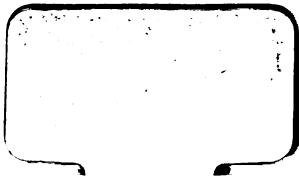


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DANTE'S INFERNO
AND OTHER TRANSLATIONS



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BY

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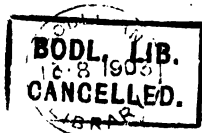
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TO
THE MEMORY OF
MY DARLING WIFE
THESE FOND ATTEMPTS TO FILL THE BLANK
CAUSED BY HER LOSS

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DANTE'S INFERNO

B

CANTO I

Dante is lost in a gloomy wood—He tries to climb a fair mountain,
but is hindered by three beasts—Virgil comes to the rescue—
The Prophecy of the Greyhound—The proposed journey.

MIDWAY the journey of our life when sped¹
I found me in a gloomy wood astray,
For lost the pathway that directly led.
And what it was, how hard it is to say,
This wood so savage and so harsh and rude,
The very thought renewing my dismay,
Scarce with more bitterness is death imbued :
But of the good to treat which thence befell,
Of other things I'll speak which there I viewed.
How 'twas I entered scarcely can I tell ;
So full was I of slumber when attained
The point where the true path I bade farewell.
But after of a hill the foot I gained,
There where its ending the long valley showed
Which with its terror had my heart constrained,
I looked on high, and saw its shoulders glowed,
The planet's rays already formed their gear
Which others leads aright by every road.
Then quieted a little was the fear
Which my heart's inmost deep had held, those hours
Of night which passed in anguish so severe.

¹ The date is 1300, when Dante was thirty-five years of age.

And like the man whom panting breath o'erpowers,
 Who from the deep escaping to the shore
 Turns to the water perilous, and glowers ;
 Ev'n so my mind, which flight still onward bore,
 Turned back intent to view the strait, whose claim
 That never man left it with life before.
 And I, when once reposed my wearied frame,
 Resumed such journey on the lone hillside
 That the firm foot the lowest ever came.
 And lo, as first almost the ascent I tried,
 A leopard,¹ nimble and exceeding light,
 Which was all covered with a spotted hide.
 And never once departed from my sight ;
 Such hindrance to my journey to design,
 That to return I turned full oft in flight.
 Time was it then of earliest morning shine ;
 Mounting the Sun aloft with every star
 That bore him company, when Love divine
 Moved at the first those things so beauteous are ;
 So that good hope to cause in me combined
 That beast with the gay coloured skin to mar,
 The hour of day and the sweet season kind ;
 Yet not so, but the sight which then appeared
 Of a fierce lion² terror gave my mind.
 He seemed to come against me, all upreared
 His head on high, by raging hunger driv'n,
 Seemed as if him the air encircling feared ;
 And a she-wolf,³ by every craving riv'n,
 Such of her leanness seemed the ghastly plight,
 That sorrow to so many lives had giv'n.

¹ The type according to some of sensuality, according to others of Florence.

² Pride and ambition, or the King of France.

³ Avarice or the Papacy.

The terror that forth issued from her sight
 Unto my spirit caused such grievous pains,
 That hope I lost of conquering that height.
And as the man who gladly counts his gains,
 And comes the time that causes loss or ill,
 In all his thoughts is saddened and complains ;
Thus I, when worked that restless beast her will,
 Which coming on against me, pace by pace,
 Drove me back thither where the Sun is still.
While thus I grovelled in the lowest place,
 Before me one was offered to my sight
 Whose faintness of long silence showed the trace.
When in the desert vast I saw this wight,
 “ Have pity upon me,” my cry began,
 “ Whoe'er thou art, or shade, or man aright.”
“ Not man,” he answered me, “ I once was man,
 And for my earthly parents, Lombards they,
 And by their country both were Mantuan.
'Neath Julius born, though later in his day,
 I lived at Rome in good Augustus' reign,
 Time when the false and lying Gods held sway.
Poet was I, and chanted in my strain
 Anchises' son the just, who came from Troy
 After the flames laid waste proud Ilion's fane.
But thou, why dost return to such annoy ?
 Why dost not scale the mount delectable,
 The source alike and cause of every joy ?”
“ Oh ! art thou then that Virgil, and that well
 Which pours of eloquence so vast a stream ?”
I answered, while abashed my forehead fell.
“ Oh of all poets glory and brightest beam,
 May the great love and the long study now
 Avail me that have made me search thy theme.

Thou art my master, and my author thou :
 Thou only he from whom I came to learn
 The noble style with honour decked my brow.
 Look on the beast which caused me thus to turn,
 Help me against her, thou illustrious Sage,
 For she makes, trembling, veins and pulses burn."
 "Needs must thou take another pilgrimage,"
 After he saw me weeping he replied,
 " If from this savage spot thou'dst disengage.
 For this fell beast, against which thou hast cried,
 Suffers none else to pass by her defile,
 But so doth hinder them that they have died.
 Her nature so malevolent and vile
 That ne'er her greed of appetite she sates,
 But after each repast it grows the while.
 Many the animals with whom she mates,
 And many more shall be, till comes apace
 The Greyhound,¹ from whom death of sorrow waits.
 He neither upon earth nor metal base,
 But wisdom, love, and virtue shall be fed ;
 From Feltro shall to Feltro² be his race.
 Through him shall humble Italy be led
 Safely, for which the maid, Camilla hight,
 Nisus, Euryalus, and Turnus bled.
 Through every city shall he urge her flight
 Till he have driven her back again to hell,
 Whence forth to fare did envy first incite.
 Wherefore my thoughts devise to work thee well,
 That thou shouldst follow me, thy guide I'll be,
 And hence through an eternal place impel,

¹ Supposed to be Can Grande della Scala, who gave Dante a refuge for a time at Verona.

² Feltre near Treviso and Monte Feltro in Romagna.

Where thou shalt hear despairing shrieks, shalt see
Spirits of olden time that, sore distrest,
Cry for the second death in agony :
And those shalt witness who contented rest
In fire, because their hope is to attain,
Whenever that may happen, to the blest ;
To whom if after to ascend thou'rt fain,
That shall a worthier spirit grant than I ;
With her when I depart shalt thou remain.
Since the great Emperor, who reigns on high,
For that I proved rebellious to his laws,
Wills that his city none through me come nigh.
All parts he governs, there his rule o'erawes ;
There is his city and his lofty seat :
Oh happy he whom there his favour draws !”
And I made answer : “ Poet, I entreat
Even by Him, the God thou didst not know,
That I this ill and worse than ill may cheat,
Lead to the place of which thou spak'st, that so
St. Peter's gate I may behold, and find
Those whom thou plungest in such depth of woe.”
Then he moved on, and I kept close behind.

CANTO II

Dante's misgivings — Virgil's reassurance — The three Heavenly Ladies — Beatrice's mission — All doubts set at rest.

DAY was departing, and the browner air
Released the creatures, earth's inhabitants,
From all their toils ; whilst mine 'twas to prepare
Alone the warfare to sustain, which stirs
Alike the journey, as the sore distress,
My memory shall record, which never errs.
Ye Muses, lofty genius, I address,
Help me ; thou mind, that wrote what I descried,
Here do thy true nobility express.
" Poet," I thus commenced, " who art my guide,
Consider now my strength, if 'twill excel,
Ere to this arduous passage thou confide.
Thou sayest that, whilst yet corruptible,
Of Silvius the parent¹ went among
The immortals, there in fleshly form to dwell :
If then that adversary of all wrong
Were gracious, thinking of the grand effect
Should yield his issue, who and what belong,
Worthy 'twould seem to human intellect ;
For he of mighty Rome and empire meet
Was father in the empyreal Heaven elect :

¹ *Æneas*, *Æneid*, vi. 763.

And this and that too, wills one truth repeat,
 Were stablished both the holy place to be
 Of greatest Peter the successor's seat.
Upon that journey, which thou vauntest, he
 Such insight gained as carried in the fray
 His victory and the robe of Papacy.
The Chosen Vessel¹ went in later day
 Thither, for confirmation of that Creed,
 The first beginning of Salvation's way.
But I, why go there? who shall that concede?
 Æneas am I not, I am not Paul:
 To me nor I, nor others grant this meed.
Wherefore if I resign me to the call
 I fear that folly will the journey yield:
 Wise, better than I speak, thou knowest all."
And as is he who unwill's the thing he will'd,
 And changes purpose by new thoughts when plied,
 So that his first design's all unfulfill'd,
Such I became upon that dark hillside:
 For I, by thinking, wasted the emprise
 Which at the first so eagerly was tried.
"If thy words' meaning rightly I surmise,"
 Answered of that magnanimous the shade,
 "Thy soul those coward feelings paralyse:
By which so often man is downward weighed
 That him from noble enterprise they turn,
 False semblance as the beast, when 'tis afraid.
That from this fear to free thyself thou learn,
 I'll tell thee why I came, what caught my sense
 That time thou first did'st my compassion earn.
Whilst I was 'mongst those spirits in suspense²

¹ St. Paul, Acts ix. 15.

² Those confined in the First Circle or Limbo.

A Lady¹ called me, beautiful and blest,
 Such that I bade her claim obedience.
 More lustrous than the star her eyes confest :
 Softly to me and sweetly she began,
 And with angelic voice her speech address'd :
 'Oh courteous spirit of the Mantuan,
 Whose fame throughout the world has still no end,
 And shall endure all Time's appointed span :
 My friend, but not, alas ! of fortune friend,
 Upon the lone hillside has found his way
 So hindered, dread has made him backward bend :
 And much I fear him gone so far astray
 That for his succour I have risen too late,
 From what of him in Heaven I heard them say.
 Bestir thee then, and with thy speech ornate,
 And what escape requires, give him such aid
 That I no more may be disconsolate.
 I'm Beatrice who this course persuade :
 I come from thence where to return I sigh :
 'Twas Love that moved me, and my speech arrayed.
 When I shall stand before my Lord on high
 To Him full often will I sound thy praise.'
 She then was silent, and I made reply :
 'Lady of worth surpassing, by whose ways
 The human race excelleth all contained
 Within that heaven which lesser circles sways :²
 So much on me has thy commandment gained
 That to obey, if now 'twere done, seems slow ;
 Needs not thy wish should further be explained.
 But tell the cause which bids thee far below
 Dread not descent within this centre here

¹ Beatrice Portinari, Dante's early love and lifelong inspiration.

² The lunar heaven.

From space so ample, to return aglow.
 'Since thou wouldst have so much to thee made clear,'
 She answered me, 'full briefly will I tell
 Why here within to come I have no fear.
 'Tis meet those things alone with dread should quell
 Which have the power of working others ill,
 And none besides, no terror they compel.
 Such, thanks to God, I'm fashioned by His will,
 Your miseries touch me not, nor to assail
 The flame of yonder burning has the skill.
 In Heaven a noble Lady¹ doth bewail
 So much this hindrance, whither thee I send,
 O'er the stern doom on high she can prevail.
 She sought Lucia,² her request to tend,
 And spake: "Thy faithful one hath need of thee
 Ev'n now, to thee his welfare I commend."
 Lucia, foe to every cruelty,
 Rose up and sought the place where I, she knew,
 With Rachel of old days had seated me:
 Spake: "Beatrice, praise of God most true,
 Why dost not succour him who loved thee so
 That he from vulgar herd for thee withdrew?
 Hearest thou not his bitter cry of woe,
 Seest not the death by which has sore bested
 The flood where ocean must all boast forego?"
 None ever in the world so swiftly sped
 To seek their profit, 'scape from their defeat,
 As I the moment that such words were said,
 I came down hither from my blessed seat,
 Trusting thy noble speech, which honours thee
 And those who heard thee that high strain repeat.'

¹ The Virgin.

² St. Lucia of Syracuse, a martyr in the time of Diocletian.

After she such discourse had held with me,
All tearful then her lustrous eyes she turned,
Wherefore she made me come more speedily.
And thus I came to find thee, as she yearned ;
I saved thee from the beast that barr'd thy way,
From the fair mountain's short ascent that spurned.
What is it then? Why, why dost thou delay?
Such cowardice why nurture in thy breast?
Why dost not ardour and bold front display?
After that three such Ladies, bright and blest,
Within the court of Heaven of thee have care,
And such good promise has my speech expressed?"
Ev'n as the flowerets by night's frosty air
Bent down and closed, when silvered by the Sun
Lift them all open for their stems to bear,
Thus with my wearied energy was done :
And such high courage coursed through all my heart
That I began as an undaunted one :
" Oh pitying she such succour to impart,
And courteous thou, didst prompt obedience learn
To the true words to thee she caused to start !
With such desire hast made my heart to burn
To take this journey, by these words of thine,
That to my former purpose I return.
Go then, since both in one sole will combine,
Thou Guide, thou Lord, thou Master, and my stay."
'Twas thus I spake ; and his advance the sign,
I entered on the deep and wooded way.

CANTO III

The inscription on the Gate of Hell—The Poets pass through—
The Souls rejected both by Heaven and Hell—The River
Acheron—Charon the Ferryman—Dante's swoon.

“THROUGH me the way to the sad city's wail :
Through me the way where woes eternal prove :
Through me the way to the lost peoples' bale.
Justice my great Artificer did move :
’Twas Power divine that fashioned my estate,
Supremest Wisdom and all-primal Love.
No things, save those eternal, were create
Before me, and eternal I endure :
Leave ye all hope, who enter by this gate.”
These words of sombre colouring obscure
I saw above a portal writ on high ;
Whence I : “Hard meaning, Master, they assure.”
And he, as charged with foresight, made reply :
“Meet, all suspicion here be left behind ;
Meet, that all coward spirit here should die.
We've reached the spot I named, where thou shalt find
The races dolorous, in whom effaced
The boon of intellect, for aye consigned.”
And after that his hand in mine he placed
With cheerful look from whence I comfort drew,
Within to the most secret things we paced.

There sighs, laments, and wails of sharpest rue
 Resounding through the starless atmosphere,
 Made at the outset tears my cheek bedew.
Tongues diverse, speeches horrible to hear,
 Voices with dolour charged, accents of rage,
 Cries loud and hoarse, and sound of blows anear,
Made such a tumult evermore to wage
 In that dark air with changeless tint embrowned,
 Like sand when, whirling, spiral clouds engage.
And I, whose head was all with horror crowned,
 Said : " Master, what do I hear with such amaze ?
 And who are these who seem in grief so drowned ?"
And he to me : " These miserable ways
 The spirits of those wretched ones afford
 Who without infamy lived and without praise.
Mixed up are they with all that caitiff horde
 Of angels, they who neither did rebel,
 Nor faithful were to God, but self their lord.
Their beauty not to mar the Heavens expel,
 Nor in profoundest hell may they abide,
 Lest guilty ranks from them some glory swell."
And I : " What grievous ills these souls betide,
 Master, that make them weep so bitterly ?"
 " That will I tell full briefly," he replied.
" These have no hope of death to set them free ;
 And their blind, abject life so low doth lie
 That envious of all other lot they be.
Fame doth to such as these the world deny :
 Mercy and Justice both alike disdain :
 Speak not of them, but look and pass them by."
And I, who looked, a banner saw entrain
 That whirling coursed so rapidly along
 Meseemed no moment of repose 'twould deign :

And close behind it came so vast a throng
Of people, my belief could ne'er persuade
That Death to spoil such host had been so strong.
After I some had recognised, his shade
I knew, upon him as I fixed mine eyes,
Whose cowardice the great refusal made.¹
At once I felt, and certainty made wise,
This was none other than that caitiff crew
Hateful to God and to God's enemies.
These hapless wretches, life who never knew,
Were naked, and tormented very sore
By hornets and by wasps which round them flew.
Those made their faces drip, all wet with gore,
Which mingled then with tears beneath their feet
By loathsome worms was gathered to their store.
And next, as further scenes my vision meet,
Figures I saw beside a mighty stream.
"Master," I therefore said, "thy grace complete
That I may know what these are, why they seem
Urged to such readiness to cross the flow,
As I discern beneath this feeble gleam."
And he to me: "These matters thou shalt know
Soon as upon its bank our steps to stay
By the sad river Acheron we go."
Then I with downcast eyes where shame held sway,
Fearing lest words of mine should aggravate,
Till gained the river did no speech essay.
And lo! toward us comes a boat, whose freight
A man of ancient locks, and hoar and old,
"Woe to ye," crying, "spirits reprobate!
Ne'er may ye hope Heaven's glory to behold:

¹ Celestine V., who was elected Pope in 1294, and abdicated five months later.

Ye to that other bank I come to bear,
Amidst eternal darkness, heat and cold :
And thou, the living soul that standest there,
Part thee from those, the spirits that are dead.'
But when he saw me still my parting spare,
"By other ways, by other ports," he said,
"To cross, not here, the shore thou shalt attain :
In lighter bark befits thee to be sped."
And him my Guide : "Charon, thy wrath restrain ;
Thus was it will'd on high, where 'tis the same
To will and do, and from more search refrain."
Then quieted the shaggy cheeks became
Of the grim ferryman of the livid lake,
Who round about his eyes had wheels of flame.
But those worn, naked spirits fell to quake,
Change colour, and to gnash their teeth with rage,
Instant they caught the savage words he spake.
God they blasphemed and their own parentage,
The human kind, the place, the time, the seed
Of their begetting, of their earthly stage.
Then weeping loud, and all with equal speed,
Unto that evil shore they took their ways
Which waits each man, God's fear who doth not heed.
Charon the demon, with his eyes ablaze,
Beckons to each of them, and all receives,
Smites with his oar if any one delays.
And even as in autumn fall the leaves
One close upon another, till the spray
As spoil to earth has rendered all its sheaves,
So the vile seed of Adam in like way
Cast themselves one by one from the bank's steep
At signals, as the bird its call to obey.
Thus they depart across the murky deep,

And even before that further side is won,
This nearer side again fresh legions heap.
Then thus the courteous Master spake : " My son,
Of those who in the wrath of God expire
Here from all lands is gathered every one ;
And ne'er in readiness to cross they tire,
For by divinest Justice they are spurr'd,
Their very fear thus turning to desire.
Ne'er by this passage are good souls transferred ;
Therefore, if Charon aught of thee complain,
Well mayst thou know the meaning of his word."
When this was ended, all the dusk champaign
Trembled so violently that the thought
Still of its terror bathes with sweat my brain.
The tearful earth with blast of wind was fraught,
Which flashed a keen vermilion light around,
With that in me was every sense o'erwrought :
And down I fell, as one whom sleep has drowned.

CANTO IV

The First Circle—The Limbo of the Unbaptized—The Four
Great Poets—The Illustrious of Olden Time.

BROKE the deep slumber which my brain oppress'd
Loud thunder, that I started from the ground
Like one by force awakened from his rest :
And raised to my full stature, cast around
Reposeful eyes, and fixed my gaze intent
To know the region where myself I found.
True 'tis upon the valley's verge I went
Which dolorous doth the abyss enshroud
Where gathers sound of infinite lament.
Obscure, profound it was, and thick with cloud
To such extent, that though its depths I scanned
Of not one thing discernment was allowed.
"Descend we yonder now to the blind land,"
Began the Poet then, all deathly pale,
"I will be first and second thou shalt stand."
And I, for I had marked his colour fail,
"How shall I go," replied, "if thou shouldst fear,
Wont for my doubts as comfort to prevail?"
And he : "The anguish of the people here
In this low region, all my visage stains
With pity, which to thee doth dread appear.
Onward, for thus the journey's length constrains."

Thus he advanced, and made me enter there
To the first circle which the abyss contains.
There, as the sense of hearing made aware,
No lamentation, save of sighs, could fall,
Which caused to tremble the eternal air :
From grief which, void of torments, held in thrall
These multitudes, so many and so vast,
Of infants, women, and of men withal.
And the good Master thus to me : "Thou hast
What spirits these thou seest, made no request.
I'd have thee know, ere further thou art past,
They sinn'd not, and if merit they possess
Avails not, since they lacked baptismal rite,
Part of the faith which thy beliefs attest :
And if they lived before the Gospel light,
Fit worship of great God did not inspire :
And I myself am with them in this plight.
For these defects, which else no guilt require,
We're lost, yet only thus afflicted hence,
That without hope we're living in desire."
Great sorrow seized my heart, as this my sense,
For many who in worth did much excel
I knew that Limbo shrouded in suspense.
"Tell me, my Master, tell me, Lord, oh tell,"
Thus I began, who wished to be assured
Of that high Faith which doth all errors quell,
"Emerged by merit any here immured,
His own or other's, rising to the Blest?"
And he, who fathomed all my speech obscured,
Answered me : "I was newly here a guest
When I beheld a mighty one invade,
Crowned with the sign of victory his crest.
From hence he issued our First Parents' shade,

Abel his son, and Noah next to bring,
 Moses, who gave the law and who obeyed ;
 Abraham Patriarch, and David King,
 Israel with his father, with his seed,
 With Rachel, for whom great his labouring,
 And others many, whom he bliss decreed :
 And I would have thee know, before their day
 No human spirits gained salvation's meed."
 Although he spoke, our course we did not stay,
 But all the while were passing through the wood,
 The wood of spirits densely thronged, I say.
 Not far as yet our journey we pursued
 From where I slumbered, when I spied a flame
 The hemisphere of darkness which subdued.
 Within some little distance now we came,
 Yet not so far, but I discerned in part
 What honourable folk that place could claim.
 "Oh thou, all Science honourest, all Art,
 Say who are these to whom such honour shown
 That from all others' ways they're set apart?"
 And he to me : "The honour and renown
 Sounding their names throughout the life of men,
 Wins them that grace in Heaven which gives this
 crown."
 Meanwhile a voice was wafted to my ken :
 "Honour to the sublimest Poet pay ;
 His shade, which parted once, returns again."
 After that voice was hushed and died away,
 Four mighty shades advancing could I see ;
 Their countenance was neither sad nor gay.
 Thus the good Master 'gan his speech to me :
 "Mark him who bears that falchion in his hand,
 Who as their very Lord precedes the three.

'Tis Homer, poet sovran in command :
 Next Horace, keen in satire to excel ;
 Ovid is third, and Lucan last doth stand.
 Since they alike with me the chorus swell
 Of the great name which that one voice express'd,
 They do me honour, and in that do well."

Thus I beheld the noble school address'd
 Of him, the Lord of the supremest strain,
 Who like an eagle soars above the rest.

After some converse these did entertain
 They turned to me with gesture of salute,
 Whereat to smile was the good Master fain :

And honour shown me bore still greater fruit,
 Since to their band vouchsafed they to admit,
 So that I sixth became in such repute.

Thus we went on to where that flame was lit,
 Talking of things which silence best beseem,
 Even as speech that place could best befit.

Above we saw a lordly castle gleam,
 Seven times by lofty walls engirdled round,
 And close protected by a lucid stream.

O'er this we passed as if 'twere solid ground :
 Those Sages through seven gates an entrance gave :
 We reached a meadow with fresh verdure crowned.

People were there whose eyes seemed slow and grave,
 Of great authority their look bore trace :
 They spoke but seldom and with voices suave.

Thus on one side we gathered to a place
 Open and lofty and of lustrous sheen,
 So that we might distinguish all that race.

There right before me on the enamell'd green
 'Twas given those mighty spirits to descry
 Whom in myself I glory to have seen.

I saw Electra with vast company,
 Where I both Hector and Æneas knew,
 Cæsar in armour with his falcon eye.
 Camilla there, Penthesilea too
 On the other side, and seated by his kin
 Lavinia, King Latinus came to view.
 Brutus I saw, made Tarquin's flight begin,
 Cornelia, Marcia,¹ Julia and Lucrece,
 And lone apart the noble Saladin.
 Then as I raised my brows, 'twas mine to trace
 The mighty Master,² chief of those who know,
 Midst philosophic family his place.
 All gaze admiring, honour all bestow.
 There Plato too I saw and Socrates,
 Who next to him before all others show,
 Democritus, to chance the world decrees,
 Thales, Diogenes, Anaxagoras,
 Zeno, Heraclitus and Empedocles :
 Good Dioscorides who sought to class
 All qualities, and Orpheus could I see,
 Linus, and Tully's form and Seneca's,
 Euclid geometer and Ptolemy,
 Hippocrates, Avicen, Galen skill'd,
 Averroes of the vast commentary.
 I cannot fully cover all the field,
 For the long theme so swiftly on doth bear
 That ofttimes to the fact the word must yield.
 The company of six shrinks to a pair :
 Another pathway the wise guide designs
 Forth from the quiet to the trembling air ;
 And to a place I come where nought that shines.

¹ Cato's wife.² Aristotle.

CANTO V

The Second Circle—Minos—The Eternal Hurricane—Fleshy Sinners—Semiramis, Dido, Cleopatra—Paolo and Francesca da Rimini.

THUS from the primal circle my descent
Down to the second, where less space within,
Yet woe the greater, goading to lament.
Minos stands horrible with ghastly grin,
Examines at the entrance each offence,
And as he girds himself consigns the sin.
I say that when the ill-fated souls commence
To stand before him, all is straight confess'd,
And he, who has of guilt so keen a sense,
Sees to which place in Hell is their behest :
Round him so many times his tail is curled
As grades he wills them of descent the quest.
Ever before him stands a thronging world,
Each one in turn draws near the judgment seat ;
They speak, they hearken, and are downward hurled.
“ Oh thou who to this dolorous retreat
Art coming,” Minos spake when me he spied,
Leaving the task to such high office meet ;
“ Mark how thou enter, and in whom confide,
Let not this ampler entrance dull thy brain.”
“ Why dost thou too exclaim ? ” to him my Guide ;
“ Seek not his fateful journey to restrain ;

Thus was it will'd on high, where 'tis the same
To will and do, and from more search refrain."
Now 'twas the doleful notes began to claim
My hearing, now unto a place, where smite
Upon me lamentations thick, I came.
Came to a region void of every light,
Which bellows, like the sea in tempest throes
To combat when opposing winds excite.
The infernal hurricane, no rest that knows,
Bears on the spirits in its fury sweep,
Whirling and buffeting gives endless woes.
When they arrive before the fatal steep
There rings the cry, the wailing and lament,
On Power Divine their blasphemies they heap.
I learnt to such appointed punishment
Are doomed the carnal sinners, by whose care
Reason to lust is made subservient.
And as their wings in the cold season bear
The starlings in a large and crowded train,
Ev'n thus above, below, now here, now there,
Carries that blast those evil souls amain :
No hope to them can comfort e'er bestow,
Not of repose indeed, but lesser pain.
And as the cranes that chant their dirges go
Making themselves in air a lengthened file,
So saw I come, and utter sounds of woe,
Shades carried by that blast I named awhile :
Wherefore I asked' him : " Master, who are they
Whom the murk air chastises in this style ?"
" The first of whom thou wouldst that I convey,"
He straight replied, " this knowledge to thy mind,
As Empress o'er full many tongues bore sway.
To vice of wantonness was thus inclined,

That lust she rendered law by her decree,
To clear the censure to herself assigned.

Semiramis, of whom we read that she

Succeeded Ninus, who her spouse had been,
Held lands which own the Soldan's mastery.

Then she¹ for love who tore her from this scene

And to Sichæus' ashes faith betrayed :
Next her is Cleopatra, wanton queen."

Helen I saw, for whom with guilt were weighed

Long circling years, and saw him at the last
Who warred with love, the great Achilles' shade.

Paris I saw and Tristan, and there pass'd

More than a thousand shades whom love had rent
From out our life, he showed me and he class'd.

After I heard my Teacher thus present

The ladies of old time, the knightly train,
Pity subdued me and bewilderment.

Thus I began then : "Poet, I would fain

Speak unto those who both together go,
And seem so light upon the wind, the twain."

And he replied : "Thou'lt see, when they shall grow

Nearer to us, then pray them by the tie
Of love that moves them, they will come and show."

Soon as the wind toward us made them fly,

I raised my voice : "Oh souls in anguish held,
Come and accost us, if none else deny."

As doves, to call of soft desire that yield,

With wings wide spread and steady cleave the air
To the sweet nest, by their own will propelled,

These issued from the throng with Dido there,

Coming toward us through the air malign,
Such was the force of that affection's prayer.

¹ Dido,

" Oh living creature gracious and benign,
 Visiting through this air of purpled stain
 Us who did erst the world incarnadine :
 If the great King of the universe would deign
 His friendship, with thy peace our prayers we'd fill,
 Such thy compassion on our grievous pain.
 What we should hear, what speak, to please thy will,
 That will we hear, that will we speak with ye,
 Whiles that the wind, as at this time, is still.
 The land where I was born sits by the sea
 Upon the coast-line whither Po descends
 With his attendant streams, at peace to be.
 Love, that soon gentle heart its knowledge lends,
 Captured this spirit with the form so fair,
 Snatched from me in a way which yet offends.
 Love, to no loved one that will loving spare,
 Seized me for him with such intense delight
 That nought, thou seest, his soul from mine can tear.
 Love did our bodies in one death unite :
 Cain's torments¹ him who quenched our life await."
 These words from them toward us took their flight.
 When this I heard the afflicted souls relate
 I bowed my face, and long I held it low,
 Till spake the Poet : " What dost meditate ?"
 When I made answer, I began : " Ah woe !
 How many sweetest thoughts, what longing led
 These souls thus dolorous a pass to know !"
 Then unto them I turned me, and I said :
 " Francesca," I began, " thy miseries
 Sadden, and make me tears of pity shed.
 But tell me ; at the time of your sweet sighs
 How, by what sign Love granted to disclose

¹ Some readings give Cain, others Caina.

Your dubious desires, your hearts apprise?"
And she replied to me: "No greater woes
Than the remembering a happier day
In misery, and that thy teacher knows.
But if so great a wish thou dost betray
For knowledge of our love's first root and seed,
I'll do like him who weeps and says his say.
One day for pastime we were set to read
Of Lancelot, how Love had held him fast:
Alone were we, from all suspicion freed.
Full many a time that reading made us cast
Shy moving glances, tinged our cheeks the while:
But one sole passage conquered us at last.
'Twas when we read the longing rapturous smile
By such a lover to be kissed, the sign;
He, whom to part from me shall nought beguile,
Trembling all over, kissed these lips of mine.
A pandar¹ was the book, and he who wrote:
That day we never read another line."
While this was poured from the one spirit's throat
The other wept so, that at pity's calls
I grew as faint as though Death's terror smote,
And down I fell, as a dead body falls.

¹ Galeotto, Gallehault, the knight who persuaded Guinevere to give Sir Lancelot a kiss.

CANTO VI

The Third Circle—Perpetual rain—Cerberus—The Gluttons—
Daute meets a Florentine who predicts what will befall that
city.

My mind returning which but now had closed
 Before that anguish of the kindred twain,
 Whence sadness all my being discomposed,
New torments, new tormented souls in pain
 Around me, as I move at all, I view,
 Or as I turn me, as my sight I strain.
Now the third circle reached which rains bedew
 Eternal and accursèd, dense and chill :
 Their rule, their quality, are never new.
Thick hail and turbid water, snow that still
 Pours itself out through the dusk atmosphere :
 Stinks all the earth as it receives its fill.
Cerberus, savage beast uncouth, stands near,
 Through triple gullet barks with currish growl
 Over the people that are sunken here.
His eyes are red, his beard is black and foul,
 Huge is his belly, paws with talons set ;
 Clutches the spirits, flays and rends : they howl,
Impious wretches, 'neath the searching wet
 Like dogs, with one to shield the other side
 They strive, and change their place more often
 yet.

When Cerberus, the great worm, our coming spied,
His mouth he opened and his fangs he showed,
In all his frame no member still could bide.
And he, my Guide, spreading his palms abroad,
Took of the earth, and in large handfuls flung
Within the ravenous wide maws bestowed.
As is the dog that greedily gives tongue,
And is appeased when once its food it gnaws,
Which only to devour it longed and clung,
Ev'n thus became with that those loathsome jaws
Of demon Cerberus, which stuns all ears
So that they deafness crave to give them pause.
Still were we passing o'er the shades that sears
The grievous rain, our planted footsteps try
Their emptiness, as substance which appears.
All these were stretched along the earth to lie,
Save that to sitting posture rose one shade
Instant that he beheld us passing by.
"Oh thou through this Infernal realm conveyed,"
Thus spake he, "if thou knowst me, recognise,
For thou, before I was unmade, wert made."
And I: "The anguish that upon thee lies
Perchance so blots thee from my memory's page
Seems that I ne'er beheld thee with mine eyes.
But tell me who thou art, and why this stage
Of torment holds thee with such studied woes,
If not most suffering, most disgust that gauge."
And he to me: "Thy city which o'erflows
With envy so, the measure is complete,
Yielded me shelter in life's calm repose.
As Ciaccio¹ wont ye citizens to greet:
Of gluttony the damning sin to atone,

¹ Ciaccio, literally hog; probably a nickname.

As thou mayst see, I languish in this sleet.
 And I, poor wretched soul, am not alone,
 For all these like infliction undergo
 For the like fault : ” and other word was none.
 And I replied : “ Ciacco, thy cruel woe
 Weighs on me thus that it invites to tears :
 But tell me, if thou knowst, to what will grow
 Those citizens the parted city¹ rears ;
 If any just be there ; and why so great
 The discord that assailed it, bring mine ears.”
 And he : “ Long contest after, long debate,
 There will be bloodshed, and the woodland troop²
 The other with great hurt will extirpate.
 Within three suns behoves that this must droop,
 And rise the other party, by his aid
 Who now still wavers in uncertain swoop.³
 Long time full lofty will its brows be stayed,
 Laying upon the other burdens dire,
 Howe'er it weep, howe'er the affront be weighed.
 Two just there are, but those no hearts desire :
 Arrogance, Envy, Avarice alone
 Are the three sparks which every bosom fire.”
 Here had an end his lamentable tone.
 And I to him : “ Yet more instruction deign,
 And let some further gift of speech be shown.
 Tegghiaio, Farinata, worthy twain,
 Arrigo, Mosca, Rusticucci, those
 With others for good works who plied their brain,
 Make me to know them and their place disclose ;
 For great desire constrains me to divine

¹ Florence, divided by the two factions of Bianchi and Neri.

² The Bianchi, whose leaders had lately come from the country.

³ Pope Boniface VIII. according to the better opinions, though some suggest Charles of Valois.

If them Heav'n sweets or poison Hell bestows."
And he : " With blackest souls are those in line ;
 Dragged to the depths by sin of various dye :
 If thou descend so far, the sight is thine.
But shouldst thou the sweet world once more descry,
 Bring me, I pray, to others' memories :
 No more I speak with thee, no more reply."
With that he turned askance his fixèd eyes,
 Looked on me a short space, then bowed his head ;
 Fell with it 'mongst those blind, and in like guise.
Then spake my Guide : " No more he leaves his bed
 Henceforth till sounds the angelic trumpet doom ;
 When comes the hostile Power to sinners dread,
Each shall revisit then his mournful tomb,
 Resume his flesh and his known form, and hear
 That which through all eternity shall boom."
Thus passed we through the filthy mixture's smear
 Of shadows and of sleet, with paces slow,
 Touching a little on life's future sphere :
Whence spake I : " Master, will these torments grow
 Following the great sentence, or remain
 Sharp as they are, or some abatement show ?"
He answered : " To thy science turn again,
 Which wills that the more perfect anything,
 Keener its sense of good, and thus of pain.
Though nothing this accursèd race can bring
 To true perfection, there to more extent
 Than here, they think within them it will spring."
As circling round that path our steps we bent,
 Talking of more than I repeat were we :
 Then reached the point where sheer is the descent,
And there found Plutus the great enemy.

CANTO VII

Plutus—The Fourth Circle—The Avaricious and the Prodigal—
Description of Fortune—The Fifth Circle—The Pool of Styx
—The Wrathful and the Sullen.

“*PAPÉ Satan, Papé Satan,*” at first,
 “*Aleppe,*” Plutus ’gan with clucking tone.
 And that high Sage, in every knowledge versed,
Spake for my comfort: “Let not fear be shown
 To hurt thee, for his power however great,
 He bars not thy descent of yonder stone.”
Then turned he to that swollen lip irate,
 And thus he spake: “Accursèd wolf, be still:
 Consume thee inwardly with rage and hate.
Not without cause we seek these depths of ill:
 In highest heaven, where Michael vengeance wrought
 Upon the proud adulterer, such the will.”
And as with swelling wind the sails full fraught
 Fall in a tangled heap when snaps the mast,
 So to the ground was that fierce savage brought.
Thus downward still to the fourth ledge we past,
 Gaining yet more of the distressful verge
 All ill of all our universe amassed.
Ah justice of great God! who ’tis can urge
 Such travails new, new pains that I descried?
 Why doth our sin so fatally submerge?
Ev’n as a billow on Charybdis’ tide,

Which breaks with that 'gainst which 'tis dashed
 amain,
By such a dance behoves that these be tried.
There vaster than elsewhere I saw a train,
 This side and that, with howls of loud dismay,
 Rolling huge weights with breasts that toil and strain :
They jostled one another in the fray,
 Then each one there revolving, wheeled around
 Exclaiming : "Why dost hold ?" "Why cast away ?"
Thus turned they through the gloomy circle's bound,
 The opposing point from every side attained,
 Still to their shameful measure giving sound.
Then each one wheeled about, so soon he gained
 That other joust, through his half circle brought.
And I, whose heart was all too sorely pained,
Said : "Master mine, now fain would I be taught
 What people they, if clerics all are hight
 These at our left on whom the tonsure's wrought ?"
And he made answer : "Such distorted sight
 Closed in the primal life their moral sense,
 That ne'er in measure could they spend aright.
Clearly of that their voice gives evidence
 When the two points they compass of the ring,
 Where parted they by contrary offence.
Clerics were these, whose heads no covering
 Of hair possess, Popes, Cardinals withal,
 In whom took avarice its highest spring."
And I : "My Master, surely 'mongst them all
 Some of this kind I needs must recognise,
 Such grievous ills defiled and held in thrall."
And he to me : "Thou drawest vain surmise :
 The unrecognising life, of foul report,
 Now from all recognition doth disguise ;

To the two shocks for aye shall they resort ;
 These from the sepulchre shall rise again
 With the fist clenched, and these with hair cut short.
 Ill giving and ill keeping both have ta'en
 The fair world from them, to this strife consigned ;
 That no fine phrase is needed to explain.
 Now canst, my son, the short-lived pastime find
 Of goods for Fortune's handling which are strewn,
 O'er which to wrangle tends all human kind.
 For all the gold that is beneath the moon,
 Or ever was, to wearied spirits such
 Could never of repose concede the boon."
 "Master," I said to him, "tell me thus much :
 What is this Fortune thou dost here describe
 Which the world's goods so gathers in its clutch ?"
 And he replied to me : "Oh foolish tribe,
 How great the ignorance your feet doth twine !
 My sentence now I will that thou imbibe.
 He who in wisdom all transcends, divine,
 Made the high heaven, and guiding hand supplied,
 That every part to every part might shine,
 Distributing the light in equal tide :
 Likewise for worldly splendours to ordain
 Willed he a general mistress and guide,
 Who should at times transmute the treasures vain
 From race to race, from blood to blood, to take
 Beyond the guardianship of human brain :
 So that one nation rule, another shake,
 Following still the judgment, the decree,
 Hers, which is hidden as in grass the snake.
 Your knowledge ne'er withstands her mastery ;
 She can foresee, she judges and pursues
 Her reign, as his each other Deity.

All truce the changes that she works refuse ;
Necessity compels them to make haste,
So oft comes one to whom the turn accrues.
'Tis she who on the cross so much is placed
Even by those from whom she praises meeds,
Unjustly blamed instead and foul disgraced.
But she is blest, and this she never heeds :
With all those other primal creatures glad
Rolls on her sphere and joys in her blest deeds.
Descend we now from hence to griefs more sad :
By this has sunk each star, which took its spring
When I set out, and longer stay forbad."
We cut to the other bank the circle's ring
Above a fount that boils and empties through
A trench which has from thence its issuing.
Darker the water far than purpled hue,
And we with these murk waves by diverse way
In company, down to the entrance drew.
This dreary runnel forms for longer stay
A pool named Styx, when reached in its descent
The foot of yonder cliffs malign and gray.
And I, who to regard stood all intent,
Saw people in this slough's defilement stuck
All naked and with looks of discontent.
These not with hands alone each other struck,
But with their head, their breast, their feet achieve,
And piecemeal with their teeth they rend and pluck.
"Son," the good Master spake, "canst now perceive
Their spirits who by passion were subdued :
And I would have thee certainly believe
That 'neath the wave are those whose sighs exude
In bubbles on the surface to consume,
As tells thine eye wherever it may brood.

Fixed in the slime they say : ' We were in gloom
In the sweet air which the sun's gladness cheers,
Bearing within our hearts a sullen fume :
Now we're in gloom where this black filth besmears.'
This hymn they gurgle deep within their throat,
For ne'er plain word from them can reach our ears."
Thus a great arc we turned of that foul moat
Betwixt the solid bank and swampy vast,
Those who the filth absorbed intent to note :
Then reached the foot of a high tower at last.

CANTO VIII

Phlegyas ferries the Poets across the Stygian Pool—Filippo Argenti—The city of Dis—Access forbidden by the demons.

I SAY continuing, that long before
 Unto the foot of that high tower we came,
 Our eyes were led its summit to explore,
Where we two cressets saw displayed in flame,
 And one return the signal far away,
 So far our eye could scarce the mastery claim.
Then turning to that sea of wisdom's sway,
 I asked what said that flame, and what replied
 That other, and their makers who were they?
And he to me: "Across the loathsome tide
 Already canst discern what hence should waft,
 Unless the marsh's reek its vision hide."
Bowstring ne'er loosened from itself a shaft
 To cleave the air so swiftly to its goal,
 As I beheld a tiny little craft
Under one single ferryman's control,
 Steering towards us o'er the waves anigh,
 With cries of: "Art thou come then, felon soul?"
"Phlegyas,¹ Phlegyas, in vain thy cry

¹ King of the Lapithæ, who, to avenge the seduction of his daughter by Apollo, set fire to the temple of the god, and was killed by his arrows.

This time," my Lord exclaimed ; " thou'lt hold our
 feet
 No longer than across the mire we ply."
 As is the man who hears of great deceit
 Practised upon him, whom repinings goad,
 Such became Phlegyas in his gathered heat.
 Into the bark my Guide descending strode,
 And then he made me enter at his side,
 First when I stept within it felt the load.
 Soon as I gained the vessel with my Guide,
 Cleaving the waters goes the ancient prow
 Deeper than e'er with others can betide.
 Whilst we were traversing the stagnant-slough
 Rose one before me thick with miry stain,
 Spake : " Ere thine hour that comest, who art
 thou ?"
 And I replied : " I come, but not remain ;
 But thou, who art thou, in so foul a dress ?"
 And he : " Thou seest I'm one whose teardrops
 rain."
 And I to him : " With weeping and distress,
 Accursed spirit, still remain confined :
 I know thee then for all thy filthiness."
 With that he stretched both hands the boat to find :
 Wherefore the prudent Master thence displaced,
 Saying : " Go there with dogs of the like kind."
 And then with both his arms my neck embraced,
 Kissed me, and said : " Oh soul of just disdain,
 Blessèd is she whose body thine encased.
 This man in life held proud and haughty vein,
 No goodness could his memory adorn :
 Thus here his shade with fury is insane.
 How many there great kingly pomp have borne

Who here shall stand like porkers in the mire
 Leaving most horrible dispraise and scorn!"

Then said I: "Master, greatly I desire
 To see him soused in this foul broth abide
 Ere from the lake forth issuing we retire."

And he to me: "Before the further side
 Its sight vouchsafe thee, thou shalt have thy fill:
 'Tis meet that such desire be gratified."

Soon after that the people with this swill
 Bedaubed, I saw so rend him and so maul,
 That I to God give thanks and praises still.

"Upon Filippo Argenti!"¹ cried they all;
 And the crazed spirit of the Florentine
 Turned on himself with his own teeth to fall.

We left him there, I add no further line:
 But grief then smote mine ears with such effray
 Intent before me bids mine eyes incline.

"Now, son," the worthy Master 'gan to say,
 "Draws near the city which of Dis has name,
 With burdened citizens, with vast array."

And I: "Its mosques my sight already claim,
 Master, there clearly in the vale they show
 Vermilion in hue, as if from flame
 They issued." And he said: "The eternal glow
 Of fire which lights them up thus red displays,
 As thou canst witness in this hell below."

Within then gained we the deep moats that raise
 A girdle round that land disconsolate:
 Its walls appeared as iron to my gaze.

Not without making first a circuit great

¹ Filippo Argenti was the nickname of a Florentine noted for his ostentatious display of wealth, whose real name was Filippo de' Cavicciuli.

We reached a point at which our boatman, loud,
"Go forth," cried out, "here is the entrance gate."
Above the porch I saw some thousands crowd
Of those rained down from heaven, who fiercely
said :
"What being this, who not to death is vowed,
Yet journeys through the kingdom of the dead?"
And my wise Master made a sign that fain
To speak with them in secret was he led.
Then somewhat closed they their so great disdain,
And said : "Come thou, and let him quit the place
Who with such rashness entered on this reign.
The path of folly lone let him retrace,
Prove if he knows it, for that thou shalt stay
Who hast escorted through so dark a space."
Think, Reader, if I yielded to dismay
Hearing of these accursèd words the sound,
Which of return took all my hope away.
"Oh dearest Leader mine, in whom I found
More than seven times security, who won
From the high peril which had hemmed me round,
Leave me not," I implored him, "thus undone ;
And let us, further progress if withheld,
Together swift retrace the course we've run."
And he, that Lord, who there had led me, quelled
My fear, exclaiming : "Courage, to impede
Our passage none may hope : such power impelled.
But here await me ; comfort thou and feed
Thy wearied spirit a good hope to gain,
In this low world I'll ne'er forsake thy need."
Thus he departs, and I in doubt remain,
Abandoned, thence as the sweet father sped,
With yes and no contending in my brain.

I could not hear what words to them he said ;
 But when he stood with them but little space
 They raced within, each keen to get ahead.
These shut the portals in my Leader's face,
 Our adversaries ; he without must bide,
 And turned around to me with tardy pace.
His eyes cast down to earth, his brows beside
 Shorn of all boldness as with sighs he spake :
 " Who hath the dolorous abodes denied ? "
And then address'd me : " Droop not for the sake
 Of wrath I show ; the test I will subdue,
 Whate'er defence within they undertake.
This their superb presumption is not new ;
 ' Twas used already on less secret gate,¹
 The which without a lock still meets the view.
O'er it thou sawest the dead scroll of Fate ;
 And now, this side of it, descends the slope,
 Passing the circles without escort, straight
One of such might as bids the portals ope."

¹ The gate of Hell, where the demons opposed the Saviour's entrance.

CANTO IX

The Three Furies appear on the wall and call for Medusa—Virgil covers Dante's eyes—An Angel Messenger descends and opens the gate—The Sixth Circle—The Heresiarchs.

THAT hue which cowardice my cheek had stained
Turn when I marked my Leader and desist,
Within him sooner his more strange restrained.
Intent he stopped like one who bends to list ;
For powerless his eye to range afar
Through the black air and through the clogging
mist.
“Yet it behoves we conquer in the war,”
Commenced he : “and if not . . . we had such
aid.
Ah what delays another's coming bar !”
Clearly I saw, as thus he overlaid
That his commencement with what came behind,
These words were diverse from the first he said.
Not less his speech caused terror to my mind,
For that the mangled words I turned till shown
Worse sentence, it may be, than he designed.
“Into this depth of the distressful cone
Descends one ever from the first degree,
Which has for punishment lost hope alone ?”
This was the question that I put ; and he,
“It rarely happens,” answered, “of our band

One makes the journey that I go with thee.
True 'tis another time I sought this strand
Conjured by that Erichtho's cruel law,
Back to their bodies which would shades command.
But little time my flesh was stripped and raw,
When entrance she compelled within that wall,
A spirit from Judas' circle forth to draw.
That place is lowest, gloomiest of all,
Farthest from Heaven which all things turns ; the
way
Full well I know ; wherefore let nought appal.
This marsh exhaling the foul stink's decay,
Girdles around the doleful city's bed
Where now we enter not without a fray.”
And more, but that has slipt my mind, he said ;
Seeing mine eye had drawn me all the while
To the high tower with summit glowing red,
Where all at once were swift upreared in file
Three Furies, tinged with blood, of hell profound,
Who had the limbs of women and the style ;
And with the greenest hydras were they crowned ;
Snakelets and hornèd serpents had for hair,
Wherewith their savage temples were enwound.
And he, of all the menials well aware
Who served the queen of the eternal wail,
Spake to me : “ Mark the fierce Erinnyes there.
Megæra this, on the left hand to assail :
Alecto she who weeps upon the right :
Tisiphone the midst.” There ceased his tale.
With talons each one tore her breast ; to smite
Their palms they wielded ; and they cried so shrill
That close I clasped the Poet in affright.
“ Medusa come : enamel thus our will

To make him": all exclaimed with downward
glance :

"The assault of Theseus we avenged but ill."
"Turn thee around, keep close thy countenance ;
For should the Gorgon show, and thou shouldst
see
Of thy return to earth would be no chance,"

The Master said ; and from that fate to free
Turned me himself, nor left my hands to shield,
But with his own the rather covered me.

Oh ye who sounder intellect can wield,
Mark well the mystic teaching which is fain
'Neath my strange verses' veil to lie concealed.

And now came o'er the turbid waves amain
The tumult of a sound with fear aghast,
Which caused the banks to tremble, both and
twain ;

Not otherwise 'twas fashioned than a blast
Impetuous from cross-encountered heats,
Which smites the wood, and all restraint o'erpast
Shivers the boughs, bears off and downward beats ;
Whirling the dust before it goes in pride,
And beasts and shepherds drives to their retreats.

Mine eyes he loosed and spake : "Towards the side
Where bitterest the smoke, thy nerve of sight
Across that ancient scum erect and guide."

As frogs before the serpent in affright,
Their enemy, speed through the brook dispersed,
Till huddled on the ground they all alight,

I saw above a thousand souls accurst
Flee before one who cross'd at a foot's pace
The Stygian Pool, nor e'er his soles immersed.
He the gross air disparted from his face,

Bringing his left hand oft before his brow ;
Save from that toil of weariness no trace.
That he was sent from Heaven I well could trow,
And turned me to the Master ; to remain
Quiet, he signed to me, before him bow.
Ah, how full fraught meseemed he with disdain !
Unto the gate he came, and with a wand
Opened it, for no bar opposed its strain.
“ Oh ye chased forth from Heaven, despised band,”
Commenced he on the horrible threshold sill,
“ Whence is that arrogance in which ye stand ?
Wherefore recalcitrant to that high will
Of which the end can never be curtailed,
And which so many times increased your ill ?
What boots it ye have Fate once more assailed ?
Your Cerberus still, if memory call it back,
Shows by flayed chin and throat how that pre-
vailed.”
Then he returned along the filthy track,
Nor spake a word to us, but semblance traced
Of him whom other cares constrain and rack
Than thought of one before him who is placed.
And we moved on our steps towards that land,
After those holy words securely braced.
Our entrance there no conflict could withstand :
And I, who much desired to see and know
What state that fortress serried in its band,
Soon as within mine eyes about me throw ;
And view a vast champaign stretch all around
Full charged with guilty torments and with woe.
Even as at Arles where swamps the Rhone impound,
Even as at Pola to Quarnaro nigh,
Which closes Italy and bathes its bound,

The sepulchres make all the ground awry ;
 Thus did they make it here on every side,
 Save that the mode had more asperity ;
For flames amidst the tombs were scattered wide,
 Kindled by which were all to such a grade
 As not a craft needs iron to be tried.
Their lids were all of them wide open laid,
 And issued forth such pitiful lament
 As wretched ones and downcast well betrayed.
“ Master,” I said to him, “ of what descent
 The buried whom the coffins here enclose,
 Who make us feel the doleful sighs they vent ? ”
And he replied to me : “ Heresiarchs those
 With followers of each sect, and far more vast
 The lading of the tombs than wouldst suppose.
Here in their burial like with like is classed,
 And hotter, and less hot, the monuments.”
 Then to the right when he had turned, we passed
Betwixt the tortures and the high battlements.

CANTO X

The Burning Tombs—The Epicureans—Farinata—
Cavalcante—Dante's exile predicted.

Now by a path betwixt the wall that seals
This region, hidden, and the tortures, speeds
My Master, and I follow at his heels.
“Oh chiefest virtue,” I began, “which leads
Throughout the impious circles, at thy will
Speak thou to me and satisfy my needs.
The people here these sepulchres who fill
Can they be seen? already reared on high
Are all the lids, and round no sentries drill.”
“All will be surely locked,” he made reply,
“When from Jehoshaphat they come again
With bodies which they left in earth to lie.
Their cemetery in this portion lain
With Epicurus all his followers hold,
Who with the body's the soul's death maintain.
Wherefore in the demand thou dost unfold
Soon shalt thou here within be satisfied,
And eke in the desire that's left untold.”
And I: “Good Leader, never would I hide
My heart from thee, save with few words to tire:
Thou too, ere this, my mind hast thither plied.”
“Oh Tuscan, that alive the city of fire

Traversest, with such honourable speech,
 Here in this place to pause be thy desire.
 Thy tongue's trained accents manifestly teach,
 That thou art native of that noble land
 Whereon I wrought perchance too hurtful breach."
 Sudden this sound forth issued on one hand
 From out one tomb; wherefore I drew in fear
 A little closer to my Guide to stand.
 And he said: "Turn thee round; what dost thou here?
 See Farinata¹ rear himself upright;
 Down to the girdle thou shalt see him clear."
 Already on his face was fixed my sight;
 And he arose erect with breast and brow,
 As though he held all Hell in great despite.
 And my Guide's ready hands, no fear could cow,
 Pressed me towards him through the tombs in line,
 Thus speaking: "Let thy words be ordered now."
 When at the foot I stood of his confine,
 Brief while he scanned me, then this question
 framed
 As in disdain: "What ancestors were thine?"
 I whose desires at prompt obedience aimed
 No whit concealed from him, but all rehearsed:
 Then somewhat raised his eyebrows, he exclaimed
 Again: "In fierce hostility the worst
 Were they to me, my fathers, and my side,
 Thus I two several times their troop dispersed."²
 "If they were driven out, from far and wide
 Both times," I answered, "their return had these;

¹ Farinata degli Uberti, a Florentine noble and leader of the Ghibellines.

² The Guelphs, among whom were Dante's ancestors, were twice defeated, in 1248 and 1260, but they returned to power again after each defeat, first in 1250, then in 1266.

But yours that art have not so well applied."
 Then rose to view beside him by degrees,
 Uncovered to the chin, another shade :¹
 He, as I think, had risen on his knees.
 He looked all round me, as by impulse swayed
 If any other stood with me to find :
 Then when his keen suspicion all allayed,
 Weeping he said : " If through this dungeon blind
 Impelled thou art by loftiness of brain,
 Where is my son ? with thee why not combined ?"
 " Not of myself," I said, " the journey's ta'en :
 He who awaits me there this guidance lent,
 Him had your Guido haply in disdain."
 His words, the method of his punishment,
 Could well ere this his name to me betray,
 Wherefore my answer had such full extent.
 Suddenly reared aloft : " What didst thou say ?"
 Cried he : " He *had* ? Is life no more bestowed ?
 Strikes not upon his eyes the light's sweet ray ?"
 When he perceived what the delay might bode
 I made before an answer I addressed,
 Supine he fell, nor longer outward showed.
 But that magnanimous at whose behest
 I stopped, to change his aspect was not led,
 Nor moved his neck, nor bended side or breast.
 " And if," continuing what first was said,
 " If they that art," he spake, " so ill could learn,
 That gives me greater torment than this bed.
 Yet shall not fifty times rekindled burn
 Her countenance who here as queen doth reign,²
 Ere of that art the weight thou shalt discern.

¹ Cavalcante Cavalcanti, father of Guido Cavalcanti, Dante's friend.

² Hecate.

And so mayst visit the sweet world again,
 Say why that people such inhuman zeal
 Against my folk in all their laws maintain?"
 Whence I: "The carnage great, the glutted steel,
 Which made all Arbia river dyed in red,¹
 Bids such a prayer within our temples peal."
 Then said he, sighing as he shook his head,
 "I was not there alone, nor had indeed
 Forth without cause amongst those other sped:
 But quite alone I stood when 'twas agreed
 By all fair Florence from the earth to sweep,
 With open brow in her defence to plead."²
 "Ah, so may rest your seed for ever steep,"
 I prayed him, "solve this knot and make that clear
 Which here entangled doth my judgment keep.
 Ye see beforehand, rightly if I hear,
 Meseems, what time brings with it in its flight,
 And in the present have ye other gear."
 "We see, like one who hath a feeble light,
 Things distant hence," he said, "so still the great
 Supremest Leader shines upon us bright.
 When they draw near, or happen, vain we rate
 Our intellect, and if none tidings shows,
 We have no knowledge of your human state.
 And dead, as further thou mayst well suppose,
 Our knowledge all shall be, the point attained,
 When of futurity the gate shall close."
 Then, for my fault with some compunction pained,
 I said: "Be't told now to that fallen shade

¹ At the battle of Montaperti, fought in 1260 between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, when the latter were successful.

² A council of the Ghibellines was held at Empoli after the battle of Montaperti, and all except Farinata advocated the destruction of Florence.

That with the living still his son remained.
 And if at first to answer mute I stayed,
 'Twas, be it known to him, because my thought
 Nursed yet the error which thy words have laid."
 And now my Master to recall me sought :
 Wherefore I prayed the spirit more in haste
 To tell with whom in contact he was brought.
 He said : "With more than thousand am I placed :
 The second Frederick's within, and here
 The Cardinal,¹ beyond no word I waste."
 With that he hid himself, and I drew near
 The ancient Poet, as in thought I tried
 That speech to me which hostile did appear.
 He moved along, and then as with my Guide
 I walked, he asked me : "Wherefore art so dazed?"
 And his demand full soon I satisfied.
 "What thou hast heard against thee ne'er be rased
 From thy mind's tablets," gave the Sage command.
 "To this now hearken" : and his finger raised.
 "Before her sweetest ray when thou shalt stand
 Whose lovely eyes sees all things, thou shalt know
 How well the journey of thy life is plann'd."
 Then to the left he turned his foot, and so
 We quit the wall, towards the midst to seize
 A path that to a valley strikes below,
 Which even up there makes foul its stench displease.

¹ Ottaviano degli Ubaldini, one of the Ghibellines.

CANTO XI

The Poets take refuge from the stench behind the tomb of Pope Anastasius—Virgil describes the three succeeding Circles and their Rings—The punishment of Force and Fraud.

ON the far edge of a high bank, our road,
Where huge and broken rocks made up a ring,
Led us above a still more cruel load :
And there, so horrible the surfeiting
Of stench the depths of that abyss emit,
Shelter we took behind the covering
Of a great sepulchre, where this was writ
I saw : "Pope Anastasius¹ here I ward,
Whom the right way Photinus caused to quit."
" 'Tis meet our downward course that we retard
Till somewhat more accustomed grows the scent
To the rank vapour ; then mayst disregard."
'Twas thus the Master. "Some expedient
Devise," I said, "lest of time's flight we're reft."
"See what I think," he answered, "thereanent.
My son, within the rocks which form this cleft,"
He then began to say, "three circlets fall
From grade to grade, like those that thou hast left.
Full of accursèd spirits are they all :
But that henceforth thy sight alone may sate,

¹ Pope Anastasius the Second, said to have been tainted with heresy by Photinus, a deacon of Thessalonica.

Learn how and wherefore these are held in thrall.
Of all ill doing which in heaven earns hate
The end is injury, thereat to halt
By force or fraud makes others desolate.
But because fraud is man's peculiar fault
It most displeases God, thus low are laid
The fraudulent, and greater pangs assault.
The violent hold the circle first in grade,
But since against three persons force is brought,
In three great rings 'tis stratified and made.
On God, on self, on neighbours may be wrought
Force, on themselves and on their goods I say,
As thou by open reasoning shalt be taught.
Murder by force and wounds in grievous fray
Are to man's neighbour given, and his rights
To ruin, flame, and vile extortion prey.
Whence homicides, and he who foully smites,
Pillage or plunder practised, to torment
These the first ring in diverse groups unites.
So to themselves may men be violent
And to their goods : thence in the second ring
'Tis meet that he should bootlessly repent
Whoever your fair world away would fling,
Gambles and squanders all he can command,
And weeps where joyously he ought to sing.
Violence to the Deity may stand
In heart's denial, in blaspheming word,
Disprising nature and her bounteous hand :
And therefore 'tis the smaller ring, the third,
Cahors¹ and Sodom with its signet seals,
And him whose heart for God foul scorn averred.
Fraud, whose sharp puncture every conscience feels,

¹ Cahors was a city of Languedoc noted for usury.

Men can employ on him who trusts them best,
 And him in confidence who never deals.
 Such latter method seems to have suppress
 The bond of love alone by nature made ;
 Whence in the second circle have their nest
 Hypocrisy and flattery, witchcrafts' trade,
 Forgery, simony, and robber bands,
 Pandars and cheats and filth of the like shade.
 The other mode forgets that love which hands
 Of nature made, and that which swells its store
 From whence the growth of special trust expands :
 Thence in the smaller circle, at the core
 Of the universe, upon which Dis doth sit,
 He who betrays consumed is evermore.”
 I answered : “ Master, clear enough is knit
 Thy reasoning, and distinguishes full well
 This gulf, the people that possesses it.
 But tell me ; those in the gross marsh who dwell,
 Whom the wind carries, and whom beats the rain,
 With such fierce tongues upon each other fell,
 Why in the red-hot city's grim domain
 Are they not punished if God's wrath they earn ?
 And if they earn it not, why such their pain ? ”
 And he made answer : “ Wherefore to unlearn
 Its wonted lore doth so thy judgment err ?
 Or where elsewhere thy mind its vision turn ?
 Doth not thy thought recall what words aver
 The dispositions heaven ne'er lets within :
 And how those three thine Ethics¹ character ?
 Incontinence and malice, the mad sin
 Of bestiality ? and how the first
 Doth God the less offend, less blame doth win ?

¹ Aristotle's *Ethics*, vii. 1.

If thou that sentence duly hast rehearsed,
 And bringest to thy mind what theirs the state
 Above, without, with penance are amerced,
 Why they are parted from these reprobate
 Well shalt thou see, and why with torment slight
 The less God's vengeance makes them feel its
 weight."

"Oh Sun that healest every troubled sight,
 Me such contentment thy solutions deign
 That doubt, no less than knowledge, gives delight.
 Once more a little turn thee back again,
 There where thou saidst that usury offends
 Goodness divine, and make the tangle plain."

"Philosophy to one who apprehends
 Her lore," he said, "not only in one part
 Notes from whence nature her due course extends,
 Divine intelligence and from its art ;
 And if thy Physics¹ well thou mark, to see
 Thou shalt attain with but few pages' start,
 That her your art, as closely as may be,
 Follows as learner master, thus designed
 As 'twere the grandchild of the Deity.
 From these two, if thou rightly bring to mind
 Genesis at its outset,² it befits
 Their life should take and prosper all mankind.
 And 'tis because this way the usurer quits
 That he doth nature for herself despise
 And for her follower : since elsewhere sits
 His hope. But come, for motion zest supplies :
 The Fishes flicker o'er the horizon's bends,
 And all the Wain on top of Caurus lies,
 And yonder far away the ledge descends."

¹ Aristotle's *Physics*, ii. 2.

Genesis i. 28.

CANTO XII

The steep descent to the Seventh Circle — The Minotaur — Phlegethon, the river of boiling blood—The Centaurs, Chiron, Nessus, and Pholus—Nessus escorts the Poets and tells of the tyrants immersed in the river.

THE place we compassed to descend the bank
Was mountainous, and, from what there we eyed,
Such that in fear of it each vision shrank.
As is that ruin, which upon the side,
Before you come to Trent, of Adige strake
Whether from earthquake or support denied :
For from the mountain summit, whence it brake,
Down to the level was the rock so rent
That one at top could find some way to take,
Such of that precipice was the descent :
And at the point where broken the ravine
Crete's infamy was stretched at full extent
Which erst by the feigned cow¹ conceived had been :
Soon as it sighted us itself distraught
It bit, like one who bursts with inward spleen.
My Sage cried out to it : " Perchance thy thought
Bids thee the Duke of Athens² here descry,
Since in the world above thy death he wrought ?
Hence with thee, beast, for this man comes not nigh
As one the schooling of thy sister³ steels,

¹ Pasiohaë.

² Theseus.

³ Ariadne.

But goes his way your punishments to spy."
As is the bull the moment that it feels
The mortal stroke received, which snaps its ties,
And cannot go, but hither thither reels,
I saw the Minotaur in such a guise.
And he perceiving: "To the passage straight;
While 'tis in fury, to descend is wise."
Thus down we took our journey through the spate
Of falling stones, themselves which often wrenched
Beneath my feet from the unwonted weight.
Musing I went; and he: "Thy thoughts have trenched
Perchance upon this ruin, which doth guard
The bestial rage that I so lately quenched.
Now shalt thou know, the first time hitherward
That I descended to this nether hell,
This fall was not, nor yet this rock was scarr'd.
But sure not long, if I discern it well,
Before His coming who the mighty prey
From Dis, the topmost circle could compel,
The deep foul valley at all points gave way
To trembling, that the universe I took
Love's thrills to feel, through which, as one would
say,¹
The world for chaos oft its reign forsook:
That instant too this rock of ancient years
Here and elsewhere with such convulsion shook.
But downward fix thine eyes, 'tis there that nears
The river brimm'd with blood, in which doth boil
Whoe'er with violence another sears."
Oh blind cupidity, oh wrath's mad coil,
How do ye spur in the brief life below,
And in the eternal then so foully soil!

¹ Empedocles.

I saw an ample foss which bent a bow
Like that which doth the whole wide plain embrace,
From what the teachings of my escort show :
In file betwixt it and the rampart's base
Coursed swiftly Centaurs, armed with shafts their
band
As wont to follow when on earth the chase.
Seeing our downward course made each a stand,
And three apart from the main body went
With bows and arrows ready to their hand.
And one from far, "To what that should torment,"
Cried, "are ye coming who descend the hill?
Speak whence ye stand, or else the bow is bent."
My Master said : "The answer 'tis our will
To render Chiron there when close beside :
Hasty thy purpose ever was for ill."
He touched me then and said : "'Tis he who died
For fair Deianira, Nessus named,
Who his own vengeance for himself supplied :
The midmost, on his breast who looks, is famed
As the great Chiron that Achilles reared :
The other Pholus whom such rage inflamed.
In thousands round the foss their course is steered,
Shooting their shafts at any souls that draw
More from the blood than suffered by their weird."
When close beside us those swift beasts we saw,
Chiron an arrow took, and with the groove
Pushed backward all the beard about his jaw.
Then when uncovered his great mouth could prove
He said to his companions : "Shows your view
The rearmost makes whate'er he touches move?
Feet of the dead not thus are wont to do."
And my good Guide, his breast already gained

Whereat consorted are the natures two,
 Answered : " He lives indeed, 'tis well I deigned
 To show him the dark valley thus alone :
 Necessity, and not delight, constrained.
 She ceased her Hallelujahs to intone
 Who this new office to my charge consigned ;
 No robber he, nor thievish soul my own.
 But by that virtue which impels my mind
 On such a savage road my steps to guide,
 Grant one of thine, whom near us we may find,
 To show where safely may the ford be tried,
 And carry this man over on his croup ;
 No spirit he athwart the air to glide."
 O'er his left breast turned Chiron round to stoop,
 And said to Nessus : " Back, so guide and aid,
 And check it, shouldst thou meet another troop."
 We followed where our trusty escort bade
 Along the border of the crimson brew,
 Where those who boiled a ghastly shrieking made.
 Some to the brows immersed 'twas mine to view ;
 And the great Centaur stated : " Tyrants those
 Who gave them blood and pillage to pursue.
 Here they bewail their dark relentless throes :
 Here Alexander, Dionysius fell
 Who heaped on Sicily long years of woes :
 The forehead, where black tresses cluster'd swell,
 Is Azzolino ;¹ that with flaxen hair
 Obizzo is of Este,² truth to tell
 Quenched by his stepson in the upper air."
 Then turned I to the Poet, who : "'Tis good

¹ Azzolino or Ezzelino da Romano, a cruel tyrant in Lombardy, put to death in 1260.

² Obizzo II. of Este, Marquis of Ferrara, murdered in 1293 by his son Azzo.

Now he should first, and second I should fare."
 A little further on the Centaur stood
 Above a tribe who to the throat appeared
 As if they issued from the seething flood.
 He showed us a lone shade,¹ one side which neared,
 Thus speaking: "In the lap of God he clave
 The heart which on the Thames is yet revered."
 Then saw I people who from out the wave
 Upreared their head and even all their breast:
 Enough of these my recognition crave.
 Thus was the blood still more and more depressed
 Till it but cooked the feet; and we achieve
 The passage of the foss which formed our quest.
 "Even as on this hand thou mayst perceive
 The boiling flood is ever growing less,"
 The Centaur said, "I'd have thee to believe
 That on the other more and more 'twill press
 Downward its bed, until the place it brings
 Where tyranny must groan in sore distress.
 There on that side divinest justice stings
 That Attila, the scourge all earth appall'd,
 Pyrrhus and Sextus;² and eternal wrings
 The tears, unlocked by the hot floods which scald,
 From those who so much on the highways warr'd,
 Rinier of Corneto, Rinier call'd
 Pazzo."³ Then turned he and recrossed the ford.

¹ Guy of Montfort, son of Simon de Montfort, who stabbed his cousin Henry, son of Richard, Earl of Cornwall, in the Cathedral of Viterbo. The heart of the murdered one was put in a golden casket and brought to London.

² Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, and Sextus, the son of Pompey.

³ Two noted robber lords, one from Corneto near Viterbo, the other from Arezzo.

CANTO XIII

The wood of the Suicides, infested by Harpies and Hellhounds—
Trees that bleed and speak—Pier delle Vigne—Lano of Siena
and Jacomo da Sant' Andrea—An unnamed Florentine.

Nor yet had Nessus reached the other side,
 When in our course we entered on a wood
 Which had no path to mark it or divide.
Not green the foliage there, but dusky hued,
 Not smooth the boughs, but gnarled and intricate,
 Not fruit, but poison which the thorns exude.
Stems not so thick and rugged have to mate
 The savage beasts which hold the acres till'd,
 Cecina and Corneto twixt,¹ in hate.
The loathsome Harpies, here their nests that build,
 Did from the Strophades² the Trojans chase
 With sad presage of woes to be fulfilled.
Wide are their wings, and human neck and face,
 Their feet with claws, huge paunch with feathers set :
 Made the strange trees of their laments the place.
And the good Master : " Know ere further yet
 Thou enter, in the second ring dost stand,"
 Commenced he, " and from thence thou shalt not
 get

¹ The river Cecina is the northern boundary of the Maremma, and the town of Corneto stands on the river Marta which bounds it on the south.

² *Æneid*, iii. 209.

Until thou come upon the horrid sand.
Wherefore look well, for things will here be lent
Which from myspeech would all belief have bann'd."
Forth on all sides I felt sore wailings sent,
But never sight of those who made them caught :
Wherefore I stopped in sheer bewilderment.
I think that he was thinking that I thought
Amidst those trunks so many voices spake
From people who for us to hide them sought.
"Wherefore," the Master said, "if thou but break
One of the twigs which from these trees depend,
The thought thou hast all maimed regard will take."
Then did I somewhat forth one hand extend,
And plucked a little branch from a great thorn ;
Whereat its trunk cried piteous : "Why dost rend?"
After the blood had browned it where 'twas torn,
"Why mangle me?" the burden was renewed ;
"Within thee is no soul of pity born ?
Once were we men and now are stems of wood :
Well had thy hand some more compassion shown
Had we been spirits of the serpent brood."
As a green brand which at one end alone
Burns, from the other doth its sap diffuse,
And hisses from the wind which forth is blown,
So from that splintered twig together ooze
Both words and blood, whereat the branch I bore
I dropped, and stood like one whom fear subdues.
"Had he been able to believe before,
Thou injured soul," my Sage began to say,
"What from my verse alone bestowed its lore,¹
His hand on thee he ne'er had sought to lay ;
But me the incredible occurrence led

¹ *Æneid*, iii., where Æneas thus mangles Polydorus.

To prompt the act which on me yet doth weigh.
 But tell him who thou wert, that in the stead
 Of all amends, thy fame he may renew
 Up in the world 'tis given him to retread.”
 And then the trunk : “Thy words so sweetly woo
 I must break silence : let it not displease
 If at some length I'm tempted to review.
 I am the man that wielded both the keys
 Of Frederick's heart,¹ and skilfully that plied
 Locking it and unlocking with such ease
 That from his secrets most I turned aside :
 Fidelity my glorious office claimed
 Such that my sleep, my pulses were denied.
 The harlot² which at Cæsar's household aimed
 Her greedful eyes, and ne'er from thence unbent,
 The common pest and vice of courts, inflamed
 All minds against me ; they to such extent
 Inflamed, inflamed Augustus with distrust,
 Till my glad honours turned to sad lament.
 Then with disdainful transport of disgust,
 Thinking that from disdain would death have freed,
 My mind made me to my just self unjust.
 By the new roots this tree which build and feed,
 To you I swear that faith I never broke
 Unto my Lord who won such honour's meed.
 If either earth regains, let him invoke
 Succour to clear my memory which lain
 Is prostrate still where envy dealt the stroke.”
 After a pause : “While silent he remain,
 Do not,” the Poet said, “the moment lose,

¹ The speaker is Pier delle Vigne, who was the trusted adviser of the Emperor Frederick the Second, and who, being disgraced and blinded by his sovereign, committed suicide.

² Envy ; see Chaucer's Prologue to the “ Legend of Good Women.”

But speak and ask what more thou wouldst obtain."
 Wherefore I answered : " Ask him what thou choose,
 Deeming it likely to content my mind :
 I cannot : for my heart such pity rues."
 Then recommenced he : " If this man thou find
 Liberal in fulfilment of thy prayer,
 Incarcerated spirit, well inclined
 Tell us how doth the soul the bondage share
 Of these hard knots, and, if within thy ken,
 Does ever any loose such members tear ?"
 Thereat the trunk puffed mightily, and then
 That wind was changed to such a voice as this :
 " Full briefly will I answer you again.
 When the fierce spirit doth itself dismiss,
 By its own action from the body torn,
 Minos consigns it to the seventh abyss.
 Into the wood, to no fixed place, 'tis borne,
 But where 'tis shot by fortune, germinant
 There sprouts it like a grain of spelt or corn ;
 It grows a sapling, then a woodland plant :
 And next the Harpies, feeding on its leaves,
 Give pain, and to that pain an outlet grant.
 Each of us, like the rest, his spoils receives,
 But not therewith once more to be arrayed :
 What he strips off, it fits not man retrieves.
 Here shall we drag them, and adown the glade
 Of the drear wood our bodies will be hung,
 Each on the thorn of his own baneful shade."
 Still to the trunk attentively we clung,
 Thinking with further speech 'twould fill our ears,
 When we were startled by a clamour, rung
 Like that which on the hunter strikes, when nears
 The boar his station, by the chase pursued,

Who the loud crash of beasts and branches hears.
And lo, upon our left two figures nude
And torn with scratches, who so hotly raced
They broke through every sliver of the wood.
The foremost cried: "Make haste now, Death, make
haste!"
The other, seeming all too much delayed,
Cried to him: "Lano, not so swiftly-paced
Thy limbs were at the jousts of Toppo's raid."¹
Then, as perchance through failing breath out-
stripp'd,
A bush and his own self one group he made.
Behind them all the woodland was equipp'd
With coal-black bitches, fleetest and sharp-set,
Like greyhounds from the leash that instant slipp'd.
Their teeth in him who low was crouching met,
And piecemeal they his martyred body tore;
Then carried off the limbs that quivered yet.
My escort took me by the hand, and bore
Up to the bush, its wailings prompt to make
In vain through crevices which dropped with gore.
"Oh Jacomo of Sant' Andrea,"² spake,
"That I was made to screen thee, what the good?
What blame is mine for thy life's guilty sake?"
Soon as the Master still above it stood,
He said: "Who wert thou through these punctures
worn
Breathing a speech so doleful, mixed with blood?"
And he replied: "Oh souls that hither borne

¹ Lano of Siena was a young spendthrift who had wasted all his substance, and exposed himself to death in a fight with the men of Arezzo at Pieve del Toppo when he had the chance of escaping.

² Jacomo or Jacopo da Sant' Andrea was a Paduan noble notorious for his extravagance.

Come to behold how each distressful shoot
Is thus from me by shameless havoc torn,
Gather them round the bush and at its foot :
That city's mine which for the Baptist's aid
Changed her first patron's :¹ wherefore still to put
Her soul to sadness has his art essayed :
And but that where the Arno's stream is cross'd
The bridge as yet some sight of him displayed,
The citizens, who later were engross'd
In building on the ashes that survived
From Attila, had found their labour lost.
Of my own roofs a gibbet I contrived."

¹ Mars was the first patron of Florence, but when the city became Christian the temple erected in his honour was made a church and dedicated to John the Baptist. The remains of the statue of Mars were on the Ponte Vecchio, till carried away by a flood after Dante's time.

CANTO XIV

The Plain of Sand on which fire is ever falling—The Violent
against God—Capaneus—The Crimson Stream rising from a
Statue in Crete and forming the Four Rivers of Hell.

SINCE for my native place I felt constraint
Of charity, I heaped the scattered leaves,
And gave to him whose speech by this was faint.
Thence to the boundary we came which cleaves
From the third ring the second, where our sight
The work of justice horrible perceives.
The fresh events to manifest aright,
I say that we arrived on level ground,
Which from its bed puts every plant to flight.
The dolorous wood enwreathes it all around,
Even as that doth the sad foss invest ;
Our steps we halted on its utmost bound.
The soil was sand, a fashion which possessed
None other, arid and of densest grain,
Than that which once the feet of Cato pressed ¹
Oh vengeance of great God, how shouldst thou fain
Be feared by every one who reads the word
Made to mine eyes so manifestly plain !
I saw of naked souls full many a herd,
Who all most piteously wailed and wept,

¹ The Libyan desert through which Cato led his troops, as described
in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, book ix.

All, as it seemed, to diverse law referred.
 Supine lay some on earth and lowly crept ;
 All huddled up had some of them their seat,
 And others an incessant motion kept.
 Far more were those who paced with circling feet,
 Those 'neath the torments crouched made lesser
 show,
 Yet loosened more their tongues by woeful heat.
 O'er all the sand in measured fall and slow
 Were stealing down dilated flakes of fire,
 As on an Alp when winds are hushed the snow.
 As Alexander in hot regions dire
 Of India, saw on troops in order set
 Flames falling to the very ground entire ;
 Whence with his legions he the danger met
 Trampling the soil, that so the task were less
 The flame to extinguish while detached as yet ;
 Thus did its glow the eternal heat depress ;
 Whence like the tinder underneath the steel
 Kindled the sand to double the distress.
 Ever without a respite was the reel
 Of miserable hands, on either side
 Shaking off burnings freshly which anneal.
 "Master," I thus began, "whose prowess vied
 With all successful, save the Demons rude
 From the gate's entrance issuing that defied,
 Who is that great one, seeming in his mood
 Careless of flame, who lies despiteful, stern,
 As though the rain ne'er softened or subdued ?"
 And he, that mighty one, who could discern
 My question to my Guide upon him bore,
 Cried : "As in life I spurned, in death I spurn.
 If Jove his smith, from whom in rage he tore

The keen-edged thunderbolt which prostrate laid
 On my last day, should weary still the more ;
 Or wear those others out their turns who made
 At the black forge 'neath Mongibello's height,¹
 'Good Vulcan,' calling out, 'give aid, give aid,'
 As once before he did at Phlegra's fight,
 And launch his bolts at me with all his force,
 Not then sweet vengeance yielded him delight."
 Then did my Guide with energy discourse
 Such that I heard him ne'er so vehement :
 " Oh Capaneus, in this that no remorse
 Quenches thy pride, the more thy punishment :
 For to thy fury, save thy rage alone,
 No torment were as full affliction sent."
 Then he turned back to me with milder tone,
 And answered : " This was one of those seven
 kings
 Thebes that besieged ; who shows, and still had
 shown
 Disdain for God, and Him small tribute brings :
 But, as I told him, closely to his breast
 His own despite as meet adornment clings.
 Now come behind me, mark thou do not rest
 Yet with thy feet on the scorched sandy bed ;
 But to the woodland ever hold them press'd."
 In silence we arrived where gushes red
 Forth from the wood a tiny streamlet, still
 The crimson colour makes me quail with dread.
 As from the Bulicame² flows a rill,
 Which 'mongst them there the sinful women share,
 So this coursed downward through the sand to spill.

¹ Ætna.

² A hot spring near Viterbo frequented by women of a certain class.

Its bottom and its shelving borders were
 Both turned to stone, and margins at the side :
 Whence I perceived the passage must be there.
 "Of all things else whereof I testified
 Since through the entrance of this gate we came
 Of which to none the threshold is denied,
 No subject of thine eyes the sight can claim
 Notable, as this present rivulet,
 Which o'er it quenches every flake of flame."
 When with this language from my Guide I met,
 I prayed him lavishly imparted taste
 With lavishly imparted food to whet.
 "Far in mid-ocean lies a country waste
 Which Crete is called," he then began to say,
 "Under whose king of old the world was chaste.¹
 There stands a mountain which of yore was gay
 With leaf and water, Ida that was styled,
 Deserted now like something in decay.
 'Twas chos'n as trusty cradle for her child²
 By Rhea, to conceal him in her fears
 She bade them drown his cries with shriekings wild.³
 Within the mount a grand old man uprears,
 His shoulders tow'rd Damietta turned doth hold,
 And Romeward, as his mirror, earnest peers.
 His head is fashioned of the finest gold,
 Pure is the silver arms and breast reveal,
 Then to the fork 'tis brass that forms the mould :
 Thence down below is all choice tempered steel,
 Save that baked clay doth the right foot cement,
 On which he props him more than other heel.

¹ "Credo pudicitiam Saturno rege moratam In terris."—Juvenal, *Sat.* vi.

² Zeus.

³ The cries of the Corybantes.

Each portion, save the gold alone, is rent
By a deep fissure, whence of tears the drip,
Which gathered through this cavern force a vent.
Their course is down the rocks till reached this dip :
Acheron, Styx they form, and Phlegethon ;
Then downward through this channel's closer grip
Even to the place where all descent is gone :
They form Cocytus ; thou shalt see full clear
What is that pool : for which no word thereon."
And I to him : "If thus the streamlet here
Springs from our world and there its source has
found,
Why doth it only on this ledge appear ?"
And he to me : "Thou knowst the place is round,
And traversed though thou hast no little space
Still left, descending to the lowest ground,
Not yet hast compassed all the circle's place ;
Wherefore if sight we have of something new
That should not stamp such wonder on thy face."
And I once more : "Where, Master, shall we view
Phlegethon, Lethe, since on one thou'rt dumb,
And sayst the other to this rain is due ?"
"Pleasing indeed to me thy questions come,"
He answered, "but the boiling crimson's hiss
One may resolve most clearly of their sum.
Lethe shalt see, but forth from this abyss,
There whither go the souls for cleansing flood
When full repentance doth the fault dismiss."
Then said he : "Now 'tis time to leave the wood :
See that thy steps are close behind me bent :
A path the margins give which fire withstood,
And every vapour over them is spent."

CANTO XV

The Violent against Nature—Brunetto Latini, Dante's teacher—
Priscian, Francesco d'Accorso, Andrea de' Mozzi.

ON one hard margin now our pathway strikes,
The runnel's steam high overcasts a shade
To save from fire the water and the dikes.
'Twixt Bruges and Wissant¹ as by Flemings made,
Fearing the surge which rushing deals its blow,
Their bulwark, that proud ocean might be stayed ;
And as by Paduans along Brenta's flow
Their houses and their castles to protect,
Before that Chiarentana² feel the glow :
After such likeness these were reared erect,
Though not so high and not so massive wrought,
Whate'er their fashion, by their architect.
Already from the wood our steps had brought
So far I could not see where that was set
Had I turned back and its direction sought,
When coming on beside the dike we met
A troop of souls, and each on us when nigh
Peered, as beneath the moon, if new as yet
With evening, men at others wont to pry ;
And keenly bent on us a puckered brow

¹ A place near Calais, adopted by the best authorities instead of either Ghent or Cadsand, which were chosen by earlier writers.

² The mountain source of the Brenta.

As an old tailor scans his needle's eye.
Thus closely fixed by such a gang, I trow
That I was recognised by one who took
My skirt and cried: "What marvel have we now?"
When he stretched forth his arm to me, my look
Intent on his baked visage I inclined,
So that the scorched appearance never shook
The recognition which possessed my mind ;
And reaching down my hand towards his face,
I spoke : "You, Ser Brunetto, here I find?"
"Let it not vex thee, son, if some small space
Brunetto Latini," he made answer, "bear
Backward with thee and let these go their pace."
"Far as I can," I said, "I make that prayer ;
And if with you to seat me you demand,
I will, if he consent with whom I fare."
"Oh, son," he said, "whoever of this band
Pauses at all, a hundred years is lain
Nor once the fire which strikes is from him fann'd.
Wherefore go forward thou ; thy skirts I'll gain,
And then rejoin my troop, which goes with cries
Bewailing its eternity of pain."
I dared not from the causeway in such wise
Drop to his level : but I held my head
Bowed down like one who walks in reverent guise.
"What fortune," he began, "hath hither led,
What destiny, before the latest day?
And who hath guided thee this road to tread?"
"Up there above, in life's serener way,"
I answered, "in a valley's deep defiles,
Ere my full age attained, I went astray.
But yestermorn I tore me from its wiles :
This one appeared as there I turned anew,

And homeward by this path my steps beguiles.”
And he to me : “ Thy star if thou pursue
Thou canst not fail to reach a glorious port,
In the fair life if rightly I could view.
And were not thus untimely mine cut short,
Seeing that Heaven to thee is thus benign,
To me to cheer thy work thou mightst resort.
But that ungrateful people and malign,
Of old from Fiesole who made descent,
And still of rock and mountain show the sign,
For thy good deeds will hostile face present :
And that with reason ; for it is not fit
With the tart crabs the fig’s sweet fruit be blent.
By ancient fame on earth with blindness smit,
Arrogant, envious, greedy to amass,
To cleanse thee from their customs use thy wit.
Thy fortune with such honour shall surpass
That either side will hunger for thy sake :
But be far distant from the mouth the grass.
Let the brute Fiesolans their fodder make
Of their own selves, and never touch the plant
Which yet may root within their dunhill take,
Revival of the sacred seed to grant
Of Romans, who remained there, when the nest
Of all ill-doing grew so dominant.”
“ If fully granted were my whole request,”
I answered him, “ you had not of the flower
Of human nature yet been dispossess’d :
Fixed in my mind and on my heart has power
The dear and good paternal image, yours,
Shown in the world, when you from hour to hour
Taught me how man eternity secures :
And how much that I prize ’tis fit my speech

Should give discernment, while my life endures.
 I write the words you speak my course to teach,
 And keep with other text that she expound
 My Lady, who will know if her I reach.
 To you be manifest this single ground,
 So that my conscience do not hence upbraid,
 Ready for Fortune, as she will, I'm found.
 Not new mine ears this earnest to invade :
 Wherefore to whirl her wheel let Fortune seek
 As it may please her, and the churl his spade."
 My Master then turned backward o'er his cheek,
 The right, regarded me and said : " Full well
 He listens who takes heed what that may speak."
 With Ser Brunetto none the less I dwell
 In converse, and of his companions ask
 Who most are known, in rank who most excel.
 And he : " From some 'tis good to tear the mask :
 With others silence greater praise can gain,
 Since short the time would be for such a task.
 This know in sum, that clerics form that train,
 Great men of letters, and of mighty fame,
 Defiled on earth by the same sin and stain.
 Priscian¹ goes onward with that mob of shame,
 Francesco too d'Accorso² joined ; and craves
 Thy sight such loathsome scurf, 'tis thine to name
 Him who translated by the slave of slaves
 From Arno's to Bacchiglione's stream,
 His ill-strained nerves left there beside its waves.³
 More would I tell thee, but my stay, my theme

¹ The famous grammarian, though there seems to be no authority for such a charge being made against him.

² A lawyer of great reputation at Bologna, who died in 1297.

³ Andrea de' Mozzi, Bishop of Florence, who was translated by Pope Boniface VIII. to Vicenza on the Bacchiglione.

Cannot be longer now, since there I see
Arising from the sand new cloud of steam.
A people comes with whom I must not be ;
My Treasure I commend thee, for my life
Lives yet therein ; no more I ask of thee.”
Then he turned round, and seemed with ardour rife
As o'er Verona's plain they stretch their thews
For the green cloth,¹ and seemed in such a strife
The one to win, and not the one to lose.

¹ A foot-race run yearly outside the city of Verona for a prize consisting of a green mantle.

CANTO XVI

Dante meets other Florentines—The Cataract of Phlegethon—
Virgil flings down a cord for a signal.

Now reached a place where water as it fell
To the next circle made its booming heard,
Like beehives humming in their every cell ;
When lo, three shades together forth were spurred,
And ran from out a troop which passed beside
Beneath the rain of the fierce torment blurred.
They came towards us, and each loudly cried :
“ Stay thou, for to our thinking by thy dress
Thou seemest in our evil land to abide.”
Ah me ! what wounds I saw their limbs impress,
Recent and ancient kindled by the fire !
Still the remembrance fills me with distress.
Their cries my Teacher’s careful heed require.
He spake, towards me as he turned his face :
“ Wait, such as these should courtesy inspire :
And were it not the nature of the place
And the fierce flame it darts, I’d say that thee
Befitted more than these a speedier pace.”
They recommenced, when at a halt were we,
Their ancient strain, and as they came to close
Made them the figure of a wheel all three.
As champions stripped and oiled are wont to pose,

Fixed on their grip and vantage earnest glance,
 Ere dealing, each to other, thrusts and blows ;
 Thus circling each of them his countenance
 Bent on me, so that neck and feet maintained
 Contrary courses in continual dance.

“If misery in this soft soil ingrained
 Heap scorn upon us and our suppliant moan,”
 The one began, “and aspect charred and stained ;
 Our fame thy mind should influence, to make known
 Who thou mayst be, since thus with living feet
 Secure thou scourest this infernal zone.

This one, whose tracks thou seest my tread repeat,
 All peeled and naked as he goes, may claim
 A higher rank than thy belief would meet.

Grandson of good Gualdrada he, his name
 Was Guidoguerra,¹ and while life could stand
 By sword, by wisdom much he overcame.

The other next me trampling on the sand,
 Tegghiaio Aldobrandi² is, so graced
 His voice on earth a welcome should command.

And I, who with them on the cross am placed,
 Jacopo Rusticucci was, whom sure
 More than aught else a fierce wife brings to waste.”

Had I some shelter from the flame secure
 I would have flung me down and in between,
 And that, methinks, my Teacher could endure.

But that so burnt and baked I should have been,
 Fear conquered the good-will within me born

¹ Guidoguerra was a noble Florentine of the Guelph party, and leader of their army in 1265.

² Tegghiaio Aldobrandi was also a Guelph noble. It will be remembered that in the Sixth Canto Dante asked the glutton Ciaccio for tidings of his fate and of that of Jacopo Rusticucci. Of this last little is known.

Which to embrace them made me erst so keen.
Then I began : "Compassion and not scorn
Has your condition fixed within my breast
So deep, that slowly thence it will be worn,
So soon to me as this my Lord addressed
Words from the which so clearly I inferred
That people such as ye are, hither pressed.
I am of your own country, and the word
Of your high deeds, and honoured names of all,
Aye with affection have I told and heard.
I go to the sweet apples, and the gall
I leave, as promised by my trusty Guide ;
But to the centre first I needs must fall."
"So may thy spirit," he with that replied,
"Long time in conduct of thy limbs excel,
And so thy fame shine on thee and abide,
Courtesy, valour, say if yet they dwell
Within our city, as they used of old,
Or all have joined their presence to expel ?
For much afflicts us by the things he told,
Who there with his companions shares our pains,
Guglielmo Borsiere,¹ late enrolled."
"The upstart people, and the sudden gains,
Engendered have excess and arrogance,
Florence, in thee, whence still thy voice complains !"
Thus I exclaimed with lifted countenance :
The three, who took these words for a reply,
Looked each at each, as fixed on truth the glance.
"If others other times to satisfy,"
They all replied, "so little cost should mean,
Well for thee that thy words with aptness vie.

¹ Guglielmo Borsiere, who is mentioned by Boccaccio, had died in 1300, just before the date assigned to Dante's journey through Hell.

Wherefore shouldst thou escape this darksome scene,
And to revisit the fair stars return,
When thou shalt joy to utter: 'I have been,'
See that to speak of us to men thou learn."
Then broke their wheel, and as they fled away
Seemed their swift limbs like wings the ground to
spurn.

A brief Amen none ever learnt to say
So quickly as they vanished from our view;
Wherefore the Master willed no longer stay.
I followed, and our paces were but few
When sound of water gave so near a sign
Our ears a spoken word scarce caught or knew.
Like to that stream¹ which holds its proper line
From Monte Viso first toward the East
Upon the left rib of the Apennine,
Up there called Acquacheta, ere released
It rushes downward to a lower bed,
And at Forlì to bear that name has ceased,
Rebellows o'er San Benedetto's head,
In one leap from the mountain falling sheer,
Where thousand might have shelter and be fed,
Thus from that cliff precipitous we hear
Resound the water so opaquely dyed,
Which in few moments would have stunned the ear.
I had a cord² about my body tied,
And at one time therewith had I designed
To catch the leopard with the painted hide.
This when I managed wholly to unwind,
Ev'n as my Guide had given me command,

¹ The Montone, which rises in the Apennines, and making a high fall near San Benedetto, flows past Forlì.

² The cord of St. Francis, a protection against sensual pleasures.

I reached it out to him coiled up and twined.
He turned him thereupon to his right hand,
And at some distance from the edge on high
Into the deep abyss he cast the band.
"Surely 'tis fit that something new reply,"
I said within me, "the new sign to hail
Which thus my Master follows with his eye."
Ah, what great caution men should never fail
Near those by whom not acts alone surveyed,
But inmost thought to read their minds avail!
Then spake he: "Its ascent will soon have made
What I expect, and what thy fancy dreams
Soon to thy sight, as meet, shall be displayed."
For ever to that truth which falsehood seems
Far as they can should men their lips have bound,
Since lack of fault from censure ne'er redeems:
But I must speak; and by the notes that sound,
Reader, through this high Comedy I swear,
So may they still enduring grace have found,
I witnessed through this gross and murky air
Come swimming up a figure, of degree
Marvellous to each heart that's strong to bear,
As he returns who has gone down to free
At times an anchor, grappling the firm seat
Of rock, or something hidden in the sea,
Who stretches upward and draws in his feet.

CANTO XVII

Geryon—The Usurers—The Poets, seated on Geryon's back,
descend into the abyss.

“Lo the wild beast with the sharp-pointed tail,
Which passes mountains, walls and arms can break;
Lo what makes all the world vile stench exhale :”
Thus in mine ears my Guide commencing spake,
The while he beckoned it towards the side,
Near where an end the traversed marbles make :
And that foul image, fraud which typified,
Came on, and landed both its head and bust ;
But to draw up its tail it never tried.
Its face was of a man the face, most just,
So gracious of its skin the outward show ;
Its trunk beside a serpent's of the dust.
Two shaggy paws far as the armpits go :
Its back, its breast, and both its sides and twain
Painted o'er all with knots and circlets, glow.
Never their cloths, worked in and overlain,
Tartars or Turks had made with such a dye,
Nor e'er such webs Arachne's loom could strain.
As sometimes by the shore the shallows lie,
Part in the water, partly on the land,
As there too in the glutton German sty
The beaver squats, its booty to command ;

So perched that vilest beast upon the bound
Which, stone itself, encloses all the sand.
Its tail was writhing in the void profound,
Twirling on high the venomous forked sting
Which armed, in scorpion's guise, the point all round.
Then said the Guide : "'Tis meet our path should bring
Some little turn, till onward we have pressed
Thither, where crouching lies that evil thing."
Wherefore descent we made to the right breast,
Upon the verge extreme ten steps to pace
That sand and flame might well be laid at rest :
Soon as our course had led us to its place,
A little further on the sand are seen
People who sat anigh that empty space.
Therewith the Master spake : "That thou mayst glean
A full experience of this circle's throng,
Go thou towards them and observe their mien.
Thy converse with them let it not be long :
Till thou return, with this I'll parley keep
That it vouchsafe to us its shoulders strong."
Thus once again along the extremest steep
Of that seventh circle, all alone I went
My journey, where the people sat who weep.
Forth from their eyes their anguish found a vent :
This side and that to parry with their hands
Now the fierce vapours, now the hot soil, they bent ;
Not otherwise a dog in summer lands,
Now with the snout, now with the feet, the bite
Of fleas, of gadflies, or of gnats withstands.
Then when on certain I had fixed my sight,
On whom so dolorous the flame descends,
None could I recognise, but marked aright
That round the neck of each a pouch depends,

Of certain colour, certain in design,
 Whereon to feed it seems each vision tends.
 And as I came and passed along the line,
 Azure upon a yellow purse I viewed
 A face and an appearance leonine.¹
 Then as my course of vision I pursued,
 I saw as red as blood another show
 A goose than butter which was whiter hued.²
 And one, who had his satchel's silver glow
 With big and azure sow emblazoned,³ cried
 To me: "What dost thou in this ditch below?
 Now go thy way; and since life yet can bide
 Know that Vitaliano,⁴ once so high
 My neighbour, here shall sit on my left side.
 Amongst these Florentines a Paduan I;
 They stun full oft mine ears with deafening blows,
 Exclaiming: 'Let him come that lord most high,
 Who shall the pouch with the three goats⁵ disclose.'"
 His mouth he here distorted, and his tongue
 Thrust out, as doth the ox that licks its nose.
 And I, who feared long stay to wrath had stung
 Him who to make a shorter stay had told,
 Turned back upon those souls with anguish wrung.
 My Guide already mounted I behold
 Upon the croup of that most savage beast,
 And he addressed me: "Now be strong and bold.
 Henceforth must we descend by stairs thus pieced:
 Mount thou in front, the midmost seat I'll take,
 So that the tail have power to injure least."

¹ The arms of the Gianfigliuzzi, a Florentine family of usurers.

² The arms of the Ubriachi, another Florentine family.

³ The arms of the Scrovigni of Padua.

⁴ Vitaliano de Vitaliani, also a Paduan.

⁵ This is supposed to refer to Giovanni Buiamonte, a Florentine usurer.

As is the man who feels the quartan's shake
 So close upon him that his nails are blue,
 And at the sight of shade is all aquake,
Such at the words he spoke to me I grew ;
 But roused me his reproofs to shame, the slave
 Before his lord with courage can endue.
I took the seat those brawny shoulders gave ;
 And would have said (but that my voice refrained
 From utterance): "Grant me the embrace I crave."
But he who help another time had deigned
 In other peril, as I mounted there
 With arms embracing clasped me and sustained :
And said : "Now move thee, Geryon, through the air ;
 Thy wheelings wide, and thy descent be slack :
 Think of the unwonted burden thou dost bear."
As the light vessel from its berth to back
 Backing, forth issues, so from thence it pass'd ;
 And when it felt free play upon the track,
There where its breast had been its tail it cast,
 And that tense-stretched it moved as doth an eel,
 And in its arms collected all the blast.
No greater fear, I think, 'twas given to feel
 When Phaethon let fall the guiding strings,
 Whence skies were kindled, as they yet reveal,
Or Icarus ill-fated felt his wings
 Losing their feathers as the wax 'gan fuse,
 While cried his sire: "Thy course ill fortune brings,"
Than mine when there I saw me on this cruise
 With air all round me, when extinguished show,
 Save of the beast itself, all other views.
It goes its journey swimming slow and slow ;
 Wheels and descends, but nought I recognise
 Save wind my face which visits from below.

On my right hand I heard already rise
Horrible crash beneath from the abyss ;
Wherefore I downward crane my head, mine eyes.
I grew more timorous at the precipice :
For wailings loud I heard, and flames espied
Which trembling all I cowered down to miss.
Then too I saw, what was not erst descried,
The wheeling and descent, through the great troop
Of ills approaching on each diverse side.
As falcon which has long been on the swoop,
Seeing nor lure nor bird, which renders fain
The falconer to cry : " Ah me, dost stoop " :
Weary descends, whence swift its flight was ta'en,
In hundred circlings, and lights down irate
Far from its master in its fell disdain :
Thus at the bottom Geryon dropped its freight
On foot, at foot of the rent rocky bed,
And then, unburdened of our bodies' weight,
Vanished like arrow from the bowstring sped.

CANTO XVIII

The Eighth Circle called Malebolge, divided into Ten Chasms—The First Chasm containing Pandars and Seducers scourged by horned demons—Jason—The Second Chasm—Flatterers immersed in filth—Thais.

A PLACE in Hell called Malebolge stands,
All built of stone, and tinged with iron stain,
Like to the ring that clasps it in its bands.
Right in the midst of that malign champaign
Yawns a wide pit, full spacious and profound,
Whose structure in its place I will explain.
The barrier then which there remains is round,
Betwixt the pit and high bank's craggy base,
And parted in ten valleys is its ground.
As is the figure of the enclosing space,
Where trenches gird the castles more and more,
The walls in guarding shelter to embrace,
These in this quarter such an image bore :
And as small bridges to the outer zone
From thresholds of such fortresses lead o'er,
So from the cliff's foundation paths of stone
Across the dikes and trenches struck their track
Down to the pit which cleaves and makes them one.
'Twas here we found us, shaken from the back
Of Geryon : to the left his course pursued
The Poet, and my following was not slack.

On the right hand new miseries I viewed,
 New torments, scourgers new with whips supplied,
 Which the first chasm filled up, a multitude.
 Naked these sinners in the depth we 'spied :
 This side the middle tow'rd us was their way,
 With us on that, but with a greater stride.
 As late the Romans, for the vast array
 The year of Jubilee,¹ did means devise
 Across the bridge the people to convey,
 Towards the castle² that they turn their eyes
 On the one side, and to St. Peter's go ;
 Towards the mount³ the other section plies.
 O'er the dark stone here, there, and high and low,
 I saw horned Demons with great scourges deal
 Upon their haunches many a cruel blow.
 Ah how they made each sinner lift his heel
 At the first stripes ! and never one indeed
 Waited the second or the third to feel.
 Whilst I moved onward, one of them to heed
 Mine eyes were held ; and thus I quickly spake :
 "On this one has my sight been wont to feed."
 Wherefore I stopped more sure of him to make ;
 My gentle Guide too did his course arrest,
 And granted me some backward steps to take :
 And that scourged figure in concealment's quest
 Bent down his face, but little that could do :
 For "Thou," I said, "whose eyes to earth are press'd
 If fashion thou dost bear be not untrue,
 Venedico Caccianimico art ;⁴

¹ The year 1300 was proclaimed a year of Jubilee by Pope Boniface VIII.

² The Castle of St. Angelo.

³ The Janiculan.

⁴ A Bolognese who betrayed his own sister to one of the Marquises of Este.

But what hath plunged thee in such stinging
brew?"

"Unwilling that," he answered, "I impart;
But thy dear speech constrains me, bidding there
The ancient world to my remembrance start.

I was the man who Ghisola the fair
To do the pleasure of the Marquis led,
However men the shameful tale declare.

Nor I the only Bolognese who shed
Tears in this place, so full with them 'tis fraught
That not 'twixt Reno and Savena's bed¹

Are tongues so many to say *sipa*² taught:
And shouldst thou need belief or evidence
Recall our grasping nature to thy thought."

While yet thus speaking, smote his keener sense
A demon with his scourge, and, "Pandar," cried,
"No women are there here for coining: hence!"

Then I rejoined mine escort, and we plied
With but few paces where a rock was grooved
Which jutted outward from that hilly side.

Easy enough the task of climbing proved,
And turned to right along its jagged teeth
From those eternal circlings we removed.

When we had reached the place where underneath
It yawns, the scourged a passage to allot,
Then spoke my Guide: "Attend, and mark thou
sheathe

Thy sight upon those others, misbegot,
Of whom as yet thou hast not seen the face,
Together with us since they passed this spot."

From that primeval bridge we watched the race

¹ The two rivers which enclose Bologna.

² Bolognese dialect.

Which came toward us on the other bed,
And which the lash doth similarly chase.
Without my asking, the good Master said :
 " Mark thou the mighty one that hither strains,
 And seems for woe no single tear to shed :
The royal aspect that he still retains !
 'Tis Jason who by courage and resource
 Bore off the fleecy ram from Colchian swains.
He passed the isle of Lemnos in his course,
 After the women all their males consigned
 To death, high-mettled and without remorse.
There he by tokens and by words refined
 Deceived Hypsipyle, the fair young maid
 Who erst her fellows all had skill to blind.
With child he left her, desolate, betrayed :
 Such guilt condemns to such a punishment ;
 And for Medea too is vengeance paid.
With him goes each who tricks with like intent :
 And this sufficient lore for thee connects
 With that first valley those within it pent."
Now had we reached the point where intersects
 The narrow path the second causeway's line,
 And buttress there for other arch erects.
People we thence perceived who moan and whine
 In the next chasm, while snorts their muzzles hold,
 And blows to their own flesh their palms assign.
The banks were all encrusted with a mould
 From vapour from below which on them clings,
 Whence eyes and nostrils were in strife enrolled.
So steep the bottom that no station brings
 Its sight in range, unless the crown subdued
 There of the arch the shelf where highest springs.
Hither we came, and people thence I viewed

Down in the foss, immersed in ordure's reek
 That seemed from human privies to exude.
 And while down yonder with mine eyes I seek,
 One with his head I saw in such foul plight
 That lay or cleric he no tongue could speak.
 "Why fix on me more eagerly thy sight
 Than on these other brutes?" in rage he cried.
 And I: "Because, if I remember right,
 Erst have I seen thee when thy hair was dried,
 Alessio thou Interminei, thy state
 Lucca, for that more scanned than all beside."
 And he made answer, beating on his pate,
 "Down here submerged me have the flatteries
 Wherewith my tongue was never satiate."
 Thereon my Guide enjoined: "In forward wise
 Stretch out thy glance a little to its butt,
 That well upon the face thou fix thine eyes
 Of that uncleanly and dishevelled slut
 Scratching herself with nails which filth impress'd,
 Now crouched, now rising on her feet to strut.
 Thais it is the harlot,¹ whom address'd
 Her paramour: 'Giv'st me great thanks?' replied,
 'Nay rather marvellous,' to his request.
 And be with this our vision satisfied."

¹ Terence, *Eunuchus*, Act iii.

CANTO XIX

The Third Chasm—Simonists with their heads thrust down into holes and their feet protruding—Pope Nicholas III.—Dante inveighs against Papal avarice.

OH Simon Magus ! oh his miscreant train !
 Who things of God, which ought to crown the suit
 Of righteousness, rapacious ye of gain
For gold and eke for silver prostitute ;
 Now it behoves for you the trumpet boom
 In the third chasm since ye have taken root.
We reached already the succeeding tomb,
 Mounting the rocky shelf where plumbs a line
 The foss exactly in its central room.
How great the art, oh Wisdom all divine,
 Thou showst in Heaven, on earth, in Hell profound,
 And with what justice doth thy power assign !
I saw upon the sides and in the ground
 The livid stone full pierced with cavities
 All of one girth, and each of them was round.
These not less ample seemed, nor more in size,
 Than those which my fair San Giovanni¹ cleave
 To give them place for standing who baptize.

¹ The Baptistry at Florence. The incident to which Dante refers took place when he was Prior, and led to his being charged with sacrilege.

One of the which I fractured to relieve
Him who, few years ago, was stifling there ;
Be this the sign that all should undeceive.
Forth from the mouth of each protruded bare
A sinner's feet and, till they bulk adapt,
His legs, within the other portions were.
Both soles had all of them in kindling wrapt ;
Whence writhed the joints amain, and quivered so
That twisted ropes and withes they would have
snapt.
As flames, with which oiled things are all aglow,
Are wont to flicker on the outer bark
Alone, so 'twas with these from heel to toe.
" Master," I asked him, " who is that I mark
Who frets and struggles more than all his throng,
And who is licked by flame of ruddier spark ?"
" If thou wilt have me carry thee along
The bank," he answered, " where it slopes the most,
From him shalt hear of him and of his wrong."
And I : " To please thee has my wish grossed :
Thou art my Lord, and from thy will hast known
I ne'er depart, and what is hid thou knowst."
Then the fourth causeway reached where that was thrown,
We turned, descending on the left the bank
To narrow depths of perforated stone.
Nor ever the good Master from his flank
Dropped me, until he brought me to the breach
Of him who there lamented with his shank.¹
" Whoe'er thou art that upside down dost reach,
Afflicted spirit, planted like a stake,"
I bade him, " utter if thou canst thy speech."

¹ Pope Nicholas the Third, of the Orsini family, whose Papacy lasted from 1277 to 1281.

I stood as doth the friar, that shrift may take
The treacherous assassin, who fixed tight
Recalls him, some delay in death to make :
Then cried he : " Art already there upright,
Art there upright already, Boniface ?¹
By many years the scroll deceived me quite.
Sated so soon the bounties to embrace
For which thou didst not fear the beauteous Dame
By fraud to take, by havoc to disgrace ?"
Such I became as those who stand in shame
Through failure felt to comprehend and heed
The answer made, and no reply can frame.
Then Virgil charged me : " Say to him with speed,
I am not he, not he thou dost suppose " :
And I made answer as it was decreed.
Whereat the spirit furious writhed his toes ;
Then sighing, and with accent of distress,
Exclaimed : " What then wouldst have me to
disclose ?
If down the bank this motive made thee press,
Having to know me such exceeding care,
Learn the great mantle was on earth my dress :
Truly a son was I of the she-bear,²
So greedy to advance the cubs, I gave
Here to the pouch myself, as wealth up there.
Beneath my head their doom those others drave
In Simony who erst preceded me,
Flattened in fissures of the rocky cave.
Down thither likewise shall I fall, when he
Shall come, for whom I took thee, the demand
When with such suddenness I made to thee.

¹ Pope Boniface the Eighth, who did not die till 1303.

² Alluding to his own family, the Orsini.

But longer is the time my feet I've tanned
 And thus have stood already upside down,
 Than he with reddened feet shall planted stand.
 Since later, for foul deeds of ill renown,
 Shall lawless pastor from the West advance,
 Whose covering him and me shall fitly crown.¹
 New Jason shall he be who meets our glance
 In Maccabees,² and as his King was kind
 To that, to this shall be who rules in France."
 I know not if foolhardy was my mind
 That I made answer only in this strain :
 " Ah ! tell me then how much our Lord designed
 As treasure from St. Peter first to gain
 Ere in his charge the keys he would invest ?
 All that he asked was ' Follow me, ' 'tis plain.
 Nor from Matthias, Peter and the rest
 Asked gold or silver, chosen to the place
 From whence the guilty soul was dispossessed.
 Stay then, thy punishment well fits thy case ;
 And guard with jealousy the ill-gotten store
 Which against Charles ³ such boldness gave thy face.
 And were I not forbidden furthermore
 By reverence for the supremest keys
 Which erst thy hand in life's glad season bore,
 I would employ severer words than these ;
 Since 'tis your avarice makes the world despair,
 Trampling the good, exalting villainies.
 Of pastors such the Evangelist was ware
 When on the waters her who sits he saw
 With fornications kings of earth ensnare.⁴

¹ Pope Clement the Fifth, Archbishop of Bordeaux before his election to the Papacy.

² Book ii. ch. iv.

³ Charles I., King of Sicily.

⁴ Revelation, ch. xvii.

'Tis she who born with the seven heads could draw
From the ten horns her method and her aid
So long as virtue was her husband's law.
A God of gold and silver have ye made :
And 'twixt the idolaters and you what lies,
Save they to one, and ye to hundred prayed ?
Ah Constantine, to how much ill gave rise,
Not thy conversion, but the dower conferred
On the first wealthy Pope by thee as prize ! ”
While thus I chanted, and these notes he heard,
Whether 'twas conscience or 'twas rage that stung,
With both his soles he furious kicked and spurr'd.
I think it pleased my Guide, for aye he hung
With such contented look upon the sound
Of the true accents uttered by my tongue.
Wherefore with both his arms he clasped me round,
And when he'd raised me wholly on his breast,
Made by the way of his descent rebound ;
Nor once grew weary thus to hold me press'd,
Till borne aloft where the fourth causeway showed
A passage to the fifth, the arch's crest.
There gently he deposited the load,
Gently because of the steep rugged stone
Which would to goats have proved an arduous road.
Another valley thence to me was shown.

CANTO · XX

The Fourth Chasm—Soothsayers and Diviners with their faces turned backward—Amphiaraus, Tiresias, Aruns, Manto—Virgil tells how Mantua was founded—Eurypylos, Michael Scott, and others.

NEW penalty behoves me weave in verse,
The twentieth Canto matter to devise
In the first chant, of those the depths immerse.
Already was I fixed with all mine eyes
To scan intently the uncovered ground,
Bathed with the tears of anguished miseries ;
And folk I saw throughout the valley's round
Come weeping and in silence, at the pace
Of those the litanies on earth that sound.
As more on them my sight I did abase,
Contorted marvellously each was seen
Betwixt the chin and the chest's opening space :
For turned toward the loins was every mien,
And backward walk became them, since to see
With forward look forbidden they had been.
Palsy perchance has wrought to such degree
Thus by its force to make men all awry ;
But I ne'er saw it, nor believe 'twould be.
God grant thee, Reader, so to fructify
Thy reading, of thyself thou mayst decide
How I could ever keep my visage dry

When close at hand our image I descried
 Distorted so, that tears the eyes which stock
 Could bathe the hinder parts where they divide.
 Truly I wept while leaning on a rock
 Of the hard cliff, so that my escort said :
 “ What ! art thou yet among the foolish flock ?
 Here piety survives when pity's dead.
 Who is more wicked than the man to stay
 God's work of judgment by compassion led ?
 Lift, lift thine head his figure to survey
 For whom earth opened, ringing out the call
 Of Thebans who beheld : ‘ Why quit the fray,
 Amphiaraus ? ¹ Whither dost thou fall ? ’
 Nor did he once his headlong leap arrest
 To Minos till he came who grapples all.
 Mark of his shoulders he has made a breast :
 And too far forward since his vision ranged
 He looks behind, to backward path address'd.
 Behold Tiresias, ² who his semblance changed
 When from a male a woman he became,
 And each from each his members all estranged.
 And then behoved him with his wand to aim
 A blow at the two serpents intertwined,
 Before his manly plumes he could reclaim.
 Then Aruns backed against his belly find,
 He who in Luni's mountains, where bestowed
 Beneath them tills the soil Carrara's hind,
 'Mongst the white marbles had for his abode
 A cavern, whence curtailed, to scrutinise
 The stars and ocean, ne'er his vision showed.

¹ One of the seven against Thebes.

² The Theban augur whose change of sex is told by Ovid in the *Metamorphoses*.

And she her breasts who covers, in such guise
 Thou seest them not, with tresses all unbound,
 And all whose hairy skin that side supplies,
 Was Manto,¹ many lands who roamed around,
 Thereafter settled where to birth I grew :
 Wherefore a little hear what I propound.
 After her father from this life withdrew,
 And Bacchus' city² was in bondage thrown,
 Long space of time the world she wandered
 through.
 Up in fair Italy a lake is shown
 At the Alp's foot which locks the German plain
 Above the Tyrol, as Benacus known.
 Through thousand springs and more, the Pennine chain
 'Twixt Val Camonica and Garda, lave
 The waters which in that said lake have lain.
 A place is in the midst, where blessing gave
 The pastors of Verona and of Trent
 And Brescia, thither if that journey drave.³
 Peschiera sits, fair fortress strongly bent
 To front the Brescian, Bergamasque array,
 Where the surrounding shore has most descent.
 There it behoves that all should fall away
 Benacus in its bosom cannot stow,
 A river through the pastures green to stray.
 Soon as the water there sets head to flow
 No more Benacus, Mincius 'tis address'd
 Down to Governo where it joins the Po.
 Not long its course ere wide a flat possess

¹ Daughter of Tiresias.

² Thebes.

³ The three dioceses meet at a point on the Lake of Garda, the Benacus of Virgil :

Fluctibus et fremitu assurgens, Benace, marino.

Georg. ii. 160.

In which it spreads and forms a marshy fen,
 At times in summer wont to breed a pest.
 Passing that way the savage virgin then
 Saw in the middle of the marshes gape
 Land without culture and devoid of men.
 There, from all human intercourse to 'scape,
 She settled with her slaves her arts to ply,
 And lived, and dying left her empty shape.
 Then they who round were scattered far and nigh
 Assembled thither, for 'twas strong the spot
 From the vast swamps which all about it lie.
 O'er those dead bones their city did they plot ;
 From her, to whom at first the choice belonged,
 They called it Mantua without further lot.
 In earlier times more dense the people thronged
 Within, ere Casalodi's foolish ear
 By Pinamonte with deceit was wronged.¹
 Wherefore I warn thee, if assigned thou hear
 Another origin to this my land,
 No lie may cheat the truth that's made so clear."
 "Master," I said, "thy reasonings command
 My faith, such certainty in them I find
 All else to me were an extinguished brand.
 But tell me of the folk that onward wind,
 If one thy notice worthily bespeaks,
 For that alone engages all my mind."
 "This one," he answered, "spreading from his cheeks
 The beard across his shoulders' dusky grain,
 When of their males were so despoiled the Greeks
 That for the cradle one could scarce remain,

¹ Pinamonte de' Buonaccorsi persuaded Alberto da Casalodi, who had at the time the control of Mantua, to banish certain of the nobles ; he then raised the populace against those who were left.

An augur was, and gave with Calchas sign
 To cut in Aulis the first cable's strain.
 Eurypylus his name, as in its line
 Somewhere my lofty Tragedy forthtells,¹
 Thou knowst it, since of all the knowledge thine.
 That other one whose flank such leanness quells
 Was Michael Scott,² and verily he knew
 Impostures all of magic, and its spells.
 Guido Bonatti mark, Asdente view,³
 Who now could wish that thread and leather hide
 Had his attention, but too late his rue.
 Those wretched see who needles cast aside,
 Shuttle and distaff, for diviners' gain;
 With herbs and images their charms they plied.
 But now come on, for now the Thorns and Cain⁴
 Are holding of both hemispheres the bound,
 And touch below Seville the billowy main.
 Already yesternight the moon was round:
 Well shouldst recall it, for it did no wrong
 More than one time in the dark wood's profound."
 So spake he, and the while we moved along.

¹ *Aeneid*, ii. 114.

² See the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*.

³ Guido Bonatti was an astrologer of Forlì; Asdente, a shoemaker of Parma.

⁴ The man in the moon.

CANTO XXI

The Fifth Chasm—The Barrators plunged in seething pitch—The
Malebranche armed with prongs threaten Virgil and Dante—
They are pacified, and ten of them act as an escort.

THUS on from bridge to bridge, our speech address'd
To things my Comedy would leave untold,
We came, and stopped when we had gained the crest,
Of Malebolge's fissures to behold
Another cleft, and other vain regret ;
Marvellous darkness I beheld enfold.
As in the Arsenal of Venice set
Boils the tenacious pitch, ere winter fled,
To caulk the vessels when such damage met
They cannot put to sea, and in its stead
One builds anew, one plugs its sides, his craft
Which on so many voyages had sped ;
The prow, the poop, they hammer, fore and aft ;
Some make huge sweeps, the shrouds some twist
and twine ;
New breadth on mizen and on mainsail graft :
Thus not by fire, but wrought by art divine
Boiled there below a thick and pitchy tide
Which clung and glued the bank in every line.
I saw it, but therein I nought descried
Save the vast bubbles which the boiling raised
All heave and swell, and then compress'd subside.

While fixèdly beneath I looked amazed,
 My Guide exclaiming loud : " Beware, beware !"
 Drew me to him from where I stood and gazed.
 Then I turned round, like one in haste to dare
 The sight from which his flight he must not stay,
 And he, unmanned by such a sudden scare,
 Will not his parting for the sight delay :
 And saw behind us a black demon fleet
 Come running up along the rocky way.
 Ah what fierce aspect his ! and how replete
 His action seemed to me of harsh despite,
 With wings outspread and light upon his feet !
 His shoulder, sharply pointed in proud height,
 Burdened both haunches of a sinner's frame,
 He held the sinew of the feet, gripped tight.
 " Lo, of our bridge ye Malebranche," came
 His words, " of Santa Zita's elders one :¹
 Plunge him beneath, for more I go to claim
 Where with the like that land is overrun :
 All, save Bonturo,² there barrators prove ;
 No changed to Yes when'er the coin is spun."
 He flung him down, and turned along the groove
 Of the hard rock, and never mastiff's chase
 So swift when loosed on the thief's track to move.
 Down sank that wretch, convulsed then rose apace ;
 But the black fiends, the bridge whom covering
 gave,
 Cried : " Here no station has the Holy Face ;³

¹ A chief magistrate of Lucca, where Santa Zita was held in veneration.

² Bonturo Dati, who was the chief peculator at Lucca, so that this is said ironically.

³ An ancient crucifix preserved in the Cathedral of Lucca, and supposed to have been carved by Nicodemus. William Rufus used it for his favourite oath.

Other the swimming than in Serchio's wave ;¹
Wherefore our talons if thou wouldst not feel,
Above the pitch to raise thee never crave."
Then grappling him with hundred hooks of steel
They spake : " Here covered it behoves thee dance,
Thus, if thou canst, thy traffic mayst conceal."
Not otherwise the cooks bid scullions lance
Into the cauldron's midst, on fat and lean,
Their fleshhooks, that of floating be no chance.
Spake the good Master : " Lest it should be seen
That thou art here, squat down and hide away
Behind a crag which may afford a screen ;
Whatever insult those upon me lay
Be not thou fearful, for these things I know
Since I have been before in such a fray."
Beyond the bridge head then he turned to go,
And when to the sixth bank his course complete,
Well had he need a dauntless front to show.
With such a fury, such tempestuous heat,
As dogs rush on the poor in his distress,
Who sudden asks an alms where stopped his feet ;
These poured from 'neath the bridge in eager press,
And levelling all their prongs at him defied ;
But he to them : " Let none be merciless.
Ere with your hook you seize on me," he cried,
" Let one step forth and hearken to my tale,
And then if ye will mangle me decide."
" Go, Malacoda," was their general hail ;
Wherefore one forward moved, the rest stood still ;
And he came saying : " What will this avail ?"
" Thinkst thou not, Malacoda, that thy skill,"
My Master said, " to find me here would lack,

¹ The Serchio is the stream which flows by Lucca.

Had not propitious fate, diviner will,
Secured 'gainst all your weapons of attack?
Let us pass on, for 'tis in Heaven decreed
Another I should show this savage track."
Then did his arrogance so far recede
That at his feet he let his trident fall,
And to the rest he spake: "Of blows no need."
And me my Guide: "Oh thou, who there dost crawl
Cowered down squat 'mid splinters of this ledge,
Securely now to me thy steps recall."
Wherefore I moved, and quickly gained the edge:
And springing forward all the demons rose,
So that I feared they would not keep the pledge.
Footmen I thus beheld in terror's throes
Who under treaty from Caprona¹ went,
Seeing themselves among so many foes.
With my whole body I drew up intent
Beside my Leader, nor mine eyes removed
From off their looks which were unkindly bent.
Their prongs they lowered: "Shall a thrust be proved
Upon his haunch?" one asked, and answer made
Another: "Let thy notch in him be grooved."
But he that demon with my Guide who stayed
And converse held, turned round with swiftest pace,
And "Peace, Scarmiglione, peace!" he bade.
Then said to us: "No further can ye trace
Your path along this bridge, for shivered lies
All the sixth arch in fragments at the base.
And further to advance if ye devise,
Go, and above this cavern plant your feet;

¹ The Castle of Caprona was surrendered by the Pisans to the troops of Lucca and Florence in 1289, and the garrison was allowed to march out in safety.

Hard by another crag a path supplies.
 Yestreen, five hours beyond this present beat,
 Twelve hundred, joined with six and sixty years,
 Since here the way was broken, were complete.¹
 Thitherward these I send of my compeers
 To see if respite gains some denizen :
 Go with them, of their malice have no fears.
 Come, Alichino, Calcabrina," then
 Began his speech, "and thou, Cagnazzo, glad
 Let Barbariccia be to guide the ten.
 Next Libicocco, Draghignazzo add,
 Tusk'd Ciriatto, Graffiacane too,
 With Farfarello, Rubicante mad.
 Explore minutely round the bubbling glue ;
 Let these be safe till the last cliff, its way
 Which doth unbroken o'er the dens pursue."
 "Oh me ! my Master, what do I survey ?"
 I said : "Without an escort let us go,
 If thou knowst where, for me, none such I pray.
 If thou such heed as was thy wont canst show,
 Dost thou not witness how their teeth they grind,
 And with their brows they menace us with woe ?"
 And he : "Such fear in thee I would not find :
 Let them go grinding on as they had lief,
 For the boiled wretches have they in their mind."
 They wheeled to left along the jutting reef ;
 But first each one had let his tongue appear
 Pressed with his teeth as signal to his chief,
 And he had made a trumpet of his rear.

¹ From the date of the Crucifixion.

CANTO XXII

The journey with the Malebranche—Ciampolo the Navarrese is hooked, but outwits his captors—Two of them scuffle and fall into the pitch.

I HAVE seen horsemen strike their camp of yore,
 And hold their muster, the assault begun,
 At times retreat their safety to restore :
Scouts have I seen your land who overrun,
 Men of Arezzo, raids that on it fell,
 Tournaments struck, and joustings coursed and won,
At times with trumpet, and at times with bell,
 Tabors, and signals from the castle wall,
 With native and with foreign things as well ;
But never with so strange a bugle call
 Horsemen or footmen have I seen outpoured,
 Or ship the sign from land or star befall.
We went with the ten demons in accord :
 Ah savage company ! but in the church
 With saints, with gluttons at the tavern board.
Fixed on the pitch intently was my search,
 All the conditions of that chasm to mark,
 And those within whom scalding floods besmirch.
As dolphins, when they make their back an arc
 The mariners a signal to impart,
 Precautions that they take to save their bark,

So to alleviate at times the smart
 One of the sinners showed his back afloat,
 Then hid it swifter than the lightnings dart.
As at the edge of water in a moat
 Stand frogs with nothing but their snout in view,
 That feet and other bulk you cannot note,
So stood on every side that sinful crew :
 But at the approach of Barbariccia, they
 Beneath the boiling juices thus withdrew.
I saw, to shuddering still my heart a prey,
 That one was waiting thus, as it will chance
 One frog remains, another springs away.
And Graffiacan, the nearest in advance,
 Grappled him by his pitch-entangled hair,
 And dragged him up, an otter to my glance.
Of all their names already was I ware,
 For note I took when they were chos'n at first,
 And how each spake to other marked with care.
"Oh Rubicante, grip, and be immersed
 Thy talons in his back, that he be flayed,"
 Yelled out in concert all the fiends accurst.
And I: "My Master, if thou canst, be made
 To know who that may be so sorely tried
 Into his adversaries' hands betrayed."
My Guide drew up the closer to his side,
 Asked who he was, and he, "My birth is traced
 Unto the kingdom of Navarre,"¹ replied.
"My mother in a noble's service placed,
 Since she had borne me to a worthless sire
 Himself, his substance, who had brought to waste.
Domestic then in good King Thibault's hire,

¹ This peculator is said to have been one Ciampolo, who was in the service of King Thibault of Navarre.

There did with barratry myself equip,
 Whereof I render reckoning in this fire."
 And Ciriatto, issued from whose lip
 On either side such tusk as boars protrude,
 Taught him to feel how one of them could rip.
 The mouse had fall'n 'mong cats of evil brood ;
 But Barbariccia closed in his embrace,
 And said : "Stand off while tight my clutch is glued."
 Towards my Master then he turned his face :
 "Ask him," he said, "what further thou wouldst
 know
 Before those others rend and leave no trace."
 "Then," said my Guide, "those other sinners show :
 Knowest thou any that are Latins here
 Beneath the pitch?" And he : "Not long ago
 From one I parted who those lands was near ;
 So had I still with him the covering worn
 No talon and no fleshhook should I fear."
 And Libicocco : "Too much have we borne,"
 Spake, and his arm so grappled with his hook
 That, as he wrenched, a sinew thence was torn.
 Then Draghignazzo too the longing took
 To grip his legs, whence round and round enraged
 Wheeled their decurion with an evil look.
 When these in some small measure were assuaged,
 My Guide without delaying, him who still
 His wound regarded, with this question gauged :
 "Who was it from whose side a parting ill
 Thou sayest thou hast made to reach the shore?"
 "Gallura's friar, Gomita,¹ who his fill

¹ The Friar Gomita was governor of Gallura, a district of Sardinia under the Pisans. He took bribes from the enemies of his master and let them go.

As vessel of all fraud," he answered, "bore,
 Who had his liege lord's foemen in his hand,
 And used them so they all his praise outpour.
 Money he took and sent them to their land
 As he relates, and in each other fief
 No small barrator, but supremely grand.
 With him foregatherers Michel Zanche, chief
 In Logodoro,¹ when their tongues begin
 Upon Sardinia, need they no relief.
 Oh me! that other mark, what fiendish grin:
 More would I say; but fear that he is stirr'd
 Preparing now to lacerate my skin."
 And the great provost turning, spake this word
 To Farfarello, who his eyeballs roll'd
 In act to strike: "Avaunt, accursèd bird."
 "If you desire to hear or to behold,"
 Resumed thereafter that affrighted shade,
 "Tuscans or Lombards, some I will unfold.
 But let the Malebranche, lest afraid
 Their vengeance make, awhile more distant bide;
 And I, while this same place my seat is made,
 One though I am, seven more will hither guide,
 When I shall whistle, as our use received
 To do when any shows himself outside."
 Cagnazzo at these words his snout upheaved,
 Wagging his head, and spake: "Hear this device
 To cast him down by knavish craft achieved."
 Then he who had such store of artifice
 Replied: "Too much to knavish craft inclined
 When mine in greater torment pay the price."

¹ Logodoro, where Michel Zanche ruled, was another Sardinian district, and Michel Zanche was treacherously murdered by Branca d' Oria, of whom we shall hear in Canto XXXIII.

Refrained not Alichino, and his mind
The rest opposing, said he : "Shouldst thou spring
Not in a gallop will I come behind,
But o'er the pitchy surface wave my wing :
Leave we the height, and be the bank a shield
To see if singly our defeat canst bring "

Oh thou that readest hear new sport revealed.
Each to the other side turned then his sight ;
First he who most reluctant was to yield.

The Navarrese chose out his time aright,
Set firm his feet on earth, and quick as thought
He leapt, and from their purpose took his flight.

With that vexation made them all distraught,
But chiefly him, the cause of such a slip ;
Wherefore he started up and shouted : "Caught !"

But little that availed : for to outstrip
Terror had wings no power ; beneath he went,
The other, flying, raised his breast atrip.

Not otherwise the waterfowl's descent
Sudden of falcon the approach to foil,
Which then returns aloft enraged and spent.

With wrath the trick made Calcabrina boil,
And close behind he flew, to him endeared
This one's escape that he might have a broil.

And soon as the barrator disappeared
At once he turned his talons on his mate,
And in close grapple o'er the foss they sheered.

But sparrow-hawk that other of full weight
To grip him in his clutch, and both the two
Fell in the middle of the boiling spate.

The heat their clasp served instant to undo :
But yet to raise themselves in vain they planned,
So thickly were their wings belimed with glue.

Then Barbariccia, grieving with his band,
 Made four fly over to the further shore
 With all their hooks, and quickly to their stand,
This side and that, in their descent they bore :
 Those so bedaubed, and now already boiled
 Within the crust, they stretched their prongs before :
And there at length we left them thus embroiled.

CANTO XXIII

Escape from the Malebranche—The Sixth Chasm—The Hypocrites
wearing weighted mantles—The Joyous Friars—Caiaphas and
Annas—Virgil's anger at the deceit practised on him.

SILENT, in solitude, companionless,
 We journeyed, one before and one behind,
 As Minor Friars along the path progress.
There had the fiends' encounter to my mind,
 So lately witnessed, Æsop's fable brought
 Where of the frog and mouse the tale we find:¹
Now and *this instant* are more like in nought
 Than one to other, if well coupled erst
 Their start and finish by attentive thought:
And as ideas from one another burst,
 So out of this another one was born,
 Redoubling all the fear I felt at first.
Thus was I musing: "These were put to scorn
 Through us, with outrage and with mockery such
 I well believe them by vexation torn.
To their ill-will should fury add its touch,
 They will pursue us with more savage zeal
 Than hound which grips the leveret in its clutch."
The terror had already made me feel

¹ A frog is said to have tied a mouse to its leg and taken it into the water: the mouse was drowned, and its body, with the frog attached to it, was carried off by a kite or eagle.

Each hair on end, and closely backward peer,
When thus I spake : " If thou dost not conceal,
Master, thyself and me with speed, I fear
The Malebranche : they are on our track :
I feel them now—I picture them so clear."
And he : " Were I of glass with leaded back,
I could not draw to me thine outward frame
Swift as thine inward yields to my attack.
Since among mine thy thoughts this instant came
With self-same action and with self-same shape,
I made of both one counsel and the same.
If on our right such sloped incline should gape
That to the other chasm we may descend,
Then shall we this imagined chase escape."
He had not of that counsel made an end
Before I saw them come with wings outspread,
Not too far off, our capture to intend.
My Guide seized on me suddenly, and sped
Like to the mother, when aroused by cries
And seeing flames around her glowing red,
She snatches up her boy and as she flies,
Having of him more than herself regard,
Such pause as to slip on a shift denies :
And from the summit of the rampart hard
Supine slid down the shelving rocky face
By which one side of the next chasm was barred.
Water along the sluice at such a pace
Ne'er coursed, the wheel of a land mill to run,
When to the floats approaching is the race,
As down along that edge my Master spun,
Bearing me with him clasped upon his breast
Not as companion, but as 'twere his son.
Scarcely his feet upon the bed could rest

Of depths below, when those had reached the hill
Right over us : but there no fear oppressed ;
For that all highest Providence, whose will
With ministry of the fifth foss endued,
All power of quitting it forbids them still.
Down there we found a painted multitude,
Who moved around with paces very slow
Weeping, whose semblance faint and worn we viewed.
Cloaks they had on with hooded cowls drawn low
Before their eyes, and shaped their cut I saw
Like those which in Cologne for monks they sew.
All gold without the sight they dazzling draw ;
But leaden all within, of such a weight
That those put on by Frederick seemed as straw.¹
Oh mantle wearisome to endless date !
We turned along with them to the left hand
Intent upon the wail of their sad fate :
But from their burden that exhausted band
Came on so slow, new company we found
Each time we moved the hip, beside us stand.
Wherefore I asked my Guide : "Of one renowned
By action or by name discovery make,
And thus advancing cast thine eyes around."
And one, who heard the Tuscan speech I spake,
Cried out behind us : "Stay your steps who speed
Ye, with such swiftness through this air opaque :
Perchance from me thou'lt have what thou mayst need."
Whereat my Guide turned round, and bade me :
"Stay,
And then according to his pace proceed."
I stopped, and saw to join me two display

¹ The Emperor Frederick II. is said to have punished traitors by making them wear cloaks weighted with lead.

A mind most eager by their countenance ;
 But their load hindered and the narrow way.
 When they o'ertook us, for a while askance
 Intent they gazed on me, nor word could dole :
 Then parleyed, on each other turned their glance :
 " From the throat's action seems he live and whole :
 If they are dead, what privilege can train
 Their steps, uncumbered by the weighty stole ?"
 Then thus to me : " Oh Tuscan, who dost gain
 The college of the hypocrites forlorn,
 Do not to tell us who thou art disdain."
 And I made answer : " I was bred and born
 In the great city on fair Arno's stream,
 And wear the body I have ever worn.
 But who are ye whose tears so copious seem
 Distilling down your cheeks, as I behold,
 And what your punishment of such a gleam ?"
 And one replied to me : " The copes of gold
 So thick are leaded, that the weights of these
 Make thus to creak the scales which they controlled.
 We two were Joyous Friars,¹ and Bolognese,
 I Catalano, Loderingho named
 Was he, together chosen to appease
 Your land, as for such task its custom aimed
 To choose but one, and how our art we plied
 Gardingo's neighbourhood has yet proclaimed."²
 " Oh friars," I began, " your ills . . ." but died
 My voice with that, for there my vision took
 One whom to earth three stakes had crucified.

¹ The Frati Godenti formed a military order at Bologna, and two of them were brought to Florence in the year 1266 to hold jointly the office of *podestà*.

² The part of Florence where stood the palace of the Uberti, destroyed under the rule of the two Friars.

Seeing us, writhings all his body shook,
 And in his beard he blew with many a sigh :
 Then Catalan the friar cast a look,
 And, "This transfixed one," said, "thou dost descry
 Counsell'd the Pharisees, that one for all
 Expedient 'twas should suffer and should die.¹
 Naked across the path he's held in thrall,
 As thus thou seest, his body doomed to use,
 Testing their weight, all passers to forestall :
 And in like torment his wife's father² rues
 Here in the foss, and those who gave consent
 In council, seed of evil to the Jews."
 Then Virgil I beheld in wonder bent
 O'er him who on the cross was stretched and press'd
 So vilely in eternal banishment.
 Next to the friar this language he address'd :
 "If lawful, let it not displeasing prove
 To tell, some opening if the right attest,
 So that we both may issue by its groove,
 Without constraining the black angel clan
 That they should come and from this depth remove."
 Then he : "From the vast circle, nearer than
 Thy hope could prompt, juts forth a rocky mound
 All the fierce valleys as a bridge to span,
 Save that in this 'tis brok'n and wraps not round :
 Ye can ascend it by the ruin's bed
 Sloped on the sides and heaped up on the ground."
 My Leader stood awhile with bended head ;
 "Ill he did us of such a fact apprise
 Who yonder hooks the sinners," then he said.
 And spake the friar : "Bologna's voice applies

¹ Caiaphas.

² Annas, father-in-law to Caiaphas.

Foul charges to the Devil, whence I knew
A liar he, and father too of lies.”
Thereafter with great strides my Guide withdrew,
Disturbed in some degree his looks with heat :
Wherefore I parted from the burdened crew,
Following the prints of his beloved feet.

CANTO XXIV

The Poets climb the rock—The Seventh Chasm—Thieves tormented
by serpents—The robber Vanni Fucci—His prediction.

IN that new season of the youthful year¹
 When tempers 'neath Aquarius his locks
 The sun, the nights too southward disappear :
When on the earth hoar-rime the image mocks
 Of its white sister with embroidery,
 But quickly of its pen the temper docks ;
The rustic, stinted in his food supply,
 Rises and looks, to witness the champagnes
 Whiten all over, whence he smites his thigh :
Returns within, and up and down complains,
 Like the poor wretch who knows not what to do ;
 Then sallies forth once more, and hope regains
Seeing the face of earth has changed its hue
 In such brief hour, and takes his crook alert,
 And drives his flock afield to pastures new :
Thus to despair my Master did exert,
 When I beheld him with such troubled face,
 And thus came soon the plaster to the hurt :
For when of the rent bridge we reached the place,
 My Guide turned on me with that gentle look
 Which first I witnessed at the mountain's base.

¹ The latter part of January.

Spread wide his arms, and while he ne'er forsook
Some inward counsel, first observing well
The fallen masses, hold of me he took.
And as the man who works, whose thoughts impel
Beforehand 'gainst all chances to provide,
So as he raised me on the pinnacle
Of some huge block, another crag he eyed,
Saying: "Here next to clamber be thy quest,
But first if 'twill sustain thee be it tried."
'Twas not a road for those whom copes invest,
For scarcely we, he light, and I impelled,
Could master the ascent from crest to crest.
And if it were not that the cliff excelled
On the far side this precinct in its height,
His hap I know not, I had sure been quelled.
But since that Malebolge slopes outright
Towards the opening of the lowest pit,
Each of its valleys causes by its site
One side should rise and low the other sit:
At length the point however we attained
From whence the last of all the stones is split.
The breath was from my lungs so wholly drained
When reached this eminence, I could no more,
But sat me down when the first place I gained.
"Now it behoves thee energy restore,"
My Master said, "for to recline on down,
Or 'neath the quilts, to fame none ever bore,
And he who on the earth without renown
Consumes his life, such vestige leaves behind
As smoke in air or foam on the wave's crown.
Uplift thee then, and o'er exhaustion mind
Be conqueror, as in fight it ne'er could fail
If the gross body left it unconfined.

A longer stairway it behoves to scale :

'Tis not enough from these thy parting made ;
If thou dost heed, so act that 'twill avail."

Then I upraised me, and myself displayed

With breath more furnished than my sense could
own,

And said : "Go on, I'm strong and not afraid."

We took the upward path along the stone,

Rugged and narrow, and of ill constraint,
And steeper far than hitherto was shown.

Talking I journeyed, not to seem too faint,

Whereat a voice from the next foss was heard,
In forming words ill-suited to acquaint.

I know not what it said, though where occurred

The arch's crown which crossed that place, I stood ;
But he who talked appeared to anger stirr'd.

I had bent down ; but living eyeballs could

Pierce not the bottom through the dusky pall.

"Master," then said I, "make thy coming good

To the next ring, let us dismount the wall ;

For hence as hearing nought I understand,
I see, and nothing I perceive at all."

"Other response," he spake, "I have not plann'd

Save by the deed : for silent action's tread
'Tis meet should follow honesty's demand."

The bridgeway we descended by its head

Where junction with it the eighth bank doth form,
And manifest to me the chasm outspread :

Within I saw so terrible a swarm

Of serpents, and of such a diverse host,

That with the thought my blood runs never warm.

Let Libya with her sand no longer boast,

Though water-snakes with amphisbæna load,

Darters and asps and speckled snakes,¹ her coast
 Plagues not so many nor so fierce she showed
 With all the country of the Ethiop,
 Or the Red Sea who have for their abode.
 With this most fell and dismal swarm to cope
 Ran folk who naked were and terrified,
 Hopeless of lurking-place or heliotrope.²
 Their hands behind them were with serpents tied :
 These fastened tail and head their loins around
 And all in front their knotted coiling plied.
 And lo, at one who on our side was found
 Darted a serpent, and transfix'd him quite
 There to the shoulders where the neck is bound.
 Nor O nor I so quickly serves to write
 As he took fire and burnt, and as he fell
 Behov'd that all in ashes he should light.
 And after thus on earth dissolved his shell,
 The ashes of themselves together press'd
 And straight returned in the same form to dwell.
 Ev'n thus by mighty sages 'tis confest
 The Phœnix dies, and once again is born,
 When closes the five hundredth year the rest.
 It feeds in life on neither herb nor corn,
 But only tears of frankincense and spice,
 And nard and myrrh as its last shroud are worn.
 And as is he who falls, nor in a trice
 Knows if a demon force the grip applies,
 Or some obstruction seizes in its vice,
 Gazes around him when in act to rise,
 Bewildered all with the fierce anguish pain

¹ These serpents are enumerated in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, book ix. lines 820-850, in Sir E. Ridley's translation.

² A stone which rendered its wearer invisible.

Which he has suffered thus, and looking sighs ;
Such was the sinner when he rose again.
Oh potency of God, what sternness thine
When such the stripes thy vengeance showers amain !
My Guide next questioned him about his line.
“ Tuscany rained me down,” he answered then,
“ A short while since, in this fierce chasm to pine.
Mule that I was, the life of brutes, not men,
Me, Vanni Fucci, pleased as chief desire :
A beast, Pistoia was my fitting den.”
My Guide I prompted : “ Bid him not retire,
And ask what crime has thrust him here below :
Seen him have I a man of blood and ire.”
The sinner heard and made no feigning show,
But turned to me his countenance, his thought,
Reddened by shame with ignominious glow ;
Then said : “ More grieves my spirit to be caught
In misery, which thee thy sight presents,
Than when from other life I first was brought.
Refuse I cannot what thy wish contents ;
Thus low I'm sent because 'twas mine to raid
The sacristy of the fair ornaments ;
And falsely to another's charge 'twas laid.¹
But lest such sight thine exultation raise
If e'er thou issue from this gloomy shade,
Open thine ears and hearken to my phrase :²
Pistoia thins herself of Neri first,

¹ Vanni Fucci, a natural son of one of the chief citizens of Pistoia, plundered the sacristy of one of its churches and threw the blame on another.

² This prediction refers to the expulsion of the Neri from Pistoia in 1301, and the subsequent defeat of the Bianchi by Charles of Valois in the same year. The battle on the Campo Piceno, near Serravalle, was fought by Moroello Malaspina of Valdimagra, by whom the Bianchi were routed.

And Florence then renews her folk, her ways.
By Mars from Valdimagra, deep immersed
In turbid clouds, a vapour is revealed,
And with impetuous tempest's cruel burst
Shall rage the combat on Piceno's field :
Whence it the mist full suddenly shall break,
Unto each Bianco grievous wounds to yield :
And this I've told thee that thine heart should ache.'

CANTO XXV

The Robber's blasphemy—Cacus—Transformations of Spirits
and Serpents.

ENDED his words the thief in mockery
 Upraised his hands with both their figs,¹ and cried :
 "Take them, Thou God, I level them at Thee."
Thenceforth the serpents were my friends allied,
 For one about his neck its coilings wound,
 As who should say : "I will no word beside" :
Another gripped his arms, and held them bound
 In front, their slightest quiver to impede,
 Riveted as it was so closely round.
Pistoia, ah Pistoia, why decreed
 Hast not thyself to flames, no more to dwell,
 Since in ill-doing dost surpass thy seed ?²
Through all the gloomy circles of this Hell
 Such arrogance I saw no spirit dare
 To God, not him from Theban walls who fell.³
With that he fled, more parley to forbear :
 And I beheld a Centaur full of rage
 Come shouting loud : "Where is the miscreant,
 where ?"

¹ The opprobrious gesture of thrusting out the thumb between the fore and middle fingers.

² The seed from which Pistoia sprang according to tradition, the followers of Catiline.

³ Capaneus ; see Canto XIV.

Maremma, I believe, can never cage
 So many serpents as his haunches drape
 Up to the point where starts our human stage.
 Above his shoulders, and behind his nape,
 Lay couched a dragon with its wings outspread,
 To kindle what encounters it agape.
 "Cacus is yonder wight," my Master said,
 "Beneath the rock of the Mount Aventine
 A lake of blood full many times who shed.
 He goes not with his brothers all in line,
 Because the treacherous theft he must atone
 Of the great herd so near to his confine :
 Wherefore his crooked deeds were overthrown
 'Neath club of Hercules, which haply smote
 With hundred blows, yet felt he ten alone."
 While this was spoken, him made flight remote,
 And underneath us there came spirits three,
 Of whom nor I nor eke my Guide took note,
 Until at length they shouted : "Who are ye?"
 Whereat our story hastened to conclude,
 And unto them we turned attentively.
 I knew not who they were, but this ensued
 Which wont are certain cases to adopt,
 That one to other's name must needs allude,
 Asking the question : "Where has Cianfa¹ stopped?"
 Then I, attentive that my Guide should bow,
 Upward from chin to nose my finger propped.
 If, Reader, thou art slow to credit now
 What I shall speak, no marvel 'twill appear,
 For what I saw, I scarce myself allow.
 Upon them while mine eyelids I uprear,
 A serpent with six feet makes swift a spring

¹ Cianfa de' Donati, a Florentine.

In front of one, all closely to adhere.
Its midmost feet upon his belly cling,
 Its foremost are spread out his arms to bind ;
 This cheek and that its teeth within them bring.
Its hindmost then around his thighs it twined,
 And thrust its tail betwixt them both and twain,
 Stretching it upwards o'er his loins behind.
Ivy was never with so close a strain
 Clasped round a tree, as did the beast abhorred
 Its own upon that other's members train.
Together then they clave as if outpoured
 In heated wax, and mingled thus their hues ;
 Its past appearance neither had restored.
As up the paper's surface doth diffuse,
 The burning to precede, a browner hue,
 Not black as yet, but such as white to lose.
The other twain beheld, and at the view
 Each cried : " Oh me, Agnel,¹ what change has
 cros't !
 See thou'rt already neither one nor two."
Already both the heads had one engrossed,
 When features showed to us, a double set,
 Mixed in one face wherein the two were lost.
To form two arms alone four strips had met ;
 Thighs with the legs, the belly and the chest
 Turned into members never seen as yet.
In him all primal aspect was repress'd :
 Two the distorted image seemed, yet none,
 Thus, as he went, his tardy steps confest.
As seems the lizard, 'neath the scorching sun
 During the dog-days, changing hedge and brake,
 Like lightning, if across the road it run :

¹ Agnello de' Brunelleschi, another Florentine.

Towards the bowels seemed its course to take
Of other twain, a peppercorn in show
Livid and black, a fiery little snake.
And in that part, from whence at first doth grow
Our nourishment, it one of them impaled ;
Then fell and lay stretched out before him low.
The pierced one looked, but language wholly failed :
To yawn with feet firm planted he began,
As if by sleep or fever fit assailed.
The serpent he, the serpent him, did scan :
The wound of one, the mouth of other, smoke
Vomited, and the smoke together ran.
Now hushed be Lucan,¹ where he tells the stroke
Which poor Sabellus, which Nasidius rues,
And bend to hearken what these strains evoke.
Nor Ovid speak of Cadmus, Arethuse :²
For if his verse of one a serpent made,
Of one a fount, I envy not his muse :
For on two natures ne'er such change he laid
Thus face to face, that to transmute in guise
Their substance promptly were both forms arrayed.
To other each responded in such wise
That in a fork its tail the serpent split,
The wounded bound his feet in closest ties.
The legs and thighs too of themselves were knit
So closely that the juncture soon forsook
Each outward sign from whence 'twas seen a whit.
The tail, when cloven thus, the figure took
Lost in the other, and in one the skin
Grew soft, while hardness must the other's brook.

¹ *Pharsalia*, book ix., where the death of two soldiers in Cato's army is described : one bitten by a *seps* ; the other by a *prester*.

² *Metamorphoses*, books iv. and v.

Arms at the armpits saw I gathered in,
And saw the beast's two feet, which short had lain,
Lengthen, to shrinking of those arms akin.
Next the hind feet were twisted in a skein
The member to become which man conceals,
And for his own the wretch protruded twain.
While the smoke's veil o'er one and other steals
In changing tints, and the hair upwards grows
On the one side which from the other peels,
One sank upon the earth, the other rose,
Yet never turned those impious lamps askew
'Neath which both wrought their features to
transpose.
He who was standing to the temples drew
His face, from surplus flesh which that attained
The ears from out the cheeks' smooth surface grew :
Of that which ran not backward but remained,
The excess a nose provided for the face,
And swelled the lips till due proportion gained.
That which lay prone its mouth doth forward chase,
And both its ears towards its head withdraws,
As the snail folds its horns within their case :
The tongue, united once and in the cause
Of speech so quick, is clov'n ; what forked was seen,
The other's, closes, and the smoke has pause.
The soul, which to a reptile turned had been,
Fled hissing through the valley, as it fled
Behind the other talking spits his spleen.
Then turning on it his new shoulders, said
Unto the third : " I will along this way
That Buoso ¹ grovelling run as once I sped."

¹ Buoso degli Abati, according to some ; de' Donati, according to others.

The seventh ballast did I thus survey
Change and rechange ; and let me be excused
If strangeness somewhat leads my pen astray.
And yet, albeit were mine eyes confused
In measure, and my mind amazement learned,
Such secrecy in flight they never used
But Puccio Sciancato¹ I discerned,
Of the companions three that came before
The only one to nothing else was turned :
The other yet, Gaville, dost deplore.²

¹ Also a Florentine, said to have been of the family of the Galigai.

² Francesco Guercio de' Cavalcanti, killed at Gaville in the Val d' Arno, whose death was revenged upon that place by his kinsmen.

CANTO XXVI

The Eighth Chasm—Fraudulent Counsellors in moving flames—
Ulysses and Diomede—Ulysses tells of his last voyage.

REJOICE thee, Florence, that so great thou'rt grown
Thou beatest over sea and land thy wings,
And spreads thy name throughout the infernal
zone.

Five such I saw among the thievish rings,
Thy citizens, whence me foul shame beseems,
And thence to thee no proud distinction springs.

But if when near the morn of truth one dreams,
Thou shalt ere long experience what for thee
Are Prato's, if not others', cherished schemes.

Were they come now, too soon it would not be.
Then, as they needs must follow, let them fare ;
Since, more I age, the more 'twill burden me.

We parted thence, and upward by the stair
Which the projections made for our descent,
Remounted, and me too my Master bare.

And as our solitary way we went
Amongst the blocks and splinters of the crag,
Without the hand the foot no succour lent.

Then did I grieve, and still my spirits flag
When I direct my mind to what I 'spied ;
And on my wit I lay unwonted drag,

Lest it should run where virtue doth not guide ;
That had kind star, or some more perfect light
Giv'n me this good, I cast it not aside.
As sees the rustic, resting on the height,
When he who on the world with brightness shines
Keeps but his face least hidden from our sight,
As to the gnat its place the fly resigns,
So many fireflies in the valley strowed,
There haply where he tills and tends his vines :
Such with so many flames resplendent glowed
The whole eighth chasm, as I could well detect
When reached the point at which the bottom
showed.
As he who vengeance bade the bears effect
Elijah's chariot saw departing wend,
When reared themselves the steeds toward heaven
erect ;
Nor thus his eyes to follow it could bend
As aught except the flame above to view
Upward in guise of a small cloud ascend :
Thus moved each one of them the gullet through
Of the deep foss, that none the theft unfold,
And that a sinner every flame withdrew.
Ris'n on the bridge I stationed to behold,
So that unless a block's support I claimed
Downward without a push I should have rolled.
My Guide, who saw me thus attentive framed,
Spake : " In those flames are closed the spirits, each
Is swathed in that wherewith he is inflamed."
" My Master," I replied, " to hear thy speech
Makes me more sure ; but I surmised before
That thus 'twould be, and guidance now beseech :
Who is in yonder flames that parted soar

Aloft, as if arising from the pyre
 Which with Eteocles his brother bore?¹
 And he replied to me: "Torments that fire
 Ulysses, Diomede, together thrown
 In vengeance, as they speeded in their ire:
 And deep within that flame 'tis theirs to groan
 The ambush of the horse, which formed the gate
 The noble seed whence issued Romans own.
 Within, the craft through which Achilles' fate
 Deidamia dead yet mourns, they wail,
 And eke for the Palladium pains await."
 "If speech within those embers doth not fail,
 Master," I said, "I pray thee much, and pray
 Again, that thousandfold my prayer avail,
 That thou deny me not so much delay
 Until the hornèd flame this place attain:
 Thou seest towards it with desire I sway."
 And he to me: "Thy prayer much praise to gain
 Is worthy, and I yield me to its force;
 But cause thy tongue its accents to restrain.
 Leave me to speak: since I divine the source
 Of thy desire, and since, for they are Greek,
 They would be shy perchance of thy discourse."
 After the flame had come upon the streak
 Where fitting to my Guide seemed time and place,
 This was the form in which I heard him speak:
 "Oh ye, whom twofold one sole flame doth case,
 Merited I of you while life was mine,
 Merited much of you or little grace,
 While in the world I built the lofty line,

¹ Such was the enmity of Eteocles and Polynices, the sons of Oedipus, that when their bodies were placed on the same funeral pyre, the flames parted.

Move not, but let one tell us where he came
 In death's dark shades, abandoned, to recline."
 The greater horn of the primeval flame
 Began with frequent murmurings to shake,
 As one which the wind tosses does the same.
 Then working to and fro its highest flake,
 As it had been a tongue which words could pour,
 It cast a voice abroad and thus it spake :
 " Escaped from Circe, who a year and more
 Near to Gaeta had my steps delayed,
 Before Æneas thus had named the shore ;
 Nor fondness for my son, nor reverence paid
 To my old father, nor the love, her due,
 Which joyful should Penelope have made,
 Could quell the ardour which within me grew,
 And bade experienced in the world to be,
 In human vices and in virtues too :
 But I set forth on the deep open sea
 Lone with one bark and that attendant train,
 Small as it was, which ne'er deserted me.
 This coast and that I saw as far as Spain,
 Ev'n to Morocco, and Sardinia's isle,
 And others bathed by the surrounding main.
 Old and exhausted when the strait defile
 We reached, where Hercules his bounds had
 plann'd,¹
 That nought to further passage should beguile
 Mankind, both I and comrades of my band :
 Seville upon the right I left recess'd,
 Ceuta already on the other hand.
 ' Oh brothers,' I began, ' who to the West
 Are come, through hundred thousand perils hurl'd,

¹ The Straits of Gibraltar.

Of this so scanty vigil still possess
Of mortal senses which remains unfurl'd,
 Will not the new experience to deny,
 Behind the sun, of the unpeopled world.
Consider what your origin, and try :
 Ye were not formed the life of brutes to lead,
 But virtue to pursue and knowledge high.
My comrades on the voyage to proceed
 With such keen longing this short speech had torn,
 Scarce had I afterwards restrained their speed.
And turning still our poop towards the morn,
 A wing for our mad flight we made each oar,
 To the left side our course for ever borne.
Night of the other pole made well explore
 Each several star, and ours so low was placed
 It could not rise from out the ocean floor.
Five times rekindled and as oft effaced
 Beneath the moon had been its glowing spark,
 After we entered the deep watery waste,
When there appeared to us a mountain dark
 Through distance,¹ and it seemed to me in height
 Such that its equal never did I mark.
We joyed at this, but grief soon quenched delight ;
 For from the new-found land a whirlwind surged,
 The vessel in its foremost part to smite.
Three times to whirl with all its waves it urged,
 And on the fourth, Another so disposed,
 The poop rose upward and the prow submerged,
Until above our heads the billows closed."

¹ The mount of Purgatory.

CANTO XXVII

Count Guido da Montefeltro—The state of Romagna—Papal
absolution overruled by a fiend's logic.

Now quite erect had risen and was still,
 To speak no more, now went from us the flame
 As licence granted the sweet Poet's will ;
When lo another, which behind it came,
 To turn our eyes towards its summit brought
 Through sounds confused which issued from its
 frame.
As the Sicilian bull which bellowings taught
 First the complaint of him (and that was right)
 Who with his file to fashion it had wrought,
Bellowed with voice of the tormented wight,
 So that though wholly brazen was its make,
 It seemed as if transfixed with anguish quite :
Thus since no way nor outlet could they break
 At starting in the fire, the words of woe
 Were changed, and its own language forced to take.
But after they had made their journey go
 Up to the point which that vibration bore
 The tongue throughout their passage did bestow,
We heard this speech : " Oh thou, to whom I pour
 My voice, who spak'st but now with Lombard turn,
 Saying : ' Now get thee gone, I urge no more ' :

Though late perchance my coming thou discern,
 Let it not irk thee pause for speech to win :
 Thou seest it irks me not, and yet I burn.
 And if now only this blind world within
 Fallen thou art from that sweet land afar
 The Latin, whence I gather all my sin,¹
 Say if Romagna's men have peace or war :
 For from the hills I came Urbino's place
 'Twixt, and the ridge which Tiber doth unbar."
 I still bent downward with attentive face,
 When my dear Leader touched me on the side,
 Saying : "Speak thou, for his the Latin race."
 And I, with ready answer straight supplied,
 Without delay began my speech to set :
 " Oh soul which there below art doomed to hide,
 Free thy Romagna is not, nor was yet
 From warfare in her tyrants' heart and mood ;
 Though now I left no open combat met.
 Ravenna stands as many years she stood :
 The eagle of Polenta, to o'ershade
 Cervia with wide-spreading wings, doth brood."²
 The city³ which so long a struggle made,
 And in a gory heap the French o'erthrew,
 Finds the green clutches yet upon it laid.
 The Mastiffs of Verrucchio, old and new,⁴
 Who 'gainst Montagna took such evil strides,

¹ The speaker is Count Guido da Montefeltro, who, after an active life as a Ghibelline leader, became a Franciscan friar.

² Guido Novello da Polenta, lord of Ravenna, whose crest was an eagle : Cervia was a seaport a few miles distant.

³ Forlì, where the French were entrapped and massacred in 1282. The Ordelaffi, who ruled the city, had a green lion on a gold field as their arms.

⁴ The Counts of Malatesta, lords of Rimini, who put to death Montagna de' Parcitati, a Ghibelline leader.

Their teeth as wonted like an auger screw.
 Lamone's city and Santerno's¹ guides
 The young cub lion of the silver lair,
 From summer who to winter changes sides ;
 And she whose flank the Savio bathes,² as there
 She sits between the mountain and the plain,
 So lives 'twixt tyranny and freedom's air.
 Now who thou art to tell I prithee deign :
 Be not more hard than others were before,
 So may thy name on earth high front maintain."
 After the fire had sounded forth a roar
 In its own fashion, the sharp point its flake
 Moved here and there such breathing to outpour :
 "If I believed an answer I should make
 To him who once again the world would see,
 This flame would stand without another shake :
 But since from this deep gulf, alive and free,
 None ever yet returned, if truth I hear,
 I answer without dread of infamy.
 A man of arms, and then a Cordelier,
 I thought, thus girt, to make amends for all :
 And sure my thought had been fulfilment near
 But for the great High Priest,³ whom ill befall,
 By whom my former sins were round me thrown ;
 And how and wherefore to thy mind I call.
 While yet I wore the form of flesh and bone
 My mother gave me, all my deeds were found
 Such as the foxes, not the lions, own.
 Subtle devices, ways beneath the ground,
 I knew them all ; and wielded so their art

¹ Faenza on the river Lamone, Imola on the river Santerno, both ruled by Maghinardo Pagani.

² Cesena.

³ Pope Boniface VIII.

That to the ends of earth went forth the sound.
When I perceived that I had reached the part
Of life, at which 'tis fit that every one
To strike his sails, his ropes to coil, should start,
That which had pleased before I sought to shun,
And yielded me confess'd and penitent ;
Ah hapless ! and good service 'twould have done.
The Prince of the new Pharisees, who went
To war hard by the Lateran,¹ the blow
Not upon Saracens or Jews to vent ;
Because a Christian was his every foe,
And none to conquer Acre forth had been,
Nor trading in the Soldan's land to go :
His highest office heeded not, nor e'en
His sacred orders, nor in me the cord
Wont to make those when girt with it, more lean.
But as Silvester Constantine implored
Leprosy's cure beneath Soracte's side,
He prayed me as physician to afford
Some healing for the fever of his pride :
Asking me counsel, and I held my tongue
Because his words seemed drunken, nor replied.
Then he : ' Thine heart with no mistrust be wrung :
Now I absolve thee, teach me so to scheme
That Palestrina may to earth be flung.
Heaven to unlock and lock my right I deem,
As well thou knowst ; and thus the keys are twain
My predecessor held in small esteem.' ²
Then did the weighty arguments constrain
My mind where silence seemed the least discreet :
' Father,' I said, ' if thou dost wash the stain

¹ Against the Colonna family, of whom Palestrina was a stronghold.

² Alluding to the renunciation of the Papacy by Celestine V.

Of sin, in which I now must place my feet,
 A short performance with a promise long
 Shall make thee triumph on thy lofty seat.'
 St. Francis came to seek me when among
 The dead ; but of black Cherubim was there
 One who cried : ' Take him not ; do me no wrong.
 Downward amongst my minions he must fare,
 For that he gave the counsel fraudulent,
 Since which my clutch was ever at his hair ;
 For none absolved can be who ne'er repent,
 And none can at one time repent and will,
 Such contradiction never can consent.'
 Ah me most wretched ! what o'erpowering thrill
 When seized by him who said : ' Perchance thy
 mind
 Considered not how logical my skill.'
 To Minos then he bore : eight times who twined
 His tail around his back's obdurate frame,
 Biting it in his fury, as ' consigned,'
 He said, ' this sinner to the thievish flame ' :
 Wherefore thou seest there my doom forlorn,
 Thus clad, thus moving, I my griefs proclaim."
 When thus completely was its speech outworn
 The flame, in anguish parted, turned to flee,
 Writhing and tossing its sharp pointed horn.
 Our course led on beyond, my Guide with me,
 Up by the bridge where the next arch bestrode
 The foss, in which they pay the penalty
 Who sowing discord heap a guilty load.

CANTO XXVIII

The Ninth Chasm—Schismatics cleft by the sword—Mahomet and Ali—Pier da Medicina, Curio, Mosca, Bertrand de Born.

WHO ever with unfettered words alone
Repeated ne'er so oft, could tell the tale
Of blood and wounds which now to me were
shown?

'Tis certain that each tongue would faint and fail,
Thanks to our human language and the mind
Which to comprise so much could ne'er avail.

Assembled were again all human kind
Who once before upon that fateful site
Apulia's country, for their blood repined
Shed by the Trojans, shed in the long fight
Which of the rings such heap of booty made,¹
As Livy pens who errs not from the right :

With those confronting Robert Guiscard's blade²
And feeling pains which from its blows accrue,
Or those whose bones are still together laid

At Ceperano,³ where proved all untrue
The Apulians, or where Tagliacozzo's fray

¹ The battle of Cannæ, after which, as Livy says, three bushels of rings were sent to Carthage.

² Robert Guiscard was a Norman whom Pope Leo IX. made Duke of Apulia.

³ The scene of a battle in 1265, when Charles of Anjou was victorious.

Saw old Alardo without arms subdue :¹
 And one his limb pierced through, one lopped away,
 Showed, such a ghastly sight 'twould ne'er present
 As equalled the ninth chasm in foul display.
 A cask whence end or middle stave was rent,
 As one I witnessed ne'er so widely gaped
 Cleft from the chin to where the wind has vent :
 Between his legs his entrails hung ; escaped
 Each vital portion and the dismal bag
 Where what is swallowed into filth is shaped.
 While fixed intent on him mine eyelids lag,
 He scanned me, and his breast wide open set,
 Saying : " Now witness how myself I jag :
 Behold and see how mangled Mahomet.
 Before me weeping Ali² goes his way,
 From chin to forelock cleft his visage wet :
 And all the others thou dost here survey
 Discord and schism to sow would never lack
 In life ; and therefore cloven thus are they.
 A demon is behind us who doth hack
 So cruelly, committing once again
 To the sword's edge each member of this pack
 When we have traversed the distressful lane ;
 Since closed and healed each wound its skin renews
 Ere to repass him any can attain.
 But who art thou that on the crag dost muse,
 Perchance delaying passage to the doom
 Adjudged thee when thyself thou didst accuse ?"
 " Death has not reached him yet, nor faults assume,"
 Replied my Master, " torments here to wreak ;
 But that experience may have ample room,

¹ A general of Charles's army who succeeded in routing Conradin by a stratagem.

² Mahomet's son-in-law.

Though I am dead, 'tis fitting that he seek
 Guidance through hell below from round to round :
 And this is true as thus to thee I speak."
 More than a hundred when they heard this sound
 Paused in the foss that I might be descried,
 Their grief through wonder in oblivion drowned.
 "Now caution Fra Dolcino¹ to provide,
 Thou who perchance ere long shalt see the sun,
 Unless he wishes soon to join my side,
 Such store of food, lest stress of snow o'errun
 And victory Novara's host permit,
 Which were not otherwise so lightly won."
 After he raised one foot, in act to quit,
 Mahomet thus to me his words address'd,
 Then on the ground extended it to flit.
 With throat pierced through another sore distrest,
 And nose cut off where that the brows attained
 And of no more than one sole ear possest,
 Who to behold in wonder had remained
 With others, opened before each of them
 His windpipe, outward all with crimson stained ;
 And spake : "Oh thou whom sins do not condemn,
 Seen once in Latin land, unless I find
 Too great a likeness cheat by stratagem,
 Pier da Medicina call to mind,
 Shouldst e'er return to view the lovely plain
 Vercelli forth to Mercabò inclined.
 And make it known to Fano's worthiest twain,
 To Messer Guido and to Angiolel,²

¹ Fra Dolcino and his followers, some thousands in number, were besieged in the mountains near Novara for more than a year, and starved out at last owing to a heavy fall of snow.

² Two nobles of Fano treacherously drowned by the younger Malatesta of Rimini.

That if all foresight here should not be vain,
 Each of them from their vessel shall expel
 And drown near La Cattolica by wiles
 The traitor perfidy of tyrant fell.
 Ne'er betwixt Cyprus' and Majorca's isles
 Hath Neptune seen so great a trespass done
 By pirates, or the race which Argos styles.
 That traitor who sees only with the one,
 And holds the land the sight of which to share
 One who is with me here would gladly shun,
 Will call them to a parley, and prepare
 So that 'gainst winds from off Focara's height¹
 They will not need the help of vow or prayer."
 And I to him: "Show me, proclaim aright,
 If news of thee on earth thou'dst have me teach,
 Who 'tis to whom so bitter is the sight."
 Of one companion then the jaws to reach
 Stretching his hand, the mouth he open wrenched,
 Exclaiming: "This is he, yet fails his speech:
 He, banished as he was, in Cæsar quenched
 All doubt, affirming that to one prepared
 Delay on injury had ever trenched."²
 Ah how he seemed to me aghast and scared,
 With tongue cut off where in his throat it grew,
 Curio, who to speak so greatly dared!
 And one whose hands were severed, both the two;
 Raising, that so the blood befouled his face,
 Their stumps athwart the air of murky hue,
 Cried: "In thy memory Mosca too give place,

¹ Focara was a mountain near La Cattolica, the squalls of which were most dangerous.

² Curio's address to Cæsar, according to Lucan (*Phars.* i.) was—
 Tolle moras: semper nocuit differre paratis.
 Occasion calls,—delay shall mar it soon.—SIR E. RIDLEY.

Who said, alas! 'a thing done hath an end,'¹
 Which was a seed of woe for Tuscan race."
 "And death," I added, "thine own stock to rend."
 Wherefore he cumulating woe on woe
 As one distressed and mad his way did wend.
 But I had paused to watch the throng below,
 And saw a thing which fear I should endure,
 Without more proof, to make my story show;
 Were't not that conscience renders me secure,
 The good companion which a man makes bold
 Beneath the hauberk placed of feeling pure.
 Certain I saw, and seems I still behold,
 A headless trunk upon its journey sped
 As went the others of that dismal fold.
 And by the locks it held its severed head
 Swinging in guise of lantern in its hand;
 The which observed us, and "Oh me!" it said.
 Unto itself a lamp itself it plann'd,
 And two in one, and one in two, were made;
 How that can be, He knows who gives command.
 When right beneath the bridge's foot he stayed,
 He raised his arm with all the head on high,
 So to bring near to us his words essayed,
 Which were: "Now see the grievous penalty
 Thou, breathing yet, the dead who'rt visiting;
 If graver aught than this thou canst descry:
 And that thou news of me on earth mayst bring,
 Bertrand de Born² acknowledge me, in life
 Who such ill counsels gave to the young king.

¹ Mosca de Lamberti used this phrase to suggest the murder of Buondelmonte, the origin of the feud between the Guelphs and Ghibellines.

² Lord of Hautefort, who stirred up Prince Henry, son of King Henry the Second of England, to rebel against his father.

Father and son I plunged in mutual strife :
 Ahithophel to Absalom no more
 And David did, with vile incitements rife.
Since two so closely knit apart I tore,
 My brain I carry parted from its source—
 Ah me most wretched ! of this trunk the core.
In me thus witnessed retribution's force.”

CANTO XXIX

The Tenth Chasm—Alchemists smitten with Leprosy—Griffolino
d' Arezzo and Capocchio—The Sienese race.

THE mass of folk, the wounds of diverse strain,
Mine eyes had rendered so inebriate
That there to pause and weep they had been fain :
But Virgil spake to me : “ Why watch and wait ?
Why doth thy sight now only stay behind
Down there 'mongst wretched shadows mutilate ?
Not thus was in those other chasms thy mind :
Think, if thou come to reckon them, at least
Two miles and twenty doth the valley wind ;
Already 'neath our feet the moon decreased :
Henceforth the time conceded us is short,
And more remains to see than yet thou seest.”
“ If thou hadst paid,” thereat I made retort,
“ Heed to the cause for which I fixed my ken,
Excuse for lingering 'twould perchance import.”
My Guide went on the while, I followed then
Behind, already making my reply,
And eke subjoining : “ Down within that den
Whereon I fastened such attentive eye,
Methinks a spirit of my blood doth weep
The crime of which the cost is there so high.”
Then said the Master : “ Let no trouble steep

Thy thought from this time forward on his score ;
 Heed somewhat else, that station let him keep ;
 At the bridge foot I saw him point, and more,
 Menace thee with his finger, and I heard
 Geri del Bello¹ was the name he bore.
 Thou wert engrossed so wholly with his word
 Who once in Hautefort held pre-eminence,
 Thou didst not look that way till thence he stirred."
 "Oh Guide of mine, the death of violence
 Not yet avenged for him by any mate
 Of that disgrace," I answered, "with offence
 Made him disdainful ; thus he parted straight
 Without a word to me, as I suppose ;
 To him which made me more compassionate."
 Thus as we talked upon the bridge we rose
 To the first place which, if the light were good,
 Down to the bottom the next valley shows.
 And over the last cloister as we stood
 Of Malebolge, so that to our view
 Could well appear its inmate brotherhood,
 Laments of diverse order pierced me through,
 Whose arrows all were barbed with pity's thrills :
 Wherefore my hands across mine ears I drew.
 As were the woe, if in one foss the ills
 Of sickness till September from July
 Valdichiana's² hospitals which fills,
 Maremma's and Sardinia's too, could vie ;
 Such was it there, and what forth issued stank
 With stench that comes from limbs which putrefy.

¹ A kinsman of Dante's, first cousin of the poet's father or grandfather, who had been slain some years before by one of the Sacchetti family, and whose death was not avenged till later.

² A valley near Arezzo, formerly swampy, but drained in the last century.

Thus we descended to the lowest bank
Of the long crag, still the left hand towards :
And then my sight grew livelier as it sank
Down to the bottom, where the highest Lord's
Ministress, Justice of unerring aim,
The forgers punishes she there records.
I think no greater grief their sight could claim
Ægina's folk,¹ who all with sickness pin'd,
So full of mischief when the air became
Down to the little worm the animal kind
All perished ; then the ancient races, fed
As poets held for certain in their mind,
By seed of ants, restored them from the dead ;
Than 'twas in that dark valley to survey
The spirits languishing in heaps outspread.
One on the belly, on the shoulders lay
One of another, and one grovelled, bent
Shifting his course along the doleful way.
Without a word and step by step we went,
Watching and listening to those sore distrest,
Whose power their bodies to uplift was spent.
Two saw I sit against each other press'd
As pan is propp'd on pan for sake of heat,
From head to foot whom loathsome scabs infest :
Ne'er saw I wield a currycomb so fleet
A stable lad for whom his master waits,
Or one who watch unwilling must complete,
As each the grip of nails which lacerates
His body, drave full oft through frenzy blind
Of the fierce itch which no relief abates.

¹ Ovid in the *Metamorphoses*, bk. vii., describes a plague which laid waste Ægina, and the re-peopling of the island by ants being changed into men.

And so the nails tore down the scurfy rind
 As of a bream the knife rips off the scales,
 Or fish which has them of a larger kind.
 "Oh thou, whose fingers' clutch thyself dismails,"
 Commenced my Guide of one of them to ask,
 "Who makest oft-times pincers of thy nails,
 Tell us if any here this region mask
 Of Latin race, so may thy nails be cloyed
 To all eternity with such a task."
 "Latin are we whom thus thou seest destroyed
 Both of us," one all tearful made lament :
 "But who art thou the question that employed ?"
 "One," spake my Guide, "am I, who my descent
 Make with this living man from steep to steep,
 And Hell to show him is my fix'd intent."
 Then snapp'd the band together wont to keep ;
 And trembling each upon me turned his view
 With those who heard the sound re-echoing sweep.
 Close up beside me the good Master drew,
 Speaking : "To them whate'er it please thee, say."
 And I began, since such his will I knew :
 "So may your memory ne'er fade away
 In the first world and in the mind of man,
 But live beneath the suns of many a day,
 Tell me both who ye are and what your clan :
 Be not to make you known to me in dread
 For this your hideous and disgusting ban."
 "Arezzo gave me birth," one answering said,
 "Albero of Siena to the fire ;¹
 But what I died for has not hither led.

¹ The speaker is supposed to be one Griffolino, who promised to teach Albero, called the son of the Bishop of Siena, the art of flying, and whose failure led to his being burnt by the Bishop.

True 'tis I told him that I could aspire,
 Speaking in jest, through air to wing my flight :
 And he, who had small sense and great desire,
 The art would have me show him ; in despite
 Not made a Dædalus, in flames to cast
 One as his son who held him, did incite.
 But to this chasm, of all the ten the last,
 For alchemy, which was on earth my deed,
 Minos condemned, who never wrongly class'd."
 And to the Poet I : " Did ever breed
 So vain a people as the Sienese ?
 Surely the French in that they far exceed."
 That other leprous one my words could seize,
 And answered : ¹ " From reproach let Stricca loose,
 For him a moderate expense could please ;
 And Niccolo who of the costly use
 First of the clove his great discovery made,
 Where the rich garden doth the seed produce ;
 And strike off Caccia d' Ascian's brigade
 With which he lavished vineyard and wood,
 And Abbagliato all his sense displayed.
 But that thou mayest know who with thee stood
 Against the Sienese, make keen thy sight
 On me, that face to face give answer good ;
 So shalt thou see in me Capocchio's sprite, ²
 Whose alchemy could metals falsely shape,
 And shouldst remember, if I scan thee right,
 How I of nature was a perfect ape."

¹ Ironically, for the Sienese here enumerated were all notorious for their extravagance.

² A Florentine, also burnt at Siena.

CANTO XXX

Personators, Gianni Schicchi, Myrrha—False Coiners smitten with Dropsy—Adam of Brescia—False Witnesses suffering from Fever—Potiphar's wife, Sinon—A quarrel.

WHAT time incensed was Juno on the score
Of Semele against the Theban race,
As she made manifest one while and more,
Such madness grew on Athamas¹ apace,
That he who saw with infants twain she bare
His wife advancing charged in each embrace,
Cried: "Spread the nets that passing I may snare
Lioness and young lions in the wild":
Then stretched his claws, too merciless to spare,
And seized on one of them Learchus styled,
Swung him around, and dashed him on a rock;
And she sought drowning with her other child.
And when o'erwhelming fortune made such mock
Of Trojan haughtiness which dared do all,
That king with kingdom fell beneath the shock;
Hecuba, sad afflicted and in thrall,
After she saw Polyxena lie dead,
And in her misery had learnt the fall
On the seashore of Polydorus sped,
Barked like a dog, insensate from annoy,
So much her sorrows had her mind misled.

¹ The frenzy of Athamas is narrated by Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, lib. iv.

But not of Thebes the furies, or of Troy,
 Ever so fierce in any met the eye,
 Their fangs on beasts, much less on men, to
 employ,
 As two pale naked shades I could descry
 Which ran about so biting as to ape
 The boar when forth it rushes from the sty.
 One fastened on Capocchio's neck, his nape
 So gripping with its teeth that, dragged and trained,
 The hardset ground it made his belly scrape.
 He of Arezzo, trembling who remained,
 Said: "Gianni Schicchi is that elfin sprite,¹
 Thus has his fury raged and others pained."
 "Oh, so may not," said I, "that other's bite
 Fix in thy back, no weariness may prove
 To tell its name before it takes to flight."
 And he: "That shade of old was known above
 As Myrrha the abandoned,² who became
 Dear to her father with unlawful love.
 Thus of her sin with him she wrought the shame
 Disguised in alien form to cloak that ill,
 As once, to gain the stud's surpassing dame,
 He who goes yonder dared with falsest skill
 Buoso Donati's self to counterfeit,
 Making, and giving solemn form, his will."
 And after thence the rabid pair to fleet,
 On whom I fixed had held my vision, ran,
 I turned it back those other vile to meet.
 One fashioned like a lute 'twas mine to scan

¹ One of the Cavalcante family who was a noted mimic, and who was employed by one of Buoso Donati's family to dictate a will disposing of the dead man's property. The mimic took greater care of his own interests than pleased his employer.

² Best known to us from Alfieri's powerful tragedy so well interpreted by Ristori.

Had but the groin alone been confiscate
 Cut from the quarter which is forked in man.
 The grievous dropsy, which doth so unmate
 The members with the juice it turns to bane
 That face and paunch are disproportionate,
 Made him wide open both his lips maintain,
 As doth the hectic, when from thirst to turn
 One to the chin, the other upward, fain.
 "Oh ye, whom free from torment I discern
 (I know not wherefore), in this world of wails,"
 He spake to us, "behold and mark and learn
 How Master Adam¹ misery assails :
 Living I had enough to please my will,
 But now, alas ! a drop of water fails.
 The rivulets, which there from each green hill
 Of Casentino down to Arno strand,
 Making their channels cool and soft, distil,
 Ever, and not in vain, before me stand ;
 More than the malady my face which strips
 Of flesh, their image serves to parch my gland.
 Inexorable Justice, she that whips,
 Takes thence occasion where my sin I plied
 To chase the sighs more swiftly to my lips.
 There is Romena where I falsified
 The coinage with the Baptist's stamp impress'd,
 For which I left my body burnt, and died.
 But were of Guido here the soul distrest,
 Of Alessandro, or their brother found,
 Not Branda spring the sight from me would wrest.
 One is within already, circling round
 The shades infuriate tell, if truth they say :

¹ Adam of Brescia, burnt by the Florentines for debasing their coinage, which he did at the instance of the Counts of Romena.

But what avails it while my limbs are bound ?
 Were I but thus much nimbler in array
 As in a hundred years one inch to pace,
 Already had I started on the way,
 Seeking him 'midst this foul disfigured race,
 Albeit eleven miles the windings strayed,
 Nor less than half a mile across the space.
 Through them in such a family I'm laid :
 They led me on to strike the florins fair
 Which with three carats of alloy were made."
 And I to him : " Say what that abject pair,
 Those that like wetted hands in winter steam,
 Lain close to the right confines of thy lair ?"
 " I found them here, nor since they've turned, 'twould
 seem,"
 He answered, " when within this chasm I rained,
 Nor will to all eternity, I deem.
 That false one she, the charge 'gainst Joseph feigned ;¹
 The other Sinon,² the false Greek of Troy :
 Sharp fever to cast forth such reek constrained."
 And one of them, who felt perchance annoy
 Being so darkly named, to smite him plumb
 On the hard belly did his fist employ :
 That sounded out as if it were a drum :
 And Master Adam smote his face as hard,
 Not less, meseemed it, had his arm become,
 And thus accosted him : " Although debarred
 From motion by my limbs which have such weight,
 My arm unfettered for such task I guard."
 Then he replied : " So ready, when thy gait

¹ Potiphar's wife.

² Who induced the Trojans to admit the horse in which the Greeks were hidden.

Led to the flames, thou hadst it not to swing ;
 But thus and more in coining was its state.”

The dropsical : “That word has truthful ring ;
 Yet not so much to truth thy witness leaned
 In search of truth when Troy was questioning.”

“ If I spake falsehood,” Sinon intervened,
 “ False coinage thine ; one fault I here atone,
 And thou far more than any other fiend.”

“ Remember, perjurer, the horse alone,”
 He with the paunch inflated made reply,
 “ And be thy bane that to the world 'tis known.”

“ Be thine the thirst which cracks and renders dry
 Thy tongue, and putrid water,” said the Greek,
 “ Which makes thy paunch a fence before thine
 eye.”

Then thus the coiner spake : “ So gapes thy beak
 For its own ill as ever wont and sure ;
 Since thirst if mine, and bloating humour's reek,
 Burning and head which pains must thou endure,
 To lap the mirror which Narcissus showed¹
 Not many words thou needest to allure.”

To hear their parley was I all bestowed,
 When spake to me the Master : “ Now just see,
 Little it lacks to strife with thee to goad.”

When thus with wrath I heard him speak to me,
 I turned towards him with such shame as burns
 Revolving ever through my memory.

And as one, dreaming, his own hurt discerns,
 Who, as he dreams, yet wishes to dream on,
 And for what is as though it were not, yearns ;

Such I became, all power of speaking gone,
 For to excuse myself I longed, and still

¹ Clear water.

Excused myself, nor knew that it was done.
“Less shame may serve to wash out greater ill
Than thine has been,” my Master spake and Guide ;
“Wherefore unload thee of all sorrow’s fill ;
And count that I am ever at thy side,
If it should chance that fortune bring thee nigher
To such dispute where people are applied ;
For wish to hear it is a base desire.”

CANTO XXXI

The Giants surrounding the Lowest Pit—Nimrod—Ephialtes—
Antæus sets the Poets down in the Ninth Circle.

ONE self-same tongue the wound first made me feel,
So as the one and other cheek to dye,
And then held forth the medicine to heal.
Thus, have I heard, was wonted to supply
The spear Achilles and his sire renowned
First ill defect, then gracious remedy.¹
We turned our back on that sad valley's round
Up by the bank which girds it all the way,
Traversing that without or speech or sound.
Here it was less than night and less than day,
So that my sight but little forward went :
Yet a loud horn I heard resounding bray,
So loud that faint each thunder 'twould have spent,
Which, as against it up its course I drew,
Towards one quarter all my vision bent :
After the dolorous rout which overthrew
The sacred host of Charlemagne's emprise,
So terribly Orlando never blew.²
Brief space when thither turned were held mine eyes
Many high towers in sight they seemed to bring ;
Then I : " What city there, my Master, lies ? "

¹ See Ovid, *Remedium Amoris*, 47.

² After the defeat of Charlemagne's rearguard at Roncesvalles Orlando blew his trumpet so loudly that it was heard by Charlemagne himself four miles away.

And he to me : "Thy glance since thou dost fling
From too great distance through the dark of night,
Needs must thou err in thine imagining.
Soon as that place is reached, 'twill show thy sight
How much by distance is the sense betrayed :
Wherefore spur on the more, and urge thy flight."
Then lovingly his hand on mine he laid
And said : "Ere further in advance we go,
That the reality less strange be made,
These are not towers, but giants, thou must know,
And from the navel downward round the sides
Are each and all within the pit below."
As when the mist disperses and divides,
Little by little to the sight grows clear
What, as it packs the air, the vapour hides ;
So while the gross and darksome atmosphere
I pierced, the brink approaching more and more,
Error took flight, and grew upon me fear.
For as, her belt of circling ramparts o'er,
Montereggione¹ crowns herself with towers ;
With half their bodies thus as turrets bore
The bank that pit encompassing, the powers
Horrible of those giants, from the sky
Jove yet doth menace when his thunder lowers.
And now the face of one I could descry,
Shoulders and breast, and belly in great part,
And both his arms adown his sides which lie.
Sure Nature did right well, when lost the art
Of making animals on such a scale,
To bid from Mars such ministers depart :
And if she ne'er of elephant and whale
Repents, to one who subtly can reflect

¹ A castle near Siena.

Her justice and discretion will not fail :
 For where the mastery of the intellect
 Added to evil will and power is shown,
 Men cannot rear a bulwark to protect.
 As lofty and as massive as the cone,
 St. Peter's pine at Rome,¹ appeared his face ;
 And in proportion was each other bone :
 So that the bank which held an apron's place
 Down from the middle, showed of him so much
 Above, that three of the tall Frisian race
 Had vainly made their boast his hair to touch :
 Wherefore I saw of him full thirty span
 Down thence the mantle where the buckles clutch.
 "*Rafel mai amech zabi almi,*" 'gan
 The savage mouth, and thus discordant cried,
 For sweeter psalms unsuited to its plan.
 "Insensate soul," towards him spake my Guide,
 "Keep to thy horn, and that to vent thee wind,
 If rage or other passion touch thy pride.
 Search at thy neck, and thou the leash shalt find
 That holds it tied, oh spirit sore confused,
 And round thy mighty breast behold it twined."
 Then said to me : "He stands there self-accused ;
 Nimrod is this, through whose ill-scheming brain
 On earth one language only is not used.
 Leave we him standing, nor discourse in vain :
 For thus to him doth every language sound
 As his to others, for to none 'tis plain."
 Then on we journeyed, making longer round
 Turned to the left, and at a cross-bow's flight
 The next, more huge and fiercer far we found.

¹ A pine-cone, six or seven feet high, which was once on the Mausoleum of Hadrian and afterwards in front of St. Peter's,

Who had the master been to gird so tight
 I know not, but 'twas his both arms to hold,
 In front the other, and behind the right,
 Linked by a chain which kept him so controll'd
 Down from the neck, that on the uncovered spot
 To the fifth coil it wound in circling fold.
 "He in his arrogance had formed the plot
 To set his strength against supremest Jove,"
 So spake my Guide, "this guerdon is his lot.
 His name is Ephialtes; much he strove
 When to the gods such fear the giants gave:
 The arms which then he wielded never move."
 And I: "If that were possible I'd crave
 That of Briareus, so prodigious built,
 Mine eyes a full experience might have."
 Then he: "Antæus close beside thou wilt
 Behold, who speaks and is from fetters free,
 Who shall conduct us to the depths of guilt.
 Much further on he stands whom thou wouldst see,
 And he is bound and like this one in make,
 Save that his look the fiercer seems to be."
 So violent an earthquake never strake
 And shook a tower so mightily, as fast
 Himself as Ephialtes was to shake.
 Then fear of death had made me more aghast,
 For which no more was needed than the dread,
 Had I not seen the bands around him cast.
 Now further in advance our journey led
 Until we reached Antæus, from the well
 Who juttet full five ells without the head.
 "Oh thou, who once within the fateful dell,¹

¹ Antæus had his cave in a valley near Zama, the scene of Scipio's victory over Hannibal.

Which Scipio of glory made the heir,
 When flight the hosts of Hannibal befell,
 A thousand lions as thy prey didst bear,
 And who, thy brethren in the lofty fray
 If thou hadst joined, belief some still may share,
 Hadst caused the sons of earth to gain the day ;
 Place us below (nor shyness hindrance lend)
 Where cold congealing locks Cocytus' way.
 Do not to Tityus or Typhoeus send :
 This man can give what here is each one's aim :
 Curl then no lip in scorn, but downward bend.
 He can restore thee still on earth to fame ;
 Because he lives, and hopes long life to taste
 Unless, too early, Grace his presence claim."
 Thus spake the Master : and that one in haste
 Stretched forth his hands and with them took my
 Guide,
 Those with such stress which Hercules enlaced.
 When Virgil felt himself so seized, he cried
 To me : "Come hither, thee that I enfold" :
 Then in one bundle both of us he tied.
 As seems the Carisenda¹ to behold
 Beneath its leaning, when a cloud delays,
 So that opposed it hangs, above it rolled :
 Such seemed Antæus as I stood at gaze
 To see him bowed, and for a time I stayed
 As I had wished to go by other ways :
 But lightiy on the bottom down he laid
 Which there with Judas Lucifer devours ;
 Then, while thus bent no longer pause he made,
 Rose, as the mast of some tall vessel towers.

¹ A leaning tower at Bologna.

CANTO XXXII

The Frozen Lake of Cocytus—Caina, the place of Traitors to their Kindred—Two Counts Alberti, Mordred, Focaccia, Sassol Mascheroni, Camicion dei Pazzi—Antenora, the place of Traitors to their Country—Bocca degli Abati—Buoso da Duera.

HAD I but rhymes as rugged and as hoarse
As suited well that dismal pit's recess,
O'er which the other rocks all thrust their course,
The juice of my conception would I press
More copiously ; but those since fate denies,
Myself to speech not fearless I address.
Since not for jest is fitted the emprise
The depth of all the universe to sing,
Nor tongue Mamma, Papa, that prattling cries.
But let the high Dames give aid to strike the string
Amphion as they aided Thebes to wall,
So may the word not differ from the thing.
Oh rabble miscreated above all,
Who hold this place of which 'tis hard to tell,
'Twould better sheep or goats to have been, befall.
When we were down within the gloomy well
Beneath the giant's feet, and far below,
And yet I scann'd the wall's transcending swell,
I heard this spoken : " Mark what way thou go ;
Trample not with thy footsteps, passing o'er,
Their heads, the brothers, weary and in woe."

Wherefore I turned, and saw stretched out before
 And 'neath my feet a lake, from frosty tie
 Of glass, not water which the semblance bore.
So thick a veil in winter ne'er could lie
 On Danube's course throughout the Austrian tract,
 Or Tanais far beneath the freezing sky,
As it was there ; that on it if the impact
 Of Tabernich or Pietrapana broke¹
 Not ev'n its edges would the fall have crack'd.
And in such guise as stands the frog to croak
 With muzzle out of water, dreams when prone
 The village girl of gleaning to evoke :
All livid to the part where shame is shown
 Had in the ice the doleful shades their place,
 Setting their teeth to the stork's chattering tone.
Each of them all turned downward held his face :
 Cold from the mouth its witness, from the eyes
 The mournful heart provides, in all the race.
When I had ranged some part to scrutinise,
 Turned to my feet, two spied I closely press'd
 So that their hair was mingled tangle-wise.
"Tell me, ye two, so straining either breast,"
 I said, "who are ye." And their necks they bent ;
 And when erect to me each face redressed,
Their eyes, with inward moisture first besprent,
 Gushed over at the lids, and then the frost
 Relocked them, and the tears between them pent.
Clamp never served to rivet post with post
 So strongly, wherefore like two goats they rolled
 Butting each other ; such the rage that cross'd.
And one, who both his ears had lost from cold,
 Spake, as his glances ever downward fell,

¹ Two mountains, one in Sclavonia, the other near Lucca.

"Why thus, as in a mirror, dost behold?
 If of those twain the names wouldst have me tell,
 The valley whence Bisenzio downward flows
 Their father Albert's was and theirs as well.¹
 One body bore them : should thy search unclose
 All Caina, thou shalt find no worthier shade
 Here in the jelly to be fixed it knows :
 Not his whose breast and shadow pierced the blade
 Wielded by Arthur, with a single blow :²
 Nor yet Focaccia :³ nor the one who, laid
 His head obstructing all my sight could show,
 Of Sassol Mascheroni had the name :⁴
 If thou art Tuscan, him thou well wilt know.
 And that no further speech of mine thou claim,
 Camicion dei Pazzi know in me,⁵
 I wait Carlin to rescue me from blame."
 Afterwards thousand faces could I see
 By cold made doggish : whence a shuddering thrill
 From frozen pools comes o'er and will not flee.
 And whilst towards the middle, where is still
 All gravity collected, our advance,
 And I was trembling from the eternal chill :
 Whether 'twas will, or destiny, or chance
 I know not : but while steered 'twixt head and head
 Of one my foot struck hard the countenance.
 Weeping he cried : "Why bruise me with thy tread ?

¹ These were two Counts Alberti, who fought over the possession of a castle in the valley of the river Bisenzio, a tributary of the Arno.

² Mordred, pierced by King Arthur so that the sunlight was seen through the wound.

³ A Pistoian of the Cancellieri family, whose savage acts gave rise to the feuds of the Bianchi and Neri.

⁴ A Ghibelline of Florence who murdered a near relation so as to succeed to his inheritance.

⁵ One of the Pazzi of Valdarno, guilty of the treacherous murder of a kinsman. Carlino of the same family was guiltier still.

If thou'rt not come to swell the vengeance stored
 For Montaperti, why molest me?" said.¹
 And I: "My Master, wait me here," implored,
 "That he may give me help one doubt to lose;
 Then speed me with thy will as may accord."
 My Guide stood still; I turned these words to use
 To him who ever lustily blasphemed:
 "Who art thou, others who dost thus abuse?"
 "Nay, who art thou," he spake, "who thus hast streamed
 Through Antenora,² others' cheeks to smite,
 As, if thou wert alive, too much had seemed?"
 "Alive am I, and precious in thy sight
 Should be," my answer was, "if fame thou'dst have
 Thy name amongst my other notes to write."
 And he to me: "The contrary I crave:
 Take thyself hence, nor cause me further pain:
 For ill can flatteries in this gulf enslave."
 His scalp then seizing with impetuous strain
 I said: "Thy name behoves it to declare
 Or that no hair upon thy head remain."
 Then he: "Although thou strip me of my hair,
 I will not tell thee, will not show my kind,
 If thousand times upon my head thou bear."
 Already in my hand his locks were twined,
 More than one tuft had thence been plucked
 away,
 While he was yelping, low his eyes inclined;
 When one exclaimed: "What ails thee, Bocca, say?
 Is't not enough thy jaws such sound should make
 But thou must yelp? What demon doth effray?"

¹ The speaker is Bocca degli Abati, whose treachery caused the defeat of the Guelphs at Montaperti.

² Called after Antenor, whom tradition accuses of betraying Troy.

"Henceforth I will not have thee silence break,
 Foul traitor, for thy shame to propagate,"
 I said, "of thee true tidings will I take."
 "Go, go," he said, "whate'er thou wilt relate ;
 But be not silent, if thou quit this deep,
 Of him whose tongue so ready was to prate.
 The silver of the French he here doth weep :
 ' Him of Duera,'¹ thou mayst say, ' I've seen
 There where in cold the sinners stand and steep.
 If thou art asked what others there had been,
 Say Beccheria's priest² is close beside
 To slit whose gorget Florence was so keen.
 Gianni dei Soldanier³ beyond doth bide
 Where Ganellone,⁴ Tribaldello⁵ stood
 Who while men slept Faenza's gates flung wide."
 From him we now had made our parting good,
 When two I saw tight frozen in one pit
 So that the head of one the other's hood.
 As bread in hunger ravenous is bit
 His teeth the topmost on the other press'd
 Where to the nape the brain is made to fit.
 Gnawed not the temples with such eager zest
 Of Menalippus Tydeus in disdain,⁶
 As he that other's skull and all the rest.
 "Oh thou by sign so bestial making plain
 Hatred of him thou eatest to our sight,

¹ Buoso da Duera of Cremona, bribed by the French to surrender a pass to Charles of Anjou.

² The Abbot of Vallombrosa, beheaded in Florence on the charge of plotting with the Ghibellines.

³ A Florentine noble of a Ghibelline family, but a traitor to that cause.

⁴ The traitor to Charlemagne.

⁵ Tribaldello de Manfredi or de Zambrasi was a citizen of Faenza, which he betrayed to the Papal forces.

⁶ See Statius, *Thebais*, bk. viii.

To tell the cause on this condition deign,
That if thou shouldst complain of him aright,
Knowing you both," I said, "and what his breach,
Thee in the world above I may requite,
If this be not dried up which gives me speech."

CANTO XXXIII

Count Ugolino and Archbishop Ruggieri—The Tower of Famine—
Ptolomea, the place of Traitors to their Friends and Guests—
Fra Alberigo, Branca d' Oria, with bodies on Earth and souls
in Hell.

His mouth uplifted from the fierce repast
That sinner, wiping it upon the hair
Behind, where his the head with spoil to blast.
Then thus began : "Thou wilt that I should bear
Desperate grief renewed which wrings my heart
Only in thought before the voice declare.
But should my speech prove seed which may impart
Infamy to the traitor whom I gnaw,
Words shalt thou find and tears together start.
I know not who thou art, or what may draw
Thy steps down hither, but a Florentine,
Hearing thee speak, in thee I surely saw.
Count Ugolino¹ must in me divine,
And this the Archbishop Ruggieri² know :
Now will I tell thee why so close I twine.
That through the effect his evil thoughts could sow,
Trusting in him, a captive was I ta'en
And after put to death, no need to show.

¹ Count Ugolino dei Gherardeschi, a Pisan noble who headed the Guelphs in that city.

² Ruggieri degli Ubaldini, Archbishop of Pisa, and leader of the Ghibellines.

But what to thee has not been rendered plain,
That is how cruel was the death which slew,
Thou'lt hear, and know if he has caused me pain.
A scanty opening within the mew
Which hath from me the name of Hunger borne,
And in which others must be shut anew,
Had shown me through its chink more moons outworn
Already, when that evil dream to me
Was sent by which the future's veil was torn.
My Lord and Master he appeared to be
Chasing the wolf and wolf-cubs to the height
For which the Pisans Lucca cannot see.¹
With bitches lean, and trained to eager sight,
Gualandi with Sismondi he had sent
And with Lanfranchi in the foremost flight.²
After short course with weariness were spent
Father and sons methought, with flanks that bled
As by sharp fangs I seemed to see them rent.
When I awoke before the dawn was red,
I heard my children wailing in their sleep,
Those who were with me there, and asking bread.
Well art thou cruel if from grief thou keep
Thinking of what my heart foreboded here :
And weepst thou not, at what art wont to weep ?
Now were they wakened, and the hour drew near
When one was wont to bring us our repast,
But from his dream felt each one doubt or fear :
And of the horrible tower I heard made fast
The lower exit, then a look aside
On my sons' faces with no word I cast.
I wept not ; all within was petrified :

¹ Monte San Giuliano, between Pisa and Lucca.

² Three of the leading Ghibelline families in Pisa.

But they wept ; and the little Anselm mine,
‘Father, thou lookest so : what ails thee ?’ cried.
For that I wept not, nor made answering sign
All of that day, nor night which then ensued,
Till on the world the sun next rose to shine.
When in our doleful dungeon did intrude
A little ray, and the four faces wear
The very aspect of my own I viewed ;
Then both my hands I gnawed in my despair.
And they, who thought I did it as though fain
To eat, upraised them on a sudden there,
And said : ‘Twill give us, father, lesser pain
If thou dost eat us : with this flesh hast clad
Our wretched bodies ; strip it off again.’
I stilled myself to render them less sad :
That day, the next, all silent we remained :
Ah, why was not, hard earth, an opening had ?
After the fourth succeeding day was gained,
My Gaddo flung him stretched before my feet
With : ‘Father, why hath not thy help sustained ?’
Therewith he died : and as thy glances meet
My form, I saw the three fall one by one
The fifth day to the sixth : then had conceit
Blind as I was to grope above each son,
And called them, dead already, two days long :
Till fast more potent wrought than grief had
done.”
Then with distorted eyes, revealed the wrong,
He seized again the wretched skull with teeth
Which, like a dog’s, upon the bone were strong.
Ah Pisa, the disgrace of men beneath
In the fair country which to *si* gives sound ;
If neighbours slow their swords in thee to sheathe,

Move but Capraia and Gorgona¹ round
The mouth of Arno with a bar to silt,
That in it all thy citizens be drowned.
For if Count Ugolino with the guilt
Was charged thy castles to betray, thy rage
Should not such torment on his sons have spilt.
Innocent, thou new Thebes, their newer age
Uguccione and Brigata nursed,
And the two others named on earlier page.²
We passed beyond, where other folk immersed
The frost binds rigidly without release,
Not downward turned, but all of them reversed.
Their very weeping makes their weeping cease,
And grief which finds a barrier in their eyes,
Inward is turned their anguish to increase :
For the first tears a knotty lump arise,
And as it were by crystal vizer barr'd
Beneath the eyebrows fill the cavities.
And though it was, as where the skin is hard,
That every sense of feeling through the frost
Came in my face its dwelling to discard,
It seemed as though some wind already cross'd ;
Whence I : " My Master, who this motion lends ?
Is not down here below all vapour lost ?"
He therefore : " Speedily thou'lt reach the ends
Where to thine eye for answer thou mayst trust,
Seeing the cause whence wind like rain descends."
And of the wretches of the icy crust
One cried : " Oh souls whose cruelty entails
Such fate, on you is the last station thrust,

¹ Two islands near the mouth of the Arno.

² Gaddo and Uguccione were sons, Anselm and Nino Brigata grandsons, of Count Ugolino.

Wipe from my countenance the hardened veils,
 So that I vent the grief which swells my heart
 A little, ere again congealed my wails."

"Wouldst have me succour, tell me who thou art,"
 I answered: "should I fail to extricate
 Down to the depths of ice let me depart."

"Fra Alberigo I,¹ who expiate
 The fruit of the ill garden," then he said:
 "Change for my fig I here receive a date."

"Oh, art thou then," I asked, "already dead?"
 "How stands my body in the world above,"
 He spake, "no tidings here to me are sped.

For oftentimes, such privilege doth prove
 This Ptolomea,² here the spirit strays
 Ere Atropos the signal gives to move.

And the more willingly that thou shouldst rase
 Tears from my visage vitrified which mourn,
 Know that as often as the soul betrays,
 As was my deed, its body thence is torn,
 And ruled thereafter by a demon's mind
 Till its full time revolving is outworn.

It plunges in a tank of such a kind;
 And haply still his body may appear
 On earth, that shade which winters here behind.

Thou'lt know him, if but late thy coming here:
 Ser Branca d' Oria he,³ and since he bears
 This close seclusion, passed full many a year."

¹ This Friar was of Faenza, and was guilty of the treacherous murder of two of his kinsfolk whom he invited to a banquet. The feast over, he cried out, "Bring in the fruit!" as a signal to armed men who rushed in and killed both the guests.

² This division is said to take its name from Ptolemy, who murdered Simon the Maccabee and his sons (1 *Macc.* 16).

³ A Genoese who, with the aid of a nephew, murdered his father-in-law, Michel Zanche.

"I think," said I, "that thy deceit ensnares ;
For Branca d' Oria ne'er his death has met,
But eats and drinks and sleeps and clothing wears."

"Up in the Malebranche's foss, where set
Boils the tenacious pitch," his answer came,
"Had Michel Zanche not arrived as yet,
When this man to a devil left his frame
In his own stead, and in his kinsman's eke
Who wrought with him the treacherous deed of
shame.

But now thy hand stretch hither, as I seek,
Open mine eyes" : I oped them not ; the accurst
Such churlish act 'twas courtesy to wreak.

Ah Genoese, in every custom versed
To virtue strange, whom all corruption swathes,
Why are ye not from out the world dispersed ?
For with the vilest sprite Romagna scathes
One such of yours I found, who for his deeds
His soul already in Cocytus bathes,
While still the earthly life his body leads.

CANTO XXXIV

Judecca, the place of Traitors to their Lords—Lucifer devouring Judas Iscariot, Brutus and Cassius—The Descent of the Poets to the Centre of the Earth, and their climb up to regain sight of the Stars.

“ *Vexilla Regis prodeunt in nos*

Inferni; ¹ wherefore if thine eye discerns
Him,” said my Master, “look before thee close.”

As when thick-gathered mist exhaling churns,
Or when our hemisphere is growing dark,
Far off descried, the gust a windmill turns ;
Such structure at that time I seemed to mark :
Then for the wind I shrank behind my Guide ;
For other rock was none to yield an ark.
I was (with fear to metre I confide)
Already where the shades were wholly deck'd,
And shone like mote in glass from depths inside.
Some lying down, while others stand erect,
The head with one, the soles with other glance ;
One like a bow bids face to feet project.
When we so far had brought us in advance,
My Master that it pleased to show my quest
The creature once of such fair countenance,

¹ “The banners of the infernal King go forth Towards us”: an adaptation of the first line of a celebrated Hymn on the Passion.

He drew him from in front, and made me rest,
Saying: "Lo here is Dis, this place to seek
Behoves thee arm with fortitude thy breast."
How I that instant frozen grew and weak,
Ask me not, Reader, writing I refrain
Seeing how poor were each attempt to speak.
I died not, nor alive did I remain:
Think for thyself, if grain of wit be thine,
What I became deprived of both the twain.
The Emperor of the dolorous realm's confine
To his mid-breast forth issued from the ice;
And with a giant am I more in line
Than giants with his arms to match suffice:
See therefore now how great that whole must be
Which to a part conforms of such device.
If he was fair as now he's foul to see,
And 'gainst his Maker lifted up his eyes,
Well may from him proceed all misery.
Oh what great marvel seemed to me to rise
When on his head three faces met my view!
One in the front, and that vermilion dyes;
The others which to that joined on, were two
Where to the middle either shoulder bends,
Which where the crest was placed together grew;
'Twixt white and yellow the right visage blends;
The left to look on was like those impelled
Forth from the region whence the Nile descends.¹
'Neath each two mighty wings forth issuing swelled,
Of size which such colossal bird beseemed;
Sails of the sea so vast I ne'er beheld.
They had no feathers, but might well be deemed
In fashion like a bat's, and these he dipped

¹ Ethiopia.

Fluttering, that so three winds from round him
streamed.

Thence fast with frost was all Cocytus gripped:
With six eyes wept he, o'er three chins beneath
Trickling his tears and bloody slaver dripped.
In every mouth he mangled with his teeth
A sinner, as a brake is wont to tear,
So that three thus in torments he could sheathe.

For him in front the biting could compare
No tittle with the rending, since of skin
The back at whiles remained completely bare.

"That soul above in greatest pain for sin
Judas Iscariot is," the Master said ;
"Without he works his legs, his head within.

Of other two who downward hold the head,
'Tis Brutus hanging the black jaws between :
See how he writhes and vents of words no shred :

The other Cassius of such sturdy mien.
But night is reascending ; from this bound
We must depart, for all we now have seen."

As was his will I clasped his neck around ;
And, making time and place occasion yield,
When opened wide enough the wings were found,
Fast to the shaggy sides himself he sealed :

From tuft to tuft then carried his descent
Betwixt the matted hair, the crusts congealed.

When we came thither where the thigh was bent
Exact the thickness of the haunches o'er,
With labour turned my Guide and breathing spent,
His head where he had held his legs before,
And grappled, like a man who climbs, the hair,
So that I thought us bound for hell once more.

"Cling to me tightly, for by such a stair,"

Panting the Master said like one distressed,
 "From so much ill behoves it forth to fare."
 Then issuing through a cleft of rock he pressed,
 And placed me on its verge to sit, and nigh
 Towards me next his wary step addressed.
 I raised mine eyes expecting to descry
 Lucifer such as I had left him last,
 And saw instead he reared his legs on high.
 If then perplexity was on me cast
 Let the dull folk reflect, who ne'er discern
 What is the point which I had overpast.
 "Rise," said the Master, "to thy feet, and learn
 The way is long, and difficult the road,
 And to mid tierce¹ is now the sun's return."
 No hall of a palatial abode
 'Twas where we stood, but native dungeon cell
 Which a bad floor and scanty lighting showed.
 "Before I tear me from the abyss, the well,"
 I said, "my Master," when upright I paced,
 "To clear from error's mist some little tell.
 Where is the ice? and how has he been placed
 Thus upside down? and how could time so small
 From eve to morning the sun's transit haste?"
 And he: "Thou thinkest thou art yet in all
 That side the centre where the hair I caught
 Of the fell worm which mines this earthly ball.
 That side thou wert while to descend I sought:
 But when I turned, to pass thou didst attain
 The point where weights from every side are
 brought:
 And 'neath the hemisphere dost now remain
 Opposed to that which covers the wide space

¹ An hour and a half after sunrise.

Of Earth, beneath whose zenith he was slain
Who showed of sin in birth, in life, no trace :
Thou hast thy feet upon the little sphere
Which of Judecca forms the other face.
When there 'tis evening it is morning here :
And this, whose hair our ladder steps supplied,
Fixed as he was at first doth still appear.
Down from the heavens he fell upon this side :
And earth which earlier on this side emerged,
Fearing him, strove 'neath ocean's veil to hide,
And sought our hemisphere ; and haply urged
To flee him, left this place thus void and lone
What on this side appears, and upward surged.”
A place there is below, remotely shown
From Beelzebub, far as his tomb extends,
Which not by sight, but by the sound is known
Of a small rivulet that there descends
Through hollow cleft, which in the rock to fray
Has served its course that winds and slightly
bends.
My Guide and I upon that hidden way
Entered to visit the bright world once more ;
And without caring for repose or stay
Mounted, he first, I second, till before
Showed a round opening which the sight unbars
Of the fair things that throned the heavenly floor,
And thence we issued to review the stars.

FROM GOETHE
FAUST

DEDICATION

ONCE more, ye shadowy forms upon me gaining,
That earlier showed ye to the troubled gaze ;
Shall I succeed this time your course restraining ?
That fond illusion still my heart obeys ?
Onward ye press ; 'tis well, then onward, reigning
As round me ris'n from vapour and from haze ;
My bosom feels a youthful tumult seething
From magic airs that round your train are breathing.

Ye bring with you the scenes of days once cheery,
And many a much-loved shade again ye raise :
Like some old legend, half-expiring, eerie,
First love comes back and friendship's flight delays.
The pang seems fresh ; the plaint repeated weary
Of life that errs in labyrinthine maze,
Naming the good who once by fortune cheated
Of shining hours, before me hence have fled.

They cannot hear the songs that now are flowing,
The cherished souls to whom my first I sang ;
Dispersed the friendly throng, and, fainter going,
The echo stilled, alas ! that earliest rang ;

My strain resounds to crowds unknown, unknowing,
Their very plaudits give my heart a pang ;
And all that listened once, enjoyed or flattered,
If yet it lives, throughout the world is scattered.

And on me seizes long unwonted yearning
For yonder spirit-realm's still, earnest sway ;
Hovers around, unsettled cadence learning,
Like an Æolian harp, my lispings lay ;
A shudder takes me, tear on tear is burning,
Grown soft and gentle the stern heart gives way ;
What I possess far distant seems is banished,
And that alone reality, that vanished.

FROM THE PRELUDE IN THE THEATRE

THE POET

OH speak not of those motley masses, spare me !
Their very aspect puts the soul to flight !
The surging throng, that 'gainst my will can tear me
Within the whirlpool, cover from my sight !
No, to that nook of heavenly stillness bear me
Where for the poet blossoms pure delight,
Where the heart's blessings love and friendship mated
Cherish with godlike hand as they created.
Ah ! what from the deep breast is there ascending,
What to themselves the lips coy lispng say,
Now failure, now perchance success attending,
Is swallowed up by the wild moment's sway ;
Oft when it years has pierced, the trial ending,
Itself in perfect form 'twill first display.
What glitters for the moment's fleeting stage is ;
The genuine lives unlost for after ages.

* * * * *
* * * * *

Begone and seek thyself another thrall !
What ! shall the poet noblest rights of all,
The rights of man, by Nature freely sent,
Squander thus wantonly at thy behest ?
Wherewith then stirs he every breast ?
Wherewith subdues he then each element ?
Is't not the harmony that from his bosom springs,

And back into his heart the whole world brings ?
 When Nature forceful o'er the spindle passes,
 Indifferent winding, threads in endless strings,
 When of all beings' inharmonious masses
 The sound in vext confusion rings,
 Who as it flows the aye equal line dividing
 Infuses life so that it rhythmic moves ?
 Who to the universal consecration guiding
 The one, where glorious the accords it proves ?
 Who bids the tempest rage for fury passion ?
 The evening red in earnest spirits glow ?
 Who scatters fairest blossoms spring can fashion
 Upon the loved one's path to blow ?
 Who twines the wreath of green leaves unpretending
 Honour to merit in its every field ?
 Ensures Olympus ? Gods in union blending ?
 The might of man in Poet's mind revealed.

* * * * *
 * * * * *

Then give me back the days departed
 When under Nature's hands I grew,
 When song as from a wellspring started,
 Song crowding song, unbroken, new,
 When mist from me the world could cloak,
 The bud of miracles gave sign,
 When as the thousand flow'rs I broke
 Filled all the valleys in profusion !
 Nothing, and yet enough was mine !
 Zeal for the truth yet pleasure in illusion.
 Give me each impulse wildly roving,
 The bliss so deep, so full of pain,
 The force of hate, the might of loving,
 Give me my youth, my youth again !

FROM THE PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN

THE ANGELS' SONG

RAPHAEL

THE Sun's full tones resound as ever,
Vying with brother spheres in song,
Achieved the fore-ordained endeavour
With thunder's roll, his course along.
Strength to the Angels in their station,
Though none may fathom him, his gaze ;
The ineffably sublime creation
Is glorious, as the first of days.

GABRIEL

And swift, and swift beyond conceiving
The pomp of earth revolves ; the light
Of Paradise in turn relieving
The deepest, the most awful night ;
In broadening billows foams the ocean
Upon its deep and rocky base,
And rock and sea with spheres in motion
Are whirled along in swiftest race.

MICHAEL

And blasts in rivalry are storming
From sea to land, from land to sea ;
Around the earth their fury forming
A chain of tense activity ;
There flames a flashing desolation
Before the thunder's awful way ;
Yet honours, Lord, thy tried legation
The gentle going of thy day.

THE THREE

Strength to the Angels in their station,
Though none may fathom thee, thy gaze ;
The works of thy sublime creation
Are glorious, as the first of days.

FROM THE SOLILOQUY

FAUST *speaks*

OH! wert thou looking, moonlight glow,
For the last time upon my woe,
For whom so many a midnight gone
Here at this desk I've watched alone!
Then over books' and papers' heap
Thou, melancholy friend, didst peep.
Ah! could I but on mountain's height
Wander beneath thy darling light,
Round mountain caverns with spirits hover,
Float in thy glimmer the meadows over,
And cleared of all the fumes of learning,
Bathe in thy dew with health returning!

* * * * *

And yet thou askest why thine heart
Thus anxious in thy bosom strains?
Why an inexplicable smart
Life's every motion cramps, enchains?
'Tis that, in living Nature's stead,
In which God's planting mortals own,
In smoke and mould surround thee, dead
The fleshless frame, the human bone.

Up! flee away to distant land!
 And this, the mystery-laden book
 In Nostradamus' very hand,
 For other escort needst thou look?
 Discernst the courses of the stars,
 And then, with Nature apt to teach,
 The soul uprising bursts its bars,
 As spirit makes to spirit speech.
 In vain the sacred signs are found
 To thee by barren musing clear:
 Ye spirits, ye are hovering round;
 Answer me, spirits, if ye hear.

*[He opens the book and sees the sign of the
 Macrocosm.]*

Ha! what a rapture thrills me at this sight
 Through all my senses in a moment flowing!
 I feel a youthful, hallowed life's delight
 Course through my nerves and veins, thus newly glowing.
 Was it some God these signs to being brought,
 The storm that raged within me stilling,
 And with mysterious impulse fraught
 The sight of Nature's powers unveiled around me willing?
 Am I a God? All seems so bright!
 To me in these pure features eyeing
 Before my very soul creative Nature lying.
 Now first the sage's meaning comes to light:
 "The world of spirits closes never;
 Thy sense is shut, thine heart is dead!
 Up! scholar, bathe unwearied ever
 Thine earthly breast in morning's red!"

How to a mighty whole all weaves,
 Each in the other works and lives!

How heav'nly pow'rs are rising and descending,
To each the golden buckets lending,
With wings that can scatter blessing,
Down through the earth from Heaven they're pressing,
Harmonious all through the All ringing !
Fair pageant ! yet a pageant and no more !
Infinite Nature, where to grasp thy store ?
Where you, ye breasts ? Ye springs whence all life flows,
Ye to whom Heaven and earth are clinging,
The blighted heart its anguish bringing—
Ye gush, ye quench, can ye not soothe my woes ?

THE SPIRIT OF THE EARTH

In the tides of life, in action's storm,
I am toss'd on the wave,
I drift to and fro !
Birth and the grave,
'An endless flow,
A changeful weaving,
A glow of living,
Thus shape I where whizzing the looms of time play,
And work for the Godhead his living array.

FAUST *speaks*

How hope alone his brain does not abandon
Who to dead rubbish steadfast cleaves,
In treasure's quest the ground upheaves,
And joys if earthworms he may lay his hand on !

Dare such a voice in human accent swell
Where spirit in its fulness all pervaded ?
Yet ah ! this time I thank thee well
Of all earth's sons the meanest, most degraded.

'Twas thou didst wrest me from despair, which frantic
 Brought down my senses to destruction's brink :
 Ah! 'twas so great the vision, so gigantic,
 That to a dwarf indeed I seemed to shrink.

I, formed in God's own image, who could feel
 To mirror of eternal truth my nearness,
 Exulted in Heaven's lustre, Heaven's clearness,
 And stripped off all that might earth's child reveal ;
 I, more than cherub, with free spirit's play
 Through Nature's veins mysterious course preparing,
 And life of Gods in joy creative sharing,
 How bitter must I expiate that daring !
 A word of thunder swept me quite away.

To match with thee I may not be presuming.
 Possessed I power that could command thy coming,
 At least I had no power could bid thee stay.
 In that blest moment of existence
 I felt so little, yet so great ;
 Thou thrust me back with fierce insistence,
 Back upon man's uncertain fate.
 Who teaches me? Shun what attractions?
 What impulses must I obey?
 Ah! not our sufferings only, but alike our actions,
 They cramp our life upon its way.

Ev'n to the grandest of the mind's conceiving
 Cling alien elements, more alien yet ;
 To us the good of this our world achieving
 The better seems delusion and deceit.
 They that had given us life, ecstatic feelings,
 Grow chill and numb in stress of earthly dealings.

If Fantasy had once, with daring flight,
And full of hope, to th' infinite expanded,
A narrow space for her suffices quite
When in time's whirlpool joy on joy is stranded.
Care in the inmost heart at once will nestle,
There bids she secret pangs to wrestle,
Uneasy rocks herself and poisons rest and joys ;
Ever new masks to cloak her she employs,
Now is as house and land, as wife and child, prevailing,
As fire or water, poison, steel ;
You tremble where you do not feel,
And what you never lose, for ever are bewailing.

The Gods I am not like ! I feel the sentence just
The worm I'm like, which grovels in the dust.
Which, as in dust it lives and would be fed,
Is crushed and buried by the wanderer's tread.

Is it not dust this lofty wall doth hold,
Which with its hundred shelves constrains me ?
The frippery that with trifles thousandfold
Fast in this world of moths enchains me ?
Here shall I find the thing I need ?
Shall I perchance a thousand books turn over,
Of universal misery to read,
And here and there one happy man discover ?
Why thus at me, thou hollow skull, that grin,
But that thy brain bewilderment was blurring ;
Like mine it sought bright day, and yet the dusk
 within,
With all its zeal for truth, was wretched erring ?
Ye instruments may mock me as ye please,
Wheels, cogs, each curved and bent appliance ;

I tried the gate, ye should have been the keys,
Yet the bolt sticks for all your wards' minutest science.
Inscrutable in open day
Nature of closest veil lets none bereave her,
And what she to your mind will not herself betray
You cannot wring from her by plying screw and lever.
Thou ancient lumber, that I ne'er have used,
Here, since my father used thee, hast thou mouldered ;
Thou ancient scroll, thou hast been smoke-bemused
So long as on this desk the lamp's dim flame has
 smouldered.

Far better it had been my little all to waste,
Than, with that little all thus burdened, here be
 sweating !

That which thy fathers left thee, snatch with haste,
O'er all things its possession setting !
What profits not, as grievous load is placed ;
All that can profit is the moment's own begetting.

Yet wherefore on that spot are riveted my glances ?
Is then that tiny flask a magnet to my sight ?
Why of a sudden blissful light entrances
As when the moonbeams flood the wood's opaquest
 night ?

I greet thee well, thou one, excelling phial,
Of which with reverence I now make trial !
In thee I honour human skill and art.
Thou essence of all lovely slumbrous juices,
Thou extract of all deadly subtle uses,
To me thy master all thy grace impart !
I see thee, and assuaged is all mine anguish ;
I grasp thee, and the struggle seems to languish,

The spirit's floodtide ebbs and ebbs away.
To the high sea I'm borne with restless motion,
Sparkles beneath my feet the glassy ocean,
To newer shores allures a newer day.

A fiery chariot floats on lightest pinions
Towards me, and impels the spirit free
In new career to cleave wide air's dominions
Up to new spheres of pure activity.
This life sublime, this joy to Gods pertaining,
Worm as thou wert, and canst thou hope to earn?
Aye, if on earth's bright sun, his beams disdainng,
Thy back thou resolutely turn!
Dare of thyself to burst apart the portals
Which others weak in will are slinking by!
Now is it time to prove by deeds that mortals
Their dignity can stake 'gainst God's supremacy;
Before those dark abysses not to quiver
Which Fantasy for self-inflicted torment claims,
On to that pass to struggle ever
Around whose narrow mouth all hell terrific flames;
Upon this step resolved, good heart to cherish,
Even if the risk were run in nothingness to perish.

Now too I take thee from thine ancient casing,
Thou beaker of the purest crystal chasing,
On which for many years I have not thought!
Thou once wert glittering at my father's feasts,
Inspiring the sober guests
As each the other pledged and greetings brought.
The cluster'd forms, art's labour, richly light,
The drinker's charge, their lore in rhymes explaining,

In one long draught the deep-mouth'd goblet draining,
 Bring back to memory many a youthful night.
 I shall not reach thee now to any neighbour,
 Expend upon thine art my wit's exacting labour ;
 Here is a juice will soon intoxicate ;
 With its brown flood it fills up all thy hollow.
 That I have chosen, that prepared to follow,
 With all my soul this crowning draught I swallow,
 This greeting to the morn in festal solemn state !

CHOIR OF ANGELS

Christ is arisen !
 Joy who death merited,
 Whom the mean-spirited,
 Fatal, inherited
 Ills did imprison !

FAUST

What deepened hum, what clearer tones with power
 Resistless from my mouth the glass compelling ?
 Sound ye already, the first festal hour,
 Ye hollow bells, of Easter gladness telling ?
 Ye choirs, ev'n now have ye the song of comfort sung
 That round the grave's deep night from lips of angels
 rung,
 New covenant's assurance swelling ?

CHOIR OF WOMEN

With myrrh and aloes
 Had we his body dress'd ;
 We whom faith hallows
 Had laid him to rest ;

Neatly round winding
Napkin and linen gear ;
Ah ! for we're finding
Christ no more here !

CHOIR OF ANGELS

Christ is arisen !
Blest is he, loving Him,
Ne'er the Heav'n moving him,
Chastening, proving him
Trial remiss in !

FAUST

Why seek ye, mighty yet so mild,
Ye heavenly tones, in dust to hail me ?
Ring out where weaker men may be beguiled.
The message I can hear full well, yet faith doth fail me ;
And miracle is faith's most darling child.
I dare not venturous to those spheres be soaring
From whence the blissful tidings flow ;
And yet, though from my youth the accustomed sound
I know,
It calls me back ev'n now, to life restoring.
Once dropped on me from Heaven the loving kiss
In solemn stillness of the Sabbath morning :
The full-toned bells pealed out mysterious sounds of
warning,
And prayer was an intensity of bliss ;
Unutterably sweet the yearning
That drove me forth where wood, where meadow lies,
And whilst a thousand tears were burning
I felt a world before me rise.

This song was harbinger to youth of sportive pleasures,
 To springtide feast of lavish glee ;
 Remembrance now, that childlike feeling treasures,
 The last, the fatal step bids flee.
 Oh still sound on, ye sweetest songs of Heaven !
 The tear distils, to earth again I'm given !

CHOIR OF DISCIPLES

He, the dominion
 Of the grave ended,
 On sublime pinion
 Glorious ascended !
 Feeling the zest of birth,
 Creative rapture near ;
 Ah ! on the breast of earth
 We are woe's capture here !
 Left thus to languish
 Where we his presence miss ;
 Ah ! 'tis our anguish,
 Master, thy bliss !

CHOIR OF ANGELS

Christ is arisen
 Out of corruption's lap !
 Joyful, your prison
 Bands bid ye snap !
 Praise by deeds rendering,
 High love engendering,
 Brother help tendering,
 Preaching, far wandering,
 Promised bliss squandering ;
 You is the Master near,
 Yours is he here !

FROM THE SCENE BEFORE THE GATE

FAUST *speaks*

FREED from their ice are the brooks, the river,
Through the bright enlivening glances of spring ;
Hope's joy in the dale is blossoming ;
Agèd winter with feeble shiver
Back to the rugged mountains took wing,
Thence can he only send in his flight
Granular hailstones' impotent showers
In flakes o'er the meadows' bursting green.
Aye, but the sun will suffer no white ;
Effort productive is everywhere straining,
All will he brighten with colour and staining ;
Yet is the landscape lacking in flowers,
With gay dress instead he fills the scene.
Turn thee, as on these heights we find us,
Look on the city we've left behind us.
From that yawning, gloomy gate
Forth presses a motley throng, elate
Each suns himself to-day on the sward,
They hallow the rising of the Lord :
For they themselves alike are risen ;
From the dreary rooms of the low mean dwelling,
From narrowing trades' and workshops' prison,
From gables and roofs free movement quelling,

From the stifling closeness of alleys,
From the churches' venerable night,
All are brought to the open light.
Look, only look ! how briskly sallies
The crowd through the field and garden ways,
How many a fleet of jovial galleys
All its breadth and length the river sways,
And almost sunk beneath its lading
Draws this last wherry from our view.
Ev'n the far mountain paths invading
Gleam on us dresses of brightest hue.
I hear the village tumult ; this is
The people's truest heaven of blisses,
Both great and little shout with glee :
Here am I man, I well may be.

FROM THE SAME

FAUST *speaks*

OH happy he, who yet may hope
From out this sea of error to be speeded !
With what we know not still we seek to cope,
And what we know is never needed.
But let not blessings which this hour we owe
Such melancholy thought embitter !
Behold how in the sunlight's evening glow
All girt with green the low huts glitter !
He dips and sinks, the day has reached its bound,
Yonder he speeds and stirs new life's endeavour.
Oh that no wing can lift me from the ground
To press on him, on him for ever !
Then the still world were evening rays
Before my feet eternal showing,
The valleys all at rest, the mountains all ablaze,
To golden streams the silver brooklet flowing.
Not then my course all godlike would restrain
The rugged chasms the wilder mountain seaming ;
Ev'n now her bays discloses, warmly gleaming,
To my astonished eyes the main.
Yet seems at last from hence the Sun-god sinking ;
But the new impulse starts to light,
I hasten on perennial glory drinking,

The day before me and behind the night ;
The billows far below, and far above the Heaven.
A lovely dream, yet, as I dream, he dies !
Ah ! with the spirit's wings aloft to rise
'Tis to no bodily wing so lightly given !
Yet 'tis inborn in all our fancies
That deepest feelings upward, onward throng
When lost above us in the blue expanses
The lark pours forth her thrilling song,
When o'er steep heights where pines are clinging
In widest span the eagle sways,
And homeward slow the crane is winging
O'er marshy flats and lakes and bays.

FROM THE SCENE IN FAUST'S STUDY

FAUST *speaks*

BOTH field and meadows now forsaken,
O'er which deep night her veil doth draw,
Within us high forebodings waken
The better soul with holiest awe.
At rest is now each wilder longing,
Each deed of violence at rest ;
The love of man our breast is thronging,
The love of God now stirs the breast.

Ah, when our narrow cell is cheering
The lamp's soft light with friendly glow,
Within our bosom all is clearing,
The heart, when school'd itself to know.
Reason once more to speak is learning,
And hope once more with blossoms rife ,
For streams of life the soul is yearning,
Ah ! for the very fount of life.

SONG OF THE SPIRITS

VANISH, ye dusky
Vaultings all over !
Lovelier rays in
Cheerfully gaze in
Bluest of skies !
Were but the darkling
Clouds disappearing !
Little stars sparkling,
Suns the more cheering
Softer arise.
Races' aerial
Beauty ethereal,
Tremulous bending
Hovers ; inspires
Next an ascending
Flame of desires.
And the attire's
Fluttering bands
Cover the lands,
Cover the bower,
Where for all living
Themselves, in deep mooting,
Lovers are giving.
Bower on bower !
Tendrils all shooting !
Grapes in a shower

Gush to recesses
Of straining wine-presses,
In brooks and in flushes
Foaming wine gushes,
Ripples where cluster
Gems of pure lustre,
Heights it forsakes there
Far behind lying,
Broadens to lakes there
Green hills supplying
Charm of all graces.
And the winged races
Drinking in rapture,
Fly to the sunlight,
Fly too the sun-bright
Islands to capture,
Rocking on ocean
Surges in motion ;
Where from the chorus
Shouting breaks o'er us,
Where through the grasses,
Scattered in masses
O'er the wide spaces,
Dancers one traces.
Some are achieving
Heights that are steepest,
Some of them cleaving
Seas that are deepest ;
Some in air floating,
All on life doting,
All on the far-away
Loves of the starry way,
Rapturous grace.

FROM GOETHE
LYRICS

EPILOGUE TO SCHILLER'S BELL

ON THE 10TH OF AUGUST 1805

REPEATED AND RENEWED AT THE PERFORMANCE
ON THE 10TH OF MAY 1815

JOY within these walls abounding,
Peace be the first peal 'tis sounding !

And thus it came to pass ! With peaceful ringing
The land was moved, and blessing as it bare
Fresh happiness shone forth ; with fervent singing
We welcomed home the youthful princely pair :
In the full throng, in life to action springing
The stirring crowd of peoples took their share,
And festive on the steps' rich decoration
" Homage to Arts " received its celebration.

Yet there I hear the midnight toll appalling
That dull and heavy swells the mourning tone.
Can it be true ? Is it our friend 'tis calling
Whom every wish clasps firmly as its own ?

P

Of life so worthy him is death enthralling?
 Ah! how by such a loss the world's o'erthrown!
 Ah! why such wretch to those as friend who hail him?
 Now wails the world and should not we bewail him?

For he was ours! What social ease was granted
 The lofty spirit on a favouring day,
 His graver vein, that lured us and enchanted,
 How soon 'twas joyous in colloquial play,
 Now nimbly wheeling, brilliant, surely planted,
 Would the deep meaning of life's plans essay,
 Fruitful outpoured in deed's, in counsel's treasure;
 Our own experience this, and this our pleasure.

For he was ours! May that exulting word
 Drown with its whelming force loud sorrow's chiding!
 He might with us, to a safe port transferred
 From the wild storm, have found a sure abiding.
 Whilst to th' Eternities his spirit spurred
 Truth, Goodness, Beauty, mightily was striding,
 And far behind him lay, in shapeless feature,
 Our common life, the bondage of the creature.

Now decks he the fair garden watch-tower, whence his
 Delight the voices of the stars to hear,
 Which to his living, his eternal senses
 Came like to like, mysterious yet clear.
 There, while he priceless boon to all dispenses,
 With wondrous skill he brings the ages near,
 Thus, in the worthiest engrossed, confronted
 The dusk, the night that all our strength has stunted.

In floods on floods the tide of history swelling
 Washed to his feet what earned his praise, his blame,
 Gleams of wild hordes, all earth their chieftains quelling,
 That in the world had lit such angry flame,
 In depths most terrible, in heights excelling,
 With clearest test search'd out their very frame.
 Now sank the moon, and a new joy devising
 Above the brighten'd hill the sun was rising.

Now red and redder yet his cheek was glowing
 With all that youth from us that never flies,
 With all that courage, soon or late o'erthrowing
 Resistance that the stubborn world applies,
 With all that faith which now, still higher going,
 Bold presses onward, now submissive lies,
 That so, with good to work, growth, profit waking,
 On noble natures day at last be breaking.

Yet in him, trained so well, such wealth revealing,
 Found these stage boards of sympathy no dearth ;
 Here mightiest destiny pourtrayed he, wheeling
 From day to night the axis of the earth,
 And works profound, enriched in form, in feeling,
 Enhanced the worth of art, the artist's worth.
 He wrought, the flower of highest effort lending,
 And on life's picture life itself expending.

Ye knew him, as his giant stride was speeding
 From purpose to achievement's lofty stage,
 As he th' obscurest book was cheerful reading,
 Men's mind and manners through each land and age ;

Yet as amongst us, pain to pain succeeding
Still left him breathless, woeful would assuage,
This lesson from the sad sweet years we borrowed,
For he was ours, to sorrow as he sorrowed.

Him, when recovered from the throng distracting
Of bitter pangs that held no longer sway,
Him have we from the bondage too exacting,
The present, that oppressed him, snatch'd away,
With lucky art and apt diversion acting,
Revived, new lit, the noble spirit's play,
Ere his last days, last evening of our meeting,
'Twas joy to win a smile of friendly greeting.

Full early he that harshest doom was dreeing,
He was to suffering, was to death brought near.
He yields to that which him so oft was freeing ;
Now that appals which was so oft our fear.
Yet sees already his transfigured being,
If it looks down, itself transfigured here :
What else in him the Present blamed, assaulted,
Has death, has Time ennobled and exalted.

And many spirits that with him had striven,
Reluctant his great merit forced to own,
They feel his pow'r through inmost senses driven,
Themselves firm-rooted, willing, in his zone ;
Now he has soared aloft to highest Heaven,
With all we treasure in close union grown.
Then honour him ! For what to man while living
Is half vouchsafed, the future all is giving.

Thus he remains to us whose separation
The years gone by—ten years already—wrought !
We all have witnessed, and with exultation,
The world give thanks to him for what he taught ;
Long since diffused itself his sole creation
In very hosts, his individual thought.
He gleams 'fore us like comet far ascending,
With his own light the light eternal blending.

ABSENT

HAVE I then lost the sight endearing?
Art thou, oh fair one, from me flown?
Still rings in my long wonted hearing
Thine every word, thine every tone.

And as at morn the wanderer's glances
Vainly would pierce the skies, to mark
Where hidden in the blue expanses
High o'er him, sightless, sings the lark :

Ev'n so my gaze all anguished pierces
Field, copse, and wood in search of thee ;
Thee call my songs in all their verses,
Oh come, beloved, back to me.

BY THE RIVER

Flow hence, ye songs such love was lavished,
Flow downward to oblivion's main !
No youth repeat with ardour ravished,
No maiden in spring bloom, the strain.

Ye sang of her my heart had smitten,
My faith she now requites with scorn ;
In water only were ye written,
So flow ye hence in water borne.

AT NIGHT

O'ER all the hilltops
Is rest,
In the trees' still tops
To thy quest
Scarce breath of air ;
Birds in the wood are in silence.
Wait thou, a while hence
Rest too shalt share.

HEATHER ROSE

SPIED a youth a rosebud bright,
Rosebud in the heather,
Young and sweet as morning light,
Ran up close to see the sight,
Gazed for hours together.
Rosebud, rosebud, rosebud red,
Rosebud in the heather.

Said the youth : I'll pluck thee, fair,
Rosebud in the heather !
Rosebud said : My thorns beware,
You shall rue it, if you dare,
That's beyond the tether.
Rosebud, rosebud, rosebud red,
Rosebud in the heather.

And the wild youth plucked full fain
Rosebud in the heather ;
Rosebud stung with might and main
But her moan, her cry of pain,
Mattered not a feather.
Rosebud, rosebud, rosebud red,
Rosebud in the heather.

CHANGE

In the brook on the pebbles how gaily I pillow !
I stretch out my arms to each oncoming billow,
And amorous clasps it the languishing breast ;
Then away down the stream, lightly speeded, it presses ;
A second draws near, and again it caresses ;
So feel I the pleasures of varying zest.

And yet, and so mournful, in vain thou art wasting
The precious bright hours of thy life that is hastening,
If the love of the dearest of maidens is missed !
Oh back to thy side be the former days beckoned !
They're kissed just as sweetly the lips of the second
As scarcely the lips of the first one were kissed.

FROM SCHILLER

THE GODS OF GREECE

WHILST ye still o'er this fair world were reigning,
Whilst to joy the lightest, closest band
Your enchanted forms was deftly straining,
Loveliest races sprung from fairyland !
Whilst your rapture-worship glowed with lustre,
Ah ! how different 'twas, how different ah !
As the garlands still thy temple cluster,
Venus Amathusia !

There round truth had poesy her veiling
Sweetly still and magically wound—
Through creation flowed full life unfailing,
And what ne'er could feel, a feeling found.
On the breast of love to press in trances
Given to Nature was a higher grace,
All, all showed th' initiated glances,
All, all, of a God the trace.

Where but now, our wisest have decided,
Soulless turns a fiery ball on high,
Helios then his golden chariot guided
In the still repose of majesty.

Oreads all these mountain heights were filling,
In that tree a Dryad had her home,
From the urns of lovely Naiads spilling
Sprang the streams in silver foam.

Once that laurel twined to give protection,
Niobe is silent in that stone,
Syrinx' reed resounded her dejection,
Philomela's grove her plaintive tone,
Drank that brook Demeter's every tear, a
Tribute to Persephone outpoured,
And from yonder hillock hailed Cythera—
Ah! 'twas vain! her bosom's lord.

Heavenly beings then, their heights forsaken,
Still came down Deucalion's race to view,
Leto's son the shepherd staff had taken
Pyrrha's lovely daughters to subdue.
Sweetly there 'twixt men and Gods and heroes
Amor did a band of union twine,
Mortals worshipped with the Gods and heroes
At the Amathusian shrine.

Gloomy earnest, drear renunciation,
Could no place in your gay worship win;
Every heart should beat with glad pulsation
For to you was Gladness' self akin.
Sanctity nought then but beauty shielded;
Of enjoyment ne'er the God ashamed
Where shy blushing the Camena yielded,
Where the Grace his fancy claimed.

Bright as palaces your temples ravished,
Sports of heroes could your fame extol
Where at Isthmian feasts the crowns were lavished,
And the chariots thundered to the goal.
Richly woven, soul-abounding dances
Circled round your altar's lustre rare ;
Wreaths of triumph decked your brows' expanses,
Crowns the fragrance of your hair.

Evoe with the Thyrsus wildly swinging
And the panthers in their gorgeous span
Herald him who greatest joy is bringing ;
Faun and Satyr reeling in the van !
Frenzied Mænads spring about him, showing
Praises of his wine in dance and bound,
And the host's full cheeks, all purple glowing,
Joyous send the beaker round.

Then no grisly spectre stalked abhorrent
By the bed of death. A kiss was all
From the lips that life's last flight could warrant,
And his torch a Genius let fall.
Ev'n in Orcus, strictest justice dealing,
Held the scales a mortal by descent,
And the Thracian's plaint o'ercharged with feeling
Made the Erinnyes relent.

Then the glad shade saw what once delighted
In the Elysian groves again appear ;
True love by true consort was requited,
And his course was given the charioteer,

Sinks Admetus in thine arms, Alcestis,
 Linus' chords the wonted songs repeat,
 There regains once more his friend Orestes,
 And his arrows Philoctete.

Higher prizes strengthened him pursuing
 Through fierce struggle virtue's toilsome road,
 Glorious they who mighty deeds were doing
 Climbed in triumph to the blest abode.
 At his presence who his dead was claiming
 Bowed in silence all that host divine ;
 On the pilot from Olympus flaming
 Through the waves the twin stars shine.

Lovely world, where art thou? Turn and linger
 Sweet spring-blossoming of Nature's grace !
 Ah, the fairyland where dwells the singer
 Holds alone thy fable-haunted trace.
 Dead and cold is all the landscape grieving,
 No divinity can meet my gaze ;
 Ah, for of that picture warm and living
 Nothing but the shadow stays.

Fall'n are all those blossoms, fall'n and perished
 In the north's, the shudder-working breath ;
 That the One might be enriched and cherished
 All this world of gods must yield to death.
 Sad I search the starry vault spread o'er me—
 Thou, Selene, there no longer found,
 Through the woods I call'd, the waves—they bore me,
 Ah, their echoes' empty sound.

All unconscious of the joys she squanders,
Ne'er entranced with her own light's excess,
Blind to guiding spirit as she wanders,
Ne'er the happier for my happiness,
Void of feeling for her Artist's honour,
Like the pendule's dead mechanic beat,
Slavish bears the burden laid upon her
Nature in her Gods' retreat.

That new life to-morrow she may kindle
Her own grave to-day she digs again,
And the moons on ever equal spindle
Wind themselves in endless wax and wane.
Idly homeward all the Gods are going
To the land of song, nor waste their pains
On a world, its leading strings outgrowing,
Its own equipoise sustains.

Ay, they home returned, and as they vanished
Was the lovely, was the lofty reft,
All fair colours, all life's music banished,
And the soulless word alone was left.
Snatched from out time's flood, and rescue given,
Hover they on Pindus' heights divine ;
That which song's immortal life should live in
Must the mortal life resign.

THE CRANES OF IBYCUS

To strife of songs, of chariots flying,
On Corinth's neck of land that vying
In gladness all Greek races blend,
Pressed Ibycus, of Gods the friend.
On him the gift of song bestowing
Apollo sweetest accents lent ;
From Rhegium with the God o'erflowing
Propped on light staff his steps he bent.

Now rising Acrocorinth trances
On mountain ridge the wanderer's glances,
He treads Poseidon's grove of pine
With shudder owning the divine.
Nought stirs around, but linked together
Long flights of cranes attendant wing,
Which seek the warmth of Southern weather,
Far stretched their squadron's dusky string.

“ Hail that across the wave, these regions
With me sought out, ye friendly legions !
As a good omen ye I claim,—
My lot and yours are just the same.

Hither we come from out the distance
And ask a hospitable roof—
Welcome to us the friend's assistance
Harm from the stranger keeps aloof."

And cheerfully he onward presses,
And gains the inmost wood's recesses ;
There suddenly in fierce array
Two murderers bar the narrow way.
Now for the combat must he nerve him,
Yet soon exhausted sinks the hand
That on the lyre's light strings could serve him,
But ne'er the bow's rude strength had spanned.

He calls on men, the Gods beseeches,
His crying no deliverer reaches ;
How far soe'er his voice may sound
No living creature here is found.
"And must I perish thus forsaken,
On stranger soil, without a tear,
By ruffian hand my life be taken,
And no avenging arm appear !"

And, as he sinks to earth sore stricken,
With rustling wings the crane flights quicken ;
He hears, for sight its help denies,
Close to their harsh discordant cries.
"Be ye, the cranes above me wheeling,
If other voice no echo wakes,
The ghastly murder's woe revealing !"
Exclaims he, and his eyeball breaks.

The naked corse men soon discover,
And, though by wounds defaced all over,
The host in Corinth sees full clear
The features that to him are dear.
“And is it thus that I must find thee?
I who had longed with pine leaf crown
To wreath the singer’s brows, and bind thee
Bright in the blaze of thy renown!”

And hearing are all guests dejected
Who at Poseidon’s feast collected,
All Greece is stricken with the smart,
His loss is felt in every heart.
Before the judges streams the nation,
Its rage demands, in seething flood,
For the wronged spirit expiation,
To appease it with the murderer’s blood.

Yet where the trace from all these masses,
This surging throng that aye repasses,
Lured hither by the games’ display,
That the fell miscreant can betray?
Have robbers, dastard, slain the poet?
Or envious has some hidden foe?
Helios alone has skill to show it
Who lights up all things here below.

Perchance with insolence he paces
Right through the midst of the Greek races
While vengeance seeks him all the time
Enjoys the profits of his crime.

Bids to the very Gods defiance
Ev'n on their temples' threshold, makes
Bold with the human wave alliance
That on the stage's portal breaks.

For tier on tier close packed are sitting,
The stage's pillars well-nigh splitting—
Hither they stream from far and near
The Grecian peoples, waiting here,
Hoarse murmuring like ocean surges,
With men while swarming, as it grew,
In ever-widening circles verges
The building on Heaven's central blue.

Who can recount the nations, telling
Their names, the crowd of guests are swelling?
From Cecrops' city, Aulis' strand,
From Phocis, from the Spartans' land,
From gulfs they came with islands studded,
From Asia's distant coast and sea,
To hearken as the chorus flooded
The stage with gruesome melody.

And strict and stern with ancient rigour
Slow paces out in measured figure
That chorus from the further ground,
Circling the theatre around.
Such stride can claim no earthly woman!
Their birth is not from race of man!
And far transcending all that's human
Their stature with its giant span.

Their loins a long black mantle swathing,
In fleshless hands they brandish, scathing,
The firebrand with its dull red glow,
Within their cheeks no blood doth flow ;
And where the locks are clust'ring gladder
On human brows with trancing spell,
There may you see the snake, the adder,
Its bag full charged with poison swell.

And awful they, in circle wheeling,
Begin the chanted hymn which pealing
Rends with sharp thrust the heart, and winds
Tighter that band the guilty binds.
Stealing the senses, heart deceiving,
The song of the Erinnyes rings,
The hearer's very marrow cleaving,
And suffers not the lyre's light strings :

“ Well is't with him who pure and sainted
Preserves the childlike soul untainted !
With vengeance him we draw not near,
He wanders free through life's career ;
But woe and woe to him concealing
Foul murder's deed from human sight !
Close on his footsteps are we stealing,
The fearful progeny of night.

“ And trusts he flight his thralldom looses ?
Winged are we there, we cast our nooses
Around his foot with tightening thralls
That helpless to the earth he falls.

Thus on we chase him, never weary,
No penitence can urge a plea,
On, onward to the shadows dreary,
Not even there to set him free."

Thus singing, dance they in a bevy,
And on the theatre lies heavy
Like hush of death deep stillness here,
As if the God himself were near.
And solemn then, with ancient rigour,
Circling the theatre around,
Slow pacing back in measured figure
They vanish in the further ground.

'Twi't truth yet and deception flutters
In doubt each breast, and trembling utters
Its homage to the fearful pow'r
Can watch and judge in secret hour,
Inscrutable, unfathomed dealing,
Dark skeins of destiny that twines,
To the deep heart itself revealing,
Yet flies before the sunlight shines.

There all at once from topmost benches
A voice upon the stillness trenches :
"See there, see there, Timotheus,
The cranes, the cranes of Ibycus!"
And sudden darkens heaven all over,
And o'er the theatre on high,
In dusky squadron seen to hover,
A flight of cranes is wheeling by.

“Of Ibycus!” The name so treasured
Stirs in each breast new grief unmeasured,
And as in ocean wave on wave
So mouth to mouth the signal gave :
“Of Ibycus! whom we are weeping?
Him whom the hand of murderer slew?
What can he mean? What secret keeping?
What have those cranes with him to do?”

And louder ever grows the question,
And boding through each heart suggestion
Like lightning flashes: “Have a care,
Your might, Eumenides, is there!
Avenged the poet by this token,
The murderer stands self-betrayed!
Seize on him who the word has spoken,
And him to whom the word was said!”

Yet scarce that word his lips had quitted,
How gladly had he held them knitted;
In vain, those lips with terror pale
Of conscious guilt soon tell the tale.
They're seized and dragged before the session,
Stage to tribunal yielding room,
And straight the miscreants make confession,
Struck by the avenging flash of doom.

JOAN OF ARC'S FAREWELL

(FROM "THE MAID OF ORLEANS")

FAREWELL, ye mountains, ye belovèd pastures,
Ye still and cosy valleys, fare ye well !
Johanna ne'er again through you shall wander,
Johanna bids you evermore farewell !
Ye meadows that I watered, and ye saplings
The which I planted, burst in joyous green !
Farewell ye grottos and ye cooling fountains,
Thou echo, lovely voice of this my vale,
That answered oft my songs, their accents learning,
Johanna goes, and never is returning.

Ye scenes of all my joys so still and quiet
I leave you here behind me, and for ay !
Ye lambkins scattered o'er the heaths run riot !
A flock without a shepherd from this day,
Another herd to tend goes forth the fiat,
In danger's field and in the bloody fray,
Such is the spirit's call sent forth to prove me,
No idle and no earthly longings move me.

For He to Moses who of old displayed Him
In flame of burning bush on Horeb's height,
To stand before the stubborn Pharaoh bade him,
Who Jesse's faithful son chose for the fight,

And, shepherd as he was, His champion made him,
For shepherds aye found favour in His sight,
He spake from yonder boughs His will declaring :
“Go forth ! on earth for me thy witness bearing !

“With rugged brass shalt thou thy limbs be lacing,
With steel be covering thy tender breast,
Man's love determined from thine heart effacing,
The sinful flames of idle earthly zest.
Ne'er shall the bridal wreath thy locks be gracing,
No cherished babe shall on thy bosom rest,
Yet thee I'll make with war's transcendent glory
Before all earthly women, famed in story.”

“Then when in fight the boldest are despairing,
When France her latest destiny draws near,
Thou shalt aloft my oriflamme be bearing,
And, as the reaper swift the bending ear,
Beat down the haughty conqueror in his daring,
Reverse for him good fortune's circling sphere,
Those hero sons of France deliverance render,
And Rheims set free, and crown thy king in splendour.”

A token has been promised me from Heaven,
'Tis He the helmet sends, it comes from Him !
With strength of Gods its steel my frame doth leaven,
And through me flames the might of cherubim.
Forth to the battle's tumult I am driven,
The tempest's fury seethes in every limb ;
I hear the battle-cry loud menace dealing,
The war-horse trample and the trumpets pealing.

LYRICS FROM "TELL"

THE FISHER BOY

THE lake is all smiles, the bather inviting,
Sleeping the child on the green bank lies,
Then flute-like sweet tinkles
His ears are delighting,
Like the voices of Angels
In Paradise.

And as he in ecstasy starts from his rest,
The waters are lapping as high as his breast,
"Dear child!" the deep murmurs,
"Mine, mine must thou be!
I lure the fair sleeper,
I draw him to me."

THE COWHERD

YE meadows farewell!
Ye pastures all glowing;
The herdsman is going,
The summer is o'er.
Again for the hill shall the vale be forsaken
When the cuckoo calls, when sweet songs awaken,

When flowers anew the glad earth array,
When the brooks are running in loveliest May.
 Ye meadows farewell !
 Ye pastures all glowing ;
 The herdsman is going,
 The summer is o'er.

THE HUNTER

LOUD thunder the heights and sharp quivers the bridge,
No fear has the hunter on dizziest ridge,
 He strides in his daring
 O'er ice-fields away,
 No spring there is shining,
 No green on the spray.
And mist 'neath his feet like an ocean spread o'er
The cities of men he discerneth no more.
 Through rifted cloud only
 The world may be seen,
 Deep under the waters
 The meadows' fresh green.

ON THE OPENING OF THE NEW CENTURY

NOBLE friend, to peace where shall be given,
Where shall freedom place of refuge view?
Now the century forth in storm is driven,
And foul murder ushers in the new.

And the lands' close ties are rent asunder,
And the ancient forms their hold resign,
Ocean cannot check loud conquest's thunder,
Not the Nile God, nor the dear old Rhine.

Two, the mightiest of the nations, clasping
Grapple for the world's exclusive sway,
Liberties of all the countries grasping,
Shake the trident, bid the lightnings play.

Gold outweighs each land in their esteeming,
And, like Brennus with his barbarous might,
Flings the Frank his sword-blade wrought and gleaming
In the scale of justice and of right.

As the polypus its feelers, urges
 Trading fleets the Briton's lust for gain,
 And free Amphitrite's bounding surges
 Would he fetter as his own domain.

Restless and unchecked his course he presses
 To the South Pole's stars none yet descries,
 Tracks each distant coast, each isle's recesses,
 Only stopping short of Paradise.

Ah! 'tis vain the charts of every quarter
 Searching through, to find the blissful sphere
 Where her garden green may Freedom water,
 Manhood's lustrous youth grow never sere.

Endless lies the world before thy glances,
 Ev'n the ships scarce reach its utmost bound,
 Yet on all that measureless expanse is
 For ten happy ones no shelter found.

In the inmost heart's still, holy spaces
 Must thou flee from life's too busy throng,
 Dreamland's realm alone shows Freedom's traces,
 Beauty's self can only bloom in song.

TO JOY

Joy, bright spark the Gods are shedding,
Daughter of Elysian race,
Drunk with fiery draught we're treading,
Heavenly one, thy holy place.
Thine enchantments bind to others
Those which custom harshly clave ;
All mankind become as brothers
Where thy gentle wing may wave.

CHORUS

Be embraced, ye teeming millions !
The wide world this kiss we give !
Loving Father sure must live
Brothers—o'er the stars' pavilions.

Whom the mighty cast's successes
Made of faithful friend the friend,
Who a darling wife possesses,
His rejoicing let him blend !
Ay—who but one soul is hailing
On this earthly globe his own !
And who cannot, let him wailing
Steal from out this band alone.

TO JOY

CHORUS

All that earth's great circle owneth,
 Homage pay to sympathy !
 To the stars our leader she
 Where th' Unknown in glory throneth.

Joy's the draught that every being
 From the breasts of Nature drew ;
 Good and evil, all agreeing,
 Tread her path which roses strew.
 Kisses gave us, vines has planted,
 Tried in death the friend she showed ;
 Pleasure to the worm was granted,
 And the cherub stands 'fore God.

CHORUS

Bow ye down, ye teeming millions ?
 World, thy Maker didst discern ?
 O'er the stars his dwelling learn ;
 Seek him o'er the stars' pavilions !

Joy is the strong spring contriving
 Of eternal Nature's soul.
 Joy, still joy the wheels is driving
 Which the great world's clock control.
 Flowers she lures from bud that cases,
 Suns from firmament on high,
 Spheres she rolls through the vast spaces
 Searcher's tube can never spy.

CHORUS

Glad as suns heaven's leading rallies
 Through its gorgeous plain to fly,
 Brothers, on, to victory
 Joyous as a hero sallies.

Truth, thy fiery mirror keepest ;
 Thence her smiles the seeker greet.
 To the heights of virtue steepest
 Guides she still the sufferer's feet.
 Faith, thy sunny mountain teaches
 Where aloft her banners blow,
 Through the bursting coffins' breaches
 Angel choirs her presence show.

CHORUS

Bravely still endure, ye millions !
 For the better world endure !
 The great God's reward is sure
 There above the stars' pavilions.

Gods we cannot make requital ;
 To be like them's noblest choice.
 Grief and want to help have title,
 With the joyful ones rejoice.
 Rancour and revenge be hidden,
 Pardoned be our mortal foe ;
 No remorse to gnaw him bidden,
 Nor the blinding tear to flow.

R

TO JOY

CHORUS

Cancelled be our debit pages !
 Reconciled the whole world here !
 Brothers—o'er the starry sphere
 God the Judge our judgment gauges.

Joy's bright bubbles brim the beaker ;
 Golden blood of grapes to share
 Makes the cannibal grow meeker,
 Hero courage gives despair—
 Brothers, spring from off your seating
 As full charged the goblets pass,
 Toss the foam to Heaven for greeting :
 The good spirit's be this glass !

CHORUS

Whom the hymn of seraph praises,
 Whom the stars, that circling, pass,
 THE GOOD SPIRIT'S BE THIS GLASS,
 There above the starry mazes !

Firm resolve by pain unshaken,
 Help to innocence in woe,
 Lasting pledge of oaths once taken,
 Truth towards both friend and foe,
 Manly pride where kings are seated—
 Brothers, cost it all we prize—
 Be its crowns to merit meted,
 Down with all the brood of lies !

CHORUS

Knit the holy circle tighter,
Swear by wine of golden hue,
To this vow ye will be true,
Swear it by the Stars' Requirer !

THE IDEALS

AND wilt thou faithless from me sever,
With each enticing fantasy,
With thy sharp griefs, thy joys, for ever
With all inexorable flee?
Can nought, thou fugitive, arrest thee,
Oh my life's golden time? 'tis vain!
Thy waters hurry down, possess thee
Eternity's unfathomed main.

Extinguished are the suns that lighted
My youthful path with cheering spell,
The fond ideals all are blighted
Which once the drunken heart could swell;
That sweetest of beliefs is shivered
In forms which dream or fancy bare,
To hard reality delivered
What once so godlike was, so fair.

As once with longing supplication
Pygmalion the stone embraced,
Till glowing poured itself sensation
On the cold cheeks of marble chaste,

Ev'n so my loving arms were straining
Round Nature's form with youthful zest,
Until her breath, her warmth were gaining
New life upon my poet breast.

And all my fiery impulse sharing,
Dumb as she was, a voice she found,
Returned the kiss of love unsparing,
And knew my heart's expressive sound ;
Then lived for me the tree, the flower,
The fountain sang in silver fall,
The very soulless felt the power,
The echo of my life, enthrall.

One circling All with mightiest striving
Bade the cramped breast expanding grow,
Launch out into the tide of living
In deed and word, in sound and show.
How grandly all this world was moulded
Long as the bud concealed the plant ;
How little has it since unfolded ;
This little, ah ! how dwarf'd and scant !

How winged the youth by venturous daring,
Rapt with the illusion dreams bestowed,
No care as yet his sense ensnaring,
Sprang forth upon life's tempting road.
The flight of his grand projects swayed him
Up to the æther's faintest star ;
Whither that wing had not conveyed him
Was nought too high, was nought too far.

How lightly thither he advances,
What is too hard for happiness !
Before the car of life in dances
How joyous those companions press !
Love with the sweet reward of loving,
Luck with the golden chaplet won,
Fame with the starry crown approving,
Truth in the brightness of the sun.

Yet, ah ! with half the way before them
Were these companions lost to view,
Their faithless steps far distant bore them,
And one by one they all withdrew.
Flown hence was Luck on lightest pinion,
Unquenched the thirst for knowledge stayed,
Doubt's lurid tempests held dominion
Where Truth her sun-bright form arrayed.

The sacred crowns that Fame had cherished,
I saw on meanest brow defiled,
Too quick had Love's sweet season perished,
So short, alas ! the spring that smiled !
And ever stiller, ever dimmer,
More desolate the rugged road ;
And scarce the while a feeble glimmer
Hope on the gloomy pathway showed.

Of all that surging train that plied me,
Who constant, loving, held me tight ?
Who stands consoling still beside me
And follows to the House of Night ?

Thou, Friendship, that all wounds reparaest,
Thy hand's soft gentle pressure brought,
Who all life's burdens loving sharest,
So early found as early sought.

And thou who gladly with her matest
When the soul's storm she lulls to rest,
My labour, thou that slow createst,
Wilt ne'er destroy, art ne'er distrest,
That on the Eternal building's stages
But grain on grain of sand uprears,
Yet from the great debt of the ages
Can blot out minutes, days, and years.

LAURA AT THE HARPSICHORD

LAURA, masters when the chords thy finger,
Statue-like unconscious there to linger
 Disembodied then I stand :
Thou dost wield of death and life the issues,
Mighty as from thousand nervous tissues
 Souls the sorceress can command.

Reverent then to listen to thee
Airs with softer rustle woo thee ;
 Riveted to hear the song
 Whirl'd in endless motion throng,
Drinking in the rapture's fill,
Listening natures all are still.
 Chantress ! these with tones thy spell,
 Me with glances, doth compel.

Soul-abounding harmonies by legions
 In voluptuous passion swim
On the chords, as from their heavenly regions
 Start new-born the Seraphim ;

As from Chaos' giant arm escaping,
 Thrust out when creation's storm was shaping,
 Suns burst flashing from the night,
 Stream the tones in magic might.

Lovely now, as o'er smooth pebbles' whiteness
 Ripple streams of silver brightness,
 Now to pomp majestic grown
 Like the thunder's organ tone,
 Bursting now thence in storm, from the rock faces
 Rushing and foaming as cataract races ;
 Sweet then the murmurs rove
 Coaxing and cooing,
 As through the aspen grove
 Winds that are wooing.

Deep now, melancholy gloom oppressing,
 Through dead wastes, with whispers awful nights
 possessing,
 As mid howling of lost souls
 Waves of tears the dark Cocytus rolls.

Maiden, speak ! I charge thee, teach that science :
 Art with loftier spirits in alliance ?
 This, nay lie not, I beseech,
 Of Elysium is't the speech ?

THE SHARING OF EARTH

THERE! take the world! spake Zeus from heights
transcending

To men on earth, take it, 'tis yours in fee.

I grant it you for heritage unending ;

Yet share amongst you brotherly.

Hastes then, whate'er has hands, to fill the niches.

Both young and old, quick impulse stirring, came.

Grasped at earth's fruits the husbandman for riches,

The squireling ranged the woods for game.

All that his stores will hold the trader seizes,

The abbot's choice the rarest, oldest wine,

The king bars streets and bridges as he pleases

And spake : The tenth of all is mine.

Quite late, when giv'n long since the last decision,

The Poet came, from farthest clime restored ;

Alas, where'er he looked nought met his vision,

And everything had found its lord.

Woe's me! and am I then alone of mortals
Forgotten, I thy truest son, thine own?
Thus with a loud lament he stormed the portals,
And flung him down before Jove's throne.

If in the land of dreams thou wert abiding,
The God makes answer, quarrel not with me,
Where wast thou then, mankind the world dividing?
I was, the Poet said, with thee.

Upon thy countenance mine eye suspended,
Upon thy Heaven's harmonies mine ear;
Forgive the spirit that, with light so splendid
Intoxicate, lost earthly gear!

What's to be done? spake Zeus—the world is given,
Chase, harvest, mart, my hand no more bestows;
Wilt thou with me be dweller in my Heaven?
Oft as thou com'st to thee it shall unclose.

MOUNTAIN SONG

By the precipice leadeth the dizzied ascent,
'Twixt life is and death in its guiding ;
The desolate way by the giants is pent
Eternal destruction betiding,
And wilt not the slumbering fury awaken,
In stillness thy path through the terrors be taken.

The terrible depths by a bridge are spanned
High over the sheer brink curving,
It ne'er was erected by mortal hand,
For none were such hardihood nerving,
The stream boils under it night and day,
Spews up at it ever, ne'er sweeps it away.

Black yawns a grim portal of horror, as though
'Twere the land of the shadow you dreaded,
There smiling a landscape in exquisite show
Where the spring and the autumn are wedded ;
From the troubles of life, from its woes that assail
Without cease, might I fly to so blissful a vale.

Four streams rush adown to the plain, their source
Close hidden gives never warning ;
To the world's four highways they take their course,
To the evening, north, noon, and the morning.
And ev'n as their mother impetuous bore them,
They dash on, are lost, there is none to restore them.

Two peaks soar aloft to the blue expanse,
High over all human races,
There veiled in a golden haze they dance
The clouds, Heaven's daughters, their paces.
On high they're pursuing their lonely career,
No witness, no earthly one, ever comes near.

The Virgin, the Queen sits enthroned on high
In clear unperishing lustre,
Her brow she enwreathes the most wondrously
With a crown of the diamond's cluster ;
The sun shoots upon her his arrows of light,
They but gild her with gold and no warmth they ignite.

FROM HEINE

EX-NIGHT-WATCHER

(ROMANZERO)

SOUR'D, they say, in temper quit he
Stuttgart where the Neckar strays,
And to Munich, Isar's city,
Came as manager of plays.

That's a lovely situation !
Glorious Bock too sparkles here,
Fantasy, imagination
Stirring up, the best of beer.

Yet the wretched Intendant, he
Wanders round, so runs the bruit,
Melancholy as a Dante,
Like Lord Byron, gloomy, mute.

Finds in comedies no pleasure,
Not in verse, however vile,
Tragedies' most tragic measure
Reads, no glimmer of a smile

EX-NIGHT-WATCHER

Many a fair one fondly fancies
O'er his grief she may prevail,
Reach his heart, but loving glances
Break upon his coat of mail.

Nannerl with quaint headgear laden
Briskly coos to soothe his pain ;
"To a nunnery, poor maiden !"
Snarls he like a princely Dane.

Friends with fruitless pains are giving
Best advice that mortal knows ;
"Take thy fill," they sing, "of living
While the lamp of life yet glows !"

Is there nought to make you happy
Here in this enchanting town,
That from many a lively chappie
Gains so much of its renown ?

Truly of late days to plague us
Many a man is gone from there,
Many an excellent Choragus
Whom we find it hard to spare.

Massmann, had he only tarried !
He full surely at the last
All your sadness would have harried,
Turning somersaults so fast.

Schelling none replaces, losing
 Him was of the highest worth ;
 As philosopher amusing,
 And as mimic best on earth.

That he left us who enshrined him
 As Valhalla's founder, yet
 All his manuscripts behind him ;
 That's the loss we most regret.

With Cornelius too was borne off
 His disciples' linked array,
 All its long hair it had shorn off
 And in that its virtue lay.

For he laid, the Master knowing,
 Magic spells upon the hair,
 Truly, by the motion's showing,
 Something that had life was there.

Dead is Görres, that hyæna !
 When the Holy Office fell
 All who watched him might have seen a
 Tear from his red eyeslit well.

* * * * *
 * * * * *

Aye, Monacho Monachorum
 Nowadays is refuge fit
 The *virorum obscurorum*
 Who are famed through Hutten's wit.

EX-NIGHT-WATCHER

Ah, how Hutten's name bewitches !
Wake, ex-watcher of the night !
There the cowls are, here the switch is,
Smite as you were wont to smite !

Scourge them with relentless rigour
As the Ulrich did before ;
When he struck with knightly vigour
How they all began to roar !

Laughed Erasmus with such frenzy,
Full of rapture at the joke,
That the outburst cured his quinsy,
In his throat the ulcer broke.

At the Ebernburg with laughter
Sickingen made frantic sound,
And the echo followed after
All the German kingdoms round.

With one peal of laughter ringing,
In which old and young concur,
Wittenberg rejoices, singing
Gaudeamus igitur !

Beating putrid cowls one catches
Any quantity of fleas,
And full oft must Hutten scratch his
Vexèd skin, the bites so tease.

Nathless *alea est jacta*

Was the warrior's battle-cry,
And so crickt 'a and so crackt 'a
Pulices and clerici.

Ex-night-watcher, tidings-giver,
Feel'st thou not thy bosom glow?
Stir thee by the Isar river,
Shake off spleen and care and woe.

Lift them up to fresh endeavour,
Thy long legs, of progress hight,
Cows how coarse, how fine soever,
They are cows, upon them! smite!

But a sigh to heave and turn his
Struggling hands an effort quite;
"Wearied now with Europe's journeys
My long legs, of progress hight.

"Corns they have for all their inches,
German shoes with narrow toes,
I know well where the shoe pinches;
Leave me, leave me to repose!"

NOTE.—The hero of this satire is Dingelstedt, a German poet of the last century.

THE SLAVE-SHIP

THE supercargo Mynheer van Koek
Sits reckoning in the cuddy,
The cargo's total he calculates,
The probable profits his study.

“The rubber is good, the pepper is good,
Bags, barrels three hundred swelling ;
I've gold-dust, ivory, but all
Are the ebony goods excelling.

“Six hundred negroes by barter got
Dirt cheap from Senegal's sources.
Their flesh is firm, their sinews are strung
Like iron of tensest forces.

“I got them, brandy in exchange,
Glass beads and cutlery giving ;
Eight hundred per cent I stand to gain
If only the half are living.

“If only three hundred blacks survive
In the harbour of Rio Janeiro,
I pouch a hundred ducats a head
From the house of Gonzalez Pereiro.”

Yet sudden is Mynheer van Koek
Disturbed contemplative bliss in,
Comes the ship's surgeon upon the scene,
The Doctor van der Smissen.

That is a figure gaunt and lean,
A nose on which red warts cluster—
“Now, medical officer,” cries van Koek,
“How do my dear blacks muster?”

With thanks for the kind inquiry, he :
“I come ill tidings telling,
That the mortality to-night
Portentously is swelling.

“The daily death-rate has been two,
But seven to-day were smitten,
Males four and females three ; the loss
Ev'n now in the log I've written.

“The bodies I straitly scrutinised,
For oft these knavish fellows
Feign to be dead, that they may be
Flung over into the billows.

"I took the irons from the dead ;
And as is my regular custom,
I bade the sailors overboard
In the early morning thrust 'em.

"There shot up straight from the teeming wave
Huge shoals of sharks, that second,
So greedy they are for negro flesh ;
My pensioners they're reckoned.

"Since first our vessel had left the coast
Close on her track they're thronging ;
The beasts have scented the corpses' reek
With snuffle of gluttonous longing.

"The way that the monsters snap at the dead
Is quite comic to all beholders !
This grabs the head, that grabs the leg,
The rest gorge the sides and shoulders.

"When all is devoured, they wallow and shoot
Well pleased round the vessel's planking,
And glower at me with suggestive look,
As if for their breakfast thanking."

Yet sighing breaks upon his speech
Van Koek : "But how diminish
This evil? and how can I the growth
Of this mortality finish?"

The Doctor makes answer : " By their own fault
Full many negroes have fainted ;
'Tis their foul breath has the purer air
Of the hold so grievously tainted.

" And melancholy many has slain,
Because unto death they bored are ;
Fresh air with music and a dance
May remedy the disorder."

Van Koek exclaims : " That's good advice !
Dear medical officer, grander
Your wisdom than Aristotle knew,
The tutor of Alexander.

" The President of the Society
In Delft for high tulip breeding
Is clever enough, but the sense you show
His faculty's far exceeding.

" Then music ! music ! the blacks shall dance
On the upper deck to its playing,
And he at the hop who is not amused,
Him shall the lash be flaying."

From the blue pavilion spread on high
Thousands of stars are beaming,
Like the eyes of lovely women, large,
With longing and lustre gleaming.

They're looking down on the sea's expanse
Which far away is wrapping
Phosphoric flashing purple haze ;
The waves voluptuous lapping.

Upon the slave-ship flutters no sail,
She lies as if stripped of rigging ;
Yet lanterns glimmer along the deck
Where music is lightsome jiggling.

The steersman is sweeping the fiddle strings,
The drum, hear the cabin-boy thump it,
The cook from the flute draws sweetest sounds,
The Doctor is blowing the trumpet.

Some hundred negroes, women and men,
Are shouting and twirling and springing
Like mad things there ; at every bound
Their irons in cadence ringing.

They stamp on the planks with boisterous glee,
And each black fair doth languish
Clasping her naked comrade's waist ;
At intervals tones of anguish.

The boatswain is *maitre des plaisirs*,
By the lashes that on them lighted
Has the sluggish dancers a stimulus giv'n,
To cheerfulness incited.

And diddledum dee and tantarara !
The noise from the depth arouses
The monsters of the watery world,
Where each one stupidly drowns.

Drunken with sleep, come swimming along
Huge sharks, full many a hundred ;
They glower with rapt look up at the ship,
As if they puzzled and wondered.

They note that the breakfast hour's not yet,
They yawn as of sleep they're scanted,
Wide spreading their jaws that down to the throat
With teeth like a saw are planted.

And diddledum dee and tantarara—
The dances are never ending.
The sharks in a passion of discontent
Their tails are biting and rending.

I think that for music they have no taste ;
Like most of their stamp, they show it.
“Trust thou no beast that doth not love
Music !” says Albion's poet.

And tantarara and diddledum dee—
The dances ne'er cease their motion ;
By the foremast stands Mynheer van Koek,
And folds his hands in devotion :

“Spare the black sinners’ lives, oh Lord,
For Christ’s sake whom we cherish !
They may have provoked thee, yet thou know’st
They’re stupid as beasts that perish.

“Spare but their lives for Christ’s dear sake
Who died for our salvation !
For if I don’t land three hundred head
All’s up with my speculation.”

RHAMPSINITUS

(ROMANZERO)

As the monarch Rhampsinitus
Paced within the golden hall
Of his daughter, she was laughing,
Laughing were her maidens all.

Laughed the blackamoors, the eunuchs
Chimed in grandly with the first,
Ev'n the mummies, ev'n the sphinxes
Laughed till they were like to burst.

Said the Princess, "I made certain
I'd your treasure's thief trepanned,
But a dead man's arm he carried,
And he left it in my hand.

"Now that treasure's thief I fathom,
How your treasure hoards he mars,
Breaks into your treasure-chambers
Spite of locks and bolts and bars.

“ Magic keys to him are given,
Keys unlocking everywhere
Doors of every kind, withstand them
Not the strongest portals dare.

“ I am not a sturdy portal,
Far too much resistance cost,
While this night I guarded treasures
I myself a treasure lost.”

Thus the Princess spake with laughter
And she skipped across the floor,
Lifted up their voice her maidens
With the eunuchs, laughed the more.

On one day the whole of Memphis
Laughed, and every crocodile
Reared its grinning jaws ecstatic
From the slimy yellow Nile,

As each heard the trumpets sounding,
Heard too by the riverside
This important proclamation
By the royal herald cried :

“ Rhampsinitus, Dei gratiâ
Of and eke in Egypt king,
To our trusty, well-belovèd,
Greeting and goodwill we bring !

“In the night that June the third and
Fourth divided, in the year
Thirteen hundred four and twenty
Ere the birth of Christ, 'tis clear

“That some thief a mass of jewels
From our treasure-chamber stole,
Next ourselves and then our daughter
Managed sliely to cajole.

“To prevent such theft in future
And withal that we may prove
Our regard for the offender,
All our sympathy and love,

“We will give him as his consort
The sole daughter of our race,
And as on our throne successor
Grant him princely rank and place.

“Seeing we know nought at present
Of our son-in-law's address,
This rescript our gracious purpose
Fitly shall to him express.

“Given this third of January
Mil. trecent. vigint. et sex
Annos A.C.N. :¹ subscriptum
Nobis ; Rhampsinitus Rex.”

¹ 1326 B.C., which Heine does not seem to have noticed was two years before the theft, as that is said to have occurred 1324 B.C.

RHAMPSINITUS

Rhampsinitus kept his promise,
Gave the thief his daughter's hand,
Dying left him to inherit
Egypt's crown and Egypt's land.

Then he reigned much like the others,
Fostered talents, likewise trade,
Little it is said was stolen
While the government he swayed.

FROM HERRMANN LINGG

NORTHERLY SUMMER NIGHT

NORTHERLY Summer Night glitters with snow,
Glitters Lake Hertha with tidal flow.

Roseate twilight, so calm in its shine,
Drops on the waves with a sparkle like wine.

There 'twixt the beeches that glow on the strand
Shimmers the holiest sea-girt land.

Shimmers the altar of sacrifice drear,
Hertha's, the Goddess that blesses the year.

Solstice of summer, holiest night,
Now on the shore for thee victims are dight.

Snowy-white horses, the blood in their veins
Noblest, stand mettlesome, tossing their manes,

Snort in the air with their hoofs' quick stroke,
Mounts from their nostrils a sacrifice smoke.

T

Slaves of the Goddess, her slaves from their birth,
Lead the white horses with silvery girth.

They too the Goddess's victims decreed
Stand without arms, and made ready to bleed.

One an old man, uplifted his head
Joyfully, parted his lips, and said :

"Swift as the even-red hasten my breath,
Short as the summer night, short too is death.

Scarce it is quenched in the darkness, my sight
Shall be refreshed with eternity's light."

Spake, then a younger, uplifting his head,
"Old man, thy words do not comfort me," said.

"Short as the winter's day, poor and bare,
Seems me this living's so fugitive glare.

Fell I, aye, fell I a hero in fight,
Bright as the flame of the northerly night,

Then, aye, then had I lived and with right,
Woe's me ! I die in the wretchedest plight !"

Spake, from the smoking hearth sudden are poured
Priests of the Goddess with glittering sword,

Straight from the neck of the captives and foot
Spouts to the earth an atoning salute.

Forth and away to the waters they course,
Blood-dripping man upon blood-dripping horse

Swimming the foamy-capt billows along,
Fearful resounds the Druidical song.

Perishing glances, last time ere they fail,
Beams of the vanishing sunlight hail ;

Spirited neighing, last time ere it fail,
Peals in the echoing Hertha-vale.

Deeper and deeper they sink in the flood,
Darker and darker the shore and the wood,

Darker and stiller the wave and the shore,
Yet in the East the sky reddens once more.

Glow all the East with awakening light :
Short is the Northerly Summer Night !

FROM FRIEDRICH VON BODENSTEDT

IN PRAISE OF WINE

(“MIRZA SCHAFFY”)

FROM the fire spring of wine,
From the magic-gifted cup,
Poison, comfort, bubble up,
What is base and what is fine,
By the drinker's native merit,
By the worth that he inherit.

In his grossness deeply sunken
Lies the fool whom drink o'erpowers ;
If he drinks the fool is drunken,
Drink we, inspiration's ours.
Sparkle wit's best flashes to us,
Angel's speech on every lip see,
And a glow of fire runs through us,
And with beauty we are tipsy.

For this wine resembles rain,
That in filth is filth itself too,
Yet the while the well-tilled plain
Blessings and each man brings pelf to.

FROM GIUSTI

THE LAND OF THE DEAD

To us, the ghosts of Italy,
Mummies the womb produces,
The sexton's nurse when little, he
Fills eke the midwife's uses ;
With us the Prior wasted
Baptismal water's spillage,
And second death when tasted
Our funeral rite's a pillage.

Behold us here all fitted
With Adam's image duly ;
We look like flesh, we're truly
Mere ribs and shin-bones knitted
O souls in such delusion,
What do ye here on high ?
Resign ye, quit the intrusion,
Join the majority.

Ah, 'tis in vain to flatter
A dead race with its story !
Of liberty, of glory,
Ye skeletons, what matter ?

Say of what use are exequies
Where busts or garlands crumble?
Domine, detur requies,
Be the sole words we mumble.

See at all points, the power
Of this drear tomb obeying,
From brain to brain is straying
Where these poor spectres cower,
Thought that is grown obscurest
With grave-clothes for its fetters.
The world of art, the jurist,
And ev'n the reign of letters

Is all to death made over.
Niccolini's race is ended,
Manzoni's dust is blended
With dead the bookshelves cover.
And thou, in thy days' evening,
Lorenzo, whence thy lot
That thou the clay art leavening
With life that thou hast not?

What gift was Romagnosi's?
A shade by thought enlightened,
That from the living frightened
Eternity's reposes.
In death aloft he towered,
But living he was puny ;
Verily, since death's swoon, he
With greater life is dowered.

Of dead, both new and olden,
The inheritance enriches
Many so much beholden,
Who 'mongst the live have niches.
In right good faith the spender
Of all the wealth inherited,
The scrupulous heir, doth render
The honours that we merited.

What energy of living
In yonder parts we see !
Of grand vitality
The press its signs is giving.
Write, write, rewrite, the endeavour ;
Those geniuses vying
Twelve times a year in dying,
And there are living ever.

Oh people rained down thither
From midst the living, tell
What fancy brings you hither
'Mongst corpses to get well ?
Know either first or last
This air will cause fatality ;
Ev'n upon you 'twill cast
Sepulchral air's mortality.

Oh friars domineering,
Oh spies inquisitorial,
Lay down your steel censorial
So ignorantly shearing.

Proper to death, ye asses,
Is merit intellectual ;
Why, when the grave amasses,
As eunuchs yet expect you all ?

Why stand here forests pointed
With bayonets that bristle ;
Why northern beards anointed
On all this bone and gristle ?
What ! do dead bodies make you
Look with such jealousy ?
Go, study some anatomy
At least, the devil take you.

But Nature's glowing pages
Have entry there and exit ;
Their part, 'tis life that decks it,
While ours the tomb engages.
And further, if thou priest
Enough our life has thriven ;
Gino, we reached the highest
Ere birth to them was given.

Oh city walls, oh tumuli
Majestic in reposes,
Your ruins ev'n, in gloom you lie,
Form an apotheosis.
Level the very trenches
Barbarian thus unquiet,
Till the tomb's mastery quenches
These bones' too reckless riot.

That monument, undying
Watches the sun's bright lustre,
And sends the torches flying ;
The rose, the violet cluster,
The vine-leaf, olive-berry,
Are symbols all of grieving :
Oh loveliest cemetery
Gives envy to the living !

Corpses, to make an ending,
Each chatter as he pleases,
And look we, whither tending
This death, on what it seizes.
Psalms of the service chanted
The *Dies Iræ's* placed in ;
Oh shall there not to hasten
Be Day of Judgment granted ?

FROM ALFIERI

TASSO'S GRAVE

THE sublime singer's bones, of epics sole
Who in a modern strain reverberate made
The antique trump from one to the other pole,
Here in a tomb neglected thus are laid?
An urn to him who flew such flight, ah Rome,
Deniest thou, while to heaven his great name rings,
The while thy greater temple a catacomb
Thou mak'st to thy vile troop of bishop kings?
Ye crowd of corpses life who ne'er could taste,
Come forth, up with ye, and be purged of ye
The Vatican which ye with stench have filled.
There in the glorious centre be he placed :
Worthy of both the monument shall be
When Angelo to great Torquato build.

FROM ALFRED DE MUSSET

STANZAS

I LOVE to see in valley's gate
Desolate
Rise like tomb in sombre state
The black convent buildings' group ;
To see by the monastic fold,
Stern and cold,
On the sill of feudal hold,
Cross and holy water stoup.

Ye of Pyrenean years
More than peers,
Churches age relentless sears,
Meagre emblems sad and wan,
Ye that time ne'er learnt to crash,
Nor the flash,
Of great mountains ground to ash
Are ye not the skeleton ?

How I love your turrets grey,
On which play
Lightnings that the storm winds sway ;
How I love each sunken stair

STANZAS

In the walls' recesses wound
 Deeply round,
Making all the pillars sound
To the ringing hymn of prayer.

Oh! when hurricanes that gain
 On the plain,
By its hair the mountain strain
Autumn tints with saffron hue,
How I love in woods that groan
 Bending prone,
Abbey towers of ancient stone
Like two granite trunks to view.

I love to see when eve ingrains
 Purple stains,
Starting forth in varied veins,
Convent roses golden glow ;
Oh! how I love the Gothic door
 Clustered o'er
With strong sculptured saints of yore
For the living praying low.

THE END



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