle of Lewes. 1264. Merton College, Oxford, founded.</p>
<p>1266. The Ghibellines again expelled from Florence. Re-ascendency of the Guelphs.</p>		<p>1265. Montfort's Parliament. 1265. Battle of Evesham. Simon de Montfort defeated and slain. 1265. Duns Scotus born.</p>

Dante.	Popes, Emperors and Kings.	Other Personages mentioned in the <i>Divina Commedia</i> .
<p>1274. First meeting with Beatrice (<i>Purg.</i> xxx, 41, 42).</p>	<p>1270 to 1285. Philippe III (<i>le Hardi</i>) King of France (<i>Purg.</i> vii, 103-106).</p>	<p>1270. Guido Novello, Lord of Polenta, obtains the sovereignty of Ravenna (<i>Inf.</i> xxvii, 41).</p>
	<p>1271. Pope Gregory X (Tebaldo Visconti da Piacenza).</p>	
	<p>1272. Edward I (England).</p>	
	<p>1273. Rudolph of Hapsburg, elected Emperor (<i>Purg.</i> vii, 91-96) died in 1291.</p>	
		<p>1274. St. Thomas Aquinas poisoned by order of Charles of Anjou (<i>Purg.</i> xx, 70). St. Bonaventura dies.</p>
	<p>1276. Pope Innocent V (Pietro Tarantasia of Savoy, the first Pope of the Order of the <i>Pre-dicatori</i>).</p>	<p>1275. Branca d'Oria treacherously kills Michel Zanche, and takes his place as Judge of Logodoro, in Sardinia (<i>Inf.</i> xxii and xxxii).</p>
	<p>1276. Pope Adrian V (Ottohuono Fieschi, de' Conti di Lavagna) (<i>Purg.</i> xix).</p>	<p>1276. Guido Guinicelli, of Bologna (called by Dante in <i>Vulg. Elog.</i> i, 15, <i>Maximus Guido</i>) dies (<i>Purg.</i> xxvi).</p>
	<p>1276. Pope John XXI (XX), (Pietro da Lisbona).</p>	<p>1276. Giotto di Bondone born at Colle di Vespignano. Some give the date 1266, others 1270.</p>
<p>1277. Pope Nicholas III (Gian Gaetano Orsini of Rome), introduces nepotism (<i>Inf.</i> xix).</p>		
<p>1278. Ottocar, King of Bohemia, dies (<i>Purg.</i> vii and <i>Par.</i> xix).</p>		

Florence.	Italy and Sicily.	Europe.
<p>1266. Roderigo degli Andalò, and Catalano dei Malavolti, Frati Gaudenti, are named joint Podestàs of Florence. Every man at Florence obliged to belong to one of the seven "Arts."</p>	<p>1267. All Tuscany except Pisa and Lucca becomes Guelph. Conradin, grandson of Frederick II, at the invitation of the adherents of Manfred, passes into Italy.</p>	<p>1266. Roger Bacon proposes to Pope Clement IV a reform in the calendar.</p>
<p>1267. By a treaty of peace the Ghibellines readmitted. King Charles of Anjou sends to the Guelphs of Florence a reinforcement of 800 French knights under Guy de Montfort. (<i>Inf.</i> xii.) The Ghibellines again exiled. Florentines confer Signory of the City upon King Charles for ten years. He sends a Vicar to rule over it, with whom are associated ten <i>Buonuomini</i>.</p>	<p>1268. Battle of Tagliacozzo. Conradin defeated and taken prisoner by Charles of Anjou, and afterwards beheaded at Naples. (<i>Purg.</i> xx, 69.)</p>	<p>1269. Oxford. St. Edmund Hall founded, but some say 1226. Roger Bacon forbidden to teach at Oxford, and confined to his monastery.</p>
<p>1269. Great inundation at Florence. Two bridges carried away.</p>	<p>1269. The Sienese and other Ghibellines under Provenzano Salvani, and Count Guido Novello defeated by the Florentine Guelphs near Colle in the Valdelsa. (<i>Purg.</i> xiii, 115.)</p>	<p>1270. William of Occam born about this time. 1270. Louis IX (<i>Saint Louis</i>) dies of the plague at Tunis during the last crusade.</p>
<p>1273. Pope Gregory X, King Charles, and the Emperor Baldwin, of Constantinople, visit Florence and make peace between the Guelphs and Ghibellines.</p>	<p>1270. Cino da Pistoja (Guittoncino dei Sini-baldi), Jurist and Poet, born. Dante addressed to him his Epistle IV, entitled <i>Exulanti Pistoriensi</i>.</p>	<p>1271. Marco Polo, the Venetian, sets out from Acre on his travels into Tartary.</p>
<p>1278. Cardinal Latino Frangipani, the Legate of Nicholas III, comes to Florence to re-arrange peace between the Guelphs and Ghibellines.</p>	<p>1272. Guy de Montfort assassinates Henry, son of Richard of Cornwall, in a church at Viterbo (<i>Inf.</i> xii).</p>	<p>1278. Pier de la Brosse, Secretary of Philippe le Hardi, King of France, put to death by reason of malignant calumny. (<i>Purg.</i> vi, 19).</p>
<p>1278. Niccola Pisano dies.</p>	<p>1278. Niccola Pisano dies.</p>	

Dante.	Popes, Emperors and Kings.	Other Personages mentioned in the <i>Divina Commedia</i> .
<p>1283. Dante sees Beatrice for the second time, and writes his first sonnet.</p>	<p>1281. The papal chair vacant 6 months. Charles of Naples procures the election of his creature, Simon de Brie de Montpilloi, in Champagne, who succeeds as Pope Martin IV (<i>Purg.</i> xxiv).</p> <p>1282. Peter of Aragon becomes King of Sicily.</p> <p>1285. Philippe IV (<i>le Bel</i>), King of France (<i>Purg.</i> vii and xxxii, and <i>Par.</i> xix).</p> <p>1285. Pope Honorius IV (Jacopo Savelli, of Rome).</p>	<p>1279. Albertus Magnus dies. He was master of St. Thomas Aquinas (<i>Par.</i> x).</p> <p>1281. Maestro Adamo, of Brescia, burnt for coining false florins (<i>Inf.</i> xxx).</p> <p>1282. The city of Faenza betrayed by Tribaldello.</p>
<p>1289. Dante takes part in the battle of Campaldino when 24 years of age.</p>	<p>1288. Pope Nicholas IV (Girolamo Mascio, of Alessiano, near Ascoli).</p>	<p>1288. Count Ugolino della Gherardesca, with two sons and two grandsons, starved to death at Pisa (<i>Inf.</i> xxxiii).</p>
<p>1289. Dante at the siege of Caprona (<i>Inf.</i> xxi).</p>	<p>1290. Charles Martel crowned King of Hungary.</p>	<p>1289. Buonconte (son of Guido) da Montefeltro slain at the battle of Campaldino (<i>Purg.</i> v, 88), in which battle Dante is a combatant.</p>
<p>1290. Death of Beatrice (<i>Purg.</i> xxxii).</p>	<p>1292. Papal Interregnum for two years and three months.</p>	<p>1289. Francesca da Rimini murdered by her husband Gianciotto (<i>Inf.</i> v, 97). Some give the date 1285.</p>
<p>1291. Dante begins to write the <i>Vita Nuova</i>, and perhaps contemplates the <i>Commedia</i>.</p>	<p>1292. Adolphus of Nassau succeeds Rudolph of Hapsburg as King of Germany.</p>	<p>1290. Michael Scott dies (<i>Inf.</i> xx, 116).</p>
<p>1291. He marries Gemma de' Donati.</p> <p>1294. Dante meets Charles Martel at Florence (<i>Par.</i> viii).</p>		

Florence.	Italy and Sicily.	Europe.
<p>1278. First stone laid of the Dominican Church of Sta. Maria Novella. Architects Fra Ristoro da Campi, Fra Sisto, and Fra Giovanni. It took 70 years to build.</p>	<p>1278. Giovanni Pisano commences building the Camposanto of Pisa.</p>	
<p>1278. A parley takes place between the Guelphs and Ghibellines in the Piazza Vecchia di Sta. Maria Novella, and a <i>modus vivendi</i> arranged.</p>	<p>1279. John of Procida foments discontent of French sway in Sicily.</p>	
<p>1285. The <i>Comune</i> of Florence decrees an enlargement of the City (<i>Par.</i> xvi, 46, et seq.)</p>	<p>1281. About this time the chronicler Ricordano Malespini is supposed to have died.</p>	
<p>1288. Arnolfo di Lapo or di Cambio lives about this time.</p>	<p>1281. Charles of Naples punishes disaffection in Sicily by cruel oppression.</p>	
<p>1289. Folco Portinari, the father (according to Boccaccio) of the Beatrice beloved by Dante, dies.</p>	<p>1282. Forlì besieged by French army, which Guido da Montefeltro annihilates (<i>Inf.</i> xvii, 43).</p>	
	<p>1282. The Sicilian Vespers. The French expelled from Sicily (<i>Par.</i> viii, 73).</p>	
	<p>1282. Peter of Aragon, son-in-law of Manfred, crowned King of Sicily.</p>	
	<p>1284. Great naval battle at Meloria, in which Genoa extinguishes Pisa as a sea power.</p>	<p>1284. The infant son (afterwards Edward II) of Edward I, born at Carnarvon with title of Prince of Wales.</p>
	<p>Florence, Lucca and Genoa join in a league against Pisa.</p>	
	<p>1284. Ruggieri di Lauria, Admiral of Peter of Aragon, King of Sicily, defeats the fleet of King Charles, and makes his son Prince Charles a prisoner (<i>Purg.</i> xi).</p>	<p>1291. By the treacherous help of the renegade Christians Acre falls into the hands of the Saracens (<i>Inf.</i> xvii, 89).</p>
		<p>1292?. Roger Bacon dies.</p>

Dante.	Popes, Emperors and Kings.	Other Personages mentioned in the <i>Divina Commedia</i> .
<p>1295. Dante is named a member of the Special Council of the Republic, composed of 80 of the most influential citizens of Florence (<i>Biscioni</i>).</p>	<p>1294. Celestine V (Pietro di Morrone) a hermit from the Terra di Lavoro, elected Pope. Resigns the papacy, and dies in prison, 1296.</p>	<p>1291. Can Grande della Scala born (<i>Par.</i> xvii, 80).</p>
<p>1295. Dante is inscribed on the Roll of Doctors and Chemists (<i>Medici e Speciali</i>), so as to have a qualification for public employment.</p>	<p>1295. Pope Boniface VIII (Benedetto Gaetani of Anagni (<i>Inf.</i> xix, 53; xxvii, 70; <i>Par.</i> xxvii, 22).</p>	<p>1292. William, Count of Monferrato, captured by citizens of Alessandria, who expose him in an iron cage, wherein he dies in 1292 (<i>Purg.</i> vii, 134).</p>
<p>1299. Dante is sent as Ambassador to the <i>Comune</i> of San Gimignano.</p>	<p>1296. Frederick of Aragon succeeds his brother James as King of Sicily (<i>Purg.</i> iii, 116; viii, 129; <i>Par.</i> xix, 131).</p>	<p>1294. Brunetto Latini, Dante's preceptor, dies (<i>Inf.</i> xv, 28).</p>
<p>1300. Dante matures his ideas of the <i>Divina Commedia</i>. The vision is supposed to have taken place in this year.</p>	<p>1298. Albert, son of Rudolph of Hapsburg, crowned King of Germany and the Romans at Aix-la-Chapelle (<i>Purg.</i> vi, 97; <i>Par.</i> xix, 115).</p>	<p>1294. Giano della Bella expelled from Florence after a popular tumult (<i>Villani</i>, viii, 8).</p>
<p>1300. Dante made one of the <i>Priors</i>. In an Epistle now lost he is said to have attributed all his misfortunes to this appointment. Quoted by Lionardo Bruni (<i>Vita di Dante</i>).</p>	<p>1295. Charles Martel, King of Hungary, dies (<i>Par.</i> viii).</p>	<p>1294. Guittone d'Arezzo dies (<i>Purg.</i> xxiv, 56).</p>
<p>1300. Dante, though hated by the <i>Neri</i>, takes no special part with the <i>Bianchi</i>, but as much as possible holds aloof from both parties (<i>Inf.</i> xv, 70; and <i>Par.</i> xvii, 64-69).</p>	<p>1295. Forese Donati, brother of Corso and Piccarda, dies (<i>Purg.</i> xxiii, 40).</p>	<p>1295. Charles Martel, King of Hungary, dies (<i>Par.</i> viii).</p>
<p>1300. Dante to save a child of the Cavicciulli family, breaks to pieces one of the standing places of the baptizers, at the font of San Giovanni, and is accused of sacrilege (<i>Inf.</i> xix).</p>	<p>1298. Jacopo del Casero murdered at Oriago (<i>Purg.</i> v, 64-84).</p>	<p>1295. Forese Donati, brother of Corso and Piccarda, dies (<i>Purg.</i> xxiii, 40).</p>
	<p>1298. Guido da Montefeltro dies (<i>Inf.</i> xxvii, 112).</p>	<p>1298. Jacopo del Casero murdered at Oriago (<i>Purg.</i> v, 64-84).</p>
	<p>1299. Niccolò Acciajuoli and Baldo d'Aguglione falsify the <i>quaderno</i> or register of public accounts: and Durante de' Chiamarontesi falsifies the measures (<i>Purg.</i> xii, 105; <i>Par.</i> xvi, 56, v. 105).</p>	<p>1298. Guido da Montefeltro dies (<i>Inf.</i> xxvii, 112).</p>
	<p>1299?. Oderisi da Gubbio dies (<i>Purg.</i> xi).</p>	<p>1299. Niccolò Acciajuoli and Baldo d'Aguglione falsify the <i>quaderno</i> or register of public accounts: and Durante de' Chiamarontesi falsifies the measures (<i>Purg.</i> xii, 105; <i>Par.</i> xvi, 56, v. 105).</p>

Florence.	Italy and Sicily.	Europe.
<p>1295. The long feud between the families of the Cerchi and Adimari brought to an end, in the Church of San Piero Scheraggio.</p> <p>1295. Church of Sta. Croce begun.</p> <p>1296. The Piazza San Giovanni enlarged as not being extensive enough for public functions and festivities.</p> <p>1297. About this time Arnolfo (<i>see</i> 1288) receives the order to build the Church of Sta. Reparata, of which the name was changed to Sta. Maria del Fiore, the present Cathedral.</p> <p>1298. First stone laid.</p> <p>1298. The <i>Palazzo Pubblico</i> (now <i>Palazzo Vecchio</i>) commenced.</p> <p>1300. Giovanni Villani commences writing his Chronicle (<i>Gino Capponi</i>).</p> <p>1300. Cimabue dies.</p> <p>1300. Casella (<i>Purg.</i> ii) dies.</p>	<p>1288. At the skirmish of La Pieve del Toppo the Sienese Guelphs are cut to pieces by the Ghibellines of Arezzo (<i>Inf.</i> xiii, 121).</p> <p>1295. Marco Polo returns to Venice from his Eastern travels.</p> <p>1297. Great discord between Pope Boniface VIII and the Colonna family.</p> <p>1298. Boniface VIII proclaims a crusade against the Colonna family. In this same year Boniface VIII, aided by the fraudulent counsels of Guido da Montefeltro, by deceitful promises gets possession of Palestrina, and other strongholds of the Colonna (<i>Inf.</i> xxvii).</p>	<p>1296. The Coronation Stone from Scone brought to London and placed in Westminster Abbey.</p>

Dante.	Popes, Emperors and Kings.	Other Personages mentioned in the <i>Divina Commedia</i> .
<p>1301. Dante goes as Ambassador from the Republic to Rome to dissuade the Pope from summoning Charles de Valois into Tuscany.</p> <p>1302, Jan. 27th. In his absence, Dante is condemned on a false charge of trafficking with public offices (<i>baratteria</i>) during his magistracy, and of having opposed the Pope and Charles de Valois. Is fined 5,000 florins and condemned to two years' banishment.</p> <p>On the 10th March following, Dante, in his absence, is condemned to be burnt alive by the Podestà of Florence (Cante de' Gabrielli). His house is sacked, and his possessions confiscated. He becomes the guest, first of Uguccione della Faggiuola and then of Bartolommeo della Scala (see <i>Villani</i> and <i>Boccaccio</i>). Henceforth he is an exile.</p> <p>1304. Dante said to be at Bologna, writing Tr. i of the <i>Convito</i> and commencing the <i>De Vulg. Elog.</i> but date of <i>Convito</i> very uncertain.</p>	<p>1303. Pope Benedict XI (Niccolò Boccasini, of Treviso) elected, but dies by poison the following year.</p> <p>1304. Papal Throne vacant on death of Benedict XI.</p> <p>1304. Albert of Austria invades Bohemia (<i>Par.</i> xix, 115-117).</p>	<p>1301. Guido Cavalcanti dies (<i>Inf.</i> x) after being banished from Florence in the preceding year.</p> <p>1301. Alberto della Scala, Lord of Verona, dies, and is succeeded by his son Bartolommeo (<i>Il gran Lombardo</i>) (<i>Par.</i> xvii).</p> <p>1303. Taddeo, a famous wealthy physician of Florence, dies (<i>Villani</i>, viii, 65, and <i>Par.</i> xii, 83).</p>

Florence.	Italy and Sicily.	Europe.
<p>1300. Cardinal Acquasparta comes to Florence as the Pope's Legate to restore peace between the <i>Neri</i> and <i>Bianchi</i>; but, failing in his endeavours, returns to Rome.</p>	<p>1300. Commencement of the factions of the <i>Neri</i> and <i>Bianchi</i> at Pistoja, so called from two sides taken in a brawl between two branches of the Cancellieri family there (<i>Inf.</i> xxxii, 63). Focaccia dei Cancellieri was the primary aggressor. From this time the Guelph party is divided.</p>	<p>1300. The first jubilee, instituted by Boniface VIII (<i>Purg.</i> ii).</p>
<p>1301. The <i>Bianchi</i> expel the <i>Neri</i> (<i>Inf.</i> xxiv, 143, <i>et seq.</i>).</p>	<p>1300. The first jubilee, instituted by Boniface VIII (<i>Purg.</i> ii).</p>	
<p>1301. Charles de Valois arrives at Florence, and remains there six months. A popular assembly resigns into his hands the signory and guardianship of the city.</p>		
<p>1301. Corso Donati, with his followers the <i>Neri</i>, returns from banishment. The new municipal elections are all in favour of the <i>Neri</i>.</p>	<p>1302. Disputes between the Pope and the King of France (Villani).</p>	<p>1303. In September, Boniface VIII, in consequence of the above disputes, is taken prisoner at Anagni, by Sciarra Colonna and Guillaume de Nogaret, and suffers great indignities. Set free by the people, he returns to Rome (<i>Purg.</i> xi, 86 <i>et seq.</i>), but dies in October.</p>
<p>1302. The <i>Bianchi</i> completely routed at the Battle of <i>Campo Pisceno</i>, in the territory of Pescia (<i>Inf.</i> xxiv, 148), and finally expelled from Florence.</p>	<p>1303. In September, Boniface VIII, in consequence of the above disputes, is taken prisoner at Anagni, by Sciarra Colonna and Guillaume de Nogaret, and suffers great indignities. Set free by the people, he returns to Rome (<i>Purg.</i> xi, 86 <i>et seq.</i>), but dies in October.</p>	
<p>1302. Carlino de' Pazzi betrays the Castle of Piano di Travigne to the Florentines (<i>Inf.</i> xxxii, 69).</p>		
<p>1302. Fulcieri da Calboli succeeds Cante de' Gabrielli as Podestà, and commits terrible atrocities (<i>Purg.</i> xiv, 58-72).</p>		

Dante.	Popes, Emperors and Kings.	Other Personages mentioned in the <i>Divina Commedia</i> .
<p>1306. Dante visits Giotto, who is painting the Chapel of the Scrovigni, at Padua (<i>Inf.</i> xvii, 64) in Oct. he goes as the guest of the Malaspina family in Lunigiana (<i>Purg.</i> viii, 115 <i>et seq.</i>)</p>	<p>1305. Pope Clement V (Bertrand de Goth, Archbishop of Bordeaux) elected at the instigation of Philippe le Bel (<i>Inf.</i> xix, 82. <i>Par.</i> xxvii, 58). Papal Seat transferred to Avignon (<i>Purg.</i> xxxii, 148-160).</p>	
<p>1307. Story told of the rough copy of the first seven cantos of the <i>Commedia</i> being found in Dante's house and sent by Dino Frescobaldi to the Marchese Malaspina. Dante, on receiving it, is said to have resumed writing his poem (<i>Boccaccio</i> and <i>Benvenuto da Imola</i>).</p>	<p>1306. Robert Bruce crowned King of Scotland, after stabbing Comyn, the heir of Balliol.</p>	
<p>1308. Dante is said to have been at Forl.</p>	<p>1307. Edward II, King of England.</p>	<p>1307. Fra Dolcino captured and cruelly executed (<i>Inf.</i> xxviii, 58).</p>
<p>1309. He is thought to have been at Paris.</p>	<p>1308. Albert of Austria assassinated. (<i>Purg.</i> vi, 97-102).</p>	<p>1308. Death of Corso Donati (<i>Purg.</i> xxiv, 83).</p>
<p>1310. Dante writes a letter to the Princes and Peoples of Italy, begging them to give their allegiance to the King, Henry VII (<i>Epist.</i> v).</p>	<p>1309. Henry VII, of Luxembourg, crowned King of the Romans at Aix-la-Chapelle, but as Emperor till 1312.</p>	
<p>1311. Apl. 16th. Dante, seeing Henry VII tarrying in Lombardy, writes to him, when engaged in the siege of Brescia, a letter reproving him for his delay, and beseeching him in the name of all the exiles from Florence to push on into Tuscany (<i>Epist.</i> vii).</p>	<p>1309. Charles II, King of Naples, dies, succeeded by his son Robert.</p>	
	<p>1311. At the beginning of this year Dante proceeds to Milan to do homage to Henry VII, and it is thought that he was present there when Henry VII was crowned with the iron crown on the day of the Epiphany, and when, says G. Villani; "ambassadors were present from almost all the cities of Italy, except Florence and its league" (<i>Villani</i>, ix, 10).</p>	

Florence.	Italy and Sicily.	Europe.
<p>1304. Niccolò da Prato, Cardinal of Ostia, sent as Papal Legate by Benedict XI as pacificator to Florence, but his mission fails, and he excommunicates the city.</p> <p>A rash expedition of the <i>Bianchi</i> against Florence is repulsed.</p>	<p>1304. Petrarch born at Arezzo.</p>	<p>1305. William Wallace executed. Scotland submits.</p>
<p>1304. Great loss of life by the fall of the Ponte alla Carraia (perhaps alluded to <i>Inf.</i> xxvi, 10, 11).</p>		<p>1307. Philippe le Bel suppresses the Order of the Templars in France with great cruelty.</p>
<p>1310. In October, the Florentines refuse to receive the Ambassadors of Henry VII (<i>G. Villani</i>).</p>	<p>1310. Descent of Henry VII into Italy.</p>	<p>1308. Edward II marries Isabella, the daughter of Philippe le Bel.</p> <p>1308. The Island of Rhodes occupied by the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem.</p>
<p>1311. In June the Florentines make a league with the Bolognese and all the Guelphs in Tuscany against Henry VII.</p> <p>1311. In November, when Henry is at Genoa, he cites before his court the Florentines, and on Christmas Eve condemns them, depriving them of every liberty and privilege. Florentine merchants at Genoa are compelled to depart, with the loss of all their property.</p>	<p>1311. All Feudatories of the Empire in Italy are summoned to present themselves before the Emperor, to have the feods confirmed, which had been granted them by previous Emperors: and among them even the Bishop of Volterra (<i>Diplomatic Archives of Florence, Carte di Volterra</i>).</p>	

Dante.	Popes, Emperors and Kings.	Other Personages mentioned in the <i>Divina Commedia</i> .
<p>1312. Dante writes the <i>De Monarchia</i>.</p> <p>1314. The letter, of doubtful authenticity, attributed to Dante, written to the Cardinals of Italy, entreating them to use their influence to get the Papal seat restored to Rome (<i>Epist. ix</i>).</p> <p>1314. It is at this time that Dante is supposed to have paid a visit to Ugucione della Faggiuola at Lucca, and to have been acquainted with Gentucca (<i>Purg. xxiv, 34-48</i>).</p> <p>1315. Final judgment on Dante, on 6th November, by Ranieri di Zaccaria d'Orvieto, King Robert's Vicar in Florence, who condemns him to death.</p> <p>1316. Dante refuses to accept the pardon of the Government of Florence, by accepting which he might have returned there (<i>Epist. x</i>).</p>	<p>1312. Henry VII crowned Emperor at Rome, 29th June.</p> <p>1313. Henry VII dies, 24th August, at Buonconvento, in the Sienese territory. Is buried in the Cathedral at Pisa. Interregnum for a year.</p> <p>1314. Clement V dies. Papal seat vacant (<i>Inf. xix, 82; Par. xvii, 82; Par. xxvii, 58</i>).</p> <p>1314. Philippe le Bel dies (<i>Par. xix, 118-120</i>).</p> <p>1314. Louis X (<i>le Hutin</i>) succeeds him.</p> <p>1314. Frederick of Austria (crowned at Bonn) and Louis of Bavaria (crowned at Aix-la-Chapelle) by rival factions, to be King of Germany and of the Romans.</p> <p>1316. Pope John XXII (Jacques d'Euse de Cahors) (<i>Par. xxvii, 58</i>).</p> <p>1316. Louis X dies. His successor John I dies five days after his birth.</p>	<p>1311. March 31st, Dante writes the Epistle, <i>sceleratissimis Florentinis intrinsicus</i>, urging them to open their gates to the Emperor (<i>Epist. vi</i>).</p> <p>1312. Riccardo da Cammino, son of "il buon Gherardo," Lord of Treviso, is assassinated (<i>Par. ix, 49-51</i>).</p> <p>1314. Can Grande defeats the Paduans, who thereupon resign to him their claims over Vicenza (<i>Par. ix, 46-48</i>).</p>

Florence.	Italy and Sicily.	Europe.
<p>1311. King Robert of Naples sends troops to the assistance of the Florentines. (<i>G. Villani</i>).</p>	<p>1311. Alboino della Scala, Lord of Verona, dies. His brother Can Grande succeeds him.</p>	
<p>1312. In October Henry VII commences, but soon abandons, the siege of Florence.</p>	<p>1312. The nobles of Parma and Reggio, on the one part; and the Cities of Bologna, Florence, Lucca, and Siena, and the Guelphs banished from Cremona and Modena, on the other part,</p>	<p>1312. The barons of England capture and behead Gaveston.</p>
<p>The Florentines fortify their frontiers against Pisa.</p>	<p>form a league against Henry VII. Ghiberto da Correggio is named their general.</p>	<p>1313. Boccaccio da Certaldo born at Paris.</p>
<p>1313. The Florentines confer the Signory of the City upon King Robert for five years.</p>	<p>1312. In March, when at Pisa, the Emperor Henry VII deprives the City of Florence of every honour and jurisdiction, and gives leave to the Spinoli of Genoa to coin false florins with the stamp of Florence. He leaves Pisa in August to make war upon King Robert, but dies on the 24th at Buonconvento. (<i>Villani</i>, ix, 49).</p>	<p>1314. Battle of Bannockburn. 1314. Exeter College, Oxford, founded.</p>
	<p>1314. Ugucione della Faggiuola, commanding the forces of Pisa, captures Lucca.</p>	<p>1315. Battle of Morgarten, in which Leopold of Austria is defeated by three Swiss Cantons.</p>
<p>1316. 11th December. General Amnesty, permitting all exiles to return to Florence.</p>	<p>1315. The Ghibellines defeat the Florentine Guelphs at Montecatini.</p>	<p>1316. Salic law established in France to exclude Louis <i>le Hutin's</i> daughter Joanna, who inherits only Navarre.</p>
	<p>1316. Ugucione driven out of Lucca.</p>	

Dante.	Popes, Emperors and Kings.	Other Personages mentioned in the <i>Divina Commedia</i> .
<p>1316. Dante writes his Epistle to Can Grande della Scala, explaining to him the fundamental principles of the <i>Divina Commedia</i>, being a consideration of the soul after death, and in its allegorical sense, Man, liable to reward or punishment.</p> <p>He dedicates to him the <i>Paradiso</i>, not yet, however, completed (Epist. xi).</p>	<p>1316. Philip V (<i>le Long</i>).</p>	
<p>1318. Dante at the Monastery of Fonte Avelana, near Gubbio, in Umbria. Is afterwards the guest of Busone de' Raffaelli, at Gubbio (Balbo, <i>Vita di Dante</i>).</p>	<p>At the time of Dante's death the following sovereigns are reigning.—</p> <p>Pope : John XXII.</p> <p>Constantinople : Andronicus II.</p> <p>France : Philippe le Long.</p> <p>Germany : Throne contested.</p> <p>England : Edward II.</p> <p>Scotland : Robert I (Bruce).</p> <p>Savoy : Amadeus V.</p> <p>Venice : Doge Giovanni Soranzo.</p> <p>Bohemia : John of Luxembourg.</p> <p>Navarre : Joanna II.</p> <p>Aragon : James II (the Just).</p> <p>Castille : Alfonso XI.</p> <p>Portugal : Dionysius (who reigned forty-six years).</p>	<p>1318. Giotto's pre-eminence as a painter.</p>
<p>1319 Dante, the guest of Pagano della Torre, at Udine, where he continues to write the <i>Paradiso</i>.</p>		
<p>1320. Dante, the guest of Guido da Polenta, at Ravenna.</p>		
<p>1321. Dante dies at Ravenna, aged 56. Interred, with great pomp, by order of Guido da Polenta, who himself died the following year.</p>		

Florence.	Italy and Sicily.	Europe.
<p>1318. King Robert confirmed in the Signory of Florence for another three years.</p> <p>1321. The Signory of King Robert over Florence terminates, having lasted eight years and six months (<i>Villani</i>, ix, 137).</p>	<p>1317. Can Grande, Imperial Vicar at Verona and Vicenza.</p> <p>1318. Can Grande elected Captain of the Ghibelline League at Soncino (<i>G. Villani</i>).</p> <p>1319. Ugucione della Faggiuola dies.</p>	<p>1320. John Gower, the poet, said to have been born.</p> <p>1321. Attainder of the Despencers by the English Parliament. Edward II forcibly reverses the Attainder.</p>

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- [This is misprinted Zaini on p. 36 of vol. 1.]

ERRATA.

VOL. I.

- Page 36 (line 18). For "Zaini" read "Zani."
 " 40 (line 5). For "Pasquainai" read "Pasquini."
 " 97 (line 68 of text). For "Che mischiato di lagrime," read
 "Che, mischiato di lagrime."
 " 107 (footnote †). For "Edward Waller" read "Edmund
 Waller."
 " 112 Place quote marks at the end of quotation in footnote.
 " 148 In footnote † line 6, for "thinkst he" read "thinks
 the."
 " 160 (last two lines). For "he was hospitably enter-
 tained by Guido, the great Lord of Polenta, Fran-
 cesca's father," read "he was hospitably entertained
 by Guido Novello, the great Lord of Polenta, Fran-
 cesca's nephew."
 " 169 (line 8). For "Messer Malatesta, the elder of Rimini"
 read "Messer Malatesta the elder, of Rimini."
 " 224 (footnote). For "Cecho d' Ascoli" read "Ceccho
 d' Ascoli."
 " 255 In translation at bottom of page, for "with sin-laden
 denizens, with mighty garrison," read "with its sin-
 laden denizens, with its mighty garrison."
 " 308 (line 25). For "Caroccio" read "Carroccio."
 " 317 (line 18). For "Cardinale Atta viano" read "Car-
 dinale Attaviano."
 " 334 (line 18). For "sè empio" read "sì empio."
 " 398 (line 17). For "Comento dell' Anonimo" read "Com-
 ento di Anonimo."
 " 432 (footnote, line 1). For "from the *Vulg.*" read "from
 the *De Vulg.*"
 " 438 (lines 18, 19). For "pictured them running," read
 "pictured the shades running."
 " 447 (line 1). For "after Attila, they would" read "after
 Attila, would."
 " 516 (line 24). For "than the" read "than to the."
 " 572 (line 4). For "Petti" read "Pelli."





THE INFERNO.

CANTO I.

THE DARK FOREST.
THE MOUNTAIN.
THE THREE WILD BEASTS.
VIRGIL.
THE VELTRO.



THIS Canto is generally considered to be Dante's Introduction to the entire poem of the *Divina Commedia*, rather than the actual commencement of the Cantica of the *Inferno*. Dante is always very symmetrical in the arrangement of his writings, and this is especially seen in the *Divina Commedia*. The whole poem consists of one hundred cantos; the three *Cantiche* of the *Inferno*, the *Purgatorio*, and the *Paradiso* each containing thirty-three, leaving this first canto of the *Inferno*, as we have just noticed, as an Introduction to the complete work.

Benvenuto da Imola* says that the *Inferno* may be

* Benvenuto de Rambaldi de Imola, *Comentum super Dantis Aldigherii Comediam*, nunc primum integre in lucem editum. Sumpibus Guilielmi Warren Vernon curante Jacobo Philippo Lacaita, *Florentia*, 1887, 5 vols., large 8vo.

divided into two principal parts, namely, the Preface (*proœmium*) consisting of the first three* Cantos; and the main subject (*tractatus*), which extends over the remainder.

He divides this first Canto into five parts.

In the First Division, from v. 1 to v. 12, Dante supposes himself to have awakened to consciousness in a dark wood.

In the Second Division, from v. 13 to v. 30, he shows how he reached a certain mountain.

In the Third Division, from v. 31 to v. 60, he relates how, on attempting to ascend the mountain, his progress was opposed by three wild beasts.

In the Fourth Division, from v. 61 to v. 90, he describes how the shade of Virgil suddenly came to his assistance.

In the Fifth Division, from v. 91 to v. 136, Dante shows how he resigned himself to the guidance of Virgil.

Division I. Dante opens the Poem by telling his readers that, at the time of his supposed vision, he had reached half way through the number of years usually allotted to the life of man, and that his life was dark and shadowed, because he was not walking in the straight way or the path of virtue.

* Benvenuto has evidently made a mistake here, for at the beginning of Canto III he says that Dante, having completed his two first introductory Cantos, in the first of which he laid down his proposition, and in the second made his invocation, now in this third Canto commences the main subject (*tractatus*). He must have meant to say here that the Preface (*proœmium*) consists of the *two* first Cantos.

Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
 Mi ritrovai* per una selva oscura,†
 Chè la diritta via era smarrita.

In the middle of the pathway of our life
 (*i. e.* when I was 35 years old), I awoke
 to the consciousness that I was in a dark
 forest (*i. e.* walking in the paths of sin) for
 that the straight way was lost.

Dante was born in 1265, and therefore, in 1300, the supposed date of the vision, he was just 35 years old. In Psalm xc, 10, we read that "the days of our years are threescore years and ten." But beyond this, in *Convito* iv, 23, Dante states what he con-

* *Mi ritrovai*: Most of the translators render this "I found myself." This does not at all give the full meaning of *ritrovarsi*, "to find oneself again," "to recover one's senses," etc. Scartazzini explains the word, *mi avvidi, mi accorsi, riconobbi che io era*. It anyhow means a great deal more than simply *mi trovai*. Giuliani (*Metodo di commentare la Divina Commedia*, Florence, 1861) writes on *mi ritrovai*: "che fu un dire, *mi riscossi e vidi*: ovvero, a parlare più spiegato, riscuotendomi dal sonno onde io era preso in su quel punto che io abbandonai la verace via (v. 11), *riconobbi, m'avvidi, m'accorsi*, che io era dentro una selva oscura. Questi verbi, quantunque di molto significativi, pure non bastano di per sè soli a rappresentarci il complesso delle idee volute inchiudere nel *mi ritrovai*."

† *Selva oscura*: Scartazzini says that the forest is the symbol of the life of sin, into which Dante had strayed after the death of Beatrice, and from which Virgil delivered him. He adds that the best commentary on this passage is to be found in the reproofs that Beatrice administered to Dante in the later Cantos of the *Purgatorio*, and especially in xxx, 124-141. Longfellow says of *selva oscura* that it is the dark forest of human life, with

Tanto è amara, che poco è più morte :
 Ma per trattar del ben* ch' i' vi trovai,
 Dirò dell' altre cose, ch' io v' ho scorte.

Ah ! how hard it is to tell what that forest was, savage, rough and impenetrable, which in the (mere) thought renews the dread ! So bitter is it, that death is little more so : but to treat of the good that I found in it, I will speak of the other things that I saw there.

In the next three lines, says Benvenuto, Dante answers an imaginary question. Some might ask him : " If to have been in the forest is such a bitter experience, why didst thou go there ? " To this Dante would reply that he cannot tell, for he was so full of sleep at the time that he entered therein. This sleep may be interpreted according to the view of St. Augustine and other theologians, who held that the soul is created by God in an instant of time, when it is

* Benvenuto remarks, that if it should be asked what is the good that Dante found in Hell, the answer is that the good is manifold (*multiplex*), for by the sight and contemplation of the vices and their punishments one may discern the chastisement of the wicked, the emendation of many, and the perfecting of the good. Boëthius (*Philos. Consol. Lib. iv, Pros. iv*) says : " Habent igitur improbi, cum puniuntur, quidem boni aliquid adnexum, pœnam ipsam scilicet, quæ ratione justitiæ bona est : . . . Multo igitur infeliciores improbi sunt injusta impunitate donati, quam justa ultione puniti."

† Giuliani prefers the reading *alte cose*, but no Tuscan commentator adopts it. *Alte*, preceded by *ben ch' io*, would scarcely apply to the *Inferno* itself, though it would do so to the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, besides which *alte* is not a good antithesis to *ben*.

infused into a body conceived basely, and therefore this sleep is sin. The main point that Dante wishes to enforce is this: "Do not ask me how I entered into this forest, *i. e.* into the path of sin, for all are born evil: therefore I cannot possibly recollect anything about my first entrance into the forest."

I' non so ben ridir com' io v' entrai ; 10
 Tant' era pien di sonno* in su quel punto,
 Che la verace via† abbandonai.

How I entered there I cannot well recall, so full was I of sleep at that time when I abandoned the true way.

This, according to Benvenuto, means the period of Dante's life, when he deserted the path of virtue. Man at the commencement of his life walks in the slumber of ignorance and original sin, until he is a young man, but he is not deserving of praise or blame, because he has not as yet acquired the use of free will, and therefore Dante rightly says that he cannot well recall how he entered into that forest, so full was he of slumber when he quitted the way of truth.

Division II. After wandering for some time through the forest, Dante at length reaches a mountain, which, on looking up, he sees is illumined

* *pien di sonno*: compare *Rom.* xiii, 11: "Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

† *verace via*: see *St. John*, xiv, 6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

by the rays of the sun. Benvenuto asks what this mountain represents. Certainly virtue, he thinks, which, being high, leads man up to heaven, and in like manner the valley is an emblem of vice, which, being low, leads man down to Hell; for the mountain is near to Heaven, and consequently to God: the valley is nearer to the centre, and consequently to Hell, which is the centre of the earth.

Ma poi che fui al piè d' un colle giunto,
 Là dove terminava quella valle,
 Che m' avea di paura il cor compunto, 15
 Guardai in alto,* e vidi le sue spalle
 Vestite già de' raggi del pianeta,†
 Che mena dritto altrui per ogni calle.‡

But after I had reached the foot of a Hill, there, where that valley ended which had pierced my heart with fear, I looked upward, and beheld its shoulders already clothed with the rays of that planet (*i. e.* the Sun) which leads all other men straight through every path.

Benvenuto says that up to this time Dante had been contemplating only the lowest temporal matters

* Compare *Psalms* cxxi, 1: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."

† According to the Ptolemaic system the sun was a planet. In *Conv.* iii, 12, Dante writes: "Ora è da ragionare per lo sole spirituale e intelligibile, ch'è Iddio." Compare *Mal.* iv, 2: "The Sun of righteousness [shall] arise with healing in his wings." And *Par.* xxv, 53-54: "com' è scritto

Nel sol che raggia tutto nostro stuolo."

‡ *Che mena dritto*: compare *St. John*, viii, 12: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

of the senses (*ista infima sensibilia temporalia*), but that now he begins to raise his head, that is, his thoughts, towards exalted and eternal excellencies (*ad alta virtualia et æterna*).

Dante finds that his contemplation of the sun-illuminated heights has given a little respite to his fears.

Allor fu la paura un poco queta,
 Che nel lago* del cor m'era durata 20
 La notte,† ch' i' passai con tanta pietà.‡

Then was the terror somewhat quieted which had continued in the lake of my heart throughout the night that I had passed in so much anguish.

Longfellow aptly describes *lago* as the deep mountain tarn of Dante's heart, dark with its own depth, and the shadows hanging over it. In one of his Canzoni Dante indicates with the same word that cavity of the heart which is the receptacle of the blood, and which Harvey styles *sanguinis promptuarium et cisterna*. Boccaccio says that this hollow is

* *lago del cor*: In Redi's *Ditirambo* the following passage occurs:

"I buoni vini son quelli che acquetano
 Le procelle sì fosche e rubelle,
 Che nel *lago del cor* l' anime inquietano."

† Scartazzini says that *la notte* is used here, as very frequently in Holy Scripture, as a symbol of ignorance, error, and carnal and sinful security.

‡ *pietà*: Blanc (*Vocabolario Dantesco*) says that Dante has preferred to make use of this poetical form, instead of *pietà*, in the sense of anguish, torment, grief, or for anything that would be calculated to excite pity. See however conversely, *Inf.* vi, 2:

"Dinanzi alla pietà de' due cognati,"

where *pietà* is explained by Scartazzini as *pietoso aspetto*.

strand, turns to the perilous water and gazes (upon it with awe); so my spirit, which still was fleeing (*i. e.* escaping in horror from the paths of sin), turned back to contemplate that pass (the dark wood), which no person ever left alive.

Benvenuto points out how appropriate is this comparison, for Dante, like a shipwrecked sailor having escaped from the bitter ocean of the world, and after struggling through so many billows of vice, had at length reached the quiet haven of virtue, and was looking back in anguish at the mortal peril to his soul in which he had so long remained.

Dante now compares himself to a traveller, who, having taken a short rest at the foot of the mountain, girds himself to the exertion of commencing the ascent.

Poi ch' ei* posato un poco il corpo lasso,
Ripresi via per la piaggia diserta,
Sì che il piè fermo sempre era il più basso;† 30

After that I had for a while rested my weary body, I resumed my way over that lonely steep (*lit.* shore), in such wise that the firm foot was always the lower.

Benvenuto explains that in ascending a hill, a man's lower foot is always the one on which his whole body is supported. Tommasèo thinks it to mean that the desires, in passing from what is evil to what is good,

* *èi*, from *ere*, for *avere*, stands here for *ebbi*. The expression is frequent among old Italian writers. Others read "*Poi ch' ebbi riposato il corpo lasso.*"

† *piè fermo*: compare *Purg.* xix, 81: "Le vostre destre sien sempre di furi."

dwell too long on the memories of the past. Some contend that as *mano stanca* (the weary, weak hand *Inf.* xix, 41) means the left hand, so *il piè fermo* (the strong, firm foot) may be taken to mean the right foot, and Dante, according to this view, in ascending the hill (as Carlyle says), with the summit on his left, would have the right (*fermo*) foot always towards the base, or lower than the other, *i. e.* he would always be turning to the right.

Division III. Dante now relates how his advance up the mountain is opposed by three wild beasts, namely, a Leopard, a Lion, and a Wolf, who seek to hinder him from carrying out his good intentions.

Ed ecco, quasi al cominciar dell' erta,*
Una lonza† leggiera e presta molto,
Che di pel maculato era coperta.

And lo ! almost at the commencement of the steep ascent, a Leopard, light and exceedingly nimble, which was covered with a spotted hide.

Nearly all the ancient, and many of the modern commentators, take the Leopard as a symbol of the

* *erta*: Lombardi quotes Biagioli as showing that *erta* is not to be taken as a substantive, but the word *montagna* must be understood as agreeing with it; on the other hand Scartazzini says it is a substantive, and signifies *salita ardua ed angusta*.

† *lonza*: the whole passage referring to the three wild beasts may be compared to *Jer.* v, 6: "Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities." And *Habakkuk*, i, 8: "Their horses are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves."

concupiscence of the flesh, or sensuality. Some have considered it to mean Florence, and its variegated hide to refer to the factions of the Bianchi and Neri.

It would appear from the remarkable passage in *Inf.* xvi*, that Dante had at this point made an attempt to ensnare the Leopard with the knotted cord that was about his waist. This Lombardi interprets as signifying that Dante had endeavoured to restrain his sensual appetites by girding himself with the Franciscan cord. Benvenuto also considers the comparison of the two passages to be a distinct proof that the Leopard signifies Sensuality, and not Vain Glory, as some have supposed. Scartazzini strongly supports this view.

Benvenuto begs his readers here to notice that Dante pictures only three wild beasts as opposing his progress towards the hill of virtue, for there are three principal vices which commonly assail man at three different periods of his life, namely, Sensuality in youth, Pride or Ambition in manhood, and Avarice or Cupidity in old age.

Dante finds it impossible to evade the attacks of the Leopard.

E non mi si partia dinanzi al volto ;
 Anzi impediva tanto il mio cammino, 35
 Ch' io fui per ritornar più volte volto.†

* The passage is *Inf.* xvi, 106-108 :

“Io aveva una corda intorno cinta,
 E con essa pensai alcuna volta
 Prender la lonza alla pelle dipinta.”

see also *Inf.* xxvii, 67-68 :

“Io fui uom d' arme, e poi fui cordelliero,
 Credendomi, sì cinto, fare ammenda.”

† In *Rom.* vii, 21, St. Paul says: “I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.”

And it withdrew not from before my face ;
 nay, rather it impeded my way so much, that
 many times did I turn round to retrace my
 steps.

Benvenuto explains this to mean that in good sooth Dante fought hard against the malady of Sensuality. He is so assailed by it now, that he turns again and again, being tempted to fall back into his former life of sin.

Dante now proceeds to define the time at which he commences his journey through the regions of eternity, about which there is much disagreement among the different commentators. Having first described the time of day, and the season of the year, he next relates how there appeared to him a second wild beast, namely a Lion, which is supposed to be a figure of Pride or Ambition, but politically, is thought to refer to the Royal House of France.

Tempo era dal principio del mattino ;
 E il sol montava su con quelle stelle
 Ch' eran con lui, quando l' amor divino
 Mosse da prima quelle cose belle ; 40
 Sì che a bene sperar m' era cagione
 Di quella fera alla gaietta pelle,
 L' ora del tempo, e la dolce stagione :
 Ma non sì, che paura non mi desse
 La vista, che mi apparve, d' un leone. 45
 Questi pareva, che contra me venesse
 Con la test' alta* e con rabbiosa fame,
 Sì che pareva che l' aer ne temesse:

**la test' alta* : Dante was himself proud of his learning, and in *Purg.* xiii, 136, he confesses his fear that his pride will have to be chastened after death :

“Troppo è più la paura, ond' è sospesa

The time was at the opening of the morn ;
 and the sun was mounting upwards with
 those stars which were with him, when
 Divine Love first set in motion (*i. e.* created)
 those beauteous things ; so that the hour of
 the day (the morning), and the delightful
 season (the spring) gave me good cause of
 hope respecting that beast with the variegated
 skin : but not so much (restoration of confi-
 dence), but that there filled me with affright
 the aspect of a Lion which appeared to me.
 This one seemed to be coming against me
 with head upreared, and with raging hunger,
 so that the air appeared to be in fear of him.

We will take it that the day was Good Friday ; the
 season, the spring ; and that the sun was in Aries.
 Benvenuto says that astrologers and theologians assert
 that in the beginning God placed the sun in Aries, in
 which sign of the zodiac we get the spring : and that
 when the sun enters into Aries, he touches the circle
 of the equinox, and becomes temperate to us ; and
 at the time when he begins gradually to ascend, it
 then seems good for us to commence any undertaking,
 for he (the sun) must necessarily increase, and proceed
 from good to better.

Benvenuto further remarks that before the Creation
 the stars were motionless, although that is not in ac-
 cordance with the opinion of Aristotle, who contended
 that motion and the world were both eternal. He

L' anima mia, del tormento di sotto,
 Che già lo incarco di laggiù mi pesa."

In *Par.* ix, 50, he writes of a proud man :

"Tal signoreggia e va con la testa alta."

(Benvenuto) also explains away an apparent contradiction on the part of Dante, when the latter says that the sweet season of spring gave him good hope of overcoming sensuality, a statement that would at first seem entirely opposed to experience, for on the approach of spring all life, both rational, brute, and vegetable, is incited to sensuality. But he says that Dante argues rightly as follows: "If at such a season as this, when man is by nature disposed to sensuality, I was able to make a great effort to repress and trample down so potent a sin, how much the stronger to do so shall I not be in the future?" Almost as though he would say: "now is the propitious time, now is the age of strength, but the winter will come, and old age; I will therefore, before then, bring my flesh into subjection."

Dante does not assert the season helped him to conquer Luxury, but that it gave him a good hope of doing so, for hope only applies to good in the future. Yet although he had good hope of overcoming the Leopard (sensuality), his hope diminished again at the sudden apparition of the Lion (pride or ambition), for Fear is contrary to Hope, in that it applies to future evil. And the Lion comes against Dante with *la testa alta* in the true attitude of the proud ambitious man, who walks with his head lofty, and aims at high things. It comes with the rage of hunger, for the appetite of the ambitious man is never sated, he is greedy after everything, and seeks to get all things under his feet, and on that account often enters into a fury that resembles madness.

Dante now proceeds to describe the third Beast,

And a She-Wolf that in her leanness appeared
to be laden with all cravings, and many has
she ere now caused to live in sorrow.

Dante, having spoken of the injury the Wolf has
done to others, now relates how it molested and terri-
fied him.

Questa mi porse tanto di gravezza
Con la paura, che uscia di sua vista,
Ch' io perdei la speranza dell' altezza.

She brought me such a load (of care) with
the terror that issued from the sight of her,
that I lost the hope of (attaining) the height.

Benvenuto points out how Dante completes his
account of the effect of this terror by aptly comparing
himself to a merchant, who travelling over sea and
land in the hope of becoming rich, if he falls among
robbers, pirates, rocks, or any other unforeseen mis-
chances, deploras his hard lot, and laments having
expended so much toil and wealth in vain; and
thereupon, losing all hope, abandons the journey he
had commenced. Dante, grieving over his wasted
efforts, yielding to the attack of the wild beasts, and
losing all hope of reaching his goal, begins to fall back
into the Valley of Sin.

they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into
many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction
and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil :
which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith,
and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

In Juvenal (*Sat.* xiv, 139) we find :

"Crescit amor nummi, quantum ipsa pecunia crevit."

C

E quale è quei, che volentieri acquista, 55
 E giugne il tempo, che perder lo face,
 Che in tutt' i suoi pensier piange e s' attrista :
 Tal mi fece la bestia senza pace,*
 Che venendomi incontro, a poco a poco
 Mi ripingeva là, dove il Sol tace.† 60

And as is he who is eager after the acquisition (of wealth), and the time (of adversity) comes, which makes him lose it, and he weeps and is sorrowful in all his thoughts: Such made me that beast ever restless, which advancing against me, was gradually forcing me back towards that place (the dark wood) where the sun is silent (*i. e.* gives no light).

* *la bestia senza pace*: Biagioli says that no epithet or expression can better render the restless state of the wolf. Some have placed *senza pace* between two commas, applying the words to Dante himself.

† *tace*: Fraticelli says that *tacere* in its figurative sense signifies to cease from one's accustomed operations. Compare *Inf.* v. 95, 96:

“e parleremo a vui,
 Mentrechè il vento, come fa, si tace.”

See also Virgil, *Æn.* ii, 255:

“per amica silentia Lunæ.”

and Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* lib. xvi, cap. 74): “Inter omnis vero convenit utilissime in coitu ejus sterni, quem diem alii interluni, alii silentii lunæ appellant.”

and Milton, *Samson Agonistes*, l. 86:

“The sun to me is dark
 And silent as the moon,
 When she deserts the night,
 Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.”

and *Inf.* v. 28: “Io venni in loco d' ogni luce muto.”

Castelvetro* remarks that while the Leopard really impeded Dante's progress, the other two beasts terrify him, and the last one (the Wolf) to the extent of making him despair.

Division IV. In this division Dante relates how, while he is being thus molested by the three beasts, and is gradually relapsing into his former blind condition of ignorance and sin, there appears suddenly before him one, who is to put to flight the clouds that overwhelm his soul, and this is the poet Virgil, who, representing natural or human knowledge, is to be Dante's guide through Hell and Purgatory. Benvenuto remarks that some have objected to Virgil, who was in Hell, being able to guide Dante through Purgatory, with which he neither was acquainted in life, not having the true faith, nor yet in death, seeing that he was condemned to Hell. But human knowledge is acquainted with virtue and vice, rewards and punishments, which are described in the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio* both in their moral and in their poetical sense. Whenever in Purgatory any matters are touched upon which are beyond the province of human knowledge, Dante puts them into the mouth of Statius who accompanies him and Virgil.

Mentre ch' io rovinava in basso loco,
Dinanzi agli occhi mi si fu offerto
Chi per lungo silenzio parea fioco.†

* *Sposizione di Lodovico Castelvetro a xxix Canti dell' Inferno Dantesco*, Basilea 1582, ora per la prima volta data in luce da Giovanni Franciosi, Verona 1886.

† *fioco*: Carlyle translates "hoarse," but explains "faint of

While I was stumbling down into the region below (*i. e.* the valley of sin), there was presented to me before mine eyes one who from long silence appeared faint of voice.

Benvenuto thinks that it was in truth a silence of a very considerable duration, seeing that it had lasted 1300 years! Scartazzini says that the illuminating voice of Reason (represented by Virgil), is, or at the first awakening of the sinner, seems to be, so low that he can hardly distinguish its accents; but that it becomes afterwards louder and distincter according as man shakes off his slumber of sin.

Dante cries to the new comer for pity and assistance.

Quand' io vidi costui nel gran diserto,*

—“Miserere di me.”—gridai a lui,

65

—“Qual che tu sii, od ombra, od uomo certo.”—

When I beheld him (Virgil) in the great desert: “Have pity on me,” I cried unto him, “Whoe'er thou art, whether shade or real man.”

voice.” Cary, who, while less literal, always renders the spirit of the poet's meaning, writes, “Whose voice seemed faint through long disuse of speech.” Carlyle quotes Milton, *Par. Lost*, vii, 25:

“Unchanged

To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days.”

The *long silence* probably also is an allusion to the great neglect of classical studies in Italy before the time of Dante.

See Dante's use of *fiocho* in the sense of weak in *Inf.* iii. 75, *fiocho lume* dim light; *Inf.* xxxi, 13, *avrebbe ogni tuon fatto fiocho*, would have made any thunder weak; xxxiv, 22, *divenni allor gelato e fiocho*; *Par.* xi, 133, *se le mie parole non son fioche*; and *Par.* xxxiii, 121: “O quanto è corto il dire, e come fiocho

Al mio concetto!”

* *nel gran diserto*: compare *Deut.* xxxii, 10: “He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.”

Virgil answers Dante categorically, declaring who he was in life, as well as his parentage, province and country.

Risposemi :—" Non uomo, uomo già fui,
 E li parenti miei furon Lombardi,
 Mantovani* per patria ambo e dui.
 Nacqui *sub Julio*, † ancorchè fosse tardi, 70
 E vissi a Roma, sotto il buono Augusto,
 Al tempo degli Dei falsi e bugiardi.
 Poeta fui, e cantai di quel giusto ‡
 Figliuol d' Anchise, che venne da Troia,
 Poichè il superbo Ilion fu combusto. 75

He answered me: "Not (now) a man, a man I once was, and my parents were Lombards, and by country both Mantuans. I was born under Julius, though late (in his life-time) and I dwelt in Rome under the good Augustus, in the time of the false and lying gods. I was a Poet, and I sang of that just son of Anchises (*Æneas*), who came from Troy after proud Ilion had been burnt.

* *Mantovani*: compare *Purg.* vi, 72-75, where Virgil and Sordello, both Lombards, embrace each other on the former merely uttering the word "Mantua . . ."

† *Nacqui sub Julio*: Virgil really was born B.C. 70, during the consulship of Pompey and Crassus, when Julius Cæsar was away in Gaul, but in the Middle Ages Julius Cæsar was commonly held to have been the first Roman Emperor, and therefore Dante makes Virgil say that, though he was born during the time of Julius Cæsar, it was too late in his reign for him to be able to say that he lived under him, or to be known by him. And he says it with regret, as Cæsar highly honoured distinguished men of letters.

‡ *quel giusto*: Virgil (*Æn.* i. 544) speaks of *Æneas*:
 "Rex erat *Æneas* nobis, quo justior alter,
 Nec pietate fuit nec bello major et armis."

Scartazzini gives three reasons why Dante selected Virgil as his guide through the regions of Hell and Purgatory.

(1) Because, as he tells us in the lines that follow, he had always considered Virgil his master in language, and had set him up as the model of a poet to imitate ;

(2) Virgil was regarded in the Middle Ages as a Prophet of the Redeemer, and of the universal Empire of Rome (see *Purg.* xxii, 66 *et seq.*) ;*

(3) In the Middle Ages moreover, when Homer was scarcely known, Virgil was the only poet who had written a description of a descent into the Infernal Regions.

Benvenuto remarks that Virgil questions Dante somewhat sharply as to why he returns to his sins like a dog to his vomit, and seems to say : " Thou canst well understand from my words who I am, but why do I find thee, whom I know well, in the act of relapsing into the vale of sin ? "

Ma tu' perchè ritorni a tanta noia ?
Perchè non sali il diletto monte,
Ch' è principio e cagion di tutta gioia ?"—

. But thou, why art thou turning back to so
much trouble, why dost thou not ascend the

* This is fully discussed in *Readings on the Purgatorio*, (London, Macmillan, 1889, 2 vols., small 8vo), Canto xxii, vol. ii, page 119.

† *Ma tu, etc.* Castelvetro thinks that it is at this point of Virgil's speech that Dante notices in him that gentle expression to which he alludes in *Inf.* xxiv, 20, 21 :

" Lo duca a me si volse con quel piglio
Dolce, ch' io vidi prima a piè del monte."

mountain of delights which is the beginning
and the cause of every joy?"

Dante replies: first expressing his astonishment and delight at meeting Virgil; then pointing out to him the danger in which he finds himself, and imploring his protection.

—"Or se' tu quel Virgilio, e quella fonte,
Che spande di parlar sì largo fiume?"— 80
Risposi lui* con vergognosa fronte.†
—"O degli altri poeti onore e lume,
Vagliami il lungo studio e il grande amore,
Che m' ha fatto cercar lo tuo volume. 85
Tu se' lo mio maestro e il mio autore :
Tu se' solo colui, da cui io tolsi
Lo bello stile,‡ che m' ha fatto onore.
Vedi la bestia,|| per cui io mi volsi :
Aiutami da lei, famoso saggio,
Ch' ella mi fa tremar le vene§ e i polsi."— 90

* *Risposi lui*: Benvenuto reads *rispuosi io a lui*. The *a* is used by all non-Tuscan Italians, but Dante was a Tuscan, and would certainly have used the expression *risposi lui* rather than *risposi io a lui*.

† *vergognosa fronte*: Benvenuto contends that Dante was abashed because men are wont to feel shame when convicted of an error before their superiors.

‡ *Lo bello stile*: Dante had already won for himself an honourable name by his lyric poetry.

|| Scartazzini remarks that although three wild beasts had opposed Dante's progress, yet from the moment that Virgil appears, he only mentions the last one.

§ *le vene e i polsi*: compare *Inf.* xiii, 62, 63:

"Fede portai al glorioso offizio,
Tanto ch' io ne perdei lo sonno e i polsi."

“Art thou then that (renowned) Virgil, and that fountain-head that pours forth so vast a flood of eloquence?” replied I unto him with abashed countenance. “O glory and light of other poets, may the long study and the intense affection (for thee), that has made me unfold thy volume, (now) avail me. Thou art my master and my author: thou alone art he from whom I have derived the pure style which has (already) done me honour. Behold the Beast (the Wolf), for which I turned back, protect me from her, Illustrious Sage, for she makes my veins and my pulses to tremble.”

From this last line, Biagioli contends that Dante must have had a kind of foreknowledge of the circulation of the blood, the discovery of which, in later times, was to render immortal the name of Harvey.

Division V. In this portion of the Canto we have Virgil's answer to Dante's petition for assistance, his prophecy as to a mysterious personage who is to be the saviour of Italy, and his advice to Dante to accept his guidance through the regions of Hell and Purgatory, after which a blessed spirit will guide him still higher. The Canto concludes with Dante's complete submission to Virgil's proposition and advice.

Benvenuto says that many might object that Dante should be told by Virgil that he will have to travel by a different way from what he is doing, when he is in fact striving to walk in the best path, the way of virtue, up the mountain. Benvenuto thinks that Virgil's meaning is that he will guide Dante to Hell through the valley of sin into which Dante was receding, but in a different way from which he was then pursuing, namely, by the way of speculation, and that Virgil implies that the time has not yet come for ascending the mountain, for a man cannot with any success go from one extreme to another, and from being a sinner become a saint in an instant of time, but must go by degrees, and first descend into Hell, that is, to the self-conviction of his sins, for such conviction is the beginning of penitence, and if evil be not recognised, it cannot be avoided. Virgil wishes, then that Dante should observe and contemplate the penalties of Hell which are inflicted on men on account of their sins.

—“A te conven tenere altro viaggio,”*—

Rispose, poi che lagrimar mi vide,

—“Se vuoi campar d' esto loco selvaggio :

Chè questa bestia, per la qual tu gride,

Non lascia altrui passar per la sua via,

Ma tanto lo impedisce, che l' uccide :

95

* *tenere altro viaggio* : Biagioli quotes Boëthius (*De Cons. Phil.* iii, Met. i) as proving that Man cannot arrive at the truth until he has acquired a conviction of error :

“Tu quoque falsa tuens bona prius

Incipi colla jugo retrahere.

Vera dehinc animum subierint.”

Ed ha natura sì malvagia e ria,
 Che mai non empie* la bramosa voglia,
 E dopo il pasto ha più fame che pria.†

“Thou must journey by a different path,” he answered, when he saw me weep, “if thou wouldst escape from this desolate spot. Because this Beast, on account of which thou criest (for help), allows no other men to pass her way, but so hinders them that she slays them. And she has a nature so malevolent and evil, that never does she glut her insatiable appetite, and, after her food, is more hungry than before.

We have now before us one of the most disputed passages in the whole of the *Divina Commedia*, one, as to the meaning of which the greatest authorities have ever been in entire discord one with another.

The following are the principal opinions as to the person signified by the *Veltro*.

(1) Our Lord Jesus Christ. This view is supported by Benvenuto, and indeed by most of the old Commentators. It must be remembered that in the Middle

* *Che mai non empie* : compare *Eccles. iv, 8* :

“Neither is his eye satisfied with riches.”

and *Ibid. v, 10* : “He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver ; nor he that loveth abundance with increase.”

† *dopo il pasto ha più fame che pria* : compare St. Jerome, *Epistle 53* : “Antiquum dictum est : Avaro tam deest, quod habet, quam quod non habet.” also Horace, *Epist. i, ii, 56* :

“Semper avarus eget.”

Ages there was a very prevalent belief in the Second Coming of our Lord, and at no distant period.

(2) A determinate Pope—Benedict XI.

(3) An indeterminate Pope.

(4) A determinate Emperor—Henry VII of Luxembourg.

(5) An ideal Emperor—indeterminate.

(6) Some great Ghibelline leader, but no one special personage.

(7) The famous Ghibelline leader Ugucione della Faggiuola. This is contended at great length by Count Carlo Troya (*Veltro Allegorico di Dante*, Firenze, 1826).

(8) Can Grande della Scala, Lord of Verona.

(9) Other Ghibelline leaders, such as Louis of Bavaria, Matteo Visconti, Cino da Pistoia, Botticello Buonacasso of Mantua, or Castruccio Castracani.

(10) Dante himself, and his Poem. This view was first propounded by Missirini (*Vita di Dante*, Milano, 1844); and since by Count Ruggero della Torre (*Poeta-Veltro*, Cividale, 1887).

(11) A person of lowly birth, born *tra feltro e feltro*, between felt and felt, *i.e.* in the garb of poverty.

Tommasèo wittily remarks that it is a well known fact that every interpreter of Dante tries to slip his own collar on to the famous "Greyhound" (*Veltro*).

Père J. Berthier (*La Divina Commedia*, Freiburg [Switzerland], 1892) contends that Dante took the idea of his *Veltro*, and perhaps also of the three beasts,

from the celebrated *Chanson de Roland*, in which on two occasions there appears in a dream to Charlemagne a Greyhound to fight against a panther and a bear.

Dean Church wrote to me in 1889: "The *Veltro*, I fear, is hopeless: nothing better can be suggested than Can Grande. But Dante himself must come to explain *tra Feltro e Feltro*."

The different interpretations to be placed upon the *Veltro*, and the arguments *pro* and *con*, are ably discussed by Professor Mgr. Poletto (*Dizionario Dantesco*, Siena, 1885-1892). In *Readings on the Purgatorio of Dante*, I adopted the views of Scartazzini as to the signification of DXV in Canto xxxiii, 43 *et seq.* His opinion is that the two passages of the *Veltro* and the DXV must be taken together, as they both betoken one and the same person. In his earlier Commentary (Leipzig, 1875) Scartazzini maintained the DXV to be Can Grande della Scala, Lord of Verona. But finding that in his recent Commentary (Milan, 1893), he had to some extent modified his views as to the *Veltro* and the *Cinquecento dieci e cinque* (DXV or DVX), I wrote to ask him his advice, and the following is extracted from a letter he very kindly wrote me in answer:*

"Yes, it may be that the famous *Veltro* as well as the *Cinquecento dieci e cinque* in the intention of Dante represent an Emperor,—an ideal Emperor, indeter-

* This letter was written to me 20 Jan., 1893, just before this work was sent to press. My other references to Scartazzini were written more than three years before, and are taken from his earlier (Leipzig) Commentary.

minate, as indeed Poletto seems to me to mean, not Henry VII, who beyond a doubt was dead when Dante was writing his last Cantos of the *Purgatorio*, and, according to my firm conviction, dead soon after the time that Dante wrote the prophecy of the *Veltro*. But even allowing this to be a possibility, I should say, in my opinion, that to demonstrate the reality of it is altogether impossible. The more I think of it, the more is my suspicion strengthened that both in the prophecy of the *Veltro* and in that of the DXV, and in all the passages relating to the same, Dante does no more than express a general hope in *some* future liberator, who was not even to himself a concrete and determinate personage. Therefore, to anyone who might have asked him who this *Veltro* and *Messo di Dio* really were, Dante would probably have given no better reply than what we read in *Purg.* xxxiii, 46 *et seq.* With regard to the *Veltro* in the first Canto of the *Inferno*, I cannot altogether withdraw from the opinion of those who see in it a representation of Can Grande, and principally because of the affinity between *Inf.* i and *Par.* xvii (an affinity which I have already noticed in my Leipzig Comment); because also of the name *Veltro* (Greyhound) in which might be traced an allusion to the name of *Cane* (Dog); because also of *Inf.* xix, 70, where the term *orsatti* (bearcubs) is used for a pun on Orsini (the family name of Pope Nicholas III). But I would not go so far as to say that even in the passage of DXV (*Dux*), and in the passages relating to it, Dante was precisely indicating Can Grande; on the contrary, this is my humble

opinion : Dante firmly believed in a future liberator. Who this liberator was to be, he did not even know himself, nor could he know it. Hence it is quite possible that at different times he may have built his hopes upon different personages, both in Can Grande, and in an Emperor, and perhaps too in a Pope. Besides, if we only reflect how much the belief prevailed in the Middle Ages of the approaching Second Advent of Jesus Christ, it does not seem to me that we must altogether cast aside the very ancient opinion that both in the *Veltro* and in the *DXV* Dante forecasts a picture of the coming Messiah.

“You see then that I really do not know how to advise you as to your best course in interpreting the passages in question, as I have not myself any very firm conviction on the subject, and rather believing on the contrary that all these opinions are nothing more than hypotheses more or less happy. If I myself had got to write a work specially about the *Veltro* (*Inf.* i) and the *Messo di Dio* (*Purg.* xxxiii), I should quote in chronological order all the interpretations that have up to now been given, together with all the arguments *pro* and *con*, and I should conclude with a modest and regretful ‘*non liquet*.’”

In so far as I myself venture to have an opinion on the subject, I rely chiefly on *Paradiso* xvii, and prefer to think that Dante, who had set his heart on an ideal Emperor to be yet discovered, had cast his eyes upon Can Grande of Verona, a noble youth of such promise that no elevation in dignity seemed to Dante beyond his reach.

Molti son gli animali, a cui si ammoglia, 100
 E più saranno ancora, infin che il veltro
 Verrà, che la farà morir con doglia.

Many are the animals with whom she is wedded, and more will there be yet, until there shall come the Greyhound, who will make her die of grief.

Fratricelli explains this to mean that, in the moral sense, Avarice unites herself to many other vices, such as fraud, theft, etc., and in the political sense, that Rome makes alliances with many potentates to strengthen her Guelph party.

Benvenuto admires the comparison in the above lines, for he says that, as a wife cannot be parted from her husband except by death, so Avarice, as a most loving consort, cleaves to many men even unto death. Dante having likened Avarice to a Wolf, preserves the metaphor in describing her foe as a dog, the natural enemy of the wolf, and as the dog drives the wolf from the sheep, so will the Greyhound drive Avarice from men.

The indifference to wealth on the part of this unknown personage, and his birthplace, are now mentioned.

Questi non ciberà terra nè peltro,*
 Ma sapienza e amore e virtute,
 E sua nazione sarà tra Feltro e Feltro. 105

* Scartazzini (Leipzig Commentary, 1874) points out that, from Dante's own writings, it is shown that he had, under the allegorical name of *Veltro* (Greyhound), concealed that of Can Grande della Scala. He speaks of this personage in the future

He will not nourish himself on lands or on riches, but on wisdom, and love, and virtue, and his dominions (*lit.* nation) will lie between Feltro and Feltro.

(*verrà*), and in point of fact in 1300 Can Grande was but a child of nine years old. He compares the passage *non ciberà nè terra nè feltro* with *Par.* xvii, 83, 84, where Dante, speaking directly of Cane, says :

“ Parran faville della sua virtute
In non curar d' argento, nè d' affanni.”

His dominions were to be *tra Feltro e Feltro*, the one being Feltre a city of Friuli, and the other Montefeltro in the Romagna ; and thus it will be seen that the entire plain of the Po, which came under the dominion of Can Grande after his victory over the Paduans in 1314, actually did lie between Feltro and Feltro. The *Veltro* was to be the liberator, or salvation of Italy, for Dante says: *questi la caccerà per ogni villa, fin che l' avrà rimessa nello inferno*. In *Par.* xvii, 89-90, he writes of Can Grande as follows :

“ Per lui fia trasmutata molta gente,
Cambiando condizion ricchi e mendici.”

Moreover, after the death of Henry VII, Can Grande became the Imperial Vicar, and was the representative of the Imperial power and authority in Italy ; and although it may seem a somewhat exaggerated hope that either the Emperor or his Vicar would be able to destroy concupiscence, yet it is evident from his own words (*De Monarchia*, Lib. i, *passim*. Translation of Marsilio Ficino) that Dante did entertain such a hope. He says: “ Alla giustizia massime si contrappone la cupidità, non resta alla giustizia alcun contrario. . . . Dove non resta alcuna cosa che si possa desiderare, ivi non può esser cupidità. . . . Il monarca non ha che desiderare ; imperochè la sua giurisdizione dallo oceano è terminata. . . . E non avendo il monarca nulla o minima cagione di cupidità, . . . ed essendo la cupidità la propria corruzione del giudizio e della giustizia, è ragionevole che egli può essere ottime disposto a reggere ; perchè può più

Di quell' umile* Italia fia salute,
 Per cui morì la vergine Cammilla,†
 Eurialo, e Turno, e Niso di ferute :

He shall be the salvation of that (now)
 humbled Italy, for which the maid Cammilla,
 Euryalus, and Turnus, and Nisus died of
 wounds.

There are different versions as to the meaning of *quell' umile Italia*. Scartazzini thinks the words are spoken ironically, and signify "that proud land." Carlyle takes them literally, as "poor degraded Italy," now fallen from its former high estate. Others consider it to refer to the low-lying plains of Lombardy, and to be simply "the Lowlands of Italy."‡

Virgil then goes on to speak of the war that the Greyhound will wage against the Wolf.

che gli altri avere giudizio e giustizia. . . . Solo adunque il monarca può ottimamente gli altri disporre."

Hence it will be seen that the prophecy of the *Veltro*, when divested of its poetic garb, hardly expresses any higher aspirations than Dante actually nourished with regard to his ideal of a monarch. And if Can Grande was the vicar of the universal monarch, and if he had already rendered himself deserving of the encomiums lavished upon him in the seventeenth canto of the *Paradiso*, Dante might well found his hopes upon him.

* See *Purg.* vi, 76-78.

† Cammilla, Euryalus, Turnus, and Nisus are characters mentioned in the *Æneid*. Benvenuto devotes many pages to them.

‡ This is the view taken by Cary and Longfellow, who quote in support of it from Virgil, *Æn.* iii, 522. :

" . . . humilemque videmus
 Italiam."

D)

Questi la caccerà per ogni villa,*
 Fin che l' avrà rimessa nello inferno, 110
 Là onde invidia prima dipartilla.

He shall chase her through every city, until
 he have put her back into Hell, there whence
 the first Envy sent her forth.

The Envy is that of Satan with respect to Man in the Garden of Paradise.† Benvenuto thinks it is spoken against the avarice of the priesthood, and that *fin che l' avrà rimessa nello inferno* means that the unknown leader will exterminate all avaricious prelates, who, on account of their sinful exactions, will go to Hell.

Virgil has told Dante that he will have to turn his steps into a different path from that on which he was impeded by the three Beasts, and especially by the Wolf representing Avarice or Cupidity. He has told him that a deliverer might be expected, who would combat and conquer this demon of Avarice or Cupidity, and now gives it as his opinion that what will tend most

* *Villa* is used for *città*. In *Inf.* xxiii, 95, we find it applied to Florence :

“Sovra il bel fiume d' Arno alla gran villa.”

And in *Purg.* xv, 97, to Athens :

“ . . . ‘Se tu se’ sire della villa,
 Del cui nome ne’ Dei fu tanta lite,
 Ed onde ogni scienza disfavilla’.”

See also *Purg.* xviii, 83 : “più che villa Mantovana.”

† Envy. See *Wisdom* ii, 24: “Nevertheless through envy of the devil came sin into the world : and they that do hold of his side do find it.”

to the benefit of Dante's soul will be to journey under his guidance through the realms of Hell, and over the Mountain of Purgatory, after which one holier than himself will guide Dante further.

Ond' io per lo tuo me' penso e discerno,
 Che tu mi segui, ed io sarò tua guida,
 E trarrotti di qui per loco eterno,
 Ove udirai le disperate strida, 115
 Vedrai gli antichi spiriti dolenti,
 Che la seconda morte ciascun grida* :

Wherefore I think and pronounce it for thy good, that thou follow me, and I will be thy guide, and will lead thee from here through a place of eternity (Hell), where thou wilt hear the shrieks of despair, and wilt behold the spirits of days gone by, wailing in agony, for that each one proclaims the second death (*i. e.* Hell).

* *che la seconda morte ciascun grida*: I am much indebted to the late Dean Church for kindly helping me with this most difficult passage. He wrote to me in 1889: "The whole passage seems to me rather an account of the *Inferno* as a whole, than to refer specially to the great men in *Limbo*. The *disperate strida* coming *first*, seemed to show that the three stanzas correspond to the three *Cantiche*: and the *Limbo* seems hardly sufficient to have a place to itself apart from the three great divisions." I have followed Lubin in taking *che* as an ellipsis for *in che* or *di che*, but have not followed him in thinking the line refers to the spirits in *Limbo*, and that *che* must be taken to signify "whose." Lubin's translation is: "whose second death every one (on Earth) deploras (believing them to be among the lost in Hell). Scartazzini feels very uncertain as to the meaning, but he agrees with Lubin in his opinion that under no circumstances must

E poi vedrai color, che son contenti
 Nel fuoco, perchè speran di venire,
 Quando che sia, alle beate genti : 120
 Alle qua' poi se tu vorrai salire*,
 Anima fia a ciò di me più degna ;
 Con lei ti lascerò nel mio partire :

grida be taken in the sense of desiring, or imploring with loud cries.

Dr. Moore (*Contributions to the Textual Criticism of the Divina Commedia*, Cambridge, 1889) remarks (page 7, note on 117). : " *Che la* seems certainly right. Against *Ch' alla* is (a) the construction of *grida* in *Purg.* viii, 125. (β) *Grida* here, as in *Purg. l.c.*, does not mean 'cry out to,' but proclaim, declare, set forth. (γ) If, as is possible, the idea in *gridare allu* was intended to correspond with such passages as Job iii, 21, or Rev. vi, 16, etc., this is inappropriate, as Scripture never uses such expressions of 'the second death'. (δ) Finally, Zaini de' Ferranti appropriately illustrates *grida* by Virgil's use of *testatur* in *Æn.* vi, 619." Mr. James Russell Lowell, in his *Essay on Dante* (p. 226), in discussing this passage, owns that he prefers the first of four interpretations that Pietro di Dante gives, among which to choose, namely, "that allegorically, depraved and vicious men are in a sense dead in reputation, and this is the first death ; the second is that of the body."

* *se tu vorrai salire*: Lubin observes that Virgil has told Dante that he will guide him through Hell and Purgatory, into which human reason can enter, but he must be conducted into Paradise by the spirit of Beatrice, which, illumined by revelation, can discern what is denied to mere human reason. Dante can only be delivered from the three beasts on the condition of visiting Hell and Purgatory, but it is left to the option of his own free will whether or no he wishes to ascend into the realms of bliss (*se tu vorrai salire*). Lubin thinks that, in the journey through Hell and Purgatory, *the Active Life* is symbolized ; in the journey into Paradise *the Contemplative Life*.

Chè quello imperador, che lassù regna,
 Perch' io fui ribellante* alla sua legge, 125
 Non vuol che in sua città per met si vegna.

And then shalt thou behold those (spirits) that are contented in the fire (of Purgatory), because they have good hope of coming, whenever it may be (the Will of God), among the blessed (in Paradise): and if afterwards thou desirest to mount up among these latter, for that (mission) there shall be a spirit more worthy than I (*i.e.* Beatrice): I will at my departure leave thee with her; for that King of Kings who reigns yonder on high, because I was rebellious to His law (by being a heathen), willeth not that I should enter into His City.

Virgil having described himself as a rebel against God, either as not having become a Christian, or as being a representative of merely human reason, now demonstrates his profound belief in the power of God, and in the boundless extent of His dominions.

* *Ribellante*: Compare *Inf.* iv, 37-38:

“E se furon dinanzi al Cristianesimo,
 Non adorar debitamente Dio.”

And in *Purg.* vii, 25-27, Virgil says of himself to Sordello:

“Non per far, ma per non far ho i' perduto
 Di veder l'alto Sol che tu desiri,
 E che fu tardi da me conosciuto.”

† *per me*: this may also be taken in the sense of *per mezzo di me, i.e.*, under my guidance.

In tutte parti impera, e quivi regge,
 Quivi è la sua città* e l' alto seggio :
 O felice colui, cu' ivi elegge !"—

He governs in all parts, and there (in Paradise) He reigns, there is His City, and His high Throne. O happy he whom He elects (as a citizen) in that place."

Dante at once acquiesces in the advice and the proposition of Virgil.

Ed io a lui :—" Poeta, io ti richieggo 130
 Per quello Dio, che tu non conoscesti,†
 Acciocch' io fugga questo male e peggio,
 Che tu mi meni là dov' or dicesti,
 Sì ch' io vegga la porta di San Pietro,‡

* *Quivi è la sua città* : Compare Psalm xi, 4; "The Lord's throne is in Heaven"; and Psalm ciii, 19; "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all;" and Isaiah, lxvi, 1; "Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool;" and Boethius (*De Consol. Philos.*, iv Metrum I, 18-20):

"Hic Regum sceptrum dominus tenet,
 Orbisque habenas temperat."

† *Per quello Dio, che tu non conoscesti* : compare 1 Cor. i, 21: "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

‡ *la porta di San Pietro* : Scartazzini follows Benvenuto in thinking this to mean the Gate of Paradise, of which St. Peter was said to keep the keys. The general view, however, is that it signifies the Gate of Purgatory, the keys of which were entrusted by St. Peter to the Angel Warder, who, in *Purg.* ix, 127, says of the keys :—

"Da Pier le tengo ; e dissemi, ch' io erri
 Anzi ad aprir, che a tenerla serrata,
 Pur che la gente a' piedi mi s' atterri."

Some explain that the Gate of Purgatory is really the

E color, che tu fai cotanto mesti."—

135

Allor si mosse, ed io li tenni retro.*

And I to him: "Poet, I entreat thee by that God Whom thou knewest not; in order that I may escape this evil (*i.e.* Sin), and worse (*i.e.* Hell), that thou wilt lead me there where thou saidst but now (*i.e.* through Hell and Purgatory), so that I may behold the Gate of St. Peter, and those whom thou describest as so full of anguish (*i.e.* the lost spirits in Hell)." Then he moved on, and I kept behind him.

entrance to Heaven, since all who enter the former are sure of eventually entering the latter, and besides, no entrance-gate is mentioned in the *Paradiso*.

* *ed io li tenni retro*: Biagioli says that *tener dietro a uno* is a defective construction, and yet graceful; the full meaning being: *tenere in andando il luogo di retro ad uno*.

END OF CANTO I.

DIGRESSION ON LINE 37.

"*Tempo era dal principio del mattino.*" et seq.

There is great divergence of opinion among the commentators of the *Divina Commedia* in establishing the assumed date of the journey through the worlds unseen, which forms the subject of the poem.

By far the larger number have thought that the time indicated is the spring of the year 1300. A much smaller number contend it to be 1301. Of the supporters of the date 1300, some think the journey began on the 13th March; others gives various dates from the 15th of March to the 5th of April. Lubin quotes Lanci Fortunato (*Ordinamenti ond' ebbe Dante*

Allighieri informato le tre Cantiche, Roma, 1856) as taking the journey to commence on the night of Thursday, the 7th of April; and this opinion is shared by della Valle Giovanni *Orario del viaggio Dantesco*, Faenza, 1870), and Pasquinai, *La Principale Allegoria*, Milano, 1875): and Lubin considers this date is without doubt the only true one to assign to Dante's supposed journey. Dante has himself indicated, with clearness and precision, the day on which he found himself lost in the forest, and also that in which he entered into Hell.

When the Poets are quitting the fourth *Bolgia*, that of the Diviners, Virgil urges Dante to hasten his steps, as the moon is already setting, and, he adds, see *Inf. xx*, 127-129:

"E pur iernotte fu la Luna tonda :
Ben ten dee ricordar, che non ti nocque
Alcuna volta per la selva fonda."

which means, "Yesterday the moon was full, and she was of assistance to thee when thou wast in the thick wood." Lubin says this gives a distinct date to find the time. It was the night of the full moon when Dante found himself in the forest, the day before that on which Virgil spoke the above words.

Dr. Moore cites the chief landmarks which are clear and more or less undisputed.

He considers the central landmark to be found in *Inf. xxi*, 112, from which it appears that it was then Easter Eve, it being universally agreed that the ruins here and elsewhere referred to in the *Inferno*, resulted from the earthquake recorded at the moment of Christ's death. This is certain from *Inf. xii*, 34-45.

Dante passed the night between Holy Thursday and Good Friday in the *Selva oscura*. He encountered the *Tre Fiere* on the morning of Good Friday, the season being that of spring, and the sun among the same stars as when he and they were first created, *i.e.*, according to tradition, in the constellation of Aries. The whole day spent in continual advance and retreat (from the dread of these three beasts), and also in the interview with Virgil, who came at last to Dante's aid, so that it was nightfall on Good Friday before they two together approached the Entrance Gate of Hell. Dante enters into Hell at nightfall on Good Friday, whereas Purgatory was entered at daybreak, and Paradise at noon.

Inf. vii, 97-99, shows him to be leaving the fourth circle just after midnight, and passing from the sixth to the seventh circle between 3 and 5 on the morning of Saturday, Easter Eve. See xi, 113-14, compared with xv, 52, *ier mattina*.

He is leaving the fourth *Bolgia* of Malebolge in the eighth circle about sunrise, or, as he prefers to describe it, at *moon-setting* on Easter Eve.

Canto xxi, 112, distinctly shows him to be in the fifth *Bolgia* of Malebolge at 7 a.m. He was in the ninth *Bolgia* early in the afternoon of the same day when the moon was directly under their feet (xxix, 10). He passed the centre of the earth to the other hemisphere between 7 and 8 p.m. (xxxiv, 68), and found that in the new hemisphere (see xxxiv, 96 and 105), the hour was between 7 and 8 a.m., and was probably, not as we might at first suppose, the morning

of Easter *Day*, but apparently the morning of Easter *Eve* over again.

Twenty-one hours were spent in the journey from the centre of the earth to its surface at the Mountain of Purgatory.

Therefore we gather :

1. It was at the time of the Spring Equinox (i, 37-40).
2. Dante entered the *Inferno* on the evening of the day after the Full Moon (xx, 127).
3. The actual day was Good Friday.

These apparently precise data can be explained in two different senses :

1. The scientific or ideal sense ;
2. The popular or natural sense.

Dr. Moore thinks that Dante refers to the Equinox in its general or popular sense, on March 21st, and that, in speaking of the Full Moon he refers, not to the Real or Astronomical, but to the *Calendar* Moon ; and according to this he would have entered the *Inferno* at nightfall on the day after the *Calendar* Full Moon, which, it is known for a fact, in the year 1300 fell upon Thursday, April 7th. Dr. Moore thinks also that Dante did not follow the prevalent mediæval belief that the actual day of the Crucifixion was March 25th, namely, on the thirty-fourth anniversary of the Annunciation, but would have adopted the conventional Good Friday as generally observed, which, in the year 1300, would be on April 8th. Dr. Moore is further of opinion that the reference to the spring equinox need not necessarily mean that Dante's vision commenced on the very day of the Sun entering into Aries, but may have meant some other day while it was still in Aries.

CANTO II.

DANTE'S INVOCATION OF THE MUSES.
HIS MISGIVINGS AS TO HIS STRENGTH.
VIRGIL RELIEVES HIS FEARS.
THE THREE LADIES OF HEAVEN.
COMMENCEMENT OF THE JOURNEY.

In the last Canto Dante stated his proposition, touching upon the place, the time, and the cause of this poem, the obstacles that he encountered, and the timely succour of Virgil.

As we have noticed before, this is really the first Canto of the *Inferno*, the previous one being the Introduction to the *Divina Commedia* as a whole.

Benvenuto divides the Canto into four parts :

In the First Division, from v. 1 to v. 9, after mentioning that it was the close of the day, Dante invokes the aid of the Muses.

In the Second Division, from v. 10 to v. 42, Dante confides to Virgil his doubts as to his sufficiency for the arduous task before him.

In the Third Division, from v. 43 to v. 126, Virgil removes Dante's doubts and tells him that he had received his mandate from Beatrice.

In the Fourth Division, from v. 127 to v. 142, Virgil receives Dante's thanks, and the two poets commence their journey.

Before commencing the account of his journey, Dante informs his readers at what time of day he set out. Benvenuto points out that a doubt arises as to how Dante has passed through a whole day so speedily, for in the last canto he said that it was morning (*Tempo era dal principio del mattino*); and now he says that it was night-fall. The answer to this is found in the fact that he spent much time in deliberating whether or no he could undertake so great a work (*io fui per ritornar più volte volto*). What he now wishes to bring out forcibly is that this evening hour, which is the time when all animate nature seeks quiet and repose, was to him alone the commencement of a double toil, both of the body and of the mind; of the body, on account of the fatigue of the difficult paths to be traversed, and of the mind, from the harrowing details of the penalties inflicted on the spirits of the damned which he would have to witness and to describe, and the compassionate sorrow that the contemplation of them would cause him. Benvenuto remarks on the appropriateness of Dante making his entrance into Hell occur at night. The time corresponds with the place, for as night is the time of darkness, blindness, and sin, so is Hell a place of punishment, obscurity, and ignorance, and as the fall of night deprives us of the light of the sun, so does Dante rightly figure himself as entering into the gloom of Hell, where the sun never shines after it has set on Earth. It will be noticed on the other hand that, as the Poets emerged from Hell into Purgatory, the sun was just rising.

Lo giorno se n' andava,* e l' aer brunot
 Toglieva gli animai,† che sono in terra,
 Dalle fatiche loro ; ed io sol uno
 M' apparecchiava a sostener la guerra
 Sì del cammino e sì della pietate,
 Che ritrarrà la mente, che non erra. 5

The day was departing, and the darkening
 atmosphere was releasing all living things that
 are on earth from their toils ; and I, the one
 alone, was preparing myself to sustain the

* *Lo giorno se n' andava*, etc. : compare the opening lines of
 Gray's *Elegy* :

“The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
 The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
 The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
 And leaves the world to darkness and to me.”

And Milton, *Par. Lost.* iv, 598—602 :

“Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray
 Had in her sober livery all things clad ;
 Silence accompany'd ; for beast and bird,
 They to their grassy couch, these to their nests,
 Were slunk.”

And Virgil, *Aeneid*, viii, 26, 27 :

“Nox erat ; et terras animalia fessa per omnes
 Alituum pecudumque genus sopor altus habebat.”

And Chaucer, *The Assembled of Foules*, st. 13 :

“The day gan failen, and the darke night,
 That reveth beastes from hir businesse,
 Beraft me my booke for lacke of light.”

† *L' aer bruno* : Longfellow quotes a long passage of Ruskin
 commenting on “*the brown air*,” and hinting that Dante meant
 slate-grey, inclining to black. To anyone acquainted with
 Tuscan idiom the word “*bruno*” is familiar as meaning black.
Portare il bruno, to be in mourning, *portare il bruno sul capello*,
 to wear crape on one's hat.

‡ *Animai* : Animated beings. In *Convito* iii, 2, Dante
 writes : “è l' uomo divino animale da' filosofi chiamato.”

struggle (*lit.* war) both of the way, and also of the pity (for the sufferings I was about to witness), which the memory that errs not shall describe.

The evening is that of Good Friday 1300, in which year Dante supposes his vision to have taken place.

Dante now, following the example of Virgil and Homer, makes his invocation to the Muses, and it is remarkable that he begins it at line 7, which corresponds exactly to his invocation at line 7 of the first Canto of the *Purgatorio*. This is one of the many instances of the symmetrical method of the *Divina Commedia*.

O Muse, o alto ingegno,* or m' aiutate :
O mente, che scrivesti ciò ch' io vidi,
Qui si parrà la tua nobilitate.

O Muses! O lofty genius! now aid me ;
O Memory, that didst record what I saw,
here will be made manifest thy nobility !

What Dante would say in this Invocation, is that, having lately taken upon himself to describe so noble a subject, it will soon become evident whether his mind is noble and wonderful, having such an opportunity of displaying its exalted faculties. He shows the confidence he had in himself, by calling on the powers of knowledge, intelligence and memory.†

* *Alto ingegno* : compare *Inf.* x, 58, 59 :

“ Se per questo cieco

Carcere vai per altezza d'ingegno,” etc.

† Benvenuto speaks of Dante as a man of wonderful capacity, perspicuous intellect, the loftiest genius, and the most subtle invention, and says that his outward appearance gave strong evidence of the qualities of his mind. He adds : “ This re-

Division II. Dante now confides to Virgil his doubts as to his adequacy to perform the great work which he has undertaken.

Benvenuto's remarks are so interesting, that at the risk of being tedious I give them at length :

"For the better understanding of the matter that follows we must premise by observing that this question of Dante, which he figures himself as putting to Virgil, is nothing else than a certain struggle of the mind, and antagonism between Man and Reason. For Dante had been inwardly examining his strength, and made within himself these arguments and objections: 'Thou art not Homer, nor Virgil, thou canst never attain the excellence of famous poets, and, consequently, thy work cannot long remain a thing of value; nay, rather, as Horace

spected Dante was of middle stature, and when he had passed middle age he was wont to walk somewhat bent; his gait was quiet and dignified; his garb very becoming, and suited to his profession (as a poet); his face was long, his nose aquiline, his eyes somewhat large, his jaws full, his under lip projecting, his complexion dark, his hair and beard thick, black, and curling, his expression always melancholy, thoughtful and contemplative. It happened to him once in the noble city of Verona, when, after the publication of the *Inferno*, his reputation was already spread abroad, as he was passing through a street before the gate, where many ladies were assembled, that one of them said in a low voice, but yet loud enough to be heard: 'Look at the man who goes in and out of Hell just when he pleases and brings news of those who are there.' 'Thou sayest truly,' answered another, 'seest thou not how the heat has made his hair to curl, and the smoke has given a dark tint to his face?' Dante, who seldom or never was wont to laugh, could not but do so on hearing these remarks."

says in his book,* it will soon be carried away as waste paper to the grocer's, and be torn up to wrap soap in.' Having these thoughts in his mind, Dante had at first begun to write in Latin, the language of literature, but afterwards he wrote in the vulgar tongue.

"The same struggle of the mind (says Benvenuto of himself) I experienced in myself before I dared to write upon this book (the *Divina Commedia*) of such world-wide reputation. But here arises the question, which is often rightly asked: why should a man of such great literary and scientific attainments as Dante have written in the popular style and in the mother tongue? To answer this briefly, we may say, for many causes; *first*, that it might be of use to many, and chiefly to Italians, who, more than other nations, take pleasure in poetry. For if he had written in the language of literature, he would only have profited literary people, and not even all of them, but only a few. Therefore he executed a work, never done before, which the most literary and learned men can examine. *Secondly*, because Dante, observing that all liberal studies, and chiefly poetry, had fallen into neglect among princes and nobles, who had been wont to take delight in poetical works, which indeed used formerly to be dedicated to them, and that works such as those of

* Benvenuto probably intended to refer to the concluding lines of *Epist. lib. ii*, *Epist. i*, 266-270:

"Nec prave factis decorari versibus opto:
 Ne rubeam pingui donatus munere, et una
 Cum scriptore meo capsula porrecta aperta,
 Deferar in vicum vendentem thus et odores,
 Et piper, et quicquid chartis amicitur ineptis."

Virgil and other pre-eminent poets were lying uncared for and unseen, cautiously and prudently brought himself to write in the popular style, when indeed he had already commenced the *Divina Commedia*, thus : *Ultima regna canam, fluido contermina mundo, Spiritibus qui lata patent, quæ præmia solvunt Pro meritis cuicumque suis, etc.*

“ But many others say that Dante recognized the fact that his style did not come up to the standard necessary for so exalted a subject ; and I might also have believed this, had not the idea been put out of my head by the authority of our latest poet, Petrarch, who, speaking of Dante, writes to my revered teacher Boccaccio of Certaldo, as follows : ‘ I have a strong opinion as to his genius, that all was within his reach that he might have attempted.’ ”

In Boccaccio’s Life of Dante almost the same words are used, only he uses the expression *idioma fiorentino* where Benvenuto says *scripsit vulgariter et materne.*

Io cominciai :—“ Poeta, che mi guidi, 10
Guarda la mia virtù, s’ ella è possente,*
Prima che all’ alto passo tu mi fidi.

I began : “ O Poet that art guiding me, do thou have regard to my powers (*lit.* virtue, to see) if they be sufficient, before thou comittest me to the arduous enterprise.

Dante now anticipates a possible answer of Virgil

* Dante begins to doubt whether his powers are sufficient
“ a sostener la guerra
Si del cammin e sì della pietate.”—*Inf.* ii, 5, 6.

to his question. The latter might have replied: "Why shouldst thou be incapable of going to the Unseen World? Did not Æneas, according to my narration (in *Æn.* vi), do so? and St. Paul, as we are told in the Scriptures?" Dante would practically tell Virgil that there was a special grace supposed in Virgil's poem to have been granted to Æneas that he might be strengthened to go forward and form a Kingdom in Italy, but he asks why should such grace be granted to himself.

Tu dici, che di Silvio lo parente,
Corruttibile ancora, ad immortale
Secolo* andò, e fu sensibilmente.† 15

Thou sayest that (Æneas) the father of Sylvius, while yet corruptible (*i. e.* living) went to the immortal world, and was there in the flesh.‡

Però se l' avversario d' ogni male‡

* *immortale secolo*: Fanfani (*Vocabolario della Lingua Italiana. Firenze, 1865*) says that *secolo*, besides signifying the space of one hundred years, also has the meaning "world," "life," &c. *secolo mortale*, human life; *secolo immortale*, eternal life. Blanc (*Vocabolario Dantesco. Firenze 1859*) translates these latter words as "*P Inferno.*" Compare Statius, *Theb.* xi, 592:

"totisque exspectent sæcula ripis."

i. e. the shades of the Infernal regions; and in the sense of "world" compare *Purg.* xvi, 135:

"In rimproverio del secol selvaggio."

† *sensibilmente*: Blanc explains this word as *corporalmente*, the opposite of *in visione*.

‡ The adversary of every evil is God; see Psalm v, 5: "Thou hatest all workers of iniquity."

Cortese* † fu, pensando l' alto effetto,
 Che uscir dovea di lui, e il chi, e il quale, ‡
 Non pare indegno ad uomo d' intelletto :
 Ch' ei fu dell' alta Roma e di suo impero 20
 Nell' empireo § ciel per padre eletto :
 La quale, e il quale (a voler dir lo vero)
 Fur stabiliti per lo loco santo,
 U' ¶ siede il successor del maggior ¶ Piero.
 Per questa andata, onde gli dai tu vanto, 25
 Intese cose, che furon cagione
 Di sua vittoria e del papale ammanto.

Wherefore, when one considers the splendid
 outgrowth (Rome) that was to emanate from

* *Cortese* is used here in the sense of Divine condescension or grace, but in *Par.* vii, 91-92, we find it signifying clemency :

“ O che Dio solo per sua cortesia

Dimesso avesse.”

† *i* : for *a lui*.

‡ *il chi e il quale* : *chi* and *quale* are expressions of the Scholiasts, the first *quis* signifying the substance, and the second *quid* the quality.

§ *empireo* : the most exalted of the Spheres of Heaven, and according to the belief prevalent in the Middle Ages, the especial abode of the Deity. In *Convito*, ii, 4, Dante writes : “ Veramente . . . li cattolici pongono lo Cielo Empireo, che tanto vuol dire, quanto cielo di fiamma ovvero luminoso,” and in the same chapter, “ E questo quieto e pacifico cielo è lo luogo di quella Somma Deità che sè sola compiutamente vede. Questo è lo luogo degli spiriti beati, secondo che la santa Chiesa vuole, che non può dir menzogna.”

¶ *U'* : derived from the Latin *ubi* is an ancient poetic form for *ove*.

¶ *maggior Piero* : Boccaccio comments on this passage : “ cioè di San Piero apostolo, il quale chiama maggiore per la

him (*Æneas*), and the who (the Roman people), and the what (the Roman Empire), (then) it does not appear unreasonable to a man of understanding that the Adversary of all evil (God) was gracious to him (in allowing him to visit Hell): since he (*Æneas*) was chosen in the Empyrean Heaven to be the progenitor of great Rome and its Empire: both which places (*lit.* the which, Rome, and the what, the Empire)—wishing to speak the truth—were decided upon as the holy place where sits the successor of the greater Peter (*i. e.* the Pope). During this journey (to the Elysian Fields), for which thou (*Virgil*) givest him due honour (in the *Æneid*), he learned things which were the cause of his victory (over *Turnus*) and of the Papal Mantle.

Dante here wishes it to be understood that the great deeds, and the heroes who made Rome so famous, were a preparation to render her worthy to become at a future time the seat of the pontifical dignity.

Dante next argues that because St. Paul was caught up to Heaven when alive, that is no reason why he (*Dante*) should be able to go there, for St. Paul was taken there for the confirmation of the Catholic Faith.

dignità papale, e la differenza di più altri santi nomini nominati Piero." In *Par.* xxv, 14, Dante speaks of St. Peter as:

"la primizia

Che lasciò Cristo de' Vicarj suoi."

Andovvi* pol lo Vas d' elezione,†
 Per recarne conforto a quella fede,
 Ch' è principio alla via di salvazione. 30
 Ma io perchè venirvi? o chi 'l concede?
 Io non son Enea, io non Paolo sono:
 Me degno a ciò nè io nè altri 'l crede.

Afterwards the Chosen Vessel (St. Paul) went there to bring back from it (the unseen world) confirmation of that Faith which is the beginning of the way of Salvation. But I, why (should I) go there? or who vouchsafes it? I am not Æneas, I am not Paul; neither do I, nor do others believe me worthy of it.

He concludes the enumeration of his doubts by saying:

Perchè se del venire io m' abbandono,
 Temo che la venuta non sia folle: 35
 Se' savio, intendi me' ch' io non ragiono."—

Wherefore, if I (blindly) resign myself to go, I fear that my journey (*lit.* coming) may prove

* *Andovvi*: *vi* refers to the *secolo immortale*, the unseen worlds of spirits, into which St. Paul penetrated when caught up to Heaven. See ii *Cor.* xii, 2-4: "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth:) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

† *lo Vas d' elezione*: This refers to St. Paul. See Acts ix, 15: "But the Lord said unto him [Ananias], Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me."

foolishness : Thou art wise, and understandest
(my meaning) better than I can speak it."

In the next lines Dante explains the state of irresolution in which he found himself, although he had, as related in the last Canto, immediately acquiesced in Virgil's decision that he should visit the abodes of the dead.

E quale è quei, che disvuol ciò che volle,
E per nuovi pensier cangia proposta,
Sì che dal comminciar tutto si tolle : 40
Tal mi fec' io in quella oscura costa :
Perchè, pensando, consumai la impresa,
Che fu nel cominciar cotanto tosta.

And as is he who unwills what he willed, and changes his purpose from new thoughts, so that he withdraws wholly from his (original) design : such did I become on that gloomy hill side ; for when I thought upon it I abandoned (*lit.* wasted) the enterprise which at first I had so eagerly embraced (*lit.* which at its commencement was so quick).

Scartazzini points out how that at the end of the last Canto we saw Dante firmly resolved to follow Virgil. But already at the very commencement of his journey new doubts have taken birth in his mind. In this description Dante shows a profound knowledge of the human heart, as well as of the means of obtaining salvation. When man first awakes from his slumber of sin he is full of good intentions.*

* Compare *St. Matthew* xiii, 20-21 : " But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the

With a certain amount of enthusiasm, he determines to change his life, and to abandon the paths of sin that are leading him to perdition. In these first moments he has no fears of his own powers being inadequate to enable him to carry out his strong resolution. But he soon experiences the truth of Christ's words in *St. John* xv, 5: "without me ye can do nothing." Sin does not allow its slaves to escape so cheaply. Man cannot of himself be converted, if Divine Grace does not assist him. After the first emotions have passed away, his powers become enfeebled. Enthusiasm vanishes; cowardice, cold calculation, and dry reason, which, from his want of faith, deceive his own self, strive to make him go astray from his healthy purpose. False, pusillanimous humility suggests, "Is your strength sufficient for so exalted an undertaking? It is true that others have done it before you, but they were quite different people from you." Against these vile thoughts there arises illuminated reason, of which Virgil is here the representative, and encourages the sinner desirous of repentance by reminding him of Divine Grace and the succour of Heaven. So man finds out by experience that if on the one hand it is true what Christ says, "Without me ye can do nothing," it is, on the other hand, no less true that man can, as St. Paul says in *Philippians* iv, 13, "do all things through Christ which strengtheneth" (him); and in II *Cor.* xii, 10, he may find, "when I am weak, then am I strong."

word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended."

Division III. Virgil, while removing Dante's misgivings, begins by showing him that they arise from cowardice, which is often so serious a hindrance to man as to cause him to go back from an honourable purpose.

—“Se io ho ben la tua parola intesa,”—

Rispose del magnanimo* quell' ombra,

—“L'anima tua è da viltate offesa :†
La qual molte fiata l' uomo ingombra,
Sì che d' onrata impresa lo rivolva,
Come falso veder bestia, quand' ombra.”

“If I have rightly apprehended thy words,” answered the shade of that great-souled one (*i.e.* Virgil), “thy spirit is assailed by cowardice, which oft times so hinders men, that it turns them back from honourable enterprise ; as a delusive appearance (turns back) a beast when it is shy.

Some translate *quand' ombra* “when it is twilight gloom,” but Blanc says that *ombrare* “est pris par presque tous les interprètes pour avoir peur, devenir ombrageux.” Benvenuto understands it so, and thinks it a most appropriate comparison, for as a young

* *del magnanimo quell' ombra*: a metathesis which is the same as *l' ombra di quel magnanimo*. In *Inf. x*, 73, Dante, alluding to the lofty-mindedness of Farinata degli Uberti, calls him :

“Quell' altro magnanimo.”

† *viltate*: In the next canto we see Virgil enjoining Dante, on entering into Hell, to put away all irresolution or cowardly fears. *Inf. iii*, 14, 15 :

“Qui si convien lasciare ogni sospetto ;
Ogni viltà convien che qui sia morta.”

horse is afraid, erroneously thinking something it has seen to be something else likely to hurt him, and refuses to go forward, however much he be spurred, but rather will go backwards, so is Dante here terrified by a false image that he pictures to himself, and, although he has begun his journey, and is stimulated by the encouraging voice of Virgil, yet is for turning back from sheer cowardice, until Virgil brings him round again to his good purpose, by the power of reason and persuasion.

Virgil, to shake off Dante's timidity, now relates how it was that he came to assist him, so that Dante may see that he neither did so rashly nor to no purpose.

Da questa tema acciocchè tu ti solve,
 Dirotti, perch' io venni, e quel che intesi 50
 Nel primo punto che di te mi dolve.

That thou mayest free thyself from these
 fears, I will tell thee why I came, and what I
 heard at the first moment that I felt compas-
 sion for thee.

Virgil, in order to prove his argument that Dante is capable of executing the task which he appears to dread so much, now commences to relate to him at considerable length how and for what purpose he was fetched out of *Limbo*, and sent to Dante's assistance.

Io era tra color che son sospesi,*
 E donna mi chiamò beata e bella,
 Tal che di comandare io la richiesi.

* *sospesi*: Blanc says: "Dante chiama quelli del Limbo *sospesi*, per esprimere il loro stato medio fra la dannazione e la beatitudine, ovvero per dire che la loro sorte non è ancora definitivamente decisa." Nearly all the commentators, how-

I was among those that are in suspense (*i. e.* in *Limbo*), and there called me a Lady so saintly and beauteous, that I besought her to give me her commands

The Lady is Beatrice, as we shall see at line 70 :

Lucevan gli occhi suoi più che la stella : * 55

ever, take the first of these two interpretations, and consider *sospesi* to signify "*nè salvi nè beati.*" Compare *Inf.* iv, 43 :

"Gran duol mi prese al cor quando lo intesi,
Perocchè genti di molto valore
Conobbi, che in quel limbo eran sospesi."

The words written over the Gate of Hell, *Inf.* iii, 9 : "Lasciate ogni speranza, voi, ch' entrate," and Virgil's own words, *Inf.* iv, 42 :

"Senza speme vivemo in disio."

show clearly that the spirits in Limbo are supposed to be *sospesi tra il cielo e l' inferno*, and can have no hope of bettering their condition after the Day of Judgment.

* *la stella*: Scartazzini remarks that "the star" is put here as a collective noun to signify the stars in general. Biagioli takes the same view, and quotes the following lines of Boëthius, *Lib.* ii, *Met.* iii :

"Cum polo Phœbus roseis quadrigis
Luce[m] spargere cœperit,
Pallet albentes habetata vultus.
Flammis stella prementibus."

and in *Cansone* iv, Dante writes :

"Poi mi parve veder appoco appoco
Turbar lo Sole ed apparir la stella,
E pianger egli ed ella."

This last quotation appears a direct contradiction to those who would understand *la stella* as the sun, but in support of their opinion they cite the first lines of *Cansone* vi in the *Rime Apocrife*, Dante, *Opere Minori*, ed. Fraticelli, vol. i, p. 247 :

"La bella stella che 'l tempo misura
Sembra la donna che mi ha innamorato."

Boccaccio interprets the passage as "that star which is brightest."

E cominciommi a dir soave e piana,
 Con angelica voce, in sua favella :*
 — 'O anima cortese† Mantovana
 Di cui la fama ancor nel mondo dura,
 E durerà quanto il moto lontana : ‡

60

* *Con angelica voce, in sua favella* : Scartazzini says that this must be understood that Beatrice was speaking with an angelic voice ; and not, as some commentators maintain, that the words *in sua favella* refer to the language she used, but only to the *sound* of the voice in which she spoke.

† *cortese* : We have the word here in its more literal sense of "generous," "courteous." In line 17 it is used in the same sense as Cacciaguida uses it in *Par.* xv, 47-48, as signifying the Grace shown by God to Man :

" 'Benedetto sie tu,' fu, ' trino ed uno,
 Che nel mio seme sei tanto cortese.' "

‡ *quanto il moto lontana* : Many editions and MSS. read *mondo* and probably with as good authority. Dr. Moore (*Textual Criticism of the D.C.*, pages 271-272) says the difference of reading is rather a celebrated one, and that it has been argued with some probability that Dante had in his mind Virgil's celebrated description of Fame (*Æn.* iv, 175, etc.) :

" *Fama, malum quo non velocius ullum :*
Mobilitate viget, viresque acquirit eundo. "

in which the three words in italics seem to have points of contact with Dante's words, *fama*, *moto* and *lontana*. Dr. Moore adds that Foscolo maintains the singular opinion that both readings originated with Dante himself, and also holds the theory that Dante kept his poem by him for several years, continually retouching it, and constantly bringing it up to date, by entering, under the form of prophecies, allusions to contemporary events. Dr. Moore thinks *moto* suits the word *lontana* better, if that word be taken as a *verb*, which appears preferable to taking it as an *adjective*. Boccaccio, although he reads *mentre il mondo*, paraphrases, "dice lontana per lontanerà, cioè si prolungherà."

L' amico mio,* e non della ventura,
 Nella disertat† piaggia è impedito
 Sì nel cammin, che volto è per paura :
 E temo che non sia già sì smarrito,
 Ch' io mi sia tardi al soccorso levata,
 Per quel ch' io ho di lui nel Cielo udito.

65

Her eyes shone more than the stars :
 and she commenced saying to me softly
 and gently in her speech, with the voice
 of an angel : ' O generous Mantuan Shade,
 whose renown yet endures in the world,
 and will endure as long-lasting as Time
 (*lit.* Motion). My friend, but not (a friend)
 of fortune, is so impeded in his way on
 the desert mountain-slope (by the three
 wild beasts) that he has turned back from
 terror : and I fear that he is already so far
 astray, that I may have arisen too late for
 his succour, from what I have heard of him
 in Heaven.

Beatrice shows that the souls of the Blessed can see
 in God as it were in a looking-glass all that is passing

* *L' amico mio* : In many passages in the *Divina Commedia*
 does Beatrice show herself to be Dante's friend, but most of all
 in *Purg.* xxx, 136-141, when she alludes to this visit of hers to
 Virgil :

“ Tanto giù cadde, che tutti argomenti
 Alla salute sua eran già corti,
 Fuor che mostrargli le perdute genti.
 Per questo visitai l' uscio dei morti,
 Ed a colui che l' ha quassù condotto,
 Li preghi miei, piangendo, furon porti.”

† *diserta* : The Mountain side was said to be deserted, owing
 to there being so few who scale the steep ascent of Heaven.

on earth.* She urges Virgil to hasten to Dante's aid, reveals to him who she is, and promises him her good offices on his behalf in Heaven.

Or muovi, e con la tua parola ornata,
 E con ciò ch' è mestieri al suo campare,
 L' aiuta sì, ch' io ne sia consolata.
 Io son Beatrice, che ti faccio andare : 70
 Vegno di loco, ove tornar disio :
 Amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare.
 Quando sarò dinanzi al Signor mio,
 Di te mi loderò sovente a lui.'—
 Tacette allora, e poi cominciai io : 75

Arise then, and with thy ornate speech, and with what (argument or persuasion) is necessary for his escape, give him such succour, that I may be consoled thereby. I that send thee forth am Beatrice ; I come from a place, to which I desire to return (*i.e.* Paradise) : Love (for Dante) moved me, which makes me speak. When I shall be (again) in the presence of my Lord, often will I praise thee to him.' She then was silent ; and I there-upon began :

Now that we have reached the point where Beatrice names herself to Virgil, it will be well to say a few words about her. Throughout the *Divina Commedia*, as well as in other of Dante's works, such as the *Vita*

* Compare *Par.* xvii, 37-42 :

“ La contingenza, che fuor del quaderno
 Della vostra materia non si stende,
 Tutta è dipinta nel cospetto eterno ;
 Necessità però quindi non prende
 Se non come dal viso, in che si specchia,
 Nave che per corrente giù discende.”

Nuova, and the *Cansoniere*, she appears in a two-fold aspect. First as the object of Dante's earliest boyish love, which, however, was only a pure, platonic affection, that never seems to have got beyond a slight acquaintance. Secondly, as the symbol of Divine Theology. Benvenuto da Imola, whose commentary was written only fifty years after the death of Dante, expressly states that this Beatrice was really and truly a Florentine woman of great beauty, and of the most honourable reputation, as may be read in other passages, but especially at the end of the *Purgatorio*. When she was eight years old, *she so entered into Dante's heart, that she never went out from it*, and he loved her passionately for the space of sixteen years, at which time she died. His love for her increased with his years; he would follow her wherever she went, and always thought that in her eyes he could behold the summit of happiness. Dante, in his works, at one time takes Beatrice in a historical sense as a real personage, and at another in a mysterious sense as Sacred Theology. And Benvenuto thinks this symbolism very well chosen, for as Beatrice was the most beautiful and modest among the ladies of Florence, so is Theology the most beautiful and honourable among the secular sciences.

Beatrice was the daughter of Folco Portinari, whose family, and that of Dante were on terms of friendship. The meetings of the children were not very frequent, and in due course of time Beatrice married Simone de' Bardi, but died in 1290. The personal identity of Beatrice Portinari was never questioned by the old commentators except by Giovanni Maria Filelfo in

his fanciful and worthless *Vita Dantis*, 1468, and in later times he was followed by Anton Maria Biscioni (*Annotazioni sopra il Convito di Dante*, Florence, 1723), who renewed the doubt as to her reality. Much ingenuity and erudition have since been expended in throwing mists of darkness over what had up to then been considered a plain and straightforward narrative. Professor Poletto (*Dizionario Dantesco*, vol. viii, Siena, 1892) says the question has at the present day reached this point, that the advocates of the different theories have ranged themselves into three camps, namely, (1) Those who with Bartoli deny any existence at all to the Beatrice of the *Vita Nuova*; (2) Those who with Giuliani refuse to see any allegory whatever in the *Vita Nuova*; and (3) Those who steering a middle course admit the real personality of Beatrice, but at the same time discern an incipient allegorical transformation. Mr. James Russell Lowell in his *Essay on Dante* (page 197) says that "so spiritually does Dante always present Beatrice to us, even where most corporeal, as in the *Vita Nuova*, that many, like Biscioni and Rossetti, have doubted her real existence. But surely we must consent to believe that she who speaks of

'the fair limbs wherein

I was enclosed, which scattered are in earth'

(*Purg.* xxxi, 50-51).

was once a creature of flesh and blood. When she died, Dante's grief . . . filled her room up with something fairer than the reality ever had been. There is no idealizer like unavailing regret, all the more if it be a regret of fancy as much as of real feeling. She early

began to undergo that change into something rich and strange in the sea of his mind (*mar di tutto senno*) which so completely super-naturalised her at last."

Scartazzini in his latest commentary (Milan, 1893) says that Beatrice is a name that Dante feigns, in order to conceal the identity of the lady he first loved, thereby admitting Beatrice, but not Beatrice Portinari.

For my own part I prefer to follow the belief that was held by the old commentators in the early child-like love of Dante for Beatrice Portinari, a love so unselfish, that it never sought, nor even apparently expected, any return, and I even incline to the theory I have heard advanced, that Beatrice was, as a young child, betrothed to her future husband Simone de' Bardi, and that Dante's love for her was merely that deferential adoration so prevalent in the Age of Chivalry and in no way derogatory to pure and honourable feeling.

Scartazzini, remarking on the various opinions as to the allegorical signification of Beatrice, some of which take her to be the symbol of Theology, some of Divine Grace, some of the spirit of Christianity, says : "Let us interrogate Dante himself. The office of Beatrice in the *Divina Commedia* is to conduct Dante from the Terrestrial Paradise to the Paradise or Heaven. The latter is, as Dante himself shows (*De Monarchia* iii, § 15), a figure of the happiness of life eternal, which consists in the fruition of the sight of God (*aspetto divino**), to which Man's own virtue or

* In *Par.* iii, 58-60, Dante says to Piccarda de' Donati :

"Ne' mirabili aspetti
Vostri risplende non so che divino,
Che vi trasmuta dai primi concetti."

strength is not able to ascend unless illumined by the light of Heaven. To this state of beatitude Man can only arrive through the spiritual training which transcends human reason, under the direction of ecclesiastical authority. It follows, therefore, that as Dante reaches the Paradise of Heaven under the guidance of Beatrice, she must perforce be intended to represent in her allegorical sense the symbol of ecclesiastical authority. And since it is the duty of this authority to direct Man according to revelation, Beatrice will be the symbol of Ecclesiastical Authority *in so far as it is in possession of Divine Revelation*. If further proofs were needed to confirm this opinion they will be found in the concluding cantos of the *Purgatorio*."

Scartazzini further remarks that one can easily understand what is the allegorical significance of Virgil, namely, to conduct Dante through the regions of Hell and Purgatory as far as the Terrestrial Paradise. In *De Mon.* iii, § 15, Dante describes the latter as figuring the happiness of this life, which consists in the practice of virtue. To this happiness Man attains by the training of philosophy (*per gli ammaestramenti filosofici*), under the direction and by the guidance of Imperial Authority. Therefore Scartazzini concludes that Virgil must be the symbol of Imperial Authority, which, in accordance with the training of philosophy, guides Man to temporal happiness. It is Beatrice that sets Virgil in motion, since, as Dante says in *De Mon.* iii, § 4, "il regno temporale non ha autorità se non in quanto dallo spirituale la riceve." And in the same chapter: "Similmente dico, che il temporale non riceve dallo spirituale l'essere, nè ancora la

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virtù che è la sua autorità, nè ancora l' operazione semplicemente ; ma bene riceve da lui questo : che più virtuosamente adoperi per lo lume della grazia, &c." (*Translation by Marsilio Ficino*).

Virgil now relates how he answered Beatrice, professing his readiness to perform her behests, and asking her why she so condescended as to come down into Hell.

—'O donna di virtù,* sola per cui
 L' umana spezie eccede ogni contento†
 Da quel ciel, che ha minor li cerchi sui :
 Tanto m' aggrada il tuo comandamento,
 Che l' ubbidir, se già fosse, m' è tardi ; 80
 Più non t' è uopo aprirmi il tuo talento.‡

* *donna di virtù* : Biagioli says that this stands for *donna virtuosa*, as in the *Vita Nuova* we find *donna di cortesia* for *donna cortese*, *signor della nobiltà* for *signor nobile*, *uomo di dottrina* for *uomo dotto*, and *rè di giustizia* for *rè giusto*. Boëthius addresses his *consolatrix* as "O virtutum omnium nutrix !"

† *contento* : for *contenuto* ; see *Par. ii*, 112-114 :

"Dentro dal ciel della divina pace
 Si gira un corpo, nella cui virtute
 L' esser di tutto suo contento giace."

The meaning of the passage is that the human race, from being endowed with reason, is superior in dignity and excellence to all sublunary created beings. The heaven which has its circles lesser (*che ha minor li cerchi sui*) is that of the Moon, the lowest in rank, as it was supposed to be the narrowest of the spheres of Paradise.

‡ *talento* : used here in the sense of "desire," "will." Compare *Inf. x*, 55, where Cavalcanti is described looking around him to see if his son Guido is with Dante :

"D' intorno mi guardò, come talento
 Avesse di veder s' altri era meco."

Ma dimmi la cagion, che non ti guardi
 Dello scender quaggiuso in questo centro*
 Dall' ampio loco,† ove tornar tu ardi.—

'O Saintly Lady, through whom alone the human race excelleth all that is contained within that heaven which has its circles lesser: so much does thy command delight me, that the obeying thee, were it already (accomplished), would seem too slow to me; it is no longer needful for thee to unfold unto me thy desire. But tell me the reason why thou fearest not to descend down here into this centre (*i. e.* Hell) from that vast space (the Empyrean Heaven) to which thou burnest to return.'

Virgil goes on to tell Dante how Beatrice answered him at considerable length, and first explains to him that such is the state of her perfection (alluding to her allegorical character) that she cannot in any way be affected by any human misery, but that she only obeys the commands of two Beings more exalted even than herself, in seeking out Virgil for the purpose of despatching him to Dante's assistance.

* *centro*: According to Dante's system of cosmography, Hell was thought to be situated in the very centre of the Earth.

† *l' ampio loco*: The Empyrean Heaven, the widest and most exalted of the spheres of Paradise. In *Purg.* xxvi, 63, Dante says of it:

"Ch' è pien d' amore e più ampio si spazia."

—‘ Da che tu vuoi saper* cotanto addentro, 85
 Dirotti brevemente,—mi rispose,—
 ‘ Perch’ io non temo di venir qua entro.
 Temer si dee di sole quelle cose
 Ch’ hanno potenza di fare altrui male :
 Dell’ altre no, che non son paurose. 90
 Io son fatta da Dio, sua mercè, tale,
 Che la vostra miseria non mi tange,
 Nè fiamma d’ esto incendio non m’ assale.
 ‘ Since thou desirest to know such deeply
 secret things,’ she answered me, ‘ why I do
 not fear to come within this place, I will
 briefly tell thee. One should only be afraid
 of those things which have power to do
 harm to others : but not of the rest, which
 are not fear-causing. I am created by God
 in His Grace such (a perfect nature) that
 misery of yours (in Hell) touches me not,
 nor does any flame of yonder burning have
 effect on me.

There is a marked distinction intended here between the two terms *vostra miseria*, which refers to the spirits in *Limbo* who are only so far afflicted that

* *Da che tu vuoi saper* : Talice da Ricaldone (*La Commedia di Dante Alighieri col Comento Inedito di Stefano Talice da Ricaldone*, Torino, 1886) comments on these nine lines as follows : “ Beatrice answers by saying, ‘ Since thou, O Poet, desirest to learn the reasons of Theology, understand that, as the rays of the sun cannot be stained by wickedness, so Theology cannot be corrupted either by heretics, or by philosophers, or by tyrants,’ and she adds : ‘ The reason why I do not fear to come hither is because one only need fear those things that are able to harm one ; but this place (Hell), these heretics, these sins, cannot deprave (*defraudare*) Sacred Theology ; nor can the flame (*d’ esto incendio*) reach it, *i.e.* the fire of concupiscence is not able to touch me (Beatrice).’ ”

they live without hope in desire, and *fiamma d' esto incendio*, which alludes to those tormented in Hell.

After this short digression, Beatrice returns to the first part of the subject, and tells Virgil who were the two that sent her to him.

Donna è gentil nel ciel, che si compiange
Di questo impedimento, ov' io ti mando, 95
Sì che duro giudizio lassù frange.

There is in Heaven a noble Lady, who feels such compassion for this hindrance (on the Mountain) about which I send thee, that she breaks the stern judgment there above.

In a literal sense the *Donna Gentile* is the Virgin Mary, whose name, like that of our Lord, is not mentioned throughout the *Inferno*, being evidently considered too sacred and sublime to be pronounced in the abode of sin. In the allegorical sense the *Donna Gentile* is the symbol of Divine grace, and is said to appease the just judgment of God in Heaven, which would otherwise punish every sinner according to his sin, but which can be recalled by Interceding Grace.

A third lady is now introduced.

Questa chiese Lucia* in suo dimando,
E disse:—*Or ha bisogno il tuo fedele*
Di te, ed io a te lo raccomando.—

* *Lucia*: Scartazzini thinks that Dante either refers to the celebrated Virgin martyr of Syracuse, or to Lucia Ubaldini, sister of Cardinal Ottaviano Ubaldini (who in *Inf. x*, 120, is mentioned as *il cardinale*). This Lucia was in 1225 living in the Convent of Sta. Chiara di Monticelli, near Porta San Pier Gattolini at Florence, and was subsequently canonized. In the allegorical sense Lucia is, as her name implies, a symbol of Illuminating Grace. The Catholic Church venerates her as

She (the *Donna Gentile*) in her request besought Lucia and said : *Thy faithful one is in need of thee now, and I commend him unto thee.*

It may be well to remind the reader of the different personages who successively speak in this part of the narrative.

Virgil is telling Dante how a Lady, who names herself as Beatrice, seeks him out in *Limbo*, and explains, as a reason for her descent into Hell, that a second Lady, the *Donna Gentile*, has sought out a third Lady, Lucia, in Paradise, and informing her of Dante's deadly peril, entreats her to do something for him. Lucia thereupon comes over to Beatrice, asks her to lend Dante her aid, and Beatrice relates to Virgil how speedily she has done so, and how she now entrusts Dante to his (Virgil's) persuasive eloquence.

Lucia, nimica di ciascun crudele,*

100

the patron saint of all who suffer from diseases of the eyes. Dante was her *fedele*, on the one hand because he had sought for Light when lost in the darkness of the forest, that is, during the epoch of his moral and religious aberrations, and on the other hand, because he had a special veneration for Sta. Lucia. We read in the *Convito*, iii, 9, his own account of the weakness of his eyes : "per affaticare lo viso molto a studio di leggere, in tanto debilitai gli spiriti visivi, che le stelle mi pareano tutte d' alcuno albore ombrate : e per lunga riposanza in luoghi scuri e freddi, e con raffreddare lo corpo dell' occhio con acqua chiara, rivinsi la virtù disgregata, che tornai nel primo buono stato della vista."

* *ciascun crudele* : Benvenuto explains that none are so cruel as they who despair of the Grace of God.

Si mosse, e venne al loco dov' io era,*
 Che mi sedea con l' antica Rachel.†
 Disse :—*Beatrice, loda di Dio vera,*
Chè non soccorri quei che l' amò tanto,
Che uscìo, per te della volgare schiera ? 105
Non odi tu la pietà del suo pianto,
Non vedi tu la morte che il combatte
Su la fumana, ove il mar non ha vanto ?—

Lucia, the enemy of everyone that is cruel, hastened, and came (over) to the place where I was, where I sat with the Rachel of ancient days. She said: *Beatrice, true*

* *al loco dov' io era* : In *Par.* xxxi, 64-69, we learn where was Beatrice's allotted place in Heaven, namely in the third rank of the Blessed in the Highest Heaven :

“ Ed :—‘ Ella ov' è ?’—di subito diss' io.
 Ond' egli :—‘ A terminar lo tuo disiro
 Mosse Beatrice me del loco mio ;
 E se riguardi su nel terzo giro
 Del sommo grado, tu la rivedrai
 Nel trono che i suoi merti le sortiro.’ ”

† *l' antica Rachele* : In the *Divina Commedia*, Rachel stands as a symbol of Divine Contemplation. See *Purg.* xxvii, 104, where in Dante's dream Leah says to him :

“ Ma mia suora Rachel mai non si smaga
 Dal suo miraglio, e siede tutto giorno.
 Ell' è de' suoi begli occhi veder vaga,
 Com' io dell' adornarmi con le mani ;
 Lei lo vedere, e me l' oprare appaga.”

‡ *Che uscìo per te della volgare schiera* : In the *Convito* i, 1, we may read Dante's own words as to his having left the common herd. “ E io adunque, che non seggo alla beata mensa, ma, *fuggito dalla pastura del vulgo*, ai piedi di coloro che seggono ricolgo di quello che da loro cade ” (which means that he studied as much as he was able). And in the *Vita Nuova*, in

praise of God, why dost thou not succour him (Dante) who loved thee so, that for thee he issued forth from the vulgar herd? Dost thou not hear the anguish of his complaint? Dost thou not see the death that combats him, beside that flood where the ocean has no boast?

The usual explanation of this passage is that Dante was struggling for his life on the banks of the river Acheron, which gives the ocean none of its waters, the rivers of Hell not being supposed to fall into the sea. But Scartazzini, remarking that no river has been mentioned as flowing through the wood, takes *fumana* in the allegorical sense as the life of man, so tempestuously tossed about by his passions that even the raging ocean cannot claim to be more stormy than it. He thinks that *fumana*, in its literal sense, signifies the dark forest, and the death with which Dante is threatened is spiritual death from the attacks of the three beasts, namely, Sensuality, Ambition and Cupidity.

Beatrice ends her narrative by telling Virgil how speedy she was to fulfil Lucia's behest, and with what confidence she entrusts Dante to his charge.

Al mondo non fur mai persone ratte
 A far lor pro, nè a fuggir lor danno, 110
 Com' io, dopo cotai parole fatte,

the last paragraph he writes: "Appresso a questo Sonetto apparve a me una mirabil visione, nella quale vidi cose, che mi fecero proporre di non dir più di questa benedetta [Beatrice] infino a tanto che io non potessi più degnamente trattare di lei. E di venire a ciò io studio quanto posso, sì com' ella sa veracemente."

Venni quaggiù dal mio beato scanno,
 Fidandomi nel tuo parlare onesto,
 Che onora te e quei che udito l' hanno.'

Never were persons in the world more quick to seek their advantage, nor to flee from their hurt, as I (Beatrice) after such words were uttered (as those of Lucia): I came down here from my Blessed seat, confiding in thy noble speech, which honours thee, as well as those who have listened to it.'

Benvenuto remarks that in the above passage Dante demonstrates the great force and virtue of eloquence; which is able to recall the erring, collect the scattered, bend the stiff-necked, and perform many other wonderful things.

In conclusion, Virgil, after telling Dante the powerful effect on himself of the sight of the tearful sympathy of Beatrice, strongly urges him to go forward with courage and resolution.

Poscia che m' ebbe ragionato questo, 115
 Gli occhi lucenti* lagrimando volse ;
 Perchè mi fece del venir più presto :

* *Gli occhi lucenti* : In this single instance of the eyes of Beatrice being mentioned in the *Inferno*, they appear to have exerted the same potent influence on Virgil, as we afterwards read, at the end of the *Purgatorio*, and throughout the *Paradiso*, that they did upon Dante.

See *Purg.* xxxi, 109-111 :

“ Menrenti agli occhi suoi ; ma nel giocondo
 Lume ch' è dentro aguzzeranno i tuoi
 Le tre di là, che miran più profondo.”

E venni a te così, com' ella volse ;
 Dinanzi a quella fiera ti levai,
 Che del bel monte il corto andar ti tolse. 120
 Dunque che è ? perchè, perchè ristai ?
 Perchè tanta viltà nel core allette ?*
 Perchè ardire e franchezza non hai ?

And *Purg.* xxxi, 115-119 :

“Disser : ‘ Fa che le viste non risparmi ;
 Posto t' avem dinanzi agli smeraldi,
 Ond' Amor già ti trasse le sue armi.’
 Mille disiri più che fiamma caldi
 Strinsermi gli occhi agli occhi rilucenti.”

Also in *Purg.* xxvii, 52-4, Virgil, to encourage Dante while passing through the flames, speaks of Beatrice's eyes :

“Lo dolce Padre mio, per confortarmi,
 Pur di Beatrice ragionando andava,
 Dicendo : ‘ Gli occhi suoi già veder parmi.’”

See also *Par.* v. 124-126, where Dante says to Beatrice :

“Io veggio ben sì come tu t' annidi
 Nel proprio lume, e che dagli occhi il traggi,
 Perch' ei corruscan, sì come tu ridi.”

And *Par.* xv, 34-36 :

“Chè dentro agli occhi suoi ardeva un riso
 Tal, ch' io pensai co' miei toccar lo fondo
 Della mia grazia e del mio Paradiso.”

In *Convito*, ii, 16, Dante says of Beatrice, “Gli occhi di questa donna sono le sue dimostrazioni, le quali dritte negli occhi dello 'ntelletto, innamorano l' anima, liberata nelle condizioni.”

Francesco da Buti (*Commento sopra la Divina Commedia di Dante Allighieri, pubblicato per cura di Crescentino Giannini, Pisa, 1858*), comments thus : “Gli occhi di Beatrice sono le ragioni sottilissime et efficacissime e l' intelletti sottilissimi, che hanno avuto li Teologi in considerare e contemplare Iddio et insegnare a considerarlo e contemplarlo.”

* *allette* : Blanc says that he is unable to accept the interpretation that some commentators give to this word, as derived from *letto*, and signifying, *dar letto, albergare, annidare*, but he

Poscia che tai tre donne benedette*

Curan di te nella corte del cielo,

125

E il mio parlar tanto ben t' impromette?"

After she had said this to me, weeping, she turned (aside) her brightly beaming eyes, whereby she made me more speedy in my coming: And I came to thee as she desired; I delivered thee from the presence of that wild beast (the wolf), which deprived thee of the short way to the beautiful mountain (of virtue). What is it then? Why, why dost thou tarry? Wherefore dost thou invite such coward fears into thy heart? Why hast thou not boldness and freedom, when three such blessed ladies in the Court of Heaven are taking thought for thee, and my words (spoken in canto I) promise thee so much good?"

Benvenuto says that Virgil's concluding words imply that in the Poet Dante has human science to assist him, as well as sacred Theology, and the Grace of God.

thinks it comes rather from the Latin *allectare*, a frequentative of *allicere*, and that Dante means to say, "Why dost thou give access to, callest, and invitest cowardice into thy heart of thine own accord?" Scartazzini also takes the same view. The English translations mostly translate it in the sense of "harbouring," "lodging," "nursing," "embedding." Benvenuto renders it "cur tu advocas?" and says of *allette*, "et est verbum Tuscorum: quando enim volunt vocare avem dicunt: *allecta illam avem: et est allecto verbum frequentativum hujus verbi allicio.*"

* *tre donne benedette*; namely, Beatrice, the Virgin Mary, and Lucia.

Division IV. The good effect of Virgil's long and persuasive speech is now shown in Dante's complete return to his good purpose, and resignation to Virgil's guidance. He compares himself, bowed down to the earth in the darkness of sin, to the flowers that are bent down and closed by the cold night; and, as these are straightened and opened by the rays of the morning sun, so is the soul of Dante uplifted, and his heart opened by the Illuminating Grace of God.

Quali i fioretti* dal notturno gelo
 Chinati e chiusi, poi che il Sol gl' imbianca,
 • Si drizzan tutti aperti in loro stelo;
 Tal mi fec' io, di mia virtute stanca : 130
 E tanto buono ardire al cor mi corse,
 Ch' io cominciai come persona franca :

Even as the flowerets, bent down and closed by the frost of night, when the sun whitens (*i. e.* illumines) them, uplift themselves all open on their stems: such did I become with my exhausted vigour; and such good courage ran into my heart, that I began as one undaunted:

Dante expresses his profound gratitude, first to

* *Quali i fioretti*: Compare Boccaccio, *Il Filostrato*, p. ii, st. lxxx:

“Come fioretto dal notturno gelo
 Chinato e chiuso, poi che il sol l' imbianca,
 S' apre e si leva dritto sopra il stelo.”

And Chaucer: *Troilus and Creseide*, II, cxxxix:

“But right as floures, through the cold of nyghte
 Yclosed, stowpen on her stalkes lowe,
 Redressen hem ayein the sonne brighte,
 And spreden on her kynde cours by rowe,” etc.

Beatrice, who sought out Virgil, and next to Virgil
who so readily obeyed her summons.

—“ O pietosa colei che mi soccorse,
E tu cortese,* che ubbidisti tosto
Alle vere parole † che ti porse | 135
Tu m' hai con desiderio il cor disposto
Sì al venir, con le parole tue,
Ch' io son tornato nel primo proposto.
Or va, che un sol volere è d' ambo e due :
Tu duca, tu signore e tu maestro :”— 140
Così gli dissi ; e poichè mosso fue,
Entraì per lo cammino alto e silvestro.

“ O full of pity she (Beatrice) who succoured
me ! And courteous thou (Virgil) who didst
so speedily obey the words of truth that she
addressed to thee ! Thou hast by thy words
disposed my heart with so great a desire to
come, that I have returned to my first pur-
pose. Go now, for one sole will is in us both :
Thou guide, thou lord and master.” Thus

* *cortese* : In *Convito* ii, 11, Dante explains *cortesia* thus :
“ Nulla cosa in donna sta più bene, che cortesia. E non
siano li miseri volgari anche di questo vocabolo ingannati, che
credono che cortesia non sia altro che larghezza : chè larghezza
è una speciale e non generale cortesia. Cortesia e onestade
è tutt' uno : e perocchè nelle corti anticamente le virtudi e
li belli costumi s' usavano (siccome oggi s' usa il contrario), si
tolse questo vocabolo dalle corti ; e fu tanto a dire *cortesia*,
quanto uso di corte ; lo qual vocabolo se oggi si togliesse
dalle corti, massimamente d' Italia, non sarebbe altro a dire
che *turpessa*.”

† *vere parole* : Compare *Par.* iv, 94-96 :

“ Io t' ho per certo nella mento messo,
Ch' alma beata non poria mentire,
Perocch' è sempre al primo vero appresso.”

I spake to him; and when he had moved
 (onward), I entered upon the deep and woody
 path (to Hell).

Boccaccio says that Dante names Virgil his guide as regards their journeying, his lord as far as pre-eminence and authority are concerned, and his master with regard to his teaching.

END OF CANTO II. AND OF THE PROCEMIUM.

DIGRESSION.

Alfieri,* alluding to the whole passage from line 94 to 109, observes: "Here is the most difficult, and, up to now, the least understood passage in the *Divina Commedia*; here is the knot in which, more than in any other, all the commentators have got entangled. If I am too bold in saying that I think I have found the real signification of it, the reader must be indulgent and pardon me for the sake of the immense labour it has cost me to find it out. There are in us (mortals) two parts, of which one is called Heart, that is Appetite; the other Soul, that is Reason. Should it happen that the adversary of Reason succeeds, either by open assaults or by seductive flatteries, in making itself lord where it was servant, and in bringing the other part into subjection, the latter, fallen from its

* Alfieri's remarks are given by Biagioli (*La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri*, Naples, 1854) from comments written in Alfieri's own copy of Dante, and brought to light after his death.

sovereign height, laments, gets sad, and has recourse to Truth, to illumine it by its light, and dissipate the darkness of its ignorance. But Truth can only be acquired by Philosophy, and therefore to it does Truth turn its prayers. Philosophy in its turn takes action, and divides itself into two principal parts, the one of which is the Science of things divine, the other that of things human ; and the first, to whom Truth has addressed its prayers, turns to the second, and moves it to the first operation. Therefore I conclude that the *Gentil donna del cielo*, who laments over the aberration of the Poet, *i.e.* of Man fallen into error, is the soul, that is, Reason ; that *Lucia*, to whom she addresses herself, is a figure of Truth, and she, in her turn, makes her entreaty to *Beatrice*, symbol of the Science of things divine, otherwise called Theology. *Beatrice* is sitting with the Rachel of bygone days, who is a symbol of Meditation, and her inseparable companion ; and finally, in Virgil, sent 'by *Beatrice* to succour Dante, is figured Knowledge of things human, or in other words, Natural Science. And Dante selected Virgil for this mission, *first*, as an evidence of his love and gratitude towards him, from whom he 'had derived the pure style which had already done him honour,' and *secondly*, because the power of poetry was (in Dante's opinion) so great, *che null' è al mondo che non possano i versi*. Let us now go into details (continues Alfieri), where we shall find such a number of other proofs of what I have advanced, that it is not possible that the aspect of such beautiful truth should not enamour whoever seeks it out and loves it. In *Convito* iii, 1, it is explained that '*per*

donna gentile s' intende la nobile anima d' ingegno, e libera nella sua propria, potestà, Che è la ragione.' In Conv. iii, 8, Dante, speaking of the mouth and eyes, says: 'li quali due luoghi per bella similitudine si possono appellare balconi della donna che nel dificio del corpo abita, cioè l' anima.' And again, in *Conv. iii, 2, 'L' anima umana, la qual è con la nobiltà della potenza ultima, cioè ragione, partecipe della divina natura . . . perocchè l' anima è tanto in questa sovrana natura nobilitata.'* And in *Conv. iv, 21: 'E ciò è concordevole alla sentenza di Tullio in quello di Senettute, che parlando in persona di Catone, dice: Imperciò celestiale anima discese in noi, dell' altissimo abitacolo venuta in loco, lo quale alla divina natura e alla eternitade è contrario.'* And now (says Alfieri) I contend to have proved who is the *gentil donna*, why she is called *donna*, why *gentile*, why she is in Heaven, that is, near her own source and origin (*presso al principio suo*)."

CANTO III.

THE GATE OF HELL.

THE SOULS OF THOSE WHO WERE EQUALLY
INDIFFERENT TO GOOD AND EVIL.

THE ACHERON.

CHARON.

BENVENUTO says that Dante, having completed the two* preliminary cantos, in the first of which he laid down his proposition, and in the second made his invocation, now in this third canto enters upon his narrative or general subject.

Benvenuto divides it into five parts.

In the First Division, from v. 1 to v. 21, Dante describes the Entrance Gate of Hell, and the terrible inscription over the doorway.

In the Second Division, from v. 22 to v. 57, he relates the anguish of those who lived without fame,

* We have noticed before (page 2) that Benvenuto has made a slight discrepancy in first stating that the preliminary part of the *Inferno* (*proœmium*) consists of three cantos, whereas now he says: "Expeditis duobus capitulis prohemialibus, in quorum primo Dantes proposuit, in secundo invocavit, nunc consequenter in isto tertio capitulo incipit suam narrationem sive tractatum." It is evident that this latter is Benvenuto's meaning.

being neither good nor bad, and of the Angels who were neither for God nor against Him.

In the Third Division, from v. 58 to v. 69, he relates the special penalties of these spirits, and remarks one in particular, for whose public career he felt great contempt.

In the Fourth Division, from v. 70 to v. 120, he describes the souls of the lost being conveyed over the river Acheron by the grim ferryman Charon, who opposes the entrance of Dante into his boat.

In the Fifth Division, from v. 121 to v. 136, Virgil answers a question Dante had put to him, after which an earthquake, accompanied by wind and lightning, so terrifies Dante that he falls down in a swoon.

Division I. We are not told at what hour the Poets reach the Gate of Hell, but there is a distinct indication in canto vii, 97-99, that it is past midnight when they are leaving the fourth circle, and we may therefore conclude that they enter into Hell just at night-fall on Good Friday 1300.

It may be observed that Dante's entrance into Purgatory and the Terrestrial Paradise took place at daybreak, and into Paradise at noon.

By a prosopopœia, or figure of giving personality to inanimate things, Dante makes the Gate of Hell itself utter the dire words with which this canto opens.

*“ Per me si va nella città dolente,
Per me si va nell' eterno dolore,
Per me si va tra la perduta gente.
Giustizia mosse il mio alto fattore :*

5

Fecemi la divina potestate,
La somma sapienza e il primo amore. †
Dinansi a me non fur cose create, ‡
Se non eterne, ed io eterna || duro :
Lasciate ogni speranza, voi, ch' entrate !"*

“Through me is the way into the city of woe,
through me is the way into eternal suffering,
through me is the way among the lost people.
Justice moved my Great Maker (to build
me) : the divine omnipotence (of the Father),
the highest Wisdom (of the Son), and the
Primal Love (of the Holy Ghost) made me.
Before me were no created things, but
eternal, and eternally I endure. Abandon
all hope ye who enter.”

Benvenuto says that this last is the most universal

* *la divina potestate*, etc. : Scartazzini says that in these two lines Dante is alluding to the Holy Trinity, according to the theological maxim that *opera ad extra sunt totius Trinitatis*; and that in his circumscription of the Three Persons Dante is following St. Thomas Aquinas. See *Summ. Theol.* Pars. I. qu. xxxix, art. viii : “Item, secundum Augustinum, Patri attribuitur” *potentia*, Filio *sapientia*, Spiritui sancto *bonitas*.”

† *primo amore* : St. Thomas Aquinas says that punishment when deserved is love.

‡ *Dinansi a me non fur cose create* : Hell is “the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.” (*St. Matth.* xxv, 41.) Scartazzini thinks it was prepared after the fall of Lucifer, and consequently after the Angels and the spheres of Heaven. The things created before Hell are therefore the Angels and the Heavens, and these are *cose create* which last eternally.

|| *eterna* : Blanc says the adjective is here used as an adverb for *eternamente*. It is frequently so used by Dante.

and crowning of the penalties of Hell, that the spirits of the doomed can never hope for any term or limit to their punishment ; and the lost soul may be said to live on in eternal chastisement, just as the salamander lives on in the fire for a considerable time (*aliquandiu*). But here Benvenuto thinks a doubt may arise, as to why Dante could have been so mad as to pass through the gate after reading the inscription. The answer to which is that Dante did not enter into Hell after the manner that the stubborn spirits did, but with the full knowledge that he would be able to come out, as will be stated further on in this canto ; like as we have sometimes seen some temporal lord cast anyone into prison for the sake of example, and order that he shall never issue from it ; whereas he will, as a special favour, grant leave to some one else to enter in and see the prisoners' condition and the mode of their punishment, but with the full security of being able to come out again.

The terrible words of the inscription seem to have caught Dante's eyes before he has realised where they were placed.

Queste parole di colore oscuro 10
 Vid' io scritte al sommo d' una porta :
 Perch' io :—" Maestro, il senso lor m' è duro."—

These words I beheld inscribed in sombre hue over the summit of a gateway. Whereat I (said to Virgil): "Master, their import is terrible to me."

Dante means that the written warning that he must abandon all hope of coming out again fills his heart with fear. It is worthy of remark that through-

out the *Inferno*, and until he has passed out of Purgatory into the Terrestrial Paradise, Dante depicts himself as entirely lacking all the qualities of a brave man, such as it is known that he exhibited in his youth, and notably at the battle of Campaldino. Although Virgil now enjoins him to lay aside all cowardice, his human fears, in the presence of the awful mysteries of the hitherto unseen world, are too great for him to suppress.

Ed egli a me, come persona accorta :
 —“ Qui si convien lasciare ogni sospetto ;*
 Ogni viltà convien che qui sia morta. 15
 Noi siam venuti al loco ov' io t' ho detto,†
 Che tu vedrai le genti dolorose,
 Ch' hanno perduto il ben dello intelletto.”‡—

And he to me, as one quick to understand :

* *sospetto* has in this passage the signification of “fear.” It is used in that sense in *Inf.* v. 129 :

“ Soli eravamo e senza alcun sospetto.”

† *ov' io t' ho detto* : Virgil is referring to his words in *Inf.* i, 115, *et seq.* :

“ E trarrotti di qui per loco eterno,
 Ove udirai le disperate strida,
 Vedrai gli antichi spiriti dolenti,
 Che la seconda morte ciascun grida.”

‡ *il ben dello intelletto* : Blanc observes of this passage that it “ne signifie pas : ils ont perdu l'*intelletto*, mais ce qui constitue le bonheur de l'intelligence, c'est à dire, ils ont perdu la connaissance de Dieu.” In *Convito*, tr. ii, 14, Dante says : “Così della induzione della perfezione seconda le scienze sono cagioni in noi ; per l'abito delle quali potemo la verità speculare, ch' è l'ultima perfezione nostra, siccome dice il Filosofo nel sesto dell' *Etica*, quando dice che 'l vero è 'l bene dello intelletto.”

“Here must all fear be left behind, every cowardice must here be annihilated (*lit.* be dead). We are come to the place where I have told thee, that thou wilt behold the sorrowing folk, who have lost the good of the intellect (*i.e.* the knowledge of God).”

Virgil now leads Dante in through the Gate.

E poichè la sua mano alla mia pose,
 Con lieto volto, ond' io mi confortai,* 20
 Mi mise dentro alle segrete cose.

And after that he had laid his hand on mine with joyful mien, at which I took comfort, he led (*lit.* put) me in among the secret things (*i.e.* hidden from mortal eyes).

Benvenuto thinks that Virgil did in real truth introduce Dante into Hell, for he had already given him such a description of sins and their punishments that Dante found the way, so to speak, prepared for him. And Virgil leads Dante with a joyful countenance, for the wise man is ever ready, willingly, joyfully, and without envy, to impart knowledge to others.

Division II. On first entering within the gloomy portals of Hell, Dante's attention is at once attracted to the punishment of those, whose lives had been absolutely

* *E poichè la sua mano . . .*

. . . *ond' io mi confortai :*

Compare Chaucer, *The Asseble of Foules*, st. 25 :

“And with that my hand in his he toke anone ;
 Of which I comfot caught, and went in fast.”

neutral, who had never sinned actively, nor done any single deed worthy of praise. They are briefly described and contemptuously dismissed from further notice.

Quivi sospiri,* pianti ed alti guai
 Risonavan per l' aer senza stelle,
 Perch' io al cominciar ne lagrimai.
 Diverse lingue, orribili favelle, 25
 Parole di dolore, accenti d' ira,†
 Voci alte e fioche,‡ e suon di man con elle,

* *Quivi sospiri*: Longfellow gives the following translation of the description by Frate Alberico (*Visio* §9) of the Mouth of Hell. "After all these things, I was led to the Tartarean Regions, and to the mouth of the Infernal Pit, which seemed like unto a well; regions full of horrid darkness, of fetid exhalations, of shrieks and loud howlings. Near this Hell was a Worm of immeasurable size, bound with a large chain, one end of which seemed to be fastened in Hell. Before the mouth of this Hell there stood a great multitude of souls, which he absorbed at once, as if they were flies; so that, drawing in his breath, he swallowed them all together; then, breathing, exhaled them all on fire, like sparks."

† *accenti d' ira*: compare *Inf.* xxiv. 67-69:

"Non so che disse, ancor che sopra il dosso
 Fossi dell' arco già che varca quivi;
 Ma chi parlava ad ira pareva mosso."

‡ *fioche*: Some translate *fioche* as hoarse, but I think Scartazzini's explanation is much the best, taking *fioche* as contrasting with *alte*, and he says that the voices were loud or faint, according as their torment made these wretched beings either yell with pain, or be completely subdued and overcome, and he quotes in illustration of the latter Dante's question in line 33:

"Che gent' è, che par nel duol sì vinta?"

See also *Inf.* i, 62, 63:

"Dinanzi agli occhi mi si fu offerto
 Chi per lungo silenzio pareva fioco,"

that is, "one whose voice had become faint, weak, from long

Facevano un tumulto, il qual s'aggira
 Sempre in quell' aria senza tempo tinta,
 Come la rena* quando a turbo spira. 30

Here sighs, lamentations and loud cries of woe resounded through the starless air, whereat at first I wept. Divers tongues, horrible utterances, words of anguish, accents of anger, voices loud and faint, and with them the sounds of hands (of spirits beating their breasts in their agony), made a tumult that is for ever whirling on in that eternally dark air, even as the sand (does) when it is blowing a whirlwind.

These miserable wretches are rightly compared to the sand for their number, and like it are vile, sterile, and only fit to be trodden under foot. They are despised by every one, and blown about by every blast of fortune. And as will be shown presently, they all run equally without aim or object, and are scattered in all directions.

Dante now asks Virgil who these are.

Ed io, ch' avea d' orror† la testa cinta,
 Dissi:—" Maestro, che è quel ch' i' odo ?
 E che gent' è, che par nel duol sì vinta ?"—

disuse." Benvenuto interprets the voices as hoarse, and comments as follows: "*fioche*, idest *raucæ*, et graves propter nimietatem planctûs, qui facit raucescere vocem."

* *Come la rena*: Compare Milton, *Par. Lost*, ii, 903:

"— Un-numbered as the sands
 Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
 Levied to side with warring winds, and poise
 Their lighter wings.—"

† *d' orror*: Many read *d' error*. Benvenuto gives both readings, explaining *d' orror*, *propter horribilem clamorem*, and *d'*

And I, who had my head begirt with horror,
said: "Master, what is this that I hear? and
what folk are these that seem so overcome
with woe?"

The intensity of their pain had completely conquered, in these miserable souls, their power to endure suffering.

Ed egli a me :—" Questo misero modo
Tengon l' anime triste di coloro, 35
Che visser* senza infamia e senza lodo.
Mischiata sono a quel cattivo coro
Degli angeli, che non furon ribelli,
Nè fur fedeli a Dio, ma per sè foro.
Cacciarli† i ciel per non esser men belli : 40
Nè lo profondo inferno gli riceve,
Chè alcuna gloria i rei avrebber d' elli."—

And he to me: "This miserable condition
the melancholy souls of those sustain who
lived without infamy and without praise.
They are mingled with that caitiff choir of
Angels, who were not rebellious, nor were

error, idest qui habebam fantasiam turbatam tantâ confusione.
Scartazzini thinks that Dante had in his mind the following
line of Virgil (*Æn.* ii, 559) of which this passage is an obvious
imitation:

"At me tum primum sævus circumstetit horror."

* *Che visser*, etc.: See *Rev.* iii, 14-16, where our Lord says to
St. John: "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans
write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true
witness, the beginning of the creation of God. I know thy
works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert
cold or hot. So then because thou art luke-warm, and neither
cold nor hot I will spue thee out of my mouth."

† *Cacciarli*: I do not here follow Witte, who reads *caccianli*,
as *cacciarli* is a reading generally preferred.

faithful to God, but were for themselves (*i.e.* stood aloof). Heaven cast them out that its lustre should not be impaired (*lit.* so as not to be less beautiful), nor does deep Hell receive them, because the guilty would have some glory over them.

The guilty might exult too much if they saw those who had been only neutral receive a punishment as severe as their own, and they would despise them for not having acquired any distinction in wickedness. Francesco da Buti remarks that some might contend that Dante ought to have placed these paltry spirits in *Limbo*, in the first circle, but the answer would be that they who were doomed to *Limbo* were punished for original sin, whereas these wretches had had that purged out by Baptism, and Dante evidently wished to show that they had all been Christians. Buti adds that others might argue that they ought to have been placed among the slothful (*accidiosi*) in the mire of the Styx (see *Canto* vii, 115-126), but he says that sloth (*accidia*) is only negligence respecting what is good; and that it does not mean that they were careless about what was evil.

Dante would seem to be so stunned and confused at the awful sounds which greet his ears as soon as he has passed through the gate, that he has not yet begun to use his eyes; and he now questions Virgil a second time as to the meaning of these sounds of woe. Virgil declines to give him anything like full details as to the condition of the suffering wretches, but tells him merely to take one look at them, and leave them to their fate.

Ed io :—"Maestro, che è tanto greve
 A lor, che lamentar gli fa sì forte?"—
 Rispose :—"Dicerolti * molto breve. 45
 Questi non hanno speranza di morte,†
 E la lor cieca vita è tanto bassa,
 Che invidiosi son d' ogni altra sorte.‡
 Fama di loro il mondo esser non lassa,
 Misericordia e giustizia gli sdegna : 50
 Non ragioniam di lor,|| ma guarda e passa."—
 And I : "Master, what is so grievous to
 them, that makes them lament so loudly?"

* *Dicerolti* : the same as *te lo dirò*. *Dicere* is an old and now obsolete word often used by early writers instead of *dire*, *dirò*.

† *speranza di morte* : Scartazzini interprets it : "They are certain that their miserable and vile condition will never come to an end." Compare *Rev.* ix, 6 : "And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it ; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them." Lubin takes quite a different view, and thinks *speranza di morte* means their (fruitless) hope of their memory dying in the world. He quotes St. Bernard (*De Consideratione*, lib. v, cap. xii) : "Horreo incidere in manus mortis viventis et vitæ morientis. Hæc [est] *secunda mors*, quæ nunquam peroccidit, sed semper occidit. Quis det illis semel mori, ut non moriantur in æternum ? qui dicunt montibus, *cadite super nos*, et collibus, *operite nos*, quid nisi mortem mortis beneficio aut finire aut evadere volunt ? invocabunt mortem et non veniet Durante anima durat et memoria, sed qualis ? Fœda flagitiis, horrida facinoribus, vanitate tumida, contemptu hispida et neglecta In æternum ergo necesse est cruciari."

‡ *altra sorte* : These wretches covet even the lot of the worst sinners, who have left some notoriety behind them.

|| *Non ragioniam di lor* : Compare *Ecclus.* xliiv, 9 : "And some there be which have no memorial ; who are perished, as though they had never been ; and are become as though they had never been born."

He replied: "I will tell it to thee very briefly. These (spirits) have no hope of death (*i.e.*, of annihilation, by which their punishment may cease), and their obscure life is so degraded, that they are envious of every other lot. The world will allow no mention of them, (divine) Mercy disdains them (by closing Heaven against them), and Justice (by not admitting them into Hell). Let us not speak of them, but look thou, and pass on."

Dante takes a glance at the throng before him, and Benvenuto says that, in obedience to Virgil, it was a mere passing glance, and he looks at them in the mass (*omnes reducit ad unum cumulum*). See note, however, on *riguardai*.

Ed io, che riguardai,* vidi un insegna,†
 Che girando correva tanto ratta,
 Che d' ogni posa mi pareva indegna :
 E dietro le venia sì lunga tratta
 Di gente, ch' i' non avrei mai creduto,
 Che morte tanta n' avesse disfatta.

55

And I, who looked attentively, beheld a banner, which whirling round ran so quickly, that it seemed disdainful (*lit.* unworthy) of all pause. And behind it there came so long a train of people, that I never should have believed that death had undone so many.

* *riguardai* : *guardare* is to look ; *riguardare*, to look closely, attentively. See Manuzzi, *Vocabolario della Lingua Italiana, già compilata dagli Accademici della Crusca*, Firenze, 1859.

† *un insegna* : Compare Milton, *Comus*, 603-4 :

—"All the grisly legions that troop
 Under the sooty flag of Acheron."

Benvenuto suggests that perhaps the flag was a mere white rag such as would be carried by low fellows of the baser sort (*sicut portant ribaldi*) who have no distinguishing banner of their own, and Benvenuto describes *ribaldi* to be louts, cowards, flatterers, costermongers, barge-porters, beggars, and such like, of whom the multitude is infinite; "nor could I ever," he adds, "have believed there were so many in the world as I once upon a time saw in the House of Charity (*ad pagnotam*) at Avignon, nor shall I ever be surprised when I see Italy filled with such wretches, so many did I see in Provence and Savoy."

Division III. Dante, while describing the miserable torments of the caitiff throng makes especial mention of one, though he refrains from uttering his name. There is great dissension among the commentators as to the person of whom Dante intended to speak. Some, among whom is Benvenuto, take him to be Esau, who made the great renunciation of his birthright, but Scartazzini points out that Dante has particularly spoken of the person being some one that he knew by sight. The same objection forbids our accepting the opinion of those who maintain that the person indicated is the Emperor Diocletian, who abdicated his throne in his old age. Dante is evidently referring to some contemporary personage, but wishes to suppress his name. Some think the allusion is to Vieri de' Cerchi, the unwarlike chief of Dante's own party, the *Bianchi*. But by far the larger number of the commentators think that

he is speaking of Celestine, who through the machinations of Cardinal Gaetani (his successor on the Papal Throne as Boniface VIII), was induced to resign the Papacy. Dante's resentment against Boniface, upon whom he looked as the author of all his misfortunes, was so great that he would readily have felt a considerable portion of such resentment against Celestine for making the way clear for Boniface.* The abdication of Celestine was viewed, in his own time, according to Dean Milman, in a different light

* In *Inf.* xxvii, 104-105, Boniface is made to say :

“ son due le chiavi,

Che il mio antecessor non ebbe cari.”

Longfellow translates a passage from the *Comento* of Boccaccio, on the abdication of Celestine V, as follows : “ Being a simple man and of a holy life, living as a hermit in the mountains of Morrone in Abruzzo, above Selmona, he was elected Pope in Perugia after the death of Pope Niccola d' Ascoli ; and his name being Peter he was called Celestine. Considering his simplicity, Cardinal Messer Benedetto Gatano, a very cunning man, of great courage, and desirous of being Pope, managing astutely, began to show him that he held this high office much to the prejudice of his own soul, inasmuch as he did not feel himself competent for it ; others pretend that he contrived with some servants of his to have voices heard in the chamber of the aforesaid Pope, which, as if they were voices of angels sent from Heaven, said, ‘ Resign, Celestine ! Resign, Celestine ! ’ moved by which, and being an idiotic man, he took counsel with Messer Benedetto aforesaid, as to the best mode of resigning.” Gower, in his *Confessio Amantis*, Book ii, relates this legend at great length. The marginal note says : “ confessor . . . narrat, qualiter papa Bonifacius predecessorem suum Celestinum a papatu contrajectata circumvencione fraudulenter supplantavit.”

“ The cardinals, that wolden save
The forme of lawe in the conclave,

by different minds. The Monkish writers held it up as a noble example of Christian perfection, but

Gon for to chese a new pope,
 And after that they couthe agrope
 Hath eche of hem said his entent.
 Til ate laste they assent
 Upon a holy clerk recluse,
 Which full was of gostly vertuse.
 His pacience and his simplesse
 Hath set him into highe noblesse.
 Thus was he Pope canonized
 With great honour and intronised.
 And upon chaunce, as it is falle,
 His name Celestin men calle . . .

A cardinal was thilke tide,
 Which the papate long hath desired,
 And therupon gretely conspired . . .

This cardinal, which thoughte guile,
 Upon a day, whan he hath while,
 This yonge clerke unto him toke
 And made him swere upon a boke
 And tolde him what his wille was.
 And forth with al a trompe of bras
 He hath him take

This clerk, whan he hath herd the form,
 How he the pope shuld enform,
 Toke of the cardinal his leve
 And goth him home, till it was eve.
 And prively the trompe he hadde,
 Til that the pope was a bedde.
 And at the midnight, whan he knewe
 The pope slepte, than he blew
 Within his trompe through the wall
 And tolde, in what manner he shall

this was the company of those caitiffs, displeasing alike to God and to His enemies.

Dante next gives a description of the penalty inflicted upon the unhappy wretches, who, from their unprofitable lives, cannot be said to have ever been really alive.

Questi sciaurati, che mai non fur vivi,*
 Erano ignudi e stimolati molto 65
 Da mosconi e da vespe ch' erano ivi.
 Elle rigavan lor di sangue il volto,
 Che mischiato di lagrime, ai lor piedi,
 Da fastidiosi vermi era ricolto.

These unfortunate wretches, who were never alive, were naked, and sorely stung by gadflies and hornets that were there. They (the insects) made their faces to stream with blood, which, mingled with their tears, was gathered up at their feet by loathsome worms.

Benvenuto remarks in his quaint way: "And take note, Reader, that although this is a very unsavoury subject, yet it is profitable that it should have been described for an example and terror to others, that they may beware of so miserable a class of captives (*tam miserabilem sectam captivorum*).†"

* *mai non fur vivi*: Compare *Conv.* iv, 7: "E da sapere che veramente morto il malvagio uomo dire si può . . . vivere negli animali è sentire, animali dico bruti, vivere nell' uomo è ragione usare . . . è morto uomo ed è rimasto bestia."

† I notice that in the text of Benvenuto adopted by Sir James Lacaita the passage *setta dei cattivi* is explained as *sectam captivorum*, but a note quotes the Este manuscript of Benvenuto as giving *sectam vitiorum*, leaving it doubtful whether Benvenuto interpreted *cattivi* as "captives" or as "wicked."

Quando noi fermerem li nostri passi
Sulla trista riviera d' Acheronte." *

And he to me: "The things (thou askest)
shall be (made) known to thee when we shall
arrest our steps upon the dismal shore of
Acheron."

Dante thinks Virgil's words were meant as a re-
proof to him, and is much disconcerted.

Allor con gli occhi vergognosi e bassi,
Temendo no' l' mio dir gli fusse grave, 80
Infino al fiume di parlar mi trassi.

Then with my eyes ashamed and cast down,
fearing lest my speaking might be irksome
to him, I refrained from speech, until (we
reached) the stream.

Dante now sees Charon, the grim ferryman of
Mythology.

In *Inf.* xxxiii, 31, according to Buti, it has the signification of
"well trained:":

"Con cagne magre, studiose e conte."

In *Purg.* ii, 55-57, the sense is "radiant," "resplendent:":

"Da tutte parti saettava il giorno
Lo sol, ch' avea colle saette conte
Di mezzo il ciel cacciato capricorno."

* *Acheronte* is derived from Ἀχων, plural of ἀχων "pain," and
ἄνω "flowing." Some derive it from ἀ privitive, and χαρὰ, "joy."
Benvenuto thinks the river has a general allegorical signification
of worldly concupiscence, through which all pass who go
to Hell.

† *Temendo no' l' mio dir*, etc. : for *temendo non il*, etc., like
the Latin *vereor ne*, or *vereor non*. Blanc quotes this passage,
and says that before the article, or the pronoun *il*, *non* very
frequently takes the form *no* or *no' l*. Benvenuto reads *nel*
mio dir.

Ed ecco verso noi venir per nave
 Un vecchio bianco per antico pelo,
 Gridando :—" Guai a voi anime prave :
 Non isperate mai veder lo cielo !
 I' vegno per menarvi all' altra riva,
 Nelle tenebre eterne, in caldo e in gelo.*" 85

And behold, coming towards us in a boat an old man, white with ancient locks, crying: "Woe unto you, guilty souls! Nevermore hope to look upon Heaven. I come to conduct you to the opposite shore, into eternal gloom, into heat and into ice.

Having thus addressed the shades of the wicked, Charon turns his attention to Dante, and noting that by reason of his being a living man, or as others interpret the passage, of his being a soul alive, from not being dead in trespasses and sins, refuses him admission to his bark.

* *gelo*: Compare Milton, *Par. Lost*, book ii, 596-603:

"Thither by harpy-footed Furies haled
 At certain revolutions, all the damned
 Are brought, and feel by turns the bitter change
 Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
 From beds of raging fire, to starve in ice
 Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
 Immoveable, infixed, and frozen round,
 Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire."

and Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, act iii, scene i:

"— the delighted spirit
 To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
 In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice;
 To be imprisoned in the viewless winds
 And blown with restless violence round about
 The pendant world."

E tu che se' costì, anima viva,
 Partiti da cotesti che son morti."—
 Ma poi ch' ei vide, ch' io non mi partiva, 90
 Disse :—"Per altra via,* per altri porti
 Verrai a piaggia, non qui, per passare :
 Più lieve legno convien che ti porti."—

And thou who standest there, living soul, part
 thyself from these who are dead.† But when
 he saw that I departed not, he said : "By
 another way, and by other ports shalt thou
 come to the shore, not here (in order) to pass ;
 a lighter vessel must carry thee."

From the answer which Virgil now makes to
 Charon on Dante's behalf (and he uses words either
 similar or identical wherever their progress is op-
 posed†), one might infer that he wishes to insist
 on the admission of Dante into Charon's boat. It is

* *Per altra via*, etc. : the other way and the other ports by
 which Dante was to journey according to the supposition of
 Charon, who saw that his was a soul not doomed to perdition,
 is told us in *Purg.* ii, 100, 101 :

"la marina . . . ,
 Dove l' acqua di Tevero s' insala . . . "
 "the shore . . . where the waters of the Tiber flow into the
 sea. . . ."

"Perocchè sempre quivi si ricoglie,
 Qual verso d' Acheronte non si cala."
 "for it is always there that are received those that do not
 descend to Acheron."

All, except those doomed to Hell, were supposed by Dante to
 make the mouth of the Tiber their starting-point for Purgatory,
 whither they were conveyed by an Angel in a light vessel (*Con
 un vasello snelletto e leggiere*).

† See Virgil's answer to Minos, *Inf.* v, 23, *et seq.*, and to
 Plutus, *Inf.* vii, 11, 12.

probable, however, from the context, that this ferry being the only ostensible means of crossing the Acheron, he would not imagine that any dispensation could take place on Dante's behalf. Whether Virgil was aware that Dante would be taken, when in a trance, across the Acheron, or not, and simply wished to give a sharp reproof to Charon, must be a matter of conjecture, but, as will be discussed further on, there is but little doubt that it was not by the ferry-boat that Dante surmounted the obstacle of the river.

E il duca a lui :—" Caron non ti crucciare :
Vuolsi così colà, dove si puote 95
Ciò che si vuole, e più non dimandare."—

And my leader to him : "Charon, vex not thyself. It is so willed there (in Heaven), where is power to do that which is willed, and enquire no further."

It was the will of God that the living soul of Dante should pass over the Acheron by some way, whatever it might be.

Virgil's reproof reduces Charon to silence.

Quinci fur quete* le lanose gote
Al nocchier della livida† palude,

* *Quinci fur quete* : Scartazzini says this verse is almost a translation of *Æn.* vi, 102 :

" Ut primum cessit furor, et rabida ora quierunt."

† *livida palude* : We see below in canto vii, 106-7, that the waters of Acheron form the Stygian marsh :

" Una palude fa, che ha nome Stige,
Questo tristo ruscel."

see also Virg. *Æn.* vi, 318-323 :

" Dic, ait, o virgo, quid vult concursus ad annem ?

Che intorno agli occhi avea di fiamme rote.*

Thereat were quieted the shaggy cheeks of the ferryman of the dark lagoon, who round about his eyes had wheels of flame (*i. e.* his eyes glared).

Charon's opposition to Dante's passage of the Acheron reminds one of that which later on Dante was to encounter from Cato at the entrance into the *Ante-Purgatorio*, and in both cases is the opposition withdrawn in deference to Virgil, who, though he addresses Charon in terms of indignant contempt, uses all his powers of persuasive eloquence to remove the objections of Cato.

The short conversation between Charon and the Poets must be understood as a digression, and Dante now relates the effect on the unhappy spirits on the

Quidve petunt animæ? vel quo discrimine ripas
Hæ linquunt, illæ remis *vada livida* verrunt?
Olli sic breviter fata est longæva sacerdos:
Anchisa generate, Deum certissima proles,
Cocyti stagna alta vides, *Stygiamque paludem.*"

See also Catullus, xvii, 10:

"Totius ut lacus putidæque paludis Lividissima."

Lombardi says that *livido* is blue black colour, which (from a bruise or similar cause) makes the blood come up below the surface of the skin.

* *di fiamme rote*: Compare Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, book vi, canto vii, st. xlii:

"His looks were dreadfull, and his fiery eies,
Like two great beacons, glared bright and wyde,
Glauncing askew, as if his enemies
He scorned in his overweening pride."

See also further down, line 109 of this canto:

"Caron dimonio, con occhi di bragia."

shore, of the cruel words addressed to them by Charon
 \ in lines 84-7.

Ma quell' anime, ch' eran lasse e nude,* 100
 Cangiar colore e dibattero i denti,
 Ratto che inteser le parole crude.

But those souls who were weary and naked,
 changed colour and gnashed their teeth the
 instant that they heard the cruel words
 (spoken by Charon).

Bestemmiavano Iddio e lor parenti,
 L' umana specie, il luogo, il tempo e il seme 105
 Di lor semenza e di lor nascimenti.†

They blasphemed God, and their parents,
 the human race, the place, the time, and the
 seed of their engendering, and of their birth.

* *lasse e nude*: Fraticelli (*La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri col commento di Pietro Fraticelli, Firenze, 1864*) begs his readers to notice once for all, that these souls are manifested to Dante with all the phenomena belonging to humanity; and therefore they change colour, gnash their teeth, suffer hunger, pain in their limbs, etc., although in other passages they are represented as being incorporeal and impalpable beings. How these various material passions befall them will be related in *Purg. xxv, 79, et seq.*

Note especially the last triplet of the passage, 106-108:

“Secondo che ci affliggono i disiri
 E gli altri affetti, l' ombra si figura,
 E questa è la cagion di che tu ammiri.”

Dante had asked Statius how shades could become so emaciated.

† *Bestemmiavano . . . lor nascimenti*: compare *Job iii, 2 et seq.*: “And Job spake, and said, Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived,” and *Jeremiah xx, 14*, “Cursed be the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed. Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father saying, A man child is born unto thee.”

Poi si ritrasser tutte quante insieme,
 Forte piangendo, alla riva malvagia,
 Che attende ciascun uom che Dio non teme.
 Caron dimonio,* con occhi di bragia,
 Loro accennando, tutte le raccoglie ;
 Batte col remo qualunque s' adagia.†

Then, all together, loudly weeping, they
 betook themselves to the accursed shore
 (of the Acheron) that awaits every man who
 feareth not God. The demon Charon, with
 eyes like burning coals, beckoning them,
 collects all together ; he beats with his oar
 everyone that lingers (or, sits down to rest).

In a beautiful simile of leaves dropping off the tree, one by one, in the fall of the year, Dante describes the souls of the lost casting themselves, each in its turn, into the boat.

* *Caron dimonio* : Scartazzini calls attention to the way Dante has posted mythological personages as custodians of the different circles of Hell ; and remarks that in doing so Dante only conforms to the theological beliefs of the Middle Ages, namely, that the beings of the Pagan Mythology were to be looked upon as actually existing, not as gods, but rather as fiends ; and they thus contrived, after a fashion, to reconcile Christian belief with Pagan tradition. The fountain of the belief in question is St. Paul, who writes in 1 *Cor.* x, 20 : " The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God."

† *s' adagia* : It is doubtful whether *adagiarsi* does not mean, to sit down, to rest oneself. That is how Scartazzini interprets it, as also Giuliani. The expression is quite common in Tuscany. Most commentators take it as derived from *adagio*, slow, and to mean here the act of retarding one's steps.

Come d' autunno* si levan le foglie
L' una appresso all' altra, infin che il ramo

* *Come d' autunno* : Compare Virg. *Æn.* vi, 305-310 :

“ Huc omnis turba ad ripas effusa ruebat,
Matres atque viri, defunctaque corpora vita
Magnanimùm heroum, pueri innuptæque puellæ,
Impositique rogis juvenes ante ora parentum :
Quam multa in silvis auctumni frigore primo
Lapsa cadunt folia.”

Biagioli finds great fault with Ginguené for saying : “ On reconnaît encore dans cette belle comparaison l'élève et l'imitateur de Virgile,” whereas Biagioli sees a direct contrast between the two passages ; that of Virgil comparing the multitude of souls with the great number of leaves ; while Dante likens the souls detaching themselves from the shore *ad una ad una* to the falling of the dry leaves from the bough one after the other. Dante may, however, quite well have followed Virgil in comparing the souls to the leaves while treating the subject somewhat differently. Compare also Milton, *Par. Lost*, i, 301-304 :

“ His legions, Angel forms, who lay intranc'd
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades,
High over-arch'd, imbower.”

See also Ariosto *Orl. Fur.* xvi, st. 75 :

“ Poi son le genti senza nome tante,
Che del lor sangue oggi faranno un lago ;
Che meglio conterei ciascuna foglia,
Quando l' autunno gli arbori ne spoglia.”

Dante evidently intended, in the simile of the leaves, to compare them to the number of the souls, as well as to their similar movement.

Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, iii, 161, says : “ When Dante describes the spirits falling from the bank of Acheron ‘as dead leaves flutter from a bough,’ he gives the most perfect image possible of their utter lightness, feebleness, passiveness, and scattering agony of despair without, however for an instant

Vede* alla terra tutte le sue spoglie,
 Similmente il mal seme d' Adamo : 115'
 Gittansi di quel lito ad una ad una,
 Per cenni, come augel† per suo richiamo.

As in the autumn the leaves fall off one after another, until the bough sees all its spoils upon the earth, even so do the evil seed of

losing his own clear perception that *these* are souls and *those* are leaves ; he makes no confusion of one with the other."

Longfellow quotes Shelley, in his Ode to the West Wind, as inverting the image, and comparing dead leaves to ghosts :

"O, wild West Wind ! thou breath of Autumn's being !
 Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
 Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
 Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes."

* *vede* : Some commentators read :

"*Rende* alla terra tutte le sue spoglie."

The respective readings are energetically maintained by their respective advocates, but not only has *vede* the support of most of the best MSS, and editions, but the line is evidently imitated from Virgil, *Georg.* ii, 80-82 :

"ingens

Exiit ad cœlum ramis felicibus arbos,
 Miraturque novas frondes et non sua poma."

† *come augel per suo richiamo* : Lubin says this passage alludes to the general snaring of birds that takes place in October, when a small bird in a cage is concealed under the branches of trees or under a bush to lure other birds into the snares prepared for them.

I am reminded of some lines of Edward Waller, though I have not been able to verify them :

"Thus, fair Incognita, thy song
 Caused young Love listening to be blest,
 As nightingales the fowlers charm
 With their own warble to the nest."

Adam : they cast themselves from that shore
one by one at signals (from Charon), as a
bird (*i. e.* a falcon) at its (signal of) recall.

The next three lines are intended to show in what
never-ending quantities the souls are conveyed to
Hell.

Così sen vanno su per l' onda bruna,
Ed avanti che sian di là discese,
Anche di qua nuova schiera s' aduna. 120

Thus they depart over the murky waters, and
even before they have landed on the far side,
again is a fresh company collected on this.

Division V. Dante had put two questions to
Virgil in lines 72-4, namely :

(1) What people are these (*quali sono?*) on the bank
of the Acheron? and

(2) What law makes them so desirous of passing
over the river (*qual costume le fa di trapassar parer
si pronte?*)

Virgil promised that he should have the infor-
mation as soon as they had reached the shore of
the Acheron, and accordingly proceeds to answer
his questions.

—“ Figliuol mio,”—disse il Maestro cortese,*

—“ Quelli che muoion nell' ira di Dio

Tutti convegnon qui d' ogni paese :

E pronti sono a trapassar lo rio,

Chè la divina giustizia gli sprona

Si che la tema si volge in disio. 125

* *cortese*: Benvenuto explains that Virgil was a courteous
Master in that he was ever liberal in imparting his knowledge.

"My Son," said the courteous Master, "They who die in the wrath of God must all assemble here from every country, and they are ever ready to cross the river, because Divine Justice so spurs them on (by means of their conscience), that their very dread (of punishment) is turned into desire (of undergoing it).

Benvenuto says that in this world one may often see a great criminal go of his own accord and give himself up for capital punishment, when he might easily escape, so much is he blinded by sin, and influenced by Divine Justice. "I have indeed heard of a man," he adds, "who had killed another and escaped, and some time afterwards went of his own free will to the judge, confessing his crime, and asking to be beheaded, as he could neither sleep nor rest."

Virgil next answers a question that he may have perceived Dante wished to put to him, but had been deterred by Virgil's injunction of silence, namely, Why had Charon refused him admission into his bark?

Quinci non passa mai anima buona ;
E però se Caron di te si lagna,
Ben puoi saper omai che il suo dir suona."—*

No innocent soul ever passes this way ; and hence if Charon complains of thee, well canst thou now understand what his words import (namely, that thou art not one of the souls of the doomed)."

* *suona*: *lit.* "what his speech sounds"; but *suona* here means "signifies, imports."

A great convulsion of nature now takes place, and Dante falls into a swoon. It is worthy of remark that whereas the last phenomenon that he witnesses before losing his senses is a brilliant flash of lightning, we find him, in the first line of the next canto, being recalled to consciousness by the loud clap of thunder that followed it, making it quite possible that in an instant of time after swooning he may have awakened to find that he had been, by some supernatural means which shall be discussed anon, transported to the other side of the Acheron.

Finito questo, la buia* campagna	130
Tremò sì forte, che dello spavento	
La mente di sudore ancor mi bagna.	
La terra lagrimosa diede vento,†	
Che balenò una luce vermiglia,	
La qual mi vinse ciascun sentimento :	135
E caddi, come l' uom cui sonno piglia.	

* *la buja campagna* : The *Anonimo Fiorentino* thinks that Dante describes the country as dark and gloomy from the absence of sun and stars, but also dark from the obscurity of the sins punished there.

† *diede vento* : The *Anonimo Fiorentino* gives as the explanation of the earthquake, thunder, and lightning, that the souls in Hell, seeing other souls arrive there, began lamenting at their coming, feeling more bitter remorse in their consciences, and these lamentations made such a din, that they caused a movement in the air, and created a wind as Dante describes : and this movement of the air, this wind acting on the fire which may be supposed to exist in that region, caused them to become bright ; and that bright glare flashed through the atmosphere just like a flash of lightning, and made the air look crimson-red. It would therefore appear to have been a fictitious flash of lightning, followed in the next canto by a fictitious clap of thunder.

When this (speech of Virgil's) was finished, the gloomy plain shook so violently, that the terror of it still bathes my memory with sweat. The tearful ground (*i. e.* the ground that is bedewed with tears) gave out a blast of wind, that lightened forth a crimson glare which overcame all sensation in me ; and I fell as a man whom sleep hath seized.

We are not told in what manner Dante passed over to the other side of the Acheron, after Charon's refusal to ferry him over. Only a few commentators have maintained that Charon, on hearing Virgil's reproof, and in deference to the Divine Authority, with which he was invested, withdrew his opposition, and that Dante thereupon passed over in the boat ; but this is undoubtedly an erroneous view. The more general and the most probable interpretation is that Dante was conveyed over the Acheron while in a trance by an angel. In the ninth canto of the *Inferno*, when the fiends have closed the gates of the City of Dis against the poets, we find them opened by a supernatural messenger who is considered by nearly all the commentators to have been an angel.* His advent is announced by a violent peal of thunder

* I have by me an interesting correspondence between the late Duke of Sermoneta, one of the greatest Dantists of his time, and Count Carlo Troya, the learned author of the *Veltro Allegorico*, on the subject of the passage of the Acheron. The Duke held very strongly the opinion that good angels could not act as ministers of Hell, and that Dante was not carried by an angel across the Acheron, neither did the Duke think the passage was made in Charon's boat. The late Dean Church, in a letter dated Feb. 19th, 1890, wrote to me : " I quite agree

and an earthquake *un fracasso d' un suon pien di spavento, per cui tremavan ambedue le sponde* (ix, 65-66). We also find in St. Matthew, xxviii, 2: "behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from Heaven," etc. Moreover, Dante, before reaching the gate of Purgatory proper, falls into a deep sleep, and on awaking finds that Lucia has carried him, while unconscious, to the very threshold of Purgatory.* Scartazzini remarks also that the words of Virgil to Charon would imply a promise that the Divine decree would be carried out in spite of him, and that the co-operation of the angel would be in some sort a fulfilment of that promise. Scartazzini says that, with regard to the allegorical sense of this passage, it will suffice to remember that, according to the scholastic teaching, the first operations of Divine Grace are mysterious. Compare St. John iii, 8: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."

with the Duke of Sermoneta in thinking, for the reasons which he gives, that Dante did *not* cross in Charon's boat, but was transported across in a way which he cannot understand. But I think that this is not absolutely certain, but only the most probable interpretation . . ."

* *Purg.* ix. 52.

END OF CANTO III.

CANTO IV.

THE FIRST CIRCLE.

LIMBO.

THE BLAMELESS UNBAPTIZED.

THE ILLUSTRIOUS HEATHEN.

At the close of the last Canto we saw that Dante, overcome by the accumulated horrors around him, had sunk down in a swoon. In the present Canto we see him awakening to find himself on the verge of the awful precipice, which is the descent to the first Circle of Hell. This circle is called *Limbo* from its being the outside zone or border of the Circles of Hell, the primary meaning of the word being the border of a garment.

Benvenuto divides the Canto into six parts.

In the First Division, from v. 1 to v. 24, Dante describes his feelings when he recovered his senses, and how he entered into the First Circle.

In the Second Division, from v. 25 to v. 43, the fate of the unbaptized, both infants and adults, is mentioned.

In the Third Division, from v. 44 to v. 66, Dante sounds Virgil as to whether there is any hope or possibility of the inmates of *Limbo* changing their condition for the better, and Virgil answers him.

In the Fourth Division, from v. 67 to v. 111, Dante

gives a description of a noble castle within the precincts of *Limbo*, which is the abode of the more illustrious heathen, and speaks of four great poets of ancient times, in whose company he passes within the gates.

In the Fifth Division, from v. 112 to v. 129, he speaks of the souls of renowned warriors that he saw there.

In the Sixth Division, from v. 130 to v. 151, he names others who were preeminent in science and philosophy.

Division I. The first words of the Canto are but a continuation of those with which the previous one ended. Dante had fainted at the earthquake, followed by a lightning flash. He is recalled to consciousness by a clap of thunder. In line 9 the Poet tells us that this thunder was the sound of the lamentations of the doomed. Benvenuto draws attention to its being a common expression to say of a man with a stentorian voice, that he speaks in a voice of thunder.

Rupperi l' alto sonno nella testa
 Un greve tuono,* sì ch' io mi riscossi,
 Come persona che per forza è desta :
 E l' occhio riposato intorno mossi,

* *Un greve tuono* : Compare Milton, *Par. Lost*, viii, 240-244 :

“ — Fast we found, fast shut,
 The dismal gates, and barricado'd strong ;
 But long ere our approaching heard within
 Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
 Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.”

Dritto levato, e fiso* riguardai 5
Per conoscer lo loco dov' io fossi.

A loud thunder-clap broke the deep slumber in my brain, so that I started up as one that is roused by force. And rising to my feet (*lit. erect*), I turned my rested eyes around me, and gazed attentively in order to recognize the place where I was.

He finds that in some mysterious way, which he does not explain, he is now on the interior bank of the Acheron, having traversed its flat shore, and is now standing on the edge of the awful chasm that leads down into Hell.

Vero è che in su la proda mi trovai
Della valle d' abisso dolorosa,
Che tuono accoglie d' infiniti guai. 10
Oscura, profond' era e nebulosa,
Tanto che, per ficcar lo viso al fondo,
Io non vi discerneva alcuna cosa.

True is it that I found myself upon the brink of the dolorous Valley of the Abyss (*i. e. Hell*), which gathers thunder of infinite woes (*i. e. collects into one thunder all the lamentations that ascend from below*). It was so obscure, profound and cloudy, that for all that I fixed my gaze on its depths, naught could I discern there.

Benvenuto thinks that Dante is here picturing the difficulty and profundity of the subject before him, for vices are infinite, diverse, various, occult and unknown. Hence Dante is right in picturing that at first sight he could not discern anything, for every-

* *fiso*: adjective used *adverbially* for *fissamente, attentamente*.

thing presented itself to his eye in a confused way. And well might Dante in the first canto exclaim :
Eh quanto a dir qual era è cosa dura !

On being invited by Virgil to follow him down the descent into Hell, Dante hesitates to do so, on noticing the pallor of Virgil's face.

—"Or discendiam quaggiù nel cieco mondo,"—

Cominciò il poeta tutto smorto :

—"Io sarò primo,* e tu sarai secondo."—

15

Ed io, che del color mi fui accorto,

Dissi :—"Come verrò, se tu paventi,

Che suoli al mio dubbiare esser conforto?"—

"Let us now descend into the blind world here below," began the Poet, as pale as death : "I will be first, and thou shalt be second." And I, who had become aware of his (pallid) colour, said : "How shall I go if thou art afraid, that art wont to be the comfort in my doubts?"

Virgil hastens to assure Dante that the change in his countenance is not due to any fear for himself, but arises from sympathy for the sufferings they are about to witness.

Ed egli a me :—"L' angoscia delle genti,

Che son quaggiù, nel viso mi dipigne

20

Quella pietà, che tu per tema senti.

Andiam, chè la via lunga ne sospigne :"—

Così si mise,† e così mi fe' entrare

* *Io sarò primo*, etc. : Compare *Inf.* xii, 114 :

"Questi ti sia or primo, ed io secondo."

† *si mise* : It is doubtful whether one must understand *si mise* as in the same sense as in Canto iii, 21 :

"Mi mise dentro alle segrete cose."

in which case this passage would be *si mise dentro al primo cer-*

Nel primo cerchio che l' abisso cigne.

And he to me : " The anguish of the people who are here below depicts on my face that pity which thou takest for fear. Let us on : for our long way urges us (to hasten). " Thus he placed himself (before me), and thus he made me enter into the first circle that girds the abyss.

It must be remembered that the despicable souls of the lukewarm were on the other side of the Acheron, and consequently outside the first circle that formed the girdle of Hell.

Division II. In the ensuing lines we read how Dante finds himself among the spirits of the blameless heathen, whose penalty is purely mental suffering at the thought of being for ever debarred from the sight of God.

Dante listens, but hears no sounds that betoken bodily anguish.

Quivi, secondo che per ascoltare, 25
 Non avea pianto, ma' * che di sospiri,
 Che l' aura eterna facevan tremare :

chio : or whether one should take the view of Benvenuto, who comments thus : " *costi si mise*, scilicet, ante me, quia me præcessit, e *costi*, secundum quod ipse prædixerat *mi feci intrare*, scilicet, post se," etc.

* *ma' che* : Scartazzini states that this is originally the same as the Latin *magis quam*, from which the Provençals formed *mais que*, the Spaniards *mas que*, and the old Italian writers *ma' che*, in the sense of *più che*, and of *se non che*. See *Inf.* xxviii, 66 :

" E non avea ma' ch' un' orecchia sola."

Ciò avvenia di duol senza martiri,
 Ch' avean le turbe, ch' eran molte e grandi,
 D' infanti e di femmine e di viri. 30

Here in so far as by listening (I could ascertain), there was no lamentation, except of sighs, which made to tremble the air (of that region which to the spirits in it is) eternal. This arose from the grief without torments which these multitudes had, that were numerous and vast, of infants, of women, and of men.

Dante appears to have been too much astonished to utter a word, so Virgil anticipates his probable desire to know whose souls these are among whom he finds himself.

Lo buon Maestro a me :—" Tu non dimandi
 Che spiriti son questi che tu vedi ?
 Or vo' che sappi, innanzi che più andi,*
 Ch' ei non peccaro : e s' elli hanno mercedi,
 Non basta, perchè non ebber battesimo, 35
 Ch' è parte † della fede che tu credi :

* *andi* : for *vadi*. It is thought that in Dante's time the verb *andare* was not so defective as it is now, and that the forms *ando*, *andi*, *anda*, were commonly used instead of those in use at the present time, *vo*, *vai*, *va*, which are supplied (says Fraticelli) from the verb *vadere*.

† *parte* : In the edition of *La Crusca* the reading *porta* was substituted for *parte* (Dr. Moore thinks) "from considerations of ecclesiastical propriety. It has no MS. authority. Dr. Barlow did not find it in a single one of 138 MSS. examined, though one MS. had *porto*. Compare the language of ii, 30." Scartazzini says that Baptism is certainly called *janua sacramentorum*, but in no case is it ever styled *janua fidei*. Lombardi also denies that Baptism can be considered *la porta della*

E se furon dinanzi al Cristianesimo,
 Non adorar debitamente Dio :
 E di questi cotai son io medesimo.
 Per tai difetti, non per altro rio,
 Semo perduti, e sol di tanto offesi,
 Che senza speme vivemo in disio.”—

40

The good Master to me: “Thou dost not ask what spirits are these that thou seest? Now I wish thee to know, before thou goest farther, that they sinned not; and if they have merit it suffices not, for they had not Baptism, which is part of the Faith that thou believest. And if they lived before Christianity, they did not worship God in the right manner (i. e. according to the Mosaic law, the only authorized mode of worshipping him before Jesus Christ).* And of these am I myself. For these

fede, seeing that it opens the way to the Sacraments, and not to the Faith, which latter on the contrary must precede it. The Ethiopian Eunuch had to make to St. Philip the Deacon his profession of faith, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,” before he could be baptized by him. Lombardi concludes that Faith is the *porta del Battesimo*, and not *Battesimo porta della Fede*, and in *Inf.* ii, 29-30, Dante himself has said:

“quella fede,

Ch' è principio alla via di salvazione.”

Faith has its distinct articles which may well be styled *parti della Fede*. “Ut enim corporis membra articulis distinguuntur: ita etiam in hac fidei confessione, quidquid distincte, et separatim ab alio nobis credendum est, recte, et apposite articulum dicimus.”

(*Catech. Rom. cap. i.*)

* I must confess to feeling very doubtful as to the right meaning of this passage. Benvenuto interprets it: “And I am

defects (*i. e.* for the lack of Baptism and Faith) and for no other guilt, are we lost, and only so far afflicted, that without hope we live in desire."

Dante is much moved at Virgil's words :

Gran duol mi prese al cor quando lo intesi,
Perocchè genti di molto valore
Conobbi, che in quel limbo * eran sospesi. 45

Great sadness laid hold on my heart when I heard this, because I knew people of much worth, who were in that *Limbo* in a state of suspense (*i. e.* neither saved nor damned).

Division III. Dante now puts a question to Virgil as to whether any of the inmates of *Limbo* had ever, to his knowledge, changed their condition for the better. From reverence he avoids mentioning the name of our Lord, nor does he ever do so throughout the *Inferno*, and Virgil, in his answer, is equally reticent about the Holy Name. It is an Article of the Catholic Faith (says Benvenuto) that Christ, at his Resurrection, descended into *Limbo*, and delivered

one of these, because I (Virgil) was born and lived before the time of Christianity, and because I did not believe in the coming of Christ." He says that is why Virgil turned pale on entering this Circle: it was from a natural feeling of sympathy for the illustrious souls condemned to exist there, of whom he himself was one.

* *limbo*: We have already noticed that *limbo* or *lembo* is so called from being the outer zone or girdle of the Circles of Hell.

the souls of the patriarchs* (*Christus resurgens descendit ad limbum et inde liberavit animas patrum*). As to the truth of this Article, Dante is now especially anxious to get an answer from Virgil.

—"Dimmi, Maestro mio, dimmi, Signore,"—
Comincia' io, per voler esser certo
Di quella fede che vince ogni errore :

—"Uscicci mai alcuno, o per suo merto,
O per altrui, † che poi fosse beato ?"— 50

"Tell me, my Master, tell me, my Lord," commenced I, wishing to be assured of that Faith which overcometh every error, "Did any either by his own merit, or by others, go forth from here, that afterwards was blessed (in Heaven) ?"

Virgil replies :

E quei, che intese il mio parlar coperto,
Rispose :—"Io era nuovo ‡ in questo stato,
Quando ci vidi venire un possente ||
Con segno di vittoria coronato.

* In the Este MS. of Benvenuto the passage is worded somewhat differently, namely, that Christ descended into *Limbo* after His death, and before His Resurrection. This was also the teaching of the Scholiasts.

† *per altrui* : compare 1 Pet. iii, 18-19 : "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit : by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison."

‡ *Io era nuovo* : As Virgil died about 19 years before the birth of Christ, and as Our Lord was 33 years of age at the time of His death, Virgil could only have been about fifty years in *Limbo* at the period alluded to.

|| *Un possente* : In *St. Matth.* xxviii, 18, Our Lord says to His

And he, who understood my covert speech,
answered : " I was yet a novice in this condi-
tion (*i.e.* in *Limbo*) when I saw come among
us a Mighty One, crowned with a sign of
victory (*i.e.* the Cross).

Virgil now goes on to tell Dante of the Spirits in
Limbo that were liberated by Christ.

Trasseci* l' ombra del primo parente, 55
D' Abel suo figlio, e quella di Noè,
Di Moisè legista† e ubbidiente ;
Abraam patriarca, e David re,
Israel con lo padre, e co' suoi nati,‡
E con Rachele, per cui || tanto fe', 60
Ed altri molti ; e fecegli beati :
E vo' che sappi che, dinanzi ad essi,
Spiriti umani non eran salvati."—

From it (*Limbo*) He took away the shade of
the first parent, of Abel his son, and that of
Noah, of Moses the lawgiver and obedient
(unto God); Abraham the patriarch and

Disciples after His Resurrection : " All power is given unto
me in heaven and in earth."

* *Trasseci* : and in verse 53 *ci vidi venire* : Observe how
careful Virgil is to show Dante that he does not for one mo-
ment forget his own condition, but fully associates himself with
the spirits in *Limbo* who have no hope of bettering their lot.
ci may either mean "thence," *i.e.* from *Limbo*, or "from among
us." Either interpretation agrees with the sense of Virgil's
words.

† *Moisè legista e ubbidiente* : This means that Moses imposed
on the children of Israel that obedience, which he himself
willingly yielded to God.

‡ *sui nati* : This evidently means all the progeny of Jacob,
namely, his twelve sons, and his daughter Dinah.

|| *per cui tanto fe'* : Jacob "did so much" for Rachel by
serving her father Laban twice seven years for her.

David the King, Israel with his father (Isaac) and his children, and with Rachel for whom he (Israel) did so much, and many others; and made them blessed. And I would have thee to know, that before these were no human spirits saved."

Lombardi says that, from the time of the Fall of Adam up to the hour of the Redemption, Paradise had been closed, and all spirits of men excluded from it.

During the above conversation the Poets have been moving onwards.

Non lasciavam l' andar, perch' ei dicessi,
Ma passavam la selva tuttavia, 65
La selva dico di spiriti spessi.

We did not desist from advancing because he was speaking, but still were passing onward through the forest, the forest, I mean, of crowded spirits.

Benvenuto remarks that it is as though Dante would say: "This is a forest of many men, not of many trees."

Division IV. Dante and Virgil are now met by the shades of four great Poets of antiquity, by whom they are conducted to a noble castle, which, within the precincts of *Limbo*, is the allotted abode of the most illustrious heathen. The whole region is lighted up by a beacon of extraordinary brilliancy.

Non era lunga ancor la nostra via
Di qua dal sonno ;* quando vidi un foco,

* *Di qua dal sonno* : On the reading *sommo* adopted by some

—“ O tu che onori* e scienza ed arte,
 Questi chi son, ch' hanno cotanta onranza,
 Che dal modo degli altri li diparte? ”— 75

“ O thou who holdest in honour (every)
 science and art, who are these who have such
 honour, that it parts them from the custom
 of the others? ”

Virgil tells him that they owe their privileges to their distinguished merit.

E quegli a me :—“ L' onrata nominanza,
 Che di lor suona su nella tua vita,
 Grazia acquista nel ciel che sì gli avanza.”—

And he to me: “ The honoured renown of them which echoes in thy life (*i. e.* in the world), wins (for them) in Heaven that favour, which gives them such a (special) distinction.”

Dante now supposes himself to hear one of the spirits proclaiming the return of Virgil to *Limbo*, and demanding especial respect to be paid to him, as the Prince of the Latin Poets.

Intanto voce fu per me udita †

—“ Onorate l' altissimo poeta ;

80

* *onori* : It has been noticed how Dante makes the word honour, in its various forms, ring and reverberate through these lines,—*onrevol, onori, onranza, onrata, onorate!*

† *voce fu per me udita* : Benvenuto thinks that the voice may have been either that of Horace or of Ovid, for they both extol him greatly in their works. He quotes Ovid as having written in his praise : “ Omnia divino cantavit carmine vates,” and he adds that Horace in his (first) book of the Odes speaks of Virgil as the half of his soul.

“ Animæ dimidium meæ.”

Hor. 1 Carm. iii, 8.

L' ombra sua torna,* ch' era dipartita.”—

Meanwhile a voice was heard by me (exclaiming) “Honour the sublime poet ; His shade, which had departed (now) returns.”

Dante sees a noble group of spirits approaching him.

Poichè la voce fu restata e queta,
Vidi quattro grand' ombre † a noi venire ;
Sembianza avevan nè trista nè lieta.

* *L' ombra sua torna, ch' era dipartita*: It was to go to Dante's aid that the shade of Virgil had parted from his fellow-poets.

† *quattro grand' ombre*: Scartazzini points out that, as regards Horace, Ovid, and Lucan, Dante had made a minute study of their works, but being unacquainted with Greek, and there not being a Latin translation of Homer at that time, he could only know Homer from extracts quoted in the translated text of Aristotle ; but Fraticelli, in a note in *Convito* ii, 15, on the passage “Quello che Aristotile si dicesse di ciò, non si può ben sapere, etc.,” warmly disputes the above view. He asks how it is proved that in 1297 the works of Aristotle were existing in Florence in the original Greek, and he states his opinion that this passage in the *Convito* is meant to apply, less to Dante, than to the Italians of his time, who, for lack of the Greek text, were forced to have recourse to translations. And Fraticelli contends that Dante, in many passages of his works, shows that he had read Homer, and that the following passage in *Convito* i, 7, convinces him that he had read it in the original Greek, which he may have learnt since 1297: “Sappia ciascuno, che nulla cosa per legame musaico [poetico] armonizzata, si può della sua loquela in altra trasmutare senza rompere tutta sua dolcezza e armonia. E questa è la ragione per che Omero non si mutò di greco in latino, come l' altre scritture che avemo da loro [da greci].” Benvenuto thinks that Dante only knew Homer through Virgil's imitation of him.

After that the voice had ceased and become silent, I beheld four mighty shades advancing towards us ; they had an aspect neither sad nor joyful.

It is well observed in the *Anonimo Fiorentino* that the wise man never gets over-elated with prosperity nor too much cast down in adversity. Benvenuto says the demeanour of the Poets shows them to be grave and mature men of authority (*virī autorisabiles, graves et maturi*).

Virgil now severally names the different Poets of the noble band, beginning with Homer.

Lo buon Maestro cominciò a dire : 85

—“ Mira colui con quella spada in mano,
Che vien dinanzi a' tre sì come sire.

Quegli è Omero poeta sovrano,
L' altro è Orazio satiro, che viene,
Ovidio è il terzo, e l' ultimo Lucano. 90

The good Master began to say : “ Mark him with that sword in hand, who precedes the three as (their) lord ; that one is Homer, the sovereign Poet, the next who comes is Horace the satirist, Ovid is the third, and the last is Lucan.”

Homer is represented with a sword, either because all his works were about warlike deeds, or because he surpassed all poets in the splendour of his genius. Benvenuto, while taking the same view, thinks that the sword in Homer's hand may also signify that he was the first of the Poets to cut open a way to the Infernal Regions. He alludes to an idea which has been held by some, that these four Poets are meant to represent the four cardinal virtues, but he considers

this to be a fiction, and says that, in his opinion, Dante in the *Inferno* only wishes to bring forward a knowledge of vices, and not of virtues as in the *Purgatorio*. He thinks rather that Dante wishes to introduce the four Poets, who, after Virgil, were his principal guides in poesy, and especially the three Latin ones, namely, Horace in satire, Ovid in comedy, and Lucan in tragedy.

Virgil explains why his return among the Poets is thus honoured.

Perocchè ciascun meco si conviene
 Nel nome, che sonò la voce sola,
 Fannomi onore, e di ciò fanno bene."

Because each of them agrees with me in the name which their unanimous voice proclaimed (*lit.* the one voice sounded), they do me honour, and in that do they well."

He means that the five, both himself and the four, had the title of Poet common to them all. In giving honour to their comrade, they were not only honouring learning and genius, but were also showing themselves to be free from the smallest tinge of envy.

Così vidi adunar la bella scuola
 Di quei signor* dell' altissimo canto, 95
 Che sopra gli altri com' aquila vola.

* *quei signor*: I do not follow Scartazzini's interpretation of the passage in making *signor* stand for *signori*. Dr. Moore (*Textual Criticism*, p. 280-282) says: "The archaic use of *quei* for *quel* (though extremely common in Dante and other old writers) has perhaps here, as it has in many other places, misled copyists In the present instance, some of those who were misled changed *signor* into *signori*, in supposed agreement with *quei*, by this change (be it noted) with the usual shortsightedness of emending copyists, failing to give sense to the

Così n' andammo infino alla lumiera,
 Parlando cose,* che il tacere è bello,
 Sì com' era il parlar colà dov' era. 105
 Venimmo al piè d' un nobile castello,†
 Sette volte cerchiato d' alte mura,
 Difeso intorno d' un bel fiumicello.
 Questo passammo, come terra dura :
 Per sette porte intrai con questi savi ; 110
 Giugnemmo in prato di fresca verdura.

Thus we went on as far as to the light, discoursing (of) things whereof it becomes (me now) to be silent, even as it was (fitting) to speak (of them) there where I was. We came to the foot of a noble castle seven times begirt with lofty walls, defended about by a fair rivulet. This we passed as dry ground ; and with those Sages I entered through seven gates ; (and) we came into a meadow of fresh verdure.

* *Parlando cose*, etc. : This means things too honourable to Dante. Tommasèo remarks that the consciousness of greatness among great men is not pride ; but among little-minded persons who misunderstand, it is vanity.

† *nobile castello*, etc. : This is supposed to be the Noble Castle of wit and learning, enriched by its seven walls, which are the seven Virtues, namely, Faith, Hope, Love, Justice, Prudence, Temperance and Fortitude. It is entered by seven gates, which are the *Trivium*, consisting of Logic, Grammar and Rhetoric ; and the *Quadrivium*, Arithmetic, Music, Geometry and Astronomy. The stream is thought to represent Eloquence, and only bars the way to the ignorant, and therefore the six great Poets are able to cross it without the slightest difficulty. Great and noble minds need not the persuasions of Eloquence to enable them to practise the seven virtues figured on the seven walls.

Benvenuto thinks that the green meadow is intended to represent the evergreen fame of illustrious men, because both Virgil in the *Æneid*, and Homer in the *Odyssey*, depict them as abiding in verdant pastures.

Dantè now observes that this spot is tenanted by persons of great dignity.

Genti v' eran con occhi tardi e gravi,
Di grande autorità ne' lor sembianti :
Parlavan rado,* con voci soavi.

On it (the meadow) were there people with eyes (that moved) slowly and majestically, of great authority in their appearance : seldom they spoke, (and) with gentle voices.

Benvenuto remarks that in the world of speech there are four different species of men (*in mundo † loquendi est quadruplex genus hominum*), some know little and speak little, and these are worthy of love, for they seem to know themselves, and be willing to learn. A second kind there are who know much and talk much, and these are worthy of being listened to, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A third order are there who know little

* *Parlavan rado* : Compare *Prov.* xxix, 20 : "Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him." In *Conv.* iv. 2, Dante says that words that are the seeds of action must be locked within the breast and only be let loose with much discretion ; and he quotes the words of Solomon in *Ecclesiastes* : "A time to keep silence, and a time to speak." Fraticelli remarks on this passage in the *Convito* that, though all the texts have *Ecclesiasticus*, the words cited are in *Ecclesiastes*, iii, 7.

† In the Este MS. of Benvenuto the reading is *in modo loquendi*, etc.

and talk much, and these ought to be driven away as an annoyance to everybody. But on the other hand, there are a fourth species who know much and talk little, and these are worthy of praise, honour and commendation, for they are the really wise, and of such is Dante speaking here, being in fact himself of this sort.

Division V. In this division Dante notices the shades of many men and women of heroic natures that he saw within the castle, and Benvenuto thinks that Dante's reason for introducing the shades of warriors immediately after those of the Poets is that the special province of the latter is to describe the great deeds of the former.

Traemmoci così dall' un de' canti	115
In loco aperto luminoso ed alto,	
Sì che veder poteansi tutti e quanti.	
Colà diritto, sopra il verde smalto,	
Mi fur mostrati gli spiriti magni,	
Che del vederli in me stesso n' esalto.	120

So we withdrew to one of the sides, (*i. e.* a little apart) into an open, bright and lofty space, so that all of them (these dignified personages) could be distinguished. There, right before me upon the enamelled green (*lit.* green enamel) were shown me the great spirits, whom to have seen I glory within myself.

The first group that Dante sees consists of heroes and heroines. With the exception of Saladin he only mentions by name either Romans, or those from whom the Roman people were supposed to be descended. See *Mon.* II, § 3.

The first mentioned is Electra, whose son Dardanus founded Troy, Hector the defender of Troy, Æneas the supposed founder of Rome, and then Cæsar, to whom the Roman Empire owes its origin. Then comes Camilla, who died fighting for Latium as did Penthesilea for Troy, Latinus, king of Latium and his daughter Lavinia, who on her marriage with Æneas brought to the Romans the sovereignty over Europe. Then Lucius Junius Brutus, who delivered Rome from the tyrants. In Lucretia, Julia, Marcia and Cornelia, are figured the virtues which rendered the Roman people great.

Io vidi Elettra con molti compagni,
 Tra' quai conobbi Ettore ed Enea,
 Cesare armato con gli occhi grifagni.*
 Vidi Cammilla e la Penthesilea
 Dall' altra parte, e vidi il re Latino, 125
 Che con Lavinia sua figlia sedea.
 Vidi quel Bruto che cacciò Tarquino,
 Lucrezia, Julia,† Marzia e Corniglia,

* *Cesare . . . con gli occhi grifagni*: Suetonius (*Jul. Cæs.* c. 45) mentions Julius Cæsar as remarkable for his dark and piercing eyes (*nigris vegetisque oculis*). *Grifagni* is akin to the German *greifen*, to snatch, seize, as of a bird of prey. St. Gregory is quoted by Camerini as saying of avaricious persons that they have in their eyes kites and hawks. Compare *Inf.* xxii, 139—140:

“Ma l' altro fu bene sparvier grifagno
 Ad artigliar ben lui,”

And see note thereon.

† *Julia*: daughter of Julius Cæsar and wife of Pompey.
Marcia: wife of Cato of Utica, see *Purg.* i, 79, and *Conv.* iv, 28.
Cornelia: daughter of Scipio Africanus and mother of the Gracchi.

E solo in parte vidi il Saladino.*

I saw Electra with many companions, among whom I recognized both Hector and Æneas, Cæsar in armour with his falcon eyes. I saw Camilla and Penthesilea on the other side, and I saw King Latinus who was sitting with Lavinia his daughter, I saw that Brutus who drove forth Tarquinius (Superbus), Lucretia, Julia, Marcia and Cornelia, and by himself apart I saw the (great) Saladin.

Division VI. The second group of spirits, consisting entirely of men of science, is now introduced. Tommasèo remarks that Dante's classification of them is not as confused as it might appear. Up to Zeno he enumerates the great philosophers; and then beginning with Dioscorides he names the sages of natural history, eloquence and medicine.

Poi che innalzai un poco più le ciglia, 130
Vidi il Maestro di color che sanno,†
Seder tra filosofica famiglia.

* *il Saladino*: (Seláh-ed-deen), the renowned Soldan of Babylon, and in feats of arms the rival of Richard Cœur de Lion, was born in 1137. He was universally admired for his lofty mind, and for his clemency towards his Christian prisoners when he captured Jerusalem after winning the great battle of Tiberias in 1187. He is here represented as sitting apart, being of a different race and faith from the surrounding spirits. In *Conv.* iv, 11, Dante extols his kingly liberality. // before a proper name implies distinction.

† *il maestro di color che sanno*: Scartazzini says that in the time of Dante, Aristotle was venerated as an infallible authority, and almost as a divinity. In *Conv.* i, 1, Dante speaks of him as *the Philosopher (Il Filosofo)*. In *Conv.* iii, 5: "Glorioso filosofo, al quale la natura più aperse i suoi segreti." *Conv.*

Tutti lo miran, tutti onor gli fanno.

Quivi vid' io Socrate e Platone,*

Che innanzi agli altri più presso gli stanno. 135

iv, 6: "autore degnissimo di obbedienza e di Fede." And in *Conv.* iv, 17: "dove aperse la bocca la divina sentenza d' Aristotile, da lasciare mi pare ogni altrui sentenza."

* *Socrate e Platone*: Emil Ruth (*Geschichte der italienischen Poesie*, vol. ii, p. 136, 7, Leipzig, 1844) remarks that the following passage in the *Convito* (iii, 11), will help us to understand Dante's classification of the sages at this point. In the translation of the *Convito* by Miss Hillard (London, 1889), the passage is rendered: "The sciences on which Philosophy most fervently fixes her gaze are called by her name, such as Natural Science, Morals and Metaphysics. Which latter, because more necessarily does this lady fix her gaze thereon, and with more fervour, is called *the first Philosophy*." In a note on this passage Miss Hillard says that this probably signifies that Philosophy is more nearly akin to Metaphysics than to the other sciences, and that therefore Metaphysics is properly called *the first Philosophy*.

Ruth says that we have here before us two series of philosophers of decreasing importance. In the first series we find the moral and natural philosophers who investigate morals and the world in the mass, both in its general and in its complex sense, both in its laws and principles. Hence we find sitting nearest of all to Aristotle the moralists Socrates and Plato, and after them the natural philosophers Democritus, Anaxagoras the founder of Deism, his disciple Diogenes of Apollonia; Thales, Empedocles, Zeno of Elia, and Dioscorides, all of them philosophers in the strict sense of the word, who introduced a general system of the metaphysics of the world, investigating its origin and its relation to God. In the second group are those philosophers who more especially penetrated into the study of morals and of nature. And in this group too (as in the other), the first to be mentioned are the moralists, viz.: Orpheus, Linus, Cicero and Seneca, who wrote about the duties of man, and laid down practical rules of life; next follow the naturalists who gave

When I lifted up my brows a little more, I beheld the master of them that know (*i. e.* Aristotle) sitting amidst a philosophic family. All gaze upon him (in admiration), all do him honour. Here I beheld Socrates and Plato, who before the others stand nearest to him (*i. e.* may be ranked as the chief philosophers after Aristotle).

The lesser lights of science are now mentioned in their order.

Democrito, che il mondo a caso pone,
 Diogenes, Anassagora e Tale,
 Empedocles, Eraclito e Zenone :
 E vidi il buono accoglitor del quale,
 Dioscoride dico : e vidi Orfeo,*

140

their attention to special sciences, such as the mathematician Euclid, the astronomer Ptolemy, and the four physicians, Hippocrates, Galen, Avicenna and Averrhoës. Thus, we see that the last person of the first group, the botanist and physician Dioscorides is, as it were, side by side with the last persons of the second group, the four physicians; so that the two groups are linked together, and compose a circle, of which Aristotle is the soul and the origin, uniting in himself all the different disciplines represented here, as does Virgil the tendency of the poets that go with him.

* *Orfeo* : Although Orpheus is better known as the hero of the mythological episode connected with the death of his wife Eurydice, it is as a real great poet and musician that Dante mentions him here. Monsignor Poletto (*Dizionario Danteo*, Siena, 1887), remarks that from the fable of Orpheus related in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Dante gathers the moral signification in *Conv.* ii, 1 : "Quando dice Ovidio che Orfeo faceva colla cetera [*i. e. cithara*, lyre] mansuete le fiere, e gli arbori e le pietre a sè muovere...vuol dire, che' l' savio uomo collo strumento della sua voce fa mansuescere e umiliare li crudeli cuori, e fa muovere alla sua volontà coloro che non hanno vita di scienza e d'

Tullio e Lino* e Seneca morale :
 Euclide geometra e Tolommeo,†
 Ippocrate, Avicenna e Galieno, ‡
 Averrois, || che il gran comento feo.

arte ; e coloro che non avendo vita ragionevole di scienza alcuna sono quasi come pietre." Lubin says that Orpheus was a disciple of Linus, and was born in Thrace.

* *Lino* : Lubin adds that Linus was a Greek poet, and like Orpheus is certainly intended to represent theology in this passage. "Theologus primus apud Græcos Linus fuit." (Hugo a Sancto Victore. *Exc.* i, 24). Some read *Livio* instead of *Lino*.

† *Tolommeo* : Claudius Ptolemæus was a celebrated Egyptian geographer, astronomer, and mathematician, and taught astronomy at Alexandria during the reigns of Marcus Antoninus and Hadrian. He has always been regarded as the prince of astronomers among the ancients, and in his great work *Μεγάλη Γεωγραφικὴ Ἐπιπέδου* he embodied all the prevailing ideas of his time, by which the earth was placed in the centre of the Universe, and this system was called after him "the Ptolemaic System," to distinguish it from others. Ptolemy's work was translated into Arabic, and from the Arabic a Latin translation had been made about thirty years before the birth of Dante. The whole of the cosmography in the *Divina Commedia* is based upon the Ptolemaic system. (*See Preliminary Chapter*).

‡ Hippocrates, Avicenna and Galen, were three celebrated physicians : the first Greek, the second Arabian, and the third a native of Pergamus, in Asia Minor.

|| Averrhoës, who was born at Cordova, about A.D. 1126, was a great Arabic writer on medicine and philosophy, as well as being a physician, but most celebrated, and especially in the time of Dante, as the translator and commentator of Aristotle. Benvenuto remarks that four of the above-mentioned sages were natives of Cordova, viz. : Lucan, Seneca, Averrhoës, and Avicenna, but as to the last of these he is in error, as Avicenna was born near Bokhara.

The air that trembles is the storm-blast of which Dante is about to speak in the ensuing Canto; and the region into which he enters is one that Scartazzini describes as containing not a single being resplendent for virtue, nor beacon, nor star, nor anything else that gives light.

END OF CANTO IV

CANTO V.

THE SECOND CIRCLE.

MINOS.

THE LASCIVIOUS AND UNCHASTE.

FRANCESCA AND PAOLO.

At the conclusion of the last Canto we saw Dante and Virgil separate themselves from the band of illustrious Poets, and Dante says that his learned Guide led him away by another path forth from the still air into a place of storm and darkness. In this Canto we find that they have descended into the precincts of the Second Circle of Hell, wherein they first see the torments of the doomed sinners.

Benvenuto divides this Canto (not very happily, I think) into five parts.

In the First Division, from v. 1 to v. 24, Dante relates how, on his entrance into the Circle, he beheld Minos, the grim judge of Hell, allotting to every lost soul its appointed punishment.

In the Second Division, from v. 25 to v. 45, he describes the punishment of the Carnal Sinners.

In the Third Division, from v. 46 to v. 69, among the spirits in torment are noticed a few of the personages in ancient history that were most noted for their impure lives.

In the Fourth Division, from v. 70 to v. 114, is

related the beautiful episode of the unhappy loves of Francesca da Rimini and of Paolo Malatesta.

(No further division of the Canto would seem to have been required.)

In the Fifth Division, from v. 115 to v. 142, Dante makes Francesca recount to him in detail the circumstances that led to her fall, and to the tragic death of herself and Paolo.

Division I. The scene opens in the very vestibule of Hell proper, at the entrance to which Dante, now left alone with Virgil, finds himself in the presence of Minos.

Così discesi del cerchio primaio*
Giù nel secondo, che men loco cinghia,
E tanto più dolor, che pugne a guaio.

Thus I descended from the first Circle down into the second, which encloses less space, and (yet) so much greater misery, that it goads to (the utterance of) lamentations.

It must be borne in mind that Hell, in the *Divina Commedia*, is supposed to be in the form of an inverted hollow cone. In the First Circle, *Limbo*, there was a wider circumference, but there was only so much grief as found its expression in sighs (see Canto iv, 26). This second Circle is smaller, but the grief is greater, and is found increasing in every diminishing Circle

* *primaio*: an obsolete form for *primo*. It is found in several passages in the *Divina Commedia*.

In *Par.* xxvi, 100, Dante says of Adam :

“E similmente l' anima primaia
Mi faceva trasparer.”

as the Poets descend, with a corresponding increase in the severity of the punishment.

Stavvi Minos* orribilmente e ringhiat :
 Esamina le colpe nell' entrata, 5
 Giudica e manda, secondo che avvinghia.

There Minos of horrible aspect stands and grins: he examines the offences at the entrance, judges, and sends accordingly as he girds himself.

As this last line might be difficult to understand, Dante goes on to explain it in the lines that follow.

Dico, che quando l' anima mal nata‡

* *Minos*: In Virg. *Æn.* vi, 431-2, Minos is described in the Infernal Regions as shaking lots in the urn:

"Nec vero hæ sine sorte datæ, sine iudice, sedes.
 Quæsitur Minos urnam movet."

We have noticed before, in *Inf.* iii, 109, that Dante represented all the mythological personages in the *Inferno* as demons, and he does so here in the case of Minos, whom he depicts with a tail, and grinning like a dog. This is even more forcibly described in *Inf.* xxvii, 124-127, where Guido da Montefeltro relates how a devil carried him to Minos, who pronounced his doom with a bestial exhibition of fury:

"A Minos mi portò: e quegli attorse
 Otto volte la coda al dosso duro,
 E, poi che per gran rabbia la si morse,
 Disse: 'Questi è de' rei del foco furo.'"

† *orribilmente e ringhia*: Benvenuto, Landino, Buti, and others, read *Stavvi Minos e orribilmente ringhia*, but the editions of Foligno, Jesi, Mantua and Naples all read as in this text.

‡ *mal natu*: comp. *Matth.* xxvi, 24: "It had been good for that man if he had not been born."

Li vien dinanzi, tutta* si confessa ;
 E quel conoscitor† delle peccata
 Vede qual loco d' inferno è da essa : 10
 Cignesi colla coda tante volte,
 Quantunque‡ gradi vuol che giù sia messa.
 Sempre dinanzi a lui ne stanno molte :
 Vanno a vicenda ciascuna al giudizio ; ||
 Dicono e odono,§ e poi son giù volte. 15
 I mean that, when the ill-fated spirit comes
 before him, it confesses itself wholly; and
 that discerner of transgressions perceives
 what place in Hell is (meet) for it: (and
 thereupon) girds himself with his tail as
 many times as the number of degrees (*i.e.*
 circles) below that he wills it (the soul)

* *tutta si confessa* : Buti explains *tutta* as meaning confessing fully, without keeping back the confession of any one single sin.

† *conoscitor* : Lubin says that, in 1300, the judge who inquired into offences was called the *cognitore*. In *Moni.* i, 12, Dante writes : "Cum alter de altero cognoscere non possit, ex quo alter alteri non subditur (nam par in parem non habet imperium); oportet esse tertium jurisdictionis amplioris, qui ambitu sui juris ambobus principetur." Therefore Poletto (*Dis. Dant.*) says that *conoscitore* here means simply a judge.

‡ *Quantunque* is here equivalent to *quanti*.

|| *giudizio* : I have translated this "judgment seat." I find confirmation for this interpretation of the word, in this particular passage, in Blanc's *Vocabolario Dantesco*, and in Poletto's *Dizionario Dantesco*. Also Fanfani (*Vocabolario della Lingua Italiana*) gives as one of the meanings of the word : "Luogo dove si giudica."

§ *odono* : Scartazzini says that Minos symbolizes the voice of conscience, and that what the sinners hear is from within themselves, because Minos does not speak. I venture to point out an exception to this in xxvii, 126, 127, where Minos orders Guido da Montefeltro to be cast into "the thieves' fire."

to be sent. Always before him are there many (souls) standing : they go up each in turn to the judgment-seat ; they speak (their confession), they hear (their sentence), and then are hurled down (to their allotted place).

The attention of Minos is now called to the approach of Dante, and, knowing that the object of his journey through Hell is the salvation of his soul, Minos endeavours to discourage him from further progress. As noticed before, Minos is represented as a malignant demon, and in that character naturally strives to hinder the man who has forsaken the ways of sin for those of virtue.

—"O tu, che vieni al doloroso ospizio,"—

Disse Minos a me, quando mi vide,
Lasciando l'atto di cotanto ufizio,

—"Guarda com' entri, e di cui tu ti fide :*

Non t' inganni l' ampiezza† dell' entrare !" — 20

"O thou who comest to the abode of woe," said Minos to me, desisting, when he saw me, from the exercise of so great a function (as that of judging): "Look how thou enterest, and in whom thou puttest thy trust. Let not the vastness of the entrance deceive thee!"

* *fide*: an ancient form of the second person singular of the present tense for *fidi*.

† *l' ampiezza dell' entrare*: compare *Æn.* vi, 126-9:

—————"facilis descensus Averno ;

Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis ;

Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,

Hoc opus, hic labor est."

Compare also St. Matth. vii, 13: "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction."

Virgil interposes, and answers, as he did when Charon opposed Dante's approach to Acheron.

E il duca mio a lui :—" Perchè pur gride ?
Non impedir lo suo fatale andare :
Vuolsi così colà, dove si puote
Ciò che si vuole, e più non dimandare."—

And my guide to him : " Wherefore dost thou also cry out (as did Charon) ? Oppose not his fated going : It is so willed there (in Heaven), where is power to do that which is willed, and enquire no further."

We may infer that Minos is silenced by Virgil's reproof, and that the two Poets pursue their way into the region of the hurricane.

Division II. The punishment of the Carnal Sinners is now described. Dante is now well within the dark precincts of Hell. No longer does he feel the soft enamelled turf beneath his feet, nor the light air on his brow, but a furious tempest sweeps through an atmosphere of gloom, and sounds of lamentation strike on his ear.

Ora incomincian le dolenti note* 25
A farmisi sentire : or son venuto
Là dove molto pianto mi percolò.
Io venni in loco d' ogni luce muto,
Che mugghia, come fa mar per tempesta,
Se da contrari venti è combattuto. 30
La bufera infernal, che mai non resta,
Mena gli spirti con la sua rapina,†
Voltando e percotendo li molesta.

* *note* : Biagioli explains this to mean inarticulate cries.

† *rapina* : Both Blanc and Poletto explain *rapina* in this passage as *forza che trascina*. Dante (*Convito* ii, cap. vi) uses

Now do the cries of despair begin to become audible to me ; now am I come to that part where much wailing strikes me. I came to a region void (*lit.* mute) of all light, which bellows as does the sea during a tempest, if it be smitten by conflicting winds. The blast of Hell that never ceases, bears the spirits along in its rapid sweep, (and) whirling them round and buffeting them, causes them suffering.

The interpretation of the next three lines is much disputed.

Quando giungon davanti alla ruina,*
 Quivi le strida, il compianto e il lamento, 35
 Bestemmian quivi la virtù divina.

the word as applied to the velocity with which the Ninth Heaven, the *Primum Mobile* whirls round : "Ancora si muove tutto questo cielo, e rivolgesi coll' epiciclo, da oriente in occidente, ogni dì naturale una fiata ; lo quale movimento, se esso è da intelletto alcuno, o se esso è dalla *rapina del primo mobile*, Iddio lo sa, chè a me pare presuntuoso a giudicare."

* *ruina* : Various interpretations of this word are given, and the passage is argued at length by its different commentators. Scartazzini is very positive that *ruina* refers to the " *bufera che mena, rapisce, rivolge e percote le anime, &c.*" Some, among whom is Philalethes (*Dante Alighieri's Göttliche Comödie. Metrisch übertragen und mit kritischen und historischen Erläuterungen versehen von PHILALETHES* [King John of Saxony]. Leipzig, 1865), think that *ruina* means the inside edge of the circle below, and that the shrieks arise from the terror of the spirits of being cast further down. But that would be quite out of accordance with the rule Dante has laid down that the spirits can never issue from the circle allotted to them. Magalotti (*Comento sui primi cinque canti dell' Inferno di Dante*, Milano, 1819) thinks that there was only one point by which there was a descent from *Limbo* into the Circle of the Sensual,

When they (the spirits) arrive before the precipice (*i.e.* before the precipitous edge of the circle at the spot where they are to be hurled down), there (begin) the shrieks, the wailings, and the lamentations, there blaspheme they the Divine Power.

and that there would be the entry. Others think *ruina* to mean a great convulsion or upturning of the rocks that formed the precipice between *Limbo* and the Circle of the Sensual, and that this convulsion was owing to the earthquake that occurred at the time of the Crucifixion. In *Inf.* xii, 31-45, Virgil alludes to this :

“ Tu pensi
 Forse a questa rovina, ch' è guardata
 Da quell' ira bestial ch' io ora spensi.
 Or vuo' che sappi, che l' altra fiata,
 Ch' io discesi quaggiù nel basso inferno,
 Questa roccia non era ancor cascata.
 Ma certo poco pria, s' io ben discerno,
 Che venisse Colui, che la gran preda
 Levò a Dite del cerchio superno,
 Da tutte parti l' alta valle feda
 Tremò sì, ch' io pensai che l' universo
 Sentisse amor, per lo quale è chi creda
 Più volte il mondo in Caos converso :
 Ed in quel punto questa vecchia roccia
 Qui ed altrove tal fece riverso.”

In *Inf.* xxiii, 137, one of the Frati Gaudenti tells Virgil the way to get out of the *Bolgia* :

“ Montar potrete su per la ruina,
 Che giace in costa, e nel fondo soperchia.”

Biagioli says that he takes a different view of *ruina* from everyone else, and he thinks that under the veil of these few verses, so full of ornate eloquence, Dante wished to portray the tempests of the mind, the passions of the soul, and the toils of the body, which assault, disturb, and lacerate all who make their reason subservient to their desires.

We may infer from the words that follow that Dante had asked Virgil who these spirits were; some, however, think he has formed his conclusion from the nature of their torment.

Intesi, che a così fatto tormento
Enno dannati i peccator carnali,
Che la ragion sommettono al talento.*

I learned that to so contrived a torment are condemned the carnal sinners (*i.e.* the impure), who make reason subservient to appetite (*i.e.* make a law of their desires).

E come gli stornei ne portan l' ali, 40
Nel freddo tempo,† a schiera larga e piena,
Così quel fiato gli spiriti mali.
Di qua, di là, di giù, di su gli mena :
Nulla speranza gli conforta mai,
Non che di posa,‡ ma di minor pena. 45

* *talento* : Compare *Inf.* x, 55-56 :

"D' intorno mi guardò, come talento
Avesse di veder s' altri era meco."

† *Nel freddo tempo*: this would be in mid-autumn, when birds of migratory habits gather together in large companies, and journey into warm climates.

‡ *Nulla speranza . . . di posa*: This does not quite tally with what Francesca says to Dante in v. 95-96 :

"Noi udiremo e parleremo a vui,
Mentrechè il vento, come fa, si tace."

On v. 31, "*La bufera infernal che mai non resta*," Scartazzini thinks he means that, although the hurricane may suspend its force for occasional brief intervals, yet it will never come to an end. But this does not sufficiently account for the discrepancy between *non che di posa* and *il vento come fa si tace*. Benvenuto's idea is that the momentary respite that was granted to Francesca and Paolo (v. 95-96) was by no means for alle-

And as in the cold season their wings bear away the starlings in a far-stretching and crowded flock : so that blast (bears along) the spirits of the wicked. Hither, thither, downward, upward it carries them : no hope ever comforts them, not only of any rest, but (even) of less suffering.

Division III. The simile we have just read of the starlings being borne along in countless multitudes, referred to the great mass of the spirits of the Unchaste as a whole. That which is next presented to us, would seem to speak rather of a particular group, at the head of which Dante is shown Semiramis.

E come i gru* van cantando lor lai,
 Facendo in aer di sè lunga riga ;
 Così vid' io venir, traendo guai,

viation of the torment, but on the contrary for aggravation of it, in the sad reminiscences that they recalled of their love on earth.

* *E come i gru* : compare *Purg.* xxiv, 64-67 :

“ Come gli augei che vernan lungo il Nilo
 Alcuna volta in aer fanno schiera
 Poi volan più in fretta e vanno in filo ;
 Così tutta la gente che lì era,” etc.

and *Purg.* xxvi, 43-46 :

“ Poi come gru, ch' alle montagne Rife
 Volasser parte, e parte inver l' arene,
 Queste del giel, quelle del sole schife,
 L' una gente sen va, l' altra sen viene,” etc.

and Lucretius, iv, 182-3 :

“ ille gruum quam
 Clamor, in ætheriis dispersus nubibus austri.”

Ombre portate dalla detta briga :

Perch' io dissi ;—" Maestro, chi son quelle 50
Genti, che l' aura nera sì gastiga ? "

And as the cranes go chanting their lays,
making a long line of themselves in the
air, so saw I come, uttering lamentations,
shades borne along by the aforementioned
strife (of winds): Whereupon I said: " Master,
who are those people, whom the murky air
so chastises ? "

Virgil replies to his question.

"—La prima di color, di cui novelle

Tu vuoi saper,"—mi disse quegli allotta,

—" Fu imperatrice di molte favelle.

A vizio di lussuria fu sì rotta, 55

Che libito fe' licito in sua legge,

Per torre il biasmo, in che era condotta.

Ell' è Semiramis, di cui si legge,*

Che succedette a Nino, e fu sua sposa :

Tenne la terra, che il Soldan corregge. 60

* *Semiramis, di cui si legge che succedette a Nino*: There is an immense preponderance of authority in favour of this reading as against *sugger dette*, which is principally advocated by Scarabelli (*Comedia di Dante degli Allagherii col Commento di Jacopo della Lana, Bolognese*, ed. Luciano Scarabelli, Bologna, 1866), and would imply that Semiramis was both the mother and the wife of Ninus. This reading is severely condemned by Witte (*Dante Forschungen*, Heilbronn, 1879, vol. ii, pp. 377-378), and still more so by Scartazzini, who says that Dante is in this passage translating almost literally from Orosius (*Hist. lib. i, c. 4*): "Huic [Nino regi Assyriorum] mortuo Semiramis uxor successit." Orosius indeed goes on to show that Semiramis combined murder with extreme depravity, and legalized incest to cover her own guilt. Scartazzini points out that Dante says himself (*Mon. ii. 9*) that he has read this passage in Orosius, and that therefore he must certainly have intended *succedette* to

L' altra* è colei, che s' ancise amorosa,
 E ruppe fede al cener di Sicheo ;
 Poi è Cleopatras lussuriosa.

“The first one of those (shades) of whom thou would'st have news,” said he to me, “was empress of many nations (*lit.* languages). In the vice of Sensuality she was so unbridled (*lit.* broken), that in her (code of) law she made lust lawful, in order to remove the blame (for the sins) into which she had been led. She is Semiramis, of whom one reads, that she succeeded Ninus and was his consort ; she held the land (the Babylonian Empire) that the Soldan now rules. That other is she (Dido) who slew herself for love (of Æneas), and broke faith with the ashes of

be the true reading. The reading *sugger dette* seems first to occur in Jacopo della Lana, but Scarabelli, who edited that ancient Commentary, contends that it is also to be found in the Quaresimale of Friar Attavanti, published in Milan in 1479, as well as in the Caetani Codex, and in the MS. in the British Museum of 1370, which bears the number 10517.

* *L' altra*, etc. : The difficulty presents itself here, that Dido, to whom this passage refers, slew herself, besides being guilty of an intrigue with Æneas, and many ask the question why Dante has not therefore placed her in the second *Girone* of the Seventh Circle, among the Suicides. And why also are Cato and Lucretia not relegated there as well? The answer to this is that Dante has placed no spirits of pagans in the circle of the Suicides, for the reason that Suicide was not considered to be a crime by the greater number of heathen philosophers, but rather an act worthy of praise if committed for objects that were noble and worthy, as was the case both with Cato and Lucretia ; and provided that the person slaying himself had done nothing contrary to the principles of the four cardinal virtues, the chief test of morals among the heathen.

Sichæus. After (her) is the licentious Cleopatra.

Virgil having pointed out the spirits of those whose sin was indiscriminate profligacy, now names to Dante a vast number who sinned from love, and one can infer that a distinction is drawn between unbridled lust, and the sinful fall of those who loved too well.

Elena vedi,* per cui tanto reo
 Tempo si volse, e vedi il grande Achille, 65
 Che con amore al fine combatteo.
 Vedi Paris,† Tristano;”—e più di mille
 Ombre mostrommi e nominolle a dito,
 Che amor di nostra vita dipartille.

See Helen (there), for whose sake so long a

* *vedi*: I have not followed the reading *vidi* as given by Scartazzini, Witte, and the old commentators. The MS. of Monte Cassino reads *vedi*, as also does Buti, who comments thus: “Parla ancora Virgilio, e dice: ‘Tu Dante vedi Elena per cui cagione si volse tanto reo tempo, etc.’” The whole context would seem to show that Virgil goes on pointing out other spirits in turn to Dante. Professor Campi (*La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri*, per cura di Cav. Giuseppe Campi, Torino, 1888), remarks that, if one followed the usual reading *vidi*, one might well ask how Dante could recognise personages that he had never seen before. It is, however, only fair to remember that in canto iv, 119, he says: “Mi fur mostrati gli spiriti magni, etc.,” and then goes on to say: “Io vidi Elettra,” “Vidi Cammilla,” “Vidi quel Bruto,” and so on to the end of the canto. Scartazzini gives the reading *vidi*, but interprets it as meaning *vedi*.

† *Paris*: It is somewhat uncertain whether Dante here refers to Paris, son of Priam and the ravisher of Helen, or to the Paris of the Mediæval Romances of Chivalry. His being coupled here with Tristan, the lover of Iseult, might suggest the latter view. I am, however, greatly indebted to Mr. Paget Toynbee for

time of guilt (*i.e.* the ten years' siege of Troy)
rolled on, and see the great Achilles, who in

drawing my attention to his valuable letters to "*The Academy*" in 1888, in which he quotes various passages wherein Paris of Troy and Tristan are mentioned in close connexion.

The first is from Chaucer's *Assembly of Foules* :

"Semyramus, Candace, and Hercules,
Biblis, Dido, Tisbe and Pirus,
Tristram, Isoude, Paris, and Achilles,
Helaine, Cleopatre and Troilus,
Sylla, and eke the mother of Romulus :—
All these were paynted on that other side,
And all hir love, and in what plite they dide."

The next is from the *Roman de Renart* :

"Seigneurs, oï avez maint conte
Que maint conterre vous raconte,
Comment Paris ravi Elaine,
Le mal qu'il en ot et la paine,
De Tristan qui la chievre fist,
Qui assez bellement en dist
Et fabliaus et chancon de geste."

The third (says Mr. Paget Toynbee) is from a thirteenth-century MS. belonging to the Ashburnham Collection :

"Li corteis Tristam fu enginné
De l'amor et de l'amisté
Ke il ont envers Ysolt la bloie.
Si fu li beau Paris de Troie
De Eleine e de Penelopé."

Mr. Paget Toynbee therefore thinks that it is evident, from these and other passages he has adduced, that the mention of Paris and Helen, and of Tristan and Iseult, as typical instances of lovers whose woes were wrought by love, was regarded in the Middle Ages as a poetical commonplace. It may, therefore, be assumed that Dante's allusion is to the Paris "*qui de Gresse ravi Helaine,*" and not to the hero of the mediæval romance.

his last hour (*lit.* at the end) fought with love (for Polyxena). See Paris, Tristan ;" and with his finger he showed me more than a thousand shades and named them, whom love had parted from our life.

Division IV. All through the *Divina Commedia* we see how tenderly Dante deals with the memories of those who have erred through love. Virgil has just pointed out to him upwards of a thousand of such, and we cannot therefore be surprised to hear that Dante is filled with wonder at their vast numbers, and with compassion for their fate.

Poscia ch' io ebbi il mio dottore udito 70
 Nomar le donne antiche e i cavalieri,*
 Pietà mi giunse, e fui quasi smarrito.

After that I had heard my teacher name the ladies and the knights of bygone days, pity fell upon me, and I was almost bewildered.

* *le donne antiche e i cavalieri*: Benvenuto thinks that Dante's sympathy was excited beyond measure at the fate of these unfortunate spirits of knights and dames, because, like them, he had himself gone through the same passion of love. Longfellow quotes, in illustration of this passage, from Shakespeare, *Sonnet cvi* :

"When in the chronicle of wasted time
 I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
 And beauty making beautiful old rhyme,
 In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights."

See also Homer, *Odyssey*, Book xi, 357-9, Lord Carnarvon's translation :

———— "with many more, whom I
 Know not to number or rehearse by name,
 Daughters and wives of Heroes."

Here begins, and continues to the end of the Canto, the episode of Dante's conversation with Francesca da Rimini, one of the most beautiful and touching passages in the *Divina Commedia*; and I cannot but regret that Benvenuto should have thought it necessary to break it up into two Divisions.

Io cominciai :—" Poeta, volentieri
 Parlerei a que' due* che insieme vanno,
 E paion sì al vento esser leggieri."— 75

I began: " Poet, I would gladly address those

* *que' due*: Paolo and Francesca. Buti relates that Francesca was the daughter of Messer Guido di Polenta da Ravenna, Lord of Ravenna, and that she was married to Lanciotto (some call him Gianciotto) son of Messer Malatesta da Rimini. This lady was very beautiful in her person: her husband very deformed and crippled; and this Lanciotto had a brother of his named Paolo; a youth of great beauty, hence it happened that Francesca and Paolo became enamoured of one another. Now it is said that, being one day alone in a chamber in all security as brother and sister-in-law, and reading how Lancelot fell in love with Queen Guenevere, and how through the connivance of Messer Galeotto they came together, Paolo inflamed with passion kissed Francesca; and after that, their love and intimacy became so evident, that it came to the ears of Lanciotto; who thereupon lying in wait, and one day finding them together, stabbed both of them with his rapier, so that they died at the same time. The *Anonimo Fiorentino* adds to this account that Paolo would certainly have escaped through a trap-door, had not a link of his shirt of mail caught on a nail of the panelling. Gianciotto rushed upon him with a halbert, but, as he was in the act of striking, his lady ran in between, so that he, thinking to strike his brother, struck his wife and killed her; he then killed Paolo in like manner at the place where he was entangled. Fraticelli says that this tragedy took place in 1284 or 1285, not at Rimini but at Pesaro.

two who go together, and seem to be so light upon the wind."

Benvenuto interprets this as meaning that the two spirits were so light upon the wind of criminal love; that is, they seem to be so enamoured of each other. Scartazzini says that, as in life they had never striven to resist the force of their passions, so now they are not in a fit condition to oppose any resistance to the force of the storm-blast. Virgil tells Dante to watch for his opportunity of conversing with them.

Ed egli a me :—" Vedrai, quando saranno
Più presso a noi ; e tu allor li prega
Per quell' amor che i* mena ; e quei verranno."—

And he to me : "Thou wilt observe when they shall be nearest to us ; and do thou then pray them by that love which bears them along ; and they will come."

Si tosto come il vento a noi li piega,
Mossi la voce :—" O anime affannate, 80
Venite a noi parlar, s' altri† nol niega."—

As soon as the wind brought them round (*lit.* bends them) to us, I raised my voice : " O

* *i*: for *li*. It corresponds to the Latin *eos*. Compare *Inf.* vii, 53-54 :

" La sconoscente vita, che i fe' sozzi,
Ad ogni conoscenza or li fa bruni ;"

† *altri*: Camerini says that this is an old form to indicate an indeterminate superior power. In *Inf.* xxvi, 141, it is used, as in the present passage, as referring to God :

" la prora ire in giù, com' altrui piacque."

In *Purg.* i, 133, it refers to Cato, the guardian of Ante-Purgatory :

" Quivi mi cinse sì come altrui piacque."

afflicted souls, come and speak with us if
Another (*i. e.*, God) interdicts it not!"

Benvenuto remarks that while speaking these words, Dante was probably in considerable doubt as to whether the shades would be allowed to pause in their rapid flight.

The two spirits comply with Dante's request, and their approach is described in a beautiful simile.

Quali colombe* dal disio chiamate,
Con l' ali alzate e ferme, al dolce nido
Volan per l' aer dal voler portate :

* *Quali colombe*, etc. : compare *Isaiah*, lx, 8 : "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?" Scartazzini reads *vengon*, and places the colon after it, instead of after *portate*, observing that the rest of the passage does not refer to the doves, but to the shades of Francesca and Paolo. He thinks that, if the words *dal voler portate* were interpreted as referring to the doves, the sentence would be unnecessary and superfluous, for the doves have already been described as *dal disio chiamate*. Animals follow an instinctive *disio*, spirits a *libero volere*. This is also the opinion of Bargigi, the XVth century commentator. Both Benvenuto and Buti read *vengon*. The late Dean Church, in a letter written to me just one month before his death, strongly dissented from this reading and interpretation, saying : "I cannot think Scartazzini is right in *Inf. v*, 82-5. Dante gives to his animals human attributes. See *Par. xix*, 34-36 :

'Qual' il falcon ch' uscendo del cappello
Move la testa, e coll' ali si plaude,
Voglia mostrando, e facendosi bello.'

And *Par. xx*, 73-75 :

'Quale allodetta che in aere si spazia
Prima cantando, e poi tace, contenta
Dell' ultima dolcezza che la sazia.'

This is not instinct, but reflexion, and the whole run of the pas-

Cotali uscir della schiera ov' è Dido,* 85
 A noi venendo per l' aer maligno,
 Sì forte fu l' affettuos^o grido.

Like unto doves who summoned by desire
 (either for their young or for their mates),

sage is made harsh by the abrupt stop at 'per l' aere,' and the insertion of the condition, 'dal voler portate' before 'cotali, &c.' Dante is not accustomed to depend on mere punctuation to make his meaning clear. 'Dal voler portate,' the eagerness of the flight, corresponds to Virgil: 'Radit iter liquidum, celeres nec commovet alas,' and expresses the same idea in a different way."

The most opposite views are taken by different commentators as to the comparison between the doves and the two shades. Benvenuto says: "But to understand how beautiful and appropriate is the aforesaid simile of the doves, one must note that doves are dedicated to Venus, who is the Mother of Love, and the goddess of Sensuality (*luxuria*), and therefore these birds are most sensual. The dove is also extremely prolific, and so easily forgets, that when its young are taken away from it, it immediately rebuilds its nest in the same place unmindful of its wrongs. . . . On the other hand the dove is the messenger of peace, sociable, caressing, humble, tractable, all of which are qualities suitable to love." Scartazzini agrees that the dove is extremely sensual, but is also the symbol of innocence. He quotes *St. Matth. x, 16*, as showing that it is also a symbol of sincerity, a virtue which poor Francesca exercises in the highest degree in her touching narrative.

* *la schiera ov' è Dido*: It is thought by some that Dante wished to make a distinction between the noble souls who yielded to the passion of love, but not to brutish sensuality, and it may well be that, after describing such voluptuaries as Semiramis and Cleopatra, Virgil passed, by a graceful transition, over the thousand shades to the knights and dames of chivalry, whose sin was unlawful love and not unbridled lust, and of these are the unfortunate pair in question.

with upraised and steady pinions come to their beloved nest carried through the air by their (own) volition: so did those (two spirits) issue from the band wherein is Dido, coming towards us through the malignant air, so powerful was my affectionate appeal.

Francesca is the first to speak, and she addresses herself to Dante alone, as the one of the pair whom she sees is alive. Womanlike, she cannot refrain from expressing her gratitude for the sympathy he is showing for them. Virgil (v. 76) had told Dante to take the opportunity of calling to the spirits, whenever it should present itself. Francesca is anxious that he should not lose it by any waste of time, and enters at once into the facts of her sad history, apparently anticipating the possibility of their being swept away by the blast in the middle of her narrative, and one infers that, with the courtesy of a true lady, she almost offers an apology beforehand, should this happen.

—“ O animal grazioso e benigno,
Che visitando vai per l' aer perso* ”

* *perso* . . . *sanguigno*: Chaucer (*Canterbury Tales*, Prologue, 441-2) describes the Doctour of Phisike thus:

“ In sanguin and in perse he clad was alle
Lined with taffeta, and with sendalle.”

Dante uses the word in several places, and in *Convito* iv, 20, explains it to be a colour of purple and black in which the black prevails (*il perso dal nero discende. . . . Il perso è un colore misto di purpureo e di nero ma vince il nero, e da lui si denomina*). See also *Inf.* vii, 103:

“ L' acqua era buia assai vie più che persa: ”

and *Purg.* ix, 97: speaking of the steps, he says:

“ Era il secondo, tinto più che perso, ” etc. .

Noi che tignemmo il mondo di sanguigno : . 90
 Se fosse amico il re dell' universo,
 Noi pregheremmo lui per la tua pace,
 Poichè hai pietà del nostro mal perverso.
 Di quel che udire e che parlar ti piace
 Noi udiremo e parleremo a vui, 95
 Mentrechè il vento, come fa, si tace.

“ O living being, courteous and kind, who goest through this black (*lit. perse*) air visiting us who stained the world with blood : If the King of the Universe were our friend, we would pray unto Him for thy peace, since thou hast compassion for our fatal woe. Of what it pleases thee (Dante) to hear and to speak, (that) we will hear and speak to you (both), while the wind is lulled, as it is (just now).

Siede la terra, dove nata fui,*
 Sulla marina dove il Po discende
 Per aver pace co' seguaci sui.

* *la terra, dove nata fui*: Ravenna is now situated at a distance of two or three miles from the sea, and about ten or twelve from the principal mouth of the Po, that is, of the right branch of it. Benvenuto says: “intellige quantum ad brachium rectum: intrat enim Padus in mare in loco qui vocatur Primarium.” Anyone now visiting it sees outside the city a dreary pestilential marsh in the midst of which the magnificent early Christian Church of St. Apollinare in Classe alone breaks the monotony and desolation of the surrounding plain. But in the time of Dante, Classe, or, as it was at that time probably called, Chiassi, was really on the sea-shore (*sulla marina*) and was the harbour of Ravenna (*Portus Classis*) as it had been in the great days of the Roman Empire. It was, when Dante frequented it, a district of great beauty, and in the latter years of his life, when an exile from Florence, he was hospitably entertained by Guido, the great Lord of Polenta, Francesca's father,

The city wherein I was born (Ravenna) is seated on the shore of the (Adriatic) sea where the Po with his followers (*i. e.*, tributary streams) descends to find rest.

Benvenuto interprets this passage as meaning that if the Po did not enter into the sea it would be in continual war with all the rivers which flow into it.

Amor,* che al cor gentil ratto s' apprende, 100

we gather from *Purg.* xxviii, 10-21, that he was wont to seek for tranquillity and seclusion in the beautiful pine forest, the *Pineta*, which skirts the plain, and extends in the direction of Rimini.

“le fronde, tremolando pronte,
Tutte e quante piegavano alla parte
U' la prim' ombra gitta il santo monte :
Non però dal lor esser dritto sparte
Tanto, che gli augelletti per le cime
Lasciasser d' operare ogni lor arte ;
Ma con piena letizia l' ore prime,
Cantando, ricevièno intra le foglie,
Che tenevan bordone alle sue rime,
Tal, qual di ramo in ramo si raccoglie
Per la pineta, in sul lito di Chiassi,
Quand' Eolo Scirocco fuor discioglie.”

In *Inf.* xxvii, 40-42, Dante mentions the connexion of the family of Francesca with Ravenna.

“Ravenna sta, come stata è molti anni :
L' aquila da Polenta la si cova,
Sì che Cervia ricopre co' suoi vanni.”

* *Amor* : Longfellow calls attention to the threefold occurrence in these three triplets of the word love, as was the case with the word *honour* in canto iv, 72-80. He says the verse murmurs with it, and he quotes from Tennyson's *Princess*, canto vii :

“Sweet is every sound,
Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet,

M

Prese costui della bella persona
 Che mi fu tolta, e il modo ancor m' offende.*
 Amor, che a nullo amato amar perdona,
 Mi prese dal costui piacer† sì forte,
 Che, come vedi, ancor non mi abbandona. 105
 Amor condusse noi ad una morte :
 Caina‡ attende chi vita ci spense.¶
 Queste parole da lor ci fur porte.

Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
 The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
 And murmuring of innumerable bees."

* *il modo ancor m' offende*: This may either mean because being slain in the act of sin she had no time for repentance, or that the brutal violence of her death was especially repugnant to one of her high birth and delicate nurture. Some prefer *mondo*, which in the MSS. was written *modo*, and would imply, says Dr. Moore, that Francesca and Paolo were wrongly accused of the crime for which they were killed. Dr. Moore, however, shows an immense preponderance of authority in favour of *modo*. Some contend that *il modo . . . m' offende* rather refers to the deceit said by Boccaccio to have been practised upon Francesca, of making her believe that Paolo, when he came to Ravenna to wed her by proxy for his brother, was in reality espousing her himself. But if this were so, she would have been innocent in thought, and would hardly have been represented by Dante as being punished among the Sensual.

† *dal costui piacer*: Benvenuto reads here "*mi prese del piacer costui sì forte*, that is, so constrained me into pleasing him with my lovely form, etc." Boccaccio is in doubt as to whether it means *del piacer di costui* or *del piacere a costui*. Magalotti thought it might be taken in two ways. Either, *mi prese del piacere, della gioja di amare costui*; or, *mi prese del piacere, ch' io faceva a costui*.

‡ *Caina*: The first of the four Rings in the Ninth Circle of Hell, in which Ring treacherous murderers of their kindred are specially punished. Dr. Moore (*Textual Criticism*, p. 38, note)

Da che io intesi quelle anime offense,
 Chinai 'l viso, e tanto il tenni basso, 110
 Finchè il poeta mi disse :—" Che pense ?"—
 Love, which quickly lays hold on a tender heart,
 captivated this one with the lovely form of which
 I was deprived, and the mode (whereof) offends
 me still. Love, which to no loved one pardons
 loving (*i. e.*, exempts from loving in return),
 seized me with so intense a delight in him, that,
 as thou seest, he does not even now desert me.
 Love brought us to one death. *Caina* awaits
 him who quenched our life." These words
 were borne to us from them. After that I had
 heard these afflicted souls, I bowed my face,
 and so long did I hold it down, till the Poet
 said to me: "Of what art thou thinking?"

Dante is too much overcome to be able at once to
 reply, and when he does, he addresses not his answer
 to Virgil, but speaks to himself as one in a soliloquy.

Quando risposi, cominciavi :—" O lasso,
 Quanti dolci pensier,* quanto disio
 Menò costoro al doloroso passo !"—

When I answered, I began: "Ah me! how
 many tender thoughts, what (fond) desire,
 led them to this woeful pass!"

thinks it probable that Dante wrote *Cain* or *Caino*, thus describing the first murderer himself as awaiting the arrival of the modern fratricide with malicious eagerness.

* *dolci pensier*: In *Convito*, ii, 2, Dante speaks of the thoughts generated by love: "Ma perocchè non subitamente nasce amore e fassi grande e viene perfetto, ma vuole alcuno tempo e nutrimento di pensieri, massimamente là dove sono pensieri contrarii che lo'mpediscono, convenne, prima che questo nuovo amore fosse perfetto, molta battaglia intra 'l pensiero del suo nutrimento e quello che gli era contrario, etc."

Scartazzini observes that *doloroso passo* is in anti-thesis to *dolci pensieri*.

Division V. Dante has remarked that in the narrative of Francesca, up to this point, there is a considerable gap. She has told him of the passionate love of herself and Paolo for one another, and then passed on at once to tell him that that love led them to one death together. He is anxious to have this void filled, and to know the further details.

Poi mi rivolsi a loro, e parla' io, 115
 E cominciai:—"Francesca, i tuoi martiri
 Al lagrimar mi fanno tristo e pio.
 Ma dimmi: al tempo de' dolci sospiri,*
 A che e come concedette amore,
 Che conoscesti † i dubbiosi desiri ‡?"— 120

Then I turned again to them, and I spoke, and began: "Francesca, thy sufferings make me weep with grief and pity (*lit.* make me sad and compassionate unto tears). But tell me: at the time of your sweet sighs, by what sign, and under what circumstances, did Love grant that you should know the dubious desires?"

Francesca complies with the request.

* *tempo de' dolci sospiri*: This means the time when the unhappy pair first became enamoured one of another.

† *A che*: Cesari (*Bellezze Della Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri*, Verona, 1824, vol. i, p. 97) has "*A che*, col verbo *conoscere*, o con simile; vale quanto, *A qual segno*, o indizio. Cf. Boccaccio (*Decam.* Giorn. v. *Nov.* x): 'E se tu non te ne avvedessi ad altro, sì te ne dei avvedere a questo.'"

‡ *conoscesti*: I do not here follow Witte, who reads *conoscesti*.

§ *dubbiosi desiri*: Their desires were dubious because up to that time they had not revealed to each other their mutual feelings. Some understand *dubbiosi* as *pericolosi*.

Ed ella a me:—"Nessun maggior dolore, *
 Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
 Nella miseria; e ciò sa il tuo dottore. †
 Ma se a conoscer la prima radice
 Del nostro amor tu hai cotanto affetto, 125
 Farò come colui che piange e dice. ‡

* *Nessun maggior dolore*, etc. : This passage, which has been imitated by many poets, is supposed to have been itself an imitation of the words of Boëthius, *De Consol. Phil.* Book ii, Pros. 4 :
 "In omni adversitate fortunæ, infelicissimum est genus infortunii fuisse felicem."

Compare also Chaucer, *Troilus and Creseide*, Book iii, 1624 :

"For of fortune's sharp adversite
 The worst kind of infortune is this,
 A man to have been in prosperite,
 And it remember, when it passed is."

And Fortiguerra, *Ricciardello* xi, st. 100 :

"—rimembrare il ben perduto
 Fa più meschino lo presente stato."

And Tennyson, *Locksley Hall* :

"This is truth the poet sings,
 That a sorrow's crown of sorrow
 Is remembering happier things."

† *il tuo dottore* : Some commentators, among whom are Daniello, Venturi, Magalotti, Biagioli and Bianchi have tried to prove that by *dottore* Dante meant Boëthius, who wrote the words quoted in the previous note. But Francesca was reminding Dante of Virgil's own words, when in *Æn.* ii, 3, he makes *Æneas*, on being asked by Dido to relate to her the destruction of Troy, reply :

"Infandum, regina, jubes renovare dolorem."

Dante calls Virgil *il mio dottore* in several places, and notably so in v. 70 of the present Canto :

"Poscia ch' io ebbi il mio dottor udito."

He never distinguishes Boëthius by that appellation.

‡ *colui che piange e dice* : (i.e. one who tells a sad story with tears). Compare the words of Count Ugolino, *Inf.* xxxiii, 7-9 :

And she to me: "No greater sorrow (is there) than to remember the time of happiness (when) in misery; and this thy teacher (Virgil) knows. But if thou hast such desire to know the first root of our love, I will do like one who weeps and tells.

Noi leggevamo * un giorno per diletto
Di Lancelotto, come amor lo strinse :
Soli eravamo e senza alcun sospetto.

"Ma se le mie parole esser den seme,
Che frutti infamia al traditor ch' io rodo,
Parlare e lagrimar vedrai insieme."

Francesca recalls her past happiness and weeps over her lost condition. Ugolino has no happy past to look back to, and though weeping at the memory of the awful pangs he endured, is only induced to relate them with the revengeful view of injuring the reputation of his betrayer, Archbishop Ruggieri.

* *Noi leggevamo*, etc. : Lamennais (*La Divine Comédie de Dante Alighieri*, Paris, 1855, vol. i, p. lxxiii), comments on this incident so happily that I venture to quote his remarks at length : "Les deux amants qu'emporte et roule dans son cercle éternel l'inférial ouragon, s'arrêtent à la prière de Dante, et Francesca lui fait le récit de leurs infortunes. Combien l'effet en est différent de ce qu'il serait si le poëte l'avait mis dans la bouche de celui qui jamais d'elle ne sera séparé. Un poëte vulgaire n'y eût pas manqué ; il aurait cru répandre ainsi sur l'amante silencieuse un certain charme de modestie pudique : et au contraire, outre l'exquis sentiment de délicatesse passionnée par lequel elle semble se rendre propre une commune faiblesse, c'est en l'avouant elle-même qu'elle l'excuse, c'est par la vive expression de l'amour qui la fascine encore, qu'elle imprime à cet amour qui survit au corps, qui réside dans l'âme seule, je ne sais quel caractère chaste d'où nait la pitié douloureuse et tendre qu'inspirent ceux dont il fera, au fond d'une joie secrète, l'immortel tourment." At the end of this Canto will be found a separate Digression : (a) The story of Francesca, as related

Per più fiate gli occhi ci sospinse 130

Quella lettura, e scolorocci il viso :

Ma solo un punto fu quel che ci vinse.

Quando leggemmo, il disiato riso

Esser baciato da cotanto amante,

Questi, che mai da me non fia diviso, 135

La bocca mi baciò tutto tremante :

Galeotto * fu il libro e chi lo scrisse :

Quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avante.”—

We were one day reading for pastime of Lancelot, how love enchained him : Alone were we, and without any fear of being surprised. Many a time that reading caused our eyes to meet, and our faces to change colour : but one passage alone was it that overcame us. When we read how the smiling and longed for lips (of Queen Guenevere) were kissed by so noble a lover, this one who never more shall be parted from me, all trembling kissed me on the mouth. Both the book and he who wrote it were a Gallehaut (*i.e.* a go-between) to us. That day we read on no further.”

by the *Anonimo Fiorentino*. (b) The passage, “Noi leggiamo,” etc., set to music by Rossini for insertion into Lord Vernon’s edition of the *Inferno* as a contribution from himself to the work.

* *Galeotto fu il libro*, etc. : the meaning of this sentence is that the book of the Romance of Lancelot du Lac was to Francesco and Paolo the go-between that facilitated their realising their love for each other, just as in the Romance itself, Gallehaut was the intermediary between Lancelot and Queen Guenevere. Benvenuto words it : “sicut Galleottus fuit conciliator et mediator amoris inter Lanzilottum et Ginevriam, ita Liber iste in quo legebant fuit mediator et conciliator qui conjuravit ipsos duos simul.”

Dante ends the Canto by describing the effect upon himself of the passionate grief of Paolo, a grief no doubt greatly intensified by the thought that he had been the chief author of the death and eternal doom of one whom he had loved so well.

Mentre che l' uno spirto questo disse,
 L' altro piangeva sì, che di pietade 140
 Io venni meno sì com' io morisse ;
 E caddi, come corpo morto cade.

While the one spirit was saying this, the other wept so (bitterly) ; that from sympathy, I swooned as though I were dying : and fell as a dead body falls.

Benvenuto comments on the above passage : " And here take note, that what the author pictures as having happened to himself on this occasion, had in very truth happened to him in life when he was enamoured of Beatrice. For when, on a certain occasion, he had purposely gone to a banquet where Beatrice was, and was passing up the stairs, she by accident came suddenly upon him, whereat the young man fell down half dead, and being laid upon a bed, remained there for a considerable time senseless ; and consider how often in this Canto the author shows himself to be torn by strong passions, having been for a long time beyond measure ensnared by this same disease (*i.e.* Love)." *

END OF CANTO V.

* It is probable that Benvenuto founded this story upon a passage in the *Vita Nuova*, § xiv, but he would appear to be much more circumstantial in his account of the episode than

DIGRESSION.

(a) The following is a translation of the story of Francesca da Rimini as given by the *Anonimo Fiorentino*. Scartazzini says that while it agrees in its essential points with that of Boccaccio it is less bombastic. "You must know that for a long time there was war between Messer Guido da Polenta and Messer Malatesta, the elder, of Rimini. Now when both sides had become sick of fighting they made peace by mutual agreement, and in order that it might the better be observed, they made a family alliance; for Messer Guido married his daughter to the son of Messer Malatesta, and Messer Malatesta gave him one of his female relations in marriage. Madonna Francesca, daughter of Messer Guido, was wedded to Gianciotto the son of Messer Malatesta;

the paragraph justifies. It relates that Dante was conducted by a friend to a banquet given to a bride in the house of the bridegroom, and that, wishing to do a pleasure to his friend, he agreed to assist him in doing service to the gentle ladies present. But on a sudden he began to tremble all over and leant against the painted wall of the house to conceal his emotion, when he perceived Beatrice among the ladies, on which he says: "Allora furono sì distratti li miei spiriti per la forza che Amore prese veggendomi in tanta propinquitade alla gentilissima donna, che non mi rimase in vita più che gli spiriti del viso . . . onde . . . l'amico mio, di buona fede mi prese per la mano, e traendomi fuori . . . mi domandò che io avessi. Allora riposato alquanto . . . e partitomi da lui, mi ritornai nella camera delle lagrime." There is nothing here about his having been laid on a bed, except by inference.

now although he was wise and prudent yet was he a coarse man [*rustico uomo*; this does not mean that he was coarse in his manners, but in his person, being deformed, and hence came his name, *Gianciotto*, which is *Giovanni ciotto*, *ciotto* being equivalent to *soppo*, lame]. Now Madonna Francesca was surpassingly fair, so much so that it was said to Messer Guido: 'You have badly matched this your daughter; she is beautiful, and of a lofty spirit; she will never remain contented with Gianciotto.' Messer Guido, who esteemed wisdom far more highly than beauty, resolved all the same that the wedding should take place; and in order that it might be so managed, that the noble lady should not refuse to accept the husband selected for her, he made Paolo come to espouse her [as proxy] for his brother Gianciotto; and thus she, thinking to have married Paolo, married Gianciotto. And true is it that before she was espoused, and Paolo being one day at the Court, a handmaiden of Madonna Francesca pointed him out to her and said: 'That is your intended husband.' She (Francesca) seeing how handsome he was, fell in love with him and was happy in it. But when the marriage had taken place, and she found herself that night * by the side of Gianciotto and not of Paolo, as

* Boccaccio declares that Francesca only discovered the fraud that had been practised upon her on the morning after the nuptials. Scartazzini thinks this to be a pure fiction, and that it is much more probable that Paolo was already married; and besides, Dante would have been certain, if this story had been true, not to have omitted to mention a circumstance that would so greatly have palliated Francesca's fault.

she had expected, she was ill-pleased. She perceived that she had been taken in ; and she would not lay aside the love she had given to Paolo ; whereupon Paolo, seeing himself loved by her, although at first it was repugnant to him to do so, let himself go easily to return her love. It so happened that about this time, they were so in love with one another that Gianciotto went away on public business, which departure of his greatly raised their hopes ; and thus their love increased so much that, being in complete privacy in a room, and reading from a book of Lancelot . . . they ended by yielding to their desires. And continuing so to do on various occasions, a retainer of Gianciotto remarked it ; and wrote and told Gianciotto about it, on account of which Gianciotto having returned home, and having one day lain in wait for them, he surprised them in a room which had another communicating with it underneath ; and Paolo would certainly have escaped, had not a link in the hauberk he was wearing caught on the point of a nail in the trap-door, and he in this way remained hanging. Gianciotto rushed at him with a halberd, the lady ran in between them, so that Gianciotto, as he brought down his weapon, thinking to strike him, struck his wife and killed her ; and then in like manner he killed Paolo at the spot where he was hanging."

Scartazzini here remarks, that Boccaccio asserts that he had several intimate conversations on this subject with a worthy person named Ser Piero di Messer Giardino da Ravenna, who was one of the most intimate friends and servants whom Dante had at Ravenna, and he adds that, when Gianciotto had

killed his wife and his brother, he returned to his business, and that the two unhappy lovers were the next day interred in one tomb.

(b) At the time when my father was preparing his great folio edition (*Inferno di Dante Alighieri*, da G. G. Warren Lord Vernon, Londra, 1858—1865), the celebrated composer Giovacchino Rossini, who was a personal friend of his, sent him as a contribution to his work, the following composition, in which he has set to music the words of Francesca da Rimini in ll. 127—138 of Canto v. The beautiful and plaintive melody is worthy indeed of the subject. In completing Lord Vernon's work for the press after his death, Sir James Lacaïta wrote opposite this music in the Album Volume (vol. iii, p. 83): "Il celebre Maestro si degnò di aggiunger pregio all' Album, con questo bellissimo componimento, che esprime con malinconiche note il luogo della Divina Commedia, che spira maggiore affetto. Di questa degnazione Lord Vernon sentì tutto il pregio, e ne fu riconoscentissimo all' insigne Creatore de' capolavori, che continueranno a commuovere gli uomini, finchè scintilla di civiltà rimanga nel mondo."

Andantino mosso.

pp

The first system shows a piano introduction. The right hand plays a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The tempo is marked *Andantino mosso* and the dynamics are *pp*.

Noi leg-gevamo un gior - no per di -

The second system features a vocal line with the lyrics "Noi leg-gevamo un gior - no per di -". The piano accompaniment continues with a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand and chords in the right hand.

- let - to di Lan - ci - lot - to, co-me a-mor lo stria - .

The third system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "- let - to di Lan - ci - lot - to, co-me a-mor lo stria - .". The piano accompaniment maintains its rhythmic accompaniment.

- se: So - li è - ra - va - .

The fourth system concludes the vocal line with the lyrics "- se: So - li è - ra - va - .". The piano accompaniment continues until the end of the system.

mo, e sen - za al-cun soe pet - - to. per più

fa - te gli occhi ci soe-pin - se quel-la let - tu - ra

e sco - lo' roc - ci li vi - so: ma

so - lo un pun - to fa quel che ci

vin - se. quan-do leg -

- gem - mo il di - ai - a - to ri - so Es - ser ba -

- cia - to da . . cotanto a - man - te que - ti che mai da -

- mo non fia di - vi - so, la boc - ca mi ba -

- cio . . tut-to tre-man - te. Ga-le -

- ot-to.. fu il li-bro e chi lo scri-se quel gior-no

piu non vi leggemmo a-van - - te.

A MILORD VERNON il suo Candido Estimatore,
GIOACHINO ROSSINI.

CANTO VI.

THE THIRD CIRCLE.
THE GLUTTONOUS.
CERBERUS.
CIACCO.

We left Dante at the end of the Fifth Canto falling into a swoon brought on by the intensity of his sympathy for the sorrows of Francesca and Paolo. He wakes to find himself in the Third Circle, where the sin of Gluttony is punished.

Benvenuto divides the Canto into four parts.

In the First Division, from v. 1 to v. 33, Dante relates the punishment of the Gluttonous, and describes Cerberus, their guardian and tormentor.

In the Second Division, from v. 34 to v. 57, the spirit of Ciaccio is introduced.

In the Third Division, from v. 58 to v. 93, Dante asks Ciaccio the reasons for the feuds and factions by which the City of Florence is rent, and he also enquires what has been the fate of certain distinguished Florentine citizens after their death, and Ciaccio replies to him.

In the Fourth Division, from v. 94 to v. 115, Dante asks Virgil whether, after the Day of Judgment, there will be any aggravation of the penalty of the doomed.

Benvenuto observes that the sin of gluttony would naturally have been treated by Dante before that of Lasciviousness, for the former sin fosters the latter,

N

but that Dante considers Gluttony the more culpable and sinful of the two, and therefore as tending more to drag down to the centre of Hell. Dante would seem to have taken this idea from Aristotle (*Ethics*, iii, ch. 10) where the following passage occurs :

“Therefore temperance and intemperance belong to those pleasures in which other animals participate; whence they appear slavish and brutal ; and these are touch and taste. Now they seem to have little or nothing to do with taste ; for to taste belongs the judging of flavours ; as those who try wines do, and those who prepare sauces ; but the intemperate do not take much or indeed any pleasure in these flavours, but only in the enjoyment, which is caused entirely by means of touch, and which is felt in meat, in drink, and in venereal pleasures. Wherefore Philoxemus, the son of Eryxis, a glutton, wished that he had a throat longer than a crane's because he was pleased with touch, the most common of senses, and the one to which intemperance belongs : and it would appear justly to be deserving of reproach, since it exists in us, not so far forth as we are men, but so far forth as we are animals.”—*Brown's Translation.*

Division I. In the same way as after his swoon at the Acheron, Dante's eyes on opening behold an entirely different scene from that which he had looked upon in the last canto.

Al tornar della mente, che si chiuse
Dinanzi* alla pietà de' due cognati,

* *Dinanzi* : Some have tried to interpret *dinanzi* as an adverb, and implying that it was a *short time ago* that Dante

Che di tristizia tutto mi confuse,
 Nuovi tormenti e nuovi tormentati
 Mi veggio intorno, come ch' io mi mova,
 E ch' io mi volga, e come ch' io mi guati.

5

On the return of my sense, which had closed itself before the anguish of the two kinsfolk that completely overwhelmed me with sadness, I discern around me fresh torments and fresh tormented (souls), whichever way I move, and (whichever way) I turn, and whichever way I look.

He finds that invisible hands have transported him into the next division of Hell.

Io sono al terzo cerchio della piovà
 Eterna, maledetta, fredda e greve :
 Regola e qualità mai non l' è nuova.*
 Grandine grossa, e acqua tinta, e neve
 Per l' aer tenebroso si riversa :
 Pute la terra che questo riceve.

10

I am in the third circle of the eternal rain, accursed, cold, and heavy : its law and quality are never new. Thick hail, and dark water, and snow, come pouring down through the murky air : the ground which receives this (*i. e.*, upon which this tempest falls) emits a putrid stench.

The guardian of this circle is the monster Cerberus, three-headed, as he is depicted in the heathen mytho-

fainted ; but the more generally accepted interpretation is the one I have given.

* *mai non l' è nuova* : This means that for ever and ever this rain is unceasing, accursed, cold, and heavy.

logy. With his ever yawning ravenous mouths he stands as a symbol of excessive gluttony.

Cerbero,* fiera crudele e diversa,
 Con tre gole caninamente latra
 Sopra la gente che quivi è sommersa. 15
 Gli occhi ha vermigli, la barba unta ed atra,
 E il ventre largo, e unghiate le mani ; †
 Graffia gli spiriti, scuoià,‡ ed isquatra.

Cerberus, monster fierce and uncouth, with triple throat, barks dog-like over the people that are overwhelmed here. His eyes are red, his beard befouled and darksome, his belly large, and his fore-paws armed with talons ; he claws the spirits, slays, and rends them limb from limb.

His red eyes denote hunger, his large belly his immense capacity for gorging himself, and his taloned paws show the rapacity with which he seizes upon his prey. The filthiness of his beard demonstrates the want of all self respect in gluttons.

* *Cerbero . . . con tre gole*: compare Virg. *Æn.* vi, 417-418 :
 "Cerberus hæc ingens latratu regna trifauci
 Personat, adverso recubans immanis in antro."

For *diversa*, see note on l. 86.

† *unghiate le mani*: Pliny (*lib.* viii, cap. 36) calls the fore-paws of the bear *manus*.

‡ *scuoià*: Many MSS. and editions read *ingoia*, *i. e.* "swallows." Scartazzini remarks that, if Dante had intended to relate that Cerberus swallowed the spirits, he would certainly not have omitted to add what he did with them after swallowing them. Did he vomit them up again as the great fish did with Jonah? Besides, in that case, he would have quartered them before swallowing them, and not afterwards.

The intolerable suffering of the spirits is next described.

Urlar gli fa la pioggia come cani :
 Dell' un de' lati fanno all' altro schermo ; 20
 Volgonsi spesso* i miseri profani.†

The rain makes them howl like dogs : with one of their sides they make a defence for the other : the polluted (*lit.* profane) wretches often turn themselves.

In every circle in Hell, except in the case of Geryon, who was too fraudulent to make an open attack, we find the demon guardians of the circle approach Dante in wrath, and Cerberus is no exception to the rule.

Quando ci scorse Cerbero, il gran vermo,‡
 Le bocche aperse, e mostrocci le sanne :
 Non avea membro che tenesse fermo.

* *Volgonsi spesso, &c.*: compare *Purg.* vi, 148-151 :

“ E se ben ti ricordi, e vedi lume,
 Vedrai te simigliante a quella inferma,
 Che non può trovar posa in sulle piume,
 Ma con dar volta suo dolore scherma.”

† *profani*: compare *Hebrews* xii, 16, “Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.” *Profano* properly means in front, *i.e.* outside of, the temple, unholy, polluted, characterised by impurity.

‡ *vermo*: Scartazzini points out that *vermo* was commonly used by ancient writers to express any kind of loathsome beast. He thinks, moreover, that Dante uses the word with intention, because these gluttons having been slaves to their bellies, which are food for worms, are now tormented by the great worm in Hell. Compare *Isaiah* lxvi, 24: “And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither

gnaws his food, (and) only thinks and strives
that he may devour it, so became (quiet)
those loathsome muzzles of the demon
Cerberus, who so stuns the spirits (with his
barking), that they would fain be deaf.

Benvenuto admires the comparison of the gluttons to dogs, and describes the points of resemblance between them in somewhat too minute detail !

Division II. At this point Dante is addressed by the spirit of one known at Florence by the name of Ciacco.*

* *Ciacco*: Boccaccio, in his Commentary, says that the word means pig, and is derived from the noise made by the cracking of the acorn when crunched by the sow. He says this was a nickname given to a citizen of Florence, who was in constant intercourse with those rich persons who ate most sumptuously and delicately, and to their tables he made it a practice to go, whether invited or uninvited, being entirely given up to gluttony. Apart from this he was a well-bred man according to his condition, eloquent, affable, and of good feeling; on account of which he was welcomed by every gentleman.

In the *Decameron*, *Giorn. ix, Nov. viii*, Boccaccio relates an amusing anecdote of Ciacco, which, according to Longfellow, presents a lively picture of Florence in Dante's time, and is moreover interesting for the glimpse it gives, not only of Ciacco, but of Filippo Argenti, who is mentioned in Canto viii, 61, as expiating his evil temper in the slime of the Styx. In this story Boccaccio distinctly shows that Ciacco was a nickname, for, instead of saying of him "*ebbe nome Ciacco*," he says that there was at Florence one "*called Ciacco by everybody*" (*da tutti chiamato Ciacco*). I give an abbreviated summary of a very long tale. One day Ciacco, chancing to pass through the fish market during the season of Lent, saw a certain Biondello

buying two goodly lampreys for Messer Vieri de' Cerchi. This Biondello was, like Ciaccio, a glutton and a parasite, who frequented the tables of the rich. He was a man of very small stature, but extremely scrupulous in his attire. In reply to Ciaccio's eager inquiries Biondello informed him that Messer Corso Donati had received as a gift three other large lampreys and a sturgeon, but these not being sufficient for the number of guests he wished to entertain, he had sent out Biondello to buy these two others. Ciaccio, on hearing this, determined to present himself uninvited at the feast, and being asked by Messer Corso, on entering, what was his pleasure, replied that he had come to dine with him. Corso bid him welcome, but had nought else placed upon the board than a poor dish of peas, a little piece of Tunny, and a few small fishes fried. The next day on being mocked by Biondello about his abundant dinner, Ciaccio turned away vowing vengeance against him. He then engaged a street hawker, to whom he gave an empty glass bottle, and told him to go to the house of Messer Filippo Argenti, and say that Biondello had sent the bottle praying he would erubinate it with his best red wine, as Biondello wished to make merry with some friends. This Filippo Argenti was a man of huge stature, and of a most violent temper, and, conceiving himself to be insulted, in a fury tried to lay hands upon the hawker, but on the latter eluding his grasp, he sought out Biondello, and meeting him by the way, stepped close up to him, and gave him a cruel blow on the nose, and then so beat and mauled his face that the bystanders dragged him off in horror, but not before he had said to Biondello, "Villanous traitor as thou art, I'll teach thee what it is to erubinate with red wine either thyself or thy cupping companions." Biondello perceived that he had met with the worsser bargain, and Ciaccio had got clear without any blows, and when at last he was healed of his grievous hurts, and he and Ciaccio met, they both desired a peaceful atonement, each of them always abstaining from flouting the other. Benvenuto relates this story nearly word for word in his Commentary on the Eighth Canto, when speaking of Filippo Argenti.

Lord Vernon, in his Commentary on the *Inferno*, observes

Noi passavam su per l' ombre che adona*
 La greve pioggia, e ponevam le piante 35
 Sopra lor vanità che par persona.†

We were passing on over the shades whom
 the heavy rain beats down, and were planting
 our feet on their emptiness which seems a body
 (*i.e.* on their prostrate forms which were
 empty shadows).

Dante now perceives the shade of Ciaccio, who had raised himself as far as he was allowed, not apparently being at liberty to stand upon his feet. He addresses Dante.

Elle giacean per terra tutte e quante,
 Fuor ch' una che a seder si levò, ratto
 Ch' ella ci vide passarsi davante.

that, although the primary meaning of *Ciacco* is *Pig*, yet he cannot believe that Dante meant it to have that signification here, for, when conversing with Ciaccio, he expresses such deep sympathy for his sufferings that he feels moved to tears. At such a moment, Lord Vernon thinks, he could not have made use of so degrading a nickname, but that Ciaccio must have been a proper name, and that, in fact, there is at Florence to this day a family of *Ciacchi*.

* *adona* : Blanc (*Voc. Dant.*) says this is a word of uncertain origin, and signifies *to beat down to the earth, subdue*. It is only used once again in the *Divina Commedia*. See *Purg.* xi, 19, 20 :

“Nostra virtù, che di leggier s' adona,
 Non spermentar”

† *lor vanità che par persona* : Benvenuto thinks this may either mean that an empty shade is as visible and tangible as the body, as is explained in the XXVth Canto of the *Purgatorio*, or, that these forms *seemed* bodies, and yet were not so, for though bearing human bodies, yet were they as pigs—wallowing in the mire.

Comp. *Purg.* ii, 79 :

“O ombre vane, fuor che nell' aspetto !”

—“ O tu, che se' per questo inferno tratto,”— 40
 Mi disse,—“ riconoscimi,* se sai :
 Tu fosti, prima ch' io disfatto,† fatto.”—

They all were lying on the earth, save one
 who raised himself into a sitting posture (*lit.*
 to sit), as soon as he saw us pass before him.
 “ O thou who art being conducted through this
 Hell,” said he to me, “ recognise me if thou
 canst : thou wast made before I was unmade
 (*i. e.* wast born before I died).”

It is evident that the brutish appearance of Ciacco's features have changed them beyond all possibility of recognition on the part of Dante, notwithstanding which, the latter courteously apologises to the abject being lying in the mire, and in order to avoid saying that his features have become so bloated by his excesses, and so befouled by the mire, as to make

* *riconoscimi, se sai* : compare the way Manfred accosts Dante, *Purg.* iii, 103-105 :

—“ Chiunque
 Tu se'
 P'on mente, se di là mi vedesti unque.”

In *Purg.* xxiii, 43, Dante is unable to recognise his wife's kinsman, Forese Donati, among the Gluttonous in Purgatory from his face, but does so when he hears his voice :

“ Mai non l' avrei riconosciuto al viso ;
 Ma nella voce sua mi fu palese
 Ciò che l' aspetto in sè avea conquiso.”

† *disfatto* : Dante was born in 1265, and Ciacco died in 1286.
 Compare *Purg.* v, 134 :

“ Siena mi fe', disfecemi Maremma.”
 and *Inf.* iii, 55-57 :
 “ sì lunga tratta
 Di gente, ch' i' non avrei mai creduto,
 Che morte tanta n' avesse disfatta.”

him unrecognizable, he assigns the cause to the marks of suffering upon his face.

Ed io a lei :—“ L' angoscia che tu hai
 Forse ti tira fuor della mia mente,
 Sì che non par, ch' io ti vedessi mai. 45
 Ma dimmi chi tu se', che in sì dolente*
 Loco se' messa, ed a sì fatta pena,
 Che s' altra è maggio,† nulla è sì spiacente.”—

And I to him : “ The anguish that thou hast, perchance withdraws thee from my memory, so that it seems not that I had ever seen thee. But tell me who thou art, that to a place of so much woe art relegated, and to a penalty so ordained, that, if other may be greater, none is so displeasing.”

Benvenuto here remarks that Dante says well, for nothing is more displeasing than to be tied down to a recumbent posture, and he goes on to describe the discomforts of a bedridden person somewhat more graphically than elegantly.

Ciacco, in deference to Dante's wish, tells him who he was, but only as regards the nickname his gluttony had acquired for him. His words seem to be spoken wearily, and without any intention of prolonging the conversation, had not Dante done so.

Ed egli a me : “ La tua città, ch' è piena
 D' invidia sì, che già trabocca il sacco, 50
 Seco mi tenne in la vita serena.‡

* *dolente* : comp. *Inf.* iii, 1 :

“ Per me si va nella città dolente.”

† *maggio* : for *maggiore*. In Florence there is a street called *Via Maggio*, which used to be *Via Maggiore*.

‡ *vita serena* : This probably expresses the longing regret

gluttony, had been a man of culture and of a kindly disposition, but his pity for him is of a lesser degree than that which caused him to faint on hearing the relation of the sufferings of the unhappy Francesca, and it will be noticed that the further down in Hell the Poets descend, the more does Dante's pity diminish.*

He also asks information from Ciaccio on three points, and a reference to the note on line 74 will show that there is an inconsistency here in Ciaccio

* Nowhere is this more clearly shown than in the interview with Friar Alberigo, the last sinner in Hell with whom Dante converses. See *Inf.* xxxiii, 109-150. Alberigo had given Dante the information he sought on the distinct understanding that Dante would wipe the frozen tears from his eyes. At line 115 Dante says :

“ Se vuoi ch' io ti sovvegna,
Dimmi chi sei, e s' io non ti disbrigo,
Al fondo della ghiaccia ir mi convegno.”

At line 127 Alberigo accentuates the bargain :

“ E perchè tu più volentier mi rade
Le invetrate lagrime dal volto,
Sappi etc.”

At line 148 he claims the fulfilment of the promise, but Dante turns from him in pitiless contempt, asserting that he was justified in breaking faith with so black a traitor :

“ Ma distendi oramai in qua la mano,
Aprimi gli occhi ' : ed io non glielie apersi,
E cortesia fu, in lui esser villano.”

One may add that, all through the Ninth Circle, Dante witnesses the sufferings of the traitors in the ice without the faintest exhibition of pity, except towards the sons and grandsons of Count Ugolino, these youths having suffered on earth for his crimes, and whether or no their souls are in Hell, we are not told. In the case of Bocca degli Abati, who betrayed the Guelphs at the battle of Montaperti, Dante seizes the traitor by the hair, and tears it out by handfuls.

being made to speak with knowledge of the present, whereas the spirits of the doomed are limited to knowledge only of the past and the future.

Io gli risposi :—" Ciacco, il tuo affanno
 Mi pesa sì, che a lagrimar m' invita :
 Ma dimmi, se tu sai, a che verranno 60
 ·Li cittadin della città partita ?
 S' alcun v' è giusto : e dimmi la cagione,
 Perchè l' ha tanta discordia assalita."—

I answered him: " Ciacco, thy grievous plight weighs on me so much that it moves me to weep. But tell me, if thou knowest, to what (pass) will come the citizens of the divided city (Florence)? if there be in it any one just person: and tell me the cause why so great discord hath assailed it."

Scartazzini observes that the first of these three questions is a very natural one for Dante to ask; but, as regards the two others, it seems strange that they should be put to a contemptible creature like Ciacco by such a man as Dante.

Ciacco, in replying to the first of Dante's questions, answers that the parties will come to deadly strife, which will be followed by the banishment of the Neri.

Ed egli a me :—" Dopo lunga tenzone
 Verranno al sangue, e la parte selvaggia* 65
 Cacerà l' altra con molta offensione.

* *la parte selvaggia*: Benvenuto remarks that, when one has read the history of the factions of the *Bianchi* and *Neri*, this passage, which otherwise would be obscure, can be easily understood. He says that in the year 1300 Florence was at the acme of its prosperity and power, the very year in which Dante was supposed to begin to write the *Divina Commedia*. But, as

And he to me : " After long contention they
will come to blood, and the rustic party (the

is often the case, prosperity begat discord, and the whole city, beginning with the nobles, and afterwards followed by the popular families, was divided into two factions, the *Bianchi* and the *Neri*. This feud had its origin at Pistoja in the great and powerful house of the Cancellieri ; but quickly, like a contagious disease, it raged throughout all Florence, and infected the whole body of the State, that was already full of bad humours : and, as Valerius says, " No vice ends in the place where it takes its origin." The leader of the White faction was Vieri de' Cerchi, the head of a family that were very arrogant, both because they were rich and powerful, and because they had only recently come to Florence from the country, and hence were called *la parte selvaggia*. The leader of the Blacks was Corso de' Donati, who as a knight had not his equal in Italy at this time. The Donati were of the old nobility, not wealthy, but of great wisdom. The Cerchi had their followers mostly among the people, because they were thought to be more favourable to republican institutions, and therefore nearly the whole of the government was in their power. Boniface VIII, wishing to prevent further scandal, sent for Vieri de' Cerchi to Rome, and commanded him to make peace with Corso Donati, but the former refused to obey. One evening in spring, the young men of the two factions encountered each other in returning from a ball, and during a fight, in which many were wounded on both sides, one of the retainers of the Donati cut off the nose of Ricoverino de' Cerchi. Dino Compagni says that this blow was the destruction of our city, on account of the hatred that it engendered among our citizens, and Benvenuto says of it, *hoc fuit principium magni mali*. Corso, having appealed to the Pope for aid, was banished from Florence with many of his followers, and at this juncture Boniface summoned Charles Sansterre, brother of Philippe le Bel of France, to come and act as peacemaker. Charles, without committing himself to either side, cajoled both parties with promises, and then, entering into the city without armed forces,

Bianchi) will drive out the other (the *Neri*) with great damage.

Scartazzini remarks that, at the time Dante wrote these words, he had already for a long while made a party for himself, as he makes Cacciaguida predict in *Paradiso* xvii, 69. It is not, therefore, his own side that he styles *selvaggia*.

But the *Bianchi* were not to enjoy their triumph for long.

Poi appresso convien, che questa caggia
 Infra tre soli, e che l' altra sormonti
 Con la forza di tal* che testè piaggia.

he was received with great honour; but by degrees he introduced his soldiers within the walls, and then the *Neri* were allowed to re-enter the city, and sack and burn the houses of the *Bianchi*. In April, 1302, most of the *Bianchi*, and among them Dante, at the time absent from Florence, were banished, and the permanent ascendancy of the *Neri* was established; and this was within three years from the date of the prediction put into the mouth of Ciaccio.

Scartazzini thinks that the *Bianchi* are called by Dante *la parte selvaggia*, because the Cerchi had recently come from the parish of Acone (*pivier d' Acone*) in the Val di Sieve, and also perhaps because, as G. Villani says of them, that they were *uomini salvaticchi ed ingrati*. In this passage Dante calls the party *selvaggia*, and in *Par.* xvii, 61-65, he calls them *ingrata*:

“E quel che più ti graverà le spalle
 Sarà la compagnia malvagia e scempia,
 Con la qual tu cadrai in questa valle,
 Che tutta ingrata, tutta matta ed empia
 Si farà contro a te.”

* *tal che testè piaggia*: Buti thinks Dante means by the power of Boniface VIII, who was Pope at the time of the expulsion of the *Bianchi*, and was the prime mover of it, and that *testè piaggia* is spoken of one who at the present time

Thereafter it behoves that this (faction) shall fall within three suns (*i.e.* years), and that

is standing half-way between two parties, because *piaggiare* is to sail between the shore and the deep sea. Boccaccio (*Il Comento di Giovanni Boccacci sopra la Commedia di Dante Allighieri, per cura di Gaetano Milanese, Firenze, 1863*), on this passage, says that the word *piaggiare* is used when speaking of one who pretends to desire greatly that which he does not really desire, or who seems to hope that something will succeed, which in reality he desires may fail, which is just what some declare that Pope Boniface did in the feud between the *Bianchi* and the *Neri* at Florence, when he made a show of equal tenderness to each of the parties, and, to bring about peace between them, he sent there the Cardinal of Acquasparta, and after him Charles de Valois; but this impartiality was false, seeing that he inclined with his whole mind to the side of the *Neri*. Blanc (*Saggio di una Interpretazione Filologica; Versione di Occioni, Trieste, 1865*), remarks (p. 74) that as *piaggiare* is derived from the old obsolete words *plaga* and *plagia*, the sea-shore, the word can only mean to keep oneself along the shore, and would more especially be applied to one, who with evil intent watches for the time and place for coming ashore, and, therefore, one naturally asks to whom a similar demeanour towards Florence must be attributed. All the modern interpreters, as well as, among the ancients, Benvenuto and the *Ottimo* (*L'Ottimo Comento della Divina Commedia, Testo inedito d'un contemporaneo di Dante, Pisa, 1828*), understand *tal* to refer to Charles de Valois. But it is nearly impossible that at the beginning of 1300, the supposed date of the vision, Charles de Valois could have the smallest inkling of being summoned by the Pope, occupied as he was in the war in Flanders, and besides, there is no reason to say that, when he did move to Florence, he went backwards and forwards to watch for a favourable opportunity. This crafty conduct agrees far better with the policy of the Pope, and it was at him that Dante levelled these words, just as Boccaccio and Buti understood them, and which are further confirmed in *Par. xvii, 49* :

O

the other (party, the *Neri*) shall come uppermost by the power of one (Boniface VIII), who just now is tacking about (from one side to the other).

Alte terrà lungo tempo le fronti, 70

Tenendo l' altra sotto gravi pesi,*

Come che di ciò pianga, e che ne adonti.†

(This party, the *Neri*) will hold its head on high for a long while, keeping the other under heavy burdens, however much it may weep thereat, and whatever shame and wrath it may feel.

Ciacco now answers Dante's second question.

Giusti son due,‡ ma non vi sono intesi :||

“ Questo si vuole, questo già si cerca,
E tosto verrà fatto, a chi ciò pensa
Là dove Cristo tutto dì si merca.”

Longfellow (in some supplementary notes published by the American Dante Society, 1885) suggests that *piaggia* may be a metaphor from falconry (a favourite subject of course with Dante), in which “coasting” is equivalent to “hovering over.” He quotes : “will coast (*var. lect. 'cost'*) my crown.” *Henry VI*, part iii, act i, sc. 1.

* *Sotto gravi pesi* : see Dino Compagni, *Cron. III*, xxiii : “Vacante lo Imperio per la morte di Federico II, coloro, che a parte di Imperio attendeano, tenuti sotto gravi pesi, e quasi venuti meno in Toscana e Cicilia, etc.”

† *adonti* : This translation is from Blanc's *Vocabolario Dantesco*. Compare *Purg.* xvii, 121 : “Ed è chi per ingiuria par ch' adonti.”

‡ *Giusti son due*, etc. : Benvenuto says that although Dante is silent as to the names of these two persons, he probably was indicating himself and his friend Guido Cavalcanti, who, adds Benvenuto, *de rei veritate tempore illo erant duo oculi Florentie*. Scartazzini does not consider Guido Cavalcanti deserving of such an epithet, he is more inclined to think Dino Compagni to be the second person referred to.

|| *intesi* : see Dino Compagni, *Cron. II*, iv, l. 14 : “Aveano

Superbia, invidia ed avarizia* sonot

Le tre faville che hanno i cori accesi."—

75

Qui pose fine al lagrimabil suono.

Two just (persons) there are, but they are not heeded there (*i.e.*, in Florence) : Arrogance,

i Guelfi bianchi imbasciatori in Corte di Roma . . . ma non erano intesi." Prof. Isidoro Del Lungo, the editor, in a note, explains *intesi* : "Non erano ascoltati."

* *Superbia, invidia ed avarizia*, etc. : compare *Giov. Villani* viii, 68 : "Questa avversità e pericolo della nostra città non fu senza giudizio di Dio, per molti peccati commessi per la superbia e invidia e avarizia de' nostri allora viventi cittadini." And in chapter 96 of the same book he repeats : "Per le peccate della superbia, e invidia, e avarizia e altri vizi che regnavano tra loro, erano partiti in setta."

† *sono* : This seems to be inconsistent with the principle laid down in Canto X by Farinata degli Uberti as to the amount of knowledge of things passing on earth that is vouchsafed to the spirits in Hell. Dante observing that Farinata asks him questions about the present state of Florence, and yet seems as well acquainted with the future as with the past, puts this question to him : *Inf.* x, 95-99 :

—"Solvete mi quel nodo,

Che qui ha involupata mia sentenza.

E' par che voi veggiate, se ben odo,

Dinanzi quel che il tempo seco adduce,

E nel presente tenete altro modo."

Farinata replies :

" "Noi veggiam, come quei ch' ha mala luce,

Le cose', disse, 'che ne son lontano ;

Cotanto ancor ne splende il sommo Duce :

Quando s' appressano, o son, tutto è vano

Nostro intelletto ; e s' altri nol ci apporta,

Nulla sapem di vostro stato umano."

Ciacco's knowledge, therefore, of events that were actually taking place in Florence at that time rather clashes with the above.

Envy and Avarice are the three sparks that have kindled the hearts (of the citizens).” Here he made an ending of the lamentable sound (of his story).

Dante has obtained from Ciacco a general statement about events in Florence, but he is anxious to know in what part of the unseen world he will find the shades of certain great Florentine citizens, and be assured as to whether they are lost or saved.

Ed io a lui :—“Ancor vo' che m' insegni,
E che di più parlar mi facci dono.*
Farinata† e il Tegghiaio,‡ che fur sì degni,
Jacopo Rusticucci, Arrigo|| e il Mosca,§ 80

* *di più parlar mi facci dono* : At Florence *fare un regalo* is used in the sense, *to do a favour*. The remark “If I come into your neighbourhood, I will pay you a visit,” would produce the reply, “Mi farà un regalo davvero” (*i.e.*, You will give me a real pleasure, *lit.* make me a gift).

† *Farinata degli Uberti*, the great Ghibelline, whose condition among the Heresiarchs is described in Canto X.

‡ *Tegghiaio* : the word must be pronounced as a dissyllable, *Tegghiai*.' The terminations *aio*, *oio*, *oia*, were commonly used as monosyllables by the Tuscan poets. See *primaio*, *Purg.* xiv, 66 : *Uccellatoio*, *Par.* xv, 110 ; and *Pistoia* in a verse of Petrarch. These were pronounced, *primai* ; *Uccellato* , and *Pistoi*.'

Tegghiaio Aldobrandi and *Jacopo Rusticucci* are both found among the Violent against Nature in Canto XVI.

|| *Arrigo* : This person is generally supposed to be *Oderigo Fifanti*, a member of a very renowned Ghibelline family, and, together with *Mosca*, the next person mentioned, one of the slayers of *Buondelmonte*, whence originated the beginning of the long strife between the Ghibelline and Guelph factions. Dante does not allude to him again.

§ *Mosca de' Lamberti* : see *Giov. Villani*, v. 38. His punish-

E gli altri che a ben far poser gl' ingegni,
 Dimmi ove sono, e fa ch' io li conosca ;
 Chè gran desio mi stringe di sapere,
 Se il ciel gli addolcia o lo inferno gli attosca.*—

And I to him : " I wish thee yet to instruct me, and that thou do me the favour of speaking further. Farinata and Tegghiaio, who were so worthy, Jacopo Rusticucci, Arrigo and Mosca, and the others who gave their minds to doing good, tell me where they are, and contrive that I may know them ; for great desire constrains me to find out whether Heaven doth soothe, or Hell empoison them."

Benvenuto remarks that this is as though Dante would say, " I am ignorant of whether they are saved or lost, for I know they had great vices, and at the same time great virtues, and therefore I think they could well be among the saved, provided only that they repented before dying, which is just what I do not know."

Ciacco speedily undeceives him as to any hope of their salvation.

E quegli :—" Ei son tra le anime più nere ; 85
 Diversa* colpa giù li grava al fondo :
 Se tanto scendi, li potrai vedere.

ment as a disseminator of discord is spoken of in Canto XXVIII. Benvenuto says that Arrigo must be silently coupled with Mosca, as he was with him in the same crime.

* *Diversa* : Blanc (*Voc. Dant.*) specially instances the use of the word in this passage as meaning, " that which differs from all that one knows, hence, horrible, hideous, frightful, ghastly, *Germ.* grässlich, entsetzlich." I am unable to follow this interpretation, as the persons alluded to are undergoing the punish-

And he: "They are among the blackest spirits; crime of different kinds weighs them down to the nethermost Hell (*lit.* to the bottom): if thou descend so far, thou mayest see them.

Buti says that Dante pictures the souls in Hell desiring fame on earth, so that he may be in agreement with Virgil, who describes the delight of Palinurus, when he heard that the promontory was to be called after him; and he adds that, allegorically speaking, men in the world, the more they are vicious and bad, the more they seek to become famous.

Ma quando tu sarai nel dolce mondo,
 P'regoti che alla mente altrui mi rechi :
 Più non ti dico e più non ti rispondo."— 90
 Gli diritti occhi torse allora in biechi :
 Guardommi un poco, e poi chinò la testa :
 Cadde con essa a par degli altri ciechi.

But when thou art (back) in the sweet world, I pray thee that thou bring me to the recollection of others: More I tell thee not, and more I answer thee not." He then turned aslant his eyes (which had been directed) straight (at me): looked at me for awhile, and then bowed his head: and) fell with it

ment of crimes differing the one from the other. Witte translates, "*verschiedenartige Schuld.*" The *Postillatore Cassinese (Il Codice Cassinese della Div. Com. per la prima volta letteralmente messo a stampa per curi dei monaci di Monte Cassino. Monte Cassino, 1865)* reads *diverse colpe*, and comments: "*nere. denigratas propter majora peccata nam farinata peccavit in fide credens animam mori cum corpore. Theghiaius et jacobus fuerunt sodomite musca et arigus contra proximum . . . et ideo patiuntur diversa supplicia.*" Witte's comment is very similar.

(into the mud) on the level with the other blind (spirits).

The tormented were, like Ciaccio, all lying with their faces in the mud, and were consequently all blind. Figuratively, as they had never in life raised their eyes from the earth, so must they now see nothing else.

Division IV. Benvenuto remarks that the digression which follows does not seem quite pertinent to the subject that has been treated before this point, and he thinks Dante has wandered somewhat away from it. The conversation is commenced by Virgil telling Dante that Ciaccio will not stir again from his recumbent posture until the Last Day.

E il duca disse a me :—" Più non si desta
Di qua dal suon dell' angelica tromba ;* 95
Quando verrà la nimica podesta,†

* *angelica tromba* : compare *St. Matth.* xxiv, 31 : "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet." &c. And in *I Cor.* xv, 51-52 : We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." And in *I Thess.* iv, 16 : "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God."

† *podesta* for *potestà*, power. I do not see why this word should not have been translated *Judge*, were it not that the adjective *nimica* is in the feminine. *Podestà* was the title given to the chief Magistrate in Mediæval Florence, and the other Italian cities, and were it taken in that sense, the line might be rendered "When the Judge (who is) adverse (to sinners) shall appear." I have not, however, found any commentator who takes this view.

So passed we on through the filthy compound
of the shades and the sleet, with lingering
steps, touching somewhat on the life to come.
Whereupon I said: "Will these torments,
after the great Sentence, increase, or diminish,
or will they be as burning (as they are now,
i.e. unchanged)?"

Virgil explains that the torments of the damned
will certainly become worse from causes perfectly
natural, and he refers Dante to Aristotle in corrobora-
tion of his assertion.

Ed egli a me :—" Ritorna a tua scienza,*
Che vuol, quanto la cosa è più perfetta,†
Più senta il bene, e così la doglienza.
Tuttochè questa gente maledetta
In vera perfezion giammai non vada, 110
Di là, più che di qua, essere aspetta." ‡

* *tua scienza*: Most commentators understand this to mean the science of Aristotle, but Scartazzini quotes a passage from Fanfani (*Studj ed Osservazioni di Pietro Fanfani sopra il testo delle opere di Dante*. Firenze, 1873) who thinks that by *tua* Virgil implies the theological science that belonged to Dante as a Christian, but not to himself as a heathen.

† *Che vuol quanta la cosa è più perfetta*, etc.: Benvenuto remarks that a good instance is that Man, the more perfect being, can appreciate the delight of the sound of the lyre far more than can the ass; *e così la doglienza*, meaning, that on the other hand, Man is far more sensitive than the ass to grief and pain, and would suffer far more from hard toil or from stripes, on account of the nobility of his composition (*propter nobilitatem complexionis*).

‡ *Di là, più che di qua, essere aspetta*: We read in the Tenth Canto that Virgil tells Dante that, although the burning sepulchres of the Heretics in the City of Dis were lying open then, they were to be closed when the spirits returned to them with

And he to me : " Return to thy Science (*i. e.* the Aristotelian philosophy), which requires that the more perfect a thing is, the more is its sense of pleasure, and so of pain. Although this accursed folk can never arrive at true perfection, (yet) they expect to be more (perfect) hereafter than now (*lit.* on the other side of the Day of Judgment more than on this side of it)."

Before the Judgment Day the souls in Hell lack their bodies, but, when they have resumed them, they will then have attained a greater perfection, though, as Benvenuto says, it is an evil and a hurtful perfection (*Mala et damnosa*), consequently they will feel their torments in a far greater degree than they do now.

Dante concludes the Canto by describing the departure from the Circle of the Gluttonous, and the entrance into that of the next sin punished.

Noi aggirammo a tondo quella strada,
 Parlando più assai ch' io non ridico :
 Venimmo al punto dove si digrada :
 Quivi trovammo Pluto il gran nemico.* 115

We kept on circling along that way, speaking

their bodies from the Valley of Jehosaphat. *Inf.* x, 10-12, St. Augustine writes that, at the resurrection of the flesh, both the happiness of the good, and the torments of the wicked will be increased.

* *Pluto il gran nemico* : Plutus the god of wealth is described as the Great Enemy. This recalls the words of St. Paul, 1 *Tim.* vi, 10, " For the love of money is the root of all evil : which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

much more than I (now) repeat : (and so) we
came to the point where is the descent :
here found we Plutus the arch-enemy.

Scartazzini says that Plutus manifests himself as
an enemy of peace in the enigmatical words that he
utters at the opening of the next Canto.

END OF CANTO VI.

CANTO VII.

THE FOURTH CIRCLE.

PLUTUS.

THE MISERS AND THE PRODIGALS.

THE FIFTH CIRCLE.

THE WRATHFUL AND THE SULLEN
OR SLOTHFUL.

In this Canto are related the punishment of the Misers and the Prodigals in the Fourth Circle, and the descent of the Poets into the Fifth Circle.

Benvenuto divides the Canto into five parts.

In Division I, from v. 1 to v. 18, Dante describes the Demon presiding over this Circle.

In Division II, from v. 19 to v. 35, an account is given of the torments of the Misers and the Prodigals.

In Division III, from v. 36 to v. 66, Virgil explains to Dante that the misuse of wealth, both by Misers and by Prodigals, is particularly to be found among the great Dignitaries of the Church.

In Division IV, from v. 67 to v. 99, Dante obtains from Virgil some information about Fortune.

In Division V, from v. 100 to v. 130, the Poets descend into the Fifth Circle, where are punished the Wrathful, and the Sullen or Slothful.

Division I. At the end of the last Canto Dante

and Virgil had just commenced the descent into the Fourth Circle, where they found Plutus, the mythological god of Riches, and the appropriate Guardian of the place where the misuse of wealth is punished. This Canto opens with the attempt, on the part of Plutus, to arrest their further progress, but the words that issue from his lips are in a jargon, the interpretation of which has puzzled all commentators from the time of Dante up to this day. It would seem at least to be a warning cry to the Arch-fiend that a presumptuous mortal, who did not die in the sin of avarice, had invaded his dominions.

— “Pape Satan, pape Satan, aleppe,”—

Cominciò Pluto colla voce chioccia.*

E quel Savio gentil, † che tutto seppe,

Disse per confortarmi :—“ Non ti nocchia

La tua paura, chè, poter ch' egli abbia,

Non ti torrà lo scender questa roccia.”—

5

“*Pape Satan, pape Satan, aleppe!*” — began Plutus (to cry) in his hoarse (*lit.* clucking) voice. And that kind Sage, who knew all things, to encourage me said: “Let not thy fear trouble thee, for, be his power what it may, yet he shall not hinder thee from descending this cliff.”

* *chioccia*: In the same part of the life of Benvenuto Cellini, in which he relates the anecdote noticed below, he mentions that he had an assistant, a man from Ferrara whose name was Chioccia.

† *gentil*: the more usual translation of this word is noble, gentle, both as to birth and character, but some have tried, according to Blanc, to give the signification of pagan, Gentile, and he considers such interpretation as quite out of place.

Benvenuto da Imola interprets the words, "Ah! Ah! Satan! Satan! what marvel is this, that a living man is seen in this place?" He thinks *aleppe* stands for *Aleph*, an adverb of grief. Others translate *aleppe*, thou Alpha, or Prince (Alpha being the first letter of the Greek alphabet). In his "Life," Benvenuto Cellini relates how, being in a court of justice at Paris, he had particularly remarked a certain judge, and a few minutes afterwards, the ushers of the Court being unable to keep back some unruly spectators, the judge called out to these latter with much impatience: "Paix! Paix! Satan! allez! Paix!" though Benvenuto Cellini writes it *phe phe, Satan, phe phe Satan alé phe*. He then adds: "Now I had learned the French tongue well; and, on hearing this sentence, the meaning of that phrase used by Dante came into my memory, when he and his master, Virgil, entered the doors of Hell. Dante and the painter Giotto were together in France, and particularly in the city of Paris, where, owing to the circumstances I have just described, the hall of justice may be truly called a hell. Dante, then, who also understood French well, made use of the phrase in question, and it has struck me as singular, that this interpretation has never yet been put upon the passage; indeed, it confirms my opinion that the commentators make him say things that never came into his head." *

* On this Mr. J. A. Symonds (*The Life of Benvenuto Cellini*, vol. ii, p. 129, note) remarks: "His suggestion is both curious and ingenious; but we have no reason to think that French judges used the same imprecations, when interrupted, in the

Benvenuto da Imola points out how much the rich are inflated with pride, and that, according to Aristotle, they would seem to imagine that having wealth they possess every other good; he adds, that it was remarked that the wise man is much more often to be seen at the houses of the wealthy, than the wealthy at the houses of the wise, and thus we see that Virgil has these ideas in his mind when he peremptorily and contemptuously silences Plutus.

Poi si rivolse a quell' enfiata labbia,*
 E disse :—"Taci, maledetto lupo : †
 Consuma dentro te con la tua rabbia.
 Non è senza cagion l' andare al cupo :

10

thirteenth as they did in the sixteenth century, or that what Cellini heard on this occasion was more than an accidental similarity of sounds, striking his quick ear and awakening his lively memory."

* *labbia* is placed here for *volto*, as in Latin *os* stands for *vultus*. Seneca, *Thyestes*, act iii, 609, writes :

"Ponite inflatos tumidosque vultus."

† *lupo* : Benvenuto points out the appropriateness of the epithet *Wolf* to Plutus, the symbolical representative of wealth misused, and it must be remembered that in Canto i, 49-51, Avarice is personified by a wolf :

"Ed una lupa, che di tutte brame
 Sembiava carca nella sua magrezza,
 E molte genti fe' già viver grame."

and v. 97-99 :

"Ed ha natura sì malvagia e ria,
 Che mai non empie la bramosa voglia,
 E dopo il pasto ha più fame che pria."

and in *Purg.* xx, 10-12 :

"Maledetta sie tu, antica lupa,
 Che più di tutte l' altre bestie hai preda,
 Per la tua fame senza fine cupa !"

Vuolsi nell' alto là dove Michele
Fe' la vendetta dell' superbo strupo.*—

.Then he turned back to that face inflated (with rage, *i. e.* to Plutus), and said : "Be silent, accursed wolf : consume within thyself with thy fury. Not without cause is this descent into the Abyss : so willed is it on high there where Michael executed the (divine) vengeance on the adulterous pride (of the Angels who rebelled against God)."

Virgil's reproof has its effect upon Plutus.

Quali dal vento le gonfiate vele
Caggiono avvolte, poichè l' alber fiacca ;
Tal cadde a terra la fiera crudele.

15

Even as the sails inflated by the wind fall entangled together when the mast snaps ; so the cruel monster fell to the earth.

Benvenuto thinks the epithet *cruel* is meant to express the torment that a miser inflicts upon him-

* *del superbo strupo* : *strupo* is a metathesis for *stupro*, a rape. The *Anonimo Fiorentino* says that Lucifer attempted to violate the Deity of Heaven, which is uncorrupt and immaculate. Benvenuto, in very similar words, says that Satan did so, in that he sought to make himself equal to the Most High. Some have attempted to prove that by *strupo* Dante meant troop, as in the Piedmontese dialect *strup* is the word used for a flock of sheep, like *troupeau* in French ; so that *superbo strupo* would signify the troop of rebel angels who sinned through pride ; but Blanc is very positive that *strupo* stands for *stupro*, and says that it is quite in harmony with Dante's genius that he should, in Biblical language, characterise rebellion against God as adultery, or fornication. St. Augustine is reported to have said : "Idolatria et quælibet noxia superstitio fornicatio est."

self ; for in other sins, such as in lasciviousness, gluttony, and such like, there is always a certain amount of gratification, but the miser is ever suffering toil and care.

Plutus being overcome, the poets enter into the Fourth Circle.

Così scendemmo nella quarta lacca,*
Prendendo più della dolente ripa,
Che il mal dell' universo tutto insacca.†

Then descended we into the fourth depth (*i.e.* circle), gaining more of (*i.e.* advancing further down upon) that woeful bank, which shuts in all the evil of the universe.

Division II. Dante next describes the penalty of the Misers and the Prodigals, and Benvenuto says that, as this penalty is very difficult to explain, Dante begins with an exclamation of wonder.

Ahi giustizia di Dio, tante chi stipa ‡

* *lacca* : compare *Inf.* xii, 11-12 :

“ E in su la punta della rotta lacca
L' infamia di Creti era distesa, etc.”

Blanc (*Voc. Dant.*) derives *lacca* either from the Latin *lacus*, or possibly as akin to the German *lache*, a slough, a lake, but admits that the word is so obsolete as to have puzzled all commentators.

† *insacca* : This means that the bank encloses, and keeps in, all the sins of the world, as though they were enclosed in a bag.

‡ *stipa* : see the Commentary of Giov. Bat. Gelli, written in 1554 (*Lecture Edite e Inedite di Giovan. Batista Gelli sopra la Commedia di Dante, Firenze, 1887*), which Scartazzini praises as so full of research that it ought to be in the library of every student of Dante. Gelli explains that, when Dante considered the number and the variety of the torments that

Nuove travaglie * e pene, quante io viddi ? 20
E perchè nostra colpa sì ne scipa ? †

Ah ! Justice of God, Who (*i.e.* what hand but Thine) crowds together so many new (*i.e.* unheard of) tribulations and penalties as I saw ? and why does our transgression thus destroy us ?

The sinners in this circle are divided into two companies, and are compelled to roll weights along the ground. Their punishment is the same, for both

he saw in Hell, there came upon him such wonder and awe, that he raised his eyes and appealed to Divine Justice to tell him who it is that packs and presses together so many toils and sufferings as met his eyes. Gelli says that is the exact meaning of *stipare*, which by sailors is commonly pronounced *stivare*, with the signification of stowing away merchandize in a ship, pressing it closely together, in order that it may occupy less space. From the Italian *stivare* and the Spanish *estivador* we get the English *stevedore*, namely, one who stows cargo in the hold of a ship.

* *travaglie* : for *travagli*. *Trebalha* or *trabalha* was frequently used by the Troubadours for *trebalhs*.

“ Si sen d' amor las trabalhas ni 'ls maus.”

— *Arnaud de Marueil*.

“ Quant a sas grans dolors

E trabalhas e plors.”— *J. Esteve*.

Quoted by Raynouard, *Lexique Roman*, Paris, 1843, v, p. 392.

† *nostra colpa sì ne scipa ?* Gelli says that Dante, on lowering his eyes again, comes to the conclusion that our evil-doing (*il fallire nostro*) is what *sì ne scipa*, *i.e.* so consumes and destroys us in divers pains and torments. He adds that *scipare* in Italian means nothing else than what the Latins call *dissipare* “ cioè mandar a male disperdere.” Benvenuto informs his readers that at Florence a woman who has had a miscarriage is said to be *scipata*. In modern Florentine she would be said to be *sciupata*, spoilt.

the Misers and the Prodigals misused their possessions. To each company is assigned the half of the circle, and, as one band roll their burdens to the right, and the other band to the left, it follows that they meet at the opposite point, where a collision ensues; and, as the two companies turn back, each assails the other with recrimination. Dante compares their never-ending round to the dance called *ridda*, and the collision between them to the concussion between the opposing currents of the two seas that meet at Charybdis in the Straits of Messina.

Come fa l' onda là sovra Cariddi,*
 Che si frange con quella in cui s' intoppa,
 Così convien che qui la gente riddi.†

* *Cariddi*: Gelli says that Charybdis was a very avaricious old woman, who used to steal the cows of Hercules that were grazing hard by. Hercules appealing to Jupiter his father, the latter struck Charybdis with a thunderbolt, and submerged her in the Straits of Messina, where she retains the same rapacious propensities, and swallows up every ship that comes too near her. Compare Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, book iv, c. 1, st. 42 :

“As when two billowes in the Irish sowndes,
 Forcibly driven with contràrie tydes,
 Do meet together, each abacke rebowndes
 With roaring rage; and dashing on all sides,
 That filleth all the Sea with fome, divydes
 The doubtfull current into divers wayes.”

† *riddi*: The principal feature in the dance called *ridda* or *riddone* was that singing accompanied the dancing. Gelli speaks of these two words as not quite obsolete in his time. “Imperocchè *ridda* ovvero *riddone* si chiamava a quei tempi, e si chiama ancora oggi in alcuni luoghi del nostro contado quella sorte di ballo tondo, nel quale le persone, presesi per la mano l' un l' altra vanno aggirandosi e cantando. Ed è detto

As does there above Charybdis the wave
which breaks itself against that (other wave)
which it encounters, so here must the people
wheel round in the dance.

Qui vid' io gente più che altrove troppa,* 25

E d' una parte e d' altra, con grand' urli,

Voltando pesi per forza di poppa :

Percotevansi incontro, e poscia pur li

Si rivolgea ciascun, voltando a retro,

Gridando:—"Perchè tieni?" e "perchè burli?"—† 30

Here saw I people more numerous than else-
where, both on the one side (of the circle)
and on the other, with loud cries, rolling
weights by strength of chest. They met

da quel *ridursi* insieme tali persone, il che si chiama ancor oggi volgamente *ridotto*." The combination in this *riddu* of dancing and singing made the comparison most appropriate between it and the sinners in this circle, who wheel round, meet at a given point, and then, after uttering their repulsive antiphon, turn round to meet again at the opposite point of their half circles.

* *gente più che altrove troppa*: Benvenuto thinks that the number of misers is infinitely greater than that of other sinners, and he points out how singularly appropriate the penalty is to the offence, for these burdens are symbolical of the toils and cares which are ever pressing on, and weighing down the bodies and the souls both of misers and spendthrifts. Their bodies are never at rest as they hurry about over sea, land, hills and valleys, exposing themselves to all sorts of dangers, from the waters, from the sky, from pirates, from robbers, enduring every kind of hardship, hunger, thirst, cold and heat; and even if their bodies are at rest, then it is their minds that are in a state of agitation. He concludes by asking if misers do not acquire with hard toil, possess in fear, and lose in grief.

† *burli*: Benvenuto says this is a popular Lombard word signifying, *to throw away*.

together with a shock, and then on that very spot did each wheel round, turning back again, (the Prodigals) yelling: "Why dost thou hoard?" and (the Misers retorting) "Why dost thou squander?"

Così tornavan per lo cerchio tetro,
Da ogni mano all' opposto punto,
Gridandosi* anche loro ontoso metro :
Poi si volgea ciascun, quando era giunto
Per lo suo mezzo cerchio all' altra giostra.† 35

Thus they returned along the gloomy circle,
on either hand to the opposite point, again
howling at each other their reproachful strain :
Then did every one of them turn, when by his
semi-circle he had come to the other joust.

Benvenuto says that to understand the mode of this punishment you must imagine a round circle, and in the middle of it a line dividing the circle into two equal parts. On the one side are the Prodigals hastening as far as the middle line, and on the other side the Misers are with equal zeal pressing forward towards the same goal. Benvenuto considers this middle line to be a symbol of the virtue of moderation or liberality, but he says that neither party ever

* *Gridandosi* : the *si* denotes the interchange of vituperation. Buti explains *si*, "l'uno all' altro."

† *giostra* : Dante metaphorically terms their collision a joust, for, like knights they charge at each other, each seeking to overthrow the other and have victory over him, and each side takes pride in doing so. In *Purg.* xxii, 42, Statius tells Virgil that, if he had not considered his ways after reading Virgil's own lines on *Auri sacra fames*, he would be rolling weights in the grim jousts :

" Voltando sentirei le giostre grame."

reaches this point, or, even if they do, they do not persevere in it; on the contrary, they at once turn about and go back again. And mark that the virtue of liberality stands half way between the two sins of Avarice and Prodigality. For the liberal man is he who gives where, when, and how he ought to do so. The Miser holds back indifferently both what he ought to hold, and what he ought not to hold. But the Prodigal on the contrary, gives away both what he ought to give, and what he ought not, without any discretion, and both of them injure themselves and others, in that they benefit nobody. Dante has placed the Misers on the left hand, and, as we shall read in the *Third Division*, shows his greater detestation of them.

Division III. Dante now puts two questions to Virgil. First, who, speaking generally, were all these spirits? and secondly, were the misers on the left of the circle all ecclesiastics?

Ed io che avea lo cor quasi compunto,
Dissi :—"Maestro mio, or mi dimostra
Che gente è questa, e se tutti fur cerci
Questi chercuti* alla sinistra nostra."—

* *chercuti*: Gelli remarks on this word that it is a syncope for *chiericuti*, and is derived from *cherica*, which, according to some, means a *crown*. He describes the tonsure, and says that he believes that the intention of it was to demonstrate the authority and dignity of the priesthood. He dissents from some who maintain that it originated in St. Peter, who, when preaching at Antioch, had his head forcibly shaved by his enemies as a mark of derision and to show that he was mad. He thinks rather that this exceedingly ancient usage arose from the practice in the Early Church of electing their priests either by popular election, or, as in the case of St. Matthias, by casting

And I who felt (*lit.* had) my heart as it were stricken, said: "My Master, now show me what race is this, and if these tonsured ones on our left were all priests."

Dante is astounded at the sight of so many ecclesiastics damned for Avarice; he can hardly believe his eyes.

Virgil begins by answering his first question, and tells him that the whole multitude, on both sides before him, were in their life-time devoid of sense in their misuse of wealth, and that their mutual recriminations make it so evident what they are, that Dante can discern it for himself.

Ed egli a me:—"Tutti e quanti fur guerci	40
Sì della mente, in la vita primaia,	
Che con misura nullo spendio ferci.*	
Assai la voce lor chiaro l'abbaia,†	
Quando vengono a' due punti del cerchio,	
Ove colpa contraria li dispaia.‡	45

lots, of which the issue was committed to Divine Providence, and thus *cherico* would be derived from κληρος, a lot. In Liddell and Scott's *Lexicon* κληρικὸς has the meanings, (a) of or for an inheritance; and (b) belonging to the clergy, a cleric, clerk.

* *ferci*: for *fecero qui, in questa vita*.

† *abbaia*: these sinners are said to bark instead of speaking, and the term is fitting for beings who acted as brute beasts without reason. The same contemptuous term is applied to the Gluttonous in vi, 19:

"Urlar gli fa la pioggia come cani."

And in xxxii, 105, the traitor Bocca degli Abati howls like a dog when Dante tears out his hair:

"Latrando lui con gli occhi in giù raccolti."

‡ *li dispaia*: Benvenuto remarks that two perfectly opposite things cannot possibly be joined together.

And he to me : " In their first life they were every one of them so distorted (*lit.* squint-eyed) in mind, that in it they made no expenditure with moderation. Clearly enough does this their voice bark it forth (*i. e.* manifests the sin of either band), when they arrive at the two points of the circle, where sin contrary (the one to the other) separates them.

Virgil, having replied to Dante's first question, now answers his second one.

Questi fur cherci, che non han coperchio
 Piloso al capo, e Papi e Cardinali,
 In cui usa avarizia il suo soperchio."—*

* *cherci*, . . . *in cui usa avarizia il suo soperchio* : compare *Inf.* xix, 106, et seq :

" Di voi pastor s' accorse il Vangelista,
 Quando colei, che siede sopra l' acque,
 Puttaneggiar co' regi a lui fu vista :

Fatto v' avete Dio d' oro e d' argento :
 E che altro è da voi all' idolatre,
 Se non ch' egli uno, e voi n' orate cento ?"

And Ariosto, *Orl. Fur.* xxvi, st. 31 and 32, speaking of avarice as a hideous monster,

" Quivi una bestia uscir della foresta
 Parea, di crudel vista, odiosa e brutta,
 Ch' avea l' orecchie d' asino, e la testa
 Di lupo e i denti, e per gran fame asciutta :
 Branche avea di leon ; altro che resta,
 Tutto era volpe ; e pareo scorrer tutta
 E Francia e Italia e Spagna ed Inghilterra,
 L' Europa e l' Asia, e alfin tutta la terra.

Per tutto avea genti ferite e morte,
 La bassa plebe e i più superbi capi :
 Anzi nuocer pareo molto più forte
 A re, a signori, a principi, a satrapi.

circle alone that he fails to discover anyone formerly known to him.

Ed egli a me :—“ Vano pensiero aduni :

La sconoscente vita, che i fe' sozzi,

Ad ogni conoscenza or li fa bruni ;

In eterno verranno alli due cozzi ;

55

Questi risurgeranno del sepulcro

Col pugno chiuso, e questi co' crin mozzi.*

And he to me : “ Vain thoughts thou gatherest : the senseless life which polluted them, now makes them too dark for any recognition : For ever shall they come to the two-fold encounter ; these (the misers) shall rise from the tomb with closed fist, and these (the prodigals) with shorn hair.

Before the Day of Judgment they will continue their torment as spirits, but afterwards they will bring back their bodies exactly in the same shape as when they were buried.

* *co' crin mozzi* : He who throws his life away, and does not use it either for his wants or his good name, is like one shorn of his hair, which is given as a natural adornment. Comp. *Purg.* xxii, 46-48 :

“ Quanti risurgeran coi crini scemi,

Per ignoranza, che di questa pecca

Toglie il penter vivendo, e negli estremi !”

In the same Canto Statius tells Virgil that, had it not been for some warning words of Virgil, he would have continued thinking that to spend money with a free hand was no sin, but, after reading the passage in question, it became clear to him that Prodigality is as great a vice as Avarice, and in v. 43 he says—

“ Allor m' accorsi che troppo aprir l' ali

Potean le mani a spendere, e pente' mi

Così di quel come degli altri mali.”

Misuse of wealth has destroyed them.

Mal dare e mal tener* lo mondo pulcro

Ha tolto loro, e posti a questa zuffa :

Qual ella sia, parole non ci appulcro.

60

Ill-giving and ill-keeping have taken from them the bright World (*i.e.* Paradise) and placed them in this conflict: what that is, I embellish no words to (describe) it.

* *Mal dare e mal tener*: Chaucer (*Persones Tale*) under the head of *De Avaritia*, writes as follows:—"Avarice, after the description of Seint Augustine, is a likerousnesse in herte to have erthly thinges. Som other folk sayn, that avarice is for to purchase many erthly thinges, and nothing to yeve to hem that han nede. And understond wel, that avarice standeth not only in land ne catel, but some time in science and in glorie, and in every maner outrageous thing is avarice Sothly, this avarice is a sinne that is ful dampnable, for all holy writ curseth it, and speketh ayenst it, for it doth wrong to Jesu Christ; for it bereveth him the love that men to him owen And therefore sayth Seint Poul, That an avaricious man is the thraldome of idolatrie."

Under the head of *Remedium Avaritiae*, also in *The Persones Tale*, Chaucer goes on to speak of Prodigality, which he terms "fool-largesse." "But for as moche as som folk ben unmesurable, men oughten for to avoid and eschue fool-largesse, the which men clepen waste. Certes, he that is fool-large, he yeveth not his catel, but he leseth his catel. Sothly, what thing that he yeveth for vaine-glorie, as to ministrals, and to folk that bere his renome in the world, he hath do sinne therof, and non almesse: certes, he leseth foul his good, that ne seketh with the yefte of his good nothing but sinne. He is like to an hors that seketh rather to drink drovy or troubled water, than for to drink water of the clere well. And for as moche as they yeven ther as they shuld nat yeven, to him apperteineth thilke malison, that Crist shall yeve at the day of dome to hem that shuld be dampned."

Virgil, in summing up, descants upon the short-lived enjoyment of wealth, and Gelli observes that, when Virgil wishes to impress some maxim very forcibly upon Dante, as here, he addresses him as "My Son," for, according to Solomon, the son is bound to lend an attentive ear to the paternal admonitions and discipline of his father, who only proffers them in love.

Or puoi, figliuol, veder la corta buffa*
 De' ben, che son commessi alla Fortuna,
 Perchè l' umana gente si rabuffa.
 Chè tutto l' oro, ch' è sotto la luna, †
 O che già fu, di queste anime stanche 65
 Non potrebbe farne posar una."—

Now, my Son, thou canst discern the short-lived vanity of those possessions that are committed to Fortune, for which the human race is (ever) wrangling. For all the gold that is under the moon, or that ever existed, would not give rest to one of these weary souls."

Riches not only are of no avail to withdraw souls out of Hell, neither can they purchase the shortest respite from their torments, for in Hell there is no redemption possible. In the moral sense this would mean that riches can in no sort of way give rest or peace to those who have made wealth their one object in life.

* *buffa*: In the *Vocabolario della Crusca* the primary signification given to *buffa* is vanity, emptiness, in the sense that it is used in *Ecclesiastes*.

† *tutto l' oro, che è sotto la luna*: so also Chaucer, *Legende of Hypernestre*, line 77:

"For all the gode under the cold Mone."

Division IV. In ending his last speech Virgil had incidentally mentioned Fortune, and Dante now asks Virgil what is that Fortune which has such influence upon worldly possessions. He then puts into the mouth of Virgil an account of Fortune, so little understood by the race of men.

Gelli discusses this subject at great length. He says Aristotle blamed the writers of his time because they did not write definite treatises on Fortune, either to prove there was no such thing, or else to show what it was, as they had done with all other causes. Gelli thinks that Dante, fearing to fall into this error, pictures himself, so soon as he hears Virgil mention Fortune, as hastening to ask him what it is. Gelli then enters at great length into various theories about Fortune. He thinks Aristotle has written on the subject with far more insight than anyone else. He contends that the Aristotelian theory is that the cause of all things that happen with regularity or with frequency is Nature; whereas the cause of those that occur rarely, unnaturally, or accidentally is not known. But as this phrase, "I do not know" is repugnant to philosophers, they gave it instead the name "Fortune." They say it is not Nature, but they do not state what it is. Gelli adds that, when Fortune is said to have been the cause of anything, it is no more than saying that the cause is not clearly known. But he considers the opinion of Christians to be that Fortune is not anything real, but a mere name, invented by the vulgar, in order to have something on which to lay the blame of human imprudence and folly. Christians do not like the term

“ Fortune,” but attribute all that happens in the world to the Providence of God, who alone rules and governs the world according to His Good Pleasure. Job did not lay the blame of his losses upon Fortune, but said, “ The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.” This is the view accepted by Christians, approved in Holy Writ, and here adopted by Dante ; but wishing, poet like, to throw a veil of allegory over it, Dante imagines Fortune to be the disposer of worldly possessions, meaning, that the Providence of God is a real thing, like unto one of those Intelligences which He has ordained to move and govern the Heavens, and that Fortune governs and causes permutations in earthly possessions, just as those Intelligences do in their respective Heavens.

—“ Maestro,”—diss' io lui,—“ or mi di' anche :
Questa Fortuna, di che tu mi tocche,
Che è, che i ben del mondo ha sì tra branche ?”—*

“ Master,” said I to him, “ Now tell me also : This Fortune to which thou makest allusion (in speaking) to me, what is it, which has the goods of the world so (completely) in its clutches ?”

* *branche* are properly the forepaws of the lion. This is very well illustrated in *Inf.* xxvii, 43-45, where the City of Forlì is said to be lying under the clutches of the green paws, meaning that it was suffering under the tyranny of the Ordelaffi, then Lords of Forlì, who bore on their shield the upper half of a lion vert ; and being only the *upper* half, of course *branche* would mean the *fore*-paws :

“ La terra che fe' già la lunga prova,
E de' Franceschi sanguinoso mucchio,
Sotto le branche verdi si ritrova.”

Dante has used the word *branche* as a term of contempt, for which Virgil now reproves him, and makes him to understand that Fortune is a spirit of Heaven, and a Minister of God. To prove the importance of the doctrine he is about to inculcate, he tells Dante that he must receive his explanation, as a child receives nourishment.*

E quegli a me :—“ O creature sciocche,† 70

Quanta ignoranza è quella che vi offende !

Or vo' che tu mia sentenza ne imbrocche :

Colui, lo cui saper tutto trascende,

Fece li cieli, e diè lor chi conduce,

Sì che ogni parte ad ogni parte splende, 75

Distribuendo ugualmente la luce :

Similmente agli splendor mondani

Ordinò general ministra e duce,

Che permutasse a tempo li ben vani,

Di gente in gente e d' uno in altro sangue, 80

Oltre la difension de' senni umani :

Perchè una gente impera, e l' altra langue,

Seguendo lo giudizio di costei,

Che è occulto, come in erba l' angue.

And he to me : “ O foolish creatures, how great is that ignorance which makes you stumble ! Now I wish thee (Dante) to

* *Line 70 et seq.* : Scartazzini points out that, in the lines that follow, Dante retracts an opinion that he had expressed in *Conv.* iv, ch. 11, where he says of riches : “ Dico che la loro imperfezione primamente si può notare nella indiscrezione del loro avvenimento, nel quale nulla distributiva giustizia risplende, ma tutta iniquità quasi sempre.”

† *creature sciocche* : Virgil speaks of men in general as foolish creatures for thinking that worldly goods belong to Fortune, whereas she is only the appointed distributor of them.

receive my judgment into thy mind (*lit.* mouth). He, whose Omniscience transcends all, created the Heavens, and gave them those who guide them (*i. e.* directing Intelligences or Angels),* so that every part might shine to every part, equally distributing the light: in like manner for worldly splendours He appointed a general mistress and guide, who from time to time might change the empty goods from nation to nation, and from one family (*lit.* blood) to another, beyond prevention of human intelligence; therefore one nation rules, and another languishes, pursuing the decree of her (Fortune), who is hidden like a snake in the grass.

As without warning the lurking snake will bite the unsuspecting passer-by, so will Fortune come suddenly upon a man, and hurl him down, while, in fancied security, he is in the very flower of prosperity; and this is meant to symbolize the hidden and inscrutable purposes of God, which all the collected wisdom of Man is powerless to hinder.

Vostro saper non ha contrasto a lei :

85

* Taking *diè lor chi conduce* to mean the Moving Intelligences, compare Cecho d' Ascoli in his *Acerba*, book I, ch. ii.

“El principio che muove queste rote
Sono intelligentie separate.

Ne stano dal divia splendor remote, etc.”

This philosopher, who after having been the master of Dante became his bitter opponent, was burnt alive in Florence in 1327, aged 70, as an Astrologer and a heretic. His real name was Francesco Stabili.

Ella provvede, giudica e persegue
Suo regno, come il loro gli altri Dei.

Your knowledge has no impediment (that it can oppose) to her ; she foresees, judges, and pursues her reign (on Earth), as do the other gods (*i.e.* the Celestial Intelligences) with theirs.

The reign which Fortune pursues is her rule over temporal goods, which are as much under her dominion as the different spheres of Heaven were, in the time of Dante, said to be under the absolute sway of the Angels or Intelligences appointed to rule over each of them.

Virgil now tells Dante how inevitable are the changes in the condition of those to whom Fortune has given wealth ; she takes from one, and gives to another, according to what she, in her occult judgments, sees to be for our good ; and these changes are incessant.

Le sue permutazion non hanno triegue : *

* In *Par.* xvi, 73-84, Cacciaguida explains to Dante how continually the great families of Florence, each in turn, are rising and falling. As many of the greatest cities of olden time had fallen into obscurity, it is not surprising that families do so, and these changes in Florence are as incessant and regular as the tides on the sea-shore.

“ Se tu riguardi Luni ed Urbisaglia
Come son ite, e come se ne vanno
Dietro ad esse Chiusi e Sinigaglia :
Udir come le schiatte si disfanno,
Non ti parrà nuova cosa, nè forte,
Pocchia che le cittadi termine hanno.

Q

Necessità le fa esser veloce,*
 Sì spesso vien chi vicenda consegue.

90

Le vostre cose tutte hanno lor morte
 Sì come voi ; ma celasi in alcuna
 Che dura molto, e le vite son corte.
 E come il volger del ciel della luna
 Copre ed iscopre i liti senza posa,
 Così fa di Fiorenza la fortuna.”

* *Necessità le fa esser veloce* : Ceccho d' Ascoli was highly indignant at this idea of Dante's, and severely censures it in his Second Book of the *Acerba* I, line 19 *et seq.* :

“ In ciò peccasti, fiorentin poeta
 Ponendo che gli ben de la fortuna
 Necessitati sono con loro meta,
 Non e fortuna, che rason non venca.
 Hor pensa, Dante, se prova nessuna
 Se può far che questa se convenca.

Fortuna non è altro che disposto
 Del che dispon cosa animata,
 Qual disponendo se trova l' opposto,
 Non vien necessitato il ben felice,
 Essendo in libertà l' alma creata,
 Fortuna in lei non può se contradice.”

Benvenuto says that with all due reverence for Ceccho d' Ascoli, he cannot help remarking that, if the latter had been as good a poet as he was an astrologer, he would not have inveighed so rashly against Dante, for he ought to have taken it for granted that the author of the *Purgatorio* would not have given a direct contradiction to his own words in *Purg.* xvi, 67-75 :

“ Voi che vivete, ogni cagion recate
 Per suso al ciel, così come se tutto
 Movesse seco di necessitate.
 Se così fosse, in voi fora distrutto
 Libero arbitrio, e non fora giustizia,
 Per ben, letizia, e per male, aver lutto.

Her changes have no truces: Necessity causes them to be swift, so often comes one who obtains his turn (of luck).

It is necessary that God's provisions should be carried out, and the different vicissitudes occur so frequently that they must of necessity be rapid.

Virgil goes on to point out how unjust men are to upbraid Fortune when they have suffered from these permutations by falling from prosperity into adversity.

Quest' è colei, ch' è tanto posta in croce *
Pur da color che le dovrian dar lode,
Dandole biasmo a torto e mala voce.

This is she, who is so execrated, even by those

Lo cielo i vostri movimenti inizia,
Non dico tutti: ma, posto ch' io il dica,
Lume v' è dato a bene ed a malizia."

And Benvenuto states that some explain this passage for Dante thus: "If Fortune exists at all, of necessity she is ever changing, for Boëthius says that, if once she begins to stand still, she ceases to be Fortune. Therefore necessity is a natural consequence, as, for example, it is necessary for anyone to be reasonable; it is necessary for me to have a free will." Horace, 1 *Carm.* xxxv, in his Ode to Fortune, thus addresses her, verse 1-4:

"O diva, gratum quæ regis Antium,
Præsens vel imo tollere de gradu
Mortale corpus vel superbos
Vertere funeribus triumphos."

And verse 17:

"Te semper anteit sæva necessitas, etc."

* *posta in croce*: The *Voc. della Crusca* says *porre in croce* means *to censure with curses*, Lat. *vituperare*. The expression is quite common in Tuscany.

who ought to give her praise, (and instead are) wrongfully giving her blame and abuse.

Virgil concludes by remarking that FORTUNE is equally indifferent to praise or censure.

Ma ella s' è beata, e ciò non ode :

Con l' altre prime creature * lieta 95

Volve sua spera, e beata si gode.

But she is blessed, and heeds it not: with the other primal creatures (*i.e.* the Angels), she joyfully rolls her sphere on, and rejoices in her blessedness.

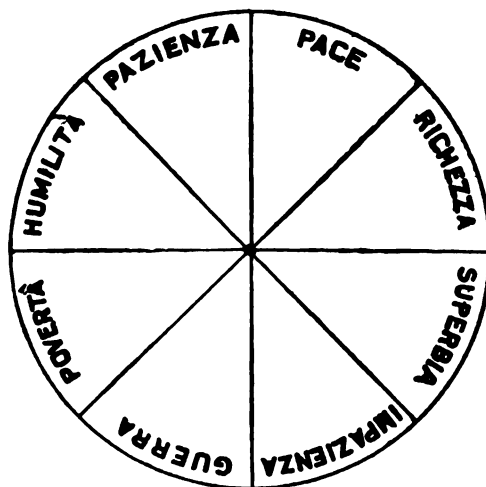
This means, that she continues to direct all the revolutions and permutations of worldly possessions which are committed to her charge, in the same way as do the other Angels in the spheres committed to them. And let us again recollect that by Fortune is symbolized Divine Providence.

Both Benvenuto and Buti interpret *volve sua spera* as simply meaning the wheel of Fortune; and Buti says that poets figuratively pictured the wheel as revolving, to show how the different changes went round as it were in a circle. He adds that these revolutions can be seen in cities and provinces, for when provinces by the mutability of Fortune have become poor they become of necessity humble; humility gives them patience; patience brings peace; peace brings wealth; but wealth brings out pride; and pride impatience; impatience brings war, and

* *prime creature*: the Angels, who, with the heavens were said to have been the first creations of God. Compare *Inf.* iii, 7-8:

“Dinanzi a me non fur cose create,
Se non eterne.”

war poverty; and poverty again brings back humility, and so it proceeds as it were in a circle. And although this is more to be seen in cities and provinces, yet at times it may also be found in individual men, and that shows that these permutations are not without cause, for men are themselves the cause of them. And the better to demonstrate this circular revolution, Buti gives a figure, here reproduced, by which one may more clearly follow and understand what he has just said, and he adds that these effects are more to be discerned in the State, where more people's wills come in contact, than in the individual man, who can more easily curb his will than can be expected from the whole population of a State.*



* The Wheel of Fortune was a favourite subject of art in the Middle Ages. A figure of such a revolving wheel is represented in white marble, set in the pavement of the nave of the Cathe-

Having ended his remarks about Fortune, Virgil invites Dante to accompany him down into the next circle, the Fifth, where are the spirits of the Wrathful, the Sullen, and the Slothful. And here it must be noted, that up to this point Dante has been treating of those sins which take their origin in the flesh, punished in the upper circles of Hell, as less heinous than those of which he is now about to speak. These are sins of the temper, and Dante esteems them more prejudicial to Society, and, as they carry no gratification with them, less excusable.

This Fifth Circle of Hell is situated on the same level as the Sixth, which is the City of Dis. The Stygian marsh separates the two, and forms the moat round the City of Dis.

Or discendiamo omai a maggior pieta :
Già ogni stella cade,* che saliva
Quando mi mossi, e il troppo star si vieta.”—

dral of Siena, and in the Church of San Zenone at Verona ; and elsewhere may be seen examples of Wheel of Fortune windows. Guido Cavalcanti's Song of Fortune begins :

“ Lo ! I am she who makes the wheel to turn :

Lo ! I am she who gives and takes away.”

Dante and his Circle. A Collection of Lyrics, translated by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, London, 1892, p. 151.

The whole poem ought to be carefully compared with this passage of Dante, to which it bears close affinity, but space forbids its being inserted here.

* *Già ogni stella cade* : This is the third reference to time given in the *Inferno*. The night was falling when the two poets set out on their way, see *Inf.* ii, 1-3 :

“ Lo giorno se n' andava, e l' aer bruno
Toglieva gli animai, che sono in terra,
Dalle fatiche loro, etc.”

Now let us descend to still deeper woe :
 already every star is sinking that was ascend-
 ing when I set out, and to tarry too long is
 forbidden."

The Ascetics held that the contemplation of vice must only be so long as would suffice to demonstrate the hideousness of it. The Poets seem to be allowed no longer time in Hell than one night, the same as was conceded to Æneas.

Division V. The Poets enter the Fifth Circle.

Noi ricidemmo il cerchio all' altra riva 100
 Sopra una fonte, che bolle e riversa
 Per un fossato che da lei deriva.

We cut across the circle to the other bank
 above a spring, that bubbles up and flows out
 through a gully that leads down from it.

The circle they cut across is the Fourth, the *other* bank means that which begirds the Fifth Circle. By their being *above a spring*, must be understood that they are standing on considerably higher ground, and see the spring below them.

They would seem, previously to this, to have been skirting the edge of the high bank, but now they strike right in, and commence descending, parallel with the torrent, into the Fifth Circle.

L' acqua era buia assai vie più che persa : *

We learn from the passage we are now discussing that *ogni stella cade, che saliva quando (Virgilio) si mosse*; therefore, it is now past midnight, and we are entering upon the early hours of Easter Eve. In the last line of Canto I, it is said of Virgil,
 "Allor si mosse."

* *persa*: this colour has been sufficiently explained in Canto

E noi, in compagnia dell' onde bige,
Entrammo giù per una via diversa.* 105

The water was dark, very much more so than perse : and we, in company with (*i.e.* following the course of) its dingy waves, entered downward by a difficult path.

A totally different landscape now meets their view.

Una palude fa, che ha nome Stige,†
Questo tristo ruscel, quando è disceso
Al piè delle maligne piaggie grige.‡

This dismal stream, when it has descended to the foot of the dark (and) sinister banks, forms a marsh which is named Styx.

v, 89. Boccaccio, noticing Dante's own definition of it in *Conv.* iv, 20, as a colour in which black predominates over purple, remarks that if the water of the Styx is much darker than perse, it follows that it must be very black indeed.

* *diversa* : Some, among whom is Benvenuto, explain *via diversa* as meaning *a different way*, but I prefer to follow Buti and Landino, who give it the same signification that it has when applied to Cerberus in vi, 13, *fiera diversa*. Buti comments on *diversa*, "Cioè sconcia e ria [rugged and evil]. Nulla via è buona che mena ai vizj, e convenientemente nulla via che sia nell' inferno si dee dir buona." Landino says : "*diversa*, cioè difficile, che così significa in fiorentino, e meritamente dimostra che la via che conduce all' ira sia difficile."

† *Stige* : compare Virg. *Æn.* vi, 323-4 :
"Cocyti stagna alta vides, Stygiamque paludem,
Dī cuius jurare timent et fallere numen."

‡ *grige* : Benvenuto says that these dark banks have a subfusc colour like a black monastic habit (*quæ habent colorem subnigrum, qualis est vestis nigra monacalis*).

Dante discovers a new spectacle, namely, the penalty of the Wrathful.

Ed io, che di mirat mi stava inteso,
 Vidi genti fangose in quel pantano, 110
 Ignude tutte e con sembiante offeso.*
 Questi si percotean, non pur con mano,
 Ma con la testa, col petto e co' piedi,
 Troncandosi coi denti a brano a brano.

And I, who stood intent to gaze, saw
 people covered with mud in that swamp,
 naked all of them, and with a look of rage.
 They struck each other not with hand only,
 but with the head, with the breast, and with
 the feet, tearing each other piece-meal with
 their teeth.

Virgil explains to Dante that two classes of sinners are punished here, namely, the Wrathful and the Slothful or Sullen.

Lo buon Maestro disse :—" Figlio, or vedi 115
 L' anime di color cui vinse l' ira : †
 Ed anche vo' che tu per certo credi,

* *sembiante offeso* : Benvenuto remarks that the appearance of anger in these shades is quickly borne out by their actions ; *percoteansi, etc.*, and he adds that the wrathful, when they lack weapons, will often rend each other after the manner of wild beasts ; and as a matter of fact he once saw two of his own pupils, who, not content with knocking each other down, tore each other with their nails and their teeth.

† *color cui vinse l' ira* : Chaucer in *The Persones Tale*, under the heading *De Ira*, thus speaks of Ire or Wrath : " This sin of Ire, after the describing of Seint Augustin, is wicked will to be avenged by word or by dede. Ire, after the Philosophre, is the fervent blode of man yquickened in his herte, thurgh which he wold harme to him that he hateth ; for certes the herte of man

Che sotto l'acqua ha gente che sospira,
 E fanno pullular quest' acqua al summo,
 Come l' occhio ti dice, u' che s' aggira. 120

The good master said : " Son, thou seest now the souls of those whom Wrath overcame : and I would also have thee believe for certain, that underneath the water there are people who sigh, and make it bubble on the surface, as thine eye tells thee, whichever way it ranges.

Scartazzini says that all the old commentators agree that the spirits under the water are those of the Slothful or Sullen, and he thinks that it is evident that Dante in this canto distributes the sinners according to the principle laid down by him in *Conv.* iv, 17, that every virtue has two collateral enemies, that is to say, vices, one of excess, and one of default. And just as in the last circle he placed the Misers

by enchaufing and meving of his blood waxeth so troubled, that it is out of all maner judgement of reson Certes this cursed sinne annoyeth both to the man himself and eke his neighbour. For sothly almost all the harme or damage that ony man doth to his neighbour cometh of wrath : for certes, outrageous wrathe doth all that ever the foule fende willeth or commandeth him ; for he ne spareth neyther for our Lord Jesu Crist, ne his swete moder ; and in his outrageous anger and ire alas ! ful many on at that time, feleth in his herte ful wickedly, both of Crist, and also of all his halwes [*i.e.* Saints, from *Scand. Helge*]. Is not this a cursed vice ? Yes certes. Alas ! it benimmeth fro man his witte and his reson, and all his debonaire lif spirituel, that shuld kepe his soule. Certes it benimmeth also Goddes due lordship (and that is mannes soule) and the love of his neighbours : it striveth also all day ayenst trouth ; it reveth him the quiet of his herte, and subverteth his soule."

and the Prodigals in contiguity to one another, so, in this circle, he places the Wrathful in contiguity to the Slothful or Sullen, their sins being equally contrary to each other. Pietro di Dante specially confirms this, but he says that, as Sullenness is a vice which is not so readily seen, therefore Dante pictures the Sullen as being punished in secrecy.

Fitti nel limo dicon : ' Tristi fummo
 Nell' aer dolce che dal sol s' allegra,
 Portando dentro accidioso fummo : *
 Or ci attristiam nella belletta negra.'
 Quest' inno si gorgoglian nella strozza, 125
 Che dir nol posson con parola integra."

Fixed in the slime, they say : ' We (once)
 were morose in the sweet air that is gladdened

* *accidioso fummo* : Chaucer thus describes *Accidie* in *The Persones Tale* under the head *De Accidia* :

"After the sinne of wrath, now wol I speke of the sinne of accidie, or slouth : for envie blindeth the herte of a man, and ire troubleth a man, and accidie maketh him hevy, thoughtful and wrawe (peevisch). Envie and ire maken bitternesse in herte, which bitternesse is mother of accidie, and benimeth him the love of alle goodnesse ; than is accidie the anguish of a troubled herte. And Seint Augustine sayth : It is annoye of goodnesse and annoye of harme. Certes this is a damnable sinne, for it doth wrong to Jesu Crist, in as moche as it benimeth the service that men shulde do to Crist with all diligence. He doth all thing with annoye, and with wrawnesse, slaknesse, and excusation, with idleness and unlust. For which the book sayth : Accursed be he that doth the service of God negligently. Than is accidie enemy to every estate of man Now certes this foul sin of accidie is eke a ful gret enemy to the livelode of the body ; for it ne hath no purveaunce ayenst temporel necessitee ; for it forslueth, forsluggeth, and destroieth all goods temporel by recchelesnesse."

by the sun, bearing within (our hearts) the fumes of sullenness: Now are we morose in the black ooze.' This hymn they gurgle in their throats, for (being choked by the mud) they are not able to articulate it in distinct words."

Benvenuto, commenting on this passage, makes some very characteristic remarks upon the demeanour in church of the priests of his day, which even in more modern times might not appear to be uncalled for to anyone who has watched the priests chanting *Vespers* in Italian churches. He says: "And mark here that a hymn is praise rendered to God, and is to be sung in churches; and so the author is justified in putting a hymn into the mouths (of these spirits of the Slothful), for the priests, whose duty it is to chant these hymns, are just those who are most given up to the vice of sloth and asininity (*vicio accidia et assinitatis*), so that these lazy fellows often are scarcely able to move their lips when they are chanting the Sacred Office, and while they slothfully and inaudibly mumble out, 'Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord,' they sit themselves down. Therefore Dante has done well in adding the cause of this gurgling, by saying that they are not able to chant their hymn in articulate words, for these priests very often do not pronounce the words of the Psalms distinctly, but rather swallow them down."

Another view sometimes held, is that these are not the *accidiosi* in the technical sense found in the *Purgatorio*, but represent the sullen or sulky type of anger (*τιμωρι*) as contrasted with the passionate

type (*δργαλος*). The two types would naturally be punished together, though with an appropriate difference of detail in the manner of their punishment. They are treated together by Aristotle, and this sense of sullen or sulky certainly fits in with lines 121—123.

The Canto is brought to a conclusion with a description of how the Poets walk along the edge of the fen, until they come to the spot whence, in the next Canto, they are to be ferried by Phlegyas in his boat over the water that divides them from the City of Dis.

Così girammo della lorda pozza *
 Grand' arco tra la ripa secca † e il mezzo, ‡
 Con gli occhi volti a chi del fango ingozza :
 Venimmo appiè d' una torre al dassezzo. 130

So we walked round a great arc of (the circumference) of the foul pool, between the dry bank and the swamp, with our eyes turned towards those who gulp down

* *pozza* : Gelli says that *pozza* and *possanghera* in Tuscany mean every kind of collection of waters, such as pool, pond, lake, lagoon, dam, fen, etc.

† *ripa secca* : Buti has a curious reading here. He reads *ripa sesta*, and explains it that, although we are describing the Fifth Circle, yet this bank is the bank of the Sixth.

‡ *mezzo* : Blanc (*Voc. Dant.*) says that, with the exception of Rossetti and Guiniforte, all the commentators explain *mezzo* in this one passage to signify the soft ground, marsh, or swamp between which and the dry bank the Poets are walking. Blanc thinks it is perhaps derived from *mitis*. Gelli explains it as *tenera e molle*.

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its filth : at last we reached the foot of a
tower.

Those that swallow the mire are the shades of the
Wrathful ; the Slothful or Sullen are unseen.

END OF CANTO VII.

CANTO VIII.

THE FIFTH CIRCLE.

THE WRATHFUL (continued).

PHLEGYAS.

FILIPPO ARGENTI.

THE CITY OF DIS.

THE FALLEN ANGELS AT THE GATE.

The conclusion of the last Canto found Dante and Virgil arriving at the foot of a tower, after having skirted the Stygian fen for a considerable distance along its edge, from which they were able to view the punishment of the Wrathful. This they continue to witness in the present Canto, until they reach the opposite shore, where the City of Dis stands, which is the Sixth Circle.

Benvenuto divides the Canto into four parts.

In the First Division, from v. 1 to v. 30, Dante mentions the two watch towers on the two sides of the fen, and how, after an exchange of signals between them, a boat is despatched, and the Poets are ferried across the water.

In the Second Division, from v. 31 to v. 63, the spirit of Filippo Argenti makes a vain attempt to delay their progress, and is repulsed by both Poets.

In the Third Division, from v. 64 to v. 81, they disembark at the Gates of the City of Dis, after remarking during their passage that its buildings are red with eternal fire.

In the Fourth Division, from v. 82 to v. 130, Dante relates the fierce opposition to his entrance within the gates, that was made by the Demon Guardians of the City.

Division I. In the first words of this Canto, Dante mentions that he *speaks, following on* to what? Scartazzini says that Dante simply means that he continues speaking about the sinners in the Fifth Circle, but that Boccaccio* and other commentators see in this verse the signs of his resuming his work on the *Divina Commedia* after the long interruption due to his exile. This opinion is, Scartazzini thinks, erroneous, as Dante did not commence writing his poem

* Boccaccio on the words *io dico, seguitando*, with which the Canto opens, relates a story which has been accepted as an historical fact by some commentators, and of which the main facts are, that Dante's wife found in a chest or secret cupboard the first seven cantos of the *Commedia* which he had written before his exile. These were shewn to Dino Frescobaldi, a poet of some repute, and by his advice were forwarded to Moroello Malaspina, at whose Castle in the Lunigiana Dante was then staying. Moroello, on receiving them, strongly urged Dante to leave unfinished so stupendous a piece of writing. Dante is credited with having answered: "The restitution of my greatest work is the return of my honour for many centuries." It has been remarked by several learned Dantists that, if the opening words of this Canto furnish a proof that Dante's work was here resumed after a long interruption, it might as well be affirmed that Ariosto was interrupted in his *Orlando Furioso*, because he begins Canto xvi, st. 5 :

"Dico, la bella istoria ripigliando,"

and Canto xxii, st. 3 :

"Ma tornando al lavor, che vario ordisco."

until the last eight years of his life, but he remarks in his volume of *Prolegomeni*, that although the anecdote related by Boccaccio of the finding of the first seven Cantos of the *Inferno*, may not have been entirely correct, it might well be that what was found on that occasion was, *not the first seven Cantos*, but the whole of Dante's outline sketch for the construction of the poem in that wonderful symmetry which it attained. Scartazzini adds that all great writers worthy of the name invariably accumulate a mass of materials, and Dante had doubtless arranged a skeleton form, the dry bones of which he may from time to time have clothed with flesh. Perchance all the episodes, and all the similes of the *Commedia* had been collected together like so many rare gems to form a diadem, which he only put together in the last eight years of his life.

Benvenuto remarks that although to some this canto appears easy and of no particular count, it is in truth difficult, and one of great beauty. He says that at the opening Dante makes a retrogression into the preceding canto, at the close of which he related how he and Virgil, after walking along the bending shore of the pool, stayed their steps at the foot of a lofty tower; and now he begins this canto by explaining in continuation of the concluding words of canto vii, that for some considerable time before they *did* reach the foot of this tower, they had noticed an interchange of signals taking place between it and some distant spot not visible to the eye, which spot however is the City of Dis. The two lights are displayed to summon the ferry boat to convey two spirits over

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the water, and by the countersignal it is understood that the summons is being obeyed.

Benvenuto further remarks that it is a very common form of speech for a man, when recounting his travels, to say: "We arrived on such and such a day at such and such a city, but long before we drew near the shore, we could see the lights of the town over the water."

Io dico seguitando, ch' assai prima
 Che noi fussimo al piè dell' alta torre,
 Gli occhi nostri n' andar suso alla cima,
 Per due fiammette che i' vedemmo porre,
 E un' altra da lungi render cenno 5
 Tanto, ch' a pena il potea l' occhio torre.

I say in continuation (then) that long before we reached the foot of the (afore-mentioned) lofty tower, our eyes were raised to its summit, by reason of two cressets that we saw displayed there, and another one afar off returning the signal, so distant that the eye could scarcely distinguish it.

Buti says that Dante pictures there being order and concord among the demons to manage their household upon a regular system, which proves the truth of the words of Christ.* Thus here the demons on the first tower signal to those in the City of Dis by hanging out as many lights as there are spirits to be conveyed across.

Dante wonders both at the signal and at the countersignal.

* *St. Matt.* xii, 25-26: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?"

Ed io mi volsi al mar di tutto il senno ; *
 Dissi :—“ Questo che dice ? e che risponde
 Quell' altro foco ? e chi son quei che il fenno.”—

And I turning to the Source (*lit.* Sea) of all
 (human) wisdom (*i. e.* Virgil) ; said : “ What
 does this light say ? and what does that
 other one answer ? and who are they that
 made it ? ”

Benvenuto thinks that Dante meant by his question
 to ask whether the signals were being made by mortals
 or by fiends.

Virgil replies that the interchange of lights was to
 call the ferry boat which may be seen approaching.

Ed egli a me :—“ Su per le sucide onde 10
 Già puoi scoger quello che s' aspetta,
 Se il fummo† del pantan nol ti nasconde.”—

And he to me : “ Over the foul waves thou
 mayest e'en now discern what we are waiting
 for, if the vapours of the marsh hide it not
 from thee.”

Benvenuto points out that although Dante had
 been able to see the lofty tower with its signal lights,
 his eye-sight cannot penetrate through the thick marsh

* *mar di tutto il senno* : In the last canto Dante calls Virgil
 “ quel Savio gentil, che tutto seppe.” In *Par.* xiii, 94-96, St.
 Thomas Aquinas, in speaking to Dante of Solomon, calls him
 that king who asked for wisdom :

“ Non ho parlato sì, che tu non posse
 Ben veder ch' ei fu re, che chiese senno,
 Acciocchè re sufficiente fosse.”

† *il fummo del pantan* : see *Inf.* ix, 6 :

“ Chè l' occhio nol potea menare a lunga
 Per l' aer nero e per la nebbia folta.”

exhalations to discern so small an object as a man in a boat.

The rapid advance of the skiff over the waters of the Styx is compared to the flight of an arrow from a bow.

*Corda non pinse** mai da se saetta,†

* *Corda non pinse etc.*: The velocity of the approach of Phlegyas over the dark waters and through the thick mists of the Styx may be contrasted with that of the Pilot Angel bringing the souls over the sapphire Ocean in the light mists of the bright hour of Sunrise to the Mountain of Purgatory. Here we have the weird figure of Phlegyas uttering curses, there the radiant Angel directing the blessed spirit-throng, who are all of them chanting: "When Israel came out of Egypt." See *Purg.* ii, 16-18 *et seq.* to v. 51 :

"Cotal m' apparve, s' io ancor lo veggia,
Un lume per lo mar venir sì ratto,
Che il mover suo nessun volar pareggia."

This contrast may be borne out by Dante's own exclamation of delight in *Purg.* xii, 112-114, when he notes the difference of his reception by the Angels in the Cornices of Purgatory from that of the fiends in the Circles of Hell :

"Ahi ! quanto son diverse quelle foci
Dalle infernali ; chè quivi per canti
S' entra, e laggiù per lamenti feroci."

† *saetta*: for a rapid course being likened to an arrow, see description (*Virg. Æn.* xii, 853-6) of the flight of one of the Furies :

"Harum unam celerem demisit ab æthere summo
Jupiter, inque omen Juturnæ occurrere jussit.
Illa volat, celerique ad terram turbine fertur :
Non secus, ac nervo per nubem impulsa sagitta."

And in Eurip. *Orestes*, 317-318, the Furies are addressed as :

"Δρομάδες ἢ πτεροφόροι,
Πορνίδες θεαί."

Che sì corresse via per l' aere snella,
 Com' io vidi una nave piccioletta 15
 Venir per l' acqua verso noi in quella,
 Sotto il governo d' un sol galeoto,
 Che gridava :—" Or se' giunta, anima fella ?"—.

Never did bowstring shoot from itself an
 arrow that ran so swift a course away through
 the air, as I beheld a tiny bark coming over
 the water towards us at that instant, under
 the guidance of a single ferryman, who cried :
 " Now art thou arrived, guilty soul ? "

Two lights, indicating that two spirits are to be conveyed, were hung out from the watch-tower, but Phlegyas would seem to have discovered immediately he caught sight of the two Poets, that only one of them was likely to be destined for punishment, as the other was clothed with flesh ; and he therefore addresses himself to one alone.

Virgil silences him, calling him by his name, with which he appears to be as well acquainted as with that of Charon, and the other fiends whom they meet farther down. Possibly he acquired this knowledge on the occasion of his previous visit to the lowest Circle of Hell, to which he alludes in the next canto.*

—" Flegiàs, † Flegiàs, tu gridi a voto,"—

Disse lo mio signore,—" a questa volta : 20
 Più non ci avrai, che sol passando il loto."— ‡

* See canto ix, 16-30.

† *Flegiàs*: In the Greek Mythology Phlegyas is said to have been King of the Lapithæ. Being incensed against Apollo for having made love to his daughter Coronis, he set fire to the temple of the God, who thereupon killed him with his arrows and condemned him to severe punishment in the lower world.

‡ *loto*: from the Latin *lutum*, mire, filth.

“Phlegyas, Phlegyas, this time thou criest in vain,” said my Lord, “thou wilt not have us longer than while we pass over the mire.”

Phlegyas, though much incensed, has not a word to say in reply.

Quale colui, che grande inganno ascolta
Che gli sia fatto, e poi se ne rammarca,
Fecesi Flegiàs nell' ira accolta.

As one who hears that some great deception has been practised upon him, and then chafes over it, such became Phlegyas in his smothered fury.

Benvenuto says that in truth Phlegyas has had a great disappointment, for having speeded over the waters in his bark, hoping to have a lost soul on whom to vent his anger, he finds himself obliged to carry over a living man, one who is in the Grace of God, although in the past he had sinned through pride.

The Poets now enter the skiff.

Lo duca mio discese nella barca,	25
E poi mi fece entrare appresso lui,	
E sol, quand' io fui dentro, parve carica.	
Tosto che il duca ed io nel legno* fui,	
Secando se ne va l' antica prora†	
Dell' acqua più che non suol con altrui.	30

My Leader stepped down into the boat, and

* *legno*: This word is used indiscriminately in most parts of Italy either to express a ship or a carriage. “That is a man-of-war!” “*L' è un legno di guerra!*” “At what time shall I order the carriage?” “*A che ora devo ordinare il legno?*”

† *l' antica prora*: Boccaccio says the boat is called *ancient* because it has been conveying shades over the Styx for many centuries; and it is called *proa*, figuring a part for the whole.

then made me enter after him, and only when I was in, did it seem laden. As soon as my Leader and I were embarked, the ancient prow moved away, furrowing the water more (*i. e.* deeper) than its wont with others (namely, the empty shades).

Benvenuto thinks that one reason for Phlegyas moving away so hastily is, that having in his boat passengers, who, not being destined for punishment, were most unacceptable to him, he was anxious to be rid of them as soon as possible.

Division II. We now learn how the shade of Filippo Argenti attempts to arrest the progress of the skiff in which the Poets are passing over the water, and it must be noted that Dante particularly mentions the pool being stagnant, because in that part of it where they meet Filippo Argenti, they have left behind the water near the shore, the surface of which is bubbling with the sighs of the Slothful or Sullen, and are only in presence of the spirits of the Wrathful, immersed, but not submerged in the slime.

Mentre noi corravam la morta gora,*
 Dinanzi mi si fece un pien di fango,
 E disse :—" Chi se' tu che vieni anzi ora ?"—

While we were running over the stagnant pool,
 there rose up before me one covered with

* *gora* : Camerini quotes from Bargigi that *gora* is a volume of water turned from a stream to be conducted to a mill or to any other use, having performed which, it is allowed to return into the river from which it has been turned. The English equivalent is mill pond. Here it simply means the great pool, marsh or fen.

mud, and said : " Who art thou that comest
before thine hour (*i. e.* before thou art dead) ?"

This is the shade of Filippo Argenti, whose name in full was Messer Filippo Argenti de' Cavicciuli-Adimari, a knight, extremely wealthy, and so purse-proud that he had the horse he usually rode, shod with silver, whence he acquired the nick name of Argenti. He was athletic, muscular, of great stature, and of a very violent temper. The fact that the family of the Cavicciuli-Adimari were of the opposite faction to Dante, and had fiercely resisted his sentence of banishment being cancelled, may somewhat account for his representing their kinsman undergoing so degrading a punishment, and one can well imagine how the haughty family of the Adimari must have objected to hear read out in Florence this description of one of them wallowing in the mire. The shrinking from ridicule is far stronger in the South of Europe than among the colder nations of the North.

Dante's indignation is roused at the evident belief of Filippo Argenti that he is destined to come to Hell at some time or other, and he retorts with true Tuscan promptitude.

Ed io a lui :—" S' io vegno, non rimango ;
Ma tu chi se', che sei sì fatto brutto ?"— 35
Rispose :—" Vedi che son un che piango."—

And I to him : " If I do come, I remain not ;
but who art thou, that art become so foul ?"
He answered : " Thou seest I am one that
weeps."

Scartazzini points out that Filippo Argenti, from

cowardice and vexation, tries to conceal his identity.* In *Inf.* xxxii, 94, we find Bocca degli Abati, the traitor of the Battle of Montaperti, attempting to withhold his name, which provokes Dante into treating him with great violence. Benvenuto thinks that Dante's answer to Filippo was purposely intended to increase his anguish, as though he would say, "I do not have to remain, but thou must do so," that he then feigns not to recognize him, and in his question, "Who art thou that art become so foul?" he seems to say in addition: "Where now is all the wealth about which thou wert wont to be so arrogant?" and Dante goes on with further taunts:

Ed io a lui :—" Con piangere e con lutto,
Spirito maledetto, ti rimani :
Ch' io ti conosco, ancor sia lordo tutto."—

And I to him : " With weeping and with
sorrow, accursed spirit, remain thou : for I
know thee, all befouled as thou art."

These words seem to have so exasperated the shade of Filippo Argenti, that in a wild outburst of ungovernable rage, he makes for the boat, with the intention of overturning it, or of dragging Dante out of it, but Virgil interposes.

* All through the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio* Dante would appear not immediately to recognize the spirits with whom he comes in contact, but gets a hint of who they are, either from some remembered peculiarity of their person, their speech, their posture, or the mode of their punishment : see the conversation with Cavalcante Cavalcanti, *Inf.* x, 64-5 :

" Le sue parole e il modo della pena
M' avevan di costui già letto il nome."

Allora stese al legno ambo le mani: 40
 Perchè il Maestro accorto lo sospinse,
 Dicendo:—"Via costà con gli altri cani."—
 Then stretched he both hands to the boat:
 whereupon the watchful master thrust him
 back, saying: "Away there with the other
 dogs."

Benvenuto here remarks of Filippo Argenti that his whole conduct and demeanour are like that of a mad dog, and that when Virgil thrust him back he meant to say: "Go away among the other shades of the Arrogant, who fly into a rage at the slightest word, as a dog at every fly." He then relates the story of Filippo's cruel vengeance against Biondello, for playing a practical joke upon him, and which we noticed in canto vi. Benvenuto (vol. i, p. 287) comments on the story in his quaint Latin thus: *Ad propositum ergo vide, qualiter Filippus Argenti pro una vana buffa distratiavit crudeliter vilem homuncionem per lutum cum furore. Ideo bene nunc distratiatur viliter, ut canis rabidus ab aliis canibus per triste cœnum infernale.*

Dante's righteous wrath against Filippo meets with an immediate expression of approval from Virgil.

Lo collo poi con le braccia mi cinse,
 Baciommi il volto, e disse:—"Alma sdegnosa,*

* *sdegnosa*: Blanc (*Voc. Dant.*) referring to this passage, explains it, "filled with a noble indignation." In *Inf.* x, 41, Farinata degli Uberti is thus described:

"Guardommi un poco, e poi quasi sdegnoso
 Mi dimandò: etc."

In that passage Blanc translates *sdegnoso* "disdainful." Scartazzini thinks that *alma sdegnosa* is meant to express

Benedetta colei che in te s' incinse.*

45

Then he threw his arms about my neck, kissed my face, and said: "Soul (that art justly) indignant, blessed be she that conceived thee.

Virgil goes on to impress upon Dante that this squalid wretch had in his life-time been filled with arrogant pride, without really having anything whatsoever to be proud about, and adds that there are many like him.

Quei fu al mondo persona orgogliosa; †
Bontà non è che sua memoria fregi:

disdain, and quotes Di Siena as saying that the disdain of Dante is placed in happy contrast to the arrogance of Filippo Argenti, there being no such punishment to men like him than to be despised by others. Fraticelli draws particular attention to the distinction between *ira* and *sdegno*; the first is punished, as being generally the vice of an impotent mind; the second is praised, as arising chiefly from hatred to sin.

* *Benedetta colei che in te s' incinse*: Gelli remarks that Virgil having praised Dante for his righteous indignation, adds his tribute of gratitude to her who bore him. He says that *di te s' incinse* signifies, "became pregnant of thee," and that the word *incignere*, though in his time obsolete, was in general use in the time of Dante. This is noteworthy, for Gelli wrote in 1555, during the cultivated age of Leo X, and yet now it is as common to hear the expression *una donna incinta* for a pregnant woman in Italy, as it is to hear of *une femme enceinte* in France.

† *orgogliosa*: Landino and Vellutello explain that *orgogliosa* means arrogant, and that the man is called arrogant who esteems himself more than he ought to do; and arrogates so much to himself that he cannot bear to be opposed or contradicted in any way whatsoever. Gelli rather thinks that it means cruel and pitiless, and cites a passage in the *Convito* where Dante combines the words *orgogliosa e spietata*.

Così s' è l' ombra sua qui furiosa.*
 Quanti si tengon or lassù gran regi,
 Che qui staranno come porci in brago, 50
 Di se lasciando orribili dispregi !"—†

An arrogant personage in the world was he ;
 no goodness is there that adorns his memory :
 so is his shade here in rage. How many are
 up there now who hold themselves mighty
 princes, who will lie here as hogs in the mire,
 leaving behind horrible dispraises of them-
 selves."

Dante would seem to be desirous of still further humiliating the memory of Filippo Argenti, as though his degradation had not been sufficiently exhibited.

Ed io :—" Maestro, molto sarei vago ‡

* *furiosa* : Filippo's frenzy of rage is evoked on finding that a living man has recognized him, knowing full well as he does what an evil reputation he has left behind him in the world. It is only after that Dante has pronounced the words *io ti conosco*, that this fury breaks forth.

† *dispregi* : Camerini explains this word "vil fama di turpitudini." In the *Dittamondo*, by Fazio degli Uberti, Lib. i, Cap. i, Terz. 6, are the following lines :

" . . . Ogni vita è cassa,
 Salvo che quella, che contempla Iddio,
 O che alcun pregio dopo morte lassa."

‡ *molto sarei vago*, etc. : Gelli thinks that Dante wishes here to show that his indignation was not only just, according to moral philosophy, as Virgil had demonstrated, but also in complete agreement with Christian doctrine, and such being the case, he only desires such vengeance to fall upon Filippo Argenti, as the punishment that had already been allotted to him by the justice of God ; that is of being ducked in that mire in which he is to remain to all eternity. And in this petition he shows that all our desires and prayers must be in conformity

Far di costui alle fangose genti,
 Che Dio ancor ne lodo e ne ringrazio. 60
 Tutti gridavano :—" A Filippo Argenti :"—
 E 'l Fiorentino spirito bizzarro *
 In se medesimo si volgea co' denti.

A little while after this I saw such an onset made upon him by the miry folk, that even now I praise and thank God for it. They all were shouting: "At Filippo Argenti!" and the frenzied spirit of the Florentine turned against his own self with his teeth.

Lombardi thinks that when one compares the

the Latin *distractio*, any kind of ill-usage; see *Inf.* xiii, 139-141:

" O anime che giunte
 Siete a veder lo strazio disonesto,
 Ch' ha le mie fronde sì da me disgiunte."

but in *Inf.* x, 85, the word has the signification of defeat, total rout:

" Lo strazio e il grande scempio,
 Che fece l' Arbia colorata in rosso, etc."

Compare also Petrarch (*Trionfo della Castità*):

" Legar il vidi; e farne quello strazio,
 Che bastò ben a mill' altre vendette,
 Ed io per me ne fui contento e sazio."

* *bizzarro*: Benvenuto translates this word *sticciosus*, from which comes the Italian *stissito*, enraged. Boccaccio (*Comento*, vol. ii, p. 150), writes: "Noi tegnamo bizzarri coloro che subitamente e per ogni piccola cagione corrono in ira, nè mai da quella per alcuna dimostrazione rimuovere si possono."

For the derivation of *bizzarro* see the dictionaries of Skeat and Littré. Its origin has given rise to much controversy. Most etymologists derive it from *bissa*, a word uncertain both in its derivation and its signification; but Littré is strongly opposed to this view.

occasions in which Dante shows compassion for the Lost, with those in which he seems rather to delight in witnessing their torments, one may take this as established, that he only has pleasure in the punishment of those, who, like Capaneus, Vanni Fucci, and this Filippo Argenti, have set themselves up in defiance of God ; whereas he shows marked compassion for the Unchaste in canto v, and for the gluttonous in canto vi.

Division III. Dante now leaves the consideration of Filippo Argenti and the Wrathful, and turns his attention to the City of Dis, the wailing of whose ill-fated inmates can now be heard across the water.

Quivi il lasciammo, chè più non ne narro :
 Ma negli orecchi mi percosse un duolo, 65
 Perch' io avanti l' occhio intento sbarro :

Here we left him, wherefore I tell no more
 about him : but a (sound of) lamentation
 smote upon my ears, whereupon I strain
 (*lit.* unbar) my eye intently forward.

Virgil observing Dante's wandering gaze, anticipates his question, and tells him what it is that they are just beginning to see.

Lo buon Maestro disse :—" Omai, figliuolo,
 S' appressa la città che ha nome Dite,
 Co' gravi cittadin, col grande stuolo."—

The good master said : " Now, son, the city
 that is named Dis draws nigh, with sin-
 laden denizens, with mighty garrison."

Lombardi states an opinion, pretty generally shared by other commentators, that the City of Dis not only

includes the place of punishment of the heretics and unbelievers into which the Poets are about to enter, but also the whole extent of Hell, from this point right down to Lucifer, seeing that in all the remaining circles are chastised they who sinned grievously from malice *prepense*, and not from mere human frailty, like those who are punished in the circles above. The City is strongly fortified, and is situated in the middle of the Stygian marsh.

Here begins, as we read in line 75, Nether Hell, the kingdom of Dis, or Pluto, the sovereign of the Infernal Regions; and Benvenuto says that it is well named after him, for in it are hidden away the great treasures of Hell, namely, such great sinners as heretics, tyrants, ravishers, assassins, blasphemers, sodomites, usurers, the fraudulent, forgers and traitors.

Ed io :—" Maestro, già le sue meschite 70

Là entro certo nella valle cerno

Vermiglie, come se di foco uscite

Fossero."—Ed ei mi disse :—" Il foco eterno,

Ch' entro l' affoca, le dimostra rosse,

Come tu vedi in questo basso inferno."— 75

And I : " Master, already can I clearly make out its mosques, there in the valley, as bright red as though they had (but now) issued from the fire." And he said to me : " The eternal fire, which enkindles them within, shows them red, as thou seest in (the gloom of) this nether hell."

Both Boccaccio and Buti explain at some length that *meschite* are places, built in honour of Mahomet, where the Saracens worship, and having minarets

instead of church towers. And just as in the world, when travellers are approaching a city, the first objects they see from afar are its temples, which are usually lofty and conspicuous ; so now, when drawing near to the City of Dis, the first object the Poets descry are the temples of that infernal city, which are the sepulchres of the heretics ; and their brazen coverings, lifted up on high, have a roof-like appearance like unto churches. Dante uses the Saracenic word *mosques* to describe them, since the places of worship of heretics cannot be called churches, because they are built in honour of the devil, and not of God. And he represents these sepulchres as being apart from the main body of the city, and placed on its extreme edge ; for such is the way (says Benvenuto) of the conventicles of heretics, that they avoid the contiguity of others.

Some commentators say that as the City of Dis is the special abode of the heretics, it is particularly described as having *mosques*, the places of worship of a false religion. Camerini explains *nella valle* to refer to the Sixth Circle, which, although on the same level as the Fifth, is separated from it by walls and moats, from which it takes the form of a city.

The boat containing the Poets now passes within the *enceinte* of the fortifications.

Noi pur giugnemmo dentro all' alte fosse,*
Che vullan † quella terra sconsolata :

* *alte fosse* : Brunone Bianchi explains this to mean deep moats.

† *vullan* : Boccaccio says that the proper signification of *vallo* is that palisading which in times of war is erected round cities to make them stronger, and which was more properly called *steccato*, "stockade ;" and that hence the word also

S

Le mura mi parean che ferro fosse.*
 Non senza prima far grande aggirata,
 Venimmo in parte, dove il nocchier, forte,† 80
 —“Uscite,”—ci gridò,—“qui è l' entrata.”—
 We now arrived within the (circle of) the deep
 fosses that fortify that city of despair: the
 walls appeared to me to be of iron. Not

comes to mean, any means of defence outside the walls of a city; and therefore Dante says that he passed within the fosses *che vallan, i. e.*, which strengthen that city.

* *Le mura mi parean che ferro fosse*: compare Virg. *Æn.* vi, 548—554:

“Respicit Æneas subito, et sub rupe sinistra
 Mœnia lata videt, triplici circumdata muro;
 Quæ rapidus flammis ambit torrentibus amnis
 Tartareus Phlegethon, torquetque sonantia saxa.
 Porta adversa ingens, solidoque adamante
 columnæ;
 Vis ut nulla virûm, non ipsi excindere ferro
 Cœlicolæ valeant. Stat ferrea turris ad auras.”

And Milton, *Par. Lost.* ii, 643—648:

“ At last appear
 Hell bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof;
 And thrice three-fold the gates; three folds were
 brass,
 Three iron, three of adamantine rock,
 Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire,
 Yet unconsum'd.”

Parean che ferro fosse: Venturi says of this construction: “Discordanza attica, in virtù della quale si pone il *fosse*, singolare, retto da *mura*, in luogo di *fossero*, plurale, che miglio accorda.”

† Benvenuto and some other commentators think *forte* is an adjective, and refers to Phlegyas, and would therefore have the sense of *superbus*, but the better interpretation seems to be that given by Witte, who punctuates it as an adverb.

without first making a wide circuit, we came unto a place where the ferryman loudly shouted to us : " Get you out, here is the entrance."

Benvenuto compares with the above, the description of Charon ferrying the souls across the Acheron, but he says there is nothing superfluous in this account of the second ferryman, who conveys the souls from the valley into the City of Dis, for the whole fiction is most ingeniously contrived. Dante pictures this great and most ancient city with three lines of fortifications, as, for example, are to be seen in the City of Padua, one of the most ancient in Italy. Now in the first and most extended of the enclosures, which is not very closely guarded, dwell they who sinned from Incontinence. In the second, which is more contracted, and closely guarded, are those who sinned from Violence. But in the third and innermost citadel, the one of narrowest limits, are they who sinned from Fraud, and at that point there will be found a third conveyor of souls more horrible than the others, namely Geryon ; and finally in the very centre of the City is the darkest prison of all, namely, the Pit in which are punished the Traitors.

Division IV. When Dante, with Virgil, issues from the boat at the peremptory command of Phlegyas, he looks up* to see in what new region he has been

* Compare in *Purg.* ii, 52-4, the description of the wondering gaze of the newly-arrived spirits on the sea-shore of Purgatory :

" La turba che rimase lì, selvaggia
Parea del loco, rimirando intorno,
Come colui che nuove cose assaggia."

landed. A strange and weird spectacle is presented to his eyes, in the shape of a vast host of fiends gathered together on the bastions of the fortress of evil. We must remember too that Dante now sees these fiends for the first time. All through the regions above he has only met the Guardians of the Circles, such as Charon, Minos, Cerberus, Plutus; but from this point, he will continue to meet these minor officials of Hell,* until the time comes when the Giant Antæus places him down on the ice in the Ninth Circle, when he will find himself face to face with Lucifer alone.

Io vidi più di mille in sulle porte
Da' ciel piovuti,† che stizzosamente

* In Purgatory, at the approach of the Angel's bark, Virgil says to Dante (*Purg.* ii, 29-30):

"Ecco l' Angel di Dio : piega le mani :
Omai vedrai di sì fatti ufficiali."

and from that point Dante continued to see Angels all through Purgatory and Paradise.

† *Da' ciel piovuti*: compare Pulci (*Morgante Maggiore*, canto ii, st. 31):

"Io voglio andar a scoprir quell' avello
Là dove e' par che quella voce s' oda ;

.
Scuopri, se vi fussi dentro
Quanti ne piovvon mai dal ciel nel centro."

and Frezzi, (*Il Quadr.* lib. iv, cap. 4) :

"Li maladetti piovuti da cielo."

Milton (*Par. Lost*, vii, 131-135) speaks of the fall of the Angels from Heaven :

". Lucifer from Heav'n
(So call him, brighter once amid the host
Of Angels than that star the stars among)
Fell with his flaming legions through the Deep
Into his place."

Dicean :—" Chi è costui, che senza morte
Va per lo regno della morta gente ?"— 85

Above the gates I saw more than a thousand
of those rained down from Heaven (*i.e.* the
fallen Angels), who angrily cried : " Who is
that, who without (experience of) death goes
through the kingdom of the people dead (in
sin) ?" *

Virgil, seeing that Dante's living presence is the
cause of the opposition to their entrance, wishes to
try whether he can persuade them to admit Dante
quietly before invoking the assistance of a Higher
Power.

E il savio mio Maestro fece segno
Di voler lor parlar segretamente.

And my sage Master made a sign of wishing
to confer with them in private.

Benvenuto thinks the repugnance of the demons to
the presence of a living person was owing to their
conviction that a recital on Earth of the torments of
Nether Hell would act upon men as a strong deterrent
to sin.

Virgil's advances are not wholly without effect.

Allor chiusero un poco il gran disdegno,
E disser :—" Vien tu solo, e quei sen vada,
Che sì ardito entrò per questo regno. 90
Sol si ritorni per la folle strada :
Provi se sa ; chè tu qui rimarrai,
Che gli hai scorta sì buia contrada."—

* Benvenuto observes that Dante himself was not like these,
dead in sin, for he had not when alive practised either deceit
or fraud, with the exception perhaps of some youthful deceits
towards women.

Non mi lasciar,—diss' io,—“così disfatto :—* 100
 E se 'l passar più oltre c' è negato,
 Ritroviam† l' orme nostre insieme ratto.”—

5° From Cerberus	<i>Inf.</i> vi, 22
6° From Plutus	„ vii, 8
7° From Phlegyas	„ viii, 19
8° From Filippo Argenti	„ viii, 41

He says however that he only gives these details for the benefit of those who desire chapter and verse, but that to him it seems absurd to suppose that Dante, in a moment of such terrible anxiety, would have counted up the number of times that Virgil had restored confidence to him. He thinks it far better to take *seven* to be an indefinite number, as we often find in Holy Writ. Compare *Prov.* xxiv, 16 : “For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again,” and *Eccles.* xi, 2 : “Give a portion to seven, and also to eight.” See also *Inf.* viii, 82-3 :

“Io vidi più di mille in sulle porte
 Da' ciel piovuti.”

and ix, 79 :

“Vid' io più di mille anime distrutte etc.”

Both of these last passages simply express a vast multitude.

* *disfatto* : Blanc (*Voc. Dant.*) says that in this one instance the word *disfatto* is used in the sense of *délaissé, désespéré, verlassen, verweifelnd*. Scartazzini also gives that meaning to it, but quotes Di Siena, who thinks it rather implies intense exhaustion and weariness consequent on the complete prostration of Dante's spirit, after all the horrors he has witnessed, and the imminence of his present danger. Di Siena thinks this is shown by Virgil's answer to Dante in lines 106-7 :

“Ma qui m' attendi ; e lo spirito lasso
 Conforta e ciba di speranza buona.”

† *Ritroviam* : Camerini explains this word to have sometimes the signification of “to repeat,” “to retrace.” He quotes the following sentence from *La Vita di Santa Maria Maddalena* : “In questo modo si consumava tutta, *ritrovando* (*i.e.* retracing, reconsidering) ogni parola e ogni cosa che le era detta.”

“Oh my beloved Leader, who for more than seven times hast restored to me security, and brought me out of the imminent peril that faced (*lit.* stood before) me, do not,” I said, “leave me thus lost in despair: and if further progress be denied us, let us quickly retrace our steps together.”

Virgil with much tenderness soothes his alarm, and assures him that their passage through the city cannot be impeded, and that he will in no case abandon him.

È quel signor, che lì m' avea menato,
 Mi disse :—“ Non temer, che il nostro passo
 Non ci può torre alcun : da tal n' è dato.* 105
 Ma qui m' attendi ; e lo spirito lasso
 Conforta e ciba di speranza buona,
 Ch' io non ti lascerò nel mondo basso.”—

And that Lord, who had conducted me thither said to me : “Fear not, for no one can take from us our onward course : by Such an One (*i.e.* God) has it been granted to us. But await me here ; and comfort and nourish thy wearied spirit with good hope, for I will not desert thee in the nether world.”

* *da tal n' è dato* : Virgil's reassuring words to Dante remind one of those of Elisha to his servant when encompassed in Dothan by the hosts of the King of Syria. 2 *Kings*, vi, 15-16 : “And his servant said unto him, Alas my master ! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not : for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.” For *tal* in the sense of meaning God, compare *Purg.* xxxi, 37-39 :

“Ed ella : ‘Se tacesti, o se negassi
 Ciò che confessi, non fora men nota
 La colpa tua : da tal giudice sassi.’”

Dante in great terror watches the interview of Virgil with the denizens of Dis.

Così sen va, e quivi m' abbandona
 Lo dolce padre, ed io rimango in forse ;* 110
 Che 'l sì e 'l no† nel capo mi tenziona.
 Udir non pote' quel ch' a lor si porse :
 Ma ei non stette là con essi guari,‡
 Che ciascun dentro a prova|| si ricorse.

Thus the gentle Father departs, and leaves me there, and I remain in suspense (*lit.* in perhaps); for both yes and no contend within my brain (*i.e.* I said within myself "Yes, he will return," and "No, he will not return"). I could not hear what was urged upon them (by Virgil): but he did not remain

* *in forse*: compare *Purg.* xxix, 16-18:

"Ed ecco un lustro subito trascorse
 Da tutte parti per la gran foresta,
 Tal che di balenar mi mise in forse."

(So brilliant that it set me to doubt as to whether it were lightning).

† *il sì e il no*: compare *Purg.* x, 61-3:

"Similmente al fummo degl' incensi
 Che v'era immaginato, gli occhi e il naso
 Ed al sì ed al no discordi fensi."

‡ *guari*: The *Voc. della Crusca* says the word is an adverb of quantity, very much used by early writers, and is equivalent to the Latin *multum*, "much, for a great while."

|| *ciascun dentro a prova si ricorse*: It is impossible to translate this literally while giving the full force of the passage. Longfellow translates it "each within in rivalry ran back." *A prova* means "striving who should be first." Dante's line expresses the simultaneous rush of the whole throng and the individual rivalry of each to outstrip the other.

with them a great while, for they all rushed back inside (the gates) each striving to get in first.

Virgil was no doubt representing to the fiends that Dante, though alive, was there by the Supreme Will of God ; but in the City of Unbelief he could get no credence, as he had done from Charon, from Minos, and from Phlegyas, and furious at his demand that Dante should be admitted, the demons broke up the parley, rushed through the gateway, and slammed the gates in his face.

Chiuser le porte que' nostri avversari 115
 Nel petto al mio signor, che fuor rimase,
 E rivolsesi a me con passi rari.

They shut the gates, did those adversaries of ours, on the breast of my Lord, who remained without, and returned towards me with slow steps (as one in deep thought).

Benvenuto thinks that one reason for Virgil not being able to guide Dante through the city of Dis may be found in the fact that Virgil had never in his writings treated of Fraud in all its varieties, with the accompanying punishments, and which were never even dreamt of by him or any other poet before Dante, and that is why the latter now depicts Virgil showing all the signs of confusion, grief, and diffidence.

Gli occhi alla terra,* e le ciglia avea raset

* *Gli occhi alla terra* : Dante here applies to Virgil himself almost the exact translation of the latter's own words in *Æn.* vi, 863 :

“Sed frons læta parum, et dejecto lumina vultu.”

† *le ciglia avea rase d' ogni baldanzu* : compare Milton, *Par. Lost*, i, 594-596 :

D' ogni baldanza, e dicea ne' sospiri :
 —“ Chi m' ha negate le dolenti case ? ”—* 120

His eyes (were) down-cast, and his brows he
 had shorn of all boldness, and he said amid
 sighs : “ Who hath denied me (entrance into)
 the dwellings of woe ? ”

Scartazzini says that by the dwellings of woe are meant the fiery tombs which will be described at the end of canto ix, in which the heresiarchs dwell as if in their own houses.

And now Virgil, sensible of the depression that Dante must be experiencing from his present demeanour, again assures him of succour near at hand.

Ed a me disse :—“ Tu, perch' io m' adiri,
 • Non sbigottir, ch' io vincerò la prova,
 Qual ch' alla difension dentro s' aggiri.
 Questà lor tracotanza† non è nuova,
 Chè già l' usaro a men segreta porta, 125
 La qual senza serrame ancor si trova.‡

“ as when the sun new-risen
 Looks through the horizontal misty air
 Shorn of his beams.”

* *Chi m' ha negate le dolenti case ?* : compare Virgil *Æn.* vi, 562-563, where the Sibyl says to Æneas :

“ Dux inclyte Teucrum,
 Nulli fas casto sceleratum insistere limen.”

† *tracotanza* : compare *Par.* xvi, 115-117 :

“ L' oltracotata schiatta, che s' indraça
 Retro a chi fugge, ed a chi mostra il dente
 O ver la borsa com' agnel si placa.”

‡ *la qual senza serrame ancor si trova* : In *St. Matt.* vii, 13, the gates of Hell are thus described : “ Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.” According to an ancient tradition, the fiends attempted to prevent the descent of Christ into *Limbo*, which

Sopr' essa vedestù* la scritta morta : †
 E già di qua da lei discende l' erta,
 Passando per li cerchi senza scorta,
 Tal che per lui ne fia la terra aperta."—

130

And to me he said: "Fear not thou, because I wax wroth, for I will overcome the trial, no matter who within (there) combines to impede (our entrance). This insolence of theirs is not new, for on one occasion they exhibited it at a gate that is less secret (*i.e.* the Gate of Hell), which is still found unbarred. Over it didst thou see the characters of death: and even now there is descending the steep on this side of it (*i.e.* inside the Gates of Hell), passing without escort through the circles, One of such authority that by him shall the city be opened."

There is some difference of opinion as to who was this messenger from Heaven. According to Benvenuto it was Mercury. The late Duke of Sermoneta thought it was Æneas. The generally accepted view is that it was an Angel of God, but the question will be discussed in the next canto.

END OF CANTO VIII.

descent Virgil speaks of in canto iv, 53 *et seq.*, offering resistance at the Gate of Hell, but Christ shattered the Gate, which from that time remained wide open—*la qual senza serrame ancor si trova* (l. 126). Dante is here alluding to the words of the Church in the Office for Holy Saturday: "Hodie portas mortis, et seras pariter Salvator noster dirupit."

* *vedestù*: syncope for *vedestitu*.

† *scritta morta*: this may either mean the inscription over the Gates of Hell that lead to Eternal Death; or the *colore smorto, oscuro*, in which we are told it was traced. See the opening lines of canto iii.

CANTO IX.

THE CITY OF DIS.

THE FURIES.

THE ANGEL SENT DOWN FROM HEAVEN.

THE SIXTH CIRCLE.

THE HERESIARCHS.

THE FIERY TOMBS.

We left the Poets standing outside the City of Dis, the gates of which had been shut in Virgil's face by the hostile fiends. The main point in the present canto is to show how this opposition was overcome, and by whose assistance the Poets gained admission within the walls.

Benvenuto divides the canto into four parts.

In the First Division, from v. 1 to v. 33, Virgil reassures the terrified Dante, by telling him that he is well acquainted with the way, as he has been there before.

In the Second Division, from v. 34 to v. 63, Dante describes the appearance of the three Furies.

In the Third Division, from v. 64 to v. 105, he relates how a messenger from Heaven made his appearance, who, opening the gates and reproving the recalcitrant fiends, turns back by the way that he came.

In the Fourth Division, from v. 106 to v. 133, the

entrance of the Poets into the City and the penalty of the Arch-Heretics is recounted.

Benvenuto says that this is a very difficult canto, and contains as many hard passages as can be found in the writings of Virgil or any other poet.

The opening lines describe how Virgil, at the insult offered him, had turned red with anger. Dante, who has been completely paralyzed with fear at the scene with the demons, and at their threat of sending him back alone, while they detain Virgil, turns deadly pale. Virgil seeing this, puts a great constraint on himself, and partly succeeds in tranquilizing Dante by re-composing his own face.

Quel color che viltà* di fuor mi pinse,†
Veggendo il duca mio tornare in volta,
Più tosto dentro il suo nuovo ristrinse.

That (pallid) hue which cowardice painted on
me outwardly (*i. e.* on my cheeks), at seeing
my Leader turn back, all the sooner repressed

* *viltà*: Gelli thinks that what Virgil noticed in Dante was not real cowardice, for

“Temer si dee di sole quelle cose
Ch’ hanno potenza di fare altrui male:
Dell’ altre no, che non son paurose.”

Inf. ii, 88-90.

He thinks rather it was doubt as to whether Virgil had mistaken the way, and whether they would succeed in overcoming this trial.

† *mi pinse*: Compare the scene with Casella, in *Purg.* ii, 82-4:

“Di maraviglia, credo, mi dipinsi;
Per che l’ ombra sorrise e si ritrasse,
Ed io seguendo lei, oltre mi pinsi.”

within him his new (colour, *i.e.* the red flush of shame and indignation).

Virgil is now on the watch for the promised succour, and like one in a forest by night, or among marshy vapours by day, he uses his ears instead of his eyes.

Attento si fermò com' uom che ascolta ;
Chè l' occhio nol potea menare a lunga . . . 5
Per l' aer nero e per la nebbia folta.

He stopped attentive like a man who is listening ; for his eye could not lead him far through the dark air and the thick mist.

Benvenuto says that to arrive at a comprehension of the extremely difficult and intricate words of Virgil in the lines that follow, he would ask us to imagine the similar case of a man having a lawsuit with certain adversaries, and when after long contention he sees that they are getting the best of it, he exclaims in anger : " By Heaven, I *must* win this fight, even though I have to do I know not what " ; after a pause he adds : " But if not . . . " then he waits a while and says : " I will put myself in the hands of one who will give me powerful help." In like manner here Virgil says : " If I cannot by my own strength force an entrance, I well know one who will put down all resistance."

—" Pure a noi converrà* vincer la punga,†"—

* *Pure a noi converrà, etc.* Benvenuto tells his pupils that these lines must be read with a loud voice and in tones of anger.

† *punga* : Blanc says this is an ancient form for *pugna*. It only occurs in this one passage. Scartazzini observes that it is

Cominciò ei :—" se non . . . tal ne s' offerse.*
Oh quanto tarda a me ch' altri qui giunga !"—

"Still it behoves us to win this fight," began he : "unless . . . (but no!) Such a One offered herself. Oh how long to me it seems before that other one arrives !"

The full sense of what Virgil has said is this : "It will never do for us to be beaten ; we *must* make our way into the city, unless I misunderstood Beatrice's promise of succour, and that after all we may find entrance impossible, and shall have to retrace our steps. But no ! that cannot be, seeing that so great a power (*tal*) as Beatrice, *i.e.* Divine Wisdom, offered us her assistance, and assured us that her words promised so much good. I know she must already be aware of our situation, and will have despatched an Angel to open those gates ; Oh ! how I wish he would come soon." Gelli and Landino both interpret the passage in this sense.

Dante has noticed the way that Virgil broke off

like *spunga* for *spugna*, and *vegno* for *vengo*. I notice too that in *Purg.* xiii, 128, Pier Pettinagno is in some editions read Pier Pettignano.

* *tal ne s' offerse* : In *Inf.* ii, 121-126, Virgil assures Dante beforehand of the protection of Beatrice and her two Holy companions :

" Dunque che è ? perchè, perchè ristai ?
Perchè tanta viltà nel core allette ?
Perchè ardire e franchezza non hai ?
Poscia che tai tre donne benedette
Curan di te nella corte del cielo,
E il mio parlar tanto ben t' impromette ?"

in what he was saying, and his uneasiness and his suspicions of danger are again aroused.

Io vidi ben, sì com' ei ricoperse 10
 Lo cominciar con l' altro che poi venne,
 Che fur parole alle prime diverse.
 Ma nondimen paura il suo dir dienne,
 Perch' io traeva la parola tronca
 Forse a peggior sentenza ch' ei non tenne. 15

I well saw, how he covered up the beginning (of his speech, *Se non*) with the other (part, *Tal ne s' offerse*) that followed after, which were words different from the first ones. But none the less his talk gave me fear, for perchance I drew the broken-off sentence to a worse import than what he (really) held.

This, Gelli thinks, signifies that Dante had misinterpreted Virgil's *Se non* to mean *se non ho smarrita la strada*.

Dante now timidly puts to Virgil an indirect question, to ascertain whether he has ever been there before, and consequently knows the way.

—" In questo fondo della trista conca *

* *conca*: In some few translations *conca* has been rendered "shell," but that is quite a subsidiary meaning of the word. *Conca* is well known in Tuscany as "a large earthenware vessel for containing lye" (Baretti's Dictionary). It is in the form of a truncated cone, and exactly corresponds to the description of Hell. Of four meanings, Baretti gives "shell" as the last. Fanfani's Dictionary gives as the first of many significations: (1) "Vaso di gran concavità, di terra cotta, che serve propriamente per fare il bucato." He also gives the following: (2) "Any sort of large vessel of any material, wide at the top." (3) "Sepulchre, tomb." (4) "Shell for *conchiglia*." (5) "A car, or a little boat." (6) "*Conca*, luogo basso, circoscritto e afoso,"

Discende mai alcun del primo grado,
 Che sol per pena ha la speranza cionca * ?"—
 Questa question fec' io ; e quei:—" Di rado
 Incontra,"—mi rispose,—" che di nui 20
 Faccia il cammino alcun per quale io vado.

" Into this depth of the woeful hollow doth any (soul) ever descend from the first grade (*i.e.* from *Limbo*), which for its punishment alone has its hope broken down? " This question put I : and he answered me : " Seldom it happens that any one of us (who are in *Limbo*) makes the journey upon which I (now) go.

According to Benvenuto, the episode that Virgil now relates to Dante of his having been down into Hell on a previous occasion, is an amiable fiction, contrived the better to disperse the terrors with which Dante's heart is filled. And alluding to the narrative beginning with the words *vero è* he remarks that although it is not true, yet Virgil only invents it for Dante's good, and therefore it is no lie, since a lie is the intention of deceiving, but Virgil feigns this with the intention of instructing Dante. Buti says almost precisely the same, namely that the story of Virgil

and he gives the following quotation, without saying from where: " Dio mio ! laggiù in quella conca è un gran brutto stare ! " He says, any one standing on the hill of the Poggio Imperiale and looking down, might call Florence a *conca*. Buti says, " Ogni cosa che tiene è conca."

* *cionca*: the word only occurs in this one passage. Blanc thinks it comes from the Latin *truncus*, and explains that a limb or branch broken down, but not actually separated from the parent trunk, is said to be *cionco*.

having been called up by the sorceress Erichtho, is a purely poetical fiction of Dante's, for neither is it to be found among ancient authors, nor can it be affirmed that Dante is here making an allegory, but that he invents this in order to give probability to the story, as before he had figured Virgil as one of the spirits in *Limbo*.

Ver' è ch' altra fiata quaggiù fui,
 Congiurato da quella Eriton * cruda,
 Che richiamava l' ombre a' corpi sui.

True it is that I was once before down here,
 evoked by that fell Erichtho, who used to
 summon the spirits back into their bodies.

* *Eriton*: Erichtho, a famous Thessalian sorceress, mentioned by Lucan (*Phars.* vi) as having recalled a dead body to life to make it predict to Sextus, son of Pompey, the issue of the battle of Pharsalia, and of the wars between his father and Cæsar. As this took place 30 years before the death of Virgil, Dante might be supposed to have fallen into an anachronism. But Scartazzini explains that it is not this circumstance he is alluding to here, but to some other event that happened after his death. He simply represents the sorceress as having survived him, which is quite possible. Carlyle thinks that Dante is probably taking some old tradition of the Middle Ages respecting Virgil, who was then thought to have been a great magician, and Scartazzini adds, that the lines in Lucan, referred to above, allude less to Virgil as the poet, than as the Magician of the Middle Ages. See *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Ninth Edition, the article on *Romance*: "The Enchanter Virgil.—After turning the heroes of antiquity into knights-errant, it was a simple task to transform poets and philosophers into necromancers; and Virgil and Aristotle became popularly famous, not for poetry and science, but for their supposed knowledge of the black art." See also Comparetti, *Virgilio nel medio Evo*. Livorno, 1877.

He now relates when and for what purpose this took place.

Di poco era di me la carne nuda, 25
 Ch' ella mi fece entrar dentro a quel muro,
 Per trarne un spirto del cerchio di Giuda.
 Quell' è il più basso loco e il più oscuro,
 E il più lontan dal ciel che tutto gira :
 Ben so il cammin : però ti fa sicuro. 30

But a short while had my flesh been naked of me (*i. e.* parted from my soul when I died), when she made me enter within that wall, to bring forth from it a spirit of the Circle of Judas. That is the lowest place and the darkest, and the most distant from the Heaven which encircles all (*i. e.* the Empyrean) : well do I know the way : therefore be reassured.

Lombardi thinks that instead of saying the Circle of Judas, one ought rather to describe it as the circle called *afterwards* that of Judas ; for if it was only a little while after his death that Virgil entered into it, Judas, who died in the same year as Jesus Christ, and therefore at least 50 years after Virgil, could not yet be in Hell to give his name to the lowest abyss. And Lombardi thinks, as does also Benvenuto, that Dante can only have invented this fiction, so as to represent Virgil as reassuring him, by showing that he had traversed Hell from top to bottom, and was, therefore, well acquainted with all the paths in it which they could yet have to pursue.

In proof of this knowledge of the locality, he explains to Dante his knowledge that the Styx completely surrounds the city.

Questa palude, che il gran puzzo spira,
Cinge d'intorno la città dolente,
U' non potemo entrare omai senz' ira."—

This marsh, which exhales the mighty stench,
encompasses round the City of Woe, wherein
we now cannot enter without anger (*i.e.* of
its guardians)."

Benvenuto and Fraticelli both think that *ira* rather would refer to the just indignation exhibited by Virgil at this opposition.

Division II. We now read how the demons, seeing that the two Poets still continue standing without any intention of retreating, summon to their assistance the three Furies of Mythology, hoping that their dread aspect will frighten the intruders into submission. Dante represents himself as so startled at the suddenness of their appearance, as quite to forget the end of what Virgil was saying to him.

Ed altro disse, ma non l' ho a mente ;
Perocchè l' occhio m' avea tutto tratto 35
Ver l' alta torre alla cima rovente,
Dove in un punto furon dritte ratto
Tre furie infernal * di sangue tinte,
Che membra femminili aveano ed atto ;
E con idre verdissime eran cinte : 40
Serpentelli ceraste † avean per crine,
Onde le fiere tempie eran avvinte.

* *Tre furie infernal* : compare Virg. *Æn.* xii, 845-848 :

"Dicuntur geminæ pestes cognomine Diræ,
Quas et Tartaream Nox intempesta Megæram
Uno eodemque tulit partu, paribusque revinxit
Serpentum spiris, ventosasque addidit alas."

† *Serpentelli ceraste* : compare Virg. *Æn.* vi, 280-281 :

And more he said, but I have it not in mind ;
 for my eye had drawn me wholly towards the
 lofty tower with its flaming summit, where
 suddenly there uprose swiftly three Hellish
 Furies, stained with blood, who had the limbs
 and the demeanour of women ; and they
 were begirt with greenest hydras ; for hair
 they had small serpent-cerastes, and with
 these their horrid brows were entwined.

The word *ratto* not only expresses the suddenness
 of the appearance of the Furies, but it also gives one
 to understand that they all rose up at the same time
 like one person.

Virgil, who had already described the Furies in the
Æneid, now names them to Dante.

“ E quei, che ben conobbe le meschine *

“ Ferreique Eumenidum thalami, et Discordia demens,
 Vipereum crinem vittis innexa cruentis.”

and Lucan, *Phars.* ix, 719-722 :

“ . . . spinaque vagi torquente Cerastæ ;
 Et Scytale sparsis etiam nunc sola pruinis
 Exuvias positura suas ; et torrida Dipsas ;
 Et gravis in geminum surgens caput Amphisbena.”

And Milton, *Par. Lost.* x, 521-526 :

“ Dreadful was the din
 Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now
 With complicated monsters head and tail,
 Scorpion and Asp, and Amphisbena dire,
 Cerastes horn'd, Hydrus, and Elops drear,
 And Dipsas.”

* *Meschine* : Castelvetro (*Sposizione di Lodovico Castelvetro a XXIX Canti del Inferno Dantesco*. Modena. 1886), explains that *meschine* are serving maids, and that the expression was in common use in his time (1582) in many parts of Italy, and

Della regina dell' eterno pianto :
 —“ Guarda,”—mi disse,—“ le feroci Erine. . . 45
 Questa è Megera dal sinistro canto :
 Quella, che piange dal destro, è Aletto :
 Tesifone è nel mezzo :”—e tacque a tanto.

And he who well knew the handmaidens of
 (Proserpine) the queen of eternal weeping ;
 said to me : “ Mark the fierce Erinnyës. This
 one the left side is Megæra : that one who
 weeps on the right is Alecto : Tisiphone is in
 the middle : ” and this said, he was silent.

Some texts read *Trine*, and others *crine*, but these
 are evidently the errors of ignorant amanuenses, who
 did not know the meaning of the word *erine*, spelt as
 it was in the MSS. and the older editions without a
 capital E. Benvenuto, Buti, Vellutello, and Landino
 all read *Erine*, and the latter commenting on the
 word says : “ The Greeks call the Furies *Erine*
 (Errinyës), because *eris* (ἔρις) signifies contention.”

Of the four first editions the Foligno and the
 Naples read *Trine*, while the Mantua and the Jesi
 read *crine*. I translate here Gelli's own words on
Erine, but am not responsible for his Greek ! “ The

especially in the Valtellina. Littré derives the word from the
 Walloon *meschine* “ une servante,” and gives many instances of
 its use from the twelfth to the sixteenth century. Of these I
 will cite one of the fifteenth century :

“ Elle estoit meschine, faisant le menage commun, comme
 les lits, le pain, et autres telles affaires.”

(Louis XI, *Novv.* XVII).

And in the sixteenth century :

“ Dont quant ce vice entre en dame ou meschine,
 Tant plus vieillit et tant plus s'enracine.”

(J. Marot, v. 198).

“ Let Medusa come : so will we turn him to stone (*lit.* concrete),” they all exclaimed, looking down : “ Ill (was it for us that) we did not avenge the assault against Theseus.”

They mean that had they turned the rash Theseus into stone, no other mortal would have dared to intrude into the Lower Regions.

Virgil is fully alive to the imminence of the danger with which Dante is menaced.

—“ Volgiti indietro, e tien lo viso chiuso ; 55
Chè se il Gorgon si mostra, e tu il vedessi,
Nulla sarebbe del tornar mai suso.”—

“ Turn round backwards, and keep thine eyes closed ; for if the Gorgon shew herself, and thou shouldest see her, never more would there be any returning up.”

He means that if his mortal eyes were once to see the head of Medusa he would be turned into stone.

Così disse il Maestro ; ed egli stessi
Mi volse, e non si tenne alle mie mani,
Che con le sue ancor non mi chiudessi. 60

Tentat, et audaci Theseus juratus amico :
Me ferus Alcides, tunc cum custode remoto
Ferreæ Cerberæ tacuerunt limina portæ.”

In the *Genealogia degli Dei* Boccaccio writes : “ Ad Inferos (Theseus et Perithous) eam (Proserpinam) rapturi declinaverunt. Verum Cerberus adversus Perithoum insurgens, illum primo interfecit impetu : quem dum juvare conaret Theseus, in magno vitæ fuit discrimine, et ultimo a Plutone detentus est. Tandem... (Hercules) descendit ad Inferos : cui obvius Cerberus factus, ... ab Hercule victus, atque triplici ligatus catena Theseo concessus est. Aliqui volunt Cerbero ab Hercule barbam decerptam, quem liberato Theseo, ad superos triplici traxit catena, etiam renitentem.”

Thus spake my Master: And he himself turned me round, and he did not trust (*lit.* keep himself) to *my* hands, but also closed me (*i.e.* covered my eyes) with his own.

Dante now tells us himself that what he has related in the above lines is an allegory, and he asks all of his readers who have intelligent minds, to understand and ponder over the teaching that is concealed in it. He evidently thinks it beyond the ken of the ignorant.

O voi, che avete gl' intelletti sani,
Mirate la dottrina che s' asconde*
Sotto il velame degli versi strani.

O ye, who have sound intellects, discern the teaching which is concealed beneath the (above) strange verses.

Benvenuto remarks that in truth these verses do come in very strangely here. And he adds: "And note here, Reader, that I, often laugh at many who say: 'Such a one understands Dante well, because he can understand the text,' and so on of every other author; but this is false, for to understand is to be able to read the inner meaning, and Dante himself here testifies to the fact; for he knew very well that the text would be very differently expounded by many."

Scartazzini believes that the verses in the above passage are called *strani*, because they are adapted to

* *Mirate la dottrina che s' asconde*, et seq. : compare *Purg.* viii, 19-21 :

"Aguzza qui, Lettor, ben gli occhi al vero,
Chè il velo è ora ben tanto sottile,
Certo, che il trapassar dentro è leggiero."

mythological fictions, and therefore are foreign (*estranei*) to the *Poema sacro*, as Dante styles the *Commedia* in *Par.* xxv, 1. No other commentator deals so fully and comprehensively with this difficult passage, and I cannot omit placing his remarks before my readers. He writes : " Now what is the teaching which is hidden beneath these verses ? Among many conflicting opinions we will state our own. In the City of Dis are punished the Heretics, that is, those who sinned against the true Faith. The sinner (Dante) wishes to enter in, that he may understand ' their end ' (*Ps.* lxxiii), in order that in the contemplation of their punishment he may arrive at contrition, and from contrition to conversion. Virgil seeks to persuade the guardian demons by fair words, that is, by philosophical arguments, to open the gates, but he is repulsed with contumely. The unbeliever has always arguments ready to oppose to arguments, and his favourite weapon is mockery. To the conversion of the unbeliever, which the contemplation of the punishment of unbelievers would bring about, there is opposed Evil Conscience, figured by the Furies, and Doubt, which has the power of rendering Man as insensible as stone, figured by Medusa. Evil Conscience will ever summon Doubt to its assistance (*Venga Medusa*). The imperial authority exhorts Man to turn his eyes towards the Evil Conscience (*Guarda le feroci Erine*), but at the same time to turn them away from petrifying doubt (*Volgiti indietro e tien lo viso chiuso*) ; moreover, in order that Man should not allow himself to become entangled in the meshes of Doubt and

Unbelief, the said imperial authority comes to his assistance actively (*egli stesso mi volse*), that is, with laws against heresy. Imperial authority however, is not sufficient of itself to conduct Man to contrition for sins against the true Faith. But here comes in the authority of the Church, which stretches out the helping hand. (*Tal ne s' offerse*), affording Divine Light (*il messo del cielo*) which overcomes the objections of Unbelief, the promptings of Evil Conscience, and the perils of Doubt, thus opening a way through all these difficulties. In the obstacles which Dante encounters here, we can see symbolized the difficulties that he himself encountered, when he first resolved to be converted from his aberrations from the true Faith. On the threshold of the City of Dis he is obliged to pause awhile, before being allowed to enter further in. And in fact his conversion was not the matter of an instant, but extended over several years."

Division III. The approach of the Angel is now described.

E già venìa su per le torbid' onde
 Un fracasso* d' un suon pien di spavento, 65
 Per cui tremavano ambo e due le sponde ;
 Non altrimenti fatto che d' un vento
 Impetuoso per gli avversi ardori,†
 Che fier la selva, e senza alcun rattento

* *Un fracasso*: compare *Acts* ii, 2: "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, etc."

† *Impetuoso, et seq.*: The wind is rendered impetuous, from having opposed to it a great current of air rarefied by heat. One of the causes of wind, is the disequilibrium of caloric in the atmosphere.

Li rami schianta, abbatte, e porta fuori.* 70
 Dinanzi polveroso va superbo,
 E fa fuggir le fiere e li pastori.

And now there came across the troubled waters the crash of a sound full of terror, at which both the shores trembled ; not other than a wind made impetuous by the opposing heats, that smites the forest, and without any restraint, cracks the boughs, beats them down and bears them away. In a cloud of dust (*lit.* dusty) it proudly sweeps onward, and makes the beasts and the shepherds flee.

Virgil had closed Dante's eyes to guard them against Doubt, symbolized by Medusa's head ; but when Divine Intelligence, represented by the Angel of God, draws near, he at once uncovers them.

Gli occhi mi sciolse, e disse :—" Or drizza il nerbo
 Del viso su per quella schiuma antica,
 Per indi ove quel fummo è più acerbo."— 75

He loosed my eyes, and said : " Now turn thy visual nerve over that ancient foam, yonder where that smoke is most pungent (*i.e.* most dense)."

* *porta fuori* : I have not followed Witte here in his reading *porta fiori*. The description is of a forest, and had Dante wished to allude to flowers, he would certainly have said more. *Fiori* appears to be quite unconnected with the sense. The four editions of Foligno, Jesi, Mantua and Naples all read *fuori*, as does also Benvenuto. Compare Tasso, *Ger. Lib.* canto xiii, st. 46 :

" Il suo caduto ferro intanto fuore.
 Portò del bosco impetuoso vento."

and Virg. *Georg.* ii, 440-441 :

" Ipsæ Caucasio steriles in vertice sylvæ,
 Quas animosi Euri assidue franguntque feruntque.

Dante now relates the terror caused among the guilty souls at the sight of the Angel.

Come le rane innanzi alla nimica
 Biscia per l' acqua si dileguan tutte,
 Fin che alla terra ciascuna s' abbica ;*

* *s' abbica* : Benvenuto explains this : " idest applicatur terræ et absconditur ibi." Boccaccio believes the word to be derived from *Bica*, a rick of corn, or a heap of grain, and that the frogs huddle themselves together one on the top of the other. Borghini (*Studi sulla Div. Com. di Galileo Galilei*, Vincenzo Borghini ed altri, pubbl. da Otto. Gigli, Firenze, 1855) confirms this, saying that anyone who knows the country round Mantua, will have seen the frogs pile themselves up in heaps, and will readily recognise the appropriateness of Dante's metaphor. The late Marchese Frasoni (*Studi Vari sulla Divina Commedia*, Firenze, 1887) speaking of Boccaccio's explanation, remarks : " Notwithstanding such great authority, I cannot believe that *Abbica* is formed from *Bica*, nor that it here signifies 'to gather themselves up into heaps,' as all have followed Boccaccio in explaining it." He goes on to say that it is not the case that when frogs are sitting on the bank beside water, and from fright throw themselves in, that they do heap themselves together. He adds : " If a man or a serpent approaches, we see them, one after the other, one here, and another there, take a header into the water, which gets turbid from the mud being stirred up. But as soon as the water has got clear again, we see the frogs lying immoveable, one at a distance from the other, at the exact place where each cast itself in. Besides the word *ciascuna* distinctly manifests the individual action of each frog, and excludes the idea of collectiveness." The Marchese Frasoni says that out of one hundred *codices* that he has examined, no less than eighty-one spell the word *abica* with one *b*; and only nineteen have *abbica* with two *b*'s. He says, therefore, that in this word we may easily discover a Dantesque Latinism derived from the verb *Abjicere*, and the idea would represent the frogs as casting themselves on the bottom of the water (*abjiciunt se aumi*). In Plinius Secundus, *Naturalis Historiæ*, secunda

Vid' io più di mille anime distrutte
 Fuggir così dinanzi ad un, che al passo 80
 Passava Stige colle piante asciutte.
 Dal volto removea quell' aer grasso,
 Menando la sinistra innanzi spesso ;
 E sol di quell' angoscia pareva lasso.

As frogs, before their foe the serpent, disperse through the water, until each is huddled up under the bank ; thus saw I more than a thousand (*i.e.* a vast multitude of) lost souls flee before One, who was passing over the Styx at the ferry with unwet feet. He waved that unctuous air from off his face, continually moving his left hand before him ; and only by that trouble did he seem to be wearied.

The Angel uses his left hand to remove the vapours from his face ; his right hand, as we infer from l. 89, being occupied in holding the light wand with which he strikes the gates.

The opinion accepted by most of the ancient and modern commentators sees in the mysterious personage before us an Angel of God. Benvenuto, however, holds that it is Mercury, the messenger of the heathen gods, who traverses the waters with his winged shoes, and opens the gate with his caduceus.

The late Duke of Sermoneta (*Dissertazione* della Dottrina che si asconde nell' Ottavo e Nono Canto* pars, lib. 21, cap. 13, the following passage occurs : " qui edere abjiciunt se humi," but in an edition of the same work by Silling, faithfully reproduced from the very ancient MS. in the Riccardiana Library at Florence *abjiciunt* is spelt *abiciunt*. In the Codex Amiatinus in the Laurentian Library at Florence *abjicit* is throughout spelt *abicit*.

* This is one of three essays in the Duke of Sermoneta's *Tre chiose...nella Div. Com. di Dante Allighieri*, etc. Firenze, 1876.

dell' Inferno), tries to prove that the *Messo del Cielo* is not sent *from* Heaven, but *by* Heaven out of *Limbo*; that he cannot be any celestial person, as he does not shine with radiant light as did the Angels in Purgatory; that Virgil only enjoins on Dante a respectful demeanour in his presence, and does not make him kneel down; that Angels could not become Ministers of Hell; and lastly that being one of the spirits sent out of Limbo, it must be Æneas. The Duke, in a letter of which I have a copy, written to the historian and Dantist, Count Carlo Troya, denies that either in the case of Dante being transported in his sleep across the Acheron, or in this instance of the Gates of Dis being opened, would the services of Angels have been allowed, because the "angeli non sono ministri d' Inferno." The late Dean Church, after reading these papers, wrote to me, Feb. 19, 1890: "I am afraid I quite disagree with him [the Duke of Sermoneta] about Book ix, and with his *a priori* view that angels cannot *appear* in the *Inferno*. He puts it, 'Che angeli non sono ministri d' Inferno'; which is true enough if it mean 'ministers of the *punishment* of Hell.' But the heavenly messenger, *del ciel messo*, in Book ix, comes not to punish, but to rescue, and prevent evil; which even in Hell, is not unworthy of an angel. The whole description is surely of a holy being (*parole sante*, v. 105), sent on an errand of help, against hateful adversaries with everything loathsome about them: and why should not an angel appear on such an errand? This seems to me the plain and obvious meaning of the whole passage. To bring in Æneas, a pagan, seems very forced."

Another strong argument against the theory that the *Messo del Ciel* can be Æneas, or any one of the inmates of *Limbo* has occurred to me. In canto viii, 125-130, Virgil is speaking to Dante about the principal Gateway of Hell (*men segreta porta*), over which Dante had seen written up the characters of death (*la scritta morta*), and he particularly tells Dante that, at that very instant, there has entered within that gate, and is descending without escort through the circles down the steep path, One by whom the city shall be laid open to them, (*e già di qua da lei discende l'erta, passando per li cerchi senza scorta, tal che per lui ne fia la terra aperta*). If the Being thus mentioned had been Æneas, he would have had, from *Limbo*, to cross the Acheron to return to the Gate of Hell, and then to recross it before descending the steep path. Gelli remarks that whoever was the Messenger, whether Mercury, according to Pietro di Dante and Benvenuto, or an Angel, as most commentators think, matters not in the least. Let it suffice that he was a Divine Messenger, which is shown by his passing over the Styx with dry feet, like Jesus Christ walking on the Sea of Galilee.

Dante now distinctly tells us that he is able to discern the Divine character of the new comer, which is further confirmed by Virgil.

Ben m' accors' io ch' egli era del ciel messo,* 85

* *del ciel messo*: compare the allusion to Solomon, *Purg.* xxx, 10-12:

"Ed un di loro, quasi da ciel messo,
Veni, sponsa, de Libano, cantando,
Gridò tre volte, e tutti gli altri appresso."

E volsimi al Maestro : ed ei fe' segno,
Ch' io stessi cheto, ed inchinassi * ad esso.

Full well did I perceive that he was a Messenger of Heaven, and I turned me to the Master : and he made me a sign to stand quiet, and bow down before him.

Dante is overcome with awe at the demeanour of the Angel, and Virgil also seems as unable to utter a word, as in *Purg.* xxix, 55-57 † at the approach of the Mystic Procession.

* *ei fe' segno, Ch' io . . . inchinassi ad esso*: compare *Purg.* ii, 28-30, where Virgil did not at first recognize the approaching Angel, but as soon as he did so,

“Gridò : ‘Fa, fa che le ginocchia cali ;
Ecco l' Angel di Dio : piega le mani :
Omai vedrai di sì fatti ufficiali.’”

It has been objected by those who deny that the *Messo del ciel* was an Angel, that in the above passage in the *Purgatorio* Virgil tells Dante that henceforward he would see such glorious ministers of God's will as this one ; thus implying that Dante has never seen one before ; but I venture to suggest that the sense will equally well bear the meaning that henceforward Dante is to see *nothing but* such ministers as these. After Dante had seen the Angel open the gates of Dis, he was brought into continual contact with demons, with monsters, and finally with Lucifer himself, but the approach of the Angel on the shore of Purgatory marked an epoch, from which there was to be no recurrence to the hideous personages of Hell. It is also possible that, in descending into Hell, the Angel was able to veil his radiance, which would have been out of place in that region of gloom ; for, in lines 101-103, Dante is able to detect the expression of his countenance.

† *Purg.* xxix, 55-57 :

“Io mi rivolsi d' ammirazion pieno
Al buon Virgilio, ed esso mi rispose
Con vista carca di stupor non meno.”

Ahi quanto mi pareo pien di disdegno !
 Venne alla porta, e con una verghetta
 L' aperse, che non ebbe alcun ritegno. 90

Ah! how full of disdain he appeared to me! He
 came to the gate, and with a light wand opened
 it, for (against him) it had no resistance.

In accents of lofty scorn the Angel reprimands the
 Demons for their presumptuous opposition, knowing,
 as they certainly did, that this exceptional journey
 of the Poets was undertaken in obedience to the Will
 of God.

—“ O cacciati del ciel, gente dispetta,”—*

Cominciò egli in su l' orribil soglia,

—“ Ond' esta oltracotanza † in voi s' alletta? ‡

Perchè ricalcitate a quella voglia,

A cui || non puote il fin mai esser mozzo, 95

E che più volte v' ha cresciuta doglia ?

“ O outcasts from Heaven, race despised,”
 began he (standing) upon the horrid thresh-
 old, “ Whence is this excess of insolence
 called forth in you ? Wherefore kick ye

* *dispetta* : “ contemptible,” from the Latin *despectus*.

† *oltracotanza* : In *Inf.* viii, 124, Virgil says of the Demons,
 “ Questa lor tracotanza non è nuova.” The Angel here uses a
 more forcible word.

‡ *s' alletta* : This word only occurs in this passage, and in
Inf. ii, 122. Blanc (*Voc. Dant.*) feels very positive that it is
 derived from the Latin *allectare* frequentative of *allicere*, to
 entice, allure, and that by a somewhat bold figure Dante puts
 it, “ Whence is this insolence called up in you ?” Many derive
 the word from *letto*, in the sense of “ to find a bed, to lodge.”
 Boccaccio explains it, “ Si chiama e si ritiene.”

|| *A cui*, etc. : compare *Rom.* ix, 19 : “ For who hath resisted
 his will ?”

against that Will, Whose end can never be hindered (*lit.* mutilated), and which (opposition) has many a time increased your pain ?

Carlyle remarks that the Angel avoids using the name of God in addressing the Demons ; and takes their Fates, and their loud barking Cerberus, in the verses that follow, as being the only terms fit for them.

Che giova nelle fata dar di cozzo ?
 Cerbero * vostro, se ben vi ricorda,
 Ne porta ancor pelato il mento e il gozzo."—

What boots it to butt against the Fates ?
 Your Cerberus, if you well remember, still
 bears for it (that opposition) his chin and
 throat flayed."

Although the term *le fata* is used, it has the double meaning here of, the Fates of Heathen Mythology, and also, the Decrees of God.

His uncongenial mission accomplished, the Angel tarries no longer on the loathsome spot. The Poets move on to the gates.

Poi si rivolse per la strada lorda, 100
 E non fe' motto a noi : ma fe' sembante
 D' uomo, cui altra cura stringa e morda,

* *Cerberus* : Hercules is said to have seized Cerberus, who wanted to oppose his entrance into Hell, and dragged him to the upper regions with a chain round his neck. In Virg. *Æn.* vi, 392-397, Charon relates this, mentioning Theseus and Pirithous at the same time :

"Nec vero Alciden me sum lætatus euntem
 Accepisse lacu, nec Thesea Pirithoumque :
 Dis quamquam geniti, atque invicti viribus essent.
 Tartareum ille manu custodem in vincla petivit,
 Ipsius a solio regis traxitque trementem ;
 Hi dominam Ditis thalamo deducere adorti."

Che quella di colui che gli è davante.

E noi movemmo i piedi in ver la terra,

Sicuri appresso le parole sante.

105

Then returned he along the miry way, and to us he uttered not a word: but bore the semblance of a man whom other concerns constrain and harrass (more) than those of the person who is before him. And we moved our feet towards the city, confident (of being admitted) after the holy words (*i.e.* spoken by the holy Angel).

Division IV. This Division marks one of the great periods in the whole Poem of the *Divina Commedia*. As in the *Purgatorio* we find the first nine cantos have dealt with the *Anti-Purgatorio*, the dominions of Cato, in which are chastised with lighter punishment those who delayed their repentance till death, so here in the *Inferno* the first nine cantos have dealt with the lesser sins of Incontinence, when it is not complicated by malice. As in *Purg.* ix, Dante describes his admittance within the Gate of Purgatory, so in *Inf.* ix, does he describe his entrance within the Gates of Dis, or Inner Hell. In general terms this Inner Hell may be said to be divided into the regions for the punishment of Violence, and those for the punishment of Fraud; but the regions of Fraud are in their turn, apart from all their minor sub-divisions, divided into two great portions, wherein are punished:

- (A) Ordinary Fraud, where no trust has been given, and

(B) Aggravated Fraud, where trust has been given,
and which therefore is Treachery.

The part in which Dante now finds himself does not really belong to any of these divisions and subdivisions. It would seem more to correspond to the region set apart for the punishment of those who lived without infamy and without praise, whom Dante saw just inside the Vestibule of Outer Hell. So here in the Vestibule of Inner Hell he finds the Arch-Heretics lying in fiery tombs. It is after he has left them, that he will really descend into Nether Hell.

Dentro v' entrammo senza alcuna guerra :

Ed io, ch' avea di riguardar disio

La condizion che tal fortezza serra,

Com' io fui dentro, l' occhio intorno invio ;

E veggio ad ogni man grande campagna 110

Piena di duolo e di tormento rio.

We entered into it (the city) without any opposition : and I, who had the wish to examine the condition (both of the sinners and their torments) which so (terrible) a fortress might enclose, as soon as I was inside, cast my eye round ; and on either hand I see a wide plain, full of anguish and evil torment.

On entering into the Gate of Purgatory, Dante's ears were entranced by hearing a *Te Deum* which reminded him of the soft cadences of an organ,*

* Compare *Purg.* ix, 139-145 :

“ Io mi rivolsi attento al primo tuono,

E, *Te Deum laudamus*, mi pareo

Udir in voce mista al dolce suono.

Tale imagine appunto mi rendea

and further on, his eyes were charmed by the sight of beautiful sculptures. Here, the first thing he sees are grim looking tombs of all kinds and shapes, which in their grotesque variety remind him of those he has seen in the cemeteries of Arles and Pola, but with the difference, that in the latter the inmates were in their sleep of death, but from these repulsive sepulchres there issue cries of woe.

Si come ad Arli,* ove Rodano stagna,

Ciò ch' io udiva, qual prender si suole

Quando a cantar con organi si stea :

Che or sì or no s' intendon le parole."

* *Arli*: The ancient cemetery of Arles, now partly demolished to make way for the Goods Station of the Lyons and Marseilles Railway, goes by the popular name of *Aliscamps* or *Eliscamps* (*Campi Elysi*). In it stands the Church of St. Trophimus. Benvenuto relates a legend, that, after a battle between Charlemagne and the Saracens, the King, unable among the masses of the fallen to distinguish the Christians (whom he wished to bury with sacred rites) from their foes, prayed to God that the power of distinction might be given to him, and immediately an inscription appeared on the forehead of every Christian soldier among the slain. Buti adds to this story that a vast number of sarcophagi, corresponding to the number of the dead Christians, appeared on the morning following the battle, of sizes suitable to the importance and grades among the dead. But Benvenuto believes the story to be a mere fable, and that the tombs were constructed because in every country it is the custom to bury the dead, and he has himself seen these cemeteries in many other places, though not in such great numbers. But, he adds, that may have happened because Arles is a very ancient city, and at one time a capital, as Benvenuto saw for himself in the time of Urban V, when Charles (IV) the Emperor came there, and had himself crowned King of Arles (*sicut vidi tempore Urbani quinti, quum Carolus modernus imperator accessit ad istam civitatem, et fecit se coronari regem Arela-*

Sì com' a Pola * presso del Quarnaro,
 Che Italia chiude e suoi termini bagna,
 Fanno i sepolcri tutto il loco varo : 115
 Così facevan quivi d' ogni parte,
 Salvo che il modo v' era più amaro ;
 Chè tra' gli avelli fiamme erano sparte,
 Per le quali eran sì del tutto accesi,
 Che ferro più non chiede verun' arte. 120

Even as at Arles, where the Rhone is stag-
 nant (*i. e.*, widens out into a lake), and as at
 Pola near to the (Gulf of) Quarnaro, which
 shuts in Italy and bathes its confines, the
 tombs make the whole place uneven : so did
 they here on every side, save that here the
 conditions were more bitter ; for within the

tensem juxta Rhodanum). Compare Ariosto, *Orl. Fur.* Canto
 xxxix, st. 72 :

“Della gran moltitudine ch' uccisa
 Fu da ogni parte in quest' ultima guerra,
 (Benchè la cosa non fu ugual divisa,
 Ch' assai più andâr dei Saracin sotterra
 Per man di Bradamante e di Marfisa),
 Se ne vede ancor segno in quella terra ;
 Che presso ad Arli, ove il Rodano stagna,
 Piena di sepolture è la campagna.”

* *Pola presso del Quarnaro* : Pola is a city situated on the
 Gulf of Quarnaro, on the Adriatic, on the confines of Italy.
 Benvenuto says that this Gulf is about forty miles in circum-
 ference, and is an exceedingly dangerous spot. He adds that
 near there are to be seen about 700 tombs of many and various
 forms. It is said that they formerly contained bodies brought
 from Sclavonia into Istria, to be buried on the sea shore.

† *Chè tra* : Gelli and others read *ch' entro*, but the meaning is
 the same, as the *Voc. della Crusca* and Blanc agree that *tra* can
 have the sense of *dentro*. Buti, however, interprets, “between
 one tomb and the other.”

tombs were scattered flames, whereby they were so heated throughout, that iron more (glowing) no handicraft requires.

Benvenuto says that this applies to any human craftsmen who make use of fire, whether to work glass, or iron, or gold.

Tutti gli lor coperchi * eran sospesi,
E fuor n' uscivan sì duri lamenti,
Che ben parean di miseri e d' offesi.

Ed io :—" Maestro, quai son quelle genti,
Che seppellite dentro da quell' arche
Si fan sentir con gli sospir dolenti ?"—

125

All their lids were lifted up, and from them (*i.e.* the tombs) there issued lamentations so piteous, that they seemed indeed to come from people suffering and tormented. And I: "Master, what people are these, who, interred within these coffers, make themselves heard with their sighs of agony?"

Dante is unable to see any of the sinners who are wailing inside the tombs. Virgil tells him who they are :

Ed egli a me :—" Qui son gli eresiarche . . .
Co' lor seguaci d' ogni setta, e molto
Più che non credi, son le tombe carche.†

* *Tutti gli lor coperchi*, etc. : In the next canto (x, 10-12) Virgil tells Dante that after the Day of Judgment the lids of the tombs will be closed down.

† *Più che non credi son le tombe carche*: compare *Inf.* x, 118-120, where Farinata tells Dante the names of the principal heretics among those that are suffering in the tomb with him.

He says :

" Qui con più di mille giaccio :
Qua dentro è lo secondo Federico,
E il Cardinale, e degli altri mi taccio."

Simile qui con simile è sepolto, 130
E i monumenti son più, e men caldi.—

And he to me : “ Here are the Arch-Heretics, with their followers, of every sect, and much more than thou thinkest are these graves crowded. Here is like entombed with like, and the monuments are more and less hot.”

Virgil means that the heat of the tombs is regulated in proportion to the offences of their inmates.

Benvenuto remarks that the Poets now enter a narrow way such as is commonly to be found in cities between the walls and the houses, to reach which path they take the unusual course of turning to their right hand.

E poi ch' alla man destra si fu volto,
Passammo tra i martiri e gli alti spaldi.

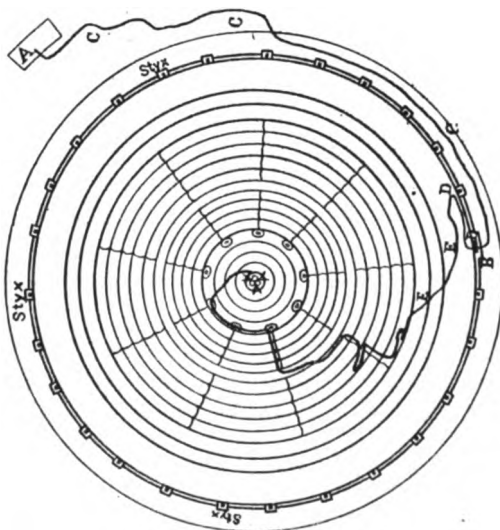
And after that he (Virgil) had turned to the right hand, we passed between the torments (*i. e.* the fiery tombs) and the lofty walls.

Monsignor Poletto (*Dizionario Dantesco*, Siena, 1885—1887, vol. ii, s. v. *Destro*) says that, in ascending the Mountain of Purgatory, the Poets invariably turn to the right, while in Hell they as regularly turn to the left, when they enter each cornice of the former, and each circle of the latter. This he thinks certainly arises from the fundamental idea that, on the Day of Judgment, the Elect will stand on the right, and the Doomed on the left. When, however, the Poets enter the City of Dis they turn to the right hand. Why is this? Monsignor Poletto thinks, with Andreoli, that, as they had to fetch a wide compass round the walls (*grande aggirata*) before disembark-

ing at the Gate of the City, when they did pass into it, they found that, in their circuit, they had traversed a much greater space than they had been doing in the other circles, and had consequently overshot the mark ; so that to get to the spot marked for their descent into the next circle, instead of turning as usual to the left, they were obliged to take ground to their right. See diagram, subjoined, of the Poets' itinerary, which is adapted from one in a beautiful work (*La Materia della Divina Commedia di Dante Allighieri dichiarata in VI tavole, Roma, 1872*) by the late Duke of Sermoneta.

END OF CANTO IX.

ITINERARY WITHIN THE CITY OF DIS.



A. Lofty tower (vii, 130).
 B. Gateway of the City of Dis.
 CCC. Deviation made by the Poets in Phlegyas's skiff.

DD. They turn to the right (ix, 132).
 EE. They turn back to the left before descending to the next circle (x, 133).
 In centre—Lucifer.

CANTO X.

THE SIXTH CIRCLE.

THE CITY OF DIS.

THE EPICUREAN HERETICS.

FARINATA DEGLI UBERTI.

CAVALCANTE DEI CAVALCANTI.

THE EMPEROR FREDERICK II.

The conclusion of the last Canto saw Dante and Virgil, having gained admittance into the City of Dis, passing between the city walls, and the fiery tombs wherein the Arch-Heretics are tormented. The present Canto deals more especially with the Epicureans, who maintained that the soul dies with the body.

Benvenuto divides the Canto into four parts.

In Division I, from v. 1 to v. 51, the shade of the great Ghibelline leader, Farinata degli Uberti, recognizing Dante as a Florentine by his Tuscan idiom, addresses him.

In Division II, from v. 52 to v. 72, the shade of Cavalcante dei Cavalcanti interrupts the conversation, to ask Dante if his son Guido, Dante's friend, is still alive.

In Division III, from v. 73 to v. 114, Farinata resumes his conversation with Dante, and predicts his exile from Florence.

In Division IV, from v. 115 to v. 136, Farinata,

having named two shades of great distinction who are in the same tomb with himself, disappears, and the Poets prepare to descend into the next Circle.

Division I. As though to give emphasis to what has been said before, the Canto opens by repeating, almost in the same words as those which concluded the last Canto, that the Poets took their way between the city walls and the sepulchres of the tormented.

Ora sen va per un secreto calle *
Tra il muro della terra e li martiri
Lo mio Maestro, ed io dopo le spalle.

Along a retired track between the city-wall and the torments (*i. e.* the fiery tombs) my master now wends his way, and I at his back (*lit.* after his shoulders).

Gelli draws attention to the art with which Dante now sounds Virgil as to whether he may be allowed to see some of these shades, who, Gelli asserts, Dante knew were often very learned men, and he probably felt an intense longing to converse with

* *calle*: Gelli thinks *calle* is here equivalent to *viottolo*, a retired, half hidden lane. He says "*Calle* in our [Tuscan] language signifies a road, large or small, and half hidden, which crosses the fields or woods, and which is more used by wild beasts than by men, and that they have certain nets which are set in these *calli* for the purpose of ensnaring wild beasts, which are called *callaiuole*." And from the path that the Poets took, winding among the tombs, Dante calls it *un secreto calle*, a retired track. Compare Virg. *Æn.* vi, 442-444 :

"Hic, quos durus amor crudeli tabe peredit,
Secreti celant calles, et myrtea circum
Sylva tegit."

them. Gelli thinks that what Dante says is in substance as follows: "You, Virgil, have brought me here to see all these things, to show them to me just as you like. Now these tombs are all open, the demons are all scattered to hide from the Angel, can we not just look in?" Benvenuto, also struck with the persuasiveness of Dante's question to Virgil, writes: *Mirabiliter captat benivolentiam ejus.*

—"O virtù somma, che per gli empi giri
 Mi volvi,"—cominciai,—"com' a te piace 5
 Parlami, e satisfammi a' miei desiri.
 La gente, che per li sepolcri giace,
 Potrebbe veder? già son levati
 Tutti i coperchi, e nessun guardia face."—

"O thou (filled with) the most exalted virtue, who art making me to go round through these circles of wickedness," I began, "speak to me as it pleases thee, and satisfy my desires. These people that lie in these tombs, might they be seen? The covers are all raised, and no one keeps guard."

Others read *che mi volvi come a te piace*, and understand the passage to mean that Dante feels he is being turned to the right or to the left, just as is pleasing to Virgil.

In replying to Dante, Virgil first remarks that, although the tombstones are now upraised, they will cease to be so after the Day of Judgment, in which statement some think he is pointing the moral that heretics, when once they have formed their judgment as to their heretical opinions, are so sealed up in their obstinacy, that they go on through life with the fire of vain-glory and self-love burning within them.

Ed egli a me :—" Tutti saran serrati, 10
 Quando di Josaffat* qui toreranno
 Coi corpi che lassù hanno lasciati.

And he to me : " They will all be closed up
 when (their inmates) return here from (the
 Valley of) Jehosaphat with the bodies they
 have left up there.

As the Poets walk forward towards the right, Virgil tells Dante that in this particular part of the cemetery are confined Epicurus and his followers. Benvenuto thinks that the chief heretic of each sect had one great tomb devoted to him and all his followers, and that, when Farinata shows himself, he emerges from the sepulchre of Epicurus (*ideo fingit istum Farinatam nunc surgere de arca magna Epicuri, etc.*), but I do not feel that Dante could have intended to convey that idea. At the end of this canto he asks the haughty Farinata to tell him what spirits were actually being tormented in the same tomb with him-

* *Josaffat* : It was believed that the place of the Last Judgment would be the Valley of Jehosaphat. See *Joel* iii, 2 : " I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehosaphat." And verse 12 : " Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehosaphat : for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about." Tasso (*Ger. Lib.* Canto xi, st. x) thus describes the Valley of Jehosaphat.

" Così cantando, il popolo devoto
 Con larghi giri si dispiega e stende,
 E drizza all' Oliveto il lento moto,
 Monte che dall' olive il nome prende,
 Monte per sacra fama al mondo noto,
 Ch' oriental contra le mura ascende ;
 E sol da quelle il parte e ne 'l discosta
 La cupa Giosafà, che in mezzo è posta."

he questioned Ciaccio (vi, 79 *et seq.*), and learned from him that he might see them lower down in Hell. Virgil promptly reads what is in his mind.*

Dante assures Virgil that he has no desire to conceal his thoughts from him, but that Virgil had himself reproved him, before they reached the Acheron, for being importunate.†

Ed io :—" Buon Duca, non tegno riposto
A te mio cor, se non per dicer poco ;

20

* We again find Virgil reading Dante's thoughts in canto xvi, 121-123 :

" Ei disse a me : ' Tosto verrà di sopra
Ciò ch' io attendo, e che il tuo pensier sogna
Tosto convien ch' al tuo viso si scopra.' "

and xxiii, 25 *et seq.* :

" E quei : ' S' io fossi d' impiombato vetro,
L' imagine di fuor tua non trarrei
Più tosto a me, che quella d' entro impetro.
Pur mo venian li tuoi pensier tra i miei
Con simile atto e con simile faccia,
Sì che d' intrambi un sol consiglio fei.' "

So also Beatrice, in *Par.* xvii, 7-12 :

" Per che mia donna : ' Manda fuor la vampa
Del tuo disio,' mi disse, ' sì ch' ella esca
Segnata bene della interna stampa ;
Non perchè nostra conoscenza cresca
Per tuo parlare, ma perchè t' ausi
A dir la sete, sì che l' uom ti mesca.' "

† Compare *Inf.* iii, 76 *et seq.* :

" Ed egli a me : ' Le cose ti fien conte,
Quando noi fermerem li nostri passi
Sulla trista riviera d' Acheronte.'
Allor con gli occhi vergognosi e bassi,
Temendo no 'l mio dir gli fusse grave,
Infino al fiume di parlar mi trassi.' "

E tu m' hai non pur mo a ciò disposto.*"—

And I: "Good Leader, I only keep my heart concealed from thee, so as to speak few words; and not only now hast thou disposed me thereto."

We now learn how Virgil's promises to Dante find a speedy fulfilment. Not only does Dante see, and have an opportunity of conversing with, one of the spirits among the Epicurean heretics, but finds also that this spirit is one of the great Florentines whom he is so desirous of meeting. It may be assumed that the shade of Farinata degli Uberti, hearing Dante make use of the Florentine forms *tegno*, *dicer*, *pur mo*, recognizes that a fellow countryman is passing by, and rises up to address him.

—"O Tosco,† che per la città del foco

* *Non pur mo*, Benvenuto remarks that Virgil was at all times an admirer and an inculcator of brevity both in speaking and writing, and was ever a teacher of the value of time. Compare *Georg.* III, 66 :

"Optima quæque dies miseris mortalibus ævi
Prima fugit."

and *Georg.* iii, 284 :

"Sed fugit interea, fugit irreparabile tempus."

and *Æn.* x. 467-8 :

"breve et irreparabile tempus

Omnibus est vitæ."

See also Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 335 :

"Quicquid præcipies, esto brevis."

† *O Tosco*: In canto xxiii, the hypocrites recognize Dante as a Tuscan either by his pronunciation or his phraseology; see v. 76-77 :

"Ed un, che intese la parola Tosca,
Diretro a noi gridò, etc."

Vivo ten vai, così parlando onesto,*

Piacciati di restare in questo loco.

La tua loquela† ti fa manifesto

25

Di quella nobil patria natio,

Alla qual forse io fui troppo molesto.”

“ O Tuscan, who alive art going through the city of fire, speaking with so much modesty, may it please thee to tarry on this spot. Thy speech clearly reveals thee (to be) a native of that noble fatherland (Florence), on which it may be that I wrought too much harm.”

These words are spoken by the shade of Farinata degli Uberti, the most renowned of the Ghibelline

and at v. 91, one of the Frati Godenti thus addresses him :

“ O Tosco, ch' al collegio

Degl' ipocriti tristi se' venuto, etc.”

and at v. 94, Dante replies :

“ Io fui nato e cresciuto

Sopra il bel fiume d' Arno alla gran villa.”

In canto xxxiii, 10-12, Count Ugolino della Gherardesca, a Pisan, at once distinguishes him as a Florentine :

“ 'I non so chi tu sei, nè per che modo

Venuto se' quaggiù; ma Fiorentino

Mi sembri veramente, quand' io t' odo.”

* *onesto* : There is a considerable preponderance of authority for taking the word to mean *modestly* or *reverently* in this passage. Lombardi says : “avverbio per *onestamente*, ma qui per *modestamente*.” Bianchi and Fraticelli “per *reverentemente*, come pur dianzi Dante faceva parlando a Virgilio.” Gelli comments : “parlando così onesto, e con tanta modestia.” Scartazzini : “avverbio = *onestamente*, val qui *modestamente*.” Boccaccio interprets it “*reverentemente*.”

† *loquela* : compare *St. Matt.* xxvi, 73 : “ And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them ; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.” Gelli thinks *loquela* means the pronunciation.

leaders of Florence. He was a knight, and a member of the noble family of the Uberti. He was held in the greatest favour by the Emperor Frederick II (who at that time was living in Tuscany, and was the great support of the Ghibelline party), and after the Emperor's death, through the continued good graces of his natural son Manfred, Farinata was able to keep the Guelphs in great subjection. In *Inf.* vi, 81, Dante speaks of him as one of those noble Florentines, *che a ben far poser gli ingegni*. In the year 1250, with the greater number of the leading Ghibellines, he was banished from Florence, but they betook themselves to Siena, where Farinata's great influence was the means of bringing the Sienese to join his forces. Having also obtained considerable reinforcements from Manfred, he deluded the Florentine Guelphs into the belief that if they marched against Siena, one of its gates should be given up to them. The Florentines fell into the snare, and commenced their march, but on the 4th September, 1260, on the river Arbia, they were attacked by the Ghibelline army, which was in ambush among the hills. The Guelphs were defeated, and with such terrible slaughter, that they abandoned Florence, and among those who fled were the ancestors of Dante. The celebrated *Caroccio* or war chariot, on which was carried the Bell called the *Martinella*, was captured by the victors. Ampère, in his *Viaggio Dantesco*, says that in the splendid Cathedral of Siena may still be seen the crucifix which served as a standard to the Sienese, as well as the mast that was fixed to the *Caroccio*, and from which the banner of the city of Florence was sus-

pended. The leading part that Farinata had taken in the war against Florence was never forgotten or forgiven. When the Guelphs recovered the ascendancy, the palaces of the Uberti were razed to the ground, and when Arnolfo di Cambio was employed as the architect to build the Palazzo Vecchio della Signoria, tradition says that he was required so to build it, that no part of it should stand on ground that had been desecrated by having been the site of the Uberti palaces; and hence the irregular shape of the building as it now stands. The tradition is probably not historically true, but it serves to show the fierce vindictive hate that was felt by the Guelphs against him who had been their chief victorious adversary.

Boccaccio says that Farinata followed the opinions of Epicurus, namely that the soul died with the body; and that the happiness of men consisted in corporal delights. Farinata was no glutton, but had a decided liking for refined and delicate dishes.

Observe that Farinata only says *forse*, as to his having been hurtful to Florence, which is equivalent to saying that he does not himself admit that he was so, but is only quoting the fact that his adversaries make that accusation.

Gelli, who was a hosier of Florence, relates of himself, that it was his great love for Dante that stimulated him into learning all that he afterwards knew, and which rendered him worthy of receiving from Cosimo de' Medici the appointment of permanent lecturer on Dante at Florence. Gelli writes at great length upon the purity and beauty of the Tuscan language and pro-

nunciation, and more especially as it is spoken in Florence. After speaking of other languages, and how they can never be so learnt by foreigners as for their speech to deceive the native ear, he adds that he will only adduce the example "*della nostra fiorentina.*" He says the Florentines have always tried to avoid the vulgar O of Pistoja, the sharp E of Arezzo, the blunt Z of Pisa, and some displeasing accents of Siena, and that they have an ear of such refined sensitiveness, that it is offended by the smallest accent or expression that grates against it. The Florentines have moreover such a beautiful choice of words, and so soft a pronunciation, that all who hear it resolve to learn and adopt it, but unless they are either born or bred in Florence they totally fail in attaining it. "And they who moved by envy, have attempted to find fault with our way of speaking, have never been able really to find anything to censure except certain words, accents, or peculiarities of speech, which in our language are only used by plebeians and ignorant people; forgetting that when one wishes to learn a language, one must do so from those who know it and talk it best, as for instance from the nobles and the principal persons of the country; for they, being brought up to talk of affairs of State, Government, or Sciences, naturally learn to speak well; whereas the plebeians, who, having no other idea than that of earning their bread, if even they are clever enough to do that, have a speech so debased and vile that it must not be taken into account." Gelli concludes by saying that when one considers the extreme minuteness of sounds, accents, pronunciation, and idiom, cherished by

Florentines, it is not to be wondered at that Messer Farinata degli Uberti, a most distinguished knight and citizen of Florence, on hearing Dante speak, knew by his first words that he was a Tuscan, and by his pronunciation a Florentine.

Dante is startled at hearing Farinata's voice, but Virgil somewhat sharply tells him to collect himself:

Subitamente questo suono uscio
 D' una dell' arche :* però m' accostai,
 Temendo, un poco più al duca mio. 30
 Ed ei mi disse :—" Volgiti : che fai ?
 Vedi là Farinata che s' è dritto : †
 Dalla cintura ‡ in su tutto il vedrai."—

Suddenly this sound issued from one of the tombs, whereupon in fear I drew a little closer to my Leader. And he to me said :

* *arche* : from *arca*, a coffer, a sarcophagus ; *not* from *arco*, a vault, an arch.

† *s' è dritto* : The *Voc. della Crusca* explains this to be the same as *rizzato in piedi*, standing up on his feet. Cavalcanti (l. 52) only *surse*, rose up, but the indomitable Farinata *si drizzò*. There is no word in the Italian language that *by itself* means to stand, unless in combination with other words. *Stare* has not that meaning, except when followed by such words as *ritto*, or *in piedi*. For instance, in *Purg.* iv, 104, Dante speaks of *persone che si stavano all' ombra*. That means that they were abiding in the shade in some position or other. Had Dante wished to describe them as standing, he would have said, *si stavano in piedi*, or *si stavano ritti*.

‡ *Dalla cintura in su* : compare Tasso (*Ger. Liber.* canto xi, st. 27) :

" Dalla cintola in su sorge il Soldano."

Many editions of Dante read *cintola* instead of *cintura*, in this passage.

“Turn thee about: What art thou doing?
See there Farinata, who has risen up erect:
from the girdle upwards thou wilt see him
wholly.”

Virgil wishes to remind Dante that he is in the presence of the identical person whom he was so desirous of seeing, and that he must dismiss his fears.

Dante thus admonished, faces the shade of the great Ghibelline, whose haughty demeanour is proof against the torments he is suffering.

Virgil leads his companion forward.

I' avea già il mio viso nel suo fitto ;
Ed ei s' ergea col petto e colla fronte, 35
Come avesse lo inferno in gran dispetto :*
E l' animose man del duca e pronte

* *dispetto* : altered from *dispetto*, “contempt,” for the sake of the rhyme. Benvenuto, commenting on *dispetto*, says that Farinata was haughty as well as his descendants, and he quotes from *Par.* xvi, 109-110, to show that pride will have a fall :

“ O quali io vidi quei che son disfatti
Per lor superbia ! ”

And in *Purg.* x, 121, *et seq.*, Dante deprecates pride in such insignificant creatures as mortals :

“ O superbi Cristian, miseri lassi,
Che, della vista della mente infermi,
Fidanza avete ne' ritrosi passi ;
Non v' accorgete voi, che noi siam vermi
Nati a formar l' angelica farfalla,
Che vola alla giustizia senza schermi ?
Di che l' animo vostro in alto galla,
Poi siete quasi entomata¹ in difetto,
Sì come vermo, in cui formazion falla ? ”

¹ Witte's 4to reads *antomata*, his 8vo *entomata*.

Mi pinser tra le sepolture a lui,

Dicendo :—"Le parole tue sien conte."—*

Already (the instant I heard Virgil's reproof) had I fixed my eyes on his (*i. e.* on Farinata's); and he had upreared himself with breast and brow, as though he held Hell in lofty scorn. And the fearless and ready hands of my Leader pushed me (forward) between the sepulchres towards him, saying : "Let thy words be precise."

Danielli explains that Virgil wishes Dante to be very clear and precise in his language in conversing with a heretic, in order that there might be no ambiguity as to his meaning.

Farinata prefaces his conversation with Dante by haughtily asking him for the name of his family, to find out whether Dante is of noble descent, and as such, worthy of his notice.

Com' io al piè della sua tomba fui,

40

Guardommi un poco, e poi quasi sdegnoso

Mi dimandò :—"Chi fur li maggior tui?"—

As soon as I was at the foot of his tomb, he eyed me for a while, and then almost contemptuously asked me : "Who were thine ancestors ?"

Farinata's manner of addressing Dante is of a piece with the way in which, later on in this canto, he

* *conte* : from *cognitus*, such as can be known at once, intelligible, clear, precise. Some have tried to derive the word from *contate* with the meaning : "Let thy words be counted, *i. e.* be brief." Compare *Inf.* xvii, 39-40, where Virgil tells Dante to lose no time :

"Mi disse, 'or va, e vedi la lor mena.

Li tuoi ragionamenti sian là corti.'"

utterly ignores the presence of Cavalcante dei Cavalcanti, the father of his own daughter's husband, and the scornful silence in which he passes over the names of the other occupants of his place of torment after naming an emperor and a cardinal.

Virgil had begged Dante to give precise answers to any questions that might be put to him, and Dante now bears this in mind, but Farinata is not pleased at the intelligence.

Io, ch' era d' ubbidir desideroso,
 Non gliel celai, ma tutti gliel' apersi :
 Ond' ei levò le ciglia un poco in soso ; 45
 Poi disse :—" Fieramente furo avversi
 A me ed a' miei primi ed a mia parte,
 Sì che per due fiata gli dispersi."—

I, who was desirous to obey (Virgil) did not conceal it (my descent) from him, but detailed (*lit.* opened) them all to him : on which he raised his eye-brows a little. Then he said : " They were fiercely hostile to me, and to my forefathers, and to my party, for which reason I twice scattered them (*i.e.*, drove them into exile)."

Benvenuto and Scartazzini differ as to the signification of Farinata's action in turning up his eye-brows. Scartazzini thinks that he did so, as seeking to recollect something, but I venture to suggest that that movement would be accompanied by a slight raising of the head simultaneously. I prefer Benvenuto's interpretation, namely that Farinata expressed an increase of displeasure on finding that Dante's ancestors were Guelphs, and Benvenuto thinks that Dante, in telling Farinata that the Alli-

ghieri descended from the Elisei, did so for the express purpose of provoking Farinata into a retort. So much has been written about Dante's political opinions, some maintaining him to have been a Guelph throughout his life, though displeased with his own party, others contending that he was always a Ghibelline at heart, that Benvenuto's clear account of what was thought on the subject in 1375 may not be out of place here. "And hereby note that Dante was a Guelph, and of Guelph parents, although many strive to assert, and do affirm the contrary, either from ignorance, or from enmity. And without going into other arguments, I will confine myself to saying that Dante never could have occupied the high position that he did at Florence, and have been in the year 1300 one among the chiefs and rulers, if he had been a Ghibelline noble, seeing that for so long a period before that time, the Ghibellines had been driven forth, and banished from Florence. Yet our author, though originally a Guelph, became after his banishment a Ghibelline, and a very strong Ghibelline (*imo Ghibelinissimus*), as Boccaccio de Certaldo distinctly asserts in his little book concerning Dante's life and habits; and I must relate an amusing story about a certain Ghibelline partisan, who hearing this, said: 'In truth, this man could never have written so great a work, unless he had become a Ghibelline.'"

The Guelphs, among whom were Dante's ancestors, were expelled from Florence the first time in 1248, when the Ghibellines, re-inforced by 1600 knights sent to their assistance by Frederick II, drove the Guelphs out of the city. The second occasion was

after the Battle of Montaperti, in 1260, when Dante's ancestor Bellincione was one of the fugitive Guelphs. Benvenuto here mentions having seen a letter written by Frederick II, in which the Emperor exults at the expulsion of the Guelphs from Florence by his friends the Ghibellines ; and he adds that Frederick took certain captured Guelph nobles with him into Apulia, where after he had had their eyes put out, he caused them to be drowned in the sea. In consequence of this, when Frederick, on a subsequent occasion, came to hold a Court at Florence, he avoided entering into the city, having heard from his astrologers that he would die at Florence ; but he *did* eventually die at another Florence, which is in Apulia (*quod moriturus erat Florentiæ ; sed mortuus est tandem in alia Florentia, quæ est in Apulia*). Benvenuto here refers to Castel Fiorentino in Apulia.

Dante is much irritated at the taunt of Farinata about his ancestors, and retorts with some asperity.

—“S' ei fur cacciati, ei tornar d' ogni parte,”—

Rispos' io lui,—“l' una e l' altra fiata ; 50

Ma i vostri non appreser ben quell' arte.”—

“If they were driven forth, they returned from every side,” I answered him, “both on the first and on the second occasion, but your people have not learnt that art aright.”

Dante means, “My party managed to get back to Florence, but yours have by no means learnt the art of returning from banishment.” The Guelphs returned to Florence the first time in January, 1251, after having defeated the Ghibellines in October, 1250. Their second return was after the defeat and

death of Manfred at the battle of Benevento in 1266, which battle was said to have been the death blow to the Ghibelline cause in Italy; and in fact from that day (says Boccaccio) by no strength or artifice did the party ever again get a footing in Florence. Gino Capponi (*Storia della Repubblica di Firenze*, vol. I, pp. 46, 47, Firenze, 1875) relates how after the Battle of Montaperti the exultation of Cardinal Ottaviano degli Ubaldini (who is alluded to in verse 120 of this canto) was checked by a speech of the Cardinal Bianco, a Guelph and an astrologer, who prophesied the ultimate return and supremacy of the Guelphs in Florence. The old chronicler Ricordano Malespini (*Istoria Fiorentina*, cap. clxix) relates the story as follows: "Il cardinale Attaviano degli Ubaldini ne fece grande festa; onde ciò veggendo il Cardinale Bianco, il quale era grande istrolago, e negromante, disse: 'Se 'l Cardinale Atta viano sapesse il frutto di questa guerra de' Fiorentini, egli non farebbe questa allegrezza.' Il Collegio de' Cardinali il pregarono che dovesse dichiarare più aperto, ed egli non lo volea dire, perchè 'l parlare del futuro non gli pareva lecito alla sua dignità; ma gli Cardinali feciono col Papa, che gli comandò sotto pena d'ubbidienza, che egli il dicesse, per lo quale comandamento disse in breve sermone: 'I vinti vittoriosamente vinceranno, e in eterno non perderanno.'"

Division II. Another spirit in the same tomb with Farinata now interposes in the conversation. This is Cavalcante dei Cavalcanti, a Guelph knight, and father of the poet Guido Cavalcanti, Dante's intimate

friend. Guido was moreover married to Farinata's daughter. Benvenuto relates of Cavalcante dei Cavalcanti that he was an ardent follower of Epicurus, himself firmly believing and persuading others that the soul dies simultaneously with the body ; and that he always had in his mouth the saying of Solomon : " For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts ; even one thing befalleth them : as the one dieth, so dieth the other ; yea, they have all one breath ; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast." (*Eccles.* iii. 19). Benvenuto calls attention to the way Dante has put two Epicureans, the one a Ghibelline, the other a Guelph, together in the same place of punishment. One of them is deserving of fame for his own deeds, the other by the merits of his son.

We are to suppose that Cavalcante, ignorant of passing events, as we shall read in verse 100 *et seq.*, has been listening in rapt attention to Dante's relation of the state of parties in Florence, and has heard with delight that the Guelphs have recovered the supremacy and returned to Florence. He has probably also heard with gratified malice Dante's retort upon Farinata that the Ghibellines have not been successful in their attempts to return. He raises himself up in the most unobtrusive way, barely showing his face.

Allor surse alla vista* scoperchiata
 Un ombra lungo questa infino al mento :
 Credo che s' era in ginocchie levata.

* *vista* : Some translate this " discovered to the view," making *scoperchiata* agree with *ombra*, but I follow Scartazzini in making it agree with *vista*, and giving to *vista* the meaning that Dante

Then there rose up to the uncovered mouth
(of the tomb) a shade by the side of this one
(Farinata) down to the chin : I think it had
raised itself up upon its knees.

Landino says that Dante describes Cavalcanti as showing less of himself than Farinata, because in life he was much less prominent as an Epicurean than Farinata, and kept his opinions much more in the background. Lombardi holds the same opinion, but Biagioli contends that the difference in their attitudes is merely due to the difference of character between the two men ; the one of a high-souled, almost heroic nature, the other timorous, unobtrusive, and of a poor spirit, as we shall presently see by his tears. Farinata answers to the Greek *μεγαλόψυχος*, Cavalcanti to *μικρόψυχος*.

D' intorno mi guardò, come talento*

55

gives to it in *Purg.* x, 67-69, where it is put to express a window, *loggia*, or balcony :

“ D' incontra effigiata ad una vista

D' un gran palazzo Micol ammirava,
Sì come donna dispettosa e trista.”

Cary translates *vista* as meaning the mouth of the tomb in verses 52-53 :

“ Then, peering forth from the unclosed jaw,
Rose from his side a shade, high as the chin.”

* *talento* is also used to signify “ wish,” “ will,” in *Inf.* ii, 81 :

“ Più non t' è uopo aprirmi il tuo talento.”

In *Inf.* v, 38-39 in the sense of appetite :

“ I peccator carnali,

Che la ragion sommettono al talento.”

See Littré (*Dictionnaire de la Langue Francaise*, Paris, 1872, s. v. *talent*) for the etymology of the word, and how it came to

Avesse di veder s' altri era meco ;
 Ma poi che il suspicar* fu tutto spento,
 Piangendo disse :—" Se per questo ciecot
 Carcere vai per altezza d' ingegno,
 Mio figlio ov' è, e perchè non è teco ?"— 60

He looked around me, as though he had a wish to see if some one else (Guido Cavalcanti) were with me, but after that this hope was quite extinguished, weeping he said :

signify desire. He compares with it the Walloon word *dalant*, "désir, besoin."

In Jamieson's *Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language*, Paisley, 1882, vol. iv, I find : " *Talent*. Desire, inclination, purpose. See *Barbour's Bruce*, iii, 694, MS. :

' Quhen thai war boune, to saile, thai went,

The wynd was wele to thair *talent* :

Thai raysyt saile, and furth thai far.'

O. Fr. *talent*, Hisp. Ital. *talento*, Barbarous Latin, *talentum*, animi decretum, voluntas, . . . hence French *entalanté*, qui aliquid agere cupit. To this is opposed *mallalent*, mala voluntas."

Compare Chaucer, *The Romaunt of the Rose*, l. 274 :

—" Her malice, and her *male talent*,"

and l. 329-330 :

" As she that had it all to-rent

For anger and for *male talent*."

The word occurs in Walter Scott, *Fair Maid of Perth*, chap. vii : " The Bailie also interposed. ' Neighbour Henry,' said he, ' we came here to consult, and not to quarrel. As one of the fathers of the fair city, I command thee to forego all evil will and *mal-talent* you may have against Master Pottinger Dwining.' "

* *suspicar* : from the Latin *suspicari*, which has three significations, (1) to suspect ; (2) to think ; (3) to hope. The third meaning is adopted here.

† *cieco carcere* : compare *Purg.* xxii, 103 :

" Nel primo cinghio del carcere cieco."

“If by loftiness of genius thou art going
through this dark prison, Where is my Son?
and why is he not with thee?”

Benvenuto remarks that it seemed extremely probable to Cavalcante that his son Guido would be in Dante's company, for they were the two shining lights of Florence, friends, philosophers, both poets, and (when Guido's father last saw them), both Guelphs.

Of Guido Cavalcanti, Poletto writes (*s. v.*) that he was the first and best loved of all Dante's friends, called in the *Vita Nuova* § 3: “quegli, cui io chiamo primo de' miei amici.” And in § 24 where he speaks of Vanna, a lady beloved by Guido, “una gentil donna, la quale era di famosa beltade, e fu già molto donna di questo mio primo amico.” In the *Vulg. Eloq.*, I, 13, Dante speaks in praise both of Guido's intimate knowledge of the perfect vulgar tongue, and also of his *Cansoni*. He is said to have died at the end of the year 1300. G. Villani (*Cronica di Giovanni Villani*, Firenze, 1823, VIII, 42,) describes him as being “of a philosophical and elegant mind, if he had not been too touchy and irritable.”

The next three lines are of somewhat doubtful import, and have been variously interpreted.

Ed io a lui:—“Da me stesso non vegno :
Colui, che attende là, per qui mi mena,
Forse cui Guido vostro ebbe a disdegno.”—

And I to him: “Of mine own self I come
not: He, who awaits me yonder (Virgil) is
leading me through this place, whom per-
chance your Guido had in disdain.”

Benvenuto, forgetting Homer, thinks Dante means

Y

that not he, but Virgil, was the inventor of a descent into Hell. He also thinks that Guido was more of a philosopher than a poet, and speaks of him as having written only one love sonnet, which Bianchi says is not the case, as Guido was a lyric poet of great distinction. Both Benvenuto and Landino understand this last line to signify that Guido had so given himself up to philosophy that he took no pleasure in reading the Poets.

Poletto (s. v. Guido Cavalcanti) points out that in the *Vita Nuova*, § xxxi, Dante states that it was entirely through Guido's persuasions that he abandoned the idea of writing the *Vita Nuova* in Latin, but adopted the vulgar tongue; and observes that some people explain Dante's remark about Guido despising Virgil, by Guido's indifference or antipathy to Latin. Poletto further quotes the opinion of another Dantist, Prof. Francesco d'Ovidio, who holds that the feeling of religious piety, which so largely inspired the Virgilian poems, was far less appreciated by Guido than by Dante. He says that the *forse* is not the expression of a doubt, but is said from motives of delicacy towards the father by Dante, a believer, to draw a veil as far as possible over the scepticism of the son, which in Dante's eyes was a sin. Of Professor Francesco d'Ovidio, Mgr. Poletto writes: "The illustrious writer says with much wisdom that the circumstance of Virgil having been looked upon merely as a poet more than anything else, turned the commentary of the *Divina Commedia* out of the right path for several centuries. The reason of that is that the commentators had so imperfect a knowledge of Dante's Minor

Works; for, from the *Monarchia* alone, they could have ascertained the large amount of faith that Dante reposes in Virgil as a philosopher, as a politician, as a historian; as one, in short, whose authority was to be received with the greatest respect, even in the most minute and intricate points of law. Let those come forward who do not confine their attention to the *Divina Commedia* alone, but look upon it as being, what it is, a ray of light reflected from the other works of Dante; and a full and true commentary will be the result."

We may therefore consider that Dante is endeavouring in his answer to spare, as far as possible, the father's feelings, while he puts it, as delicately as he can, that Guido as a sceptic had not much respect for Virgil, whose writings were full of religious belief. In his answer, however, he uses the past tense *ebbe*. The father fastens on the expression.

Le sue parole e il modo della pena
 M'avevan di costui già letto* il nome : 65
 Però fu la risposta così piena.
 Di subito drizzato gridò :—" Come

* *letto* is used here in the sense of indicating "revealed."
 Compare *Purg.* xxvi, 85-86 :

" per noi si legge,
 Quando partiamci, il nome di colei, etc."

and *Par.* xxvi, 16-18 :

" Lo ben, che fa contenta questa corte,
 Alfa ed O è di quanta scrittura
 Mi legge Amore, o lievemente o forte."

Cavalcante's words about his son Guido, and the fact of seeing him undergoing the punishment of an Epicurean, had sufficiently disclosed his identity to Dante.

Dicesti : egli ebbe ? non viv' egli ancora ?
Non fiere gli occhi suoi lo dolce lome ?"—

His words and the manner of his punishment had already revealed his name to me : therefore was my answer so full. Instantly rising erect he cried : " How saidst thou : He had ? Is he not still alive ? Does not the sweet light (of the world) strike upon his eyes ? "

Dante is much puzzled at these questions. He was under the impression that the spirits in Hell were not deprived of knowledge of what was passing in the world, and it is only later on, when Farinata, in his turn, questions him about contemporary events, that any doubt enters into his mind, and then he obtains an explanation from Farinata. But when Cavalcante first asks him whether his son is still alive, astonishment makes him hesitate, and the poor father sinks back in despair, fearing that his son also is dead.*

Quando s' accorse d' alcuna dimora 70
Ch' io faceva dinanzi alla risposta,
Supin ricadde, e più non parve fuora.

When he became aware of some delay which I made before (giving) the answer, he fell again upon his back, and forth appeared no more.

Scartazzini thinks that when Cavalcante fell back he lost all consciousness, because when Dante has

* Cavalcante's feelings about his son were probably like those which Dives in Hell expressed to Abraham. See *St. Luke*, xvi, 27-28 : " Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him [Lazarus] to my father's house : For I have five brethren ; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment."

learned from Farinata that he and his companions are totally ignorant of the present, and gives Farinata a special message for Cavalcante about his son, the father does not seem to hear or to give heed to Dante's remarks.

Division III. Farinata has taken no more notice of Cavalcante's interruption than if such a person had never existed. One reads of people suddenly losing consciousness in the middle of a sentence which they are speaking, and on recovering their senses, perhaps hours afterwards, they will complete the sentence as though no interval of time had elapsed between. So it is with Farinata, who, just before Cavalcante interposed in the conversation, had received from Dante a smart retort to the effect that the Ghibellines had never known the way to return from banishment. No consideration of the intervening episode has checked his train of thought.

Ma quell' altro magnanimo, a cui posta*

Restato m' era, non mutò aspetto,

Nè mosse collo, nè piegò sua costa.

75

—“E se,”—continuando al primo detto,

—“S' egli han quell' arte,”—disse,—“male appresa,

Ciò mi tormenta più che questo letto.

But that other great soul (Farinata) at whose
command I had remained, changed not his

* *posta*: “*stare a posta di alcuno*,” “to be under the command of any one,” Baret's Dictionary. Another out of many meanings that seems to be suitable to this passage is “request, instance, solicitation.” That is also Benvenuto's interpretation. Scartazzini explains it, “*alla cui disposizione*.” Others, “*A beneplacito del quale*.”

countenance, nor turned his head (*lit.* neck) nor bent his side (towards Cavalcante). "And if," he said, continuing his first discourse, "if they (the Ghibellines) have learned amiss that art (of returning from banishment) that (fact) torments me more than this couch.

Landino observes that to an indomitable mind like that of Farinata neither torments, nor even death, would be so repugnant as to have to yield to an enemy. To this Gelli adds that Farinata valued his honour and that of his party before everything else.

And now Farinata, in retaliation for Dante's taunt that the Ghibellines had not learnt the art of returning from banishment, predicts to him that, within the short space of four years, he will have a similar experience.

Ma non cinquanta volte fia raccesa
 La faccia* della donna che qui regge, 80
 Che tu saprai quanto quell' arte pesa.

* *La faccia della donna che qui regge*: Macaulay (*Criticisms on Principal Italian Writers' Works*, vol. vii, page 615) remarks: "There is another peculiarity in the poem of Dante, which, I think, deserves notice. Ancient Mythology has hardly ever been successfully interwoven with modern poetry. Dante alone, among the poets of later times, has been . . . neither an allegorist nor an imitator; and, consequently, he alone has introduced the ancient fictions with effect. His Minos, his Charon, his Pluto [Plutus] are absolutely terrific. Nothing can be more beautiful or original than the use which he has made of the river of Lethe. He has never assigned to his mythological characters any functions inconsistent with the creed of the Catholic Church. He has related nothing concerning them which a good Christian of that age might not

But the face of the Lady who reigns here shall not be fifty times rekindled, ere thou shalt know how heavy is that art (*i.e.* of returning when banished).

The Lady is Proserpine, Diana, or the Moon, and the rekindling of her face refers to fifty lunar months from the date of the vision (April 1300) which would be about the time of April, 1304. When the *Bianchi*, among whom was Dante, were attempting to get things smoothed over to enable them to return from exile to Florence, Dante disagreed with their plans, and is thought then to have separated from them.* They made the attempt in July, but it failed.

believe possible. On this account, there is nothing in these passages that appears puerile or pedantic. On the contrary, this singular use of classical names suggests to the mind a vague and awful idea of some mysterious revelation, anterior to all recorded history, of which the dispersed fragments might have been retained amidst the impostures and superstitions of later religions. Indeed, the mythology of the Divine Comedy is of the elder and more colossal mould. It breathes the spirit of Homer and Æschylus, not of Ovid and Claudian."

* Cacciaguida (*Par.* xvii, 61 *et seq.*) foretells to Dante the disgust he will feel for his fellow-exiles, and that he will end by standing aloof from them :

“ E quel che più ti graverà le spalle
 Sarà la compagnia malvagia e scempia,
 Con la qual tu cadrai in questa valle,
 Che tutta ingrata, tutta matta ed empia
 Si farà contro a te ; ma poco appresso
 Ella, non tu, n' avrà rossa la tempia.
 Di sua bestialitate il suo processo
 Farà la prova, sì che a te fia bello
 L' averti fatta parte per te stesso.”

Farinata now changes the subject, and asks Dante a question regarding his own family, against whom greater animosity was being shown by the victorious and vindictive Guelphs than against any other Ghibelline family, except perhaps the Lamberti; and to obtain from Dante this information, he adjures him by all his hopes of safe return to the world.

E se tu mai nel dolce mondo regge,*

Dimmi, perchè quel popolo è sì empio

Incontro a' miei in ciascuna sua legge?—

And so mayest thou once again return to the sweet world, (I adjure thee) tell me, why that people (of Florence) is so relentless against my kindred in all its decrees?

Buti considers that Farinata's reason for asking this question is, that at that time, the Uberti were

* *regge*: Of this word Blanc (*Voc. Dant. s. v. reddire*) says: "As regards the passage in *Inf. x*, 82, where several interpreters wish to give to the word *reggere* the sense of *durare* "to endure," we think that *regge* is only an ancient form of the conjunctive mood of *redire*, as a poet might put *vegge* from *vedere*; the sense then would be, 'if ever thou returnest.'" Nannucci (*Manuale*, ed. 2^{da} vol. ii, page 315, note 7), quotes the following passage from Brunetto Latini: "E quella disse: E se tu non riedi? E que' rispuose: E s' io non reggio, e' ti sodisfarà il successore mio." Nannucci observes that some commentators object that the derivation of *reggere* from *redire* is too far-fetched, but he does not think so; for if from *cudo* can be formed *caggio*; from *vedo*, *veggio*; from *fiedo*, *feggio*; from *siedo*, *seggio*, he does not see why from *riedo* should not be formed *reggio*. Nannucci quotes as an example the following: "reggendo (*ritornando*) in prima recò in Occidente le reliquie di San Stefano martire, etc." (*Popular Translation into Italian of the Stories of P. Orosius*, by Bono Giamboni, lib. i, cap. i).

always specially excluded from any amnesty to the exiles decreed by the State, and always specially included in any decree wherein more rigorous measures were resolved upon. The Florentines (Buti thinks) probably inserted as the preamble to any new law: "To the honour of the State, and for the destruction of the Uberti and their followers." Villani confirms this statement.

Dante tells Farinata, in answer, that the vindictive Florentines have never forgiven him, the Ghibelline general, who at the Battle of Montaperti, humiliated their army to the very dust. The *Martinella* (the war-bell) and the standard of Florence were dragged along the ground, and 4,000 Florentines slain.

Ond' io lui :—" Lo strazio e il grande scempio, 85
 Che fece l' Arbia colorata in rosso,
 Tale orazion fa far nel nostro tempio."—

Whereupon I to him: "The rout and the great carnage, which (at Montaperti) dyed the Arbia with crimson, cause orisons of that kind to be made in our place of worship (*lit.* temple)."

There is here a touch of irony. Farinata recognized Dante as belonging to a Guelph family, but did not know that the Guelphs were themselves split up into two factions, and that Dante with the Whites had been banished by the Blacks. Dante bitterly alludes to the Church of San Giovanni (now the Baptistery) being used for political meetings. *Orazion! tempio!* The Churches consecrated to God were debased by the vindictive enactments made in them by the ruling powers at Florence against their adversaries.

Bianchi says that the hatred against the Uberti was so unmeasured, that before the Altar of God the Florentine people dared to offer up the following prayer: "That it may please Thee to root out and disperse the family of the Uberti!"

Farinata shows emotion and disappointment at this revelation. We read below that he shakes his head, some explain in anger, but I agree with Scartazzini that in Italy that gesture denotes a mixture of astonishment and sorrow. He has much to say in his own defence.

Poi ch' ebbe sospirando il capo scosso,
 —"A ciò non fui io sol,"—disse,—"nè certo
 Senza cagion con gli altri sarei mosso : 90
 Ma fu' io sol colà, dove sofferto
 Fu per ciascun di toglier via Fiorenza,
 Colui che la difesi a viso aperto."—

When with a sigh he had shaken his head, "I was not the only one in that," he said, "and certainly should not have stirred with the others without cause (*i.e.* I wished to return to my home from exile). But I was the only one at that place (Empoli), who, when it had been agreed by every one to sweep away Florence, defended her in the face of all (*ist.* with open face)."

After the Battle of Montaperti there was a Dict held by the chiefs of the Ghibellines at Empoli, a small town about twenty miles from Florence, and by a nearly unanimous vote it was resolved to utterly destroy Florence as the principal stronghold of the Guelphs. Thereupon, Farinata degli Uberti started to his feet, and drawing his sword, exclaimed

that he would with it defend Florence, and would lay down a thousand lives, if he had them, against those who should attempt to carry out so unrighteous a decision, and thereupon in great anger quitted the Diet. On which so great a fear entered into the minds of all present, lest the indignation of a man so publicly esteemed might greatly damage the cause of the Ghibellines, that there was no further thought of their resolution, but they all gave their minds to allay his displeasure.

Dante now puts a question in his turn to Farinata, interesting, both from the subject on which he asks information, and from his mode of address. We will consider this last point first. Readers may have remarked in this Canto that, for the first time, Dante uses the second person plural *voi* in separately addressing both Farinata and Cavalcante. There is only one other individual in the whole of the *Inferno* to whom he does so, and that is his old teacher Brunetto Latini, in canto xv. Without counting those spirits whom he meets in pairs, or in groups, we find he addresses seventeen single shades. Of these, the three we have mentioned are addressed with *voi*, and the fourteen others with *tu*.* That

* The fourteen shades in Hell addressed with *tu* are :

1. Francesca da Rimini. Canto V, 73--142.
2. Ciacco. Canto VI, 38--93.
3. Filippo Argenti. . . . Canto VIII, 31--63.
4. Caccianimico. Canto XVIII, 40--66.
5. Alessio Interminei. . . Canto XVIII, 115--126.
6. Nicholas III. Canto XIX, 31--120.
7. Guidode Montefeltro. Canto XXVII.
8. Pier da Medicina. . . . Canto XXVIII, 64--90.

he intends to show great respect by this mode of address to Farinata, Cavalcante, and Ser Brunetto, is made evident by the episode of his conversation with the good Pope Adrian V, in *Purg.* xix,* where we find that at first, not knowing to whom he was speaking, he began using *tu*, but on hearing he had been Pope, he changed to *voi*. He also specially uses *voi* in speaking to his great-great-grandfather

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| 9. Mosca. | Canto XXVIII, 103—111. |
| 10. Griffolino. | Canto XXX, 34. |
| 11. Maestro Adamo. | Canto XXX, 49—129. |
| 12. Bocca degli Abati. | Canto XXXII, 85—111. |
| 13. Count Ugolino. | Canto XXXII, 133—139. |
| 14. Fra Alberigo. | Canto XXXIII, 115—141. |

For one of these, Francesca, of the great family of Da Polenta, among whom Dante found the last resting place during his life of weary exile, he evidently felt much affection, and uses *tu* as a term of endearment, but he also uses the expression to Bocca degli Abati, the base betrayer of the Florentine arms at the Battle of Montaperti, and for whom, of all the spirits in Hell, he seems to have felt the most loathing contempt.

* See *Purg.* xix, 94, *et seq.* Dante begins by saying :

“ ‘Chi fosti, e perchè volti avete i dossi
 Al su, mi di’, e se vuoi ch’ io t’ impetri
 Cosa di là ond’ io vivendo mossi.’
 Ed egli a me : ‘ Perchè i nostri diretri
 Rivolga il cielo a sè, saprai : ma prima,
 Scias quod ego fui successor Petri.’ ”

On hearing this Dante kneels down, but is reproved.

“ Io m’ era inginocchiato, e volea dire ;
 Ma com’ io cominciai, ed ei s’ accorse,
 Solo ascoltando, del mio riverire :
 Qual cagion’ disse, ‘ in giù così ti torse ?’
 Ed io a lui : ‘ Per vostra dignitate
 Mia coscienza dritto mi rimorse.’ ”

Cacciaguida, in *Par.* canto xvi.* It is probable that Dante would have addressed Guido da Montefeltro, the great Ghibelline leader, with *voi*, but when he first spoke to him he did not know who he was, and the shade never gave him another opportunity, but darted off at the conclusion of his narrative in grievous torment, *dolorando*.

And now to the other point. Dante has noticed that while Ciaccio was able to predict the issue of the factions at Florence, and Farinata could foretell Dante's own exile, yet Cavalcante is ignorant that his son is still alive, and Farinata had just questioned him about present matters at Florence. Dante is puzzled, and asks Farinata the reason, adjuring him by his hopes of a cessation of the inveterate hatred and persecution of his family.

--"Deh, se riposi mai vostra semenza,"—
 Prega' io lui,—"solvetemi quel nodo, 95
 Che qui ha involupata mia sentenza.
 E' par che voi veggiate, se ben odo,
 Dinanzi quel che il tempo seco adduce,
 E nel presente tenete altro modo."—

"Ah! so may your seed find repose (and return to Florence)" I entreated him, "loose for me that knot (*i. e.* doubt) which has here

* In *Par.* xvi, 10-12, and 16-18:

"Dal *Voi*, che prima Roma sofferie,
 In che la sua famiglia men persevra,
 Ricominciaron le parole mie."

"Io cominciai: ' *Voi* siete il padre mio,
Voi mi date a parlar tutta baldezza,
Voi mi levate sì, ch' io son più ch' io.'"

confused my judgment. It seems that you (in Hell), if I rightly hear, see beforehand that which time brings with it, and as regards the present have another mode (*i. e.* you are ignorant of it)."

The answer that Farinata makes to Dante is very remarkable. It is generally considered to imply that the first words of it (*Noi veggiam*) apply to *all* the lost spirits in Hell, but I have more than once noticed passages that seem inconsistent with this view. In canto vi, Ciaccio not only predicts the future in lines 64—72, but in lines 73—75 he adds: *Giusti son due, ma non vi sono intesi, superbia, invidia ed avarizia sono, etc.*, which is a direct allusion to the present as well as to the future. Again in this canto, the question that Farinata has put to Dante about the persecution of his kindred, *dimmi, perchè quel popolo è sè empio incontro a' miei*, in lines 82—84, would almost seem to show *some* knowledge of what was passing at Florence, though possibly this might be explained by his inferring the present hostility of the Florentines from Dante having told him that they had never been able to return from exile. Poletto (*Dizionario Dantesco* s. v. Cavalcanti [Cavalcante]) expresses his conviction that by *noi* is not to be understood all the lost in Hell, but only the Epicureans in this Circle *che l'anima col corpo morta fanno* (v. 15), and he thinks that, for the sin of denying the immortality of the soul, they have to undergo this special punishment. He says that Dante always shows a marvellous correspondence between the sin and its punishment,*

* In *Inf.* xx, 37-39, the soothsayer Amphiaraus is represented

and as the soothsayers, from wishing to peer into futurity are condemned to look behind them, why should not they who have denied the immortality of the soul, besides undergoing the penalty of the eternal fire, have the additional humiliation, that so long as time lasts they will have to admit this immortality by being permitted to see into the future? In the world these Epicureans lived all for the present, and ignorantly despised the future, in Hell they are condemned to behold the future only, and to remain ignorant of the present.

—“Noi veggiam, come quei ch' ha mala luce, 100
 Le cose,”—disse,—“che ne son lontano ;
 Cotanto ancor ne splende il sommo Duce :
 Quando s' appressano, o son, tutto è vano
 Nostro intelletto ; e s' altri nol ci apporta,
 Nulla sapem di vostro stato umano. 105

“We view, like one who has imperfect sight,
 the things,” he said, that are remote from us
(i.e. the past and the future); thus much

with his head facing behind him, because he presumptuously dared to look too forward.

“Mira, che ha fatto petto delle spalle :
 Perchè volle veder troppo davante,
 Diretro guarda, e fa retroso calle.”

And all the other soothsayers are thus punished. So, also, in *Inf. xix, 71, 72*, Pope Nicholas III tells Dante that, whereas in the world he had been successful in empouching wealth, he has by way of corresponding punishment in Hell got himself into the pouch, by which he means the hot oven in which he is fixed feet uppermost.

“Cupido sì, per avanzar gli orsatti,
 Che su l' avere, e qui me misi in borsa.”

Light does the Supreme Ruler still bestow upon us: "When they draw near or are present our intellect is wholly at fault; and if others bring it not to us we have no knowledge of your human state.

By the words *cotanto ancor* Farinata means that the knowledge he and his companions are vouchsafed, is only until the Judgment Day; after that, all will be to them a sealed book.

Però comprender puoi, che tutta morta
Fia nostra conoscenza da quel punto
Che del futuro fia chiusa la porta."—*

Therefore thou canst understand, that our knowledge will become wholly dead from that point, when the portal of Futurity shall be closed."

Gelli says that Dante, having received from Farinata the above courteous explanation, which has made clear to him what he found it so hard to understand, suddenly becomes conscious of his own recent seeming discourtesy towards Cavalcante dei Cavalcanti in not at once satisfying his question about his

* *quel punto che del futuro fia chiusa la porta*: compare Petrarch (*Trionfo della Divinità*) 61-69:

"O mente vaga, al fin sempre digiuna!
A che tanti pensieri? un ora sgombra
Quel che in molt'anni appena si raguna.
Quel che l'anima nostra preme e' ngombra,
Dianzi, adesso, ier, diman, mattino e sera,
Tutti in un punto passeran com' ombra.
Non avrà loco *fu, sarà, nè era,*
Ma è solo, in presente, e *ora e oggi,*
E sola eternità raccolta e' ntera."

son. He entreats Farinata to convey a message from him to make amends. Let us hope that Farinata so far overcame his contempt for Cavalcante as to comply.

Allor, come di mia colpa compunto,
 Dissi :—"Or* direte dunque à quel caduto 110
 Che il suo nato è co' vivi ancor congiunto.
 E s' io fui innanzi alla risposta muto,
 Fat' ei saper che il fei, perchè pensava
 Già nell' error che m' avete soluto."—

Then, as though conscience-smitten for my fault, I said: "I wish then you would say to that one fallen (back into the tomb) that his son is still joined to the living. And if just now I was mute in (*i.e.* abstained from) answering, let him know that it was because I was still thinking in the error which you have solved for me."

Division IV. By way of bringing this long conversation to an end, Dante pictures Virgil as interrupting it, and giving him the signal for passing on further.

▲ E già il Maestro mio mi richiamava : 115
 Perch' io pregai lo spirito più avaccio
 Che mi dicesse chi con lui si stava.

And already my Master was recalling me :

* *Or* : There are many passages in the *Divina Commedia* where the English "now" seems a very unsatisfactory rendering of the sense of *ora*. In the *Vocabolario della Lingua Italiana già compilato dagli Accademici della Crusca corretto ed accresciuto dall' Abate Giuseppe Manuzzi*, Firenze, 1838, I find one meaning of *ora* out of many: "Sometimes it expresses desire, in the sense of the Latin *utinam*."

wherefore more hurriedly I begged the spirit
to tell me who was with him.

Farinata answers him at once, and true to his
haughty character, mentions an Emperor and a Car-
dinal, while passing over all the other inmates of the
tomb as unworthy of notice.

Dissemi :—" Qui con più di mille giaccio :
Qua dentro è lo secondo Federico,*
E il Cardinale, e degli altri mi taccio."— 120

He said to me : " With more than a thousand
I lie here : herein is the Second Frederick,
and the Cardinal, and of the others I am
silent."

By *il Cardinale*, Benvenuto says that Dante means
Cardinal Ottaviano degli Ubaldini, who was illustrious
in the time of King Manfred and Charles I, a saga-
cious and bold man, hostile to the Papal Court, and
a great protector of the Ghibellines. He was called

* *lo secondo Federico* : Frederick II, the famous grandson of
Frederick Barbarossa, reigned as Emperor of Germany from
1220 to 1250. He was also King of Naples and Sicily, in which
countries he held one of the most brilliant courts of the Middle
Ages. Giov. Villani, *Cronica*, lib. vi, cap. 1, thus mentions him :
" This Frederick reigned thirty years as Emperor, and was a man
of great mark and great worth, learned in letters and of natural
ability, universal in all things ; he knew the Latin language, the
Italian, the German, French, Greek and Arabic ; was copiously
endowed with all virtues, liberal and courteous in giving, valiant
and skilled in arms, and was much feared. And he was disso-
lute and voluptuous in many ways, and had many concubines
and mamelukes, after the Saracenic fashion ; and was addicted
to all sensual delights, and led an Epicurean life, taking no
account of any other ; and this was one principal reason why
he was an enemy to the clergy and the Holy Church."

the Cardinal, Gelli explains, because he had the greatest power and influence in the Papal Court. Pietro di Dante assigns the true reason for his being punished here, saying, that in life he was often heard to say that he knew not if he had a soul or not, but that he well knew, if he had, that he had lost it many times over on account of his excessive love for the Ghibelline party.

Farinata now disappears, and Dante proceeds on his way.

Indi s' ascose : ed io in ver l' antico
Poeta volsi i passi, ripensando
A quel parlar che mi pareo nimico.

He then hid himself (*i. e.* sank down) : and I turned my steps towards the Poet of Antiquity (Virgil), pondering over that saying which seemed hostile to me.

The evil impending over Dante was his exile, predicted to him by Farinata in lines 79-81.

Virgil at once perceives Dante's preoccupation and depression of spirits, and enquires the cause.

Egli si mosse ; e poi così andando,
Mi disse :—"Perchè sei tu sì smarrito?"— 125
Ed io li satisfeci al suo dimando.

He moved on ; and then (as we were) thus going, he said to me : "Why art thou so bewildered?" And I satisfied him in his inquiry.

The words in which Virgil goes on to counsel Dante may be taken in two distinct ways. I will first give the one that I follow. Virgil tells Dante to store up in his memory what Farinata has predicted of his

coming misfortunes, and that, when he is in the presence of Beatrice, he will be told by her what they will be. But meanwhile as he has come down to Hell to learn salutary lessons from the penalties of the wicked, he must give his attention to the spectacle before his eyes, and not dwell too long on the other matter for the present. It is here that Virgil raises his finger, to accompany the word with the gesture.

The other interpretation is the one more generally adopted, namely, that Virgil, after telling Dante to remember what had been said against him, says: "And now listen to this, *ora attendi qui*," and he points with his finger up to Heaven, adding that, when Dante should be on his journey through Paradise, he would learn from Divine Wisdom all that was before him.

—"La mente tua conservi quel ch' udito
Hai contra te,"—mi comandò quel Saggio,

—"Ed ora attendi qui:"—e drizzò il dito.

—"Quando sarai dinanzi al dolce raggio

130

Di quella, il cui bell' occhio tutto vede,
Da lei saprai di tua vita il viaggio."—

"Let thy memory preserve what thou hast heard against thee," that Sage commanded me, "and meanwhile give thine attention (to what is) here (before thee):" and he raised his finger. "When thou shalt be in presence of the sweet radiance of her (Beatrice, *i. e.* Sacred Theology) whose lovely eye seeth all, from her shalt thou learn the journey of thy life."

Benvenuto observes that Dante hardly seems to be quite accurate here, seeing that it was not from

Beatrice, but from his own forefather Cacciaguida that he received the explanation of what was causing him so much doubt and anxiety. But if the whole canto (*Par.* xvii) be read, it will be seen that Cacciaguida utters his prediction in answer to a request from Dante to do so, and which request Dante has made to him by the express command of Beatrice herself.*

And now the canto is concluded by a description of the departure of the Poets from what might almost be called the Street of the Tombs, which they had entered when, as we read at the end of canto ix, they turned to the right. They now strike across the circle to their left, to reach the edge of the precipitous descent to the Circles below.

Appresso volse a man sinistra il piede :

Lasciammo il muro, e gimmo in ver lo mezzo

Per un sentier ch' ad una valle fiede, 135

Che infin lassù facea spiacer suo lezzo.

Thereupon he turned his foot to the left hand : we quitted the wall, and went towards the centre (of the city) by a path that strikes down into a valley, which (valley) made its stench unpleasant, even up there.

Scartazzini here remarks that most commentators take *lassù* to mean the high precipice above Lower

* *Par.* xvii, 7-12 :

“ Per che mia donna : ‘ Manda fuor la vampa
Del tuo disio, ’ mi disse, ‘ sì ch’ ella esca
Segnata bene della interna stampa ;
Non perchè nostra conoscenza cresca
Per tuo parlare, ma perchè t’ ausi
A dir la sete, sì che l’ uom ti mesca.”

Hell, on which the Poets were standing. But he thinks rather that *lassù* refers to the world above, as the same word does in verse 12 of this canto, *coi corpi che lassù hanno lasciati*. He quotes in comparison, *Rev. xiv. 11* : "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." *

* Why should not Dante be referring both to the world above Hell, and also to the high precipice? Many passages have two and even three meanings.

END OF CANTO X.

CANTO XI.

THE SIXTH CIRCLE.
TOMB OF ANASTASIUS.
DESCRIPTION OF THE DIVISIONS OF
THE INFERNAL CITY.

In this canto Virgil gives Dante a detailed explanation of those parts of Hell, inside the City of Dis, which have still to be visited.

Benvenuto divides the canto into three parts.

In the First Division, from v. 1 to v. 15, while taking shelter behind a tomb from the foul stench that rises from nether Hell, Dante asks Virgil to give him some instruction, which the latter promises to do.

In the Second Division, from v. 16 to v. 66, Virgil makes Dante clearly to understand the principles on which the Circles below are disposed and arranged.

In the Third Division, from v. 67 to v. 115, Virgil further explains why the Impure; the Gluttonous; the Misers and Prodigals; the Wrathful and Sullen; are not punished in the City of Dis; and also in what way Usury offends God.

Division I. Although during their walk among the tombs the Poets were inside the walls of the City of Dis, they cannot really be said to have entered the city proper until the time (mentioned in canto x, 134-5), when they quitted the track that ran under the walls,

and turning to their left, struck right across the Circle, which, be it remembered, was the Sixth. They now appear before us, having reached the edge of a smaller concentric ring, which borders the circular abyss down which they are about to descend into the Seventh Circle. Here the odour is so revolting that they are obliged to stop.

In su l' estremità d' un alta ripa,*
 Che facevan gran pietre rotte in cerchio,
 Venimmo sopra più crudele stipa : †
 E quivi, per l' orribile soperchio
 Del puzzo, che il profondo abisso gitta, 5
 Ci raccostammo ‡ dietro ad un coperchio
 D' un grande avello, || ov' io vidi una scritta

* *ripa* : Boccaccio and Gelli both say that *ripa* only means a fall of rocks or of earth from one place down to another, and so sheer and abrupt, that one cannot walk upon it, or only with the greatest difficulty.

† *stipa* : Various meanings are given to this word. I take that given by Benvenuto and adopted by Scartazzini.

Benvenuto says : " Note that *stipa* is sometimes *verbum literale*, and is the same as *claudit* ; sometimes it is a word in the dialect of Bologna and has the same signification as [the Latin] *sit* ; sometimes it is a noun, and has various meanings ; sometimes it is a coop or cage for punishment and death, so the souls here are in a prison much more grievous than any of those above ; therefore by *stipa* understand " prison," and " punishment." Many commentators take it in the sense of a mass of things packed or crowded together, from *stivare*, to pack the hold of a vessel, and thus understand the word to be used here to express the vast multitudes that were crowded together in the descending circles of Lower Hell.

‡ *ci raccostammo* : The ordinary meaning of this word is to draw near, but Blanc says that in this particular passage it has the signification of taking shelter.

|| *diets' ad un coperchio d' un grande avello* : We must re-

Che diceva : *Anastasio* papa guardo,*
Lo qual trasse Fotin della via dritta.

Upon the extreme edge of a lofty precipice, which huge shattered rocks formed into a circle, we came above a still more cruel prison. And here, by reason of the horrible excess of stench, which the deep abyss throws up, we took shelter behind the lid of a great monument, whereon I saw a writing which said : " I keep Pope Anastasius, whom Photinus drew from the right way."

Benvenuto discusses the evil odours connected with

member that all the lids of the tombs were raised, and standing upright, and the tomb was a large one, *grande avello*, such as would contain a vast number of Arians, Sabellians, etc. In the *Dittamondo*, lib. iv. cap. xiv, Fazio degli Uberti writes :

" Fui in Colonia
 Dove son gli tre maghi in ricchi avelli."

* *Anastasio papa* : Blanc (*Saggio di una Interpretazione Filologica della Divina Commedia, Versione Italiana* di Ocioni, Trieste, 1865) says that the person here referred to is Pope Anastasius II, though some commentators have tried to prove that Dante was confusing the Pope with the Emperor of that name. This Pope's heresy was that of having thrown doubts on the validity of the damnation of a bishop, Acacius, excommunicated in A.D. 484, by Pope Felix III, and having communicated with Photinus, a deacon of Thessalonica, who was not only on terms of friendship with Acacius, but was also himself guilty of the heresy of believing that the Holy Ghost did not proceed from the Father, and that the Father was greater than the Son.

Gelli thinks that, while the names of ordinary heretics are unrecorded, heresy in a Pope is so heinous a crime as to necessitate his name being held up to perpetual notoriety. Heresy in a Pope can never remain unconcealed.

the various torments in the circles and subdivisions below, with realistic minuteness ; each, he says, would give forth its own especial stench, and that is why Virgil, in the lines that follow, wishes to explain that their present delay and subsequent slow progress is for the purpose of habituating themselves to the general bad smell of the whole abyss, before encountering the individual stench of each Circle in its turn. And Benvenuto adds that the course pursued is a wise one ; nature abhors sudden changes, for we may see by experience that anyone venturing on the sea for the first time is at once upset and provoked to nausea ; but after a while he gets inured to it, and has a keener appetite than before.

—“ Lo nostro scender conviene esser tardo, 10
 Sì che s' ausi un poco prima il senso
 Al tristo fiato, e poi non fia riguardo.”—

“ Our descent must needs be slow, so that sense may first get somewhat accustomed to the sickening blast, and then will there not be (any need for) caution.”

Dante, wishing to give his readers a detailed plan of the regions below, represents himself as asking Virgil to tell him anything that he ought to know before entering them, and Virgil answers that he was just on the point of doing so.

Così il Maestro ; ed io :—“ Alcun compenso,”—
 Dissi lui,—“ trova, che il tempo* non passi
 Perduto ;”—ed egli :—“ Vedi che a ciò penso. 15
 Thus the Master ; and I said to him : “ Find

* *che il tempo non passi perduto* : compare *Purg.* iii, 78 :
 “ Chè perder tempo a chi più sa più spiace.”

some set off (against this delay), that the time pass not idle (*lit.* lost);" and he: "Look! I am thinking of that (very thing)!"

Benvenuto observes that the following explanation is most useful and necessary, for without it the conception of the different parts of the City of Dis would have been very confused.

Division II is very long, and contains full details of Lower Hell.

Dante first gives the three main divisions, namely, the Seventh, the Eighth, and the Ninth Circles.

Figliuol mio, dentro da cotesti sassi,"—
 Cominciò poi a dir,—"son tre cerchietti*
 Di grado in grado, come quei che lassi.
 Tutti son pien di spirti maledetti:
 Ma perchè poi ti basti pur la vista, 20
 Intendi come, e perchè son costretti.

My son, within (the circumference of) these rocks," he then began to say, "are three lesser circles (descending) from grade to

* *cerchietti*: I have translated this, "lesser circles." I do not like any attempt to give the force in English of Italian diminutives by such an English word as "circlet," which surely does not express what Dante means by *cerchietto*. These *cerchietti* were vast spaces in the heart of the Earth, extending (according to the computations of such eminent geometricians as Manetti, Landino, Giambullari, and Galileo) to hundreds of miles, but only called by the diminutive form to show that they were of less circumference in each successive grade, than the still more vast spaces above. The word "circlets" might deceive the reader into thinking that the subdivisions of the circles (*gironi* and *bolge*) were being referred to.

grade, like those that thou art leaving (*i.e.* the first six). They are all full of spirits accursed: but in order that later on the sight (of them) may suffice thee, understand how and why they (the spirits below) are confined.

Some think that *costretti* refers to the Circles, and means, why one set of circles is narrowed inside another set of circles.

Virgil then tells Dante that there is one broad two-fold classification to be applied to the sins punished in Lower Hell, namely, (1) Sins of Violence, and (2) Sins of Fraud.

D' ogni malizia,* ch' odio in cielo acquista,
Ingiuria† è il fine, ed ogni fin cotale
O con forza o con frode altrui contrista.

* *malizia*: Poletto (*Dis. Dant.* s. v.) says that the moral signification of *malizia* is vice, wickedness. Compare *Convito* iv, 1: "Ma perocchè ciascuna cosa per sè è da amare e nulla è da odiare, se non per *sopravvenimento di malizia*, ragionevole e onesto è non le cose ma le malizie delle cose odiare." Miss Hillard (*Banquet of Dante Allighieri*, London, 1889) translates *sopravvenimento di malizia*, "superadded wickedness," which seems to render the meaning admirably. See also *Conv.* iv, 15: "E secondo malizia [Miss Hillard translates *evil disposition*] ovvero difetto di corpo, può essere la mente non sana." In *Inf.* xv, 78, Brunetto Latini speaks of the wickedness that has sprung up in Florence when it

"Fu fatto nido di malizia tanta."

† *Ingiuria*: Nearly all the commentators explain this as injustice, or intentional wrong done to anyone. Blanc, Poletto, Camerini, Scartazzini thus interpret it; in Barberi (*Gran Dizionario Italiano-Francese*, Paris, 1839) the passage is translated: "L' injustice est le but de toute méchanceté que le ciel poursuit de sa haine." Gelli comments thus on *ingiuria*: "cioè, qualche

Of every vice that incurs hatred in Heaven,
the end is injury (to some one), and every
such end either by Violence or Fraud
aggrieveth others.

But Fraud is the greater sin of the two, because it
is a sin specially human. Violence is common both
to Man and to other animals, but Fraud necessitates
reasoning powers.

Ma perchè frode è dell' uom proprio male, 25
Più spiace a Dio ; e però stan di sotto*
Gli frodolenti, e più dolor gli assale.

But since Fraud is an evil-doing peculiar to
Man, it more displeases God ; and therefore
the Fraudulent are placed beneath, and
greater affliction assaileth them.

Gelli points out that the reason of Fraud being a
sin so peculiar to Man is that it is an operation which
never shows itself as what it really is, but on the con-
trary it always, while wishing to wreak evil, assumes
the garb of wanting to do good, and therefore
it can only be used by Man, who, having the ad-

operazione e qualche effetto contrario alla justitia ; che così
significa questa parola *ingiuria*." And he adds that Aristotle
in his Rhetoric describes *ingiuria* as being those wrong doings
and offences that are voluntarily committed against order and
against justice.

* *stan di sotto gli frodolenti* : Compare Cicero, *De Officiis*,
lib. I, cap. 13 : " Meminerimus autem, etiam adversus infimos,
justitiam esse servandam. . . . Cum autem duobus modis, id
est, aut vi aut fraude, fiat injuria : fraus, quasi vulpeculæ, vis,
leonis videtur : utrumque homine alienissimum : sed fraus odio
digna majore. Totius autem injustitiæ nulla capitalior est,
quam eorum, qui, cum maxime fallunt, id agunt, ut viri boni
esse videantur."

vantage of Reason, can by it craftily conceal his purposes, and, however evil they may be, can veil them under a semblance of good. On the other hand, animals having no intelligence but that of the senses, are not able to conceal their intentions in the same manner. Gelli does not reckon as a fraud the ruse practised by the cuttle-fish of emitting a black liquid which, by troubling the water, makes the fish invisible to its natural foes, for that is only the power of defence which Nature has given it as an instinct. Nor is fraud the craft used by the crab, who introduces a small stone between the two valves of the half-opened oyster, so as to be able to get in his nippers, and pull the oyster out. It is only natural instinct. In the same way one cannot call Art the knowledge of the swallows in building their nests with such marvellous precision, and all exactly alike. Therefore, since Man is inferior to many animals in strength, whereas none of them can rival him in fraud, nor even have the knowledge or the power to imitate him, it may be concluded that fraud is peculiar to Man, and is consequently more displeasing to God than Violence. For God has given to Man his intellect and reasoning powers in order that he may surpass and excel all other animals in perfection, and, if Man makes use of his speech and his reason for purposes of fraud, it is greatly displeasing to God that he should use, to the offence and detriment of himself and others, such noble powers, given to him for the purpose of doing good.

Virgil having now briefly touched upon Fraud,

to the varieties of which, and their respective punishments, he will return later, goes on to explain in detail the different kinds of violence punished in the respective sub-divisions of the next Circle, into which they are descending.

De' violenti il primo cerchio è tutto :
 Ma perchè si fa forza a tre persone,
 In tre gironi è distinto e costruito. 30
 A Dio, a sè, al prossimo si puone
 Far forza, dico in loro ed in lor cose,
 Come udirai con aperta ragione.

The first Circle (of these three below) is wholly of the Violent : but as Violence can be wrought against three persons, it (the Circle) is divided and constructed in three Rounds. Against God, against themselves, against their neighbour, can Violence be wrought. I say against themselves (*i. e.* their persons), and against their property, as thou shalt hear by clear demonstration.

Benvenuto says that he wishes his hearers to understand and mark well that the above-mentioned three-fold violence can be done in two ways (*prædicta triplex violentia potest fieri dupliciter*).

The first Round or subdivision of the Circle of the Violent and its inmates is next described.

Morte per forza e ferute dogliose
 Nel prossimo si danno, e nel suo avere 35
 Ruine, incendi e tollette * dannose :

* *tollette* : Both Gelli and Scartazzini give the same interpretation, "ruberie e rapine," and the former says that the word was in constant use in the time of Dante, and is to be found in Villani. Both Poletto and Blanc agree that the words *tollette dannose*

Onde omicide e ciascun che mal fiere,
 Guastatori e predon, tutti tormenta
 Lo giron primo per diverse schiere.

Death by Violence, and painful wounds, are perpetrated against (the person of) one's neighbour; and against his substance (are wrought) destructions, arsons, and rapacious exactions. Hence homicides, and every one who smites unjustly, spoilers and robbers, all of these does the first Round torment in separate bands.

are the same as the mediæval expressions, *maltoletkum*, *male-tollettum*, *maletotta*, and *maletota*, and from which comes the old French *mal tble*, from *tollere* to rob, and signifying extraordinary imposts, extortionate taxation, unjust and ruinous burdens.

Some read *collette*, "collections." Scartazzini says that both *collette* and *tollette* mean *tribute*, *impost*, or even a public loan, and that, if there be any difference between the two, it would be that *tollette* is derived from the Celtic *Tolt*=imposition, public burden, and that *Collette* would be a public loan or tax that had to be paid into the hand of collectors, especially in time of war. But Scartazzini thinks the context shows clearly that the right reading is *tollette*, and that it signifies robbery, rapine, and not a public burden. If the *omicide* in v. 37 are those who in v. 34, *morte per forza nel prossimo danno*; if those who in v. 37 *mal fedono* are the same that in v. 34 *ferute dogliose nel prossimo danno*; if the *guastatori* of v. 38 are the same as those who do violence to their neighbour's goods with *ruine* and *incendi*, v. 36; then those who do violence to their neighbour's goods with *tollette dannose*, in v. 36, must of necessity be the *predon* of v. 38, who are punished in the first *girone*. Now these *predoni*, adds Scartazzini, are the very persons alluded to in *Inf.* xii, 138, *che fecero guerra alle strade*, in fact, freebooters. Gelli follows the same line of argument. Benvenuto says it is violent extortion and rapine.

The next point touched upon is the Second Round or subdivision of the Seventh Circle, in which are the Violent against themselves and their own goods.

Puote uomo avere in sè man violenta 40

E ne' suoi beni : e però nel secondo

Giron convien che senza pro si penta

Qualunque priva sè del vostro mondo,

Biscazza* e fonde la sua facultade, †

E piange là dove esser dee giocondo. 45

Man can lay violent hands upon himself and upon his possessions : and therefore in the second Round has to repent without avail (*i.e.* without hope of redemption) everyone who deprives himself of your world (*i.e.* the Suicide), who gambles away and dissipates his

* *Biscassa* is literally, to gamble at the *biscassa*, also *bisca*, a place where hazard was publicly played. Gelli draws a marked distinction between *baratterie*, where he says anyone that liked might go, whether ignorant of the game, or unknown to the players ; but he says that *biscassa* in "our" (the Tuscan) language is a place where play goes on, but not so publicly as in the *baratterie*; and to the *bische* there only go those who are known and are experienced players ; they moreover go there with a certain regard to decorum and respect, which is not the case in the *baratterie*. Gelli says some people find fault with Dante for writing *biscassa e fonde* instead of the simpler words *consuma e sperde*, but they are evidently ignorant of the beauties of the Tuscan diction, nor understand the art and the force of the words, which Dante so well understood himself. Gelli is very severe on certain commentators, especially Bembo, for attempting, "in a language which was not his native tongue," to criticize Dante, a born Tuscan.

† *facultade* : Riches, income, fortune, substance, *not* faculties, as we understand them. Compare Boccaccio, *Giorn.* iii. *Nov.* x :

"Avendo in cortesia tutte le sue facultà spese."

AA

property, and weeps there where he ought to be cheerful.

This means that possessions, which ought to be a source of joy, and, if rightly employed, a means of attaining everlasting happiness, when misused, are the cause of perpetual grief and trouble.

Scartazzini points out the difference between these dissipators of their wealth, who gamble it away bodily, and the Prodigals in the Fourth Circle whose sin is that of spending their money badly (see vii, 58).*

The Third Round or Subdivision of the Seventh Circle comes next. In it is punished the third kind of Violence, but it must be distinctly understood that this third kind is in itself threefold, and is further subdivided into

- (a). Violence against God,
- (b). Violence against Nature, and
- (c). Violence against Art.

Puossi far forza nella Deitade,
Col cor negando e bestemmiando quella,
E spregiando natura e sua† bontade :
E però lo minor giron suggella‡

* “ Mal dare e mal tener lo mondo pulcro
Ha tolto loro, e posti a questa zuffa.”

† *spregiando natura e sua bontade*: It is evident from verse 95 that the bounty here referred to is God's, not Nature's; see vv. 94-96:

“ ‘ Ancora un poco indietro ti rivolvi,
Diss' io, 'là dove di' che usura offende
La divina bontade, e il groppo solvi.’ ”

‡ *suggella*: Compare *Rev.* xiv, 9-10:

“ If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without

Del segno suo e Sodoma e Caorsa,*
E chi, spregiando Dio, col cor favella. 50

Violence can be committed against the Deity, by denying and blaspheming Him in the heart, and by despising Nature (*i.e.* by being guilty of unnatural crimes), and His (God's) bounty. And therefore the (innermost and consequently) smallest Round stamps with its seal both Sodom and Cahors, and all such as speaks disdainfully of God in their hearts.

By Sodom every kind of offence against Nature is meant. Cahors (the ancient *Divona Cadurcorum*) is the *chef-lieu* of the Département du Lot. In the time of Dante it was ill-famed for usurers, therefore the above three lines mean that in the innermost Round are punished Unnatural Crime, Usury, and Blasphemy. Gelli says that both Nature and Art

mixture into the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb."

* *Caorsa* : Ducange (*Glossarium Mediæ et Infimæ Latinatis*, Paris, 1842) quotes an edict of St. Louis, in Jan. 1268, against the usurers of Cahors ; another of Philippe le Hardi to the same effect, and a third (*Statuta Ecclesiæ Meldensis*, ann. circiter 1346, inter *Instrum. Hist. Meld.* tom. 2, page 492) : "Inhibentes ne quis in domibus, vel in locis, aut in terris Ecclesiarum Lombardos, aut alios advenas, qui vulgariter Caorcini dicuntur, usurarios manifeste receptare præsumat." Ducange also gives the following quotation from Guignevil (*Peregrinatio humana gentis*, MS.) ubi de Concupiscentia :

"Li Sathanas m' i engenra,
Et de illuèc il m' aporta
A Chaourse, où on me nourri,
Dont Chaoursière dite sui :
Aucun me nomment convoitise."

proceed from God, and that Art is said by Dante (v. 105) to be as it were His grandchild. I cannot omit quoting what he goes on to say, but do so in the original: "Contro a le quali due cose dice il Poeta che si può usar violenza in questi modi: contro a la Natura, con impedire la generazione umana, sfogando quel prurito della carne, ch'ella ha dato all' uomo perch' ei dia opera a essa generazione, in modi ch' ei non ne abbia a seguitar tal effetto; e contra a l' arte, cercando di acquistare avere, di accrescerlo con modi contrarii a essa natura, come voler far multiplicar per lor stesse quelle cose che non posson farlo, come fanno gli usurai i danari."

By the words *Del segno suo* Dante means the rain of fire which falls on the sinners in the Third *Girone*, as will be seen in cantos xiv and xv.

Having now explained the first of the two classes of sins by which Man can do wrong to his neighbour, namely Violence, Virgil passes on to the second great class, which is Fraud. Now Fraud is again subdivided into, (a) Ordinary Fraud where no trust has been given; and (b) Aggravated Fraud, where trust has been given.

Benvenuto says of *the first of these*, that it is of a general kind, which bursts the ordinary bond of Nature; that every man is naturally a friend to his fellow, and that we are bound to do unto others as we would have them do unto us, and so keep faith with every one. But *the second kind of Fraud* is that which violates any other special tie, as for instance, he who commits fraud against his master, his parents, his neighbour, his friend, or his comrade; in this way

the second kind of Fraud is far worse, and therefore traitors are punished in the very bottom of Hell.

We shall find that Ordinary Fraud (*a*) is punished in Circle VIII, which is called *Malebolge*, and is subdivided into ten separate *Bolge*, or pits (*lit.* pouches). It is dealt with in Cantos xviii to xxx inclusive.

Aggravated Fraud (*b*) is punished in Circle IX, wherein are four different classes of Traitors. This circle is described in Cantos xxxi to xxxiv inclusive.

La frode, ond' ogni coscienza è morsa,*
 Può l' uomo usare in colui che 'n lui fida,
 Ed in quei che fidanza non imborsa.

Fraud, for which every conscience is gnawed (with remorse), a man can practice upon those who trust him, and upon those who repose (*lit.* imburse) no confidence (in him).

Virgil now describes Ordinary Fraud (*a*), stating what classes of sinners come under this category, and where they are punished. This fraud was the last mentioned in the preceding lines, and it is therefore spoken of as the latter kind of the two.

Questo modo di retro par che uccida 55

Pur lo vinco d' amor che fa natura ;

Onde nel cerchio secondo s' annida

Ipocrisia, lusinghe e chi affattura,

Falsità, ladroneccio e simonia,

Ruffian, baratti e simile lordura. 60

This latter mode (*i.e.* Fraud that has *not* violated trust) would only appear to destroy the link of affection that Nature makes ;

* *morsa*: Tommasèo thinks this either means that Fraud is so great a crime that even the most obdurate consciences feel remorse for it ; or, that Virgil is wishing to censure Dante's contemporaries as being more especially guilty of that particular sin.

wherefore in the second circle (of the City of Dis, the Eighth of Hell) have their nest, Hypocrisy, Flattery, and they who practise Sorcery, Falsehood, Robbery and Simony, Panderers and Barterers, and such-like filth.*

The description of the chastisement of those guilty of Aggravated Fraud where trust has been betrayed (*b*) concludes Virgil's long explanation of the plan of Lower Hell, the distribution of its various parts, and the classification of the sins punished in them.

Per l' altro modo quell' amor s' obblia
 Che fa natura, e quel ch' è poi aggiunto,
 Di che la fede spezial si cria :
 Onde nel cerchio minore, ov' è il punto
 Dell' universo, † in su che Dite siede, 65

* Gelli calls attention to the fact, that of the ten different species of Ordinary Fraud punished in the Eighth Circle (*Malebolge*), only eight are enumerated here, while two classes of sinners must be understood to come under the general category of *e simile lordura*, and these are, Disseminators of Discord, and Forgers.

† *il punto dell' Universo*: According to the Ptolemaic system of cosmography, the Earth was in the centre of the Universe, and hence the centre of the Earth was the centre both of the Earth and of the whole of the spheres that were supposed to encircle it. In Par. xxxiii, 22-24, St. Bernard, in his beautiful prayer to the Virgin, speaks of Dante as having come from the nethermost depth of the Universe :

“ Or questi, che dall' infima lacuna
 Dell' universo infin qui ha vedute
 Le vite spiritali ad una ad una, etc.”

Centro is used to signify Hell in *Inf.* ii, 82-84 :

“ che non ti guardi
 Dello scender quaggiuso in questo centro
 Dall' ampio loco, ove tornar tu ardi.”

In *Convito*, iii, 5, Dante gives the exact definition of the

Qualunque trade* in eterno è consunto.”—

By the other mode (*i. e.* Treachery, both) that love is forgotten which Nature begets, and that which is afterwards added, from which special trust is created: Wherefore in the smallest Circle, where is the centre of the Universe, upon which Dis (Lucifer) is seated, whoever betrays is consumed to all eternity.”

By the smallest Circle must be understood the third Circle of the City of Dis, but the ninth of Hell.

Division III. Dante has listened closely to Virgil's explanation, but there are two points which are not clear to him, and he now confesses to Virgil his difficulty about the first of them; namely, why are not all the sinners in Hell punished inside the City of Dis? Why are those that he saw in the Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Circles dealt with differently?

Ed io :—“ Maestro, assai chiaro procede
La tua ragione, ed assai ben distingue

system as then believed. “Basta sapere che questa terra è fissa e non si gira, e che essa col mare è centro del cielo. Questo cielo si gira intorno a questo centro continuamente.” In the *Quaestio de Aqua et Terra*, § iii, Dante says: “Quum centrum terræ sit centrum universi, ut ab omnibus confirmatur.”

* *Qualunque trade*: Compare Virg. *Æn.* vi, 608-614:

“Hic, quibus invisi fratres, dum vita manebat,
Pulsatusve parens, et fraus innexa clienti;
Aut qui divitiis soli incubere repertis,
Nec partem posuere suis: quæ maxima turba est:
Quique ob adulterium coesi; quique arma secuti
Impia, nec veriti dominorum fallere dextras,
Inclusi pœnam expectant.”

Questo baratro e il popol che il possiede.
 Ma dimmi : Quei della palude pingue, 70
 Che mena il vento, e che batte la pioggia,
 E che s' incontran con sì aspre lingue,
 Perchè non dentro dalla città roggia
 Son ei puniti, se Dio gli ha in ira ?
 E se non gli ha, perchè sono a tal foggia* ?— 75

And I: "Master, thy discourse proceeds most clearly, and very well distinguishes (the several parts of) this Abyss and the people that possess (*i. e.* inhabit) it. But tell me: They of the slimy morass (*i. e.* the Wrathful, Slothful, and Sullen, and they) whom the wind bears along (the Impure), and (they) on whom the rain beats (*i. e.* Gluttonous), and (they) who encounter one another with such bitter tongues (*i. e.* the Misers and Prodigals), why are not they punished within the City ruddy

* *foggia*: the word only occurs in this and in one other passage; it here means, "guise," "manner," "way."

Compare Petrarch, *Part i. Son. 33*:

"Perchè fa in lei con disusata foggia

Men per molto voler le voglie intense."

It means also, "expression." One can say: "That man is handsome, well made, and has a good countenance." "Quell' uomo è bello, ben fatto, e di buona foggia."

It may also be used for fashion in dress: see Franco Sacchetti, *Rime*:

"Poca virtù, ma fogge, e atti assai

l' veggio ognora in te, bella Fiorenza."

Dante uses it once more in *Inf. xiv, 13-15*, in the sense of "condition," "kind," "fashion."

"Lo spazzo era un' arena arida e spessa,
 Non d' altra foggia fatta che colei,
 Che fu da' piè di Caton già soppressa."

(with fire), if God has them in anger? and if not, why are they in such a plight (as to be tormented at all)?”

Virgil reproves Dante for not seeing for himself the true solution of the problem that he proposes, and he asks him, in terms of disapproval, why, when he has been used hitherto to show great acumen in enquiring into matters of difficulty, he should now give importance to merely trivial questions. He reminds Dante that he has made the Ethics of Aristotle his own (*tua Etica*), by mastering their intricacies, and in them he will find his answer.

Ed egli a' me :—“Perchè tanto delira*,”—

Disse,—“lo ingegno tuo da quel che suole?

Ovver la mente dove altrove mira?

Non ti rimembra di quelle parole,

Colle quai la tua Etica† pertratta

80

Le tre disposizion che il ciel non vuole :

* *delira*: Buti explains this: “Tanto delira, cioè esce del solco, cioè si svia.” The *Voc. della Crusca* says it is to be beside oneself, to have lost the thread of one’s ideas, to be frantic, and derives the word from *ληρεῖν*, to be foolish. Others derive it from *de lira*, to go out of the furrow, to deviate from a straight line, to be deranged. The *Voc.* further explains, “Delirare è dal solco della verità uscire, come esce lo bue del solco, quando impazza, e non è obbediente al giogo.” Compare Tasso, *Ger. Liberata*, xiv, st. 17:

“E bench’ or lunge il giovine delira,
E vaneggia nell’ ozio e nell’ amore,
Non dubitar però, etc.”

† *la tua Etica*: The passage here referred to is in Aristotle’s Ethics, book vii, ch. 1:

“Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα λεκτέον, ἕλλην ποιησαμένους ἀρχήν, ὅτι τῶν περὶ τὰ ἤθη φευκτῶν τρία εἰσὶν εἶδη, κακία ἀκρασία θηριότης.”

“After what has been already said, we must make another

Incontinenza, malizia e la matta
 Bestialitate? e come incontinenza
 Men Dio offende e men biasimo accatta?
 Se tu riguardi ben questa sentenza, 85
 E rechiti alla mente, chi son quelli,
 Che su di fuor sostengon penitenza,
 Tu vedrai ben, perchè da questi felli
 Sien dipartiti, e perchè men crucciata
 La divina vendetta gli martelli."— 90

And he to me :—"Why wanders thy mind," said he, "so far beyond its wont? or is thy memory looking elsewhere? Dost thou not remember those words with which thine Ethics treat at great length the three dispositions (of the mind) which Heaven wills not: Incontinence, Vice, and mad Brutishness? and how Incontinence offends God least, and incurs less blame? If thou rightly regardest this conclusion, and callest to mind who are those, who (in the Circles) up above outside (this city), are suffering chastisement, thou wilt well discern, why they are separated from these guilty wretches (in the Circles below), and why Divine Justice strikes them down with less wrath."

Dante having had a full reply to his first question, now puts before Virgil his second doubt, as to why Usury has been mentioned by Virgil as one of the sins of Violence against God's goodness (*spregiando* *sua bontade*, v. 48), whereas it would rather

beginning, and state, that there are three forms of things to be avoided in morals—vice, incontinence, brutality." Browne's Translation.

seem to Dante that it is a sin of offending one's neighbour. He asks for an explanation of this.

—“ O Sol* che sani ogni vista turbata,
 Tu mi contenti sì, quando tu solvi,
 Che, non men che saper, dubbiar m' aggrata.
 Ancora un poco indietro ti rivolvi,”—
 Diss' io,—“ là† dove di' che usura offende 95
 La divina bontade, e il groppo solvi.”—

“ O Sun (*i.e.* Virgil) that healest all troubled sight, thou so contentest me when thou solvest (my doubts), that doubting is not less pleasing to me than knowing. Turn back yet again somewhat,” I said, “ to where thou sayest that Usury offends Divine Goodness, and solve the knotty point.”

Virgil now replies, and the *Ottimo* thus explains his answer: “ Virgil solves the proposed question, and proceeds in this way: Nature takes its course from God; therefore she is an art from God,‡ that is, His natural order and procession; and that which proceeds from Nature, and follows it, we may say is a child of Nature: natural art proceeds from Nature, and follows it as a pupil does a master; so that this

* *O Sol*: compare *Inf.* i, 82:

“ O degli altri poeti onore e lume, etc.”

The *Anonimo Fiorentino* says that as the natural Sun drives away the darkness of night, and dissipates the clouds and thick mists, so Virgil dissipates in Dante the blindness of ignorance, and therefore Dante addresses him as Sun.

† *là dove di'*: Dante refers to Virgil's words at verse 46-48:

“ Puossi far forza nella Deitade,
 Col cor negando e bestemmiano quella,
 E spregiando natura e sua bontade.”

‡ “ Nature is the art of God.” Browne (*Religio Medici*, pt. 1, sect. xvi.)

art is nearly a grand-child of God. And from these two, that is, from Nature and art, man must take his life and progress in it. And whereas the Usurer does not follow Nature or natural art, but holds another road separate from this one; therefore he despises Nature the daughter of God, and natural art, which is the grand-daughter of God; and places his hope in other things, namely, in worldly possessions."

—"Filosofia,"—mi disse,—"a chi la intende,

Nota non pure in una sola parte,

Come natura lo suo corso prende

Dal divino intelletto e da sua arte;

100

E se tu ben la tua Fisica* note,

Tu troverai non dopo molte carte,

* *la tua Fisica*: Poletto (*Dizionario Dantesco s. v. Fisica*) points out that in the works of Dante we have abundant and certain demonstrations of his knowledge of Physical Science.

Dante speaks of Nature and the formation of snow.—*Par.* xxvii, 67.

Of the thawing of snow.—*Purg.* xxx, 85-90; *Par.* ii, 106-107; *Par.* xxxiii, 64.

Of rain.—*Purg.* v, 109; *Conv.* iv, 18.

Of mists.—*Inf.* xxxi, 34-37; *Purg.* xvii, 1-9.

Of earthquakes and winds.—*Inf.* iii, 130-133; ix, 64-69; *Inf.* xxxiii, 103-105; *Purg.* xxi, 34-60; *Par.* viii, 22.

Of thunder, and where formed.—*Inf.* iv, 1-3; *Purg.* xiv, 134.

Of lightning.—*Purg.* xxxii, 109; *Par.* xxiii, 40-42.

Of waters and streams.—*Purg.* xxviii, 97 and 121; *Par.* xii, 99.

Of the ebb and flow of the sea.—*Inf.* xv, 5; *Par.* xvi, 82.

Of the magnetic needle.—*Par.* xii, 29.

Of the rainbow, of which he had ascertained the cause long before Antonio de Dominis had made it known.—*Purg.* xxv, 91-93.

Of the double rainbow.—*Par.* xii, 10.

Of the parhelia or halos.—*Par.* xxvi, 106.

Of falling stars.—*Purg.* v, 37; *Par.* xv, 13.

Che l' arte vostra quella, quanto potete,
 Segue, come il maestro fa il discente,
 Sì che vostr' arte a Dio quasi è nipote. 105

"Philosophy," said he to me, "to those who understand it, points out, not in one part alone, how Nature takes her course from the Divine Intellect and from its art; and if thou notest well thy physics, thou wilt find after (searching) not many pages, that your art follows her (Nature) as much as it can, as the pupil does his master, so that your art is, as it were, a grand-child to God.

Of universal attraction (long before the days of Newton and Kepler).—*Inf.* xxxiv, 110.

Of the great cataclysms of the earth.—*Inf.* xii, 41.

And Mgr. Poletto says that it is perfectly clear that Dante was acquainted with the theory of the upheavals and subsidences of the earth, which is usually thought to be a discovery of modern geological science.—*Inf.* xxxiv, 122-126; and *Quæst. Aq. et Terr.* § 21.

The celebrated geologist, Antonio Stoppani (*La questione dell' Acqua e della Terra di Dante Alighieri in Op. Lat. di Dante, ed. Giuliani*, vol. ii), speaking of the scientific value of Dante's Treatise, *Quæstio de Aqua et Terra*, remarks: "What astonishes me in this dissertation, as well as in *The Divine Comedy*, is, that Dante, in dealing with natural laws or facts, does not go in search of proofs to the abstractions of Aristotelian principles, which in those times had been converted into so many dogmas, to the transcendental abstrusities of metaphysics or theology, or to the Cabala, so much in vogue in the Middle Ages, but to the laws of nature, ascertained, as well as was then possible, by observation and experience, or demonstrated by mathematics." (Quoted from Davidson's Translation of *Scartazzini's Handbook to Dante*. Boston. 1887.)

Buti quotes from a Latin translation of Aristotle (*Physic.* lib. iii): "Ars imitatur naturam in quantum potest."

Up to this point Virgil has been clearing away the doubts in Dante's mind by Reason and the authority of philosophy or natural science. He now passes on to prove his statement by the authority of Holy Scripture.

Gelli remarks that Virgil having been specially sent by Beatrice, Sacred Theology, to lift Dante out of error, takes the same line that many theologians do who are versed in natural science, namely, of proving that philosophy is in all respects in perfect conformity with theology. Benvenuto says that the words which Virgil next speaks mean briefly this, that man owes his being to Nature, but his well-being to Art, and that God first said to him, "Be fruitful and multiply," and secondly, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, &c." *Gen.* iii, 19.

Da queste due, se tu ti rechi a mente
Lo Genesi dal principio, conviene
Prender sua vita ed avanzar la gente.*

From these two (*i.e.* Nature and Art) if thou
wilt call to mind the Genesis at the begin-

* *avanzar la gente*: Scartazzini, commenting on these words, says they mean that people must nourish themselves and increase their worldly goods by the help of Nature, and also by the help of Art, that is, by agriculture, manufactures, commerce, etc. Buti comments: "*E se tu rechi a mente riduci a memoria, consideri lo Genesi dal nel principio suo, troverai che da queste due cioè dalla natura e dall' arte conviene la gente umana prendere che ricavi la sua vita cid che gli è necessario alla vita, ed avanzare che si avvantaggi nei terrini acquisti.*" In a note on *Lo Genesi*, Buti adds: "*dove si pone questa sentenza: 'oportuit ab initio sæculi humanum genus sumere vitam et excedere unum alium per naturam et artes.'*"

ning, human beings must gain their livelihood, and increase (their possessions).

Gelli remarks that Landino has made a mistake in his commentary on this passage, in saying that in the beginning of the Book of Genesis it is thus written: "Oportuit ab initio sæculi humanum genus sumere vitam et excedere unum aliū per naturam et artes." Gelli says that it is not possible for any words to express better the meaning of Dante in the passage we are discussing, but as a matter of fact the words do not occur in Genesis at all, and Gelli thinks they are to be found in the works of Lactantius. There must be here, then, a slip either of Landino's pen, or of his memory; a slip of the pen, if he wrote "Genesis" by mistake instead of "Lactantius," or a slip of his memory in thinking the words were to be found in the one, whereas they were in the other.

Virgil concludes his discussion of usury by showing from what he has said, that the usurer offends against the goodness of God, because he offends Nature in offending against art.

Ma perchè l' usuriere altra via tiene,
Per sè natura,* e per la sua seguace 110
Dispregia, poichè in altro pon la spene.

But as the Usurer takes another way he despises Nature (both) for herself, and for her

* *Per sè natura*, etc.: Tommasèo, commenting on this passage, remarks that the scathing contempt which Dante manifests for the usurers proves what is recorded in the chronicles of the century, of the immense mischief that usury was doing at that time. Usury does not cultivate Nature in following agriculture, and seeking out the natural fruits of the earth, but tills the ground to bring out metals, which are not its natural fruit.

follower (Art), since he places his hope elsewhere (*i.e.*, in the credulity of others).

Cary explains this as follows : " The Usurer, trusting in the produce of his wealth lent out on usury, despises Nature directly, because he does not avail himself of her means for maintaining or enriching himself ; and indirectly, because he does not avail himself of the means which Art, the follower and imitator of Nature would afford him for the same purposes."

We must remember that, during the above prolonged conversation, the Poets have been standing still behind the lid of the tomb of Pope Anastasius, in order to withdraw themselves a little from the noxious vapours that rise from the depths below. Virgil will not delay any longer, and he explains to Dante what the time is on the Earth. All through the *Divina Commedia* the references to time are most definite and precise. We may remember that we considered Dante to have entered into Hell at nightfall on Good Friday, which in the year 1300 was on the 8th of April. The two Poets approached the Styx at midnight (canto vii, 98). It is now the early morning of Saturday, Easter Eve, probably about 4 a.m., and Virgil defines the hour by a description of movements in the skies, which, during the Poets' subterranean journey, are hidden from their view.

Ma seguimi oramai, che il gir mi piace :
 Chè i Pesci guizzan su per l' orizzonta,*
 E il Carro tutto sopra il Coro † giace,
 E il balzo via là oltra si dismonta."—

115

* *orizzonta* for *orizzonte*.

† *il Coro* : Prof. G. Della Valle (*Il Senso Geographico-Astro-*

But now follow me, as it pleases me to go on : for the Fishes are quivering (*i.e.* rising) up on the horizon, and the Wain (of Boötes, *i.e.* the Great Bear) lies wholly over the Caurus (meaning the North-West) and yonder far onwards we must descend the steep.

Dr. Moore (*Time References in the Divina Commedia*, London, 1887, page 43) writes of the Pisces : "The rising of this Constellation, covering, of course, several degrees of celestial space, commenced about 3 a.m., and ended about 5 a.m. We may suppose that the time indicated, therefore, is roughly about 4 to 5 a.m. The reference in the next line to Ursa Major lying right upon the north-west line (*tutto sovra Coro*) will be found, I believe, precisely accurate in conjunction with the other phenomenon. [Carlyle points out that the Constellation of the Fishes is that which immediately precedes Aries, and as the Sun was in Aries, as we saw in canto i, the time indicated here would be some two hours before sunrise.] Antonelli (*Studi Speciali*, Firenze, 1871, page 86) says that when the

nomico dei Luoghi della Divina Commedia, Faenza, 1869), says that *il Coro*, in Latin either *Caurus* or *Corus*, was a wind that blew from between the North and West, the popular name for which in Italy is *Ponente-Maestro*. When the Sign of Pisces falls upon the Eastern horizon, the Wain or Great Bear lies precisely in the direction of this wind. Della Valle points out that there is usually a definite meaning in every word Dante uses, and that when he says that *il Carro giace tutto sovra il Coro*, he means that the centre of the constellation is in the direction of the Caurus ; for the Wain occupies a certain expanse of the heavens, and if *the whole of it* lies over the North-West, its centre must be the part that points chiefly in that direction.

B B

Constellation Pisces is rising in a north latitude of 32°, Ursa Major will be "*tutto* in quel lato, l'estrema del timone distante circa 40° del Polo."

The two Poets are now supposed to move forward, and at the opening of the next canto we shall find them standing on the brink of the abyss * leading down to the Seventh Circle.

* This abyss must not be confounded with the Great Abyss described in cantos xvi and xvii, which, starting from the centre of the innermost Round of the Circle of Violence, Circle vii, plunges down into the lower depths of Hell, and is so impracticable, that the Poets have to be carried down by Geryon who lands them in *Malebolge*.

END OF CANTO XI.

CANTO XII.

THE FIRST ROUND OF THE SEVENTH CIRCLE.
 THE MINOTAUR.
 THE VIOLENT AGAINST THEIR NEIGHBOUR.
 THE TYRANTS.
 THE CENTAURS.
 CHIRON AND NESSUS.
 EZZELINO—OPIZZO DA ESTE.
 GUIDO DA MONFORTE.

In the last Canto we saw in how precise and definite a manner the disposition of the Circles of Hell that are inside the City of Dis was described. In this Canto we shall find the Poets about to enter the first of the three Rounds or rings of the Seventh Circle, in which are tormented the souls of the Violent against their neighbours, and among them the most noted tyrants in history.

Benvenuto divides the canto into four parts.

In Division I, from v. 1 to v. 30, Dante describes how the Minotaur, a type of unnatural passions, attempts in vain to arrest the progress of the Poets.

In Division II, from v. 31 to v. 57, after a conversation about the extraordinary chaos of fallen rocks of which the precipice is formed, the Poets approach the river of boiling blood in which the Violent are immersed.

In Division III, from v. 58 to v. 99, their recep-

tion by the Centaurs is related, and how Chiron, the chief, appoints Nessus to guide them along the river, and to carry Dante over the ford.

In Division IV, from v. 100 to v. 139, Nessus, after pointing out the most notorious of the tormented sinners, transports Dante to the other shore, and then retires.

Division I. We left Dante and Virgil directing their steps to the brink of the precipice, down which they are to descend into the Seventh Circle, and we now find them hesitating, not only at the difficulties of the rocky steep, but also at the unexpected sight of a monster lying on its summit. "Imagine yourself," says Benvenuto, "crossing one of the Alps, and at a spot that is exceedingly rugged and dangerous, encountering a fierce wild beast such as a bear or a wild boar. Your danger would at once appear to you double as great. Picture to yourself then Dante's terrors at the sight of the Minotaur, in addition to the fear of the tremendous chasm below him."

Era lo loco, ove a scender la riva

Venimmo, alpestro,* e per quel ch' ivi er' anco,
Tal, ch' ogni vista ne sarebbe schiva.

* *loco . . . alpestro*: Mr. Ruskin's remarks (*Modern Painters*, iii, 243) on this passage tend to show that Dante was notably a bad climber, and that his ideas of rocks and mountains were neither very elevated nor very correct. This opinion is strongly combated by two eminent members of the English and Italian Alpine Clubs. In the *Bollettino del Club Alpino di Torino*, 1886, vol. xx, No. 53, page 12, there is an elaborate article by Ottone Brentari (*Sesione di Vicenza*), entitled *Dante Alpinista*. In the *Alpine Journal*, vol. x, no. 75, page 400, Mr. Douglas W. Freshfield supplies a most interesting contribution on *The*

Mountains of Dante. Referring to the above-mentioned remarks of Mr. Ruskin, he says that he rises from its re-perusal with a strong sense that Dante's feeling for Alpine scenery—in the broad and proper sense of the word Alpine, which in a note he explains to be a generally accepted name for all the rounded hill-tops in the upper portions of the Tuscan Apennines, where the flocks and herds find pasturage—has been done injustice to. Without being tempted into one of those extravagances which employ and entertain bookworms; without endeavouring to prove—as some would endeavour to prove Shakespeare to have been an attorney's clerk or an apothecary's boy—that Dante was what his countrymen now call an *alpinista*, Mr. Freshfield contends that it may be shown from his works that he knew and loved mountains better than Mr. Ruskin was at one time disposed to allow. It is to be noticed that when Dante wanted a beautiful background for stately figures, a place of sojourn for poets or princes (see *Purg.* vii), he chose, not with the *bourgeois* Boccaccio the likeness of a Florentine garden, or a Val d'Arno olive-yard, but high ground, a mountain valley or meadow; that his references to mountains are by no means of a depreciatory nature; and, further, that while few poets have talked of climbing so much as Dante has, none has shown so thorough a practical knowledge of the right way to set about it.

The broad assertion that Dante "never alludes to the Alps except in bad weather or snow," may be contradicted without going beyond Mr. Ruskin's own quotations, put before his readers to prove the contrary. The point of comparison between the fogs of Purgatory and an Alpine mist, is surely not only the ugliness of the mists, but also the glorious effect of the sun bursting through them about sunset, when the plains below are already dead, and the light falls only on the mountain sides.

Virgil's first question to Dante is (*Inf.* i, 77-8):

"Perchè non sali il diletto monte,
Ch' è principio e cagion di tutta gioia?"

In *Inf.* xiv, 97-98, Dante speaks of the Cretan Ida as *lieta d'acqua e di fronde*.

In No. 69 of the same journal, page 72, Mr. Freshfield also

The place, to which we came to pass down over the brink, was Alpine, and such, by reason of what was there besides (*i.e.* the Minotaur), that any eye would recoil from it.

Dante compares the precipitous nature of the spot to the Slavini* di Marco on the Adige between Trent and Verona. Benvenuto considers the comparison highly appropriate; for the cliff there, before the great landslip occurred, was as sheer and abrupt as the wall of a house, and no one could by any possibility have got down it. Afterwards, however, the great mountain-slip made it more easy of descent. And this is supposed to have been the case with the precipice above Lower Hell. We shall see that Virgil had visited the place on a former occasion when it was impracticable to human feet.

Qual è quella ruina, che nel fianco
 Di qua da Trento l' Adice percosse 5
 O per tremuoto o per sostegno manco;
 Chè da cima del monte, onde si mosse,
 Al piano è sì la roccia discosciosa,
 Ch' alcuna via darebbe a chi su fosse;

alludes to the beauties of the mountain-meadows in the Val d' Incisa and the gorgeous masses of variegated colour to be seen in them, and thinks that it must have been from personal experience of them that Dante described, in such glowing terms, the Valley of the Princes (*Purg.* vii), and the sweet glades where Matelda gathered flowers in the *Divina Foresta* (*Purg.* xxvii).

* *Slavini di Marco*: Poletto (*Dizionario*) informs his readers that among his own native mountains both *Lavina* and *Slavina* are terms used to express an avalanche, and every one can well see what a close analogy there is between such a phenomenon and the *ruina* to which Dante refers.

E quando vide noi, sè stesso morse *
 Sì come quei, cui l' ira dentro fiacca. 15

As in that landslip, which on this (the Italian) side of Trent struck the Adige on its bank either by reason of an earthquake or from lack of support; for from the mountain top wherefrom it started, down to the plain, is the cliff so shattered, that it might afford some sort of path to one who was above; Even such was the way down into that chasm:

Dædalus, ipse dolos tecti ambagesque resolvit,
 Cæca tegens filo vestigia."

Compare also Ovid, *Heroides*, Epist. iv, 55-58:

"Juppiter Europen (prima est ea gentis origo)

Dilexit, tauro dissimulante Deum.

Pasiphaë mater, decepto subdita tauro,

Enixa est utero crimen onusque suo."

In *Purg.* xxvi, this is twice alluded to:

v. 41: ". . . Nella vacca entra Pasife,

Perchè il torello a sua lussuria corra."

and 85-87:

"In obbrobrio di noi, per noi si legge,

Quando partiamci, il nome di colei

Che s' imbestiò nell' imbestiate schegge."

* *sè stesso morse sì come quei, cui l' ira dentro fiacca*: It is not unlikely that Dante is here again alluding in derision to the state of degradation in which he has represented Filippo Argenti (*Inf.* viii, 62, 63):

"E 'l Fiorentino spirito bizzarro

In sè medesimo si volgea co' denti."

The description of his insensate rage being compared to that of "the Infamy of Crete" would assuredly, as perhaps Dante wished, add greatly to the irritation which Filippo's arrogant kinsmen, the Adimari, must have felt on reading the ridiculous account of him in canto viii.

and on the summit of the rugged declivity was lying outstretched (the Minotaur) the infamy of Crete, which was conceived in the fictive cow: and when he saw us, he bit himself like unto him whom anger consumes within.

This wild spot is described by the Rev. John Eustace (*A Classical Tour in Italy in 1802*. Fourth Edition. vol. i, ch. ii, pages 108-109, and note); The descent "becomes more rapid between Roveredo and Ala; the river which glided gently through the valley of Trent, assumes the roughness of a torrent; the defiles become narrower; and the mountains break into rocks and precipices, which occasionally approach the road, sometimes rise perpendicular from it, and now and then hang over it in terrible majesty. . . . Amid these wilds the traveller cannot fail to notice a vast tract called the *Slavini di Marco*, covered with fragments of rock torn from the sides of the neighbouring mountains by an earthquake, or perhaps by their own unsupported weight, and hurled down into the plains below. They spread over the whole valley, and in some places contract the road to a very narrow space. A few firs and cypresses scattered in the intervals, or sometimes rising out of the crevices of the rocks, cast a partial and melancholy shade amid the surrounding desolation. This scene of ruin seems to have made a deep impression upon the wild imagination of Dante, as he has introduced it into the twelfth canto of the *Inferno*, in order to give the reader an adequate idea of one of his infernal ramparts."*

* Poletto remarks that, besides the *Slavini di Marco*, there is

The Minotaur would now seem to be gathering himself up for a violent onslaught upon Dante, against whom Benvenuto thinks his rage would be kindled from the knowledge that Dante would be able to relate in the World what is the punishment of the Violent, and so deter many from incurring the penalties of such sins.

Dante now relates the artifice by which Virgil gave another direction to the frenzy of the Minotaur, by irritating him with a pointed insult. In the quaint words of Benvenuto: *Et subdit auctor qualiter Virgilius magnifice sedaverit iram Minotauri.*

Lo savio mio inver lui gridò :—“ Forse
Tu credi che qui sia il duca * d' Atene,
Che su nel mondo la morte ti porse ?

another great downfall of rocks (recorded by Ambrosi, in his *Comento* on this canto, Rovereto, 1864), near Calliano, opposite the Castello della Pietra, on the old road between Trent and Roveredo, and he says that it is recorded by Petrarch. The passage is in Petrarch's *Epistole Poetiche*, lib. ii, in the Epistle to Gulielmo Veronensi Oratori :

“ Vidi et terrificam solido de monte ruinam ;
Atque indignantes præcluso tramite Nymphas
Vertere iter, dextramque vadis impellere ripam.”

But Telani (*Intorno alla dimora di Dante al castello di Lissana*, Rovereto, 1834) feels certain that these lines of Petrarch's refer to the *Slavini di Marco*.

* *duca d' Atene*: *duca* is here used for *dux*, a leader, and is freely used both in old English and in old Italian to express a sovereign or ruler. Compare Shakespeare, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, act i, scene i :

“ Happy be Theseus, our renowned Duke !”
also Chaucer, *The Knight's Tale*, opening lines :

“ Whilom, as olde stories tellen us,
Ther was a duk that highte Theseus.

Partiti, bestia, chè questi non viene
 Ammaestrato dalla tua sorella,
 Ma vassi per veder le vostre pene."— 20

My sage cried towards him : "Perchance thou thinkest that the Duke of Athens (*i.e.* Theseus) is here, who in the world above gave thee thy death. Begone monster! for this one (Dante) comes not tutored by thy sister (Ariadne), but is passing by to look upon your punishments (*i.e.* both of the violent and of thyself)."

Virgil means that Dante has not come to slay the Minotaur over again, assisted by the subtle arts of a woman, but comes to witness the torments of the Violent, in order that he may warn his fellow men from incurring them.

The Minotaur is represented as giving way to the blind violence of an insane man, combined with all the movements of an infuriated bull; and Buti sees in each of his actions one of the several kinds of violence that have been enumerated in the last canto.

Qual è quel toro che si slaccia * in quella
 Che ha ricevuto già 'l colpo mortale,
 Che gir non sa, ma qua e là saltella,
 Vid' io lo Minotauro far cotale. 25

Of Athenes he was lord and governour,
 And in his time swiche a conquerour, etc."

Compare also "the dukes of Edom," *Gen.* xxxvi, 40-43.

* *Quel toro che si slaccia* : Compare Virgil, *Æn.* ii, 222-224 :

"Clamores simul horrendos ad sidera tollit :
 Quales mugitus, fugit cum saucius aram
 Taurus, et incertam excussit cervice securum."

As is that bull, who at the moment he has just received his death-blow, breaks his halter, and who cannot go, but plunges from side to side, (so) did I see the Minotaur do the like.

Virgil perceiving that the moment is favourable for passing onward, while the Monster's attention is withdrawn, promptly seizes the opportunity, and hurries Dante over the brink of the precipice.

E quegli accorto gridò :—"Corri al varco ;
Mentre ch' è in furia, è buon che tu ti cale."—

And he (Virgil) perceiving this, cried : "Run to the passage ; whilst he is in his frenzy, it is well that thou get down (the steep)."

Dante and Virgil now descend, the former observing that the stones, as he walks, are for the first time set in motion by a human foot.

Così prendemmo via giù per lo scarco
Di quelle pietre, che spesso moviensi*
Sotto i miei piedi per lo nuovo carco. 30

Thus we took our way down those loose rocks (*lit.* unloading of stones), which often moved under my feet by reason of the unaccustomed weight.

Division II. Again we find Virgil divining Dante's thoughts, and anticipating his possible inquiry, by giving him some account of the fall of rocks down

* *quelle pietre, che spesso moviensi Sotto i miei piedi:* In ll. 80, 81, we shall see that, when the Poets approach the Centaurs, this unusual phenomenon at once attracts the attention of Chiron, who thereupon says to his comrades :

"Siete voi accorti,
Che quel di retro move ciò ch' ei tocca?"

which they are making their way to the valley of the river of blood. He tells them that it occurred during the earthquake at the time of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The first descent of Virgil into Lower Hell took place before the death of Our Lord. His remarks carry them on until they reach the valley, where they encounter the Centaurs.

Io già * pensando ; e quei disse :—“ Tu pensi
Forse a questa rovina, ch' è guardata
Da quell' ira bestial ch' io ora spensi.

Or vuo' che sappi, che l' altra fiata †

Ch' io discesi quaggiù nel basso inferno,

Questa roccia non era ancor cascata.

35

I went on pondering ; and he said : “ Thou art perchance thinking of this ruined declivity, which is guarded by that brutish rage which I quelled just now. Now I would have thee know that the other time I came down this way into nether Hell, this cliff had not yet fallen.”

In the *Chiose Anonime alla Prima Cantica della D. C. di un Contemporaneo del Poeta*, published in 1865, at Turin, by Francesco Selmi, this passage is thus discussed.

“ Virgil died a short time before Christ ; and after

* *glà* : from the verb *gire* to go. It is seldom used except in poetry.

† *l' altra fiata* : This refers to what Virgil told Dante in canto ix, 22-30 :

“ Ver è ch' altra fiata quaggiù fui,

· · · · ·

Ben so il cammin : però ti fa sicuro.”

his death, by the incantations of a great master in the magic art, he was compelled to descend into the darkness of Hell, and at that time this cliff had not yet fallen. Subsequently, as the text says, when Christ died, the whole earth trembled, and many walls and rocks fell, because of His death. And shortly afterwards Christ descended into *Limbo*, and despoiled it of all the holy fathers, and good and holy men, and carried them off in spite of the Devil, and that is why Dante speaks of the great booty He (Christ) carried off from Dis out of the highest circle."

Virgil continues :

Ma certo poco pria, s' io ben discerno, Che venisse Colui, che la gran preda Levò a Dite del cerchio superno, Da tutte parti l' alta valle feda	40
Tremò sì, ch' io pensai che l' universo Sentisse amor, per lo quale è chi creda Più volte il mondo in Caos converso* :	
Ed in quel punto questa vecchia roccia Qui ed altrove tal fece riverso.	45

But certainly, if I well discern, not long before He (Jesus Christ) came, Who carried off from Dis the mighty booty from the highest circle (*i.e.* the souls in *Limbo*), the deep and loathsome valley so trembled in all its bounds, that I imagined the Universe was thrilling with love, through which there are some who

* *il mondo in Caos converso* : Pietro di Dante quotes in illustration of this from Ovid, *Metam.* i, 5 :

"Ante, mare et tellus, et quod tegit omnia, cœlum,
Unus erat toto Naturæ vultus in orbe,
Quem dixere Chaos ; rudis indigestaque moles."

believe that the world hath many a time been turned into chaos. And at that moment (of our Lord's death) both here, and in another place (*i.e.* in the Sixth *Bolgia* of the Eighth Circle) this ancient rock rolled down like this (*lit.* made such overthrow).

Allusion is here made to the opinion of Empedocles, who laid down that the world was formed of six principles or natural forces, namely, the four elements and love and hatred; and this formation he attributed to discord between the elements and the motions of heaven, that is to say, by homogeneous matter separating itself from homogeneous, to unite itself with heterogeneous matter; and, on the other hand, when, after a certain interval of time, the elements and the motions of heaven were in agreement, love was generated, meaning, the tendency among substances for like to unite itself to like, and thus the world was dissolved into chaos, or, a confused mass of matter. And as such a disjunction cannot take place without a tremendous convulsion to the world, therefore Virgil, feeling the whole cavity of Hell tremble, and not knowing the reason why, thought that the opinion of Empedocles must be correct, namely, that by force of that natural love, the linking forces had been broken, the heterogeneous parts dispersed to re-unite with the homogeneous ones, and that the Universe had again resolved itself into chaos.

We shall read in canto xxiii, 133-138, how, when the Poets reach the *Bolgia* of the Hypocrites, they find that the causeways which bridge over the whole ten rings of the *Malebolge* (Evil-Pouches), wherein

Fraud is punished, are also broken down in those parts where they cross the *Bolgia* of the Hypocrites. It is to the downfall of this causeway that Virgil is alluding, in line 45, when he says: *qui ed altrove tal fece riverso*. Rossetti points out that our Lord's death was due to violence, and still more to fraud, and therefore Dante has imagined that, in the earthquake which took place at that time, part of this outside bulwark of the Circle of the Violent, and each of the bridges over the *Bolgia* of the Hypocrites, fell into ruins. Dante intended to show that, as the awful crime had been perpetrated through the instrumentality of these two sins, Nature, in horror and in fear, threw down into ruin the two identical spots where those two classes of sinners are punished: as though to place before their eyes a perpetual reminder of an event so terrible.

During these weighty observations the Poets have been gradually descending the broken face of the cliff, and, as they draw near to the foot of it, Virgil directs the attention of Dante to the river of blood in the valley below them, stretching as far as the eye can reach.*

Ma ficca gli occhi a valle ;† chè s' approcia‡

* As to the valley stretching as far as the eye could reach, see the supposed extent of the divisions and spaces in Hell in the Preliminary Chapter.

† *ficca gli occhi a valle*: the same as *avallare gli occhi*, to lower the eyes. In *Purg.* xxviii, 55-57, Dante uses *avallare* to describe a modest maiden casting down her eyes:

“Volsesi in sui vermigli ed in sui gialli
Fioretti verso me, non altrimenti
Che vergine, che gli occhi onesti avalli.”

‡ *s'approcia* for *s' appressa*: Blanc thinks this is derived

La riviera del sangue,* in la qual bollet
Qual che per violenza in altrui nocchia.”—

But fix thine eyes below there : for the river
of blood is nigh at hand, in which are seeth-
ing all they who by violence injure others.”

This is the Phlegethon, the third of the four rivers in Hell. Dante does not know the name of it until he is in the third Round, on the burning sand, when, in a conversation with Virgil about the rivers of Hell, he asks him where is the Phlegethon, and Virgil tells him that the boiling of the red river might have rendered his question needless. Then only does Dante realize that he has already seen the Phlegethon. We may notice moreover, in line 114 of this canto, that when Dante turns to Virgil for information about the tyrants immersed in the blood, Virgil tells him that the Centaur Nessus, who is guiding them, must be his principal informant ; though as a matter of fact Nessus does not instruct him as to the name of the river.

Dante now, thinking over Virgil's concluding words regarding the punishment of those who have done violence either to the person of their neighbour, or to his substance, breaks out into an apostrophe to Cupidity, as the primary cause of all violence, since it is only by giving way to their unchecked passions

from the Latin *ad-proximare*, and is an ancient form nearly akin to the French *s'approcher*, like many other forms in old Italian.

* *la riviera del sangue* : see canto xiv, 130-135.

† *in la qual bolle* : Compare *Purg.* xii, 55-57 :

“ il crudo scempio

Che fe' Tamiri, quando disse a Ciro :

Sangue sitisti, ed io di sangue t'empio.”

C C

that men lose their reason, and that is why he calls Cupidity blind.

O cieca cupidigia, e ria e folle,
 Che sì ci sproni nella vita corta, 50
 E nell' eterna poi sì mal c' immolle !

O Cupidity, blind, and guilty and insane,
 which so goadest us in our short life, and in
 the eternal (life) dost so miserably steep us
 (*i.e.* in the boiling blood) !

Rossetti explains this to mean that concupiscence and irascibility, when not kept under due control, urgè us on to crime in our short human life, and in the eternal life bring us to the miserable condition here described. But he is commenting on a different reading, which gives *o ira folle*, instead of *e ria e folle*, which is Witte's reading. Rossetti adds that blind cupidity makes men seize upon the property of others, and insane wrath makes us slay or wound them.

Dante now gives a description of the river of blood which was just coming into view, but he is only able to do so partially. He is still at a considerable elevation above the plain, and sees the Valley of the River of Blood stretching for miles and miles below him, until it recedes from view. Most of the commentators are careful to explain that the lines that follow are to be understood in the sense, "that of that particular Round Dante could only see a small segment, since the remainder stretched beyond his visual powers, by reason of its great extent."

Io vidi un' ampia fossa in arco torta,
 Come quella che tutto il piano abbraccia,
 Secondo ch' avea detto la mia scorta :

I saw a wide fosse curved like a bow, being
such that it encircles all the flat country, in
accordance with what my Guide had said.

Virgil had spoken to Dante about the lesser circles
in canto xi, 16—18.

The Poets now catch sight of the mythological
guardians of this Round, namely, the Centaurs, half
men and half horses. According to Boccaccio they
typify the men-at-arms, with whom the tyrants were
wont to keep their peoples in subjection.

E tra il piè della ripa ed essa, in traccia 55
Correan Centauri* armati di saette,
Come solean nel mondo andare a caccia.

And between the foot of the precipice and it
(the fosse), Centaurs were running in single
file, armed with arrows, as in the world they
were wont to go to the chase.

In the Preliminary Chapter we have discussed the
supposed dimensions of Hell. It will be seen that
Alessandro Vellutello, whose mensurations we have
adopted, estimates the total width of the seventh
circle as $17\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and that of each of the three
Rounds at 5·83 miles:

Benvenuto, alluding to the Centaurs galloping about
armed with arrows, says that in his day the Hun-
garians in Italy used to do so (*sicut recte faciunt hodie
Hungari in Italia*).

* The Centaurs are referred to in *Purg.* xxiv, 121-123 :

“ ‘Ricordivi,’ dicea, ‘dei maledetti
Nei nuvoli formati, che satolli
Teseo combatter coi doppi petti.”

Division III. The approach of the Poets is now observed by the Centaurs.

Vedendoci calar ciascun ristette,*
 E della schiera tre si dipartiro
 Con archi ed asticciuole prima elette : 60
 E l' un gridò da lungi :—" A qual martiro
 Venite voi, che scendete la costa ?
 Ditel costinci,† se non, l' arco tiro."—

Seeing us descend they all stopped short, and from the band three detached themselves, (armed) with bows and long arrows (which they had) previously selected. And from afar one (of them, Nessus) cried out : " To what torment come ye, who are descending the cliff-side ? Tell it from there, if not, I draw the bow."

The three Centaurs, as we shall see, are Chiron the

* *Vedendoci calar . . . se non, l' arco tiro* : In these six lines Scartazzini remarks that we have a complete photograph of a similar passage in Virgil, *Æn.* vi, 384-389 :

"Ergo iter inceptum peragunt, fluvioque propinquant.
 Navita quos jam inde ut Stygia prospexit ab unda
 Per tacitum nemus ire, pedemque advertere ripæ ;
 Sic prior aggreditur dictis, atque increpat ultro :
 ' Quisquis es, armatus qui nostra ad flumina tendis,
 Fare age, quid venias ; jam istinc et comprime gressum.'"

† *Ditel costinci*, etc. : Compare the words, and contrast the demeanour of this demon guardian of Hell with that of the Angel Porter at the Gate of Purgatory. See *Purg.* ix, 85-87 :

" ' Dite costinci, che volete voi ?
 Cominciò egli a dire : ' ov ' è la scorta ?
 Guardate che il venir su non vi noi ! ' "

In both instances the interposed answers of Virgil are very similar.

with which he told her she could bring back the love of Hercules if ever he grew cold to her. Some time afterwards Deianeira, hearing that Hercules had deserted her for Iole, sent the shirt to him. Hercules put it on, and immediately found himself in the most excruciating torments, and, being unable to take the shirt off, he lit a funeral pyre on Mount Ida, and burnt himself upon it. It is thus that Nessus revenged his death by himself.

Having described Nessus, whom he evidently regards with some contempt, Virgil draws Dante's attention to Chiron in terms of respect due to the tradition that he was a wise man, skilled in the use of herbs, a physician, an astronomer, a seer, and a musician.

Gelli, speaking of Chiron as being a most excellent physician, says that, according to Paul of Egina, he discovered the mode of curing certain abscesses, which have ever since been popularly called Chironic abscesses (*apostemazioni Chironiche*).*

E quel di mezzo, che al petto si mira, 70
 È il gran Chirone,† il qual nudrì Achille :
 Quell' altro è Folo,‡ che fu sì pien d' ira.

* Conf. *Chironius*, "old term for a malignant ulcer"—Mayne's *Expository Lexicon*, 1860, p. 190.

† *il gran Chirone, il qual nudrì Achille* : Compare *Purg.* ix, 34-39 :

" Non altrimenti Achille si riscosse,
 Gli occhi svegliati rivolgendo in giro,
 E non sappiendo là dove si fosse,
 Quando la madre da Chiron a Schiro
 Trafugò lui dormendo, in le sue braccia,
 Là onde poi li Greci il dipartiro."

‡ *Folo* : The death of Pholus by the hand of Hercules is mentioned twice by Virgil. *Georg.* ii, 455-57 :

D' intorno al fosso vanno a mille a mille,
 Saettando quale anima si svelle
 Del sangue più, che sua colpa sortille."— 75

And that one in the middle, who is looking at his breast, is the great Chiron, who brought up Achilles; that other is Pholus, who was so full of rage. Round about the fosse they go in thousands and thousands, directing their shafts at any spirit that raises itself out of the blood further than its crime has allotted to it."

Gelli thinks it is a well devised allegory for Dante to represent the three Centaurs coming against him the instant he comes into view; by which he means to show that there are three principal passions which Man has to encounter, that urge him to use violence against his neighbour. The first of these passions is Lust, which led Nessus to his death for the beautiful Deianeira; the second is Wrath, figured by Dante in Pholus; the third is Ambition, as seen in Chiron. Of these three, Lust and Wrath are always reprehensible. But Ambition, or the love of dominion, can sometimes be meritorious when sought after with a wish to profit the world, and not for

" . . . ille furentes

Centauros letho domuit, Rhætumque Pholumque
 Et magno Hylæum Lapithis craterè minantem."

In *Æn.* viii, 293-295, Hercules is thus addressed:

" Tu nubigenas, invicte, bimembres
 Hylæumque Pholumque manu, tu Cressia mactas
 Prodigia, et vastum Nemea sub rupe leonem."

Jacopo della Lana calls Pholus a soldier and a man of war, who, more than others, was overcome by rage; the Poets have therefore depicted him as a furious Centaur.

personal objects ; hence St. Paul (1 *Tim.* iii, 1) writes : " This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." Gelli thinks Chiron is intended here to represent honourable ambition, *ch' ei nudrò Achille* ; showing that the man who does good and teaches, is a worthy man, and moreover, in saying of Chiron that *si mirava al petto*, Dante evidently wished to describe a grave reflective personage, whose habit it was to go with downcast eyes and measured steps. Rossetti also writes that he cannot be reconciled to think of Chiron as a demon in Hell, like the Minotaur, Nessus and Pholus, seeing that from the remotest antiquity he has always been presented to our eyes as an eminently wise and good man, and the sage instructor of heroes. And although his pupil Achilles turned out covetous and headstrong, that was not on account of, but in spite of Chiron's bringing up of him. But Rossetti thinks Dante wished to depict a figure of the soul, and heeded not that, by placing Chiron as a devil in Hell, he was giving an entirely false impression of his character. In making Chiron obey the exalted mandate announced to him by Virgil, Dante represented him as good for those few moments, and indicated him as turning to the right (v. 97) to give orders to Nessus in compliance with Virgil's request.

The Poets advance to meet the three Centaurs.

Noi ci appressammo a quelle fiere snelle :
 Chiron prese uno strale, e con la cocca*
 Fece la barba indietro alle mascelle.

* *cocca* : The *Vocabolario della Crusca* gives "notch" as the primary signification of the word, and quotes this

Quando s' ebbe scoperta la gran bocca,
 Disse ai compagni :—" Siete voi accorti,
 Che quel di retro move * ciò ch' ei tocca?
 Così non soglion fare i piè de' morti."— 80

We approached those fleet monsters : (where-upon) Chiron took an arrow, and with the notch-end combed (*lit.* made) his beard back behind his jaws: When he had thus uncovered his huge mouth, he said to his companions : " Have ye noticed that the one behind (*i.e.* Dante) moves whatever he touches? Thus are not wont to do the feet of the dead."

Gelli observes that Vellutello, who is usually an obsequious follower of Landino, does not agree with him here in thinking that Chiron put his beard back in the act of drawing his bow to its full stretch, but

passage as indicating that part of the arrow on which are the feathers. It is also used to signify the arrow itself. See *Inf.* xvii, 135-136 :

" E, discarcate le nostre persone,
 Si dileguò, come da corda cocca."

and *Par.* viii, 104-5 :

" Disposto cade a provveduto fine,
 Sì come { cocca } in suo segno diretta."
 { cosa }

This last passage I quote because it is cited in the *Vocabolario della Crusca*, and also by Benvenuto, with the reading *cocca*. But all the four first editions, Lana, as well as Witte and Scartazzini, read *cosa* instead of *cocca*.

* *move ciò ch' ei tocca* : see verses 29-30 of this canto :

" quelle pietre, che spesso moviensi
 Sotto i miei piedi per lo nuovo carco."

rather that Chiron put back his beard from his mouth with his arrow, that he might speak with greater ease; and Gelli begs his hearers to notice how often one may see the same thing done by men with long beards, and that we ought to learn this lesson from it, that when we have to make a speech, we should as much prepare ourselves in all the external instruments that are requisite, as in our conceptions and internal thoughts.

Virgil here interposing, replies to Chiron for Dante, and we get an idea of the gigantic stature of *il gran Chirone*, by hearing up to what point only of his two-fold body Virgil reaches.

E il mio buon Duca, che già gli era al petto
Dove le duo nature * son consorti,

Rispose :—" Ben è vivo, e sì soletto 85
Mostrarli mi convien la valle buia :
Necessità 'l c' induce, e non diletto.

And my good Leader, who was now (standing) up to his breast (at the height) where the two natures (the equine and the human) are conjoined, answered: "He is indeed alive, and thus alone have I to show him the dark valley (Hell): Necessity brings him to it, and not pleasure."

Dante's necessity was that of finding the salvation of his soul, but Virgil goes on to tell Chiron by what authority he has brought Dante hither, and invokes

* *Dove le due nature son consorti*: This somewhat resembles the passage in *Purg.* xxxi, 80, 81, where the Gryphon, above which Beatrice is standing, is similarly described:

"Beatrice volta in sulla fiera,
Ch' è sol a una persona in due nature."

his co-operation, by requesting that one of his troop may protect them and carry Dante across the fosse.

Tal si partì da cantare alleluia,*
 Che mi commise quest' ufficio nuovo ;
 Non è ladron, nè io anima fuia. 90
 Ma per quella virtù, per cui io movo
 Li passi miei per sì selvaggia strada,
 Danne un de' tuoi, a cui noi siamo a pruovo,†
 Che ne dimostri là dove si guada,
 E che porti costui in su la groppa ; 95
 Che non è spirito che per l' aer vada."—

One there is (Beatrice) who withdrew herself
 from singing Hallelujah (*i.e.* came down from

* *Tal si partì da cantare alleluia*: Compare this answer of Virgil to Chiron with his answer to the Angel-Warder at the Gate of Purgatory, *Purg.* ix. 88-90 :

“ ‘ Donna del ciel, di queste cose accorta,
 Rispose il Maestro a lui, ‘ pur dianzi
 Ne disse : Andate là, quivi è la porta.’ ”

† *a cui noi siamo a pruovo*: Gelli remarks that in his time (1561) this passage was considered to be most puzzling to all the commentators, but that possibly it was an expression in common use in the time of Dante. He gives the various interpretations, but adds that as he has never found in any writer, or in any dialect, anything approaching or resembling this form, he declines to furnish an opinion as to its meaning.

Benvenuto explains it, *ad prope*, *i.e.* near, and I have followed his interpretation.

Buti, “to whom we may be approved and held dear.”

Landino, “to whom we may be approved and held dear, that he may with his experience give proof of his good guidance of us.”

Crescentino Giannini, the editor of the Commentary of Francesco da Buti (still alive in 1890), says that the expression, in the sense of *appresso*, near, is still to be found among the people about Genoa.

Heaven), and she entrusted me with this unwonted duty; he is no (living) robber, nor I the shade of a thief. But by that Power, by which I move my steps along so wild a road, give us one of thy followers, near to whom we are standing, that he may show us the place where there is a ford, and may bear on his croup this one (Dante), who is not a spirit that can walk upon air."

Chiron accedes to Virgil's request, and commands Nessus to accompany the Poets.

Chiron si volse in sulla destra poppa,*

E disse a Nesso : †—"Torna, e sì li guida,

E fa cansar, s' altra schiera v' intoppa."—

Chiron turned upon his right breast, and said to Nessus : "Return thou, and so guide them (as they desire), and should another band come upon you, keep it back."

Benvenuto here remarks that in fact, during Dante's life, similar cases must have occurred to him; for in his wanderings he occasionally fell into the hands of some noble castellan, from whom, on his departure, he would pray that one of his horsemen might accompany him and act as his escort; for Dante was greatly

* *in sulla destra poppa* : compare *Inf.* xvii, 31 :

"Però scendemmo alla destra mammella."

† *Nesso* : Ovid (*Met.* ix, 104-108) speaks of Nessus as experienced in the fords of the swift river Evenus, and accosting Hercules, embarrassed as to how to convey Deianeira across :

"Venerat Eveni rapidas Jove natus ad undas.

Uberius solito nimbis hiemalibus auctus,

Vorticibusque frequens erat, atque impervius amnis.

Intrepidum pro se, curam de conjuge agentem

Nessus adit, membrisque valens, scitusque vadorum."

honoured by these local magnates, high qualities like his being ever held in great esteem.

Division IV. Nessus conducts the Poets to the bank of the river of blood, in which they see immersed at varying depths, proportioned to the magnitude of their crimes, many spirits who had sinned grievously by violence against their neighbour. Nessus first points out the more notorious tyrants, who have to undergo nearly total immersion.

Noi ci movemmo colla scorta fida * 100

Lungo la proda del bollor vermiglio,

Ove i bolliti facean alte strida.

Io vidi gente sotto infino al ciglio ;

E il gran Centauro disse :—" Ei son tiranni,

Che dier nel sangue e nell' aver di piglio. 105

Quivi si piangon li spietati danni :

We moved on with our trusty escort along the bank of the boiling crimson (flood), wherein those that were seething uttered piercing screams. I saw people immersed up to the eyebrows ; and the great Centaur said : "They are tyrants who laid their grasp on blood and plunder. Here they bewail the pitiless wrongs wrought by them.

The first tyrant named is Alexander, and the question of his identity has given rise to much controversy.

* *scorta fida*: Two old commentators take very opposite views as to the meaning here of the word *fida*. The *Anonimo Fiorentino* says that Nessus was a faithful escort to the Poets, because he had been ordered to be so, while Buti thinks that the word is used ironically to signify that he was anything but the most faithful escort to Delaneira.

The *Chiose Anonime* ed Selmi, Pietro di Dante, Jacopo di Dante, Benvenuto, and the *Codice Cassinese*, think Alexander the Great is referred to. Mr. Paget Toynbee supports this view in a letter to *The Academy*, 15 Oct. 1887, in which he contends that Dante took his views on the subject from Orosius.

Buti is doubtful whether Alexander the Great or Alexander of Pheræ is meant, but, if the latter, then he thinks that Dante intended to refer to two tyrants in Sicily, for Buti takes Pheræ to have been in Sicily instead of Thessaly, and that these two tyrants made *Sicilia aver dolorosi anni*.

Lana thinks Alexander was a tyrant who conquered all the world, and amongst other cruelties caused to be slain at one time in Jerusalem eighty thousand men and their families.

The *Comento dell' Anonimo*, ed. Lord Vernon, says : "Questi è Alesandro re di Jerusalem e tiranno crudelissimo del quale si dice che $\frac{C}{VIII}$ huomeni co le mogli e co li figliuoli insieme fece a una fiata uccidere."

Gelli is unable to say which of three persons is meant ; Alexander the Great ; Alexander of Pheræ ; or "Alessandro Janneo, figliulo di Aristobolo, re degli Ebrei, uomo molto sanguinolento e crudele."

Scartazzini thinks it is Alexander of Pheræ, and says that Diodorus Siculus mentions him together with Dionysius. It is related of him that he used to clothe his victims in the skins of wild beasts, and then have them worried by his hounds, and Plutarch (*Pelop.* c. 29) relates of him that he would have men buried alive, and feel shame at the idea of showing any compassion. Scartazzini adds, moreover, that

Dante, in his other works, speaks in high praise of Alexander the Great. In the *De Monarchia*, ii, 9, he speaks of him as "Alexander rex Macedo maxime omnium ad palmam monarchiæ propinquans." And in *Convito* iv, 11: "E chi non ha ancora nel cuore Alessandro, per li suoi reali beneficii!"

Poletto (*Dizionario*, s. v. Alessandro) takes a very broad view. After touching lightly on the voluminous proofs that are urged by the respective advocates of Alexander the Great, or Alexander of Pheræ, he adds: "E perchè pur nelle quistioni critiche, come nei parlamenti costituzionali non manca mai il partito di mezzo, il centro, che serve o d' equilibrio o d' altalena [*see-saw*], così non manca chi è disposto ad accettare e l' uno e l' altro."

Quivi è Alessandro, e Dionisio fero,
Che fè Sicilia aver dolorosi anni :

Here is Alexander, and the cruel Dionysius,
who made Sicily pass years of suffering.

Rossetti remarks that there were two Dionysii in Sicily, both abominable tyrants, and both equally deserving of immersion in the boiling blood, and Rossetti thinks that it is not unreasonable to conjecture that Dante did not especially intend to distinguish either between them or the two Alexanders, and, by leaving their identity vague, allowed all the four to be implied. He says Dante did so in the case of the two Pyrrhuses and two Sextuses. He adds that Petrarch* likewise mentions Dionysius

* See Petrarch, *Trionfo d' Amore*, Cap. i. Terz. 35 :

"Que' duo pien di paura e di sospetto,
L' un è Dionisio, e l' altro è Alessandro :
Ma quel del suo temer ha degno affetto."

and Alexander together, without defining their individualities.

Having pointed out two tyrants of ancient history, Nessus now indicates two of the worst in Italy, the former of whom died a few years before Dante's birth, while the latter was his contemporary.

E quella fronte ch' ha il pel così nero
È Azzolino ; * e quell' altro ch' è biondo

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* *Azzolino III* da Romano was of the family of the Counts of Onara, and was son-in-law of the Emperor Frederick II. He was born in 1194, and being Imperial Vicar in the Marca Trivigiana, he ruled it with great tyranny from 1230 to 1260. His cruelties caused him to be held in such detestation that a crusade was proclaimed against him by Pope Alexander IV, and being taken prisoner, in defiance of his enemies he rent the bandages from his wounds, and so caused his own death after reigning 34 years. Benvenuto thus describes him : " Many write that Ecerinus was of middle height, swarthy, and covered with hair. But I hear that he had one long hair above his nose, which stood out whenever he was inflamed with anger, and that at such times all fled from before his face . . . Some have written that he had 50,000 men put to death. But among a thousand other atrocious crimes, when he had destroyed Padua, he was so overcome by frenzied rage, that he had 12,000 Paduans put to death by sword, fire, and starvation." Landino adds to this story that he caused these 12,000 Paduans to be imprisoned in a wooden enclosure, and had their names registered in a ledger by his Chancellor, against whom he entertained suspicions. On the ledger being filled up, Ezzelino told the Chancellor that he wished him to go with these souls to Hell, and present them with the register of their names to the Devil, from whom he had received many kindnesses ; and thereupon, having driven the ill-fated Chancellor inside the enclosure, he had all burned together. See also *Giov. Villani*, vi, ch. 72 ; and Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, iii, st. 33 :

È Opizzo * da Esti, il qual per vero
Fu spento dal figliastro su nel mondo.”—

“ Ezzellino, immanissimo tiranno,
Che fia creduto figlio del Demonio,
Farà, troncando i sudditi, tal danno,
E distruggendo il bel paese ausonio,
Che pietosi appo lui stati saranno
Mario, Silla, Neron, Cajo ed Antonio.”

Never had Azzolino loved, and in his horrible barbarities he treated both men and women alike.

In the *Dittamondo*, lib. ii, ch. xxviii, Fazio degli Uberti thus mentions Azzolino :

“ Tra Asolo e Bassan da quella proda
Un monte sta vedovo ed orfanino,
Che del peccato altrui poco si loda.
Di lassù scese in quel tempo Azzolino,
Che fe' dei Padovani tal sacrificio,
Qual sallo in Campagnola ogni fantino.”

Both Ezzellino and the Castel di Romano are mentioned by Dante in *Par.* ix, 25-30 :

“ In quella parte della terra prava
Italica, che siede tra Rialto
E le fontane di Brenta e di Piava,
Si leva un colle, e non surge molt' alto,
Là donde scese già una facella,
Che fece alla contrada un grande assalto.”

* *Opissone*, or Obizzo of Este, Marquis of Ferrara, Modena and Reggio, succeeded his grandfather Azzo VII, in 1264. He was an ardent Guelph partisan, and assisted the army of Charles of Anjou, which was being marched against Manfred, to cross over the river Po. He extended his rule into Venetia. Opinions seem to differ as to how far his reputation for cruelty and rapacity is justified ; and it must be remembered that his assistance given to the French army mainly contributed to the death of Manfred at the Battle of Benevento, and the defeat, capture, and subsequent execution of Manfred's son Conradin at Tagliacozzo. The resentment of the Ghibellines probably

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And that brow which has the hair so black is
Azzolino; and that other which is fair is
Opizzo of Este, who, to speak the truth, was
slain by his step-son up in the world."

Tradition says that Dante calls Opizzo's real son a step-son, because the idea of a son murdering his father is too horrible to entertain. Some relate that the son was only a reputed son, having been borne by Opizzo's wife in wedlock after an illicit amour, and that Dante, knowing this, calls him a step-son. But as will be seen from the note, these appear to be idle tales.

Benvenuto at this point draws a vivid picture of what he imagines to have taken place. He says the narrative in the text appears somewhat obscure, but that we are to suppose that the Centaur, standing on

showed itself by loading him with obloquy, and Dante goes on to cite a commonly received opinion at that time, that Opizzo met his death by being smothered on a sick bed by his son, who afterwards succeeded him as Azzo VIII. Poletto says that the majority of historians agree that this was a cruel and unauthenticated report circulated by his enemies, and not even possessing the merit of probability. Benvenuto describes Opizzone as being a man of that rare personal beauty for which the whole race of the Este were renowned, but that when tilting in honour of a lady at some jousts he had lost an eye.

In *Inf.* xviii, 55-57, he is the person spoken of as *il marchese* by Venedico Caccianimico, who confesses to Dante that for money he induced his sister, the beautiful Ghisola, to do the Marquis's will :

"Io fui colui, che la Ghisola bella
Condussi a far la voglia del Marchese,
Come che suoni la sconcia novella."

the bank, had been pointing out the most powerful and magnificent tyrants, who were being tormented in the stream of blood, but that he then began to show signs of wishing to pass into the blood itself. Dante in terror and uncertainty turns to Virgil for guidance as to what he is to do ; and Virgil must at once have ordered him to mount upon the Centaur's horse back, taking the place immediately behind the human part of his body, while Virgil would do so behind Dante ; so that the Centaur's human form would be the first (*i.e.* before Dante), and Virgil would be second (*i.e.* behind him), to allay his fears, and to protect him from falling into the boiling flood (*ut non timeret nec posset ruere in aquam*).

Allor mi volsi al Poeta, e quei disse :

—“ Questi ti sia or primo, ed io secondo.”—

I turned me then to the Poet, and he said :

“ Let this one (the Centaur) be now the first to thee, and I the second.”

Lana takes *primo* and *secondo* in the sense of “ in front ” and “ behind. ” He comments thus on the passage : “ Cioè che lassavano andare Nesso innanzi, che era primo a Dante, e Virgilio venia dirieto a Dante, sì ch' era Virgilio a Dante secondo. ” The more generally accepted interpretation however, is that which is supported by Blanc, namely that *primo* designates the person deserving of greater confidence from his experience and superior knowledge of the locality. Di Siena thinks Virgil used consummate tact in drawing back and yielding to Nessus the duty of pointing out the tyrants, so as to avoid having to place his patron Cæsar Augustus in the same category

of punishment as Alexander. Di Siena adds that some think Virgil's words are addressed to Nessus, and mean, "let him, Dante, be the first to mount on thy back, and I will be the second (to mount, behind him)." For my own part I think Virgil's words are addressed to Dante, and may well be taken in the double sense, namely, that Dante was to mount immediately behind Nessus, and Virgil immediately behind him, and also that Dante was to look wholly to Nessus for information and instruction during their transit.

We must now picture to ourselves this singular group preparing to pass by the ford through the river of blood, Dante sitting on the back of Nessus, and Virgil supporting him behind. They would seem to have moved along the bank, looking down upon the tormented shades till they came to the shallowest part (mentioned in lines 124-6), wherein only the feet are immersed. There they cross the ford.

Poco più oltre il Centauro s' affisse * 115
 Sopra una gente che infino alla gola
 Pareva che di quel bulicame uscisse.

A little further on the Centaur stopped above
 a multitude, who as far as the throat seemed
 to issue forth from that bubbling (pool).

The spirits here spoken of are, though deeply dyed in guilt, apparently in a slight degree less so than the tyrants before described, who were immersed up to

* *s' affisse*: compare the opening lines of *Purg.* xxx, 1-7:

"Quando il settentrion del primo cielo . . .

.

Fermo si affisse."

the eyebrows ; these only to the throat. We shall see that the river goes on shoaling until the Poets cross the ford, and from that point it gradually deepens again till the part where Attila, Pyrrhus, Sextus, and the robber barons are undergoing the deepest immersion. It will be noticed that Dante has altered the nomenclature of the river of blood, and styles it *quel bulicame*. As he is about to mention a ghastly story that had occurred at Viterbo, he probably finds it convenient to adopt the name of the peculiar waters of that place. Benvenuto says that the Bulicame is a lake of water which is red, hot, and sulphureous, near Viterbo, but that he will describe it at greater length in canto xiv. The *Anonimo Fiorentino* says that this Bulicame makes *bolle* or bubbles, and that its boiling waters take their name from that cause.

A shade is now pointed out, who from the singular enormity of his offence is set apart in solitary torment.

Mostrocci un' ombra dall' un canto sola,

Dicendo :—" Colui fesse in grembo a Dio

Lo cor che in sul Tamigi ancor si cola."—* . 120

He showed us a shade apart on one side,

* *sul Tamigi ancor si cola* : There are two interpretations given of the word *cola*. The first would derive it from the verb *colare*, and would signify that the heart of the murdered Henry of Cornwall still continued to drip blood, probably from the enormity of the crime of slaying him during the elevation of the Host. The second, and more usually adopted interpretation, is to derive *cola* from the Latin *colere*, which Blanc says is not without precedent among old writers, and it would then take the meaning, "is held in reverence." Benvenuto comments : "*ancor si cola, idest colitur.*"

saying : " That one (Guy de Montfort) in the bosom of God (*i.e.* in God's sanctuary at Viterbo) pierced the heart which is still venerated on the Thames."

The assassin was Count Guy, son of Simon de Montfort,* who, to avenge the death of his father, murdered, during the celebration of High Mass in the Cathedral at Viterbo, Prince Henry, son of Richard Duke of Cornwall, and consequently nephew of Henry III, King of England. Prince Henry had come there in the train of King Charles of Anjou, who was on his way to the Papal Court, and Pietro di Dante says that at this time (1270), a Court was being held at Viterbo in the Church, and while Henry, with bended knees, was devoutly looking upon the Body of Christ, the said Lord Guy pierced him through with his sword. In the *Comento dell' Anonimo*, published by Lord Vernon in 1848, Guy is described as "Messer Arnaldo di Brunforte d' Inghilterra," but the old commentaries of Pietro di Dante, Jacopo di Dante and the *Chiose Anonime* (Selmi) all give him his correct name. The *Comento dell' Anonimo* adds that the text says *in grembo a Dio*, because the assassin slew his victim in the presence of the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The old commentators agree that the heart of the murdered prince was extracted, and taken in a casket to King Edward in London, in

* Guy de Montfort is mentioned by Fazio degli Uberti in the *Dittamondo*, book ii, ch. xxix :

"Un poco prima, dove più si stava
Sicuro Arrigo, il conte di Monforte
L' alma dal corpo col coltel gli cava."

order that he might take measures to avenge his blood relation. The King is said to have erected on London Bridge a statue (of Prince Henry himself, Lana says), in the outstretched hand of which was placed the casket containing the heart, the base of the statue bearing this inscription: *Cor gladio scissum do, cui consanguineus sum*. Benvenuto relates the story at great length, and says that Prince Henry's body was embalmed and carried to the City of London, and interred in "a certain monastery of monks, called there *Guamiscier* [Westminster], in a chapel, wherein are buried all the Kings of England, and round which the effigies of them all are to be seen." He also confirms the story of the hand of the statue holding the heart, but adds that above the heart was placed a naked sword in witness of the crime. He says that by the river is to be understood the city, and that the Tamis is a river flowing by the royal city of London, which of old was called Trinovantum, as *Julius Celsus** writes.

As the Poets advance along the bank they come to a less guilty order of the Violent, such as ordinary homicides or robbers, and their punishment is more lenient.

Poi vidi gente, che di fuor del rio
Tenea la testa ed ancor tutto il casso : †
E di costoro assai riconobb' io.

* *Julius Celsus* : a scholar at Constantinople in the seventh century after Christ, who made a recension of the text of Cæsar's Commentaries.

† *casso* : from the Latin *caprum*. The *Vocabolario della*

I next saw people, who held the head and
even all the bust out of the river: and of
those I recognized many.

Rossetti remarks that the small tyrants were far more numerous than the great ones, and consequently Dante, who lived in those atrocious times, was able to identify a good many. But *riconobbi* may also well be taken to mean that Dante recognized them after Nessus had pointed them out and named them, just as in *Limbo* (canto iv, 119) he says: *Mi fur mostrati gli spiriti magni*, and then goes on to speak of those he saw just as if he had recognized them.

Così a più a più si faceva basso
Quel sangue sì, che cocea * pur li piedi: 125
E quivi fu del fosso il nostro passo.

Thus more and more did that (stream of)
blood become shallow, so that (at last) it only
boiled the feet (of the tormented): and here
was our passage of the fosse.

As Nessus is wading, he points out that on either
side the depth increases.

—“ Sì come tu da questa parte vedi
Lo bulicame che sempre si scema,”—

Crusca explains it as the concave part of the body surrounded by the ribs.

* *cocea pur li piedi*: Others read *copria, toccava, sì che copria li piedi, sì cocco* [sic] *tutti i piedi, cocea lor li piedi*, etc. On these variants Dr. Moore (*Textual Criticism*, p. 302, 303) writes: “*Copria* has quite the air of a correction, it being a much more obvious word than *cocea* to apply to a river. The corrector forgot that it was *sangue bollente*. *Cocea* has the support of the more numerous and generally more authoritative MSS., though most of the Vatican family have *copria*.”

Disse il Centauro,—“ voglio che tu credi,
 Che da quest' altra più a più giù prema 130
 Lo fondo suo, infin ch' ei si raggiunge
 Ove la tirannia convien che gemà.

“ As thou seest the boiling stream continually shoals on this side,” said the Centaur, “ I would have thee believe that on that other (side) it deepens its bed more and more, until it reunites (*i.e.* completes its circle at that part) where tyranny has to lament.

Lana explains that what Nessus virtually says to Dante is that as he has seen the river gradually shoaling up to the place they have now reached, so must he understand that on the other side it deepens again correspondingly, until on the far side of the circle it attains a greater depth than any Dante has seen ; and there the tyrants would seem to be undergoing complete immersion.

Three hateful tyrants are next named, and after them two robber barons, both of them bearing the name of Rinieri, and one, at least, of a noble family.

La divina giustizia di qua punge
 Quell' Attila * che fu flagello in terra,

* *Quell' Attila che fu flagello in terra*: Attila the celebrated King of the Huns styled himself “ *The Scourge of God*.” Poletto (*Dizionario*) observes that Dante follows the popular tradition which credited Attila with the destruction of Florence, whereas it is a known fact that he never crossed the Po ; but perhaps Totila the King of the Goths may have greatly injured the city in his wars against the Generals of Justinian ; and at several places in Tuscany the name of Attila is to be seen in place of that of Totila in ancient inscriptions. This is the case at Poppi in the Casentino. By Lana, Pietro di Dante, Jacopo di Dante, the *Chiose Anonime* (Selmi), and Buti, another tradition is

E Pirro,* e Sesto ; † ed in eterno munge 135
 Le lagrime, che col bollor disserra
 A Rinier da Corneto, a Rinier Pazzo, ‡
 Che fecero alle strade tanta guerra :^o—
 Poi si rivolse, e ripassossi il guazzo.

related, by which it would seem that Attila, when besieging Rimini, entered the city in disguise, and going into one of the *loggie* where the citizens were wont to play at tables or chess, he was recognized by a citizen, who struck him on the head with a chess or back-gammon board and killed him on the spot. But Benvenuto alludes to this story as being perfectly false, and asserts that Attila died of a violent bleeding at the nose after drinking wine to great excess at the banquet consequent on his marriage with Honoria, sister of the Emperor Valentinian ; and in that way this man of blood was choked with blood and wine when dying, just as after death he was immersed in blood up to the eyebrows.

* *Pirro*: Opinions have differed as to which Pyrrhus Dante means here, but there seems little doubt that he is referring to the famous King of Epirus, who from B.C. 280 to 274 was so terrible a foe to the might of Rome. Of the old commentators, Pietro di Dante and Benvenuto both support the above view, and both mention his alleged descent from the other Pyrrhus the son of Achilles ; Benvenuto also relates that he was cousin of Alexander the Great. Jacopo di Dante, the *Comento dell' Anonimo*, the *Chiose Anonime* (Selmi), and Buti all contend that Pyrrhus the son of Achilles is intended.

† *Sesto*: Sextus the son of Pompey the Great, a notorious sea-pirate, of whom Lucan (*Phars.* vi, 420-422) says :

“Sextus erat, Magno proles indigna parente,
 Qui, mox Scyllæis exsul grassatus in undis,
 Polluit æquoreos Siculus pirata triumphos.”

Some maintain that Sextus Tarquinius is meant, and Buti says he feels quite uncertain to which of the two Dante is referring.

‡ *Rinier da Corneto* and *Rinier de' Pazzi* were both notorious robber-barons, the former in the *Maremma* district, and the latter in the country between Florence and Arezzo. Of

There Divine Justice torments that Attila who was the Scourge on earth, and Pyrrhus, and Sextus; and to (all) eternity extracts (*lit.* milks) tears, which by (the torture of) the seething flood it unlocks from Rinieri da Corneto, from Rinieri Pazzo (*i.e.* dei Pazzi), who made so much war upon the highways:” He (Nessus) then turned back, and (quitting us) repassed the ford.

Nessus has, while speaking, conveyed the Poets to the opposite shore. We infer that they dismount, and the Centaur at once returns to his post. They are on the edge of the Forest of Woe, which, as we shall see in the next canto, they enter, and contemplate the sufferings of the Suicides.

Rinieri de' Pazzi the *Ottimo* says that he was a knight of the noble family of the Pazzi, and used to despoil the prelates of the Church of Rome by order of the Emperor Frederick II, about 1228. He was excommunicated in 1269 by Clement IV.

END OF CANTO XII.

CANTO XIII.

THE SECOND ROUND OF THE SEVENTH
CIRCLE.

THE VIOLENT AGAINST THEMSELVES.

THE HARPIES.

PIER DELLE VIGNE.

THE SQUANDERERS OF THEIR WEALTH.

THE BLACK HOUNDS OF HELL.

LANO OF SIENA — JACOMO DI SANT'
ANDREA.

ROCCO DE' MOZZI.

At the conclusion of the last canto we saw Dante and Virgil standing upon the further shore of the river of blood, where they had been deposited by the Centaur Nessus. He has just recrossed the stream, and they are about to force their way into the dreadful forest where Suicides meet their doom.

Benvenuto divides the canto into four parts.

In Division I, from v. 1 to v. 21, the Harpies, and the nature of the penalties of the Suicides are described.

In Division II, from v. 22 to v. 78, Dante encounters the shade of Pier delle Vigne, the great Chancellor of the Emperor Frederick II, and hears his sad tale.

In Division III, from v. 79 to v. 108, Pier delle Vigne, in answer to Dante's inquiry, explains how it

happens that the souls of the Suicides are converted into trees.

In Division IV from v. 109 to v. 151, the miserable fate of the dissipators of their own possessions is related.

Division I. The Poets are now entering into the second of the Rounds or concentric rings into which the Seventh Circle is divided. The first Round was a vast plain which extended around a moat or river of blood of great extent. Immediately on the other side of this river the great forest is situated, stretching away in a wide circle; and within this again is the third Round of burning sand, which the Poets can only observe from the shelter of the forest. Therefore from the inner edge of the river of blood to the outer edge of the burning sand the whole intervening space is forest. In this are punished two classes of the Violent against themselves, namely :

(1) The Violent against their own persons, *i.e.* Suicides, who are transformed into trees, the shoots of which are fed upon by the Harpies.

(2) The Violent against their own substance, *i.e.* the dissipators of their own property, who in complete nudity have to flee before a voracious pack of black bitches by whom they are overtaken and torn to pieces.

The Preliminary Chapter, under the heading "*Dimensions of Hell*," recounts the two leading attempts that were made, by Manetti (about 1480), and Vellutello (1596), to estimate the size of the different parts of Hell; and as the former scheme was

never properly finished by its author, but very imperfectly carried on by others, we put it aside, and confined ourselves to the estimate of Vellutello. According to him, each of these Rounds of the Circle of Violence has a width of 5·83 miles, and the width of the Seventh Circle therefore would be about $17\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

The rugged and impenetrable character of the forest, and the forbidding aspect of its gloomy recesses is first described.

Non era ancor di là Nesso arrivato,
Quando noi ci mettemmo per un bosco,
Che da nessun sentiero era segnato.

Non * frondi verdi, ma di color fosco,
Non rami schietti, ma nodosi e involti, 5
Non pomi v' eran, ma stecchi con toscò.

Not yet had Nessus reached the other side, when we cast ourselves into a wood, which was marked by no track. Not green the foliage, but of dusky hue, not smooth the branches, but gnarled and intertwined, no fruits were there, but thorns imbued with poison.

Two things are worth notice in the above lines. By stating that they entered the wood before Nessus

* Gelli greatly admires the rhetorical skill in which Dante has described the evil nature of this forest, beginning each of the clauses with *non*, and placing the verb, which applies to all three, in the last clause, and thereby giving great emphasis and intensity to the signification of the words. Compare Cicero, *In Verrem*, act ii, lib. i, cap. 3: "Non enim furem, sed ereptorem; non adulterum, sed expugnatorem pudicitiae; non sacrilegum, sed hostem sacrorum religionumque; non sicarium, sed crudelissimum carnificem civium sociorumque in vestrum iudicium adduximus."

had reached the other side, Dante wishes to show that he and Virgil lost no time in pursuing their way, and it does not seem that they had to traverse any great intervening space. Secondly, they appear to have found themselves in front of a thick outer wall of underwood, unbroken by anything like a path or track to indicate the way for them to go. The words *ci mettemmo per un bosco* well express the idea of men who cast themselves headlong forward without knowing where they are going, (*come uom che va, nè sa dove riesca. Purg. ii, 132*). Benvenuto commenting on this, observes that it is well imagined by Dante to describe this forest as having no straight path, inasmuch as there is no reasonable cause that should induce men to commit so desperate an act of self-destruction.

Dante now compares the dense brakes of the Infernal Forest to those of the Tuscan Maremma with which we may suppose him to have been familiar.

Non han sì aspri sterpi nè sì folti
 Quelle fiere selvagge, che in odio hanno
 Tra Cecina * e Corneto † i luoghi colti.

No thickets so sharp nor tangled have those
 savage wild-beasts, which between Cecina and

* The *Cecina* is a river that runs into the Mediterranean after flowing through the province of Volterra.

† *Corneto* is a small town in the former States of the Church, near the sea, on the River Marta. Cecina and Corneto form as nearly as possible the boundaries of the Tuscan Maremma, where, in the time of Dante, there were dense forests, tenanted by bears, wild boars, stags, roe-deer, and other animals that shun the haunts of man.

Corneto have in hatred (*i.e.* avoid) the open cultivated spots.

Benvenuto remarks that Dante now describes the Harpies, the appointed ministers of punishment in this circle. As this is a most dismal wood, it is appropriate that in it there should be the most dismal birds.*

Quivi le brutte Arpfe † lor nidi fanno, 10
 Che cacciar delle Strofade i Troiani
 Con tristo annunzio di futuro danno.

* In no part of his writings does Dante show greater skill than in his contrasts. Compare the death-like gloom, the horror, the inhospitable density of the thickets, the thorns, and finally the brutal winged monsters of the forest of Hell with the soft enchantment of the *divina foresta spessa e viva*, as related in *Purg.* xxviii. In Hell he has just quitted the river of blood, in the divine forest he approaches a rill so limpid that all the purest streams in the world would appear turbid beside it. A soft fragrant breeze freshens the air, and from it (v. 10)

“le fronde, tremolando pronte,
 Tutte e quante piegavano,

Non però dal lor esser dritto sparte
 Tanto, che gli augelletti per le cime
 Lasciasser d'operare ogni lor arte;
 Ma con piena letizia l'ore prime,
 Cantando, ricevièno intra le foglie,
 Che tenevan bordone alle sue rime.”

Very different are the ghastly winged beings who, with repulsive bodies, discordant cries, and destructive actions, are the denizens of the forest of woe.

† *le brutte Arpfe*: Scartazzini thinks the Harpies are a symbol of the remorse of a bad conscience. The Trojans who accompanied Æneas were compelled to abandon the Strophades, islands in the Ionian Sea, finding them infested by the Harpies,

Ale hanno late, e colli e visi umani,
 Piè con artigli, e pennuto il gran ventre :
 Fanno lamenti in su gli alberi strani. 15

Here make their nests the loathsome Harpies,
 who drove the Trojans from the Strophades,
 with dire announcement of approaching evil.
 Broad wings have they, and human necks
 and faces, feet with talons, and feathered
 their huge bellies : on the strange trees they
 utter mournful cries.

Gelli comments on the various opinions as to what
 who polluted their meals, and the Harpy Celæno predicted their
 sufferings from hunger. See Virg. *Æn.* iii, 210-218 :

“ . . . Strophades Graio stant nomine dictæ,
 Insulæ Ionio in magno : quas dira Celæno,
 Harpyiæque colunt aliæ, Phineia postquam
 Clausa domus, mensasque metu liquere priores.
 Tristius haud illis monstrum, nec sævior ulla
 Pestis et ira Deum Stygiis sese extulit undis.
 Virginei volucrum vultus, fœdissima ventris
 Proluvies, uncaëque manus, et pallida semper
 Ora fame.”

The meal of the Trojans, polluted by the Harpies, is described
 in lines 223-228 :

“ Tum littore curvo
 Exstruimusque toros, dapibusque epulamur opimis.
 At subitæ horrifico lapsu de montibus adsunt
 Harpyiæ, et magnis quatiant clangoribus alas,
 Diripiuntque dapes, contactuque omnia fœdant
 Immundo.”

In lines 253-257 we find the prophecy of Celæno related :

“ Italiam cursu petitis, ventisque vocatis
 Ibiq; Italiam, portusque intrare licebit.
 Sed non ante datam cingetis mœnibus urbem,
 Quam vos dira fames nostræque injuria cædis
 Ambrosas subigat malis consumere mensas.”

E E

Dante intended by placing the Harpies in this forest. Gelli says that Landino thinks they signify rapine, there being no greater rapine, that a man can be guilty of, than that of taking his own life. Vellutello disagrees with Landino, and says that Dante has only placed the Harpies here for the purpose of giving fitting birds for trees of such a nature as these. Giambullari sees in them an emblem of cruelty, as they have nothing human but the face and neck. Gelli, without either approving or condemning these views, wishes to add his own. He thinks the Harpies signify three conditions, which so influence men's minds, that if they do not control them by Reason, they may be led into such despair as to make life odious and insupportable to them. These conditions are (1) Grief; (2) Slavery; and (3) Poverty.*

* The following diverse opinions are taken from some of the old commentators :

Jacopo della Lana : " The Harpies are an allegory, signifying self-will, whence despair."

Petr. Allighieri : " Harpies . . . *i.e.* rapines and, as the man who kills himself and dissipates his possessions, snatches away his life and wealth, therefore he (Dante) pictures the Harpies feeding on such despairing wretches, figured by trees."

Jac. Allighieri : " The Harpies, figured as they are, signify the sad recollections and memories of their own (*i.e.* the Suicide's own) privation."

The Ottimo : " The Harpies have here to signify, that the sad recollections and memories of those who deprive themselves of life are gnawed and lacerated by fetid infamy."

Boccaccio : " The Harpies signify rapacity. they (the Suicides) snatched away their own lives, so the Harpies make them suffer by snatching off their tops, that is, feeding upon

Benvenuto here recapitulates the disposition of these three Rounds, remarking that Virgil takes this opportunity of telling Dante in which of them he is.

Lo buon Maestro :—" Prima che più entre,
 Sappi che se' nel secondo girone,"—
 Mi comìnciò a dire,—“ e sarai, mentre
 Che tu verrai nell' orribil sabbione.
 Però riguarda bene, e sì vedrai
 Cose, che torrien fede al mio sermone.”—

20

And the good Master began to say to me :
 “ Before thou enter further, know that thou
 art in the Second Round, and shalt be, until
 thou shalt issue upon the horrible sand-waste.
 Look well therefore, and so shalt thou see
 (such strange) things, as might discredit my
 speech.”

Division II. Dante now begins to describe the torment of the Suicides. He hears sounds of pain all round him. These are caused by the Harpies pecking twigs off the trees. The trees are the actual

them, and making them more hideous and foul. They build their nests upon these trees to remind them that their woe will continually increase.”

Benvenuto : “ The Harpies who bite off the tops, and scatter the blood of these (Suicides), figure Avarice and Prodigality, both of which vices reduce a man to despair.”

Buti : “ They are placed to make their nests and feed upon the trees which clothe the souls of the desperate, and also to utter lamentations, which are the remorse of those for the evil they have done, by their despair and violence, against themselves.”

Bargigi thinks them to be the Furies, as depicted by the Poets.

bodies of the tormented, and they only have power of articulation through the wounds caused by the Harpies. As each twig is broken off, from the broken end blood issues, and with it the sound of wailing.

Io sentia da ogni parte traer guai,
E non vedea persona che il facesse ;
Perch' io tutto smarrito m' arrestai.

I heard lamentations uttered on every side,
and I saw no one who made them ; whereat
quite bewildered I stood still.

Dante stands still, to see where among the trees are concealed the persons, whose voices he can hear but cannot see. Virgil divines his thoughts, and hastens to give him a practical proof of their being partly erroneous.

I' credo ch' ei credette ch' io credesse,* 25
Che tante voci uscisser tra que' bronchi
Da gente che per noi si nascondesse.

* *I' credo ch' ei credette ch' io credesse* : Blanc says that he would like to be able to contend that Dante neither sought out nor avoided such-like play of words, but that the following passages forbid one from coming to the conclusion that he did not somewhat relish them :

Inf. xiii, 67-8 :

“ Infiammò contra me gli animi tutti,
E gl' infiammati infiammar sì Augusto.”

Inf. xxvi, 65-6 :

“ Maestro, assai ten prego
E riprego, che il prego vaglia mille.”

Inf. xxx, 136-7 :

“ E quale è quei che suo dannaggio sogna,
Che sognando desidera sognare.”

Purg. xx, 1-2 :

“ Contra miglior voler voler mal pugna ;
Onde contra il piacer mio, per piacerli.”

I think that he (Virgil) thought that I thought that so many voices issued through those trunks from people who were hiding themselves on account of us.

Dante's imagination is only partly incorrect. There *are* persons confined in the trees, whose voices he can hear, but it is not on account of him and Virgil that they are concealed, and Virgil therefore shows him how to get at the whole truth.

—"Però,"—disse il Maestro,—"se tu tronchi
Qualche fraschetta d' una d' este piante,
Li pensier ch' hai si faran tutti monchi."— 30

"Therefore," said the Master, "if thou break off any little twig from one of these trees, the thoughts that thou hast will be altogether modified (*lit.* mutilated)."

Buti remarks that Virgil only tells Dante that he is *partly* wrong; that his ideas on the subject will be

Purg. xxvii, 132 :

"Fuor sei dell' erté vie, fuor sei dell' arte."

Purg. xxxi, 136-7 :

"Per grazia fa noi grazia che disvele
A lui la bocca tua."

Purg. xxxiii, 143-4 :

"Rifatto sì, come piante novelle
Rinnovellate di novella fronda."

Par. iii, 56-7 :

"perchè fur negletti
Li nostri voti, e vòti in alcun canto."

Par. v, 139 :

"Nel modo che il seguente canto canta."

Par. xxi, 49-50 :

"Perch' ella, che vedeva il tacer mio
Nel veder di colui che tutto vede."

diminished, *si faran monchi*, but not be altogether removed. Benvenuto, on the other hand, takes *monchi* to mean that Dante's belief was to be entirely amputated and removed.

Dante, eager for information, at once follows Virgil's advice.

Allor porsi la mano un poco avante,
 E colsi un ramicel da un gran pruno : *
 E il tronco † suo gridò :—"Perchè mi schiante?"—
 Da che fatto fu poi di sangue bruno,
 Ricominciò a gridar :—"Perchè mi scerpi? 35
 Non hai tu spirto di pietate alcuno?
 Uomini fummo, ed or sem fatti sterpi :
 Ben dovebb' esser la tua man più pia,
 Se state fossim' anime di serpi."—‡

* *un gran pruno* : Contrast the condition of this shade, the great Chancellor of Frederick II, transformed into a great forest tree, with that of Rocco de' Mozzi, a person of no great distinction, mentioned in line 123 *et seq.*, who has become merely a humble shrub (*cespuglio*).

† *E il tronco suo gridò* : The *Anonimo Fiorentino* thinks that the tree remonstrated, because it knew that Dante was not one of the appointed ministers of the punishment of Hell.

‡ On lines 31-39 inclusive, Gelli remarks that he only wishes that they could be considered by some who venture to blame Dante's style and words; and if they wish to know the beauty, the force, and the energy of his writing, they should compare them with that of Virgil, who, in a long passage in *Æn.* iii, 22-57, relates how Æneas found the shade of Polydorus imprisoned in a tree. Dante's lines perfectly resemble these following (see lines 26-29) :

"Horrendum et dictu video mirabile monstrum.
 Nam, quæ prima solo ruptis radicibus arbor
 Vellitur, huic atro liquuntur sanguine guttæ
 Et terram tabo maculant."

Canto XIII. *Readings on the Inferno.* 423

Come d' un stizzo verde, che arso sia 40
Dall' un de' capi, che dall' altro geme,*
E cigola per vento che va via ;
Sì della scheggia rotta usciva insieme
Parole e sangue : ond 'io lasciai la cima
Cadere, e stetti come l' uom che teme. 45

Then I stretched my hand a little forward,
and plucked a tiny branch from a great tree :
and its trunk cried out : "Why dost thou
rend me?" After it had become dark with
blood, it recommenced crying : "Why dost
thou mangle me? Hast thou no sort of feel-
ing of pity? Men were we, and now are we

And again, lines 39-42 :

"gemitus lacrymabilis imo
Auditur tumulo, et vox reddita fertur ad aures :
Quid miserum, Ænea, laceras ? jam parce sepulto ;
Parce pias scelerare manus."

And Frezzi, *Il Quadriregio*, book i, ch. 4 :

"A quelle frasche stesi su la mano,
E d' una vetta un ramuscel ne colsi ;
Allora ella gridò : oimè, fa piano,
E sangue vivo uscì, ond' io lo tolsi."

* *geme* : The primary meaning of *gemere* (*Vocabolario della Crusca*) is to distil drops, to send forth bubbles. In the market at Florence the cheese-sellers, praising their Parmesan, cry : "Guardi 'l bel Parmigiano l. lo vedi come *geme* !" meaning that it is so fresh that it exudes moisture. They will also use *piange* in the same sense.

Chaucer (*Knights Tale*, 2339-2342) has thus imitated this passage :

"And as it queynt, it made a whistelyng,
As doth a wete brond in his brennyng.
And at the brondes end out ran anoon
As it were bloody drops many oon."

turned into trees : well might thy hand have been more merciful, (even) had we been souls of serpents." As from a green brand that is on fire at one of its ends, and from the other exudes bubbles, and hisses with the air (*lit.* wind) which is escaping ; so from the broken twig there came forth together both words and blood : whereupon I let the branch fall, and stood like a man who is in fear.

Virgil, seeing the bewilderment of Dante, comes to his aid and, addressing the ill-fated spirit in the tree with much courtesy and kindness, apologizes for having felt himself obliged to counsel Dante to break off the branch, as it was absolutely necessary for him to have a practical demonstration of the truth. He also invites him to tell Dante who he was.

—" S' egli avesse potuto creder prima,"—

Rispose il Savio mio,—" anima lesa,

Ciò ch' ha veduto pur con la mia rima,

Non averebbe in te la man distesa ;

Ma la cosa incredibile mi fece

Indurlo ad opra, che a me stesso pesa.

Ma dilli chi tu fosti, sì che, in vece

D' alcuna ammenda, tua fama rinfreschi

Nel mondo su, dove tornar gli lece."—

"O wounded Soul," answered my Sage, "had he been able to believe before that which he has only seen in my rhyme (*i.e.* in the *Aeneid*), he would not have stretched forth his hand against thee, but the incredibility of the thing made me prompt him to the act, which (now) upon myself weighs heavily. But tell him who thou wast ; so that in

50

The shade is that of Pietro delle Vigne.

Benvenuto says that he was born at Capua of poor parents, and turned his education to such good account that he became the most learned man of his day. As a doctor versed both in the Roman and the Civil Law, and a perfect master of style, he rose into such high favour with the Emperor Frederick II, as to become his Chancellor and his most intimate confidant. In this capacity he had access to all the Emperor's secrets, and was enabled either to confirm or alter his purposes, and to manage everything exactly as he liked. But his too great good fortune brought upon him the envy and hatred of many; for the other courtiers, seeing that his exaltation led to their abasement, secretly plotted to accuse him of charges which they trumped up one after the other. One accused him of having so enriched himself, that he was more wealthy than the Emperor; another, that he took credit to himself for whatever the Emperor might have done of his own wisdom; another accused him of revealing the Emperor's secrets to the Roman Pontiff, and so on. Frederick II, who was by nature suspicious, gave faith to all these calumnies, cast Pier delle Vigne into prison, and had his eyes put out. Some relate that, as Frederick was making a progress through Tuscany to Pisa, Pietro was borne on a mule in his train, and conveyed to the Castello di San Miniato, where he put an end to himself by beating his head against the wall of the dungeon in which he was confined. Others have it, that Pietro, when standing at the window of his own palace in his native city of Capua, threw himself down into the street

from a great height, just when the Emperor was passing by. But Benvenuto thinks he committed suicide in his first prison, and does not give credence to the two stories just quoted, first, because he does not think it probable that the Emperor, after having had Pietro's eyes put out, would have had him conveyed in his train for no purpose, and still less that, after having had him blinded, he should have let him go at liberty, for Pietro was not blinded in his mind, and might by his counsels have done Frederick much harm. Benvenuto adds that Frederick had many put to death, after imposing fines upon them, and amongst others he did not spare one of his own sons in a case precisely similar to that of Pietro delle Vigne. Boccaccio relates the circumstances of Pietro's fall and death somewhat differently and in great detail. He says that the opportunity seized by Pietro's enemies for slandering him to the Emperor was when the latter was at war with the Church, and that by forged letters and suborned witnesses they made Frederick believe himself to have been betrayed by Pietro. The Emperor's confidence in his Chancellor being thus destroyed, he had him blinded, but, not being fully convinced of his guilt, allowed him to go away free. Pietro caused himself to be conducted to Pisa, a city which he knew to be loyal to the Emperor, and where, from the great services he had rendered it in the days of his power, he might expect some friendliness from its citizens. Being disappointed in this, he one day caused a boy, who was leading him about, to place him opposite the Church of San Paolo on the Arno. Then, suddenly breaking away from his little guide, he

rushed furiously forward, with his head down like a sheep butting, and dashed out his brains against the wall of the Church.

Boccaccio points out that, in the lines that follow, the shade of Pietro never once mentions his own name to Dante, by which one may take for granted that his reputation was widely spread, and his sad story well known.

Io son colui, che tenni ambo le chiavi
 Del cor di Federico, e che le volsi
 Serrando e disserando sì soavi, 60
 Che dal secreto suo quasi ogni uom tolsi : *
 Fede portai al glorioso officio,
 Tanto ch' io ne perdei lo sonno † e i polsi.

* *Che dal secreto suo quasi ogni uom tolsi*: The expression *secreto suo* corresponds to the Latin phrase *a secretis*, and is analogous to the Italian word *secretario* or *segretario*. Benvenuto relates, as a wonderful instance of the intimacy of Pietro with Frederick II, that on a palace at Naples were to be seen the effigies of the Emperor seated on a throne, and Pietro on a chair by his side. The people were represented kneeling at the Emperor's feet, asking for judgment of their causes in the following verses :

" Cæsar, amor legum Federice piissime regum
 Causarum telas Nostrarum solve querelas."

[Observe that, though these are two hexameters, both in them, and in the lines that follow, the half lines are made to rhyme]. The Emperor was represented giving his reply in these words :

" Pro vestra lite Censorem juris adite
 Hic nam jura dabit, vel per me danda rogabit
 Vineæ cognomen, Petrus est judex sibi nomen."

I suppose *Vineæ* was pronounced *Vigne*, making a *spondee*.

† *il sonno e i polsi*: I do not here follow Witte, who reads *le vene e i polsi*. Dr. Moore (*Textual Criticism*, page 305) thinks that *sonno e i polsi* may safely be pronounced the pri-

I am he, who held both keys of the heart of Frederick (*i.e.* the power of persuading or dissuading him), and who turned them so softly (both) in locking and unlocking, that I excluded nearly all men from his intimacy: To

mary reading as against *le vene e i polsi* (which has however considerable support). *Sonno e i polsi* gives a more appropriate sense; *vene e i polsi* has a *prima facie* appearance of doing so, but would rather seem to refer to Pietro's death, a reference which, as Scartazzini points out, would be premature and out of place as yet. His devotion to his noble office was such as to destroy not his life (*vene e i polsi*), but his repose by night, and his strength and mental powers by day. Court jealousy super-vened, and roused suspicions which were the cause of his death. Castelvetro points out the distinction (continues Dr. Moore) very clearly: "Ancora non ha parlato dell' *invidia* che fu cagione che egli fosse rimosso dall' ufficio . . . ; nè dello *sdegno* che fu cagione della morte sua. Nè la *fedè*, che portò all' ufficio, fu cagione dell' *invidia*, ma il favore smoderato che gli veniva da Federigo." *Vene e i polsi* is undoubtedly a reading of great antiquity, for it is found in Jacopo della Lana, but it is always well to remember, what Scartazzini points out in his volume of *Prolegomeni*, that in some cases of variants, both readings may possibly be Dante's own, and the later one the revision by himself of the earlier one. In the *Prolegomeni* (pages 425-428) Scartazzini gives it as his opinion that Dante was *preparing* the complete outline of the *Commedia* for many years before he actually began *composing* it. He has no doubt that, when Dante began to write the first canto of the *Inferno*, he had already decided there were to be one hundred cantos in the *Commedia*, and had probably composed many hundreds of verses of the leading passages, before he took the work in hand as a whole, during the last eight years of his life. Let us suppose then that *le vene e i polsi* may have been composed by Dante during his period of preparation, and *il sonno e i polsi* substituted by himself later, as better expressing the narrative.

my glorious office I gave fidelity so great that for it I lost my sleep and all my strength (*lit.* pulses).

Boccaccio speaks of a man who has any spirit or vigour as one, "*che abbia alcun polso.*"

Pietro next relates how he was undone by the jealousy of the other courtiers.

La meretrice,* che mai dall' ospizio
 Di Cesare † non torse gli occhi putti, 65
 Morte comune, e delle corti vizio,
 Infiammò contra me gli animi tutti,
 E gl' infiammati infiammar sì Augusto,
 Che i lieti onor tornaro in tristi lutti.

The harlot (*i.e.* Envy) the common bane and vice of courts, who never removed her eyes from the household of Cæsar, inflamed against me the minds of all, and they that were inflamed so inflamed Augustus, that my joyful honours turned to bitter woes.

Pietro now shows that he wishes to love and honour Frederick II, in spite of the dishonour the latter had inflicted on him, because he looked upon him as deceived by others. Pietro thereby increases our interest in him, and gives proofs of that fidelity which calumny had denied to him. He takes the oppor-

* *La meretrice*: Envy. Chaucer (Prologue to the *Legend of Good Women*) makes allusion to this very passage:

"Envie is lavender of the court alway,
 For she ne parteth neither night ne day,
 Out of the house of Cæsar, thus saith Dant,
 Who so that goeth algate she wol nat want."

† *Cesare* . . . *Augusto*: both these names are used here to denote the Emperor Frederick.

tunity of assuring Dante in the most solemn way that remains to him as a lost soul, swearing by the roots of his own tree (which Benvenuto says is equivalent to swearing by his own soul), but which may also mean, by his recently commenced existence in Hell, that as regards treachery to his benefactor he had been perfectly innocent, and entreats that either he or Virgil will rehabilitate his good name. Of course the very fact that Pietro is only punished as a Suicide, was intended by Dante as a proof that self destruction was his sole crime. Had he really been guilty of treachery to his benefactor, he would have been found in the very lowest Circle of Hell, among the fourth and worst class of Traitors.

L' animo mio per disdegnoso gusto, 70

Credendo col morir fuggir disdegno,
Ingiusto fece me contra me giusto.

Per le nuove * radici d' esto legno

Vi giuro che giammai non ruppi fede
Al mio signor, che fu d' onor sì degno. 75

E se di voi alcun nel mondo riede,

Conforti la memoria mia, che giace
Ancor del colpo che invidia le diede."—

(Then) my spirit with indignant eagerness, thinking to escape disdain by dying, made me (who was) just unjust to myself (by suicide). By the new roots of this tree, I swear to you that never did I break faith with my Lord, who was so worthy of honour. And, if either of you return to the world, let him

* *nuove radici* : new, comparatively speaking, for Pietro delle Vigne had died nearly fifty years before. Scartazzini thinks *nuove* must be taken in the sense of: strange, uncouth.

rehabilitate my memory which is still lying
low from the stroke that Envy dealt it."

Scartazzini remarks that Dante expresses great reverence and admiration for the Emperor,* both as a great prince, a man of letters, a patron of literature, a man of worth and dignity, and also as a great Ghibelline ; but, from the point of view of a Christian and a Catholic, he has placed him among the Heretics in Hell.

Division III. Pietro delle Vigne has ended his melancholy tale. Virgil knows there is no time to be lost, for, when the broken twig shall have ceased to shed blood, the voice of the shade will no longer find a vent ; besides which they have not as yet traversed half the immense distance they have to walk, and they must hasten on. But Virgil wishes his companion to gain information on two points, and urges him to question the tree about them.

* Scartazzini gives the following quotation from the *Vulg. Eloq.* i, xii, in which Dante is full of Frederick's praises: "Si quidem illustres heroes Federicus Cæsar, et bene genitus ejus Manfredus, nobilitatem ac rectitudinem suæ formæ pandentes, donec fortuna permansit, humana secuti sunt, brutalia dedig-nantes."

He adds a story told by Giov. Villani (vi, 41), that, at the burial of Frederick, a certain ecclesiastic, wishing to celebrate his praises, wrote the following lines :

"Si probitas, sensus, virtutum gratia, census
Nobilitas orti, possent resistere morti,
Non foret extinctus Federicus, qui jacet intus."

These lines greatly pleased Manfred and the other barons, and they ordered them to be engraved on the Emperor's tomb.

Un poco attese, e poi :—" Da ch' ei si tace,"—
 Disse il Poeta a me,— " non perder l' ora ; 80
 Ma parla, e chiedi a lui se più ti piace."—

Awhile he paused, and then : " Since he is
 silent," said the Poet to me, " Lose not the
 opportunity (*lit.* hour) ; but speak, and ques-
 tion him if it pleases thee (to know) more."

Dante is overcome by such sympathy for the ill-fated shade, that he feels himself quite unable to address him. Scartazzini points out that there is something of personal motive in the deep compassion Dante now evinces for the third time since he entered Hell. The first time was when Virgil described to him the eternal existence without hope of the poets and sages of antiquity (*Inf.* iv, 40-45), for Dante was himself of their band (*della loro schiera, Inf.* iv, 101), and on hearing their fate he felt great grief ; the second time was at the relation by Francesca of her tale of woe, when Dante, who well knew what it was to feel the pangs of love, was so moved with pity that he fell into a dead faint (*Inf.* v, 142) ; now again, he feels compassion for Pietro, who was destroyed by Envy and Calumny ; and to these Dante too was himself indebted for being at that time an exile, despoiled of his property, and dishonoured in the eyes of his fellow citizens. He entreats Virgil to be again the spokesman.

Ond' io a lui :—" Domandal tu ancora
 Di quel che credi che a me satisfaccia ;
 Ch' io non potrei : tanta pietà m' accora."—

Whereat I to him : " Do thou once more ask
 him about anything thou canst think would

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be a satisfaction to me, for I cannot: such
pity overcomes my heart."

Virgil complies, and again addresses the spirit; in doing so he distinguishes Dante from himself, a spirit, by speaking of him as "the man." He then puts two questions to Pietro; in the first, he asks him how the spirits are confined in the trees, and secondly, whether any ever get out again.

Perciò ricominciò :—" Se l' uom ti faccia 85
Liberamente ciò che il tuo dir prega,
Spirito incarcerato, ancor ti piaccia
Di dirne come l' anima si lega
In questi nocchi ; e dinne, se tu puoi,
S' alcuna mai da tai membra si spiega."— 90

Thereupon he recommenced: "So may the man (Dante), imprisoned spirit, perform for thee freely that which thy words entreat, as it may please thee to tell us farther, (firstly) how the soul is bound up in these gnarled trunks; and (secondly) to declare to us, if thou canst, whether any (soul) is ever loosened from such limbs."

By the second question Virgil means to ask, whether the spirits of the Suicides will rise again at the Day of Judgment, and reclothe themselves with their mortal bodies like the other departed.

The shade of Pietro replies, and had he had organs wherewith to sigh, he would have done so when recalled by Virgil to the full recollection of his sin, and its eternal punishment; but, as it is, he can only blow through the rupture in the branch, out of which he had shed blood. He begins by answering the first

question, and relating how the soul gets into the tree.

Allor soffidò lo tronco forte, e poi
 Si convertì quel vento in cotal voce :
 —“ Brevemente sarà risposto a voi.
 Quando si parte l' anima feroce *
 Dal corpo, ond' ella stessa s' è divelta, 95
 Minos la manda alla settima foce.
 Cade in la selva, e non l' è parte scelta ;
 Ma là dove fortuna la balestra,
 Quivi germoglia come gran di spelta ; †
 Surge in vermena, ed in pianta silvestra : 100
 L' Arpie, pascendo poi delle sue foglie,
 Fanno dolore, ed al dolor finestra.

Then the trunk blew heavily, and afterwards the wind changed itself into these words: “ Briefly shall it be answered to you. When the inhuman soul departs from the body, from which it has itself torn itself, Minos sends it to the Seventh Circle (*lit.* entrance). It falls into the wood, and there is no place assigned to it; but wherever chance hurls it. There it sprouts as a grain of spelt; it grows up into a sapling, and (in time) into a forest tree: after which the Harpies, feeding upon its foliage, give it pain, and to the pain a window (*i.e.* an opening through which the cry of pain can issue).

So far Pietro has answered Virgil's first question.

* *feroce*: Buti says that the soul of the Suicide may well be called *feroce*, since, like a wild beast, it turns its fangs upon its own flesh.

† *spelta* is a kind of oats, that has a very small brown grain, which throws out a great many sprouts.

He now goes on to answer the second, telling Virgil, in so many words, that the spirits of himself and his companions will indeed rise again at the Judgment Day, but their bodies will nevermore contain them. These bodies that were felt too irksome in life will find an eternal resting place on the trees wherein their spirits are confined.

Come l' altre, verrem per nostre spoglie,
 Ma non però ch' alcuna sen rivesta :
 Chè non è giusto aver ciò ch' uom si toglie.* 105
 Qui le strascineremo, e per la mesta
 Selva saranno i nostri corpi appesi,
 Ciascuno al prun dell' ombra sua molesta.†—†

Like the other (spirits) we shall come (to Earth) for our bodies (*lit.* stripped-off clothing), but not indeed that any may don them again: for it is not reasonable that a man should have that of which he deprives

* *non è giusto aver ciò ch' uom si toglie*: On this passage Buti observes that that which a man cannot bestow upon himself, he must not deprive himself of, but rather is bound to retain it at the pleasure of him who bestowed it. If, therefore, he takes away, or renounces such benefits, it is not right that he should have them again.

† *l' ombra sua molesta*: I follow Blanc in taking this as meaning that the shade found the body such an encumbrance, that it would no longer tolerate the burden, but committed suicide. He strongly objects to take *molesta* in the sense of *molestata*, tormented. Many take *molesta* in the sense of the soul being hostile to the body. Blanc interprets the passage: "the soul (or the existence) that has become too burdensome for the suicide."

Witte translates the line:

"An seines lästgen Schattens Baum gehenket."

himself. Hither shall we drag them, and throughout the forest of woe shall our bodies be hung, each on the tree (which is the habitation) of its burdened shade."

Benvenuto says that as regards this passage, than which none is to be found more difficult in the whole poem, one is bound to insist with all the powers of one's mind that what the author lays down not only seems erroneous, but distinctly heretical. To say that these particular spirits will not reclothe themselves with their flesh is altogether contrary to the Faith, and the Poet, as a faithful Christian, could not and ought not to say such a thing. Benvenuto, after citing different suggestions that have been made to get out of the difficulty, all of which he dismisses as wholly insufficient, says he has no doubt that Dante never stated the above as *his own* opinion, but only made Pietro delle Vigne (who in despair had destroyed himself) say it, not because it *is* true, but because Pietro fallaciously believed it to be so; for if he had believed in the resurrection of the body, and still more in the eternity of punishment, he could never, Benvenuto thinks, have put an end to his life. Therefore there is no more use in knocking one's head against a wall, and calumniating Dante, as some persons are so fond of doing; for even if they are not able to understand his fictions, still they ought to defend him, and recollect that Dante was always most Catholic in his utterances, as may be seen in all his writings, and he would not have spoken as he does in this passage without good reason, for in matters of Faith he was certainly not ignorant of what every

little old woman knows, namely, that every soul shall put on its flesh again at the Last Day.

Division IV. A new class of the Violent against themselves now comes upon the scene. These are they who utterly squandered their own substance, not as the Prodigals in the Fourth Circle, by spending it injudiciously and profusely (*mal dare*, canto vii, 58), but by so wasteful a misuse of it as practically to amount to self-destruction. The reader must gather this by inference, for it is not so stated in the text, but the persons, whose shades are the principal actors in the scene we are about to study, were men well known in their time, and notorious for this particular delinquency; and no doubt on the subject seems to have existed among the oldest commentators, such as Boccaccio, Lana, Benvenuto, Buti, the *Anonimo Fiorentino*, the author of the *Chiose Anonime* and others. Benvenuto says that Dante has with great art pictured them running in terror through the forest, naked, pursued by wild ravening hounds, who, when they catch them, rend them limb from limb. These hounds are the emblems of the emissaries of the creditors, the latter being represented by the hunters who may be supposed to be following the pack. For when a rich man by wilful waste has reduced himself to penury, like the spirits in the wood, he finds himself naked, continually pursued by creditors and their emissaries, and, though he is ever escaping and breaking through prisons and other obstacles, they are ever on the watch for him, and, when they catch him, they figuratively tear him limb from limb. One seizes

his house, another his vineyard, another his household goods, and another whatever else is left ; and, if they cannot seize enough, they lay hold upon his person.

Dante introduces this scene by describing that, while he and Virgil were yet standing before Pietro delle Vigne's tree, their ears were struck by the noise made by the fugitives and the pack that chased them through the thickets.

Noi eravamo ancora al tronco attesi,
Credendo ch' altro ne volesse dire, 110
Quando noi fummo d' un romor sorpresi,
Similmente a colui, che venire
Sente il porco e la caccia alla sua posta,
Ch' ode le bestie e le frasche stormire.

We were still (waiting) attentively by the trunk, thinking that it might wish to tell us more, when we were surprised by a noise, in like manner to him (the hunter), who perceives the boar and the chase coming towards his post, (and) who hears the animals and the branches crashing.

Spell-bound, Dante listens to the approach of the weird hunt, though he knows not what he is going to see. Very soon, however, the principal actors in the scene are before him.

Ed ecco duo dalla sinistra costa, 115
Nudi e graffiati, fuggendo sì forte,
Che della selva rompièno ogni rosta.*

* *rosta*: Blanc (*Vocabolario*) contends that, notwithstanding what Daniello and Perazzini say about this word, although properly it signifies a fan (*arrostarsi*, to fan oneself), in this passage it stands for the branch of a tree (*Baumzweig*) with its leaves on, such as would serve the purpose of a fan. Some translate it "fan," and quote from Milton, *Par. Lost*, v. 5-7 :

Quel dinanzi :—" Ora accorri, accorri, morte."—
 E l' altro, a cui pareva tardar troppo,
 Gridava :—" Lano, sì non furo accorte 120
 Le gambe tue alle giostre del Toppo."—
 E poichè forse gli fallia la lena,
 Di sè e d' un cespuglio fece un groppo.

"the only sound
 Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
 Lightly dispersed."

Borghini (*Studi sulla Divina Commedia di Galileo Galilei, Vincenza Borghini ed altri*, p. 302) speaking of the difficulty which even the most educated Florentines of his day [he died 1580] would experience in knowing the many technical words in use in certain localities in Tuscany, and of the nearly boundless wealth of words in the Tuscan language, alludes especially to this word as used in this passage, as follows : " Now there is in Dante the word *rosta*, used in a particular sense, and but little understood, which means, *when many boughs are plaited together to make a kind of hedge to screen off or to turn aside the waters of rivers*. This word, if heard by a citizen who has his possessions on the hills, would be an entirely new expression, whereas to one who had them on the plain of Florence, near the Arno or the Bisenzo or the Ombrone, it would be perfectly familiar." The late worthy Father Giuliani, Professor of Dante Literature in Florence, in his charming little book, *Delizie del Parlare Toscano*, Firenze, 1884, vol. I, p. 187, writing on the above explanation, remarks : " Such was the decided assertion of Borghini, a most experienced judge of his native tongue ; and yet even he did not know that the same word is used by the peasantry in the mountain districts of Siena, the Casentino, and Pistoja, in the identical sense understood by Dante. ' *Roste*,' they told me, ' is the name we give to certain screens of roots, boughs and twigs, which we are in the habit of making up here and there in the forests, to stop the chestnuts, when they have fallen from the trees, from being carried away by any sudden flood.' " Padre Giuliani, after saying that it will not be unprofitable to investigate in what part

And behold on the left hand (there came) two, naked and torn, fleeing so precipitately, that they broke down every obstacle in the wood. The foremost (cried): "O Death, this time haste thee, haste thee!" and the other one, who seemed to himself to be too slow (*i.e.* unable to keep up with his companion), shouted: "Lano, thy legs were not so prompt at the jousts (*i.e.* skirmish) of the Toppo." And (then) since perchance his breath failed him, of himself and of a bush he made one group (*i.e.* he crept cowering into a bush).

These two shades are those of Lano (an abbreviation of Ercolano) of Siena, and Jacomo di Sant' Andrea. The former was of gentle blood, and inherited great wealth from his father. There was at that time at Siena a society of very rich young men who formed themselves into what Jacopo della Lana calls the *brigata spendereccia*,* and Vellutello the

of Italy one may find the most beautiful language, of such excellence as to be worthy of being recorded in literature, adds: "Without going back to remote times, but confining myself to the present, and overcome by the force of truth, and the evidence of examples, I am bound to confess that the Tuscan people alone preserve, pure and unsullied in all its features, the idiom of Ciullo d'Alcamo, of Guinicelli, and of Dante. Dante, my master and benefactor, has drawn me wholly to himself, the more so that he has given me the desire and the power to refresh my soul in the harmony of this perennial music."

* Dante refers to the *Brigata Spendereccia in Inf. xxix, 125-132*:

"Trammene Stricca,
Che seppè far le temperate spese ;

brigata godereccia. These turned all their possessions into a sum of money amounting to 200,000 ducats, and in the course of twenty months, by most wanton extravagance, they reduced themselves to utter destitution. Lano, having ruined himself in this foolish manner, is said to have joined an army which the Sieneſe had raised to aſſiſt the Florentines againſt the Ghibellines, who were aſſembled in great force at Arezzo under Guglielmo degli Ubertini, Biſhop of Arezzo. Benvenuto ſays that the Ghibelline army comprised Tuscans, Romagnoles, as well as men from the Marche and the Duchy (of Spoletto). He reckons the Sieneſe at 400 knights, and 4,000 foot. The Sieneſe fell into an ambuſh laid for them by the Aretines at the Pieve (*Parish*) Del Toppo, and Villani (vii, 120) relates that they fell in great numbers. See alſo Gino Capponi (*Storia della Repubblica di Firenſe*, vol. I, page 74). Lano, preferring death to the certain poverty that awaited him at home, threw himſelf into the thick of the fight and was among the ſlain. Coſta, in his Commentary, remarks that there is a diſtinct meaning in the words *Ora accorri morte*, uſed by Lano in verſe 118, for they ſhow that, on the preſent occaſion, death would have been of greater ſervice to him than when he threw

E Niccolò, che la coſtuma ricca
 Del garofano prima diſcopeſe
 Nell' orto, dove tal ſeme ſ' appicca ;
 E tranne la brigata, in che diſperſe
 Caccia d' Aſcian la vigna e la gran fronda,
 E l' Abbagliato il ſuo ſenno proferſe."

See alſo footnotes on the above lines.

his life away. Lano would seem to belong both to the category of the Squanderers, and that of the Suicides.

Jacomo della Cappella di Sant' Andrea, of Monselice, was the son of Odorico da Monselice and Speronella Delesmanini, noted as having been the wife of six husbands. Scartazzini believes that he was put to death by Ezzelino in 1239. He is mentioned by Jacopo Allighieri, by the *Anonimo*, by Lana, by Benvenuto, and several others. Gelli relates that he was so unbridled in his prodigality that many of his acts were rather those of a fool than a prodigal. On one occasion, when travelling from Padua to Venice, he is said to have thrown away a large number of gold coins of the value of ten scudi (over £2) each, to see them make ducks and drakes (*far passarini*) on the lagoon. Another time he had some of his labourers' cottages burnt, in order that himself and a number of his guests might dry their wet clothes on returning from the chase. Scartazzini relates that, like Nero, wishing to see a large conflagration, he set one of his own villas on fire, and watched till it was burnt down, together with all its outbuildings. As we have remarked before, Dante has evidently wished to draw a distinction between the Prodigals of the Fourth Circle, who only spent their money overprofusely, and these miserable dissipators of all their substance.

We now learn how the fugitives are being hunted by so vast a host of demons, in the shape of dogs, that the whole forest is full of them.

Dietro a loro era la selva piena
 Di nere cagne, bramose e correnti,* 125
 Come veltri che uscisser di catena.

Behind them was the wood full of black bitch-
 dogs, ravening and fleet, like greyhounds that
 have been slipped from the leash.

Lano, who was running first, appears to have, for
 the time, distanced the hellish pack, but Jacomo da
 Sant' Andrea is not so fortunate.

In quel, che s' appiattò, miser li denti,
 E quel dilaceraro a brano a brano ;
 Poi sen portar quelle membra dolenti.

On him who had squatted down they set
 their teeth, and him did they rend piecemeal ;
 and thereafter bore off those suffering limbs.

In rushing upon Jacomo da Sant' Andrea, the
 hounds had broken down the bush in which he
 had tried to conceal himself. This, we shall now
 see, is the abode of another hapless shade, whose
 sufferings are much greater, says Benvenuto, than
 those of Pier delle Vigne. He had shed tears and
 blood from one little fracture, whereas this one is
 broken all to pieces.

Presemi allor la mia scorta per mano, 130
 E menommi al cespuglio che piangea,
 Per le rotture sanguinenti, invano.
 —“ O Jacomo,”—dicea,—“ da sant' Andrea,
 Che t' è giovato di me fare schermo ?
 Che colpa ho io della tua vita rea ?”— 135

My Guide then took me by the hand, and led
 me to the bush which through its bleeding
 fractures was wailing in vain (*i.e.* without hope

* *nere cagne, bramose e correnti*: Compare *Inf.* xxxiii, 31 :
 “ Con cagne magre, studiose e conte.”

of relief). "O Giacomo da Sant' Andrea," it said,
 "what has it profited thee to make of me thy
 screen? What blame have I for thy guilty life?"

Virgil takes advantage of the first pause in the
 lamentations of the spirit to ask his name.

Quando il Maestro fu sopr' esso fermo,
 Disse :—"Chi fusti, che per tante punte
 Soffi con sangue doloroso sermo?"—

E quegli a noi :—"O anime* che giunte
 Siete a veder lo strazio disonesto,†
 Ch' ha le mie fronde sì da me disgiunte,
 Raccoglietele al piè del tristo cesto:

140

When my Master (on reaching the bush)
 stood still over it, he said: "Who wast thou,
 who through so many wounds art breathing
 forth such woeful words (together) with
 blood?" And he to us: "O Souls that are
 come to contemplate the shameful havoc
 which has thus severed my shoots from me,
 gather them together (I pray you) at the foot
 of the ill-fated shrub (*i.e.* myself)."

He then answers Virgil's question and tells them
 who he was.

* *O anime*: Scartazzini points out that the shade in the tree,
 having no eyes to see with, imagines both Dante and Virgil are
 shades like himself.

† *strazio disonesto*: Scartazzini says that the Latins used
honestus for beautiful, noble, and *inhonestus* for ugly, disgusting.
 Here it has the sense of "shameful." Comp. Virg. *Æn.* vi,
 494 *et seq.*:

"Atque hic Priamiden laniatum corpore toto
 Delphobum vidit, lacerum crudeliter ora,
 Ora manusque ambas, populataque tempora raptis
 Auribus, et truncas inhoneste vulnere naris."

—“ Io fui della città che nel Batista
 Mutò 'l primo patrono : ond' ei per questo
 Sempre con l' arte suà la farà trista : 145
 E se non fosse che in sul passo d' Arno
 Rimane ancor di lui alcuna vista ;
 Quei cittadin, che poi la rifondarno
 Sopra il cener che d' Attila* rimase,
 Avrebber fatto lavorare indarno. 150
 Io fei giubbetto† a me delle mie case.”—

“I was of the city which exchanged its first patron (Mars) for the Baptist : on account of which he (Mars) for ever with his art shall make her sorrowful : and were it not that on the passage of the Arno (*i.e.* on the Ponte Vecchio) there still remains some semblance of him ; those citizens, who afterwards rebuilt it (Florence) upon the ashes that were left

* *Attila* : In the time of Dante it was generally believed that Attila had destroyed Florence (see footnote at p. 409). It is thought that the city may have been much damaged by the incursions of Totila in 450, but of its total destruction there is no proof.

† *fei giubbetto a me delle mie case* : Jacopo della Lana says : “ There is in Paris a house called *Giubbetto* (*Giubbetto è in Parigi una casa*) in which justice is executed for the Magistracy of the city (*per la pubblica Signoria*) : in it heads are cut off, criminals are hanged, and sentences are carried out against the persons of malefactors (*li si procede nella persona dei malfattori per la ragione pubblica*). Now the shade in the bush says that he made of his own houses a gibbet for himself, *i.e.* that he hung himself.”

In the *Chiose Sincrone* of the *Codice Cassinese* we find : “ *Giubettum est quædam turris Parisiis ubi homines suspenduntur.*” The *Ottimo* writes in the same sense.

after Attila, they would have caused the work
(of its reconstruction) to be done in vain.
(There in Florence) did I make for myself a
gibbet of my houses (*i.e.* I hung myself in
one of my palaces)."

There is a great difference of opinion among the old commentators as to whether the shade in this bush was that of Rocco, Rucco, or Ruco de' Mozzi or Lotto degli Agli.

Jacopo della Lana, and the Falso Boccaccio consider it to be the latter, and Lana says it was a well-known fact in the time of Dante that it was Messer Lotto delli Agli, who was so distressed at having pronounced a sentence, afterwards proved to have been unjust, that he hung himself with his silver belt. The *Chiose* (ed. Selmi) say that the bush that was weeping had been Ricco de' Mozzi of Florence; who had been very rich (*ricco*), but eventually fell into such poverty that he hung himself in his own house. The *Ottimo* and Buti give both the disputed names, but are unable to decide which is the correct one, Jacopo and Pietro Allighieri give neither of the two names, but Pietro remarks that it happens very frequently in that city (Florence) that men hang themselves. Boccaccio confirms Pietro's statement as to the frequency of the suicides, saying that it seemed like a curse of God on Florence at that time that so many men hung themselves. Jacopo Allighieri thinks that there was great art in Dante not naming the spirit, for every one who read the story might consider it to refer to his relative. Jacopo adds that it is the special vice of the Florentines to hang them-

selves, just as the people of Arezzo are given to throw themselves down wells. Benvenuto mentions both Rocco de' Mozzi and Lotto degli Agli as having hung themselves, but says he cannot conjecture who is the person referred to here, as such numbers in Florence hanged themselves by the neck—more than he can remember.*

On the lines from *Io fui della città che nel Batista mutò 'l primo patrono*, to the end of the canto, Blanc comments (*Saggio di una Interpretazione Filologica della D. C. vers.* O. Occioni. Trieste, 1865). He says that Dante is here following a tradition that was so generally accepted in his time that it is unnecessary to verify it. The legend was this: Florence in its Pagan days elected Mars as its tutelary deity, and placed an equestrian statue of him in a temple where the Baptistery now stands. When the city became Christianized, in the reign of Constantine, it selected St. John the Baptist to be its patron saint in place of Mars. But the Florentines, still having some hankering after their Pagan errors, were unwilling to have the statue of Mars destroyed, and, preserving it as a sort of palladium, placed it on the top of a tower near the Arno. It remained there until Attila, *or rather Totila*, as it is well-known that Attila never crossed the Apennines, took and destroyed the city (this too is contrary to history), and the statue fell into the Arno. When Florence was rebuilt by Charlemagne (this is another myth), there was

* At the present day in Florence the usual form of suicide is that of throwing oneself out of window, and many unhappy persons end their lives in that way.

recovered from the river the lower half of the statue of Mars, from the waist downwards, and having been examined with a kind of mystical terror, it was placéd upon a pillar in the centre of the Ponte Vecchio. There it remained until 1333, when it was carried away in the great inundation which destroyed the bridge, and every trace of it was lost. From this legend the meaning of the words *E se non fosse, etc.*, may be clearly understood. Lana speaks of the statue as existing in his time (about 1323). Landino contends that, under certain constellations, the statues, and similar consecrated things, might have much influence upon the destiny of a city.

Blanc says that, although the above explanations seem to him sufficient, one must not disregard the observations of Benvenuto on this subject. The latter says that Boccaccio da Certaldo used to tell him that he had often heard old men say to any boys who pelted this statue with stones or mud, that they would come to a bad end, and that in fact one who did so pelt it was drowned in the Arno, and another was hung. Benvenuto adds: "But, Reader, before I proceed further, I want you to know that this Canto is not less ingenious and obscure than the preceding one; therefore, bethink you that Dante does not follow the legend of the populace, for it would be too absurd, and would almost make him speak heresy, were he to assert that Florence would bring evil upon herself because she was converted to Christianity. Say rather that Dante is uttering against the Florentines a taunt, which, though veiled, is exceedingly bitter, namely, that from the time that Florence dis-

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missed Mars, that is, strength and valour in arms, and began to worship the Baptist only, meaning the Florin on which the Baptist is stamped, she gave herself up wholly to the acquisition of wealth, and, therefore, will be unfortunate in her warlike achievements; for, as long as the Florentines gave their minds to deeds of arms and to exertion, they were energetic and victorious; but when they turned their attention to rapacious harpies and accumulation of riches, although they might seem to be more prosperous and powerful, yet were they less honoured in their feats of arms, and, in their continual wars, were more and more weakened by their avarice: if, therefore, some slight vestige of Mars* were not still remaining in

* In *Par.* xvi, 145-147, reference is made to the mutilated statue of Mars:

“Ma conveniasi a quella pietra scema
Che guarda il ponte, che Fiorenza fesse
Vittima nella sua pace postrema.”

There is a curious reference in the same canto to the relative positions in Florence of the statue of Mars on the Ponte Vecchio and the Church of San Giovanni, which is the Baptistery. Dante asks Cacciaguida, verse 25:

“Ditemi dell’ovil di San Giovanni
Quanto era allora,”

wishing to know what the size of Florence was in the time of his great-great-grandfather. Cacciaguida answers him that the city was then but one-fifth of the size that it had attained in the time of Dante, verses 46-48:

“Tutti color ch’ a quel tempo eran ivi
Da poter arme, tra Marte e il Batista,
Erano il quinto di quei che son vivi.”

The city, therefore, in the time of Cacciaguida, had the Ponte Vecchio at one edge of its circumference, and the Baptistery at the other.

it, Florence would many a time have met with the same destruction that she met from Attila."

Benvenuto then relates a curious legend, of which, however, he doubts the truth, that Attila, in A.D. 440, having in vain besieged Florence, contrived to enter it by fraud and treachery. Knowing that Florence and Pistoja were very hostile to each other, he promised the former to destroy the latter, and to the Florentines to be their faithful friend. They, foolishly giving credence to this artifice, opened their gates and admitted Attila. As soon as he was inside the city he summoned all the greatest and noblest of the citizens to a council, and had them slaughtered one by one as they passed through an ante-chamber, their bodies being secretly made away with by a subterranean aqueduct under the palace, nor was this carnage discovered until, when too late, the people saw that the Arno was being stained red by the blood falling into it from this aqueduct. Attila is then said to have ordered a general massacre, the sack of the city, and its complete destruction.

Benvenuto, both in discussing this passage and also another in canto xv, remarks that Dante often quotes the chronicles of his country, which relate similar frivolous anecdotes; but, whatever they may be, he (Benvenuto) does not believe the above story, for, as mentioned before (p. 448), Attila never crossed the Apennines. Boccaccio and Landino recount this legend, but both speak of the Palace where Attila was lodged as "*il Capitolio*," and Boccaccio states that among the slain in the general massacre was Maurizio, Bishop of Florence.

Gelli comments on the different versions of the legend as told by Procopius and by Villani. As to the assertion of the latter that Florence remained in ruins from the time of its destruction until it was rebuilt by Charlemagne, Gelli thinks that it was not possible that so great a city could remain in ruins, for upwards of 300 years, without the fact being recorded by historians. It cannot therefore be true, either that Attila destroyed it, or that Charlemagne rebuilt it, as Dante makes this spirit say, and as Villani writes. But Gelli, wishing to save the credit of Dante and of Villani, thinks we must suppose that in their time there was some forgotten chronicler who did say so. They must not therefore, he adds, be blamed, for it is not the same with chronicles as with sciences, since the truth or fallacy of scientific assertions can be deduced from the soundness of their premises, and the conclusions derived therefrom ; but the verifications of history can only be made from the testimony of different writers, and by comparing one with another, which "at the present day (1560) has become very easy," he says, "owing to the vast mass of books that the art of printing has brought into existence." But in the days of Villani and Dante the only books were manuscripts, and these few in number, whence verification was extremely difficult ; for which reason every sort of excuse must be made for any short-comings of this kind.

END OF CANTO XIII.

CANTO XIV.

THE THIRD ROUND OF THE SEVENTH CIRCLE.
THE VIOLENT AGAINST GOD.
THE BURNING SAND.
THE RAIN OF FIRE.
CAPANEUS.
THE COLOSSUS OF IDA.
THE RIVERS OF HELL.

We left Dante and Virgil standing by the bush that contained the shade of Rocco de' Mozzi in the Second Round of the Seventh Circle. The Poets have now finished their inspection of the 'Infernal Forest of the Suicides and Squanderers, and are approaching the edge of the horrible Sandy Waste, wherein is punished the third kind of Violence, which, as we noticed in canto xi, is again threefold, and divided into the following subdivisions, namely,

- (a) The Violent against God,
 - (b) The Violent against Nature,
- and (c) The Violent against Art.

This canto deals only with the first subdivision.

Benvenuto divides the canto into four parts.

In Division I, from v. 1 to v. 42, Dante describes the position of the Third Round with reference to the preceding one; its nature; and the terrible penalty that the sinners undergo therein.

In Division II, from v. 43 to v. 75 (and into this

I have taken three lines more than Benvenuto gives), the Poets single out Capaneus, a Blasphemer against God, and converse with him.

In Division III, from v. 76 to v. 120, Virgil gives Dante a full explanation of the origin of all the rivers in Hell.

In Division IV, from v. 121 to v. 142, in answer to a question from Dante, Virgil tells him why it is they only now, for the first time, see the River Phlegethon.

Division I. At the end of the last canto the voice in the bush had entreated the Poets to collect, and lay down by his roots, the twigs that had been so ruthlessly broken off from him by the headlong flight of the shade of Jacomo di Sant' Andrea from the pursuit of the hounds of Hell. Dante now does so, with all his sympathies aroused at the sufferings of a fellow Florentine.

Poichè la carità del natio loco
 Mi strinse, raunai le fronde sparte,
 E rende' le a colui ch' era già fioco.*

As the love of my native place moved me, I
 collected the scattered branches, and restored
 them to him who was already weak (*i.e.* losing
 his voice).

* *fioco*: some read *roco*, hoarse; and others explain *fioco* to mean hoarse, but Blanc (*Voc. Dant.*) says that its primary meaning is "that which is of small power, weak." He adds that, although the *Vocabolario della Crusca* gives to this word the signification of "hoarse," he does not think it necessary to do so, as that sense is only applicable to it in *Inf.* iii, 27: "Voci alte e fioche." In all other passages Blanc contends that it manifestly means "weak."

say that we reached a plain, which from its bed (*i.e.* soil) repels every plant. The Forest of Woe is to it a garland round about, as is the fosse of torment to that (*i.e.* the Forest surrounds the plain, and the river of blood surrounds the Forest) : here we stayed our steps at the closest edge.

Both Benvenuto and Buti remark how appropriate this sterile burning sand is to the sins of the Violent against God, against Nature, and against Art, every individual of which three subdivisions leads, when in the world, a life as profitless as this soil, in which no grass will grow or tree take root.

Dante compares the sandy waste to the Libyan desert, across which Cato of Utica, in the year B.C. 47, marched the army of Pompey after hearing of his assassination, for six days undergoing hunger and thirst, and every privation.

Lo spazzo * era un' arena arida e spessa,
Non d' altra foggia fatta che colei,
Che fu da' piè di Caton † già soppressa. 15

The ground was an arid and deep sand, made of no other fashion than that which of yore was trodden by the feet of Cato.

* *spazzo* : Poletto (*Dizionario*) says that *spazzo* the soil (*Lat. solum*) must not be confounded with *spazio* (intervallum). One can say (*spazzo d' una sala*) the floor of a hall, and thence we get the verb *spazzare* to sweep. Compare *Purg.* xxiii, 70-71 :

“ E non pure una volta, questo spazzo
Girando, si rinfresca nostra pena.”

Benvenuto reads *spacio*, and comments : “ *idest tota planities spatiosa*, etc.”

† *Caton* : An account of this fatal march, too long to quote here, will be found in Lucan, *Phars.* ix, 379-410.

Benvenuto relates this supposed occurrence at length, and thinks Dante very happily inspired in comparing the huge, flat, burning, dry and sterile waste that he now sees, to the boundless and intolerable Libyan desert, the terrible description of which, by Lucan, seems to have left an indelible impression upon his mind.

Dante now, after solemnly warning his readers to dread the vengeance of God for the crimes which were very prevalent in his day, and which vengeance, he says, will assuredly fall upon those who perpetrate them, proceeds to classify the guilty spirits according to the threefold manner in which they have to receive their punishment. The Violent against God, the Blasphemers, have to lie upon their backs on the burning sand, with their faces turned up towards Heaven, Whose Power they derided, so that they receive the full force of the Rain of Fire. The Violent against Art, the Usurers, have to sit looking towards the earth, whose fruits they despised or misused. The Violent against Nature have to run continually, looking horizontally towards their own species, with whom they sinned so grievously. We shall see, moreover, from what Brunetto Latini tells Dante,* that any breach of discipline has to be atoned

* In *Inf.* xv, 37-42, when Dante offers to sit down and converse with Brunetto Latini, the latter answers :

“ ‘O figliuol,’ disse, ‘ qual di questa greggia
 S’ arresta punto, giace poi cent’ anni
 Senza arrostarsi quando il fuoco il feggia.
 Però va oltre : io ti verrò a’ panni,
 E poi rigiugnerò la mia masnada,
 Che va piangendo i suoi eterni danni.’ ”

for by the offender lying for a hundred years exposed to the severer penalty of the Blasphemers.*

O vendetta di Dio, quanto tu dei
 Esser temuta da ciascun che legge
 Ciò che fu manifesto agli occhi miei !
 D' anime nude vidi molte gregge,
 Che piangean tutte assai miseramente, 20
 E pareva posta lor diversa legge.
 Supin giaceva in terra alcuna gente ;
 Alcuna si sedea tutta raccolta,
 Ed altra andava continuamente.
 Quella che giva intorno era più molta, 25
 E quella men, che giaceva al tormento,
 Ma più al duolo avea la lingua sciolta.

O vengeance of God, how greatly must thou be dreaded by everyone who reads that which was now revealed to my eyes ! I beheld many troops of naked spirits, who were all weeping most piteously, and a diverse law seemed to be assigned to them. Some were lying supine

Bartoli (*Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, Firenze, 1887, vol. vi, part 1, page 128), while noticing that there is a certain similarity of punishment in the unceasing motion of the Violent against Nature, and that of the Impure whirled about in the pitiless hurricane, confesses to feeling it a grave difficulty that the penalty of having to lie still for a hundred years should be considered more severe than that of having to run for ever. He cannot see what difference of torment there can be between eternal immobility and eternal motion. While hesitating to offer an opinion at variance with that of so distinguished a scholar as Prof. Bartoli, I might venture to point out that, during the period of their extra penalty, the shades not only have to lie motionless upon the burning sand, but also, as Brunetto expressly states, are forbidden to ward off the flames that fall upon them, *senza arrostarsi quando il fuoco il feggia*, and these uttered the loudest lamentations, see verses 26-27.

on the ground ; some sitting all crouched up ; and others running incessantly. Those that were going round (the Violent against Nature) were the most numerous, and the fewest those who were lying down in their torment, but (these last, the Blasphemers) had the tongue more loosed (*i.e.* cried loudest) at the pain.

Having first described the different modes in which the three sub-divisions of the sinners in this Round were undergoing their punishment, Dante now relates how that punishment was a slowly falling rain of fire which tormented all, but with a varied degree of intensity. He compares it to some peculiar phenomena supposed to have occurred to the Army of Alexander the Great, which will presently be discussed.

Sopra tutto il sabbion d' un cader lento

Piovean di foco dilatate falde,*

Come di neve in alpe senza vento.

30

Quali Alessandro † in quelle parti calde

D' India vide sopra lo suo stuolo

Fiamme cadere infino a terra calde ;

* *dilatate falde* : nearly the same words occur in Tasso, *Ger. Lib. x, st. 61* :

“ Alfin giungemmo al loco ove già scese

Fiamma dal cielo in dilatate falde,

E di natura vendicò l' offese

Sovra le genti in mal'oprar sì calde.

Èu già terra feconda, almo paese ;

Or acque son bituminose e calde,

E steril lago.”

† *Quali Alessandro*, et seq. : Many and divergent are the opinions on this passage expressed by the different commentators. Boccaccio frankly confesses that he does not know whence Dante got the story. Buti speaks of *un libro de' fatti d' Alessandro*, but without further indicating his authority. Ben-

Perch' ei provvide a scalpitar lo suolo
 Con le sue schiere, acciocchè il vapore 35
 Me' si stingeva mentre ch' era solo :

venuto says it comes from a letter written by Alexander to Aristotle. He also refers vaguely to "Gallicus ille qui describit Alexandreidam metricè." This *Gallicus* Mr. Paget Toynbee (see letter to "*The Academy*," Feb. 2, 1889) believes to be Gaultier de Lille, or Gualtherus de Castellione (De Châtillon), who wrote an epic poem on Alexander the Great, called the *Alexandreis*, in Latin hexameters, towards the end of the twelfth century. But as regards the source from whence Dante derived his account of the episode alluded to in this passage, Mr. Toynbee thinks there can hardly be a doubt that he took it, directly or indirectly, from the spurious *Epistola Alexandri Regis ad Aristotilem præceptorem suum de Mirabilibus Indie*. If so, Dante's description must, as Dr. Moore suggests, have been given from memory, to which in the days before printing, when books were so scarce and inaccessible, writers had but too often to trust. Dante would seem to have somewhat confused the details, but the two conspicuous features in this spurious narrative are the snow and falling flames. Mr. Toynbee has transcribed the letter from a thirteenth-century MS. in the British Museum, Sloane, 1785, fol. 6, verso, and the following extract from it should be compared with the passage in this canto: "frigus ingens uespertino tempore seuiebat Cadere mox in modum uellerum immense niues cepere quarum aggregationes metuens cum in castra cumularentur niues calari feci ut quam citopedum iniuria tabescerent . . . Vna tunc res saluti fuit quod cum momento temporis ymber nimius subsecutus est . . . Quem e uestigio atra nubes subsecuta est uiseque sunt lamquam faces ardentes descendere ita ut incendio earum quasi totus campus ardere uideretur . . . Jussi tunc milites sacras (? suas or scissas) vestes ignibus opponere." Mr. Toynbee says that there is another twelfth-century poem entitled the *Romans d'Alexandre*, in which the same simile occurs as in Dante, namely, of burning flames falling as thick as snow, and Dante may well have derived the ideas he has expressed from either of these two Romances.

Tale scendeva l'eternale ardore ;
 Onde l'arena s'accendea, com'esca *
 Sotto focile, a doppiar lo dolore.
 Senza riposo mai era la tresca†
 Delle misere mani, or quindi or quinci
 Iscotendo da sè l'arsura fresca.

40

Over the whole sandy waste were raining down broad (*lit.* dilated) flakes of fire, falling slowly, like snow on the Alps without wind. As the flames which Alexander, in those hot regions of India, saw falling upon his host unbroken down to the ground: on account of which he took the precaution of having the earth trampled down by his phalanxes, in order that the vapour (*i.e.* the flames) might be the better extinguished while it was single (*i.e.* before the flames got united to those that followed and broke out into an entire sheet of fire): so fell the eternal heat, from which the sand, like tinder under (flint and) steel, got ignited, to double the torment. Unceasing was the rapid dance of the wretched hands, now on one side, now on the other, shaking off from them the fresh burning.

Division II. Dante's attention is now drawn to one of the Blasphemers, stretched out at full length on the burning sand, whose whole demeanour exhibits a stubborn indifference and dogged defiance. This is Capaneus, one of the seven kings who besieged Thebes,

* *com'esca sotto focile*: Compare Frezzi, *Quadriregio*, i, 17:
 "Si come l'esca al foco del focile."

† *tresca*: Compare *Purg.* x, 64, 65:
 "Lì precedeva al benedetto vaso,
 Trescando alzato, l'umile Salmista."

represented by both Æschylus and Statius as an arrogant and impious blasphemer, who, having boasted that he would conquer Thebès in spite of Jupiter, was thereupon struck dead by a thunderbolt. We do not learn his name until the close of the conversation that now takes place, when Virgil utters it in a short and stern reproof.*

Io cominciai :—" Maestro, tu che vinci
Tutte le cose, fuor che i Demon duri,†
Che all' entrar della porta incontra uscinci, 45

* Capaneus is again alluded to as an example of arrogance towards God in *Inf.* xxv, 13-18, where it is said that even he was not more arrogant than Cacus. Observe, too, in this quotation the word *acerbo*, alluded to in the note on *la pioggia non par che il maturi*, wherein the comparison is made between the sense of *maturare* and *acerbo*.

" Per tutti i cerchi dell' inferno oscuri
Non vidi spirito in Dio tanto superbo,
Non quel che cadde a Tebe giù da' muri.
Ei si fuggì, che non parlò più verbo :
Ed io vidi un Centauro pien di rabbia
Venir chiamando : ' Ov' è, ov' è l' acerbo ?' "

Again in the *Cansoniere* (canzone xx), where Dante is urging that even in Sodom there were a few righteous men, so also are there, he says, a few in Florence ; though Capaneus (representing Arrogance), Crassus (Avarice), Aglauros (Envy), Simon Magus (Simony), *il falso Greco*, i.e. Sinon, who is so styled, *Inf.* xxx, 98 (Deceit), and Mahomet (Dissensions), are devouring it.

" Chè stentando viv' ella ;
E la divoran Capaneo e Crasso,
Aglauro, Simon mago, il falso Greco,
E Macometto cieco,
Che tien Giugurta e Faraone al passo.
Poi ti rivolgi a' cittadin suoi giusti,
Pregando sì ch' ella sempre s' augusti."

† *tu che vinci Tutte le cose, fuor che i Demon duri* : Boccaccio

Chi è quel grande, che non par che curi
 L' incendio, e giace dispettoso e torto *
 Sì che la pioggia non par che il maturi ?"—†

F began : " Master, thou who overcomest all things, save the perverse Demons, who came forth against us at the entrance of the gate (of Dis), who is that mighty one, who seems not to heed the burning, and lies there so disdainful and stern that the rain (of fire) seems not to soften (*lit.* ripen) him ?"

on this passage observes that Reason (Virgil) can overcome everything except Obstinacy, which Divine Power alone can vanquish.

* *torto* : Tommasèo explains this either to be for *torvo*, stern, grim, fierce in the face ; or, twisted in the attitude. He much prefers the former. Benvenuto only says in explanation of *dispettoso e torto*, "*cum facie contra cælum.*" Landino : " il che significa l' ostinazione dell' animo e la perversità sua, e mente *non diritta*, e opinione depravata."

† *Sì che la pioggia non par che il maturi* : Blanc (*Saggio*) says that the metaphor is taken from fruit, which at first is sour (*acerbo*), but afterwards the rays of the sun ripen it. Tommasèo states that the proud are said to be *acerbi*. (See above in note on Capaneus, quotation from *Inf.* xxv). As the rain in falling softens the fruit, so does the rain of fire here soften, that is, render humble, the arrogant blasphemers.) Blanc observes this is, nearly without exception, the interpretation and the reading of the early commentators, but a few read *il marturi*, "torments him." Dr. Moore (*Textual Criticism*, p. 307) thinks there can be no doubt as to the genuineness of *maturi* as against *marturi*, which latter may have been suggested by its suitability to line 46, of which it does little more than repeat the idea, and still more, perhaps, from the failure to see the propriety of the metaphor in *maturi*. Landino says : "è per similitudine da' pomi che prima sono acerbi e poi maturi . . . Diciamo acerbo l' animo di colui il quale ancora sta pervicace."

Alfieri* calls attention to the perfect picture of this obdurate and arrogant blasphemer of the gods, and the wonderful art with which Dante's genius has picked out and blended the colours that harmonize best with the character of the subject. We have seen how the cowardly wretches in the Vestibule of Hell were unable to restrain their cries of anguish merely at the light stings of gadflies and wasps; we have seen the magnificent picture of Farinata, lofty-minded in his actions and his words; we now have before us the arrogant Capaneus, lying upon the burning sand, his eyes turned away in haughty indifference to the torment, under which he alone, among all his companions in misery, is obstinately silent (see v.v. 26-27).

Capaneus now even more fully displays himself in the character of the Arrogant soul. He answers Dante's question himself, when he had not been addressed, and he shouts out his words in an angry and defiant voice, proclaiming himself as little afraid in death, as he had been in life, of the Divine Power that struck him down.

E quel medesimo, che si fue accorto
 Ch' io domandava il mio duca di lui, 50
 Gridò :—" Qual io fui vivo, tal son morto.
 Se Giove stanchi il suo fabbro, da cui
 Crucciato † prese la folgore acuta,
 Onde l' ultimo dì percosso fui ;

* Alfieri's marginal notes in his own copy of the *Divina Commedia* are quoted by Biagoli. (*La Divina Commedia di Dante col Comento di Biagoli*, Napoli, 1854.)

† *Crucciato* : Capaneus having succeeded in gaining a footing

And that same (shade), who had perceived that I was questioning my Leader about him, shouted out : "Such as I was living, such am I dead. Though Jove should tire out his armourer (Vulcan), from whom in wrath he seized the sharp thunderbolt, with which at the last day (of my life) I was struck down ; or, though he should weary out the other workmen (who labour) in alternate gangs in the black smithy in Mongibello (*i.e.* *Ætna*) crying : ' Good Vulcan, help, help,' as he did at the Battle of Phlegra, and launch bolts at me with all his might, (yet) should he never have thereby a sweet revenge."

The braggart insolence of Capaneus arouses an unwonted outburst of indignation on the part of Virgil, who administers a rebuke to the audacious blasphemer.

Allora il Duca mio parlò di forza
 Tanto, ch' io non l' avea sì forte udito :
 —" O Capaneo, in ciò che non s' ammorza
 La tua superbia, se' tu più punito :
 Nullo martirio, fuor che la tua rabbia,
 Sarebbe al tuo furor dolor compito."—

65

Then did my Leader speak with a force
 that I had never heard so loud before :
 " O Capaneus, in that thine arrogance is yet

" La battaglia crudel ci manifesta,
 Ove fur morti li giganti in Flegra,
 Per l' ossa che discopre la tempesta."

Compare also Petrarch, *Trionfo della Morte*, cap. i, 32-33 :

" Con un furor qual io non so se mai
 Al tempo de' giganti fosse a Flegra."

unquenched, thou art the more punished :
no torment except thine own rage would
be pain really adequate to thy fury."

Virgil's wrath is thrown into strong relief by the contrast of his gentle manner, when, turning his back on the scoffer, he addresses Dante.

Poi si rivolse a me con miglior labbia,
Dicendo :—" Quel fu l' un de' sette regi
Ch' assiser Tebe : ed ebbe, e par ch' egli abbia
Dio in disdegno, e poco par che il pregi : 70
Ma, come io dissi a lui, li suoi dispetti
Sono al suo petto assai debiti fregi.

Then he turned round to me with gentler countenance, saying : " This was one of the Seven Kings who besieged Thebes ; and held, and, as it seems, holds, God in disdain, and esteems Him lightly ; but as I told him, his evil passions are most suitable ornaments to his breast.

[Benvenuto here begins the Third Division, but I have thought it better to make it begin three lines lower down, at the conclusion of Virgil's words.]

Unwilling to waste further indignation, Virgil turns his back upon Capaneus, and bids Dante do the same.

Or mi vien dietro, e guarda che non metti
Ancor * li piedi nell' arena arsiccia :
Ma sempre al bosco li ritieni stretti."— 75

Now follow after me, and look moreover that thou set not thy feet upon the red-hot sand, but keep them always fast to the wood."

* *Ancora* must be taken here in conjunction with *guarda* rather than with *metti*.

The Poets never once step out on to the sand, but continue to walk within the edge of the wood, which they only quit when they come to the causeways petrified by the waters of the Phlegethon, which form solid margins on each side of it.

Division III. The Poets now move on. Tommasèo thinks that the stream to which they come must have been a considerable distance from the spot where they left Capaneus.

Tacendo divenimmo là ove spiccia
Fuor della selva un picciol fiumicello,
Lo cui rossore ancor mi raccapriccia.*

In silence we came to where from the wood
a little rivulet gushes forth, the redness of
which even now makes me shiver with horror.

Tommasèo remarks upon the terrible picture that must have been presented to the eye by the stream of blood seen through the lurid gloom of the forest, the ruddy hue of the falling fire, and the sulphur yellow of the sand. Castelvetro explains that this red stream is merely the overflow of the vast moat of boiling blood in the First Round, and that after traversing the forest and the burning sand, it falls into the Abyss, and forms the frozen lake of Cocytus at the bottom of Hell. He notices that Dante had looked without apparent terror at the River of

* *raccapriccia*: makes me shudder with horror and fear. Gelli says the Tuscans call *capricci* those first sensations of a chill, which a man feels when he is beginning to have a fever.

Blood and the tyrants seething therein, but that now when he sees the stream in its reduced form, and with none tormented in it, his hair stands on end at the recollection of its former terrors.

Dante makes a very curious comparison between this stream and a certain watercourse at Viterbo, which in his time issued from a hot bubbling pool that went by the name of Bulicame. All the old commentators describe it. Gelli says: "I would have you to know that on the plain of Viterbo, distant from the walls of the city about a mile and a half, there is to be seen a circular pool about twelve ells wide; in the middle of this there wells up from underground a very copious spring of exceedingly hot water, which is boiling continuously, for which reason it has acquired the name of *Bollicame*. And all that the pool will not contain of this boiling water flows away along a watercourse about two feet wide, and very deep, by which it is conducted like a mill dam through that quarter of the city which the prostitutes inhabit."

Castelvetro says that in his time there were no such houses of ill-fame, nor any stream running through the city, that flowed out of the Bulicame. Blanc, however, sees no reason to doubt the accuracy of the story, and feels sure that these unfortunates did have their residences near this water, as its medicinal virtues would be an attraction to their customers; and he quotes a passage from Poggio Fiorentino, in which a very similar state of things is related as existing at the baths of Baden in Switzerland, at the time of the Council of Constance, about a century after the

death of Dante, and in which a melancholy picture is presented of the morals of the Clergy in those days.*

Boccaccio's account of the Bulicame is the one which most closely agrees with the text. He says : " Some relate, that near unto this *bulicame* there are chambers, in which the public women have their dwellings, and they, for the purpose of washing their clothes, have turned off little conduits of this water so as to bring it into their different rooms."

Jacopo della Lana says that the water is portioned off among the prostitutes' houses at Viterbo ; and " each of them has a bath of the said water in her house ; which water, from its sulphurous source and its heat, is of a reddish colour and emits continual

* In the *Dittamondo*, book III, ch. x, Fazio degli Uberti describes the heat of the Bulicame to have been so intense, that a whole sheep thrown into it would be boiled to rags in a quarter of an hour.

" Seguita or che di Viterbo dica,
Che nel principio Vejenza fu detta,
Fino al tempo che a Roma fue nemica.

.

Io nol credea, perchè l' avessi udito,
Senza provar, che 'l bulicame fosse
Acceso d' un bollor tanto infinito.
Ma gettato un monton dentro si cosse,
In men che un uomo andasse un quarto miglio,
Ch' altro non ne vedea che proprio l' osse.
Un bagno v' ha, che passa ogni consiglio
Contra 'l mal della pietra, però ch' esso
La rompe e trita come gran di miglio."

vapour. So, likewise, did this (Infernal) stream run through the air (*sic*) of Hell red and smoking."*

Quale del Bulicame esce un ruscello,
 Che parton poi tra lor le peccatrici, 80
 Tal per l' arena giù sen giva quello.
 Lo fondo suo ed ambo le pendici
 Fatt' eran pietra,† e i margini da lato :
 Perch' io m' accorsi che il passo era lici.

* See also Ignazio Ciampi, *Un Municipio Italiano nell' età di Dante Alighieri*. Roma, 1865; and Felice Bussi, *Storia di Viterbo*.

† *Fatt' eran pietra*: Rossetti (*La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri con Commento Analitico di Gabriele Rossetti*, Londra, 1826), thinks that it may be imagined that the continual flow of that stream of exceedingly hot blood had conglutinated and baked the sand into hard *terra cotta*. But there are several rivers in Italy which possess the property of petrifying all objects that are deposited in their waters. In *Purgatorio*, xxxiii, 67-68, Beatrice tells Dante that he would have understood the moral signification of the allegory before him had not his vain thoughts been as the petrifying waters of the Elsa (a river in Tuscany) round his mind :

"E, se stati non fossero acqua d' Elsa

Li pensier vani intorno alla tua mente, etc."

It is said to be the petrifying power of the waters of the Anio which has formed the great blocks of Travertine, of which so many of the principal edifices of Rome are constructed. This stone was called *lapis Tiburtinus*, from the fact of the Anio flowing past Tibur (the modern Tivoli).

The Travertine of which the ancient city of Pæstum is entirely built is said to have been petrified by the waters of the River *Sele*, formerly *Silarus*, which was celebrated in ancient times for its calcareous incrustations. See Silius Italicus, *Punica*, book viii, 582-3 :

"Silarus . . . quo gurgite tradunt

Duritiem lapidum mersis inolescere ramis."

Camerini quotes Blanc as saying that this stream petrified its

As from the Bulicame (at Viterbo) there issues the streamlet, which the sinful women afterwards share among them, so did that (rivulet) run down upon the sand. Its bottom and both the sloping (inner) banks had become petrified, as well as the (outer) margins at the sides : whence I perceived that there was the passage.

Dante knew full well that he had to get *somehow* across the glowing waste, on which Virgil had enjoined him not to set his feet, and therefore when they reached this spot, and he saw the stone margins of the rivulet, which crossed the way they were going at right-angles, he could well understand that they were the means afforded to him for making his way over the sand to the great central Abyss. We shall see in the two last lines of this canto, how Virgil explains to him, that not only do these margins form a path impervious to heat, but also that no fire can fall upon them without being quenched. Like the sulphurous waters of the Bulicame, so also from this stream was a dense column of vapour given forth, which latter effectually guarded those passing beneath it from the fiery flakes above.

Dante and Virgil are now supposed to have stepped on to one of the hardened margins of the red stream, and during a conversation which begins here and lasts until the end of the canto, they do not seem to have moved on at all. Virgil is about to explain

bed from the character of its waters, just as the waters of Carlsbad form stalactites. I do not know from which of Blanc's works he has taken the words.

to Dante the mystical origin of all the rivers and marshes of Hell, and he begins by an earnest assurance that the subject merits Dante's closest attention.

—“Tra tutto l' altro ch' io t' ho dimostrato, 85
 Posciachè noi entrammo per la porta,
 Lo cui sogliare* a nessuno è negato,
 Cosa non fu dagli tuoi occhi scorta
 Notabil, come lo presente rio,
 Che sopra sè tutte fiammelle ammorta :”—† 90
 Queste parole fur del Duca mio :
 Perchè il pregai, che mi largisse il pasto‡
 Di cui largito m' aveva il disio.
 “Among all the other (things) that I have

* *sogliare*: from the old Latin word *soliar* and equivalent to *soglia*; but here it has the sense of the “entrance” denied to none, as were the gates of the City of Dis. See *Inf.* viii, 115-116 :

“Chiuser le porte que' nostri avversari

Nel petto al mio signor, che fuor rimase.”

† *Che sopra se tutte fiammelle ammorta*: Buti thinks that Dante wished to give to the redness of the river this literal signification, that the river takes different colours according to the places in which it flows; and as when it passed through the Seventh Circle it became Phlegethon, the stream of boiling blood, therefore it retains that red colour here. And in the moral sense one may say that this river signifies the penalty of sin; and as in the seventh circle are punished the Violent, who sinned from blood-guiltiness, it is right that the river be red. Secondly, Dante wishes his readers to understand that the river gives forth moist vapours which extinguish the flames; while in the moral sense he wishes to show that the contemplation of sin quenches the fire of temptation in the soul, of the kind of sins that are punished in this region.

‡ *che mi largisse il pasto et seq.*: Compare *Par.* iii, 91-96 :

“Ma sì com' egli avvien, se un cibo sazia,

E d' un altro rimane ancor la gola,

Che quel si chiede, e di quel si ringrazia ;

shown thee, since we entered through the gate, the threshold of which is denied to none, nothing has been disclosed to thine eyes so noteworthy, as the present river, which quenches all the flakes of fire above it." These words were my Leader's: whereupon I entreated him to bestow on me the food for which he had bestowed the appetite.

Dante means that Virgil had given him a craving for the explanation of the mysterious allusion. Benvenuto remarks, that no food, however artistically prepared, restores the body so pleasantly, as the lesson learnt from the interpretation of a cunningly devised fable restores the mind.

Virgil complies with Dante's request, and unfolds the mystical source of this red stream, which is said to percolate through the earth out of a colossal statue under Mount Ida in Crete. Alluding to the ruinous condition of the once renowned hundred cities of the Island, and its present neglected and untilled soil, he calls it a desolated land.

—"In mezzo mar siede un paese guasto,"—

Così fec' io con atto e con parola,
Per apprender da lei qual fu la tela
Onde non trasse infino a co la spola."

Both in the *Convito* and in the *Paradiso* Dante calls Science the food of Angels. See *Convito*, i, 1: "Oh beati que' pochi che seggono a quella mensa ove il pane degli angeli si mangia, e miseri quelli che con le pecore hanno comune cibo."

Again, *Par.* ii, 10:

"Voi altri pochi, che drizzaste il collo
Per tempo al pan degli Angeli, del quale
Vivesi qui, ma nou sen vien satollo, etc."

Diss' egli allora,—“ che s' appella Creta,*
Sotto il cui reget fu già il mondo casto.

95

* *Creta*: Virgil says of Crete, *Æn.* iii, 104-6:

“ Creta Jovis magni medio jacet insula ponto,
Mons Idæus ubi et gentis cunabula nostræ;
Centum urbes habitant magnas, uberrima regna.”

The worship of Cybele in the island is spoken of in l. iii,
et seq.:

“ Hinc mater cultrix Cybelæ, Corybantiaque æra,
Idæumque nemus; hinc fida silentia sacris,
Et juncti currum dominæ subiere leones.”

In the *Dittamondo*, book iv, cap. vii, Fazio degli Ulberti,
says of Crete:

“ Dal temperato ciel, la terra e l' acque
Maccaronéson in prima si disse,
Ma da Cres re lo proprio nome nacque.

Fama è per quei, che vi fanno dimoro,
Che già si vide con cento cittade,
E si dicea Centopoli fra loro.”

† *rege*: Benvenuto says that the period of the reign of Saturn
in Crete was that of the Golden Age on Earth. Compare Juv.,
Sat. vi, 1, 2:

“ Credo pudicitiam Saturno rege moratam
In terris.”

To this Juvenal adds, that the age in which he lived was so
degenerate that it could not even be compared with the Iron
Age, which came last after the Golden, the Silver, and the
Brazen. See *Sat.* xiii, 28-30:

“ Nona ætas agitur, pejoraque sæcula ferri
Temporibus: quorum sceleri non invenit ipsa
Nomen, et a nullo posuit Natura metallo.”

Ovid too speaks of the Golden Age, *Metam.* i, 89-90:

“ Aurea prima sata est ætas, quæ, vindice nullo,
Sponte sua, sine lege, fidem rectumque colebat.”

Pietro di Dante commenting on this passage in the *Divina*

“In the midst of the sea,” he then said,
 “there lies a wasted country, which is called
 Crete, under whose king (Saturn) the world
 in olden time lived in innocence (*lit.* chaste).

Boccaccio says that Dante terms Crete a wasted country, and so it is, by comparison with its former greatness in the days when it had a large population, numerous cities, and a very fertile soil. Boccaccio goes on to say that in his time the Venetians (to

Commedia goes on to quote from Ovid about the other ages of the world.

The Silver Age. *Metam.* i, 113-115:

“Postquam Saturno tenebrosa in Tartara misso,
 Sub Jove mundus erat : subiit argentea proles,
 Auro deterior, fulvo pretiosior ære.”

The Brazen Age. *Metam.* i, 125-127:

“Tertia post illas successit aënea proles,
 Saevior ingeniis, et ad horrida promptior arma;
 Nec scelerata tamen.”

The Iron Age, *Metam.* i, 127-131:

“De duro est ultima ferro.

Protinus irrupit vena: peioris in ævum
 Omne nefas : fugere pudor, verumque, fidesque :
 In quorum subiere locum, fraudesque, dolique,
 Insidiæque, et vis, et amor sceleratus habendi.”

Virgil (*Æn.* viii, 319-327) thus describes the Golden Age :

“Primus ab ætherio venit Saturnus Olympo,
 Arma Jovis fugiens, et regnis exsul ademptis.
 Is genus indocile ac dispersum montibus altis
 Composuit, legesque dedit, Latiumque vocari
 Maluit, his quoniam latuisset tutus in oris.
 Aurea quæ perhibent, illo sub rege fuerunt
 Sæcula : sic placida populos in pace regebat.
 Deterior donec paulatim ac decolor ætas,
 Et belli rabies et amor successit habendi.”

whom, Camerini asserts, Boccaccio was very hostile), were holding Crete under a cruel tyranny, and had driven forth many of the former inhabitants, and, to keep the remainder in poverty, had turned a great part of the soil, which is extremely fruitful and of excellent quality, into pasture, or had caused it to lie fallow. Benvenuto confirms Boccaccio's account, and says the fact is so well-known, that he forbears from discussing it. Rossetti explains that the island had been laid waste through continual wars and earthquakes, by which its once famous cities had been overthrown.

Una montagna v' è, che già fu lieta
 D' acqua e di fronde, che si chiamò Ida ;
 Ora è diserta come cosa vieta.

Rea* la scelse già per cuna fida 100
 D' un suo figliuolo, e, per celarlo meglio,
 Quando piangea, vi facea far le grida.

A mountain is there, which was named Ida,
 that once smiled with waters and foliage ;
 now it is deserted as a thing worn out. Rhea
 (wife of Saturn) selected it of yore as a secure
 cradle for a son of her's (Jupiter), and, the

* *Rea* : Rhea, who was also known by the various names of Berecynthia, Cybele, Terra and Ops, was said to be the wife of Saturn, and the mother of Jupiter, Juno, Neptune, and Pluto. To save Jupiter from his father Saturn, who devoured his children as soon as they were born, Rhea secreted him on Mount Ida, where he was suckled by the goat Amalthea, and the sound of his infantine cries was drowned by the beating of cymbals by the Corybantes, the priests of Cybele. See Virg. *Æn.* iii, 111, *et seq.*, quoted on page 475.

better to conceal him, when he wept, caused
cries to be made there.

By "cries" is meant noise of all kinds, the clashing
of swords, shields, cymbals, and the frenzied yells of
the Corybantes.

The Colossus of Ida is now described.

Dentro dal monte sta dritto un gran veglio, Che tien volte le spalle inver Damiata,* E Roma guata sì come suo specchio.	105
La sua testa è di fin' oro formata, E puro argento son le braccia e il petto, Poi è di rame infino alla forcata :	
Da indi in giuso è tutto ferro eletto, Salvo che il destro piede è terra cotta, E sta in su quel, più che in sull' altro, eretto.	110

Within the mountain there stands upright a
great old man, who keeps his shoulders
turned towards Damiatta (Egypt), and looks
at Rome as it were his mirror. His head is
formed of fine gold, and of pure silver are his
arms and his breast, from thence he is of
bronze as far as the fork : from that point
downwards he is wholly of choice iron, save
that his right foot is of baked clay, and on
this more than on the other he stands sup-
ported.

Of all the explanations given by different com-

* *Damiata* : see Milton, *Par. Lost*, ii, 592-4 :
"A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
Betwixt Damiata and Mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk."

mentators,* both ancient and modern, of the above difficult passage, the one that appears to meet with

* The following are some of the explanations :

Pietro Alighieri : The allegory is this : that the empire of the world which used to be in the East, and principally where the City of Damiatia stands near Acre in Syria (*sic*), departed thence and passed to the Latins in the West.

The *Chiose Anonime* (ed. Selmi) says that the golden part of the image concerned celestial matters ; the silver those of destiny ; the bronze, things terrestrial ; and the iron, things infernal.

Jacopo Alighieri. The statue of the great old man signifies the gradual deterioration of the ages, from the age of Saturn which was one of innocence, to the later ones of Jupiter, Mars, and others which gradually became more teeming with vices. In the Christian sense it means the procession of ages, from the primeval times of Adam, to Noah, to Abraham, to Jesus Christ. And its looking towards Rome and turning its back to Damiatia is to show that the dominion of the century of Dante was concentrated at Rome, and had left Babylon. And Damiatia is mentioned "*because it is a certain mountain half way between Banbellonia and Rome (sic).*"

Jacopo della Lana also confirms Damiatia being a mountain in Babylonia, and interprets the passage to mean that the empire of the world and the dominion over public affairs (*signoria publica*) will leave Babylon and come to Rome.

Benvenuto says the allegory represents the different ages of man in the world, and the figure being that of an old man shows the many thousand years that the race of man has inhabited the world ; he turns his back to Babylon, because the once mighty empire of the Assyrians went to pieces a long while ago ; and he looks towards Rome because at the last came the empire of the Romans, and the Roman Church. Benvenuto adds that Dante has evidently mistaken the Babylon of Egypt for the great Babylon of antiquity, for it is certain that Damiatia is a city of Egypt, formerly called Memphis by prophets and poets,

the most general approval is that of Blanc (*Saggio di una Interpretazione Filologica di parecchi passi oscuri e controversi* della D.C. 1865.) I give it in full, as do also Scartazzini and Camerini. He says: "The evident purpose of Virgil is to describe to Dante the origin of the rivers of Hell. It is quite clear that the image of the old man within the mountain in Crete, is taken from the dream of Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel ; * and equally clear that Dante understands it in a different sense. Dante is not in

that it was frequently captured by Christian nations, and for that cause destroyed by the Saracens, so that it should no longer serve as a stronghold for their enemies. Dante intended his readers to understand by Damietta the Babylon of the Assyrians, and yet *this* Babylon is subject to the Babylon in Egypt, that is to say, to the power of the Soldan. The old man looking on Rome as on his looking-glass, symbolizing the human race, is contemplating his own features in her (Rome), for she was a woman more beautiful, more young, and more recent, than the Babylon that is deserted for ever.

Gelli says that he sees the allegory differently, and that the statue being made to turn its face towards Rome shows that Dante, both here, as well as in many other passages in his works, manifests his opinion that a great part of the evil deeds of the world originated in the bad example of the Heads of the Church, upon whom men are looking continually as upon a mirror. Not only did Dante hold this opinion, but also Petrarch, as may be read in his writings.

* See *Daniel*, ii, 31-33: "Thou, O King, sawest, and, behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay."

this passage speaking of certain monarchies succeeding one another, but of the general history of the human race; and as among ancient writers is found the tradition of the Golden Age, the Silver Age, etc., and as Juvenal speaks of his times as being too bad to be even placed in comparison with the iron age, so also, in Dante's writings, the deterioration of metals denotes the degradation of Man. He has placed the statue in Crete, partly from the ancient tradition that it was there that the Golden Age flourished, and partly because, according to the geographical knowledge of those days, that island was supposed to stand in the very midst of the three best known parts of the world, and might in consequence be considered as the centre and beginning of the human race. The statue turns its back on Damietta, and its face towards Rome, either to indicate the general course of history, which began in the East and then travelled to the West, or better, perhaps, the advancement of religious worship, which from the rude Egyptian idolatry, gradually ascended to the truths of Christianity, having its central abode at Rome. The statue has one foot of iron, and the other of clay, and would seem to be chiefly supported by the latter. The most obvious explanation certainly seems to be that the deterioration of the human race was there reaching its extreme limit; but it is equally allowable to seek for another hidden signification in these feet. By the foot of iron is symbolized the Empire [this is the view of several of the oldest commentators]. The foot of baked clay is thought to symbolize the Church."

Ciascuna parte, fuor che l' oro, è rotta
 D' una fessura che lagrime goccia,
 Le quali accolte foran quella grotta.
 Lor corso* in questa valle si diroccia: 115
 Fanno Acheronte, Stige e Flegetonta ;
 Poi sen va giù per questa stretta doccia
 Infin là dove più non si dismonta :
 Fanno Cocito ; e qual sia quello stagno,
 Tu il vederai : però qui non si conta."— 120

Every part except the gold (*i.e.* the head) is rent with a fissure that distils tears, which collected bore through that rocky cavern. Their course descends from rock to rock (*i.e.* from the Circles above) into this valley : they (the tears) form Acheron, Styx and Phlegethon ; then it (the Phlegethon) runs its way down through this narrow channel to where there is no more descent (*i.e.* the bottom of Hell) : (there) they form Cocytus : and what that lake is, thou shalt see it : here therefore it is not related."

The allegory of the above passage is thus inter-

* *Lor corso*, et seq. : Compare Milton, *Par. Lost*, ii, 575 et seq. :

" . . . four infernal rivers, that disgorge
 Into the burning lake their baleful streams ;
 Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate ;
 Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep ;
 Cocytus, nam'd of lamentations loud
 Heard on the rueful stream ; fierce Phlegethon,
 Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
 Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,
 Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
 Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks,
 Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
 Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain."

→ preted by Barelli (*L' Allegoria della D. C.*, 1864, page 90-92): "The tears which the old man (symbol of the human race) is shedding from all the fissures with which he is wounded except his head of gold, are the universality of the sins committed by all men in the three less pure ages that followed after the Golden Age. These tears stream down into the profound Abyss, *che il mal dell' universo tutto insacca* (*Inf.* vii. 18); and in the first instance they form the river named *la triste riviera d' Acheronte*; the water of which river reappears, *buia assai vie più che persa*, in the Circle of the Misers and Prodigals (vii, 103); it then spreads out into the Stygian fen, in which are immersed the Wrathful; and it is probable that Dante intended it to be understood that it is this same stream, transformed into boiling blood, in which are tormented the Violent in the first Round of the Seventh Circle; because it is but a little lower down that we find it gushing forth in the mournful forest of the Suicides of the Second Round under the name of Phlegethon; and when at last it reaches the *fondo che divora Lucifero con Giuda* (*Inf.* xxxi, 142-3), it congeals into an immense sphere of ice called Cocytus. This stream that springs from so sinful a source, and flows through the different regions of Hell under four different names, is the antithesis to that rill which bubbles up in the middle of the *divina foresta* of the *Purgatorio*, and waters it, which divides into two streams which are Euphrates and Tigris, which two names again change respectively into Lethe and Eunoe. → The river of Hell takes its origin in the corruption of the human race, its evil character in-

creases in proportion to its downward descent from stage to stage, it renders more wretched the abode of the lost, and is one of the instruments of their punishment ; whereas that (river) of the divine forest ' issues from a sure and unfailing source which receives back again, by the will of God, as much as it pours away when divided into two streams ' (*Purg.* xxviii, 124-6).* It flows with its limpid waters to beautify the Church of God, in its onward course it acquires on the one hand (in Lethe) the power of washing away all memory of past sins ; on the other (in Eunoe), that of conferring all the wealth of spiritual benefits. In a word, the first is an emblem of sin, the second, of grace ; the one of evil, the other of its antidote."

On the question whether Dante meant to describe four rivers, or one river under varying names, Blanc (*Saggio*, p. 138) is of opinion that, had there been several rivers, they must of necessity have fallen into Cocytus, and Dante, who is a marvel of minute precision in his descriptions of places, would certainly not have failed to mention the fact. But in truth in verse 117 one reads (according to Blanc's reading, but not the one I follow) : *Poi sen van giù per quella stretta doccia*, by which it is clear that the Phlegethon is the sole exit of all the rivers. The tears collect and, boring through the crust of the earth, penetrate right down into Hell, where they are found in the shape of Acheron, which flows round the upper edge of Hell. This then runs off underground, reappearing as the

* " . . . esce di fontana calda e certa,
Che tanto dal voler di Dio riprende,
Quant' ella versa da due parti aperta."

Styx, which, after encircling the City of Dis, dives down a subterranean channel, and remains unseen until it emerges once more as Phlegethon. It accompanies the two wayfarers to the edge of the Great Abyss, over which it leaps as a furious cataract and plunges into *Malebolge*; but what becomes of it then we are not told until we find it at the bottom of the Pit, where, under the name of Cocytus, it gathers together all the waters of Hell. Blanc contends that the above explanation would apply equally well to four distinct rivers, or to one river with four names, but he is more in favour of four distinct rivers, because Virgil's answer (v. 134-5) to Dante's question (v. 130-131), as to where is Phlegethon, would have said, had there been only one river: "Thou hast already seen it, but under another designation."

Division IV. In the lines that follow, we find that Dante is puzzled about the course of this river of many names, and he asks Virgil how it happens, that as they have traversed all the circles above, they only now see it for the first time in this third Round.

Ed io a lui :—"Se il presente rigagno
Si deriva così dal nostro mondo,
Perchè ci appar pur da questo vivagno?"—

And I to him: "If this stream before us thus
takes its source in our world, why does it only
become visible to us on this border (*i.e.* the
edge between the second and third Rounds)?"

Virgil explains that although they have come so far down, and always turning to their left as they descend into a new Circle or Round, still they have

not as yet walked round the circumference of Hell. It is not easy to reckon what distance that circuit would represent, since with every fresh descent a diminished circumference was reached, but, according to Manetti's computations of distances in Hell, the circumference at the top, deducting the depth of the crust of the Earth, which he and Galileo put at 405 miles and a fraction, could not be supposed to be less than about 7,000 miles, or, according to Vellutello, whose computations I have adopted, 1,000 miles. (See *Preliminary Chapter*).

Ed egli a me :—" Tu sai che il luogo è tondo,
E tutto che tu sii venuto molto 125
Pur* a sinistra giù calando al fondo,

* *Pur a sinistra*: I have here departed from Witte who reads *più a sinistra*. On the subject of these two readings, Dr. Moore (*Textual Criticism*, etc. page 308) writes: "This is a case in which I think we must certainly adopt the reading *Pur*, which has a comparatively small number of MSS. on its side. It should be observed however (and this is curious), that the early Commentators, so far as they notice the passage, seem to be unanimous for *Pur*., for example Lana, Boccaccio, *Anon. Fior.* (*tutta volta a sinistra*), Buti, Bargigi, Landino (*sempre a sinistra*). So also the *Ottimo*, where the passage is illustrated by a diagram. Benvenuto explains the point very clearly thus:—"Ergo si venisti semper ad sinistram potest esse aliquid ad dextram de quo tu nondum perpenderis."

We find the same expression again in *Inf.* xxix, 52-53 :

"Noi discendemmo in sull' ultima riva
Del lungo scoglio, pur da man sinistra."

See also xviii. 21 : "tenne a sinistra."

xix. 41 : "discendemmo a mano stanca."

xxi. 136 : "Per l' argine sinistro volta dieno."

xxiii. 68 : "volgemmo . . . pure a man manca."

xxxi. 83 : "volti a sinistra."

Non se' ancor per tutto il cerchio volto ;
 Perchè, se cosa n' apparisce nuova,
 Non dee addur maraviglia al tuo volto."—

And he to me : "Thou knowest the place (Hell) is circular, and though thou hast come far, always to the left in thy descent towards the bottom, thou hast not yet gone round the complete circle ; therefore, if any new thing appears to us, it need not bring wonder to thy countenance."

Virgil's reply (says Dr. Moore) is quite clear. The place is round, and though they had journeyed far, and constantly (or only) to the left, they had not yet completed the circuit. Buti remarks : "One can only descend in Hell by turning to the left, that is, by the path of vice which is symbolized by the left hand." There are only two exceptions to the rule of the way observed by the Poets in their transit of Hell. In canto xvii, 31, when they are about to approach Geryon, they descend *alla destra mammella* ; and in ix, 132, they turn to the right before they pass among the tombs of the Heresiarchs. But as I have already stated (at the conclusion of canto ix), I follow Mgr. Poletto's opinion, who thinks that, as they had to fetch a wide compass round the walls (*grande aggirata*) before disembarking at the Gate of the City, they found on entering that they had overshot the mark for the right spot for descending into the next circle, and consequently were obliged to take ground to their right. Dr. Moore (*op. cit.* pp. 309, 310) points out that in canto xxiii, 31, Virgil speaks of the possibility of their finding a way to their

right, since this was the way of escape from the pursuit of the Demons. The *Cornici* of Purgatory are traversed by turning always to the right, and the same symbolism is found in Virgil.*

I have quoted largely from Dr. Moore's masterly dissertation on this passage, in his *Textual Criticism*, pp. 307-310.

Benvenuto remarks that Dante might seem to be contradicting himself, in saying that he had not seen this river, which however he certainly had seen, and fully described, where the Violent against their Neighbour are punished. But it must be explained that although he has seen the Phlegethon, out of which this stream before him has issued, yet, as he did not follow the course of it through the Forest of Woe, he has not had an opportunity of seeing how or where the present stream issued from the river of blood, though he now meets with it again on this Sandy Waste. For instance, one might quite well see the Lake of Garda, and afterwards see the Mincio at Mantua, or at some other point far from its source, and not be aware that it flows out of the Lake of Garda at Peschiera, and that the water of the river is the same water as that of the lake. So Dante has not up to now been aware that he had already seen the Phlegethon, as we shall see by the questions he asks next.

* See *En.* vi, 540-3 :

“ Hic locus est, partes ubi se via findit in ambas :
Dextera quæ Ditis magni sub mœnia tendit ;
 Hac iter Elysium nobis : at *lava* malorum
 Exercet pœnas, et ad impia Tartara mittit.”

Ed io ancor :—" Maestro, ove si trova 130
 Flegetonta e Letè, chè dell' un taci,
 E l' altro di' che si fa d' esta piova ?"—

And I again: "Master, where are to be found
 Phlegethon and Lethe, for of the one (Lethe)
 thou speakest not, and the other (Phlegethon)
 thou sayest is formed by this rain (of fire)?"

It was natural for Dante to ask after Lethe, for the poets of antiquity had always included it among the rivers of the Infernal regions, which were supposed to be, Acheron, Styx, Phlegethon, Cocytus and Lethe. Virgil had named the other four, and the omission of Lethe arrested Dante's attention.

Virgil, in reply, tells Dante that he certainly cannot see Lethe here in Hell, for it is the river of oblivion, and in Hell a great part of the torment of the sinner consists in the recollection of his evil deeds. But Dante will see it, when, after leaving these regions of Hell, and having traversed the whole of Purgatory, he will find it as the stream in whose tranquil and beneficent waters the souls, that have by long penance expiated their sins, are finally washed from all remembrance of them, before ascending into Paradise.

—" In tutte tue question certo mi piaci,"—
 Rispose ;—" ma il bollor* dell' acqua rossa 135
 Dovea ben solver l' una che tu faci.
 Letè vedrai, ma fuor di questa fossa,
 Là dove vanno l' anime a lavarsi,
 Quando la colpa pentuta è rimossa."—

* *ma il bollor dell' acqua rossa*: compare Virgil, *Æn.* vi, 550-1:

"Quæ rapidus flammis ambit torrentibus amnis
 Tartareus Phlegethon, torquetque sonantia saxa."

“In all thy questions truly thou pleasest me,” he answered ; “but the boiling of the ruddy water (the river of blood) might well have solved the first (question) that thou puttest. Lethe thou shalt see, but outside of this Abyss (Hell), there (in Purgatory) where the souls go to wash themselves, when the fault repented of has been removed (by expiation).”

Blanc observes (*Saggio*, pp. 140-141) that from Virgil telling Dante that the red colour of the river of blood might have clearly indicated to him that it was Phlegethon, many have striven to show that this is a proof that Dante was acquainted with the Greek language, as the word Phlegethon is derived from $\Phi\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omega$, to burn. But he adds that when we consider that Boccaccio, who, only fifty years after this time, while he had a Greek as a guest in his house, wrote (*Genealogia Deorum*, xv, c. 7) as follows: “Since there is no one in Italy who is acquainted with the Greek writings . . . nay, not even do we know the Greek characters,” and when even Petrarch lamented that a manuscript of Homer that he possessed was so much dead capital to him ; and when one recollects that Dante shows himself ignorant of Greek in many passages of his writings, using the word *entomata* (instead of $\epsilon\nu\tau\omicron\mu\alpha$) for insects, and in the *Convito* (ii, 15) remarking that one could not well know the opinion of Aristotle . . . *perchè sua sentenza non si trova cotale nell' una traslazione (latina) come nell' altra* ; and when one recollects that Dante never quotes from Sophocles or Æschylus, but only those passages of Euripides that are quoted by Horace, it is impossible to contend that he could have

known anything at all of the Greek language. Dante would know the meaning of the word Phlegethon from the passage in Virgil quoted to illustrate *il bollor dell' acqua rossa* at verse 134, but not probably from any other source.

Virgil now intimates that they may move forward.

Poi disse :—" Omai è tempo da scostarsi
 Dal bosco : fa* che dietro a me vegne : 140
 Li margini fan via, che non son arsi,
 E sopra loro ogni vapor si spegne."—

Then he said : " Now is it time to quit the wood : mind that thou come (exactly) behind me : the margins which are not burnt form a path, and above them every vapour is extinguished."

* *fa che dietro a me vegne* : compare *Purg.* ii, 28-29 :
 " Fa, fa che le ginocchia cali ;
 Ecco l' Angel di Dio."

END OF CANTO XIV.

CANTO XV.

THE THIRD ROUND OF THE SEVENTH CIRCLE
(continued).

THE VIOLENT AGAINST NATURE.

BRUNETTO LATINI.

FRANCESCO D' ACCORSO.

ANDREA DE' MOZZI.

This canto treats of the second subdivision (*b*) of the third kind of Violence, namely, that against Nature. As we noticed in the last canto, the punishment meted out to the sinners in these three subdivisions is the same, but it is applied in three different ways. We saw that the Violent against God have to lie on the burning sand with the flakes of fire falling upon their upturned faces. Unceasing movement is the penalty exacted for the hideous crime punished in this subdivision.

Benvenuto divides the Canto into four parts.

In Division I, from v. 1 to v. 45, Dante minutely describes how he was able, without danger, to traverse the Burning Sand, and how, from among a group of sinners passing by, he is recognized by his once revered teacher Brunetto Latini.

In Division II, from v. 46 to v. 78, Brunetto speaks of the evil fortune Dante may expect at the hands of the Florentines.

In Division III, from v. 79 to v. 99, Dante assures

Brunetto of the loving recollection he has preserved of his instructions, and that even though Brunetto has foretold adversity against him, when it comes, Dante will support it without dismay.

In Division IV, from v. 100 to v. 124, Brunetto tells Dante the names of some sinners with whom he is undergoing punishment.

Division I. In order that the reader may fully realize the present position of the Poets, it may be well, even at the risk of some repetition, to recapitulate a little. After Nessus had deposited them on the further side of the River of Blood, they at once entered into the Forest of Woe. This they traversed until they found themselves on the edge of the Burning Sand, but, being unable to tread upon the sand, they turned to their left, and keeping still inside the border of the Forest, they walked on, until, as we saw at v. 76 of the last canto, they reached the point where the Phlegethon crosses their path. This stream they found to be bordered by petrified margins on which Dante could safely tread, while the atmosphere above was so moist as to quench the fire that was continually falling all round them. They now take advantage of these safeguards, and, according to plate III of the Duke of Sermoneta's *Tavole*, it would seem that the path they are following runs across the great Sandy Waste.

Ora cen porta l' un de' duri margini,
E il fummo del ruscel di sopra aduggia
Sì, che dal foco salva l' acqua e gli argini.
Now one of the indurated margins bears us

E quale i Padovan * lungo la Brenta,
 Per difender lor ville e lor castelli,
 Anzi che Chiarentana † il caldo senta ;
 A tale imagine eràn fatti quelli, 10
 Tutto che nè sì alti nè sì grossi,
 Qual che si fosse, ‡ lo maestro felli.

other purpose ; but to this it has been replied, that had Dante ever experienced the tempestuous North Sea, or even the shorter Channel passage, some mention of so disagreeable an incident would certainly have found its way into his writings. [This was written before the publication of Mr. Gladstone's interesting article, "Did Dante study at Oxford?" *Nineteenth Century*, June 1892.]

* *i Padovan lungo la Brenta*: See *Dittamondo*, book iii, chapter iii :

"Da pado o da padule prese il nome
 Chè presso v' è assai questa cittade,
 Brenta la cerchia e chiude come un pome."

† *che Chiarentana*: Benvenuto thinks Chiarentana stands for *Carinthia*, over which, in his time, certain lords held sway who were called Dukes of Carinthia. But Scartazzini quotes from Lunelli (*Spiegazione geografica della voce Chiarentana di Dante. Giornale del Centenario*, pp. 146-147), and contends, with far greater probability, that Dante is here referring to a mountain of the Trentino between Valvignola and Valfonte, to the East of Lake Levjco, called by the inhabitants Canzana and Carenzana, which extends along the left bank of the Brenta, and this river takes its source from the two lakes lying at the foot of the mountain, as well as from the mass of torrents that flow down its sides. There is no consensus of opinions as to the place indicated.

‡ *Qual che si fosse*: Nearly all the commentators interpret this as referring to the engineer, and think Dante implies that he does not know whether these margins were due to divine or to diabolical agency. But Scartazzini urges that Dante knew perfectly well who was the Architect of Hell, and had said so in the most expressive words in *Inf.* iii, 4 (*Giustizia mosse il mio alto fattore*).

Even as the Flemings between Wissant and Bruges, fearing the flood-tide that rushes towards them, rear their bulwarks that the sea may retreat ; and even as the Paduans (make embankments) along the Brenta, to protect their towns and their castles, before Chiarentana feels the heat (and swells the Brenta with its melted snow) ; Of like formation were these (margins) fashioned, though their Constructor (God) had made them neither so lofty nor so thick (as those in Flanders and on the Brenta) whatever may have been (their size).

Benvenuto, speaking of the tides in Flanders, says that " they are influenced by the Moon, which is the mother of moisture (just as the sun is the father of heat) and attracts water from afar, as the magnet attracts iron (*sicut magnes attrahit ferrum*). But in the West the Moon causes this operation of the waters to take place in a much more marvellous way, and especially so at the time of the Full Moon ; and this has aroused the greatest wonder among the most distinguished navigators,* because there are no such tides either in the East, or in the Mediterranean Sea. In England, which is in the Western Ocean, the sea rises so exceedingly in the royal city of London, that at certain periods the water of the river Thames flows over the bridge, which is very high. In Flanders the tide is so strong that it will at times leave the shore dry for fifteen miles ; † and then, when returning, will re-cover

* Benvenuto means, of course, navigators from the South of Europe.

† The Este MS. of Benvenuto reads five miles.

the ground so swiftly, that the fleetest horse would not be able to escape before it." Benvenuto speaks also of an extraordinary spring-tide having recently occurred in his time in Flanders, which had drowned 15,000 persons. In the same way the inhabitants of the banks of the Brenta are compelled to construct dikes on either side of that river to protect themselves from the overwhelming floods that prevail in the spring, when the sun has melted the glaciers, and the torrents of snow water threaten them with inundations.

We may now attempt to picture the scene. We see Dante and Virgil walking along this dike or causeway. We may infer that it was about the height of an ordinary man above the sand, for we read at verse 24 that Brunetto Latini could reach up and lay hold of the hem of Dante's garment. The gloom of the dark air around is lit up by the lurid glare of the falling flames. A thick mist from the stream on their left rolls above their heads, and affords them protection from the fire. On their right, some six feet below the causeway, is the hot tawny-coloured sand, across the width of which, some $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles, the path runs in a slanting direction. From all sides resound bitter lamentations (see xiv, 27); but those obliged to remain prostrate are they who lament the loudest.

The vast space that the Poets are traversing is now indicated by an intimation, that while Dante has been observing and describing the dikes, he and Virgil have walked a considerable distance, in fact, quite out of sight of the Forest of Woe, and at this point they come in contact with the shades of the Violent against Nature, running on the sand alongside of the dike.

K K

Già eravam dalla selva * rimossi
 Tanto, ch' io non avrei visto dov' era,
 Perch' io indietro rivolto mi fossi, 15
 Quando incontrammo d' anime una schiera,
 Che venia lungo l' argine, e ciascuna
 Ci riguardava, † come suol da sera
 Guardar l' un l' altro sotto nuova luna ;
 E sì ver noi aguzzavan le ciglia, 20
 Come 'l vecchio sartor ‡ fa nella cruna.

We had already got so far away from the wood,
 that I should not have seen where it was,
 even had I turned back, when we encountered
 a troop of shades, who were coming alongside
 of the bank, and everyone of them peered at
 us like as at eventide men are wont to gaze at

* *dalla selva rimossi tanto*, etc.: contrast with this *Purg.*
 xxviii, 22-24 :

“Già m' avean trasportato i lenti passi
 Dentro alla selva antica tanto, ch' io
 Non potea rivedere, ond' io m' entrassi.”

In Purgatory Dante had got so far inside the Divine Forest that,
 on looking back, he could no longer see where he had entered;
 here in Hell he has walked so far away from the Forest of Woe,
 that had he looked back, which he did not, he would have been
 unable any longer to catch sight of it.

† *Ci riguardava come suol da sera*, etc.: compare Virg. *Æn.*
 vi, 268-272 :

“Ibant obscuro sola sub nocte per umbram,
 Perque domos Ditis vacuas, et inania regna.
 Quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna
 Est iter in sylvis : ubi cœlum condidit umbra
 Jupiter, et rebus nox abstulit atra colorem.”

‡ *Come 'l vecchio sartor*, etc.: compare *Dittamondo*, book iv,
 chapter iv :

“Perocchè sì mi stringe a questo punto
 La lunga tema, ch' io fo come il sarto,
 Che quando ha fretta spesso passa il punto.”

one another under (the dim light of) a new moon ; and sharpened their brows* towards us as does the old tailor at the eye of his needle.

Daniello† says that Dante admirably describes this act of sharpening the eyebrows, which is like that of an archer, when he is taking aim to shoot at a target.

Dante is now accosted by the shade of Brunetto Latini.‡

Così adocchiato da cotal famiglia,

Fui conosciuto da un, che mi prese

Per lo lembo,|| e gridò :—“ Qual meraviglia ?”—

(While) thus being scutinized by a company.

so (branded with infamy), I was recognized by one, who seized me by the skirt, and exclaimed : “What marvel (is this) ?”

Messer Brunetto Latini was born of a noble family in Florence about 1220, and died there in 1294. Benvenuto says that he was a man of great wisdom and eloquence in the time of Dante ; but that he had

* Carlyle in a note explains this well : “puckered their brows as if frowning at us.”

† *Dante con l' esposizione di M. Bernardino Daniello da Lucca, sopra la sua Commedia dell' Inferno, del Purgatorio, e del Paradiso, Venezia, 1568.*

‡ Brunetto Latini : A few of the older editions and commentators speak of him as Brunetto Latino. At the end of this canto will be found a supplemental note, in which I have explained why some called him so *in those days*.

|| *mi prese per lo lembo* : Dante was walking on the petrified margin of the Phlegethon, and Brunetto's head hardly reached up to his feet, so that the most natural movement on the part of Brunetto was to take hold of his skirt. It is remarkable that although Dante found the form of Casella impalpable (*Purg.* ii, 76-81), yet Brunetto's touch arrested his steps, and Dante's hand stroked Brunetto's face.

such an overweening opinion of himself that when he was a distinguished notary, and had on one occasion allowed some trifling error to creep into a certain writing, which he might easily have corrected, he preferred to leave it there, and run the risk of being accused of a fraud, rather than by the alteration of his writing to admit the possibility of having erred through ignorance. On this account he had to leave Florence, and in his absence was condemned to be burned. The *Chiose Anonime* (Selmi) says that he was a neighbour of Dante, and taught him a great many things; that he did not care for the soul, as he was altogether worldly; that he sinned greatly in unnatural crime, and scoffed much at the things of God and Holy Church. Giov. Villani (Lib. viii, cap. x) writes of him that he became the Secretary (*Dittatore*) of the Republic. Ricordano Malespini (ch. 162) relates that he was sent as ambassador to Alfonso King of Castille to induce him to favour the Guelph party, in opposition to Manfred. At this juncture the rout of the Guelph forces at the Battle of Montaperti in 1260 obliged Brunetto to escape into France. Camerini thinks this was the real cause of his banishment, and that the story told by Benvenuto and Boccaccio is perfectly false. Brunetto was able to return to Florence in 1269, and died there in 1294. He wrote the *Tesoretto* in the Tuscan language, and during his sojourn at Paris a work in French called the *Tesoro*. He was the teacher both of Dante and of Guido Cavalcanti.* Villani adds that, notwithstanding his private

* Scartazzini, in confirmation, quotes from Ugo Verini, *De Illustr. Urbis Florentia*, lib. ii :

Risposi :—" Siete voi qui, ser* Brunetto?"— 30

And I, when he stretched forth his arm to me,

and Cesari advocate the other. Some of these think that Dante putting forth his hand and stroking or touching Brunetto's face would evince a want of respect towards his superior. With that I cannot agree. The movement appears to me alike natural and graceful, denoting both affection and sympathy, and is just what I can imagine being done by a disciple to a loved and revered Master whom he sees, after long separation, in sorrow and suffering. Di Siena says: "We will not enter as judges into such a controversy, but still we think the lowering of the hand to the face of Ser Brunetto can signify a rapid and perfectly intelligible gesture of reverence quite as well as the inclination of the head. The act of lowering either the hand or the head is intended to mark the relative positions of Dante standing at a considerable height, and Brunetto on the sand below." Biagioli remarks that Dante does not say *stendendo* nor *porcendo la mano*, because the word *chinando* paints the true attitude of the Poet, and shows us himself above, and the other below. Biagioli further explains that this gesture of Dante, in lowering his hand to Brunetto's face, was after he had made out who he was by his close scrutiny of the scorched features; and therefore Biagioli thinks that De Romanis, the editor of the third edition (1820-22) of Lombardi's Commentary, is in error when he argues that Dante inclined his face to Brunetto's for the purpose of identifying him, as, if Dante did so, it was as described three or four lines back, and had he then repeated the movement, it would not have been that he might recognize Brunetto, for that he has told his readers in the preceding three lines, he had done already. I follow the reading *la mano* in Witte's text without pretending to decide which of the two is right, though I confess to preferring the idea of the tender sympathizing caress implied by *chinando la mano*.

* *ser Brunetto*: Ser is the shortened form of *sero*, for which modern usage has substituted *signore*, formerly a title of nobility and of superiority, but which Biagioli laments had in his day become so common as to be given even to police spies.

fastened my eyes so (closely) on the baked countenance (below me), that the scorched features did not prevent the recognition of him by my intelligence, and reaching down my hand to his face, I answered: "Ser Brunetto, are you here?"

Benvenuto explains that this is as though Dante would say to Brunetto: "You wonder that I, who, alive and still young, am passing through Hell, in order to flee from the paths of sin; but it is certainly no less marvellous that you, who were wont to be of such high morality and culture, should be dead in so base a sin, and be so scorched and burned here." And Benvenuto points out that from reverence to his senior and his teacher, he addresses him in the plural, *i. e.* using *voi* instead of *tu*. In canto x, at p. 331, I have drawn attention to Dante's different uses of *voi* and *tu*.

Adolfo Bartoli (*Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, Florence, 1889, vol. vi, part ii, p. 58, chapter on *la politica e la storia nella D. C.*) asks why, if Dante's reverence for Ser Brunetto was so great, and he felt so many ties of affection for him, he has been so pitiless as to deal such a crushing and fatal blow to his reputation, as he does by mentioning his punishment here. Some have tried to show that Dante, a Ghibelline, has placed Brunetto here because he was a Guelph, but this, Bartoli says, is a complete fallacy, as it is a fact that Dante has placed many Ghibellines in Hell, and many Guelphs in Purgatory, notably his bitter foe Charles of Anjou (see *Purg.* vii, 113, 124), and, therefore, political sentiments would exercise but a secondary influence on his adjudication of rewards or punish-

ments among the departed great. Bartoli cannot agree with Scartazzini that Dante condemned Brunetto to Hell because he felt himself the delegate of the Eternal Judge, and that there must be a strong line of demarcation between justice and private affection, for Brunetto really was stained with the degrading crime for which Dante places him in Hell. Bartoli considers that Dante would probably have been more inclined to draw a veil tenderly over the name of his beloved teacher, as also over those of the great Florentines in the next canto, and would have left them in the obscurity he concedes to the multitude of such sinners, so vast that *il tempo saria corto a tanto suono* (xv, 105). But no! he loses no opportunity in these two cantos of mingling respect and affection for persons guilty of offences so abominable that in this nineteenth century all would recoil with horror at the very mention of their names. Virgil tells him that they must be treated with the greatest courtesy, that their deeds of arms vie with their reputation for wisdom, and that their words would always be listened to in the world. Dante would have embraced them had he been able to descend on to the sand, but he speaks with affection of their "honoured names!!" Bartoli thinks the hypothesis of Blanc the most plausible, that in the thirteenth century unnatural crimes were so exceedingly prevalent, that men guilty of them did not incur that loathing and horror which they would inspire in modern times; and that Dante, though obliged, from the theological point of view, to brand them as sinners punished for deadly sins, yet would not look upon them, from the human point of view, as

men so dishonoured, that he should shrink from consorting with them on terms of friendship.

Ser Brunetto now confirms his identity, giving his name in full, and intimates his desire to converse with Dante.

E quegli :— “O figliuol mio, non ti dispiaccia,
Se Brunetto Latini un poco teco
Ritorna indietro,* e lascia andar la traccia.”—

And he: “O my Son, let it not displease thee,
if Brunetto Latini turns back a little way in
thy company, and lets the troop file on.”

Benvenuto remarks in Dante's reply that, while showing the greatest readiness to remain in Brunetto's company, he is careful only to consent, on the condition of doing so with Virgil's approval, for he does nothing without the counsel and permission of Reason, and especially in such very questionable surroundings.

Io dissi a lui :—“ Quanto posso ven preco ;
E se volete che con voi m' asseggia, † 35
Farò, se piace a costui, chè vo seco.”—

I said to him: “As much as I may I beseech
you to do so; and if you wish that I should
sit down with you, I will do it, if it pleases
him there (Virgil), for I journey with him.”

Brunetto explains to Dante that he would incur too

* *Ritorna indietro* : Buti observes that the troop in which Brunetto was running were going in the opposite direction to that pursued by Dante and Virgil, and, therefore, for them to enter into conversation, it was necessary, either that the troop should stop, which was forbidden, or that one party should turn back with the other.

* *m' asseggia* : from *assedere*, of which the ancient forms were *asseere*, *assejere*, and by changing the *j* into *g*, *asseggere*.

heavy a penalty, were he to avail himself of his friendly offer to sit down with him.

—“O figliuol,”—disse,—“qual di questa greggia*
S’arresta punto, giace poi cent’anni
Senza arrostarsi quando il fuoco il feggia.†
Però va oltre: io ti verrò a’ panni,‡
E poi rigiugnerò la mia masnada,
Che va piangendo i suoi eterni danni.”—

40

“O my Son,” said he, “whosoever of this herd stays at all, lies afterwards for a hundred years without fanning himself when the fire strikes him. Therefore do thou move onwards: I will come at thy skirts, and after that (I have conversed with thee) will rejoin my band, who go lamenting their everlasting damnation.”

From the above we see that, according to the law

* *greggia*: the primary meaning of this word in the *Vocabolario della Crusca* is that of a quantity of beasts herded together. May not Dante have used the word here advisedly in speaking of those who had lived as “brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed?” (2 *Pet.* ii, 12).

† *feggia*: from *ferire*. This, by changing “r” into “d,” became *fedire*; from *ferere* came *fiedere*; and then by changing “d” into “g” came *feggere*, and in old times also *feggiare*, whence comes the third person present of the indicative *feggia*.

‡ *io ti verrò a’ panni*: Benvenuto explains that Brunetto said he would come along near the dike at Dante’s feet, in such wise that his head should just reach up to his skirts (*ita quod cum capite attingebat pannos aitoris*), and from this it may be gathered that the dike was about the height of a man’s stature. Blanc, too, asks why Brunetto says *a’ panni*, and not *allato* or *appresso*; and argues that it is very clear both from this expression, and from his taking hold of Dante’s garment, *per lo lembo*, that his face only just reached up to the level of Dante’s skirts.

of Hell, the mere fact of departing for a single instant from its restrictions, on the part of those who sinned against Nature, would immediately subject them to the penalty of the Blasphemers for a hundred years, but with this addition, that they could not, like them, brush aside the flames, but must allow them to fall without resistance upon their upturned faces.

Dante mutely assents to Brunetto's request, his whole demeanour showing that he feels no repugnance whatever for the shade at his feet.

Io non osava scender* della strada
 Per andar par di lui : ma il capo chinot
 Tenea, come uom che reverente vada. 45

I dared not descend from the causeway to walk
 on the same level with him : but I held my head
 bowed down, like one who walks with reverence.

* *Io non osava scender*, etc. : Compare *Inf.* xvi, 46-51 :

" S' io fussi stato del foco coperto,
 Gittato mi sarei tra lor disotto,
 E credo che il Dottor l' avria sofferto.
 Ma perch' io mi sarei bruciato e cotto,
 Vinse paura la mia buona voglia,
 Che di loro abbracciar mi faceva ghiotto."

† *ma il capo chino Tenea* : Compare this with Dante's attitude when walking alongside of the shades of the proud in Purgatory, *Purg.* xi, 73-78 :

" Ascoltando, chinai in giù la faccia ;
 Ed un di lor (non questi che parlava)
 Si torse sotto il peso che lo impaccia :
 E videmi e conobbemi e chiamava,
 Tenendo gli occhi con fatica fisi
 A me, che tutto chin con lui andava."

and *Purg.* xii, 1-2 :

" Di pari, come buoi che vanno a giogo,
 M' andava io con quella anima carca."

Division II. After the interchange of a few remarks between Dante and his old teacher,* Brunetto predicts Dante's future adversity at the hands of his countrymen.

He first asks Dante how, and by whom guided, he has come alive into Hell.

Ei cominciò:—"Qual fortunat o destino
Anzi l' ultimo di quaggiù ti mena ?
E chi è questi che mostra il cammino ?"—
He began : "What fortune or what fate
leadeth thee here below before the last day ?
And who is this who is showing the way ?"

Dante answers Brunetto's first question by telling him that he fell into the paths of sin during his youth, and that he has only now begun to seek after a state of salvation, (and here he replies to the second question), under the guidance of Virgil, whom however Dante does not mention by his name.

—"Là su di sopra in la vita serena,"—
Rispos' io lui,—"mi smarri' in una valle, 50
Avanti che l' età † mia fosse piena.

* Scartazzini is more inclined to think that Brunetto exercised an influence over Dante's mind in his writings, than to believe that he ever was his personal teacher. See Scartazzini, *Prolegomeni*, p. 32.

† *Qual fortuna*, et seq. : compare Virg. *Æn.* vi, 531-534 :
"Sed te qui vivum casus, age fare vicissim,
Attulerint. Pelagine venis erroribus actus,
An monitu divùm ? an, quæ te fortuna fatigat,
Ut tristes sine sole domos, loca turbida, adires ?"

‡ *l' età . . . piena* : In *Convito*, iv, 23, Dante defines a man's full age at 35 years. But Dante in the canto we are now discussing was speaking of a time in his life before this ; and we know

Pure ier mattina* le volsi le spalle :
 Questit m' apparve, tornand' io in quella,
 E riducemi a ca per questo calle."—

that he turned aside from the contemplation of heavenly things soon after the death of Beatrice, in 1290, when he was 25 years old. In *Purg.* xxxi, 34 *et seq.*, he tells her so :

“ . . . Le presenti cose
 Col falso lor piacer volser miei passi,
 Tosto che il vostro viso si nascose.”

Scartazzini remarks that the above conclusion is in no way inconsistent with the first verses of canto i, for he does not there say that he *then* went astray, but that he then awoke to the consciousness of having done so, and thereupon turned and endeavoured to retrace his steps. Some have interpreted the words *Avanti che l'età mia fosse piena* as signifying “before I had accomplished the period of life allotted to me by God,” but the other interpretation is undoubtedly the right one.

* *Pure ier mattina* : Daniello points out that Dante had consumed an entire day in trying to scale the mountain ; in defending himself from the three wild beasts ; and in conferring with Virgil ; he had entered into Hell on the night of Good Friday, and, as it was now about 4 a.m. on the early morning of Easter Eve, we are able to verify his statement that only the day before had he turned his back upon that valley in which he had lost himself.

† *Questi m' apparve* : Scartazzini thinks that the avoidance of Virgil's name both here, and in other passages in the *Inferno*, was due to reverence on the part of Dante, who never mentions the name of God, or of Jesus Christ, or of the Virgin Mary, while he is traversing Hell. Blanc thinks that Dante never mentions Virgil's name but when it is strictly necessary ; as when Virgil becomes the spokesman in addressing Ulysses (*Inf.* xxvi, 73-84), because, as a Greek, the latter would have been disinclined to take part in a conversation with a person of modern times like Dante.

“There up above in the tranquil life (on Earth),” answered I him, “I went astray in a vale (of sin) before that my age was full. Only yestermorn did I turn my back upon it (my former state of sin): this one (*i.e.* Virgil) appeared to me, when I was retrogading into it (sin), and he is guiding me to my (heavenly) home by this path.”

Brunetto would seem to be either unable or unwilling to understand the full purport of Dante's reply. He had asked Dante what turn in the wheel of fortune had brought him down to Hell before his death. Dante has replied that he had found himself going astray, and leading a life which would have led to his destruction, and which he had quitted but yesterday on the appearance of Virgil (Reason), who is putting him in the way of retracing his steps, and seeking out his heavenly home. Brunetto evidently ignores the nature of the home Dante has in prospect; he takes it for granted that honourable fame as a Poet and Rhetorician is the goal or haven that Dante is seeking; and seems to tell him that long ago he had, as an astrologer, drawn his horoscope, and that, if Dante will only follow the course therein marked out for him, his reputation will be glorious.

Buti points out that the will to follow the influence of the constellations, or not, rests in Man himself. Camerini quotes Nannucci (without giving reference) as saying that on the 14th May, 1265, the day of Dante's birth, the Sun entered into the constellation of Gemini, which, in the language of the astrologers was “the significator” of Writing, of Science, and of

Cognoscitive Power (*cognoscibilità*) ; and hence Brunetto, when he drew Dante's horoscope, had pretended to foresee that he could not fail to reach the glorious haven.

The great American Dantist, Mr. James Russell Lowell, in his Essay on Dante, says the inference from this passage, that Dante's teacher Brunetto Latini drew Dante's horoscope, and predicted for him a great destiny, is absurd. I am unable to think so. The error, if it be one, is held by Lana, Benvenuto, Buti, Daniello, Boccaccio, Tommaseò, Nannucci, Scartazzini, Lombardi, Biagioli, Gelli, Witte, and others, though Philaethes and Lubin take the opposite view. There is no reason to think that Brunetto did not believe in Astrology like other men of science in his day.

Ed egli a me :—" Se tu segui tua stella, 55
 Non puoi fallire al glorioso porto,
 Se ben m' accorsi nella vita bella : *
 E s' io non fossi sì per tempo † morto,

* *nella vita bella* : Some texts read *in la vita novella*, which again has been explained in two ways ; " If I judged rightly of the promise of thine early youth ; " or " If I formed a right judgment of thy first work, the *Vita Nuova*." Dante represents Brunetto in Hell looking back regretfully to *la vita bella*, the beautiful life on earth ; compare also *Inf.* vii, 58-59, where the Misers and Prodigals are said to have had the fair world taken from them :

" Mal dare e mal tener lo mondo pulcro
 Ha tolto loro."

Dr. Moore (*Textual Criticism*, page 107, note) cites another variant, *vita fella* as existing in the MS. of the Biblioteca di San Marco at Venice.

† *sì per tempo* : Biagioli says this is an adverbial form equiva-

Veggendo il cielo * a te così benigno,
Dato t' avrei all' opera conforto.

60

And he to me:—"If thou follow thy star, thou canst not fail to reach the glorious haven (of Science), if I well discerned in the beautiful life: And had I not died too soon, seeing Heaven so benignant to thee, I would have given thee encouragement in the work.

Tommaseò thinks the meaning of *sì per tempo morto* is not so much that Brunetto died young; but that he did not live long enough to be able to give assistance to Dante in his literary and civil career. Dante wanted it to be known that Brunetto's opinions would have coincided with his own. Lana considers that Brunetto would say: "Had I lived longer I would have brought thee into the perfection of knowledge." Lord Vernon interprets the phrase as meaning that Brunetto would have encouraged Dante in

lent to *di buon' ora*, and is properly used in speaking of the beginning of the day. Here the form is extended, and human life is considered as though it were but a single day, or but the twinkling of an eye beside Life Eternal.

* *Veggendo il cielo a te così benigno*: compare *Purg.* xxx, 109-117:

"Non pur per opra delle rote magne,
Che drizzan ciascun seme ad alcun fine,
Secondo che le stelle son compagne;
Ma per larghezza di grazie divine,
Che sì alti vapori hanno a lor piova,
Che nostre viste là non van vicine,
Questi fu tal nella sua vita nuova
Virtualmente, ch' ogni abito destro
Fatto averebbe in lui mirabil prova."

the study of the other sciences, and in the exercise of virtuous and honourable deeds.

Brunetto, after having shown how worthy his pupil is of a better fate, proceeds to predict the adversity that will befall him at the hands of that Florentine people, for whom he has done so much, and Benvenuto remarks that for the most part it is the case that different States have returned evil for good to their noblest and most meritorious citizens, as did Rome to Scipio, Athens to Theseus, and so on.

Ma quell' ingrato popolo maligno,
Che discese di Fiesole * ab antico,
E tiene ancor del monte e del macigno,

* *quell' ingrato popolo maligno, che discese di Fiesole*: Scartazzini has a very valuable note on these lines, in which he says that, according to the old Florentine tradition, Fiesole was the first city in the world, or at least the first ever built in Europe. It was destroyed by Julius Cæsar, and the Romans built a new city, Florence, which was to be peopled, half by the Fiesolan people, and half by Roman citizens; so that the city of Florence took its origin from Fiesole. The tradition goes on to say that Attila caused Florence to be destroyed and Fiesole to be rebuilt, though both Giov. Villani and Macchiavelli assert that it was Totila who destroyed Florence. Florence was said to have been rebuilt either by the Romans or by Charlemagne, and later on the Florentines, after destroying Fiesole, allowed its inhabitants to come and live at Florence. Villani thinks that this mixture of Romans and Fiesolans is the reason of the continued divisions and feuds among the Florentines. This was also the belief of Dante, for in *Par.* xvi, 67-69, he makes his great-great-grandfather Cacciaguida attribute the ills of the State to the original admixture of races, though he is not confining himself to that of the Florentines with the Fiesolans alone, but with their neighbours in all the districts round Florence. Cacciaguida says:

Ti si farà, per tuo ben far,* nimico :
 Ed è ragion ; chè tra li lazzi sorbi † 65
 Si disconvien fruttare al dolce fico.

“ Sempre la confusion delle persone
 Principio fu del mal della cittade,
 Come del corpo il cibo che s' appone.”

See also *Par.* xvi, 121-122.

Dante thought he was descended from the ancient Romans ; and he is careful to distinguish those Florentines who descended from Fiesole from the so-called pure Roman seed. For the former he entertains the most sovereign contempt. He accuses the Florentines who came from Fiesole of still retaining the hardness of the mountain and the roughness of the granite. Dante thought all mountaineers very stupid and corrupt. This is explained by Boccaccio : “ They still smack of the mountain, in that they are rustic and savage, and of the granite, in that they are hard and not capable of being moulded to any liberal or civil graces.” Scartazzini takes his authorities from Giov. Villani, Ricordano Malespini, Macchiavelli (*Istorie Fiorentine*), Scipio Ammirato (*Istorie Fiorentine, Florence, 1600*), and from Boccaccio.

Père Berthier, in a preliminary specimen page of his sumptuous work (*La Divina Commedia con commenti secondo la scolastica del P. Gioachino Berthier, Freiburg, 1892*), of which only two parts have yet been published, says of this annotation : “ Qui copierò la dotta annotazione dello Scartazzini.”

* *per tuo ben far* : Dante's party, the *Bianchi*, were bitterly opposed both to Pope Boniface VIII and to Charles of Valois, and it will be seen in the sentence of condemnation of the chiefs of the *Bianchi*, 27 Jan. 1302, that for such opposition they paid dear, and Dante among them. “ Et quod commiserint, vel committi fecerint, fraudem vel barattariam in pecunia vel rebus communis Florentie ; vel quod darent sive expenderent contra Summum Pontificem et dominum Karolum pro resistentia sui adventus, vel contra statum pacificum civitatis Florentie et Partis Guelforum.” (Bartoli, *Storia Lett. It.*, vol. v, page 131 and page 136.)

† By *lazzi sorbi* are to be understood those Florentines that

Vecchia fama nel mondo li chiama orbi,*
 Gent' è avara, invidiosa e superba :
 Da' lor costumi fa che tu ti forbi.†

But that ungrateful, malignant people (of
 Florence), who in olden times came down

were descended from the Fiesolans, and by *dolce fco* the Florentines descended from the ancient Romans.

* *orbi* : commentators do not agree as to the origin of the saying *Fiorentini ciechi*. Some assert that while the Pisan forces had gone to conquer the Island of Majorca, then held by the Saracens, the Florentines undertook to guard Pisa against the Lucchesi who were threatening it ; and the Pisans, on their return, offered the Florentines their choice of two rewards : either the celebrated bronze doors that now adorn the Cathedral of Pisa ; or two columns of porphyry, which from envy the Pisans had first purposely injured by fire, and had then concealed under scarlet drapery. These two columns are to this day standing on either side of Ghiberti's beautiful doors, on the side of the Baptistery at Florence that faces the Cathedral. Tradition says that the Florentines chose these, and, when they discovered the fraud, exclaimed : "*O quanto siamo stati ciechi nel confidare in volpi pisane!*" Benvenuto relates this story at length, but says he neither believes this, nor yet another fable told by Boccaccio in his book, *De Fluminibus*, that the Florentines were called blind because Hannibal lost an eye from the effects of cold caught during the inundation of the Arno. He thinks they were called blind for having believed in the fair words of Attila (Totila), and opened their gates to him (see note at the end of canto xiii). Scartazzini says that the origin of this proverb of the *Fiorentini ciechi* is hid in profound darkness, like all other proverbs, because they take their birth in the mouths of the populace.

† *forbi* : compare Petrarch, *Trionfo della Castità*, v. 106 :
 "Com' uom ch' è sano, e' n un momento ammorba,
 Che sbigottisce, e duolsi accolto in atto
 Che vergogna con man da gli occhii forba."

L L 2

from Fiesole, and even now retain (somewhat) of the mountain and the granite, will, for thy good deeds, become thy foes: and it is right; for it is not fitting for the sweet fig tree to bear its fruit among the harsh crab-apples. Old report in the world proclaims them blind, they are a race avaricious, envious, and arrogant: see that thou cleanse thyself from their ways.

Gelli thinks that, at this point in the conversation, Ser Brunetto, fearing that the displeasing announcements he had made to Dante might cause him too much distress and perturbation of mind, now seeks to console him by showing him that, whatever injury the Florentine people might do him, he would find that each of the two parties would seek to win him over to their side. Benvenuto speaks of the two factions as the exiling and the exiled (*pellens et pulsa*).

The passage is intricate, and will require more minute explanation. Brunetto tells Dante that both the *Neri* and the *Bianchi* will have hunger for him, meaning that each party will try to win him over to their side; but they will hunger in vain. It will no more be given to either to boast of success, than the goat that is stretching up to snatch at herbage beyond its reach. Brunetto, in speaking of the beasts of Fiesole, alludes to the Florentine families of Fiesolan descent, and contemptuously observes that they are welcome to make litter of themselves, *i.e.* to trample down and oppress each other, but he warns them not to dare to injure the parent stem, *i.e.* the old families of genuine Roman descent, if any are still left in such

a dunghill of corruption and iniquity as Florence has become.

La tua fortuna tanto onor ti serba, 70
 Che l' una parte e l' altra avranno fame *
 Di te : ma lungi fia dal becco l' erba.
 Faccian le bestie Fiesolane strame †
 Di lor medesme, e non tocchin la pianta,
 S' alcuna surge ancora in lor letame, 75
 In cui riviva la semente santa ‡
 Di quei Roman, che vi rimaser, quando
 Fu fatto il nido di malizia tanta."—

Thy fortune reserves such honour for thee,
 that both factions will have hunger for thee :
 but far will be the herbage from the goat.
 Let the beasts of Fiesole make litter of their

* *l' una parte e l' altra*, et seq.: compare *Par.* xvii, 68-69 :

"sì che a te fia bello

L' averti fatta parte per te stesso."

† *strame* signifies any kind of grass, hay, or straw that can serve the cattle either for food or litter.

‡ *la semente santa Di quei Roman* : Gelli says that Dante calls the Roman people holy, not alone because they were approved by all the world as the most worthy, just and virtuous race that ever existed, as that they were elected by God in His new law as the chosen people among whom Peter founded his Church, just as the Jews were the chosen race under the old dispensation. And Dante shows this in *Convito* iv, 5, where he speaks of God having preordained that people and that city, the glorious Rome, in which was to be concentrated the Universal Government of the Earth. He calls the Romans *divini cittadini*, and at the end of chapter v, he says : "Whence can we ask no further proof that a special origin and a special growth, thought out and ordained by God, was that of the holy city" (Miss Hillard's translation).

In the *De Monarchia*, ii, v, Dante speaks of the Romans as "*populus ille sanctus, pius et gloriosus.*"

own selves, and let them not touch the plant if any yet springs up upon their dunghill, in which there still survives the sacred seed of those Romans, who remained there (at Florence) when it (was built and) became the nest of so much wickedness."

Ser Brunetto's meaning is, "By all means let the base citizens in Florence of Fiesolan extraction oppress, trample, devour, and make havoc of each other, together with all the debased scions that are able to exist amid their foul corruption and hideous vices, but let them not lay a finger on any of the inheritors of the pure Roman blood, from which, and not from the Fiesolans, you, Dante, claim that your family descends."

All Brunetto's words are intended to express an indignant protest against the treatment which he perceives his beloved pupil is about to receive from the Florentines, and, inflamed with anger, he styles them *bestie Fiesolane*; *bestie** for their brutish and inhuman stupidity; *Fiesolane*, for their debased lineage; while he speaks of their persons as litter to be trampled under foot; and their residence as a dunghill.

Benvenuto remarks that the Florentines sin more from deliberate wickedness (*malitia*), than from want of self control (*incontinentia*).

Division III. In lines 58-60 Ser Brunetto had assured Dante that, had he himself not died prema-

* *bestia* is commonly used in Tuscany to imply mere stupidity. A Tuscan wishing to say: "Oh how stupid of me!" will simply say "Bestia!"

turely, he would gladly have given him continual help in his work. Dante now confides to him how often he has longed for it, how much he misses the encouragement of his beloved teacher, and how he wishes that he were yet alive.

—“Se fosse tutto pieno il mio dimando,”—

Risposi lui,—“voi non sareste ancora	80
Dell' umana natura posto in bando :	
Chè in la mente m' è fitta, ed or mi accora	
La cara e buona imagine paterna	
Di voi, quando nel mondo ad ora ad ora	
M' insegnate come l' uom s' eterna :	85
E quant' io l' abbia in grado, mentre io vivo	
Convien che nella mia lingua si scerna.	

“Were all my desire fulfilled,” I answered him, “you would not yet have been banished from the human race (*i.e.* by death): for in my memory is fixed, and now goes to my very heart, that dear, kind, and paternal countenance of yours, when in the world for hours and hours you used to teach me how Man makes himself eternal: and how much I prize it (*i.e.* your teaching), as long as I live must be shown forth in my tongue (*i.e.* in my writings).

Dante means that it goes to his heart to see the features of his beloved teacher disfigured and scorched almost beyond recognition.

Lana says that Dante has so appreciated the influence of Ser Brunetto's teaching, that he will let it give its impress to his poetry, so that his tongue may not appear silent about it.

Dante now assures Ser Brunetto that he will carefully note down all that he has been fore-

telling him about the future events of his life, but that he shall not attempt any elucidation until he reaches the presence of Beatrice, either of his words or of "another text," by which he refers to the predictions of Ciaccio and Farinata.

Ciò che narrate di mio corso scrivo,
E serbolo* a chiosar con altro testo
A donna che saprà, se a lei arrivo. 90

* *serbolo a chiosar con altro testo*, etc. : It is not quite correct that Dante was to have these predictions explained to him by Beatrice, for it is Cacciaguida who does so, as spokesman for Beatrice, in *Par.* xvii, in which canto there is so close a correspondence with the allusions in the present one, that it is difficult to assign to the different quotations their proper places in illustrating many words and allusions in this passage. Dante tells Cacciaguida of the continual hints he has received, both in Hell and in Purgatory, as to the evil days that are likely to befall him, and, though he feels himself solid against his fate, still he would like to know what it is going to be. *Par.* xvii, 19-27 :

“ Mentre ch' io era a Virgilio congiunto
Su per lo monte che l' anime cura,
E discendendo nel mondo defunto,
Dette mi fur di mia vita futura
Parole gravi ; avvenga ch' io mi senta
Ben tetragono ai colpi di ventura.
Per che la voglia mia saria contenta
D' intender qual fortuna mi s' appressa ;
Chè saetta previsa vien più lenta.”

The *altro testo* would more especially refer to the words that he has already heard from Ciaccio (*Inf.* vi) and Farinata (*Inf.* x), and it was on the latter occasion that Virgil informed him that he would learn from a Lady in Heaven about the journey of his life (*da lei saprai di tua vita il viaggio, Inf.* x, 132). When Cacciaguida has ended his predictions, he sums up thus (*Par.* xvii, 94-96):

“ Figlio, queste son le chiose
Di quel che ti fu detto ; ecco le insidie
Che dietro a pochi giri son nascose.”

That which you tell (me) about my career, I write down, and together with another text I reserve it to be interpreted by a Lady (Beatrice) who will know (how to explain it to me), if ever I get to her.

Lana remarks this is as though Dante would say: "I well understand what the natural sciences announce, but I am disposed to believe only what the Science of Theology lays down about the matter." Gelli thinks *con altro testo* to mean that Dante will seek an explanation of the obscure events of his future life predicted in the horoscope drawn by Ser Brunetto at his birth "con altro che d' astrologia, cioè con le sacre scritture."

Dante in conclusion tells Ser Brunetto that, whatever be the adversity in store for him, he is prepared to face it with an undaunted heart, so long as he can feel himself pure in life, and upright in deeds.

Tanto vogl' io che vi sia manifesto,
Pur che mia coscienza * non mi garra, †
Che alla fortuna, come vuol, son presto.

* *coscienza*: In *Inf.* xxviii, 115-117, Dante speaks of a pure conscience:

"Se non che coscienza mi assicura,
La buona compagnia che l' uom francheggia
Sotto l' asbergo del sentirsi pura."

And in *Conv.* iv, 11: "Quanto più l' uomo soggiace allo intelletto, tanto meno soggiace alla fortuna." Compare, also, *Hor. Epist.* i, 1, 60:

"Hic murus ænius esto,
Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa."

Again, *Ovid, Fast.* i, 485-6:

"Conscia mens ut cuique sua est, ita concipit intra
Pectora pro facto spemque metumque suo."

† *garra*: from *garrere*, an obsolete form of *garrere*, to reprove, to upbraid.

Non è nuova agli orecchi miei tale arra :
 Però giri fortuna la sua rota, 95
 Come le piace, e il villan la sua marra.”

I only desire this one thing to be manifest to you, that provided my conscience upbraided me not, I am prepared for Fortune, as she list. Such earnest-money (*i.e.* such anticipation) is not new to my ears : therefore let Fortune turn her wheel as it pleases her, and the clown his mattock.”

Dante is here referring to the *bestie Fiesolane*. Lana thinks that by the clown is signified the sensitive appetite. Boccaccio explains it that Dante alludes to the Florentines of Fiesolan extraction, more as country boors than as citizens, and means, “Let them do their wicked will against me, just as the clown turns the earth in all directions with his shovel.”

Gelli remarks that, in their passage through Hell, Dante had heard Virgil say several times that what was willed on high must be performed below, and that the souls of the lost were more tormented by the memory of their misdeeds than they had ever been by the strokes of adverse fortune, or the persecutions of cruel men, or by the infamies of those who go after the popular cry of the common people. This thought had made Dante resolve that he would through life act with justice and sincerity, and walk in the paths of virtue, regardless of all else. And as he had observed in history [remark this is said by Gelli, the good old hosier of Florence] that it is nearly always the best men who are most persecuted, and more espe-

cially in those countries which have a Republican form of government, where envy and jealousy invariably seem to go after those who have delivered their country from the greatest dangers ; therefore Dante says that such earnest-money, such a mode of repaying good with evil (*tale arra*), is by no means new to his ears, and he fully expects that, having done his best to serve his country, he will meet with the usual reward ; but that, though his life is to be blighted by a cruel destiny, or by the inconsistent dealings of a debased race of citizens, he will pursue the even tenor of his way.

While Dante has been speaking these words, the Poets have been walking along the raised causeway, Virgil in front, Dante behind, Brunetto Latini keeping pace with them on the sand below, on Dante's right.

If Virgil had turned to his left to speak to Dante, he would have turned his back on Ser Brunetto, an act of discourtesy quite incompatible with the usage of so well-bred a man as Virgil. He turns, therefore, to his right and, facing Dante, looks fixedly at him to attract his attention, and repeats to him, in the form of a proverb, the same idea that he had expressed when they had just quitted *Farinata degli Uberti* (canto x, 127).

It must be remembered moreover that Virgil must have made this remark, while still walking on, to Dante walking behind him. As Ser Brunetto had to keep in ceaseless movement, the two Poets must have been going fast, and the expression turned himself backward on his right cheek (*in sulla gota destra*) exactly describes the action that would take place, if

a man walking fast turns his head to speak to another walking fast behind him.

Lo mio Maestro allora in sulla gota
 Destra si volse indietro, e riguardommi ;
 Poi disse :—" Bene ascolta chi la nota."—

My Master thereupon turned backward on his right (*lit.* cheek), and looked at me ; then he said : " He listens well who notes."

By this Virgil means to tell Dante that, if he wishes to profit by Brunetto's words, he must retain them in his memory, for they bear a far more serious import upon his future life than Dante seems in the least to realize.

Division IV. Dante now changes the conversation from his own affairs, and questions Ser Brunetto about his companions in suffering.

Nè per tanto di men parlando vommi 100
 Con ser Brunetto, e domando chi sono
 Li suoi compagni più noti e più sommi.

Yet not the less for this (interposition of Virgil) do I walk on conversing with Ser Brunetto, and I ask him who are his companions the most noteworthy and illustrious.

Most commentators give the above interpretation to the words *più noti e più sommi*, but Benvenuto takes them in a bad sense, as signifying those who were the most notorious and depraved.

Brunetto answers Dante very much as Farinata had done, by naming some of the most distinguished, and passing over the rest in silence, only that he explains away this reticence with the remark that there is no

time to mention so many. He also tells Dante of what professions they were.

Ed egli a me :—" Saper d'alcuno è buono :
 Degli altri fia laudabile tacerci,*
 Chè il tempo saria corto a tanto suono. 105
 In somma sappi, che tutti fur cherci,
 E letterati grandi,† e di gran fama,
 D' un peccato medesimo al mondo lerci.

* *tacerci*: Compare canto x, 116—120, where Farinata degli Uberti makes a similar reply to Dante's question :

"Perch' io pregai lo spirito più avaccio
 Che mi dicesse chi con lui si stava.
 Disse mi : ' Qui con più di mille giaccio ;
 Qua dentro è lo secondo Federico,
 E il Cardinale, e degli altri mi taccio.'"

† *E letterati grandi, e di gran fama*: Dante seems to have felt much compunction and some fear in bringing so many distinguished names into disrepute, and we find, in *Par.* xvii, he confides his scruples to his ancestor Cacciaguida, telling him, (112, et seq.):

"Giù per lo mondo senza fine amaro,
 E per lo monte, del cui bel cacume
 Gli occhi della mia Donna mi levaro,
 E poscia per lo ciel di lume in lume,
 Ho io appreso quel che, s' io il ridico,
 A molti fia sapor di forte agrume."

Cacciaguida replies that only those who have guilty consciences will feel any inconvenience from his plain speaking, and he adds (127—135):

"Ma nondimen, rimossa ogni menzogna,
 Tutta tua vision fa manifesta,
 E lascia pur grattar dov' è la rogna ;
 Questo tuo grido farà come il vento,
 Che le più alte cima più percote ;
 E ciò non fia d' onor poco argomento."

And he to me: "It is good (for thee) to
know of some: of the others it is more

And that is why, both in Paradise, in Purgatory, and in Hell
he has only been shown (138—142):

" Pur l' anime che son per fama note ;
Chè l' animo di quel ch' ode, non posa,
Nè ferma fede per esempio ch' haia
La sua radice incognita e nascosa,
Nè per altro argomento che non paia."

All the persons alluded to in these two cantos are men of
the most exalted rank and position.

Benvenuto speaks with disgust and horror of the enormity
of the offence of these wretched beings. He says: "Ah quam
melius erat istis habuisse uxorem, imo secundum legem Ma-
chometti plures uxores et concubinas!" Further on, Benvenuto
speaks of the very difficult position in which he found himself
while giving these lectures in the University at Bologna, when
he perceived that this crime was so very prevalent that he had
either to be a tacit witness or expose it; the latter course, which
he adopted, placing his life in the greatest danger. I give his
own words in the original: "Et hic nota, lector, quod vidi ali-
quando viros sapientes magnæ literaturæ conquerentes, et
dicentes, quod pro certo Dantes nimis male locutus est nomi-
nando tales viros. Et certe ego quando primo vidi literam
istam, satis indignatus fui; sed postea experientia teste didici,
quod hic sapientissimus poeta optime fecit. Nam in MCCCCLXXV,
dum essem Bononiæ, et legerem librum istum, reperi aliquos
vermes natos de cineribus sodomorum, inficientes totum illud
studium: nec valens diùtius ferre fœtorem tantum, cujus fumus
jam fuscabat astra, non sine gravi periculo meo rem patefeci
Petro cardinali Bituricensi, tunc legato Bononiæ; qui vir magnæ
virtutis et scientiæ detestans tam abominabile scelus, mandavit
inquiri contra principales, quorum aliqui capti sunt, et multi
territi diffugerunt. Et nisi quidam sacerdos proditor, cui erat
commissum negotium, obviasset, quia laborabat pari morbo cum
illis, multi fuissent traditi flammis ignis; quas si vivi effugerunt,
mortui non evadent hic, nisi forte bona pœnitudo extinxerit

praiseworthy for us to be silent, because the time would be short for so much speech (*i.e.* to name so many). Know in brief that all were clerics, and great scholars, and of great renown, on earth polluted by one same crime.

Brunetto only speaks to Dante about the shades of those persons who are in his own band, namely, clerics, and men of letters. We shall see in the following canto that the next band were of other professions. They seem to have been divided into classes, the shades in one class being strictly forbidden to mix with those of another.

He now picks out a few names that he thinks worthy of Dante's notice.

Priscian * sen va con quella turba grama,

aqua lacrymarum et compunctionis. Ex hoc autem incurri capitale odium et inimicitiam multorum ; sed divina justitia me contra istos hostes naturæ huc usque benigne protexit."

* *Priscian* was a celebrated grammarian born at Cæsarea in Cappadocia in the Sixth Century of the Christian Era. Bargigi says he was an apostate monk. The *Anonimo Fiorentino* says that he is placed here to represent a class, as the teachers of the young in those days seem to have had a detestable reputation. In later times Ariosto wrote in a similar strain in his Satire addressed to Cardinal Bembo, imploring him to turn his attention to securing a high tone of morality in the teachers of the young, and not select them for their learning alone. He then apostrophizes the vices of the existing teachers :

"Oh nostra male avventurosa etade !
 Che le virtuti che non abbian misti
 Vizi nefandi si ritrovin rade.
 Pochi ci son Grammatici e Umanisti
 Senza il vizio per cui Dio Sabaot
 Fece Gomorra e i suoi vicini tristi,

E Francesco d' Accorso ;* anco vedervi, 110
 S' avessi avuto di tal tigna brama,
 Colui potei che dal servo de' servi
 Fu trasmutato d' Arno in Bacchiglione, †
 Dove lasciò li mal protesi nervi.

Che mandò il foco giù dal Cielo et quot
 Eran tutti consunse, sicchè a pena
 Campò fuggendo un innocente Lot."

* *Francesco d' Accorso* : Scartazzini says that he was a Florentine, son of the celebrated Accorso or Accursius, a jurist of great reputation, author of the *Glossa* or Commentary of the Code of Justinian. He was a Professor at Bologna, and is said to have been induced by Edward I, who was passing through that city on his return from the Crusades in 1273, to accompany him to England, which Francesco did. He went to Oxford, where he became a Professor of Law, and returned to Bologna in 1280 enriched by the munificence of the King of England.

† *Colui . . . che . . . fu trasmutato d' Arno in Bacchiglione* : The person here alluded to is Andrea de' Mozzi, who from the deplorable reputation he had earned as Bishop of Florence, on account of his addiction to the crimes punished in this circle, was translated to Vicenza, near which flows the Bacchiglione, and Scartazzini says that he died there in 1296, during the Papacy of Boniface VIII. The *Anonimo Fiorentino* says that he rendered himself utterly unfit to be a Bishop, owing to his abominable crimes, as well as for his gross stupidity. Benvenuto is unable to conceal his utter contempt for him, and begins by telling his reader that he wishes him to know with much laughter (*volo te scire cum non modico risu*) who this wretched creature is. He goes on to describe the ridicule into which his Sacred Office was brought by the absurdity of his utterances from the pulpit, by which circumstance he made himself the laughing-stock of the lowest of the populace. He comments thus on him : *Iste ergo magnus bestionus a natura, laborabat isto vitio bestialitatis contra naturam*. Benvenuto adds that he is certain Dante alludes to his translation to Vicenza in order to expose a further indignity done by him. He

Priscian goes there with that crowd of miscreants, and Francesco d' Accorso ; and besides, hadst thou had any desire of (seeing) anything so loathsome (*lit.* such a scurf), thou mightest have seen among them him (Bishop Andrea de' Mozzi) who by the Servant of servants (*i.e.* by the Pope) was translated from Arno to Bacchiglione, where (at his death) he left his sin-stained sinews.

says that on one occasion he was preaching, and in the peroration to his sermon he spoke as follows : "O Lords and Ladies, I wish to recommend to you my sister-in-law Monna Tessa, who is going to Rome ; for in truth, if for a short time she was unsteady and facile, she has now turned over a new leaf ; and therefore she is going to Rome to obtain Indulgence." The Bishop's brother Tommaso de' Mozzi, a great jurist, unable any longer to tolerate such follies, and the increasing notoriety of his brother's vices, with much prudence brought about his translation to the see of Vicenza by Pope Nicholas of the Orsini family. The words *servo de' servi* refer to the expression in the Pope's Bulls, which styles him *Servus servorum Dei*.

Compare the Third *Satire* of Ariosto in reference to the promises made by Pope Leo X, line 202 :

"Ma quando cardinale o de li servi
Io sia il gran servo, e non ritrovi anco
Termine i desiderj miei protervi, etc."

It is somewhat remarkable that Gelli, who wrote his lecture on this canto in 1560, when the Inquisition was in full force in Italy, not only omits all mention of this peccant bishop in the lecture, but even omits the lines of the canto in which allusion is made to him ; whether from fear of the terrors of the Inquisition, or from that of incurring the vengeance of a powerful Florentine family, I cannot tell, but an account of the state of morality existing among the clergy in Gelli's time may be read in J. A. Symonds' *Renaissance in Italy, Age of the Despots*, London, 1880. Chapter on "The Church and Morality."

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I would tell of more ; but my coming (further with thee), and our conversation, cannot be prolonged, for I see a new smoke rising yonder from the sand. People are coming with whom I may not be ; Be my *Tesoro* commended to thee, in which I still live (in fame) ; and more I ask not."

Scartazzini explains that the smoke is the cloud of dust kicked up by the moving feet of the approaching band, for Brunetto's comrades had been gone some time, and the dust raised by them would have sub-

describe it than in the author's own words, Book 1, ch. i : 'The smallest part of this Treasure is like unto ready money, to be expended daily in things needful ; that is, it treats of the beginning of time, of the antiquity of old histories, of the creation of the world, and in fine of the nature of all things The second part, which treats of vices and virtues, is of precious stones, which give unto man delight and virtue ; that is to say, what things a man should do and what he should not, and shows the reason why The third part of the Treasure is of fine gold ; that is to say, it teaches a man to speak according to the rules of rhetoric, and how a ruler ought to govern those beneath him And I say not that this book is extracted from my own poor sense, and my own naked knowledge, but, on the contrary, it is like a honeycomb gathered from diverse flowers ; for this book is wholly compiled from the wonderful sayings of the authors who before our time have treated of philosophy, each one according to his knowledge And if anyone should ask why this book is written in Romance, according to the language of the French, since we are Italian, I should say it is for two reasons ; one, because we are in France [Brunetto Latini wrote his *Tesoro* at Paris], and the other because this speech is more delectable, and more common to all people (*parceque cette langue est plus delitable et plus commune à toutes gens et court parmi le monde*).'"

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sided. Lana thinks that, by the dust they raise, this band must be running more swiftly, and therefore must be supposed to be more guilty, than Brunetto and his companions. Brunetto does not tell Dante who the new comers are, but they would hardly be the same who are mentioned in the next canto as distinguished for wisdom and prowess with the sword (canto xvi, 39), for before Dante encountered these last, so long a time had elapsed, as had sufficed to take him a considerable distance onward, and he had then reached a point, from whence he could hear the roar of the Phlegethon thundering down the tremendous abyss into *Malebolge*.

Benvenuto thinks that the comparison with which Dante now closes the canto, in describing the rapidity of Ser Brunetto's hurried departure, is both lucid and very amusing. During his sojourn at Verona Dante would often have witnessed the foot-race that took place annually on the first Sunday in Lent for the *Pallio*, or green mantle, in which race Boccaccio says the runners were naked.

Dante compares Ser Brunetto speeding away to the fleetest of these runners.

Poi si rivolse, e parve di coloro
 Che corrono a Verona il drappo verde
 Per la campagna ; e parve di costoro
 Quegli che vince e non colui che perde.

Then he turned back, and seemed (like one)
 of those who at Verona run over the course
 (for) the green cloth ; and he seemed like
 the one of them who wins, and not he who
 loses.

Scartazzini says this popular spectacle was instituted to celebrate the victory that was won on the 29th September, 1207, by Azzo d' Este, Podestà of Verona, over the adherents of the Conte di San Bonifazio and the Conte de' Montecchi. The Statutes of Verona state that four prizes were to be exhibited for competition, the first of which was to be run for by virtuous women, even if *only one* could be found. (*Exponi debent quatuor bravia, quorum primum sit VI brachiorum panni viridis sambugati et fini; ad quod curretur per mulieres honestas, etiam si esset una.*)

END OF CANTO XV.

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE AS TO BRUNETTO LATINI'S
NAME.

As it was once suggested to me that in my *Readings on the Purgatorio* I had made use of "the popular but incorrect form" Brunetto Latini instead of Brunetto Latino, and being anxious to ascertain which is really the correct way of writing the name *in this nineteenth century*, I have for some time made a point of asking the opinion of every well-known Dantist with whom I have been brought in contact. Among these I may mention the late Dean Church, Sir James Lacaita, Professor Villari, the historian

and late Minister of Public Instruction in Italy, and more recently Doctor Scartazzini. All these in reply to my question, "Which do you say, Brunetto Latino or Latini?" have without exception answered, "Brunetto Latini;" and have explained that the name in full was Brunetto dei Latini, like Farinata degli Uberti. Dr. Scartazzini has kindly answered me at some length. I translate his words :

"Concerning the surname of Ser Brunetto, I will briefly tell you my opinion, which, if necessary, I think I can defend on good grounds. The termination in *i* is evidently plural, unless anyone chose to say that it is the Latin genitive. The different bearers of a surname or members of a family used to style themselves (*e.g.*) *i* Latini, *i* Paganini, *i* Lombardi, *i* Puccianti, *gli* Scartazzini, etc. At the present day, when speaking of the individual, these names are also used in the singular, whence we both say and write : *il* Latini, *il* Paganini, etc. But the mediæval (*antichi*) Italians were more precise in these matters. Speaking of a single person they would say *il* Latino, *il* Paganino, etc. ; and in my own family, which was always called Scartazzini, I find in documents of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, where they referred to a single person, they used to write Lorenzo Scartazzino, Clara Scartazzina. In using the plural termination the mediæval Italians used constantly to add the sign of the genitive, writing : Dante degli Alighieri, Brunetto dei Latini, etc. Therefore to your question I answer : According to modern use one must say Brunetto Latini, but, if one wishes to adhere very closely to ancient usage, one has to say Brunetto Latino [Sir James Lacaïta wishes me to say that he does not even allow this much], and I

am convinced that Ser Brunetto never signed himself *Latini*, but always *Latino*, or *dei Latini*, as also it is equally certain that were he living now he would sign himself Brunetto *Latini*. Therefore we come to this conclusion: In olden times the correct form of the name was Brunetto Latino, in modern times Brunetto *Latini*."

A distinguished University Dantist and *littérateur* writes to me as follows: "Thank you very much for Scartazzini's interesting letter, which I enclose. I entirely agree with you and with him as to the correctness *now* of writing *Latini*. *Latino* would be mere pedantry; as bad as Stephan for Stephen, which I saw lately, Eadward for Edward, or that modern hybrid abomination Vergil, which always irritates me extremely. Vergilius if you like, but Vergil is neither one thing nor the other."

I may add that I was urged by no less a Dantist, and an Italian, than Sir James Lacaita, to draw attention to this matter, when I should write "*Readings on the Inferno*."

I see moreover that Adolfo Bartoli, perhaps the greatest living authority on such questions, in his *Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, in vol. vi, repeatedly uses the expression Brunetto *Latini*.

The Chief of modern Dantists, the late Karl Witte, both in his text of the *Divina Commedia*, and in his *Dante Forschungen*, speaks of Brunetto *Latini*. Therefore, with such authority as that of Witte (who reads *Latini* in his text), Scartazzini, Bartoli, Villari, Lacaita and Church, I am afraid I must still continue to make use of "the popular though incorrect form" Brunetto *Latini*.

Since I wrote the above, Sir James Lacaita has spoken to me further on the subject, and remarks that *Latini* is the

genitive of *Latinus*, and is equivalent to saying *filius Latini*, like Williamson in English for "the son of William," etc. In Southern Italy the form is almost always "di Vincenzi," "di Pietri," "di Giovanni," etc. ; and afterwards, especially in this century, they have gradually, for the sake of abbreviation, taken to write it as one word, "Devincenzi," "Degiovanni," "Desanctis," "Depretis," etc., and Brunetto Latini stands for "Brunettus filius Latini."

CANTO XVI.

THE THIRD ROUND OF THE SEVENTH
CIRCLE.

THE BURNING SAND (*continued*).

THE VIOLENT AGAINST NATURE (*continued*).

GUIDO GUERRA.

TEGGHIAIO ALDOBRANDI.

JACOPO RUSTICUCCI.

—GUGLIELMO BORSIERE.

GERYON.

Many commentators have contended that the sinners whom Dante encounters in the present canto were stained with an even deeper dye of guilt than those described in the last canto ; but it is more probable (as Scartazzini suggests) that they are mentioned as having been men in authority and position in public life, in contrast to the clerics and teachers spoken of in the last canto ; the distinction being, not the gravity of the offences, but the position in life of the offenders.

Benvenuto divides this canto into four parts.

In the First Division, from v. 1 to v. 27, Dante relates how he was accosted by the shades of three noble Florentines, and the singular method adopted by them to enable themselves to enjoy a few moments' conversation with him, without pausing in their ceaseless movement.

In the Second Division, from v. 28 to v. 45, Jacopo Rusticucci, one of the three, names both himself and his companions to Dante, after asking him who he is.

In the Third Division, from v. 46 to v. 90, Dante, replying to the questions addressed to him by the three shades, describes to them the decadence of Florence, which he attributes to the pride and arrogance introduced into the City by the new upstart plutocracy.

In the Fourth Division, from v. 91 to v. 136, Dante relates how he was conducted by Virgil to the brink of the Great Abyss that overhangs *Malebolge*, down into which the Phlegethon falls, and he describes the strange monster called up by Virgil to carry them down into the Eighth Circle.

Division I. At the end of the last canto the Poets had just parted from the shade of Brunetto Latini, who had sped away in pursuit of his own company, as well as to avoid contact with another troop that were approaching, and with whom he told Dante he was not at liberty to consort. We now find that the Poets, who are continuing to traverse the Burning Sand by walking on the petrified and protected margin of the Phlegethon, are addressed by three shades belonging to another band which they encounter, but not that band which Ser Brunetto said he must avoid, for, since leaving them, the Poets have got over so much ground that they are drawing near to the inside edge of the Third Round, which, we must not forget, is the innermost of the three Rounds of the Seventh Circle, and they can now hear the sound of the Phlegethon falling into the Eighth Circle.

Già era in loco ove s' udia il rimbombo *
 Dell' acqua che cadea nell' altro giro,
 Simile a quel che l' arnie † fanno rombo ;
 Quando tre ombre ‡ insieme si partiro,

* *rimbombo*: Gelli says that the proper meaning of this word is that reverberation that remains after some sound or noise (more especially in hollow or confined spaces), and lasts until the air that has been violently disturbed by the noise, returns into its former condition. And hence the word is also used in a metaphorical sense to denote some voice or memory which is left behind by some well-known thing. Petrarch uses it in both senses. In the metaphorical sense in *Sonnet* cliv (which in some editions is cxxxv):

“Ma questa purà e candida colomba,
 A cui non so s' al mondo mai par visse,
 Nel mio stil frale assai poco rimbomba.”

And in the ordinary sense, in *Sonnet* lx (which in some editions is lii):

“Ma la sua voce ancor quaggiù rimbomba ;
 O voi che travagliate, ecco il cammino ;
 Venite a me, se 'l passo' altri non serra.”

† *l' arnie*: Gelli reads *arme*, which he says that he finds in the text of a commentator contemporary with Dante, but whom he does not name. He remarks, moreover, that he has never found in any country the word *arnie* used to signify beehives (sic). It is somewhat remarkable, however, that Boccaccio, also a Florentine, says: “cioè, era simile a quel rombo che l' arnie fanno, cioè, gli alvei o i vasi ne' quali le pecchie (bees) fanno li lor *fiari* (honeycombs), il quale è un suon confuso, che simigliare non si può ad alcun altro suono.”

Scartazzini says *arnia* is derived from the Celtic *arn*, hollowed. In *Georg.* iv, 260-263, Virgil compares the hum of the bees to the moaning of the waves of the sea:

“Tum sonus auditur gravior tractimque susurrant :
 Frigidus ut quondam silvis immurmurat Auster ;
 Ut mare sollicitum stridit refluentibus undis ;
 Æstuat ut clausis rapidus fornacibus ignis.”

‡ *Quando tre ombre correndo venian ver noi* :
 Compare *Purg.* v, 28-30:

Ah me! what sores, recent and old, did I
behold upon their limbs, burnt in by the
flames! It grieves me still, merely when I
think of it.

Scartazzini points out that while the old wounds never healed up, the ever falling flakes of fire were continually creating new sores. Boccaccio thinks their wounds must have resembled those made by red-hot pincers, a not unusual mode of punishment in the 13th century.

In all the *Divina Commedia* there is perhaps no episode more remarkable than that which now occurs, wherein Dante describes Virgil, one of the purest of the ancient Poets, impressing on him the great respect he is to pay to the three personages with whom he is now about to converse. Bartoli expresses his extreme disgust, and quoting the different observations that are made about them, denoting reverence and admiration, in lines 15, 39, 41-42, 50-51, down to the crowning marvel of all, where, in lines 58-60, Dante speaks of their "honoured names," he comes to the same conclusion referred to in the last canto, namely, that although Dante has branded all these names with what would be considered indelible infamy in a pure age, the public opinion of Dante's time on this hideous subject must have been different. Bartoli thinks with Blanc that the extreme prevalence of the crime may have caused it to be judged with less opprobrium than would be the case now. A marked change in public feeling would seem to have occurred fifty years after the death of Dante respecting this vice, for Benvenuto, while stating, at page 523 of vol. I of his

Commentary, how very prevalent it had been when he was at Bologna, speaks about it again at page 550, where, after affirming that whereas, in the past, Florence had been so bad as to have merited the fate of the Cities of the Plain, he concludes by saying: "But by the grace of God, at this day in the fourteenth century, it seems to have become much more purified."

Alle lor grida il mio Dottor s' attese,
 Volse il viso ver me, ed :—" Ora aspetta,"—
 Disse ;—" a costor si vuole esser cortese : 15
 E se non fosse il foco che saetta
 La natura del loco, io dicerei,
 Che meglio stesse a te, che a lor, la fretta."—

My Teacher paused attentive to their cries,
 (then) turned his face to me, and said : " Now
 wait, to these we must needs be courteous :
 And were it not for the fire which the nature
 of the place darts down, I should say that
 haste would become thee better than them."

He means that, were it not for the fire, he should exhort Dante to descend from the margin, and run with all speed to meet them, as they had been personages of great dignity.

The Poets have now stayed their steps, and await the questions that the three shades are about to put to them. It must be remembered, as we read in canto xiv,* that the whole body of the degraded beings of this circle were lifting up their voices in an unceasing wail of anguish. To address the Poets

* Canto xiv, 19-20 :

" D' anime nude vidi molte gregge,
 Che piangean tutte assai miseramente."

standing on the causeway above them, they had been obliged to pause for an instant ; but having spoken, we learn that they recommenced their wailing, and adopted the ingenious expedient of forming themselves into a wheel, by joining hands, and running round and round ; so that, while they continued in motion, yet they remained on the same spot, and their attitudes seem to have reminded Dante of those of wrestlers.

Ricominciar, come noi ristemmo, ei
 L' antico verso ; e quando a noi fur giunti, 20
 Fenno una rota di se tutti e trei.
 Qual soleano i campion far nudi ed unti,
 Avvisando lor presa e lor vantaggio,
 Prima che sien tra lor battuti e punti :
 Così, rotando, ciascuno il visaggio 25
 Drizzava a me, sì che in contrario il collo
 Faceva a' piè continuo viaggio.

As we stopped, they resumed the old refrain (of their lamentation) ; and when they had come up with us, they all three made of themselves a wheel. As champions stripped and oiled are wont to do, watching for their grip and their vantage, before they have exchanged blows and thrusts : so, wheeling round, each (of these) directed his face towards me, so that the neck was continually travelling in contrary (direction) to the feet.

As they ran round and round in a circle, wishing at the same time to keep their eyes fixed upon the Poets, it stands to reason that they had to turn them nearly the whole time in the opposite direction to that in which they ran.

Benvenuto lays great stress upon *battuti e punti tra lor*, signifying with their palms or fists (*cum palmis vel pugnīs*). "Nor are you," continues he, "to understand that it means with the sword in this passage, as some used to fight, and indeed still do at the present day, as when two petty kings fought in the presence of Scipio at Carthage in Spain; and as the three Horatii fought with the three Curiatii of Alba; for the comparison then would not be appropriate." In *Convito*, i, 8, Dante writes: "*Atto libero* è quando una persona va volentieri ad alcuna parte, che si mostra vel tenere volto lo viso in quella: *atto sforsato* è, quando contra a voglia si va, che si mostra in non guardare nella parte dove si va." (*Free action* is, when a person goes voluntarily in any direction, which is made evident by his turning his face that way; *a forced act* is when he goes against his will, which he shows by not looking in the direction he goes. *Miss Hillard's Translation*.) Upon this quotation, as applying to the passage in the text, Scartazzini remarks that the act of looking is an *atto libero* on the part of the three shades, whereas their running round and round in a circle or wheel is an *atto sforsato*.

Division II. One of the shades now names his two companions to Dante. He briefly mentions what was noteworthy in their lives, and then makes himself known as Jacopo Rusticucci, decidedly inferior in birth and rank to the other two. With much sadness and shame he entreats Dante not to be

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prejudiced by their abject condition and degraded appearance, but to judge them by their former reputation.

—“Eh, se miseria d' esto loco sollo
 Rende in dispetto noi e nostri preghi,”—
 Cominciò l' uno,—“e il tinto aspetto e brollo ; 30
 La fama nostra il tuo animo pieghi
 A dirne chi tu se', che i vivi piedi
 Così sicuro per lo inferno fregghi.
 Questi,* l' orme di cui pestar mi vedi,
 Tutto che nudo e dipelato vada, 35
 Fu di grado maggior che tu non credi.
 Nepote fu della buona Gualdrada :†

* *Questi* . . . *Nepote fu*, et seq. : Guido Guerra, grandson of the good Gualdrada, is mentioned by Ricordano Malaspini (chapter 157) as commanding the Guelph army that in 1255 drove the Ghibellines out of Arezzo. He was banished from Florence after the battle of Montaperti, with the other leading Guelphs, among whom was Dante's father. He was surnamed Guerra on account of his being continually engaged in some sort of fighting, and from his daring exploits in war. Benvenuto observes that many have wondered why Dante should have made use of the name of an ancestress to introduce a man of such illustrious descent, and distinguished by such great achievements. But Benvenuto thinks it was quite rightly done, in order that his grandmother's renowned family might be mentioned.

† *Gualdrada* was the daughter of Messer Bellincione Berti de' Ravignani, one of the most notable and honourable citizens of Florence, and of whom Dante's ancestor, Cacciaguida, is made to speak (*Par.* xv, 112, and xvi, 94, et seq.) with profound respect. In the latter passage Cacciaguida mentions Guido's descent from Bellincione :

“Sopra la porta, che al presente è carca
 Di nuova fellonia, di tanto peso
 Che tosto fia giattura della barca,

Guido Guerra ebbe nome, ed in sua vita
Fece col senno assai e con la spada.

Erano i Ravignani, ond' è disceso
Il conte Guido, e qualunque del nome
Dell' alto Bellincion ha poscia preso."

Boccaccio (*Comento*) relates the following story of Gualdrada, namely, that the Emperor Otho IV happening to be at Florence, and having gone to the Feast of San Giovanni to render it more joyful with his presence, it chanced that into the church there entered with the other citizens' wives, Messer Berto's, and brought with her a daughter of hers named Gualdrada, who was yet a maiden : and as they sat with others on one side, because the girl was surpassingly beautiful both in form and feature, nearly all present turned round to look at her, and amongst others the Emperor ; who having greatly commended her beauty and manners, asked Messer Berto, who was near him, who she was ; to which Messer Berto answered smiling : " She is the daughter of one who would I dare say allow you to kiss her, if it pleased you." The girl, being near, heard the words, and being much troubled at the opinion her father seemed to have of her, in letting it be thought that she would allow any one to kiss her otherwise than in a lawful way ; stood up and, looking at her father with a blush of shame, said : " Father, I pray you not to make such liberal promises at the expense of my modesty, for, unless by violence, no man shall ever kiss me except the one you give me for a husband." The Emperor greatly commended the maiden's reply, saying that such words could only proceed from a virtuous and modest heart, and at once turned his thoughts to finding a suitable bridegroom for her, and calling into his presence a noble youth named Guido Beisangue, who was afterwards known as the Conte Guido the Elder, he encouraged him to espouse her, and gave him as a dowry a territory of great extent in the Casentino and in the Alps, of which he created him Count. Guido and Gualdrada had several children, one of whom was the father of Guido Guerra.

N N 2

L' altro che appresso me l' arena trita, 40
 È Tegghiaio * Aldobrandi, la cui voce†
 Nel mondo su dovria esser gradita.
 Ed io, che posto son con loro in croce,
 Jacopo Rusticucci ‡ fui : e certo
 La fiera moglie più ch' altro mi nuoce."— 45

"Ah!" began one of them, "if the wretchedness of this place soft (from the yielding sand) and our blackened and charred aspect renders us and our prayers (objects) of scorn ; let our renown incline thy mind to tell us who thou art, who thus in all security movest (*lit.* rubbest) thy living feet through Hell. This one, in whose footprints thou seest me tread (*lit.* kick), albeit that he goes naked and peeled, was of higher rank than thou mightest imagine. Grandson of the good Gualdrada, his name was Guido Guerra, and in his life-time he did much by wisdom and with the sword. The other who next after me tramples the sand,

* *Tegghiaio Aldobrandi* was of the Adimari family, of whom Boccaccio says that he was a knight of a great soul and deeds of renown, and of great intelligence in the art of war, and, had his advice been listened to, the Florentines would not have taken the field against the Siense, and would have avoided the disastrous defeat they experienced at Montaperti.

† *la cui voce* : Benvenuto and Blanc both interpret *voce* to mean here *reputation*, and Blanc refers to ll. 31-33 ; and 85-87.

‡ *Jacopo Rusticucci* sprang from the people. There are contradictory accounts as to his guiltiness of the sin for which he is represented as undergoing punishment here. The *Anonimo Fiorentino* speaks of him otherwise as a great statesman, rich, prudent, peaceable and liberal. The story that is told about him can be read in the old commentaries.

is Tegghiaio Aldobrandi, whose reputation ought to be acceptable up in the world (*i.e.* by the Guelphs before the battle of Montaperti). And I, who with them am placed in torment, was Jacopo Rusticucci; and certainly my fierce wife more than anyone else injures me."

He means that her savage temper made his home so unhappy, that he separated from her, and then fell into the hideous crime for which he suffers to all eternity, and therefore she still injures him. Benvenuto, upon this, remarks that accursed be such an excuse, for Jacopo Rusticucci would seem to have followed the example of Orpheus, who, because he had lost his wife, began to despise the whole female sex, and the Thracian women, in revenge for his contempt towards them, tore him to pieces under the excitement of their Bacchanalian orgies. Benvenuto adds: "I could well wish that such a fate might befall all such men, and then we should not hear of so many."

Division III. Dante is so deeply moved on hearing who are these shades, that had the nature of the place allowed of it, he would at once have joined them. Gelli says that Dante means to lay down the principle that we should never frequent the society of any one, who, however virtuous in other respects, is tainted with any one besetting sin, with which there is any danger of our being contaminated. Therefore Dante shews himself as resisting his great desire to embrace these renowned Florentines. Ben-

venuto expresses the same idea in somewhat more forcible language.

S' io fussi stato dal foco coperto,
Gittato mi sarei tra lor disotto,
E credo che il Dottor l' avria sofferto.

Ma perch' io mi sarei bruciato e cotto,
Vinse paura la mia buona voglia, 50
Che di loro abbracciar mi faceva ghiotto.

If I had been sheltered from the fire, I should have thrown myself into the midst of them down below, and I believe my Teacher would have permitted it. But as I should have burnt and baked myself, fear overcame my good will, that made me eager to embrace them.

Dante now replies in regular order to each of the questions of Jacopo Rusticucci ; and first of all warmly repudiates the idea of any other feeling having been aroused in him than that of intense pity at the sight of their terrible sufferings.

Poi cominciai :—" Non dispetto, ma doglia
La vostra condizion dentro mi fisse
Tanto, che tardi tutta si dispoglia,
Tosto che questo mio Signor mi disse 55
Parole, per le quali io mi pensai,
Che qual voi siete, tal gente venisse.

Then I began : " Not scorn, but sorrow your condition has fixed so deep within me, that slowly will it be entirely stripped off, so soon as this my Lord spake words unto me, by which I conjectured that some such personages as you might be coming.

Dante next tells them that he is their fellow-citizen, partly to answer Jacopo Rusticucci's question as to

who he is, and partly to explain why he feels such deep sympathy for them as Florentines, whose names and reputation are so well known to him.

Di vostra terra sono ; e sempre mai
 L' opre di voi e gli onorati nomi
 Con affezion ritrassi ed ascoltai. 60
 Lascio lo fele,* e vo per dolci pomi†
 Promessi a me per lo verace‡ Duca ;
 Ma fino al centro pria convien ch' io tomi.—§

* *Lascio lo fele* : According to Boccaccio (*Comento*), Dante means that he is quitting the bitterness of the world, or rather that which is the consequence of sins not desisted from ; but Dante *was* desisting from his sins, and, grieving for them, was going to penitence.

† *pomi* : Compare *Purg.* xxxii, 73-75 :

“ Quale a veder dei fioretti del melo,
 Che del suo pomo gli Angeli fa ghiotti,
 E perpetue nozze fa nel cielo.”

Scartazzini thinks the *fele* refers to the *selva oscura*, and the *pomi* to the *divina foresta* in the Terrestrial Paradise, where, when they have arrived, Virgil says to Dante (*Purg.* xxvii, 115-117) :

“ Quel dolce pome, che per tanti rami
 Cercando va la cura dei mortali,
 Oggi porrà in pace le tue fami.”

‡ *verace* : Gelli thinks Dante calls Virgil *verace* because he was sent to him by Beatrice, *i.e.* by Divine Theology, a science which cannot err from the truth, and looks upon him as her messenger rather than as a poet of human sciences, in which he can only be true in part.

§ *tomi* : *tomare* is properly to fall head first. The word occurs in Petrarch. *Sestina Prima*, st. 5, et seq. :

“ Prima ch' i' torni a voi, lucenti stelle,
 O tomi giù nell' amorosa selva,
 Lasciando il corpo che fia trita terra,

I am of your city ; and ever with unceasing affection have I recounted and listened to the report of your deeds and your honoured names. I am leaving the gall (*i.e.* the bitterness of my sins), and go after the sweet fruit promised me by my trusty Guide ; but before that, shall I have to go down (*lit.* fall head first) to the centre (of the Earth)."

Jacopo Rusticucci has heard from another sinner, newly arrived in their place of torment, a very startling report of the present changed condition of Florence, and earnestly petitions Dante to inform him if it be true. He adjures him by his hopes of two things, which Benvenuto says are especially to be desired by man, namely, a long life in the present, and lasting fame in the future.

—“ Se lungamente l' anima conduca
 Le membra tue,”—rispose quegli,—“ ancora, 65
 E se la fama tua dopo te luca,
 Cortesia e valor,* di', se dimora
 Nella nostra città, sì come suole,
 O se del tutto se n' è gita fuora ?

Vedess' io in lei pietà, ch' in un sol giorno
 Può ristorar molt' anni, e 'nnanzi l' alba
 Puommi arricchir dal tramontar del sole.”

Benvenuto thinks the word is used advisedly, because Dante will fall head first to the centre of the earth, inasmuch as he will have to turn his head round to the place where his feet were (*quia in centro inferni tomabit, quia volvet caput ubi primo habebat pedes*).

* *Cortesia e valor . . . sì come suole* : Boccaccio considers that *cortesia* consists in acts of politeness, or in learning to live with each other liberally and happily, and to render due honour to every one in so far as it is possible ; *valore* seems rather to be

Chè Guglielmo Borsiere,* il qual si duole 70
 Con noi per poco, e va là coi compagni,
 Assai ne cruccia con le sue parole.”—

the virtue of giving most thought to the honour of the State, to noble enterprises, and yet more to feats of arms, in all of which these three shades had been citizens honoured and distinguished. Compare *Purg.* xvi, 115-116 :

“ In sul paese ch' Adice e Po riga
 Solea valore e cortesia trovarsi, etc.”

See, also, *Conv.* ii, 11 : “ Cortesia e onestade è tutt' uno ; e perocchè nelle corti anticamente le virtudi e li belli costumi s' usavano (siccome oggi s' usa il contrario), si tolse questo vocabolo dalle corti ; e fu tanto a dire *cortesia*, quanto uso di corte.”

Benvenuto thinks the question implies that the shades are alluding to the good times before their own days, when there were many who lived nobly, liberally and magnificently. And he adds that munificence or liberality is called courtesy (*curialitas*) because it first and foremost emanated from the courts of princes, as may frequently be read in this book (the *Divina Comedia*).

* *Guglielmo Borsiere* : Bartoli (*op. cit.* vol. vi, part ii, p. 70), quoting both from Benvenuto and Boccaccio, says that this person was a Florentine, who made purses, but afterwards changed his profession to become a man in society (uomo di corte, *homo curialis*), and that he, and some other men like him, made it their business to adjust treaties of peace between men of noble and gentle blood, to arrange marriages, relationships, and sometimes with pleasant and becoming romances to refresh the minds of the weary, and encourage them to honourable deeds. In the *Decameron*, Giorn. i, Nov. 8, Boccaccio relates the following tale about him: “ There was in Genoa a gentleman, named Messer Ermino de' Grimaldi, who, in immense possessions and wealth, by far surpassed every one of the most wealthy citizens known in Italy ; and as he surpassed them all in wealth, so in avarice and squalor he surpassed every other squalid and miserly person in all the world . . . for which reason . . . he was called by everybody Messer Ermino Avarizia. It came to pass that about

“So may thy soul long guide thy limbs (*i.e.* may thy life be a long one),” he replied, “and so may thy fame shine forth after thee, tell me, if liberality and worth dwell in our city as they are wont, or have they entirely gone out of it? because Guglielmo Borsiere, who has been (but) a brief while among us in torment, and is going along yonder with our companions, afflicts us much with his words (as to the condition of Florence).”

Bartoli (*Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, vol. vi, part ii, page 67) points out that there are seven Florentines undergoing punishment for the same

that time, whilst by spending nothing he went on accumulating wealth, there came to Genoa a worthy, well-bred and witty gentleman, called Guglielmo Borsiere . . . who was respected and always welcomed by all the gentlemen at Genoa. Having made a stay of several days in that city, and hearing much talk of Messer Ermino's avarice and squalor, he became desirous of seeing him. Messer Ermino . . . received him in a courteous manner . . . and took him, and some Genoese who came with him, to see a fine house which he had built, and when he had shown him all over it, he said: ‘Pray, Messer Guglielmo, can you, who have heard and seen many things, tell me of something that was never yet seen, to be painted in my hall?’ To whom Guglielmo, hearing him speak in such bad taste, replied: ‘Messere, I can tell you of nothing that has never yet been seen, that I know of; . . . but if it please you, I can indeed tell you of one thing which, I believe, you never saw.’ Messer Ermino said: ‘I pray you tell me what that is’ To whom Guglielmo immediately replied: ‘Have Liberality painted in your hall.’” Boccaccio adds that this sharp answer had such an effect on the Miser, that he changed entirely, and became one of the most liberal, gracious, and respected citizens in Genoa.

crime. In the former band there were Brunetto Latini, Bishop Andrea de' Mozzi, and Francesco d' Accorso. In this second band we find Guido Guerra, Tegghiaio Aldobrandi, Jacopo Rusticucci, and Guglielmo Borsiere. Bartoli remarks that these last four, as belonging to the epoch that preceded that of Dante, are naturally looked upon by him with a benevolent eye. He represents them as punished for their sin, but he loves them, and takes pleasure in recording their noble and virtuous deeds. What a difference in his demeanour towards them, and the manner in which Andrea de' Mozzi is mentioned. It is not the fault which dictates his judgments to Dante, but something which bursts forth from his mind, from his recollections, from his sympathies, or his indignation.

Dante is far from being able, to reassure Jacopo Rusticucci as to his misgivings about the present condition of Florence, which, he tells him, in reply to his question, has wholly deteriorated, owing to the overweening pretensions of its *parvenu* citizens.

—“ La gente nuova,* e i subiti guadagni,

* Boccaccio thinks that, by *nuova gente*, Dante means those people who came to inhabit Florence in addition to the old citizens, but more especially does he think Dante is referring to the Cerchi, who not long before had come into Florence from the *pivier* (parish) of Acone, a small rural town between Pistoja and Lucca. In *Par.* xvi, 46-70, Cacciaguida, after saying that in his time the inhabitants of Florence were only a fifth of what they had become in that of Dante, and deploring how Florence had recently become invaded by people from all the neighbouring townships, adds, v. 52 :

“ O quanto fora meglio esser vicine

Orgoglio e dismisura * han generata,
 Fiorenza, in te, sì che tu già ten piagni."— 75
 Così gridai colla faccia levata :
 E i tre, che ciò inteser per risposta,
 Guatar l' un l' altro, come al ver si guata.
 "The upstart (*lit.* new) people, and their
 sudden gains, O Florence, have engendered in
 thee arrogance and disparity, so that already

Quelle genti ch' io dico, ed al Galuzzo
 Ed a Trespiano aver vostro confine,
 Che averle dentro."

He then goes on to say that, had the Church exercised its proper influence in Italy, it would have prevented those endless wars between the great cities, which had the effect of driving the population of the environs into Florence. But for these shortcomings on the part of the Church, which ought to exercise the tender influence of a mother over her child, he asserts (61—69):

"Tal fatto è Fiorentino, e cambia e merca,
 Che si sarebbe volto a Simifonti,
 Là dove andava l' avolo alla cerca.
 Sariansi Montemurlo ancor dei Conti ;
 Sariansi i Cerchi nel pivier d' Acone,
 E forse in Valdigreve i Buondelmonti.
 Sempre la confusion delle persone
 Principio fu del mal della cittade,
 Come del corpo il cibo che s' appone."

Scartazzini thinks it more probable that Dante is alluding to the two factions of the Cancellieri, who, in 1300, had recently been transplanted from Pistoja to Florence, and from them arose the two parties of the *Neri* and *Bianchi*, the principal cause of the misfortunes of Florence, and of Dante's exile.

* *dismisura*: Compare again Cacciaguida's words, *Par.* xv, 103-105 :

"Non faceva, nascendo, ancor paura
 La figlia al padre, chè il tempo e la dote
 Non fuggfan quinci e quindi la misura."

art thou mourning over it." Thus I cried out with face uplifted (*i.e.* with great boldness): and the three, who understood this for an answer, looked upon one another, as men look at the truth (*i.e.* when they hear it).

They are filled with admiration at his reply, but, in what follows, hint to him that it may cost him dear.

—"Se l' altre volte sì poco ti costa,"—
 Risposer tutti,—"il soddisfare altrui, 80
 Felice te, se sì parli a tua posta.*
 Però se campi d' esti lochi bui,
 E torni a riveder le belle stelle,
 Quando ti gioverà † dicere: 'Io fui,'
 Fa che di noi alla gente favelle."— 85

"If on other occasions," they all replied, "it costs thee so little to satisfy others, happy thou, if thou speakest thus according to thy will. † Wherefore, if thou escape from these darksome regions, and returnest to behold again the beautiful stars, when it will rejoice

* *a tua posta*: Blanc, alluding to this particular passage in his *Vocabolario Dantesco*, says it is a very obscure expression, which seems to signify: "at your convenience," "at your pleasure." Compare *Inf.* x. 73-74:

"Ma quell' altro magnanimo, a cui posta
 Restato m' era, etc."

† *Quando ti gioverà dicere: 'Io fui'*: Compare *Virg. Æn.* i, 203:

"Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit."
 Again, Tasso, *Gerus. Liberata*, xv, st. 38:

"Quando mi gioverà narrare altrui
 Le novità vedute, e dire: Io fui."

‡ The meaning of this passage is, that Dante has in few words concisely expressed what he wanted to say, but with a freedom of speech that will be dangerous to him.

thee to say : ' I was (there), ' see that thou
speak to men of us."

The interview with the three Florentines is now brought to a conclusion. Their departure is very hurried, and, after he has seen them speed away, Dante makes no further mention of the Violent against Nature.

Indi rupper la rota, ed a fuggirsi
Ale sembiar le gambe loro snelle.

Un ammen non saria potuto dirsi
Tosto cosl, com' ei furo spariti :

Perchè al Maestro parve di partirsi.

90

Then they broke their wheel (*i.e.* they un-joined hands), and in running off, their nimble legs seemed wings. An Amen could not have been uttered as quickly as they had vanished : whereupon my Master thought it meet to depart.

Division IV. The Poets are moving on, and are now reaching the verge of the immense Abyss that leads down from the Inner Ring of the Circle of the Violent into the depths of *Malebolge*. It is at this point where we see the great divergence in the computations of the size of Hell, as between Vellutello and Manetti. Vellutello, whom we follow, gives the Great Abyss a depth of 140 miles. But Manetti, who makes his Hell begin much nearer the surface of the Earth than Vellutello, gives no less a depth than 750 odd miles. In the first of Galileo's lectures given before the Academy of Florence in support of Manetti's theories as to the dimensions of Hell, he mentions the exact spot where Dante and Virgil now are :

“And Dante walking alongside of the said river (the Phlegethon) towards the centre, arrived at the edge of the Abyss (*burrato*) of Geryon, where, together with Virgil, mounting upon the back of the monster, he was lowered through the murky air down into that division of Hell where all species of fraudulent are chastised in ten chasms (*bolgie*). And this division of Hell is $750\frac{5}{11}$ miles distant from that above, and this is the depth of the Abyss.”

In all these speculations and calculations there needs must be many inconsistencies, the greatest of all, that Dante, on foot, could travel from the surface of the Earth to its centre in the short space of twenty-five hours, a distance computed in Dante's time to be 3,245 miles. This distance, had Dante walked at the very improbable pace of five miles an hour, it would have taken him twenty-seven days to accomplish, supposing him to be walking the whole of that time without ever stopping to rest. The ingenious Manetti, having arrived at the other measurements of the depths by various deductions, finds that he has in all accounted for about 2,515 miles out of the total semi-diameter of the Earth of about 3,245 miles, and from that he comes to the conclusion that the 750 odd miles unaccounted for must be the depth of the great Abyss.

By way of reconciling the inconsistency of a human being being able in twenty-five hours to traverse a space of 3245 miles, it must be remembered that the *Divina Commedia* is a vision, and in visions, as in dreams, the proportions of time and space are purely arbitrary.

We read in the opening lines of the canto, that the Poets were within hearing distance of the Cascade, when the three Florentine shades addressed them ; now they have advanced farther, and are close upon the Falls.

Io lo seguiva, e poco eravam iti,
 Che il suon dell' acqua n' era sì vicino,
 Che, per parlar, saremmo appena uditi.

I was following him, and we had gone but a short way, when the roar of the water was so near to us, that, in speaking we should scarce have been heard.

Dante compares the Falls of the Phlegethon to those of a river (the Montone) in North Italy.

Come quel fiume,* ch' ha proprio cammino
 Prima da Monte Veso in ver levante 95
 Dalla sinistra costa d' Apennino,

* *Come quel fiume* : In Lord Vernon's folio edition of the *Inferno*, vol. iii, tavola xlvi, page 123, there is the following description of the Falls of the Montone :

"The Acquacheta rises in the Apennines near the Badia di San Benedetto in Romagna, and after many tortuous windings, forces its way through rocks of hard schistous stone, and when it reaches Forlì, it is deprived (*vacante*) of its proper name, and is then called the Montone. A little way below the Badia is the village of San Benedetto, where once the noble house of Della Rocca di San Casciano, and the Conti Guidi of the Dovadola branch held sway ; they at one time gave hospitality to the divine Poet, who was a friend of Guido Salvatico and of Ruggiero his son. Some contend that in their castle he wrote some cantos of the *Divina Commedia*, in which he clearly alludes to these localities ; and that, to show himself grateful for their courteous hospitality, he immortalized in song the heroic end of Buonconte da Montefeltro, whose only daughter and heiress was Mantenessa, wife of Count Guido Salvatico."

Che si chiama Acquaqueta suso, avante
 Che si divalli giù nel basso letto,
 Ed a Forlì di quel nome è vacante,*
 Rimbomba là sopra san Benedetto 100
 Dell' alpe, per cadere ad una scesa,
 Ove dovria † per mille esser ricetto ;
 Così, giù d' una ripa discoscesa,
 Trovammo risonar quell' acqua tinta,
 Sì che in poc' ora avria l' orecchie offesa. 105

Like as that river which holds its own course, first from Monte Viso towards the East, on the left (*i.e.* the North-West) side of the Apennines, which (river) higher up is called the Acquaqueta, before it rushes down into its bed below, and at Forlì is deprived (*lit.* is vacant) of that name (being thereafter called the Montone), falls thundering down in a single leap from the high mountains (*lit.* Alps) above San Benedetto, where there ought to be habitation for a thousand ; thus, down from a precipitous cliff, we found that darksome cataract re-echoing so that in a short time it would have stunned the ear.

Benvenuto considers the whole passage relating the above comparison so intricate and difficult, that he says he shall discuss it in great detail. I find, however, that the explanation given by Blanc (*Saggio*,

* *di quel nome è vacante* : compare *Purg.* v, 94-97 :

“ appiè del Casentino

Traversa un' acqua che ha nome l' Archiano,

Che sopra l' Ermo nasce in Apennino.

Dove il vocabol suo diventa vano etc.”

† *dovria* : Witte reads *dovea*, but this is one of the few cases in which I do not follow his reading.

pp. 156-157) is so lucid and exhaustive that I give that in preference. He says: "Rightly to understand these verses, it is necessary to make one or two observations. Dante, when he speaks of *l' Apenninno*, is accustomed to look at that range of mountains from its origin, in the Maritime Alps, and then to follow it like the course of a river, so that the Northern and Eastern slopes appear to him as on his left hand, and those of the South and West as on his right; as for instance in this passage, and also in his *De Vulgari Eloquio* (i, 10). Of all the rivers flowing from the left flank of the Apennines towards the Po, which takes its rise in Monte Viso, the Acquacheta, so called in its upper course, and Montone in its lower course near Forlì, and which flows into the sea near Ravenna is the only one that does not discharge into the Po, but holds its own course (*proprio cammino*). At the place where it falls down from the Apennines, near a Benedictine Monastery, it gathers itself into a thundering cascade, which Philalethes thinks has much diminished in volume since the time of Dante. It is to this river that Dante is now comparing the Phlegethon, for the reason that, like it, it forms a roaring cascade, and because it also changes its name, being called Phlegethon in Upper Hell, and in the lowest Hell, Cocytus. Dante adds that near to this fall of the river, *dovea*, or *dovria*, *per mille esser ricetta*, but what does this mean? Boccaccio very candidly confesses that for a long time he was in doubt as to what was the intention of the author, until the Abbot of the said Monastery related to him how one of the Conti Guidi, lords of that mountain region, had had it in his

mind to build a castle there, and to establish many residences round it, but that through the death of that Count the project fell through. Benvenuto repeats the same story; Buti reads *poria* (*i. e. potria*) and rather thinks that one must understand that in that monastery a thousand monks, strangers, and passers-by might be lodged. It is pretty clear that the good Abbot had thrust forward the explanation which showed him and his monks in the most favourable light; but on the other hand, all interpreters, both ancient and modern, from the time of Guiniforte onwards, explain, and I think rightly, that Dante has here, after his own particular manner, aimed a severe blow at the governing body of those monks; their monastery *ought to be* a receptacle for a thousand monks, while in fact there are only a few enjoying its rich revenues. Now there is no doubt that the reading *dovria* is the one that best fits in with the above interpretation, which has therefore been adopted by Daniello and all the commentators that came after him, while on the other hand Boccaccio, Benvenuto, Guiniforte and the four first editions read *dovea*."

We now come to a passage which, while presenting no difficulty whatsoever as to the literal sense of the words, is, notwithstanding, generally understood to have an allegorical or mysterious signification, in the interpretation of which there are so many divergent opinions, as to render it one of the most difficult in the whole of the *Divina Commedia*. As the interpretation must deal with the whole episode from here to the end of the canto, I propose to defer the discussion of it until the conclusion.

The Poets are standing on the edge of the Abyss, into the gloom of which their eyes are unable to penetrate.

Io aveva una corda * intorno cinta,
 E con essa pensai alcuna volta
 Prender la lonza alla pelle dipinta.
 Poscia che l' ebbi tutta da me sciolta,
 Sì come il Duca m' avea comandato, 110
 Porsila a lui aggroppata e ravvolta.
 Ond' ei si volse inver lo destro lato,
 Ed alquanto di lungi dalla sponda
 La gittò giuso in quell' alto burrato.

I had a cord girded about me, and with it I had at one time bethought me to take the Leopard with the spotted hide (*i.e.* the Lusts of the Flesh). When I had quite unloosed it from me, as my Leader had commanded me, I handed it to him coiled and rolled up. Whereupon he turned him to his right side, and cast it out some distance from the edge right down that deep abyss.

Virgil's action, in turning to his right side before discharging the coiled rope, exactly describes the gesture of a man when about to throw a ball or a stone with his full strength.

Virgil's eye follows the rope into the darkness, and his rapt attention fascinates Dante, who begins

* *Io aveva una corda intorno cinta* : This means the cord of the Franciscans, and is supposed to signify that at one period of his life Dante had entered the Order of St. Francis, in order to mortify his carnal appetites. Compare *Inf.* xxvii, 67-68 :

"Io fui uom d' arme, e poi fui cordelliero,
 Credendomi, sì cinto, fare ammenda."

speculating as to what may be coming. But he soon finds that Virgil has guessed his thoughts, and tells him so.

— “E’ pur convien che novità risponda,”— 115
 Dicea fra me medesmo,—“al nuovo cenno
 Che il Maestro con l’ occhio sì seconda.”—
 Ahi quanto cauti gli uomini esser denno
 Presso a color, che non veggon pur l’ opra,
 Ma per entro i pensier miran col senno ! 120

“Surely,” said I within myself, “something new must answer this novel signal, which my Master follows so with his eye.” Ah, how cautious men have to be with those, who look not at the deed alone, but look with their wisdom at the thoughts within !

This means : “ I must be careful what I even think beside Virgil, for he at once guesses what is in my mind.”

Ei disse a me :—“Tosto verrà di sopra
 Ciò ch’ io attendo, e che il tuo pensier sogna
 Tosto convien ch’ al tuo viso si scopra.”—

He said to me : “ Soon will come up what I am expecting, and that which thy thought dreams of must soon be discovered to thine eyes.”

Dante is at this point much embarrassed how to describe the extraordinary monster that ascended in obedience to Virgil’s signal, and he tells his readers that, as a general rule, when a fact, though perfectly true, seems incredible, it is far better not to speak of it, than by doing so to incur the imputation of being a liar. The Italian proverb that the truth when not

believed is held to be a lie (*La veritate non creduta bugia è tenuta*), would evidently be present in his mind, and the creature that he saw was so utterly unlike anything in nature, that he almost fears to tell of it, and only does so in obedience to the imperative law imposed upon him of relating in writing all that he has witnessed.

Sempre a quel ver * ch' ha faccia di menzogna
 De' l' uom chiuder le labbra finch' ei puote, 125
 Però che senza colpa fa vergogna ;
 Ma qui tacer nol posso : e per le note
 Di questa commedia, † lettor, ti giuro,
 S' elle non sien di lunga grazia vote,
 Ch' io vidi per quell' aer grosso e scuro 130
 Venir notando ‡ una figura in suso,
 Maravigliosa ad ogni cor sicuro,

* *Sempre a quel ver*, etc. : compare Pulci, *Morgante Maggiore*, xxiv, st. 104 :

“ *Sempre a quel ver, ch' ha faccia di menzogna,
 E più senno tener la lingua cheta,
 Che spesso senza colpa fa vergogna.*”

Compare *Inf.* xiii, 20-21 :

“ *riguarda bene, e si vedrai
 Cose, che torrien fede al mio sermone.*”

And *Inf.* xxviii, 113-114 :

“ *E vidi cosa ch' io avrei paura,
 Senza più prova, di contarla solo.*”

† *commedia* : Scartazzini says that the word, *in this instance*, is to be pronounced with the accent on the *i*, *commèdia*, as in Greek.

‡ *Venir notando* : compare Virg. *Æn.* vi, 14, et seq.:

“ *Dædalus, ut fama est, fugiens Minola regna,
 Præpetibus pennis ausus se credere cœlo,
 Insuetum per iter gelidas enavit ad Arctos
 Chalcidicaque levis tandem superadstitit arce.*”

Sì come torna colui che va giuso

Talora a solver ancora, ch' aggrappa

O scoglio od altro che nel mare è chiuso,

135

Che in su si stende, e da piè si rattappa.

Before that truth which has the semblance of falsehood a man must ever close his lips as far as he can, because (though) blameless he incurs shame (of supposed falsehood). But here I cannot be silent: and, by the rhymes of this Comedy, Reader, I swear to thee—and so may they (these rhymes), not be devoid of long-lasting favour,—that through that thick and murky air I saw, grotesque (enough to strike terror) into every steadfast heart, a figure come swimming up like him (the diver) who sometimes goes down to clear an anchor which has got fouled on a rock, or other thing which is hidden in the sea, who (when he) returns, extends the upper part (of his body), and from his feet (to the waist) gathers himself up.

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE BY DR. SCARTAZZINI ON
LINES 106-136.

In Scartazzini's volume of *Prolegomeni della Divina Commedia*, page 531, he impresses on all who devote themselves to the interpretation of Dante, especially foreigners, that the more they draw from the Italian commentaries of the greatest repute the more useful their work will be, and the more meagre will be the labour of those who think themselves capable of dispensing with such assistance. Dr. Scartazzini, who is looked up to by all students of Dante,

has kindly allowed me to reproduce the whole of his very valuable supplemental note to this canto.

He writes :

“ Although the literal sense of the last [thirty-one] verses of this canto is pretty clear, and does not present any great difficulty, these lines are, notwithstanding, some of the most difficult in the entire Poem, it being anything but easy to discover and decipher their mystic meaning, or

‘ . . . la dottrina che s’ asconde
Sotto il velame degli versi strani.’

First of all let us be allowed to remark that those who attach too much importance to the fact that Virgil, in throwing down into the Abyss the mysterious cord with which Dante was girded, causes Geryon, the image of Fraud (*sozza imagine di froda*) to come up, have in our opinion rendered it difficult rather than easy to understand rightly the signification of these verses. I myself do not think it is a question here of showing a symbol with which to attract Geryon, the image of Fraud, but that the use which Virgil makes of the cord is purely accessory. If Geryon had to come up it was absolutely necessary that he should know that there were some persons above who had to be carried down. Now how were they to let him know? Shout and call him? Certainly, if he could have heard the shouts! But as the two Poets could scarcely hear themselves speak by reason of the loud roar of the falling water, how could Geryon have possibly heard them at the bottom? Therefore, as they had no means of making him hear, they must perforce make him some signal. But this could not be done by gestures, since neither did the two Poets see Geryon, nor did he see them. The only way then out of the difficulty was to throw some object down to him, so as to give him a sure indication that there were some men or shades waiting for him up there, who wanted him. But

what had they to throw down? A stone, perhaps, or a piece of wood? Yes, but they must first find one. And on those smooth stone margins on which they were standing, and on the Burning Sand Waste there were neither stones nor pieces of wood. The only thing then to throw would be something that they had about them, and they naturally choose in preference something superfluous, which they can do without; and this object is just the mysterious cord, which consequently need not necessarily be a symbol with which to attract Fraud, but simply a signal to Geryon, to take the place of the shouts which he would not have heard, or the gestures which he would not have seen.

Now to determine with approximate certainty what may be the allegorical signification of this cord, we must deal separately with the circumstance that Virgil threw it down the Abyss to Geryon, to make him come up to the place where the two Poets are standing.

Having first stated that, let us turn our attention to the following points:

✓(1.) *The Cord is not a mere symbol, but is at the same time a real cord.* Dante speaks of it in a way that absolutely forbids our taking it for a purely metaphorical cord. Now, if Dante had been speaking of a mere symbol how could he possibly have made use of the terms he does? The Poet is girded with the cord, he unlooses it at the command of Virgil, and puts it quite off him (*se la scioglie tutta*), then he coils it up, he hands it to his Guide, who takes it, and with his right hand casts it down the Abyss to induce Geryon to come up, and, as he casts it, follows it attentively with his eye. This must certainly mean a real cord; such actions demonstrate it to be so quite sufficiently, beyond the fact that it is used as a material signal which would have influence to set that fiend in motion. One could not coil or roll up a purely metaphorical object.

(2.) *The chief importance of the cord consists in that the Poet had once hoped with it to overcome the Leopard, and, let us repeat, not in the fact that Virgil makes use of it to call up Geryon.* In making the observation that with that cord he had once hoped to overcome the Leopard with the spotted hide, Dante is, in fact, telling us, himself, both the motive that had induced him to gird himself with it, and also the use to which he intended to put it. Therefore, so far at least, the mysterious cord had had nothing to do with Geryon, and consequently the commentator must be laying stress, not so much on the time when Dante takes off the cord and throws it away, as on the motive that induced him to gird himself with it in the first instance, and on the use he intended to make of it during the time he was girded with it. Now, according to the distinct words of Dante, the cord has no connection with anything except the Leopard. Therefore, the symbol of the Leopard will serve to explain the symbol of the cord, and *vice versa* the symbol of the cord will be of no little advantage in defining the symbol of the Leopard.

(3.) *The cord has become superfluous to Dante from the moment that he has left behind him the last of the circles in which are punished sins of Lasciviousness.* The Poet has not indeed up to now made any mention of this mysterious cord. But he says that with it he had hoped to overcome the Leopard. He never saw the Leopard except in the *selva oscura*; therefore he must have been girded with the cord when he first became conscious that he was passing through the dark wood. Here, on the verge of the Eighth Circle, he has still got the rope about his body: and therefore he has been girded with it from the commencement of his journey until this moment. (Now Virgil casts it down the Abyss, and Dante does not take it up again: therefore from this moment it has become to him a perfectly useless object.)

But what, then, can this cord be with which the Poet had at times thought he could overcome the Leopard? To this question we find an answer in an ancient tradition, according to which it would seem that in his youth Dante had donned the garb of the Franciscan Order, but that he quitted it before completing his noviciate. Buti, who lived in the same century as Dante, speaks of the tradition, both in this passage and in *Purg.* xxx, 42, as an undoubted and generally-known fact; *undoubted* because he does not even hint at there being any doubt upon the subject: *generally known* because he only just alludes to it, evidently taking it for granted that his hearers already are acquainted with the details. But can we, ought we, to believe Buti? Well, give us any plausible reasons for not giving credence to him, and then teach us how to understand this passage after denying the facts he states, and then we will give you credit for your hypercriticism!

But what reasons are there that can be alleged? The ever-to-be-revered Blanc (*Versuch.* etc. pt. I, Halle, 1861, page 143) observes that 'all men of sense' held Buti's tale to be a fable. Without forgetting the respect due to the memory of so distinguished a man, we must still be allowed to ask, before we proceed farther, if it is an especial mark of good sense to suppose that an author of the same century as Dante should not have had the possibility of informing himself about what he relates; if it is a mark of good sense to suppose him to be a person of such bad faith that he would wish to be the first to spread this fable, or a person so rash as to dare to publish it openly at a period when the recollections about Dante were quite fresh, and when it was not possible that the circumstances could be unknown in a person of such celebrity. Would it not rather be a mark of greater good sense to admit that Buti takes his stand upon a tradition that was common at that time, and further

to admit that, in days of such proximity to the time of Dante, such a tradition could not well be false.

Now, who are these men of sense?

Blanc quotes Tiraboschi, Petti, and Balbo. Well, none of these three were men who would easily be gulled in matters of history. But let us see with our own eyes what these men *do* say! Let us open Tiraboschi, and in vol. v, part ii, of his *Storia della Letteratura Italiana* (2nd edition, Modena, 1789) at page 492 we read: 'Francesco da Buti, who in the same fourteenth century wrote a commentary on Dante, relates, that when he was still young he became a Friar of the Order of the Minorites, but that he put off the garb before making his profession, which circumstance, however, is not related by any writer of the Life of Dante.' Is it contended from these words that the Father of our history of literature [Tiraboschi] held Buti's narrative to be a mere fable? Tiraboschi, it is true, winds up a marginal note with this sentence: 'But these are fables'; only that the sentence refers to what is related by Padre Giovanni di Sant' Antonio, and not at all to that by Buti. Pelli, in the eighth paragraph of his *Memorie* (Venezia, Zatta, 1758, page 58, and in the second edition, Florence, 1823, page 79) after alluding to Buti's account, goes on thus: 'I cannot really say that there is any authority for this fact; but I know this, that the fact of finding it distinctly related by an author [Buti], who wrote not more than 70 years after the death of Dante, is a pretty strong ground for presuming it to be true.'

So then Pelli held Buti's account for a fable? And how about Balbo? In his *Vita di Dante* (Firenze, Le Monnier, 1853) page 95, Balbo writes: 'Anyhow this cord, with which Dante says that he had once thought to overcome the Leopard . . . does not seem to me to admit of a better interpretation, or indeed of any other, than that

it was the cord of the Franciscans, who were styled, both then and by himself, Cordeliers, (and by donning their garb he (Dante) thought to overcome the conflicts which had arisen in him at the time we are speaking about.) And this is really the interpretation given by the best commentators. And when to this we add the singular devotion, nay more, the love with which Dante relates the life of St. Francis in the *Paradiso* (canto xi), and his other also loving devotion to St. Clare, who was, as is well known, a sister in religion to St. Francis (*Par.* iii, 97); and his very outbursts of wrath against those who, in his estimation, were causing the Order to degenerate; from all these it seems to me that we get, not only a probability, but little less than a moral certainty of the fact alleged by Buti, that Dante did make trial of becoming a Franciscan.' Did, then, Balbo hold the fact to be a fable? If Tiraboschi, Pelli, and Balbo are the group in question of 'men of sense,' it will be at least granted to us to say: *All men of sense held the fact alleged by Buti to be either certain, or at least probable.* The epoch in which Dante gave way to the idea of abandoning the world shall be established in the internal life of the Poet in the volume of the *Prolegomeni*.

If, then, there are well-founded reasons for denying credence to the account of Buti; if, moreover, there is an epoch in Dante's life in which it is extremely probable that he was seriously thinking of abandoning the world (see our work: *Dante Alighieri*, etc. Bienne, 1869, page 227 *et seq.*), it will then only be necessary to explain the verses in question, as we have done in our Commentary. (The cord symbolizes the habit of St. Francis, in donning which Dante had hoped to shelter himself from the temptations of the flesh—he had hoped to overcome the Leopard, the symbol of Lasciviousness. To overcome Lasciviousness he had girded himself with the cord of St. Francis.)

'*Præcinge me, Domine, cingulo puritatis et extingue in lumbis meis humorem libidinis, ut maneat in me virtus continentia et castitatis.*' That is the prayer of the Priest at the moment of putting on the girdle round the Eucharistic vestment; and that must have been Dante's prayer at the moment he put on the cord. (But the cord alone is not in itself sufficient to overcome the temptations of the Flesh, to take the Leopard. Dante, though girded with the cord, must contemplate the punishment of the Lascivious before he can inwardly and entirely subdue his carnal appetites. But now, after having witnessed the torments of carnal sinners and the hurricane of Hell, which

'Di qua, di là, di sù, di giù gli mena,'

after having witnessed on the horrible Sandy Waste the last and extremest consequence of unbridled lust, that rain of fire, which falls upon those who were polluted by the most disgusting form of carnal sins, having seen the sores, both recent and of old standing, that have been wrought by the eternal flames,—now Dante has conquered,—and conquered inwardly, therefore Virgil bids him divest himself *entirely* of the cord as of a thing that from henceforward has become quite superfluous, and he casts it down into the Abyss of Hell to resume it no more.)

And if any one, notwithstanding what we said at the commencement of this digression, would ask us why Virgil should wish to make use of this particular cord to call up Geryon, we should answer: 'Because he wished to pay back the loathsome image of Fraud in its own coin.' How often was not, both during Dante's time, and before, and since, the monastic garb, here represented by the cord, nothing else but—a loathsome image of Fraud!

But for anyone who does not like our interpretation, here are some others:

Jacopo della Lana: 'By this cord Dante means fraudu-

lence . . . and adds that many times he had thought to capture temporal goods by Fraud, and vainly glorified himself in their acquisition.' (!)

Ottimo : says that 'there were times when he believed and thought that by it he could capture the Leopard with the spotted hide, that is to say, with deceit to capture some kind of Lasciviousness.' (!)

Anonimo Fiorentino : 'The Author says here that with the cord, that is, with deceit and fraudulence, he had at times thought that he could delude some young woman whom he loved.' (!)

Chiuse Anonime, ed. Selmi : 'With this cord Fraud itself is to be captured, with which indeed Dante formerly thought to beguile and flatter women, and perhaps he did so.' (!)

So also *Pietro di Dante*, the *Postillatore* Cassinese, Benvenuto, Daniello, etc. etc.

Modern exponents, on the contrary, see in the cord the symbol of the virtue the opposite to Fraud, namely,

Tommasèo and Andreoli... Good Faith ;

Mauro Sagacity ;

Barelli Honesty and Uprightness
of purpose ;

Fratricelli Vigilance ;

Hoffinger Justice, and so on.

We will not stop to combat all these [modern] opinions in detail, but will simply say this :

If the cord is the symbol of any sort of virtue, from this passage which we have undertaken to discuss, we get this inevitable consequence, namely, that in 1300, in the very year of his conversion, Dante divested himself wholly and entirely of virtue itself (!!!), for Virgil threw away the cord, nor does Dante ever speak of having retaken it, and girded himself with it anew.

And to sum up :

Since Dante, on reaching the verge of the Eighth Circle of Hell, divests himself of the cord, hands it to Virgil, and does not take it back any more, that cord cannot possibly signify any one single virtue at all, but only either a vice which he puts away from himself for ever, or else some object so utterly indifferent to him that from thenceforward it is of no further use to him.

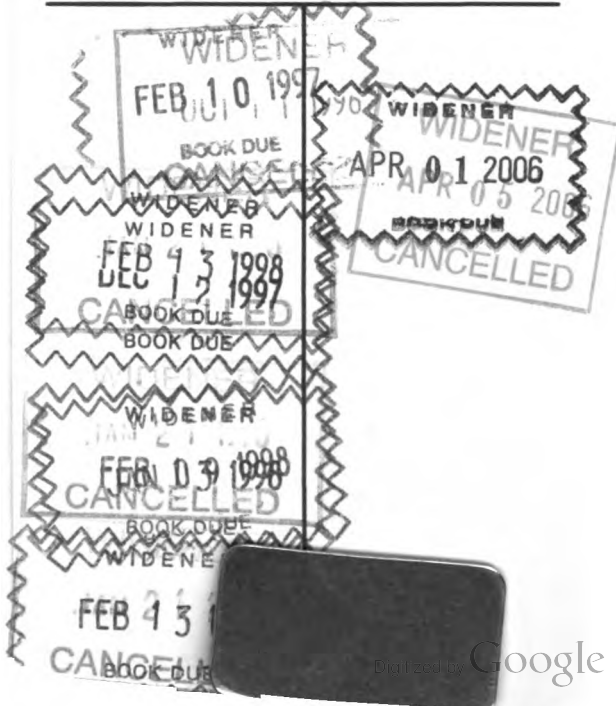
Let the Reader choose which of these explanations pleases him best."

END OF CANTO XVI AND OF VOLUME I.

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