

1321

**THE DIVINE COMEDY:
THE INFERNO (HELL)**

Alighieri Dante

translated by Henry F. Cary

Dante, Alighieri (1265-1321) - Italian poet. Dante was the first noteworthy poet to write in Italian and is considered one of the greatest poets in all literature. He is best known as the author of “The Divine Comedy,” a three- Cantica epic allegory of the human soul and a monument of the Middle Ages. **Inferno (Hell)** (1321) - The first part of “The Divine Comedy” describes Dante’s voyage through the Nine Circles of Hell with his guide, the Roman poet Virgil. “Purgatory” and “Paradise” complete the trilogy.

Table Of Contents

CANTO I	10
CANTO II	17
CANTO III	24
CANTO IV	31
CANTO V	39
CANTO VI	46
CANTO VII	52
CANTO VIII	59

CANTO IX 66
CANTO X 73
CANTO XI 80
CANTO XII 86
CANTO XIII 94
CANTO XIV 102
CANTO XV 109
CANTO XVI 116
CANTO XVII 123
CANTO XVIII 130

CANTO XIX 137
CANTO XX 145
CANTO XXI 152
CANTO XXII 160
CANTO XXIII 168
CANTO XXIV 176
CANTO XXV 184
CANTO XXVI 191
CANTO XXVII 198
CANTO XXVIII 205

CANTO XXIX	212
CANTO XXX	220
CANTO XXXI	228
CANTO XXXII	235
CANTO XXXIII	242
CANTO XXXIV	250
NOTES - CANTO I.	257
NOTES - CANTO II.	260
NOTES - CANTO III.	262
NOTES - CANTO IV.	263

NOTES - CANTO V. 267
NOTES - CANTO VI. 269
NOTES - CANTO VII. 271
NOTES - CANTO VIII. 272
NOTES - CANTO IX. 273
NOTES - CANTO X. 275
NOTES - CANTO XI. 279
NOTES - CANTO XII. 281
NOTES - CANTO XIII. 284
NOTES - CANTO XIV. 286

NOTES - CANTO XV. 288

NOTES - CANTO XVI. 290

NOTES - CANTO XVII. 292

NOTES - CANTO XVIII. 293

NOTES - CANTO XIX. 295

NOTES - CANTO XX. 297

NOTES - CANTO XXI. 300

NOTES - CANTO XXII. 302

NOTES - CANTO XXIII. 304

NOTES - CANTO XXIV. 306

NOTES - CANTO XXV. 308

NOTES - CANTO XXVI 310

NOTES - CANTO XXVII. 312

NOTES - CANTO XXVIII. 316

NOTES - CANTO XXIX. 320

NOTES - CANTO XXX. 322

NOTES - CANTO XXXI. 324

NOTES - CANTO XXXII. 326

NOTES - CANTO XXXIII. 330

NOTES - CANTO XXXIV. 332

CANTO I

The writer is met by Virgil, who promises to show him the punishments of Hell and Purgatory and to lead him to Beatrice, who will conduct him into Paradise.

IN the midway of this our mortal life,
I found me in a gloomy wood, astray
Gone from the path direct: and e'en to tell,
It were no easy task, how savage wild
That forest, how robust and rough its growth,
Which to remember only, my dismay
Renews, in bitterness not far from death.
Yet, to discourse of what there good befell,
All else will I relate discover'd there.

How first I enter'd it I scarce can say,
Such sleepy dulness in that instant weigh'd
My senses down, when the true path I left;
But when a mountain's foot I reach'd, where closed
The valley that had pierced my heart with dread,

I look'd aloft, and saw his shoulders broad
Already vested with that planet's beam,
Who leads all wanderers safe through every way.

Then was a little respite to the fear,
That in my heart's recesses deep had lain
All of that night, so pitifully past:
And as a man, with difficult short breath,
Forespent with toiling, 'scaped from sea to shore,
Turns to the perilous wide waste, and stands
At gaze; e'en so my spirit, that yet fail'd,
Struggling with terror, turn'd to view the straits
That none hath passed and lived. My weary frame
After short pause recomforted, again
I journey'd on over that lonely steep,
The hinder foot still firmer. Scarce the ascent
Began, when, lo! a panther, nimble, light,
And cover'd with a speckled skin, appear'd;
Nor, when it saw me, vanish'd; rather strove
To check my onward going; that oftentimes,
With purpose to retrace my steps, I turn'd.

The hour was morning's prime, and on his way
Aloft the sun ascended with those stars,
That with him rose when Love divine first moved
Those its fair works: so that with joyous hope
All things conspired to fill me, the gay skin
Of that swift animal, the matin dawn,
And the sweet season. Soon that joy was chased,
And by new dread succeeded, when in view
A lion came, 'gainst me as it appear'd,
With his head held aloft and hunger-mad,
That e'en the air was fear-struck. A she-wolf
Was at his heels, who in her leanness seem'd
Full of all wants, and many a land hath made
Disconsolate ere now. She with such fear
O'erwhelm'd me, at the sight of her appall'd,
That of the height all hope I lost. As one,
Who, with his gain elated, sees the time
When all unawares is gone, he inwardly
Mourns with heart-gripping anguish; such was I,
Haunted by that fell beast, never at peace,
Who coming o'er against me, by degrees
Impell'd me where the sun in silence rests.

While to the lower space with backward step
I fell, my ken discern'd the form of one
Whose voice seem'd faint through long disuse of speech.
When him in that great desert I espied,
"Have mercy on me," cried I out aloud,
"Spirit! or living man! whate'er thou be."

He answered: "Now not man, man once I was,
And born of Lombard parents, Mantuans both
By country, when the power of Julius yet
Was scarcely firm. At Rome my life was past,
Beneath the mild Augustus, in the time
Of fabled deities and false. A bard
Was I, and made Anchises' upright son
The subject of my song, who came from Troy,
When the flames prey'd on Ilium's haughty towers.
But thou, say wherefore to such perils past
Return'st thou? wherefore not this pleasant mount
Ascendest, cause and source of all delight?"
"And art thou then that Virgil, that well-spring,
From which such copious floods of eloquence

Have issued?" I with front abash'd replied.
"Glory and light of all the tuneful train!
May it avail me, that I long with zeal
Have sought thy volume, and with love immense
Have conn'd it o'er. My master thou, and guide!
Thou he from whom alone I have derived
That style, which for its beauty into fame
Exalts me. See the beast, from whom I fled.
O save me from her, thou illustrious sage!
For every vein and pulse throughout my frame
She hath made tremble." He, soon as he saw
That I was weeping, answer'd, "Thou must needs
Another way pursue, if thou wouldst 'scape
From out that savage wilderness. This beast,
At whom thou criest, her way will suffer none
To pass, and no less hindrance makes than death:
So bad and so accursed in her kind,
That never sated is her ravenous will,
Still after food more craving than before.
To many an animal in wedlock vile
She fastens, and shall yet to many more,
Until that greyhound come, who shall destroy

Her with sharp pain. He will not life support
By earth nor its base metals, but by love,
Wisdom, and virtue; and his land shall be
The land 'twixt either Feltro. In his might
Shall safety to Italia's plains arise,
For whose fair realm, Camilla, virgin pure,
Nisus, Euryalus, and Turnus fell.
He, with incessant chase, through every town
Shall worry, until he to hell at length
Restore her, thence by envy first let loose.
I, for thy profit pondering, now devise
That thou mayst follow me; and I, thy guide,
Will lead thee hence through an eternal space,
Where thou shalt hear despairing shrieks, and see
Spirits of old tormented, who invoke
A second death; and those next view, who dwell
Content in fire, for that they hope to come,
Whene'er the time may be, among the blest,
Into whose regions if thou then desire
To ascend, a spirit worthier than I
Must lead thee, in whose charge, when I depart,
Thou shalt be left: for that Almighty King,

Who reigns above, a rebel to his law
Adjudges me; and therefore hath decreed
That, to his city, none through me should come.
He in all parts hath sway; there rules, there holds
His citadel and throne. O happy those,
Whom there he chuses!" I to him in few:
"Bard! by that God, whom thou didst not adore,
I do beseech thee (that this ill and worse
I may escape) to lead me where thou said'st,
That I Saint Peter's gate may view, and those
Who, as thou tell'st, are in such dismal plight."

Onward he moved, I close his steps pursued.

CANTO II

Dante doubts whether his strength suffices for the journey,
but he takes courage and follows Virgil.

NOW was the day departing, and the air,
Imbrow'n'd with shadows, from their toils released
All animals on earth; and I alone
Prepared myself the conflict to sustain,
Both of sad pity, and that perilous road,
Which my unerring memory shall retrace.

O Muses! O high genius! now vouchsafe
Your aid. O mind! that all I saw hast kept
Safe in a written record, here thy worth
And eminent endowments come to proof.

I thus began: "Bard! thou who art my guide,
Consider well, if virtue be in me
Sufficient, ere to this high enterprise
Thou trust me. Thou hast told that Silvius' sire,

Yet clothed in corruptible flesh, among
The immortal tribes had entrance, and was there
Sensibly present. Yet if heaven's great Lord,
Almighty foe to ill, such favor show'd
In contemplation of the high effect,
Both what and who from him should issue forth,
It seems in reason's judgment well deserved;
Sith he of Rome and of Rome's empire wide,
In heaven's empyreal height was chosen sire:
Both which, if truth be spoken, were ordain'd
And stablish'd for the holy place, where sits
Who to great Peter's sacred chair succeeds.
He from this journey, in thy song renown'd,
Learn'd things, that to his victory gave rise
And to the papal robe. In after-times
The chosen vessel also travel'd there,
To bring us back assurance in that faith
Which is the entrance to salvation's way.
But I, why should I there presume? or who
Permits it? not Aeneas I, nor Paul.
Myself I deem not worthy, and none else
Will deem me. I, if on this voyage then

I venture, fear it will in folly end.
Thou, who art wise, better my meaning know'st,
Than I can speak." As one, who unresolves
What he hath late resolved, and with new thoughts
Changes his purpose, from his first intent
Removed; e'en such was I on that dun coast,
Wasting in thought my enterprise, at first
So eagerly embraced. "If right thy words
I scan," replied that shade magnanimous,
"Thy soul is by vile fear assail'd, which oft
So overcasts a man, that he recoils
From noblest resolution, like a beast
At some false semblance in the twilight gloom.
That from this terror thou mayst free thyself,
I will instruct thee why I came, and what
I heard in that same instant, when for thee
Grief touch'd me first. I was among the tribe,
Who rest suspended, when a dame, so blest
And lovely I besought her to command,
Call'd me; her eyes were brighter than the star
Of day; and she, with gentle voice and soft,
Angelically tuned, her speech address'd:

'O courteous shade of Mantua! thou whose fame
Yet lives, and shall live long as nature lasts!
A friend, not of my fortune but myself,
On the wide desert in his road has met
Hindrance so great, that he through fear has turn'd.
Now much I dread lest he past help have stray'd,
And I be risen too late for his relief,
From what in heaven of him I heard. Speed now,
And by thy eloquent persuasive tongue,
And by all means for his deliverance meet,
Assist him. So to me will comfort spring.
I, who now bid thee on this errand forth,
Am Beatrice; from a place I come
Revisited with joy. Love brought me thence,
Who prompts my speech. When in my Master's sight
I stand, thy praise to him I oft will tell.'

“She then was silent, and I thus began:

'O Lady! by whose influence alone
Mankind excels whatever is contain'd
Within that heaven which hath the smallest orb,
So thy command delights me, that to obey,

If it were done already, would seem late.
No need hast thou further to speak thy will:
Yet tell the reason, why thou art not loth
To leave that ample space, where to return
Thou burnest, for this centre here beneath.'

“She then: ‘Since thou so deeply wouldst inquire,
I will instruct thee briefly why no dread
Hinders my entrance here. Those things alone
Are to be fear’d whence evil may proceed;
None else, for none are terrible beside.
I am so framed by God, thanks to his grace!
That any sufferance of your misery
Touches me not, nor flame of that fierce fire
Assails me. In high heaven a blessed dame
Resides, who mourns with such effectual grief
That hindrance, which I send thee to remove,
That God’s stern judgment to her will inclines.
To Lucia, calling, her she thus bespake:
“Now doth thy faithful servant need thy aid,
And I commend him to thee.” At her word
Sped Lucia, of all cruelty the foe,

And coming to the place, where I abode
Seated with Rachel, her of ancient days,
She thus address'd me: "Thou true praise of God!
Beatrice! why is not thy succor lent
To him, who so much loved thee, as to leave
For thy sake all the multitude admires?
Dost thou not hear how pitiful his wail,
Nor mark the death, which in the torrent flood,
Swol'n mightier than a sea, him struggling holds?"
Ne'er among men did any with such speed
Haste to their profit, flee from their annoy,
As, when these words were spoken, I came here,
Down from my blessed seat, trusting the force
Of thy pure eloquence, which thee, and all
Who well have mark'd it, into honor bring.'

"When she had ended, her bright beaming eyes
Tearful she turn'd aside; whereat I felt
Redoubled zeal to serve thee. As she will'd,
Thus am I come: I saved thee from the beast,
Who thy near way across the goodly mount
Prevented. What is this comes o'er thee then?"

Why, why dost thou hang back? why in thy breast
Harbor vile fear? why hast not courage there,
And noble daring; since three maids, so blest,
Thy safety plan, e'en in the court of heaven;
And so much certain good my words forebode?"

As florets, by the frosty air of night
Bent down and closed, when day has blanch'd their leaves,
Rise all unfolded on their spiry stems;
So was my fainting vigor new restored,
And to my heart such kindly courage ran,
That I as one undaunted soon replied:
"O full of pity she, who undertook
My succor! and thou kind, who didst perform
So soon her true behest! With such desire
Thou hast disposed me to renew my voyage,
That my first purpose fully is resumed.
Lead on: one only will is in us both.
Thou art my guide, my master thou, and lord."

So spake I; and when he had onward moved,
I enter'd on the deep and woody way.

CANTO III

Dante and Virgil come to the gate of Hell where those were punished who spent their time on earth in apathy and indifference to good and evil.

“THROUGH me you pass into the city of woe:
Through me you pass into eternal pain:
Through me among the people lost for aye.
Justice the founder of my fabric moved:
To rear me was the task of power divine,
Supremest wisdom, and primeval love.
Before me things create were none, save things
Eternal, and eternal I endure.
All hope abandon, ye who enter here.”

Such characters, in color dim, I mark’d
Over a portal’s lofty arch inscribed.
Whereat I thus: “Master, these words import
Hard meaning.” He as one prepared replied:
“Here thou must all distrust behind thee leave;

Here be vile fear extinguish'd. We are come
Where I have told thee we shall see the souls
To misery doom'd, who intellectual good
Have lost." And when his hand he had stretch'd forth
To mine, with pleasant looks, whence I was cheer'd,
Into that secret place he led me on.

Here sighs, with lamentations and loud moans,
Resounded through the air pierced by no star,
That e'en I wept at entering. Various tongues,
Horrible languages, outcries of woe,
Accents of anger, voices deep and hoarse,
With hands together smote that swell'd the sounds,
Made up a tumult, that forever whirls
Round through that air with solid darkness stain'd,
Like to the sand that in the whirlwind flies.

I then, with error yet encompass'd, cried:
"O master! what is this I hear? what race
Are these, who seem so overcome with woe?"

He thus to me: "This miserable fate

Suffer the wretched souls of those, who lived
Without or praise or blame, with that ill band
Of angels mix'd, who nor rebellious proved,
Nor yet were true to God, but for themselves
Were only. From his bounds Heaven drove them forth
Not to impair his lustre; nor the depth
Of Hell receives them, lest the accursed tribe
Should glory thence with exultation vain."

I then: "Master! what doth aggrieve them thus,
That they lament so loud?" He straight replied:
"That will I tell thee briefly. These of death
No hope may entertain: and their blind life
So meanly passes, that all other lots
They envy. Fame of them the world hath none,
Nor suffers; mercy and justice scorn them both.
Speak not of them, but look, and pass them by."

And I, who straightway look'd, beheld a flag,
Which whirling ran around so rapidly,
That it no pause obtain'd: and following came
Such a long train of spirits, I should ne'er

Have thought that death so many had despoil'd.

When some of these I recognized, I saw
And knew the shade of him, who to base fear
Yielding, abjured his high estate. Forthwith
I understood, for certain, this the tribe
Of those ill spirits both to God displeasing
And to his foes. These wretches, who ne'er lived,
Went on in nakedness, and sorely stung
By wasps and hornets, which bedew'd their cheeks
With blood, that, mix'd with tears, dropp'd to their feet,
And by disgusting worms was gather'd there.

Then looking further onward, I beheld
A throng upon the shore of a great stream:
Whereat I thus: "Sir! grant me now to know
Whom here we view, and whence impell'd they seem
So eager to pass o'er, as I discern
Through the blear light?" He thus to me in few:
"This shalt thou know, soon as our steps arrive
Beside the woful tide of Acheron."

Then with eyes downward cast, and fill'd with shame,
Fearing my words offensive to his ear,
Till we had reach'd the river, I from speech
Abstain'd. And lo! toward us in a bark
Comes on an old man, hoary white with eld,
Crying, "Woe to you, wicked spirits! hope not
Ever to see the sky again. I come
To take you to the other shore across,
Into eternal darkness, there to dwell
In fierce heat and in ice. And thou, who there
Standest, live spirit! get thee hence, and leave
These who are dead." But soon as he beheld
I left them not, "By other way," said he,
"By other haven shalt thou come to shore,
Not by this passage; thee a nimbler boat
Must carry." Then to him thus spake my guide:
"Charon! thyself torment not: so 'tis will'd,
Where will and power are one: ask thou no more."

Straightway in silence fell the shaggy cheeks
Of him, the boatman o'er the livid lake,
Around whose eyes glared wheeling flames. Meanwhile

Those spirits, faint and naked, color changed,
And gnash'd their teeth, soon as the cruel words
They heard. God and their parents they blasphemed,
The human kind, the place, the time, and seed,
That did engender them and give them birth.

Then all together sorely wailing drew
To the curst strand, that every man must pass
Who fears not God, Charon, demoniac form,
With eyes of burning coal, collects them all,
Beckoning, and each, that lingers, with his oar
Strikes. As fall off the light autumnal leaves,
One still another following, till the bough
Strews all its honors on the earth beneath;
E'en in like manner Adam's evil brood
Cast themselves, one by one, down from the shore,
Each at a beck, as falcon at his call.

Thus go they over through the umber'd wave;
And ever they on the opposing bank
Be landed, on this side another throng
Still gathers. "Son," thus spake the courteous guide,

“Those who die subject to the wrath of God
All here together come from every clime
And to o’erpass the river are not loth:
For so Heaven’s justice goads them on, that fear
Is turn’d into desire. Hence ne’er hath past
Good spirit. If of thee Charon complain,
Now mayst thou know the import of his words.”

This said, the gloomy region trembling shook
So terribly, that yet with clammy dews
Fear chills my brow. The sad earth gave a blast,
That, lightening, shot forth a vermilion flame,
Which all my senses conquer’d quite, and I
Down dropp’d, as one with sudden slumber seized.

CANTO IV

The poet descends into Limbo where he finds those who have lived virtuously, but through lack of baptism do not merit the bliss of Paradise.

BROKE the deep slumber in my brain a crash
Of heavy thunder, that I shook myself,
As one by main force roused. Risen upright,
My rested eyes I moved around, and search'd
With fixed ken, to know what place it was
Wherein I stood. For certain, on the brink
I found me of the lamentable vale,
The dread abyss, that joins a thundrous sound
Of plaints innumerable. Dark and deep,
And thick with clouds o'erspread, mine eye in vain
Explored its bottom, nor could aught discern.

“Now let us to the blind world there beneath
Descend,” the bard began, all pale of look:
“I go the first, and thou shalt follow next.”

Then I, his alter'd hue perceiving, thus:
"How may I speed, if thou yieldest to dread,
Who still art wont to comfort me in doubt?"

He then: "The anguish of that race below
With pity stains my cheek, which thou for fear
Mistakest. Let us on. Our length of way
Urges to haste." Onward, this said, he moved;
And entering led me with him, on the bounds
Of the first circle that surrounds the abyss.

Here, as mine ear could note, no plaint was heard
Except of sighs, that made the eternal air
Tremble, not caused by tortures, but from grief
Felt by those multitudes, many and vast,
Of men, women, and infants. Then to me
The gentle guide: "Inquirest thou not what spirits
Are these which thou beholdest? Ere thou pass
Farther, I would thou know, that these of sin
Were blameless; and if aught they merited,
It profits not, since baptism was not theirs,

The portal to thy faith. If they before
The Gospel lived, they served not God aright;
And among such am I. For these defects,
And for no other evil, we are lost;
Only so far afflicted, that we live
Desiring without hope." Sore grief assail'd
My heart at hearing this, for well I knew
Suspended in that Limbo many a soul
Of mighty worth. "O tell me, sire revered!
Tell me, my master!" I began, through wish
Of full assurance in that holy faith
Which vanquishes all error; "say, did e'er
Any, or through his own or other's merit,
Come forth from thence, who afterward was blest?"

Piercing the secret purport of my speech,
He answer'd: "I was new to that estate
When I beheld a puissant one arrive
Amongst us, with victorious trophy crown'd.
He forth the shade of our first parent drew,
Abel his child, and Noah righteous man,
Of Moses lawgiver for faith approved,

Of patriarch Abraham, and David king,
Israel with his sire and with his sons,
Nor without Rachel whom so hard he won,
And others many more, whom he to bliss
Exalted. Before these, be thou assured,
No spirit of human kind was ever saved."

We, while he spake, ceased not our onward road,
Still passing through the wood; for so I name
Those spirits thick beset. We were not far
On this side from the summit, when I kenn'd
A flame, that o'er the darken'd hemisphere
Prevailing shined. Yet we a little space
Were distant, not so far but I in part
Discover'd that a tribe in honor high
That place possess'd. "O thou, who every art
And science valuest! who are these, that boast
Such honor, separate from all the rest?"

He answer'd: "The renown of their great names,
That echoes through your world above, acquires
Favor in Heaven, which holds them thus advanced."

Meantime a voice I heard: "Honor the bard
Sublime! his shade returns, that left us late!"
No sooner ceased the sound, than I beheld
Four mighty spirits toward us bend their steps,
Of semblance neither sorrowful nor glad.

When thus my master kind began: "Mark him,
Who in his right hand bears that falchion keen,
The other three preceding, as their lord.
This is that Homer, of all bards supreme:
Flaccus the next, in satire's vein excelling;
The third is Naso; Lucan is the last.
Because they all that appellation own,
With which the voice singly accosted me,
Honoring they greet me thus, and well they judge."

So I beheld united the bright school
Of him the monarch of sublimest song,
That o'er the others like an eagle soars.

When they together short discourse had held,
They turn'd to me, with salutation kind

Beckoning me; at the which my master smiled:
Nor was this all; but greater honor still
They gave me, for they made me of their tribe
And I was sixth amid so learn'd a band.

Far as the luminous beacon on we pass'd,
Speaking of matters, then befitting well
To speak, now fitter left untold. At foot
Of a magnificent castle we arrived,
Seven times with lofty walls begirt, and round
Defended by a pleasant stream. O'er this
As o'er dry land we pass'd. Next, through seven gates,
I with those sages enter'd, and we came
Into a mead with lively verdure fresh.

There dwelt a race, who slow their eyes around
Majestically moved, and in their port
Bore eminent authority: they spake
Seldom, but all their words were tuneful sweet.

We to one side retired, into a place
Open and bright and lofty, whence each one

Stood manifest to view. Incontinent,
There on the green enamel of the plain
Were shown me the great spirits, by whose sight
I am exalted in my own esteem.

Electra there I saw accompanied
By many, among whom Hector I knew,
Anchises' pious son, and with hawk's eye
Caesar all arm'd, and by Camilla there
Penthesilea. On the other side,
Old king Latinus seated by his child
Lavinia, and that Brutus I beheld
Who Tarquin chased, Lucretia, Cato's wife
Marcia, with Julia and Cornelia there;
And sole apart retired, the Soldan fierce.

Then when a little more I raised my brow,
I spied the master of the sapient throng,
Seated amid the philosophic train.
Him all admire, all pay him reverence due.
There Socrates and Plato both I mark'd
Nearest to him in rank, Democritus,

Who sets the world at chance, Diogenes,
With Heraclitus, and Empedocles,
And Anaxagoras, and Thales sage,
Zeno, and Dioscorides well read
In nature's secret lore. Orpheus I mark'd
And Linus, Tully and moral Seneca,
Euclid and Ptolemy, Hippocrates,
Galenus, Avicen, and him who made
The commentary vast, Averroes.

Of all to speak at full were vain attempt;
For my wide theme so urges, that ofttimes
My words fall short of what bechanced. In two
The six associates part. Another way
My sage guide leads me, from that air serene,
Into a climate ever vex'd with storms:
And to a part I come, where no light shines.

CANTO V

In the second circle of Hell, Dante beholds Minos, the Infernal Judge, and witnesses the punishment of carnal sinners.

FROM the first circle I descended thus
Down to the second, which, a lesser space
Embracing, so much more of grief contains,
Provoking bitter moans. There Minos stands,
Grinning with ghastly feature: he, of all
Who enter, strict examining the crimes,
Gives sentence, and dismisses them beneath,
According as he foldeth him around:
For when before him comes the ill-fated soul,
It all confesses; and that judge severe
Of sins, considering what place in Hell
Suits the transgression, with his tail so oft
Himself encircles, as degrees beneath
He dooms it to descend. Before him stand
Always a numerous throng; and in his turn

Each one to judgment passing, speaks, and hears
His fate, thence downward to his dwelling hurl'd.
"O thou! who to this residence of woe
Approachest!" when he saw me coming, cried
Minos, relinquishing his dread employ,
"Look how thou enter here; beware in whom
Thou place thy trust; let not the entrance broad
Deceive thee to thy harm." To him my guide:
"Wherefore exclaimest? Hinder not his way
By destiny appointed; so 'tis will'd,
Where will and power are one. Ask thou no more."

Now 'gin the rueful wailings to be heard.
Now am I come where many a plaining voice
Smites on mine ear. Into a place I came
Where light was silent all. Bellowing there groan'd
A noise, as of a sea in tempest torn
By warring winds. The stormy blast of Hell
With restless fury drives the spirits on,
Whirl'd round and dash'd amain with sore annoy.
When they arrive before the ruinous sweep,
There shrieks are heard, there lamentations, moans,

And blasphemies 'gainst the good Power in Heaven.
I understood, that to this torment sad
The carnal sinners are condemn'd, in whom
Reason by lust is sway'd. As, in large troops
And multitudinous, when winter reigns,
The starlings on their wings are borne abroad;
So bears the tyrannous gust those evil souls.
On this side and on that, above, below,
It drives them: hope of rest to solace them
Is none, nor e'en of milder pang. As cranes,
Chanting their dolorous notes, traverse the sky,
Stretch'd out in long array; so I beheld
Spirits, who came loud wailing, hurried on
By their dire doom. Then I: "Instructor! who
Are these, by the black air so scourged?" "The first
'Mong those, of whom thou question'st," he replied,
"O'er many tongues was empress. She in vice
Of luxury was so shameless, that she made
Liking be lawful by promulged decree,
To clear the blame she had herself incurr'd.
This is Semiramis, of whom 'tis writ,
That she succeeded Ninus her espoused;

And held the land, which now the Soldan rules.
The next in amorous fury slew herself,
And to Sichaeus' ashes broke her faith:
Then follows Cleopatra, lustful queen."

There mark'd I Helen, for whose sake so long
The time was fraught with evil; there the great
Achilles, who with love fought to the end.
Paris I saw, and Tristan; and beside,
A thousand more he show'd me, and by name
Pointed them out, whom love bereaved of life.

When I had heard my sage instructor name
Those dames and knights of antique days, o'erpower'd
By pity, well-nigh in amaze my mind
Was lost; and I began: "Bard! willingly
I would address those two together coming,
Which seem so light before the wind." He thus:
"Note thou, when nearer they to us approach.
Then by that love which carries them along,
Entreat; and they will come." Soon as the wind
Sway'd them toward us, I thus framed my speech:

“O wearied spirits! come, and hold discourse
With us, if by none else restrain’d.” As doves
By fond desire invited, on wide wings
And firm, to their sweet nest returning home,
Cleave the air, wafted by their will along;
Thus issued, from that troop where Dido ranks,
They, through the ill air speeding: with such force
My cry prevail’d, by strong affection urged.

“O gracious creature and benign! who go’st
Visiting, through this element obscure,
Us, who the world with bloody stain imbrued;
If, for a friend, the King of all, we own’d,
Our prayer to him should for thy peace arise,
Since thou hast pity on our evil plight.
Of whatso’er to hear or to discourse
It pleases thee, that will we hear, of that
Freely with thee discourse, while e’er the wind,
As now, is mute. The land, that gave me birth,
Is situate on the coast, where Po descends
To rest in ocean with his sequent streams.

“Love, that in gentle heart is quickly learnt,
Entangled him by that fair form, from me
Ta’en in such cruel sort, as grieves me still:
Love, that denial takes from none beloved,
Caught me with pleasing him so passing well,
That, as thou seest, he yet deserts me not.
Love brought us to one death: Caina waits
The soul, who spilt our life.” Such were their words;
At hearing which, downward I bent my looks,
And held them there so long, that the bard cried:
“What art thou pondering?” I in answer thus:
“Alas! by what sweet thoughts, what fond desire
Must they at length to that ill pass have reach’d!”

Then turning, I to them my speech address’d,
And thus began: “Francesca! your sad fate
Even to tears my grief and pity moves.
But tell me; in the time of your sweet sighs,
By what, and how Love granted, that ye knew
Your yet uncertain wishes?” She replied:
“No greater grief than to remember days
Of joy, when misery is at hand. That kens

Thy learn'd instructor. Yet so eagerly
If thou art bent to know the primal root,
From whence our love gat being, I will do
As one, who weeps and tells his tale. One day,
For our delight we read of Lancelot,
How him love thrall'd. Alone we were, and no
Suspicion near us. Ofttimes by that reading
Our eyes were drawn together, and the hue
Fled from our alter'd cheek. But at one point
Alone we fell. When of that smile we read,
The wished smile so rapturously kiss'd
By one so deep in love, then he, who ne'er
From me shall separate, at once my lips
All trembling kiss'd. The book and writer both
Were love's purveyors. In its leaves that day
We read no more." While thus one spirit spake,
The other wail'd so sorely, that heart-struck
I, through compassion fainting, seem'd not far
From death, and like a corse fell to the ground.

CANTO VI

The poet finds himself in the third circle where he sees the punishment of the gluttonous, one of whom foretells the coming agitations in Florence.

MY sense reviving, that erewhile had droop'd
With pity for the kindred shades, whence grief
O'ercame me wholly, straight around I see
New torments, new tormented souls, which way
Soe'er I move, or turn, or bend my sight.
In the third circle I arrive, of showers
Ceaseless, accursed, heavy and cold, unchanged
Forever, both in kind and in degree.
Large hail, discolor'd water, sleety flaw
Through the dun midnight air stream'd down amain:
Stank all the land whereon that tempest fell.

Cerberus, cruel monster, fierce and strange,
Through his wide threefold throat, barks as a dog
Over the multitude immersed beneath.

His eyes glare crimson, black his unctuous beard,
His belly large, and claw'd the hands, with which
He tears the spirits, flays them, and their limbs
Piecemeal disparts. Howling there spread, as curs,
Under the rainy deluge, with one side
The other screening, oft they roll them round,
A wretched, godless crew. When that great worm
Descried us, savage Cerberus, he oped
His jaws, and the fangs show'd us; not a limb
Of him but trembled. Then my guide, his palms
Expanding on the ground, thence fill'd with earth
Raised them, and cast it in his ravenous maw.
E'en as a dog, that yelling bays for food
His keeper, when the morsel comes, lets fall
His fury, bent alone with eager haste
To swallow it; so dropp'd the loathsome cheeks
Of demon Cerberus, who thundering stuns
The spirits, that they for deafness wish in vain.

We, o'er the shades thrown prostrate by the brunt
Of the heavy tempest passing, set our feet
Upon their emptiness, that substance seem'd.

They all along the earth extended lay,
Save one, that sudden raised himself to sit,
Soon as that way he saw us pass. "O thou!"
He cried, "who through the infernal shades art led,
Own, if again thou know'st me. Thou wast framed
Or ere my frame was broken." I replied:
"The anguish thou endurest perchance so takes
Thy form from my remembrance, that it seems
As if I saw thee never. But inform
Me who thou art, that in a place so sad
Art set, and in such torment, that although
Other be greater, none disgusteth more."
He thus in answer to my words rejoined:
"Thy city, heap'd with envy to the brim,
Aye, that the measure overflows its bounds,
Held me in brighter days. Ye citizens
Were wont to name me Ciacco. For the sin
Of gluttony, damned vice, beneath this rain,
E'en as thou seest, I with fatigue am worn:
Nor I sole spirit in this woe: all these
Have by like crime incurr'd like punishment."

No more he said, and I my speech resumed:
"Ciaccio! thy dire affliction grieves me much,
Even to tears. But tell me, if thou know'st,
What shall at length befall the citizens
Of the divided city; whether any
Just one inhabit there: and tell the cause,
Whence jarring Discord hath assail'd it thus."

He then: "After long striving they will come
To blood; and the wild party from the woods
Will chase the other with much injury forth.
Then it behoves that this must fall, within
Three solar circles; and the other rise
By borrow'd force of one, who under shore
Now rests. It shall a long space hold aloof
Its forehead, keeping under heavy weight
The other opprest, indignant at the load,
And grieving sore. The just are two in number,
But they neglected. Avarice, envy, pride,
Three fatal sparks, have set the hearts of all
On fire." Here ceased the lamentable sound;

And I continued thus: "Still would I learn
More from thee, further parley still entreat.
Of Farinata and Tegghiaio say,
They who so well deserved; of Giacopo,
Arrigo, Mosca, and the rest, who bent
Their minds on working good. Oh! tell me where
They bide, and to their knowledge let me come.
For I am prest with keen desire to hear
If heaven's sweet cup, or poisonous drug of Hell,
Be to their lip assign'd." He answer'd straight:
"These are yet blacker spirits. Various crimes
Have sunk them deeper in the dark abyss.
If thou so far descendest, thou mayst see them.
But to the pleasant world, when thou return'st,
Of me make mention, I entreat thee, there.
No more I tell thee, answer thee no more."

This said, his fixed eyes he turn'd askance,
A little eyed me, then bent down his head,
And 'midst his blind companions with it fell.

When thus my guide: "No more his bed he leaves,

Ere the last angel-trumpet blow. The Power
Adverse to these shall then in glory come,
Each one forthwith to his sad tomb repair,
Resume his fleshly vesture and his form,
And hear the eternal doom re-echoing rend
The vault." So pass'd we through that mixture foul
Of spirits and rain, with tardy steps; meanwhile
Touching, though slightly, on the life to come.
For thus I question'd: "Shall these tortures, Sir!
When the great sentence passes, be increased,
Or mitigated, or as now severe?"

He then: "Consult thy knowledge; that decides,
That, as each thing to more perfection grows,
It feels more sensibly both good and pain.
Though ne'er to true perfection may arrive
This race accurst, yet nearer then, than now,
They shall approach it." Compassing that path,
Circuitous we journey'd; and discourse,
Much more than I relate, between us pass'd:
Till at the point, whence the steps led below,
Arrived, there Plutus, the great foe, we found.

CANTO VII

In the fourth circle, he sees Plutus and the torments of the prodigal and avaricious; in the fifth circle, the wrathful and gloomy are punished in the Stygian lake.

“AH me! O Satan! Satan!” loud exclaim’d
Plutus, in accent hoarse of wild alarm:
And the kind sage, whom no event surprised,
To comfort me thus spake: “Let not thy fear
Harm thee, for power in him, be sure, is none
To hinder down this rock thy safe descent.”
Then to that swol’n lip turning, “Peace!” he cried,
“Curst wolf! thy fury inward on thyself
Prey, and consume thee! Through the dark profound,
Not without cause, he passes. So ‘tis will’d
On high, there where the great Archangel pour’d
Heaven’s vengeance on the first adulterer proud.”

As sails, full spread and bellying with the wind,
Drop suddenly collapsed, if the mast split;

So to the ground down dropp'd the cruel fiend.

Thus we, descending to the fourth steep ledge,
Gain'd on the dismal shore, that all the woe
Hems in of all the universe. Ah me!
Almighty Justice! in what store thou heap'st
New pains, new troubles, as I here beheld.
Wherefore doth fault of ours bring us to this?

E'en as a billow, on Charybdis rising,
Against encounter'd billow dashing breaks;
Such is the dance this wretched race must lead,
Whom more than elsewhere numerous here I found.
From one side and the other, with loud voice,
Both roll'd on weights, by main force of their breasts,
Then smote together, and each one forthwith
Roll'd them back voluble, turning again;

Exclaiming these, "Why holdest thou so fast?"
Those answering, "And why castest thou away?"
So, still repeating their despiteful song,
They to the opposite point, on either hand,

Traversed the horrid circle; then arrived,
Both turn'd them round, and through the middle space
Conflicting met again. At sight whereof
I, stung with grief, thus spake: "O say, my guide!
What race is this. Were these, whose heads are shorn,
On our left hand, all separate to the church?"

He straight replied: "In their first life, these all
In mind were so distorted, that they made,
According to due measure, of their wealth
No use. This clearly from their words collect,
Which they howl forth, at each extremity
Arriving of the circle, where their crime
Contrary in kind disparts them. To the church
Were separate those, that with no hairy cowls
Are crown'd, both popes and cardinals, o'er whom
Avarice dominion absolute maintains."

I then: "Mid such as these some needs must be,
Whom I shall recognize, that with the blot
Of these foul sins were stain'd." He answering thus:
"Vain thought conceivest thou. That ignoble life,

Which made them vile before, now makes them dark,
And to all knowledge indiscernible.
Forever they shall meet in this rude shock:
These from the tomb with clenched grasp shall rise,
Those with close-shaven locks. That ill they gave,
And ill they kept, hath of the beauteous world
Deprived, and set them at this strife, which needs
No labor'd phrase of mine to set it off.
Now mayst thou see, my son! how brief, how vain,
The goods committed into Fortune's hands,
For which the human race keep such a coil!
Not all the gold that is beneath the moon,
Or ever hath been, of these toil-worn souls
Might purchase rest for one." I thus rejoin'd:
"My guide! of these this also would I learn;
This Fortune, that thou speak'st of, what it is,
Whose talons grasp the blessings of the world."

He thus: "O beings blind! what ignorance
Besets you! Now my judgment hear and mark.
He, whose transcendent wisdom passes all,
The heavens creating, gave them ruling powers

To guide them; so that each part shines to each,
Their light in equal distribution pour'd.
By similar appointment he ordain'd,
Over the world's bright images to rule,
Superintendence of a guiding hand
And general minister, which, at due time,
May change the empty vantages of life
From race to race, from one to other's blood,
Beyond prevention of man's wisest care:
Wherefore one nation rises into sway,
Another languishes, e'en as her will
Decrees, from us conceal'd, as in the grass
The serpent train. Against her nought avails
Your utmost wisdom. She with foresight plans,
Judges, and carries on her reign, as theirs
The other powers divine. Her changes know
None intermission: by necessity
She is made swift, so frequent come who claim
Succession in her favors. This is she,
So execrated e'en by those whose debt
To her is rather praise: they wrongfully
With blame requite her, and with evil word;

But she is blessed, and for that reck's not:
Amidst the other primal beings glad
Rolls on her sphere, and in her bliss exults.
Now on our way pass we, to heavier woe
Descending: for each star is falling now,
That mounted at our entrance, and forbids
Too long our tarrying." We the circle cross'd
To the next steep, arriving at a well,
That boiling pours itself down to a foss
Sluiced from its source. Far murkier was the wave
Than sablest grain: and we in company
Of the inky waters, journeying by their side,
Enter'd, though by a different track, beneath.
Into a lake, the Stygian named, expands
The dismal stream, when it hath reach'd the foot
Of the gray wither'd cliffs. Intent I stood
To gaze, and in the marish sunk descried
A miry tribe, all naked, and with looks
Betokening rage. They with their hands alone
Struck not, but with the head, the breast, the feet,
Cutting each other piecemeal with their fangs.

The good instructor spake: "Now seest thou, son!
The souls of those, whom anger overcame.
This too for certain know, that underneath
The water dwells a multitude, whose sighs
Into these bubbles make the surface heave,
As thine eye tells thee wheresoe'er it turn.
Fix'd in the slime, they say: 'Sad once were we,
In the sweet air made gladsome by the sun,
Carrying a foul and lazy mist within:
Now in these murky settlings are we sad.'
Such dolorous strain they gurgle in their throats,
But word distinct can utter none." Our route
Thus compass'd we, a segment widely stretch'd
Between the dry embankment, and the core
Of the loath'd pool, turning meanwhile our eyes
Downward on those who gulp'd its muddy lees;
Nor stopp'd, till to a tower's low base we came.

CANTO VIII

Phlegyas, the ferryman of the lake, conveys Dante and Virgil to the city of Dis where the portals are closed against them by Demons.

MY theme pursuing, I relate, that ere
We reach'd the lofty turret's base, our eyes
Its height ascended, where we mark'd uphung
Two cressets, and another saw from far
Return the signal, so remote, that scarce
The eye could catch its beam. I, turning round
To the deep source of knowledge, thus inquired:
"Say what this means; and what, that other light
In answer set: what agency doth this?"

"There on the filthy waters," he replied,
"E'en now what next awaits us mayst thou see,
If the marsh-gendered fog conceal it not."

Never was arrow from the cord dismiss'd,

That ran its way so nimbly through the air,
As a small bark, that through the waves I spied
Toward us coming, under the sole sway
Of one that ferried it, who cried aloud:
“Art thou arrived, fell spirit?”- “Phlegyas, Phlegyas,
This time thou criest in vain,” my lord replied;
“No longer shalt thou have us, but while o’er
The slimy pool we pass.” As one who hears
Of some great wrong he hath sustain’d, whereat
Inly he pines: so Phlegyas inly pined
In his fierce ire. My guide, descending, stepp’d
Into the skiff, and bade me enter next,
Close at his side; nor, till my entrance, seem’d
The vessel freighted. Soon as both embark’d,
Cutting the waves, goes on the ancient prow,
More deeply than with others it is wont.

While we our course o’er the dead channel held,
One drench’d in mire before me came, and said:
“Who art thou, that thus comest ere thine hour?”

I answer’d: “Though I come, I tarry not:

But who art thou, that art become so foul?"

"One, as thou seest, who mourn": he straight replied.

To which I thus: "In mourning and in woe,
Curst spirit! tarry thou. I know thee well,
E'en thus in filth disguised." Then stretch'd he forth
Hands to the bark; whereof my teacher sage
Aware, thrusting him back: "Away! down there
To the other dogs!" then, with his arms my neck
Encircling, kiss'd my cheek, and spake: "O soul,
Justly disdainful! blest was she in whom
Thou wast conceived. He in the world was one
For arrogance noted: to his memory
No virtue lends its lustre; even so
Here is his shadow furious. There above,
How many now hold themselves mighty kings,
Who here like swine shall wallow in the mire,
Leaving behind them horrible dispraise."

I then: "Master! him fain would I behold
Whelm'd in these dregs, before we quit the lake."

He thus: "Or ever to thy view the shore
Be offer'd, satisfied shall be that wish,
Which well deserves completion." Scarce his words
Were ended, when I saw the miry tribes
Set on him with such violence, that yet
For that render I thanks to God, and praise.
"To Filippo Argenti!" cried they all:
And on himself the moody Florentine
Turn'd his avenging fangs. Him here we left,
Nor speak I of him more. But on mine ear
Sudden a sound of lamentation smote,
Whereat mine eye unbarr'd I sent abroad.

And thus the good instructor: "Now, my son
Draws near the city, that of Dis is named,
With its grave denizens, a mighty throng."

I thus: "The minarets already, Sir!
There, certes, in the valley I descry,
Gleaming vermilion, as if they from fire
Had issued." He replied: "Eternal fire,

That inward burns, shows them with ruddy flame
Illumed; as in this nether Hell thou seest."

We came within the fosses deep, that moat
This region comfortless. The walls appear'd
As they were framed of iron. We had made
Wide circuit, ere a place we reach'd, where loud
The mariner cried vehement: "Go forth:
The entrance is here." Upon the gates I spied
More than a thousand, who of old from heaven
Were shower'd. With ireful gestures, "Who is this,"
They cried, "that, without death first felt, goes through
The regions of the dead?" My sapient guide
Made sign that he for secret parley wish'd;
Whereat their angry scorn abating, thus
They spake: "Come thou alone; and let him go,
Who hath so hardily enter'd this realm.
Alone return he by his witless way;
If well he knew it, let him prove. For thee,
Here shalt thou tarry, who through clime so dark
Hast been his escort." Now bethink thee, reader!
What cheer was mine at sound of those curst words.

I did believe I never should return.

“O my loved guide! who more than seven times
Security hast render'd me, and drawn
From peril deep, whereto I stood exposed,
Desert me not," I cried, "in this extreme.
And, if our onward going be denied,
Together trace we back our steps with speed."

My liege, who thither had conducted me,
Replied: "Fear not: for of our passage none
Hath power to disappoint us, by such high
Authority permitted. But do thou
Expect me here; meanwhile, thy wearied spirit
Comfort, and feed with kindly hope, assured
I will not leave thee in this lower world."
This said, departs the sire benevolent,
And quits me. Hesitating I remain
At war, 'twixt will and will not, in my thoughts.

I could not hear what terms he offer'd them,
But they conferr'd not long, for all at once

Pellmell rush'd back within. Closed were the gates,
By those our adversaries, on the breast
Of my liege lord: excluded, he return'd
To me with tardy steps. Upon the ground
His eyes were bent, and from his brow erased
All confidence, while thus in sighs he spake:
"Who hath denied me these abodes of woe?"
Then thus to me: "That I am anger'd, think
No ground of terror: in this trial I
Shall vanquish, use what arts they may within
For hindrance. This their insolence, not new,
Erewhile at gate less secret they display'd,
Which still is without bolt; upon its arch
Thou saw'st the deadly scroll: and even now,
On this side of its entrance, down the steep,
Passing the circles, unescorted, comes
One whose strong might can open us this land."

CANTO IX

The poet enters the city of Dis where he discovers heretics are punished in tombs burning with intense fire.

THE hue, which coward dread on my pale cheeks
Imprinted when I saw my guide turn back,
Chased that from his which newly they had worn,
And inwardly restrain'd it. He, as one
Who listens, stood attentive: for his eye
Not far could lead him through the sable air,
And the thick-gathering cloud. "It yet behoves
We win this fight"; thus he began: "if not,
Such aid to us is offer'd- Oh! how long
Me seems it, ere the promised help arrive."

I noted, how the sequel of his words
Cloked their beginning; for the last he spake
Agreed not with the first. But not the less
My fear was at his saying; sith I drew
To import worse, perchance, than that he held,

His mutilated speech. "Doth ever any
Into this rueful concave's extreme depth
Descend, out of the first degree, whose pain
Is deprivation merely of sweet hope?"

Thus I inquiring. "Rarely," he replied,
"It chances, that among us any makes
This journey, which I wend. Erewhile, 'tis true,
Once came I here beneath, conjured by fell
Erictho, sorceress, who compell'd the shades
Back to their bodies. No long space my flesh
Was naked of me, when within these walls
She made me enter, to draw forth a spirit
From out of Judas' circle. Lowest place
Is that of all, obscurest, and removed
Furthest from heaven's all-circling orb. The road
Full well I know: thou therefore rest secure.
That lake, the noisome stench exhaling, round
The city of grief encompasses, which now
We may not enter without rage." Yet more
He added: but I hold it not in mind,
For that mine eye toward the lofty tower

Had drawn me wholly, to its burning top;
Where, in an instant, I beheld uprisen
At once three hellish furies stain'd with blood.
In limb and motion feminine they seem'd;
Around them greenest hydras twisting roll'd
Their volumes; adders and cerastes crept
Instead of hair, and their fierce temples bound.

He, knowing well the miserable hags
Who tend the queen of endless woe, thus spake:
"Mark thou each dire Erynnis. To the left,
This is Megaera; on the right hand, she
Who wails, Alecto; and Tisiphone
I' th' midst." This said, in silence he remain'd.
Their breast they each one clawing tore; themselves
Smote with their palms, and such shrill clamor raised,
That to the bard I clung, suspicion-bound.
"Hasten Medusa: so to adamant
Him shall we change"; all looking down exclaim'd:
"E'en when by Theseus' might assail'd, we took
No ill revenge." "Turn thyself round and keep
Thy countenance hid; for if the Gorgon dire

Be shown, and thou shouldst view it, thy return
Upwards would be for ever lost." This said,
Himself, my gentle master, turn'd me round;
Nor trusted he my hands, but with his own
He also hid me. Ye of intellect
Sound and entire, mark well the lore conceal'd
Under close texture of the mystic strain.

And now there came o'er the perturbed waves
Loud-crashing, terrible, a sound that made
Either shore tremble, as if of a wind
Impetuous, from conflicting vapors sprung,
That 'gainst some forest driving all his might,
Plucks off the branches, beats them down, and hurls
Afar; then, onward passing, proudly sweeps
His whirlwind rage, while beasts and shepherds fly.

Mine eyes he loosed, and spake: "And now direct
Thy visual nerve along that ancient foam,
There, thickest where the smoke ascends." As frogs
Before their foe the serpent, through the wave
Ply swiftly all, till at the ground each one

Lies on a heap; more than a thousand spirits
Destroy'd, so saw I fleeing before one
Who pass'd with unwet feet the Stygian sound.
He, from his face removing the gross air,
Oft his left hand forth stretch'd, and seem'd alone
By that annoyance wearied. I perceived
That he was sent from heaven; and to my guide
Turn'd me, who signal made, that I should stand
Quiet, and bend to him. Ah me! how full
Of noble anger seem'd he. To the gate
He came, and with his wand touch'd it, whereat
Open without impediment it flew.

“Outcasts of heaven! O abject race, and scorn'd!”
Began he, on the horrid grunsel standing,
“Whence doth this wild excess of insolence
Lodge in you? wherefore kick you 'gainst that will
Ne'er frustrate of its end, and which so oft
Hath laid on you enforcement of your pangs?
What profits, at the fates to butt the horn?
Your Cerberus, if ye remember, hence
Bears still, peel'd of their hair, his throat and maw.”

This said, he turn'd back o'er the filthy way,
And syllable to us spake none; but wore
The semblance of a man by other care
Beset, and keenly prest, than thought of him
Who in his presence stands. Then we our steps
Toward that territory moved, secure
After the hallow'd words. We, unopposed,
There enter'd; and, my mind eager to learn
What state a fortress like to that might hold,
I, soon as enter'd, throw mine eye around,
And see, on every part, wide-stretching space,
Replete with bitter pain and torment ill.

As where Rhone stagnates on the plains of Arles,
Or as at Pola, near Quarnaro's gulf,
That closes Italy and laves her bounds,
The place is all thick spread with sepulchres;
So was it here, save what in horror here
Excell'd: for 'midst the graves were scattered flames,
Wherewith intensely all throughout they burn'd,
That iron for no craft there hotter needs.

Their lids all hung suspended; and beneath,
From them forth issued lamentable moans,
Such as the sad and tortured well might raise.

I thus: "Master! say who are these, interr'd
Within these vaults, of whom distinct we hear
The dolorous sighs." He answer thus return'd:
"The arch-heretics are here, accompanied
By every sect their followers; and much more,
Than thou believest, the tombs are freighted: like
With like is buried; and the monuments
Are different in degrees of heat." This said,
He to the right hand turning, on we pass'd
Betwixt the afflicted and the ramparts high.

CANTO X

Dante discourses with Farinata degli Uberti and Cavalcante Cavalcanti, the first of whom predicts the poet's exile from Florence.

NOW by a secret pathway we proceed,
Between the walls, that hem the region round,
And the tormented souls: my master first,
I close behind his steps. "Virtue supreme!"
I thus began: "Who through these ample orbs
In circuit lead'st me, even as thou will'st;
Speak thou, and satisfy my wish. May those,
Who lie within these sepulchres, be seen?
Already all the lids are raised, and none
O'er them keeps watch." He thus in answer spake:
"They shall be closed all, what-time they here
From Josaphat return'd shall come, and bring
Their bodies, which above they now have left.
The cemetery on this part obtain,
With Epicurus, all his followers,

Who with the body make the spirit die.
Here therefore satisfaction shall be soon,
Both to the question ask'd, and to the wish
Which thou conceal'st in silence." I replied:
"I keep not, guide beloved! from thee my heart
Secreted, but to shun vain length of words;
A lesson erewhile taught me by thyself."

"O Tuscan! thou, who through the city of fire
Alive art passing, so discreet of speech:
Here, please thee, stay awhile. Thy utterance
Declares the place of thy nativity
To be that noble land, with which perchance
I too severely dealt." Sudden that sound
Forth issued from a vault, whereat, in fear,
I somewhat closer to my leader's side
Approaching, he thus spake: "What dost thou? Turn:
Lo! Farinata there, who hath himself
Uplifted: from his girdle upwards, all
Exposed, behold him." On his face was mine
Already fix'd: his breast and forehead there
Erecting, seem'd as in high scorn he held

E'en Hell. Between the sepulchres, to him
My guide thrust me, with fearless hands and prompt;
This warning added: "See thy words be clear."

He, soon as there I stood at the tomb's foot,
Eyed me a space; then in disdainful mood
Address'd me: "Say what ancestors were thine."
I, willing to obey him, straight reveal'd
The whole, nor kept back aught: whence he, his brow
Somewhat uplifting, cried: "Fiercely were they
Adverse to me, my party, and the blood
From whence I sprang: twice, therefore, I abroad
Scatter'd them." "Though driven out, yet they each time
From all parts," answer'd I, "return'd; an art
Which yours have shown they are not skill'd to learn."

Then, peering forth from the unclosed jaw,
Rose from his side a shade, high as the chin,
Leaning, methought, upon its knees upraised.
It look'd around, as eager to explore
If there were other with me; but perceiving
That fond imagination quench'd, with tears

Thus spake: "If thou through this blind prison go'st,
Led by thy lofty genius and profound,
Where is my son? and wherefore not with thee?"
I straight replied: "Not of myself I come;
By him, who there expects me, through this clime
Conducted, whom perchance Guido thy son
Had in contempt." Already had his words
And mode of punishment read me his name,
Whence I so fully answer'd. He at once
Exclaim'd, up starting, "How! said'st thou, he had?
No longer lives he? Strikes not on his eye
The blessed daylight?" Then, of some delay
I made ere my reply, aware, down fell
Supine, nor after forth appear'd he more.

Meanwhile the other, great of soul, near whom
I yet was station'd, changed not countenance stern,
Nor moved the neck, nor bent his ribbed side.
"And if," continuing the first discourse,
"They in this art," he cried, "small skill have shown;
That doth torment me more e'en than this bed.
But not yet fifty times shall be relumed

Her aspect, who reigns here queen of this realm,
Ere thou shalt know the full weight of that art.
So to the pleasant world mayst thou return,
As thou shalt tell me why, in all their laws,
Against my kin this people is so fell."

"The slaughter and great havoc," I replied,
"That color'd Arbia's flood with crimson stain-
To these impute, that in our hallow'd dome
Such orisons ascend." Sighing he shook
The head, then thus resumed: "In that affray
I stood not singly, nor, without just cause,
Assuredly, should with the rest have stirr'd;
But singly there I stood, when, by consent
Of all, Florence had to the ground been razed,
The one who openly forbade the deed."

"So may thy lineage find at last repose,"
I thus adjured him, "as thou solve this knot,
Which now involves my mind. If right I hear,
Ye seem to view beforehand that which time
Leads with him, of the present uninform'd."

“We view, as one who hath an evil sight,”
He answer’d, “plainly, objects far remote;
So much of his large splendor yet imparts
The Almighty Ruler: but when they approach,
Or actually exist, our intellect
Then wholly fails; nor of your human state,
Except what others bring us, know we aught.
Hence therefore mayst thou understand, that all
Our knowledge in that instant shall expire,
When on futurity the portals close.”

Then conscious of my fault, and by remorse
Smitten, I added thus: “Now shalt thou say
To him there fallen, that his offspring still
Is to the living join’d; and bid him know,
That if from answer, silent, I abstain’d,
‘Twas that my thought was occupied, intent
Upon that error, which thy help hath solved.”

But now my master summoning me back
I heard, and with more eager haste besought

The spirit to inform me, who with him
Partook his lot. He answer thus return'd:
"More than a thousand with me here are laid.
Within is Frederick, second of that name,
And the Lord Cardinal, and of the rest
I speak not." He, this said, from sight withdrew.
But I my steps toward the ancient bard
Reverting, ruminated on the words
Betokening me such ill. Onward he moved,
And thus, in going, question'd: "Whence the amaze
That holds thy senses wrapt?" I satisfied
The inquiry, and the sage enjoin'd me straight:
"Let thy safe memory store what thou hast heard
To thee importing harm; and note thou this,"
With his raised finger bidding me take heed,
"When thou shalt stand before her gracious beam,
Whose bright eye all surveys, she of thy life
The future tenor will to thee unfold."

Forthwith he to the left hand turn'd his feet:
We left the wall, and toward the middle space
Went by a path that to a valley strikes,

Which e'en thus high exhaled its noisome steam.

CANTO XI

At the seventh circle, he is instructed by Virgil concerning the three following circles and why certain sinners do not suffer within the city of Dis.

UPON the utmost verge of a high bank,
By craggy rocks environ'd round, we came,
Where woes beneath, more cruel yet, were stow'd:
And here, to shun the horrible excess
Of fetid exhalation upward cast
From the profound abyss, behind the lid
Of a great monument we stood retired,
Whereon this scroll I mark'd: "I have in charge
Pope Anastasius, whom Photinus drew
From the right path." "Ere our descent, behoves
We make delay, that somewhat first the sense,
To the dire breath accustom'd, afterward
Regard it not." My master thus; to whom
Answering I spake: "Some compensation find,
That the time pass not wholly lost." He then:

“Lo! how my thoughts e’en to thy wishes tend.
My son! within these rocks," he thus began,
“Are three close circles in gradation placed,
As these which now thou leavest. Each one is full
Of spirits accurst; but that the sight alone
Hereafter may suffice thee, listen how
And for what cause in durance they abide.

“Of all malicious act abhorr’d in heaven,
The end is injury; and all such end
Either by force or fraud works other’s woe.
But fraud, because of man’s peculiar evil,
To God is more displeasing; and beneath,
The fraudulent are therefore doom’d to endure
Severer pang. The violent occupy
All the first circle; and because, to force,
Three persons are obnoxious, in three rounds,
Each within other separate, is it framed.
To God, his neighbor, and himself, by man
Force may be offer’d; to himself I say,
And his possessions, as thou soon shalt hear
At full. Death, violent death, and painful wounds

Upon his neighbor he inflicts; and wastes,
By devastation, pillage, and the flames,
His substance. Slayers, and each one that smites
In malice, plunderers, and all robbers, hence
The torment undergo of the first round,
In different herds. Man can do violence
To himself and his own blessings: and for this,
He in the second round must aye deplore
With unavailing penitence his crime.
Who'er deprives himself of life and light,
In reckless lavishment his talent wastes,
And sorrows there where he should dwell in joy.
To God may force be offer'd, in the heart
Denying and blaspheming his high power,
And Nature with her kindly law contemning.
And thence the inmost round marks with its seal
Sodom, and Cahors, and all such as speak
Contemptuously of the Godhead in their hearts.

“Fraud, that in every conscience leaves a sting,
May be by man employ'd on one, whose trust
He wins, or on another who withholds

Strict confidence. Seems as the latter way
Broke but the bond of love which Nature makes.
Whence in the second circle have their nest,
Dissimulation, witchcraft, flatteries,
Theft, falsehood, simony, all who seduce
To lust, or set their honesty at pawn,
With such vile scum as these. The other way
Forgets both Nature's general love, and that
Which thereto added afterward gives birth
To special faith. Whence in the lesser circle,
Point of the universe, dread seat of Dis,
The traitor is eternally consumed."

I thus: "Instructor, clearly thy discourse
Proceeds, distinguishing the hideous chasm
And its inhabitants with skill exact.
But tell me this: they of the dull, fat pool,
Whom the rain beats, or whom the tempest drives,
Or who with tongues so fierce conflicting meet,
Wherefore within the city fire-illumed
Are not these punish'd, if God's wrath be on them?
And if it be not, wherefore in such guise

Are they condemn'd?" He answer thus return'd:

"Wherefore in dotage wanders thus thy mind,
Not so accustom'd? or what other thoughts
Possess it? Dwell not in thy memory
The words, wherein thy ethic page describes
Three dispositions adverse to Heaven's will,
Incontinence, malice, and mad brutishness,
And how incontinence the least offends
God, and least guilt incurs? If well thou note
This judgment, and remember who they are,
Without these walls to vain repentance doom'd,
Thou shalt discern why they apart are placed
From these fell spirits, and less wreakful pours
Justice divine on them its vengeance down."

"O sun! who healest all imperfect sight,
Thou so content'st me, when thou solvest my doubt,
That ignorance not less than knowledge charms.
Yet somewhat turn thee back," I in these words
Continued, "where thou said'st, that usury
Offends celestial Goodness; and this knot
Perplex'd unravel." He thus made reply:

“Philosophy, to an attentive ear,
Clearly points out, not in one part alone,
How imitative Nature takes her course
From the celestial mind, and from its art:
And where her laws the Stagirite unfolds,
Not many leaves scann’d o’er, observing well
Thou shalt discover, that your art on her
Obsequious follows, as the learner treads
In his instructor’s step; so that your art
Deserves the name of second in descent
From God. These two, if thou recall to mind
Creation’s holy book, from the beginning
Were the right source of life and excellence
To human kind. But in another path
The usurer walks; and Nature in herself
And in her follower thus he sets at naught,
Placing elsewhere his hope. But follow now
My steps on forward journey bent; for now
The Pisces play with undulating glance
Along the horizon, and the Wain lies all
O’er the northwest; and onward there a space
Is our steep passage down the rocky height.”

CANTO XII

Dante and his leader find the Minotaur on guard and descry a river of blood, patrolled by Centaurs, which is the torment of those who committed violence against their neighbors.

THE place, where to descend the precipice
We came, was rough as Alp; and on its verge
Such object lay, as every eye would shun.

As is that ruin, which Adice's stream
On this side Trento struck, shouldering the wave,
Or loosed by earthquake or for lack of prop;
For from the mountain's summit, whence it moved
To the low level, so the headlong rock
Is shiver'd, that some passage it might give
To him who from above would pass; e'en such
Into the chasm was that descent: and there
At point of the disparted ridge lay stretch'd
The infamy of Crete, detested brood
Of the feign'd heifer: and at sight of us

It gnaw'd itself, as one with rage distract.
To him my guide exclaim'd: "Perchance thou deem'st
The King of Athens here, who, in the world
Above, thy death contrived. Monster! avaunt!
He comes not tutor'd by thy sister's art,
But to behold your torments is he come."

Like to a bull, that with impetuous spring
Darts, at the moment when the fatal blow
Hath struck him, but unable to proceed
Plunges on either side; so saw I plunge
The Minotaur; whereat the sage exclaim'd:
"Run to the passage! while he storms, 'tis well
That thou descend." Thus down our road we took
Through those dilapidated crags, that oft
Moved underneath my feet, to weight like theirs
Unused. I pondering went, and thus he spake:
"Perhaps thy thoughts are of this ruin'd steep,
Guarded by the brute violence, which I
Have vanquish'd now. Know then, that when I erst
Hither descended to the nether Hell,
This rock was not yet fallen. But past doubt,

(If well I mark) not long ere He arrived,
Who carried off from Dis the mighty spoil
Of the highest circle, then through all its bounds
Such trembling seized the deep concave and fowl,
I thought the universe was thrill'd with love,
Whereby, there are who deem, the world hath oft
Been into chaos turn'd: and in that point,
Here, and elsewhere, that old rock toppled down.
But fix thine eyes beneath: the river of blood
Approaches, in the which all those are steep'd,
Who have by violence injured." O blind lust!
O foolish wrath! who so dost goad us on
In the brief life, and in the eternal then
Thus miserably o'erwhelm us. I beheld
An ample foss, that in a bow was bent,
As circling all the plain; for so my guide
Had told. Between it and the rampart's base,
On trail ran Centaurs, with keen arrows arm'd,
As to the chase they on the earth were wont.

At seeing us descend they each one stood;
And issuing from the troop, three sped with bows

And missile weapons chosen first; of whom
One cried from far: "Say, to what pain ye come
Condemn'd, who down this steep have journey'd. Speak
From whence ye stand, or else the bow I draw."

To whom my guide: "Our answer shall be made
To Chiron, there, when nearer him we come.
Ill was thy mind, thus ever quick and rash."
Then me he touch'd and spake: "Nessus is this,
Who for the fair Deianira died,
And wrought himself revenge for his own fate.
He in the midst, that on his breast looks down,
Is the great Chiron who Achilles nursed;
That other, Pholus, prone to wrath." Around
The foss these go by thousands, aiming shafts
At whatsoever spirit dares emerge
From out the blood, more than his guilt allows.

We to those beasts, that rapid strode along,
Drew near; when Chiron took an arrow forth,
And with the notch push'd back his shaggy beard
To the cheek-bone, then, his great mouth to view

Exposing, to his fellows thus exclaim'd:
"Are ye aware, that he who comes behind
Moves what he touches? The feet of the dead
Are not so wont." My trusty guide, who now
Stood near his breast, where the two natures join,
Thus made reply: "He is indeed alive,
And solitary so must needs by me
Be shown the gloomy vale, thereto induced
By strict necessity, not by delight.
She left her joyful harpings in the sky,
Who this new office to my care consign'd.
He is no robber, no dark spirit I.
But by that virtue, which empowers my step
To tread so wild a path, grant us, I pray,
One of thy band, whom we may trust secure,
Who to the ford may lead us, and convey
Across, him mounted on his back; for he
Is not a spirit that may walk the air."

Then on his right breast turning, Chiron thus
To Nessus spake: "Return, and be their guide.
And if ye chance to cross another troop,

Command them keep aloof." Onward we moved,
The faithful escort by our side, along
The border of the crimson-seething flood,
Whence, from those steep'd within, loud shrieks arose.

Some there I mark'd, as high as to their brow
Immersed, of whom the mighty Centaur thus:
"These are the souls of tyrants, who were given
To blood and rapine. Here they wail aloud
Their merciless wrongs. Here Alexander dwells,
And Dionysius fell, who many a year
Of woe wrought for fair Sicily. That brow,
Whereon the hair so jetty clustering hangs,
Is Azzolino; that with flaxen locks
Obizzo of Este, in the world destroy'd
By his foul step-son." To the bard revered
I turn'd me round, and thus he spake: "Let him
Be to thee now first leader, me but next
To him in rank." Then further on a space
The Centaur paused, near some, who at the throat
Were extant from the wave; and, showing us
A spirit by itself apart retired,

Exclaim'd: "He in God's bosom smote the heart,
Which yet is honored on the bank of Thames."

A race I next espied who held the head,
And even all the bust, above the stream.
'Midst these I many a face remember'd well.
Thus shallow more and more the blood became,
So that at last it but imbrued the feet;
And there our passage lay athwart the foss.

"As ever on this side the boiling wave
Thou seest diminishing," the Centaur said,
"So on the other, be thou well assured,
It lower still and lower sinks its bed,
Till in that part it reuniting join,
Where 'tis the lot of tyranny to mourn.
There Heaven's stern justice lays chastising hand
On Attila, who was the scourge of earth,
On Sextus and on Pyrrhus, and extracts
Tears ever by the seething flood unlock'd
From the Rinieri, of Corneto this,
Pazzo the other named, who fill'd the ways

With violence and war." This said, he turn'd,
And quitting us, alone repass'd the ford.

CANTO XIII

Dante enters the second compartment of the seventh circle which contains those who have done violence to their own persons or have violently consumed their goods.

ERE Nessus yet had reach'd the other bank,
We enter'd on a forest, where no track
Of steps had worn a way. Not verdant there
The foliage, but of dusky hue; not light
The boughs and tapering, but with knares deform'd
And matted thick: fruits there were none, but thorns
Instead, with venom fill'd. Less sharp than these,
Less intricate the brakes, wherein abide
Those animals, that hate the cultured fields,
Betwixt Corneto and Cecina's stream.

Here the brute harpies make their nest, the same
Who from the Strophades the Trojan band
Drove with dire boding of their future woe.
Broad are their pennons, of the human form

Their neck and countenance, arm'd with talons keen
The feet, and the huge belly fledge with wings.
These sit and wail on the drear mystic wood.

The kind instructor in these words began:
"Ere further thou proceed, know thou art now
I' th' second round, and shalt be, till thou come
Upon the horrid sand: look therefore well
Around thee, and such things thou shalt behold,
As would my speech discredit." On all sides
I heard sad plainings breathe, and none could see
From whom they might have issued. In amaze
Fast bound I stood. He, as it seem'd, believed
That I had thought so many voices came
From some amid those thickets close conceal'd,
And thus his speech resum'd: "If thou lop off
A single twig from one of those ill plants,
The thought thou hast conceived shall vanish quite."

Thereat a little stretching forth my hand,
From a great wilding gather'd I a branch,
And straight the trunk exclaim'd: "Why pluck'st thou me?"

Then, as the dark blood trickled down its side,
These words it added: "Wherefore tear'st me thus?
Is there no touch of mercy in thy breast?
Men once were we, that now are rooted here.
Thy hand might well have spared us, had we been
The souls of serpents." As a brand yet green,
That burning at one end from the other sends
A groaning sound, and hisses with the wind
That forces out its way, so burst at once
Forth from the broken splinter words and blood.

I, letting fall the bough, remain'd as one
Assail'd by terror; and the sage replied:
"If he, O injured spirit! could have believed
What he hath seen but in my verse described,
He never against thee had stretch'd his hand.
But I, because the thing surpass'd belief,
Prompted him to this deed, which even now
Myself I rue. But tell me, who thou wast;
That, for this wrong to do thee some amends,
In the upper world (for thither to return
Is granted him) thy fame he may revive."

“That pleasant word of thine,” the trunk replied,
“Hath so inveigled me, that I from speech
Cannot refrain, wherein if I indulge
A little longer, in the snare detain’d,
Count it not grievous. I it was, who held
Both keys to Frederick’s heart, and turn’d the wards,
Opening and shutting, with a skill so sweet,
That besides me, into his inmost breast
Scarce any other could admittance find.
The faith I bore to my high charge was such,
It cost me the life-blood that warm’d my veins.
The harlot, who ne’er turn’d her gloating eyes
From Caesar’s household, common vice and pest
Of courts, ‘gainst me inflamed the minds of all;
And to Augustus they so spread the flame,
That my glad honors changed to bitter woes.
My soul, disdainful and disgusted, sought
Refuge in death from scorn, and I became,
Just as I was, unjust toward myself.
By the new roots, which fix this stem, I swear,
That never faith I broke to my liege lord,
Who merited such honor; and of you,

If any to the world indeed return,
Clear he from wrong my memory, that lies
Yet prostrate under envy's cruel blow."

First somewhat pausing, till the mournful words
Were ended, then to me the bard began:
"Lose not the time; but speak, and of him ask,
If more thou wish to learn." Whence I replied:
"Question thou him again of whatsoe'er
Will, as thou think'st, content me; for no power
Have I to ask, such pity is at my heart."

He thus resumed: "So may he do for thee
Freely what thou entreatest, as thou yet
Be pleased, imprison'd spirit! to declare,
How in these gnarled joints the soul is tied;
And whether any ever from such frame
Be loosen'd, if thou canst, that also tell."

Thereat the trunk breathed hard, and the wind soon
Changed into sounds articulate like these:
"Briefly ye shall be answer'd. When departs

The fierce soul from the body, by itself
Thence torn asunder, to the seventh gulf
By Minos doom'd, into the wood it falls,
No place assign'd, but wheresoever chance
Hurls it; there sprouting, as a grain of spelt,
It rises to a sapling, growing thence
A savage plant. The harpies, on its leaves
Then feeding, cause both pain, and for the pain
A vent to grief. We, as the rest, shall come
For our own spoils, yet not so that with them
We may again be clad; for what a man
Takes from himself it is not just he have.
Here we perforce shall drag them; and throughout
The dismal glade our bodies shall be hung,
Each on the wild thorn of his wretched shade."

Attentive yet to listen to the trunk
We stood, expecting further speech, when us
A noise surprised; as when a man perceives
The wild boar and the hunt approach his place
Of station'd watch, who of the beasts and boughs
Loud rustling round him hears. And lo! there came

Two naked, torn with briers, in headlong flight,
That they before them broke each fan o' th' wood.
"Haste now," the foremost cried, "now haste thee, death!"
The other, as seem'd, impatient of delay,
Exclaiming, "Lano! not so bent for speed
Thy sinews, in the lists of Toppo's field."
And then, for that perchance no longer breath
Sufficed him, of himself and of a bush
One group he made. Behind them was the wood
Full of black female mastiffs, gaunt and fleet,
As greyhounds that have newly slipt the leash.
On him, who squatted down, they stuck their fangs,
And having rent him piecemeal bore away
The tortured limbs. My guide then seized my hand,
And led me to the thicket, which in vain
Mourn'd through its bleeding wounds: "O Giacomo
Of Sant' Andrea! what avails it thee,"
It cried, "that of me thou hast made thy screen?
For thy ill life, what blame on me recoils?"

When o'er it he had paused, my master spake:
"Say who wast thou, that at so many points

Breathest out with blood thy lamentable speech?"

He answer'd: "O ye spirits! arrived in time
To spy the shameful havoc that from me
My leaves hath sever'd thus, gather them up,
And at the foot of their sad parent-tree
Carefully lay them. In that city I dwelt,
Who for the Baptist her first patron changed,
Whence he for this shall cease not with his art
To work her woe: and if there still remain'd not
On Arno's passage some faint glimpse of him,
Those citizens, who rear'd once more her walls
Upon the ashes left by Attila,
Had labor'd without profit of their toil.
I slung the fatal noose from my own roof."

CANTO XIV

They arrive at the third compartment where violence
against God, Nature, and Art is punished.

SOON as the charity of native land
Wrought in my bosom, I the scatter'd leaves
Collected, and to him restored, who now
Was hoarse with utterance. To the limit thence
We came, which from the third the second round
Divides, and where of justice is display'd
Contrivance horrible. Things then first seen
Clearlier to manifest, I tell how next
A plain we reach'd, that from its sterile bed
Each plant repell'd. The mournful wood waves round
Its garland on all sides, as round the wood
Spreads the sad foss. There, on the very edge,
Our steps we stay'd. It was an area wide
Of arid sand and thick, resembling most
The soil that erst by Cato's foot was trod.

Vengeance of heaven! Oh! how shouldst thou be fear'd
By all, who read what here mine eyes beheld.

Of naked spirits many a flock I saw,
All weeping piteously, to different laws
Subjected; for on the earth some lay supine,
Some crouching close were seated, others paced
Incessantly around; the latter tribe
More numerous, those fewer who beneath
The torment lay, but louder in their grief.

O'er all the sand fell slowly wafting down
Dilated flakes of fire, as flakes of snow
On Alpine summit, when the wind is hush'd.
As, in the torrid Indian clime, the son
Of Ammon saw, upon his warrior band
Descending, solid flames, that to the ground
Came down; whence he bethought him with his troop
To trample on the soil; for easier thus
The vapor was extinguish'd, while alone:
So fell the eternal fiery flood, wherewith
The marle glow'd underneath, as under stove

The viands, doubly to augment the pain.
Unceasing was the play of wretched hands,
Now this, now that way glancing, to shake off
The heat, still falling fresh. I thus began:
“Instructor! thou who all things overcomest,
Except the hardy demons that rush’d forth
To stop our entrance at the gate, say who
Is yon huge spirit, that, as seems, heeds not
The burning, but lies writhen in proud scorn,
As by the sultry tempest immatured?”

Straight he himself, who was aware I ask’d
My guide of him, exclaim’d: “Such as I was
When living, dead such now I am. If Jove
Weary his workman out, from whom in ire
He snatch’d the lightnings, that at my last day
Transfix’d me; if the rest he weary out,
At their black smithy laboring by turns,
In Mongibello, while he cries aloud,
‘Help, help, good Mulciber!’ as erst he cried
In the Phlegraean warfare; and the bolts
Launch he, full aim’d at me, with all his might;

He never should enjoy a sweet revenge."

Then thus my guide, in accent higher raised
Than I before had heard him: "Capaneus!
Thou art more punish'd, in that this thy pride
Lives yet unquench'd: no torment, save thy rage,
Were to thy fury pain proportion'd full."

Next turning round to me, with milder lip
He spake: "This of the seven kings was one,
Who girt the Theban walls with siege, and held,
As still he seems to hold, God in disdain,
And sets his high omnipotence at naught.
But, as I told him, his despiteful mood
In ornament well suits the breast that wears it.
Follow me now; and look thou set not yet
Thy foot in the hot sand, but to the wood
Keep ever close." Silently on we pass'd
To where there gushes from the forest's bound
A little brook, whose crimson'd wave yet lifts
My hair with horror. As the rill, that runs
From Bulicame, to be portion'd out

Among the sinful women, so ran this
Down through the sand; its bottom and each bank
Stone-built, and either margin at its side,
Whereon I straight perceived our passage lay.

“Of all that I have shown thee, since that gate
We enter’d first, whose threshold is to none
Denied, naught else so worthy of regard,
As is this river, has thine eye discern’d,
O’er which the flaming volley all is quench’d.”

So spake my guide; and I him thence besought,
That having given me appetite to know,
The food he too would give, that hunger craved.

“In midst of ocean,” forthwith he began,
“A desolate country lies, which Crete is named;
Under whose monarch, in old times, the world
Lived pure and chaste. A mountain rises there,
Call’d Ida, joyous once with leaves and streams,
Deserted now like a forbidden thing.
It was the spot which Rhea, Saturn’s spouse,

Chose for the secret cradle of her son;
And better to conceal him, drown'd in shouts
His infant cries. Within the mount, upright
An ancient form there stands, and huge, that turns
His shoulders toward Damietta; and at Rome,
As in his mirror, looks. Of finest gold
His head is shaped, pure silver are the breast
And arms, thence to the middle is of brass,
And downward all beneath well-temper'd steel,
Save the right foot of potter's clay, on which
Than on the other more erect he stands.
Each part, except the gold, is rent throughout;
And from the fissure tears distil, which join'd
Penetrate to that cave. They in their course,
Thus far precipitated down the rock,
Form Acheron, and Styx, and Phlegethon;
Then by this straiten'd channel passing hence
Beneath e'en to the lowest depth of all,
Form there Cocytus, of whose lake (thyself
Shalt see it) I here give thee no account."

Then I to him: "If from our world this sluice

Be thus derived; wherefore to us but now
Appears it at this edge?" He straight replied:
"The place, thou know'st, is round: and though great part
Thou have already past, still to the left
Descending to the nethermost, not yet
Hast thou the circuit made of the whole orb.
Wherefore, if aught of new to us appear,
It needs not bring up wonder in thy looks."

Then I again inquired: "Where flow the streams
Of Phlegethon and Lethe? for of one
Thou tell'st not; and the other, of that shower,
Thou say'st, is form'd." He answer thus return'd:
"Doubtless thy questions all well pleased I hear.
Yet the red seething wave might have resolved
One thou proposest. Lethe thou shalt see,
But not within this hollow, in the place
Whither, to lave themselves, the spirits go,
Whose blame hath been by penitence removed."
He added: "Time is now we quit the wood.
Look thou my steps pursue: the margins give
Safe passage, unimpeded by the flames;

For over them all vapor is extinct."

CANTO XV

They meet a troop of spirits that have done great violence
to nature, and Dante distinguishes Brunetto Latini,
his former master.

ONE of the solid margins bears us now
Envelop'd in the mist, that, from the stream
Arising, hovers o'er, and saves from fire
Both piers and water. As the Flemings rear
Their mound, 'twixt Ghent and Bruges, to chase back
The ocean, fearing his tumultuous tide
That drives toward them; or the Paduans theirs
Along the Brenta, to defend their towns
And castles, ere the genial warmth be felt
On Chiarentana's top; such were the mounds,
So framed, though not in height or bulk to these
Made equal, by the master, whosoe'er
He was, that raised them here. We from the wood
Were now so far removed, that turning round
I might not have discern'd it, when we met

A troop of spirits, who came beside the pier.

They each one eyed us, as at eventide
One eyes another under a new moon;
And toward us sharpen'd their sight, as keen
As an old tailor at his needle's eye.

Thus narrowly explored by all the tribe,
I was agnized of one, who by the skirt
Caught me, and cried, "What wonder have we here?"

And I, when he to me outstretch'd his arm,
Intently fix'd my ken on his parch'd looks,
That, although smirch'd with fire, they hinder'd not
But I remember'd him; and toward his face
My hand inclining, answer'd: "Ser Brunetto!
And are ye here?" He thus to me: "My son!
Oh let it not displease thee, if Brunetto
Latini but a little space with thee
Turn back, and leave his fellows to proceed."

I thus to him replied: "Much as I can,

I thereto pray thee; and if thou be willing
That I here seat me with thee, I consent;
His leave, with whom I journey, first obtain'd."

"O son!" said he, "whoever of this throng
One instant stops, lies then a hundred years,
No fan to ventilate him, when the fire
Smites sorest. Pass thou therefore on. I close
Will at thy garments walk, and then rejoin
My troop, who go mourning their endless doom."

I dared not from the path descend to tread
On equal ground with him, but held my head
Bent down, as one who walks in reverent guise.

"What chance or destiny," thus he began,
"Ere the last day, conducts thee here below?
And who is this that shows to thee the way?"

"There up aloft," I answer'd, "in the life
Serene, I wander'd in a valley lost,
Before mine age had to its fulness reach'd.

But yester-morn I left it: then once more
Into that vale returning, him I met;
And by this path homeward he leads me back."

"If thou," he answer'd, "follow but thy star,
Thou canst not miss at last a glorious haven;
Unless in fairer days my judgment err'd.
And if my fate so early had not chanced,
Seeing the heavens thus bounteous to thee, I
Had gladly given thee comfort in thy work.
But that ungrateful and malignant race,
Who in old times came down from Fesole,
Ay and still smack of their rough mountain-flint,
Will for thy good deeds show thee enmity.
Nor wonder; for amongst ill-savor'd crabs
It suits not the sweet fig-tree lay her fruit.
Old fame reports them in the world for blind,
Covetous, envious, proud. Look to it well:
Take heed thou cleanse thee of their ways. For thee,
Thy fortune hath such honor in reserve,
That thou by either party shalt be craved
With hunger keen: but be the fresh herb far

From the goat's tooth. The herd of Fesole
May of themselves make litter, not touch the plant,
If any such yet spring on their rank bed,
In which the holy seed revives, transmitted
From those true Romans, who still there remain'd,
When it was made the nest of so much ill."

"Were all my wish fulfill'd," I straight replied,
"Thou from the confines of man's nature yet
Hadst not been driven forth; for in my mind
Is fix'd, and now strikes full upon my heart,
The dear, benign, paternal image, such
As thine was, when so lately thou didst teach me
The way for man to win eternity:
And how I prized the lesson, it behoves,
That, long as life endures, my tongue should speak.
What of my fate thou tell'st, that write I down;
And, with another text to comment on,
For her I keep it, the celestial dame,
Who will know all, if I to her arrive.
This only would I have thee clearly note:
That, so my conscience have no plea against me,

Do Fortune as she list, I stand prepared.
Not new or strange such earnest to mine ear.
Speed Fortune then her wheel, as likes her best;
The clown his mattock; all things have their course."

Thereat my sapient guide upon his right
Turn'd himself back, then looked at me, and spake:
"He listens to good purpose who takes note."

I not the less still on my way proceed,
Discoursing with Brunetto, and inquire
Who are most known and chief among his tribe.

"To know of some is well;" he thus replied,
"But of the rest silence may best beseem.
Time would not serve us for report so long.
In brief I tell thee, that all these were clerks,
Men of great learning and no less renown,
By one same sin polluted in the world.
With them is Priscian; and Accorso's son,
Francesco, herds among the wretched throng:
And, if the wish of so impure a blotch

Possess'd thee, him thou also mightst have seen,
Who by the servants' servant was transferr'd
From Arno's seat to Bacchiglione, where
His ill-strain'd nerves he left. I more would add,
But must from further speech and onward way
Alike desist; for yonder I behold
A mist new-arisen on the sandy plain.
A company, with whom I may not sort,
Approaches. I commend my Treasure to thee,
Wherein I yet survive; my sole request."

This said, he turn'd, and seem'd as one of those
Who o'er Verona's champaign try their speed
For the green mantle; and of them he seem'd,
Not he who loses but who gains the prize.

CANTO XVI

They meet the spirits of three military men, and then reach the place where the water descends to the eighth circle.

NOW came I where the water's din was heard
As down it fell into the other round,
Resounding like the hum of swarming bees:
When forth together issued from a troop,
That pass'd beneath the fierce tormenting storm,
Three spirits, running swift. They toward us came,
And each one cried aloud, "Oh! do thou stay,
Whom, by the fashion of thy garb, we deem
To be some inmate of our evil land."

Ah, me! what wounds I mark'd upon their limbs,
Recent and old, inflicted by the flames.
E'en the remembrance of them grieves me yet.

Attentive to their cry, my teacher paused,
And turned to me his visage, and then spake:

“Wait now: our courtesy these merit well:
And were't not for the nature of the place,
Whence glide the fiery darts, I should have said,
That haste had better suited thee than them.”

They, when we stopp'd, resumed their ancient wail,
And, soon as they had reach'd us, all the three
Whirl'd round together in one restless wheel.
As naked champions, smear'd with slippery oil
Are wont, intent, to watch their place of hold
And vantage, ere in closer strife they meet;
Thus each one, as he wheel'd, his countenance
At me directed, so that opposite
The neck moved ever to the twinkling feet.

“If woe of this unsound and dreary waste,”
Thus one began, “added to our sad cheer
Thus peel'd with flame, do call forth scorn on us
And our entreaties, let our great renown
Incline thee to inform us who thou art,
That dost imprint, with living feet unharm'd,
The soil of Hell. He, in whose track thou seest

My steps pursuing, naked though he be
And reft of all, was of more high estate
Than thou believest; grandchild of the chaste
Gualdrada, him they Guidoguerra call'd,
Who in his lifetime many a noble act
Achieved, both by his wisdom and his sword.
The other, next to me that beats the sand,
Is Aldobrandi, name deserving well,
In the upper world, of honor; and myself,
Who in this torment do partake with them,
Am Rusticucci, whom, past doubt, my wife,
Of savage temper, more than aught beside
Hath to this evil brought." If from the fire
I had been shelter'd, down amidst them straight
I then had cast me; nor my guide, I deem,
Would have restrain'd my going: but that fear
Of the dire burning vanquish'd the desire,
Which made me eager of their wish'd embrace.

I then began: "Not scorn, but grief much more,
Such as long time alone can cure, your doom
Fix'd deep within me, soon as this my lord

Spake words, whose tenor taught me to expect
That such a race, as ye are, was at hand.
I am a countryman of yours, who still
Affectionate have utter'd, and have heard
Your deeds and names renown'd. Leaving the gall,
For the sweet fruit I go, that a sure guide
Hath promised to me. But behoves, that far
As to the centre first I downward tend."

"So may long space thy spirit guide thy limbs,"
He answer straight return'd; "and so thy fame
Shine bright when thou art gone, as thou shalt tell,
If courtesy and valor, as they wont,
Dwell in our city, or have vanish'd clean:
For one amidst us late condemn'd to wail,
Borsiere, yonder walking with his peers,
Grieves us no little by the news he brings."

"An upstart multitude and sudden gains,
Pride and excess, O Florence! have in thee
Engender'd, so that now in tears thou mourn'st!"

Thus cried I, with my face upraised, and they
All three, who for an answer took my words,
Look'd at each other, as men look when truth
Comes to their ear. "If at so little cost,"
They all at once rejoin'd, "thou satisfy
Others who question thee, O happy thou!
Gifted with words so apt to speak thy thought.
Wherefore, if thou escape this darksome clime,
Returning to behold the radiant stars,
When thou with pleasure shalt retrace the past,
See that of us thou speak among mankind."

This said, they broke the circle, and so swift
Fled, that as pinions seem'd their nimble feet.

Not in so short a time might one have said
"Amen," as they had vanish'd. Straight my guide
Pursued his track. I follow'd: and small space
Had we past onward, when the water's sound
Was now so near at hand, that we had scarce
Heard one another's speech for the loud din.

E'en as the river, that first holds its course
Unmingled from the Mount of Vesulo,
On the left side of Apennine, toward
The east, which Acquacheta higher up
They call, ere it descend into the vale,
At Forli, by that name no longer known,
Rebellows o'er Saint Benedict, roll'd on
From the Alpine summit down a precipice,
Where space enough to lodge a thousand spreads;
Thus downward from a craggy steep we found
That this dark wave resounded, roaring loud,
So that the ear its clamor soon had stunn'd.

I had a cord that braced my girdle round,
Wherewith I erst had thought fast bound to take
The painted leopard. This when I had all
Unloosen'd from me (so my master bade)
I gather'd up, and stretch'd it forth to him.
Then to the right he turn'd, and from the brink
Standing few paces distant, cast it down
Into the deep abyss. "And somewhat strange,"
Thus to myself I spake, "signal so strange

Betokens, which my guide with earnest eye
Thus follows." Ah! what caution must men use
With those who look not at the deed alone,
But spy into the thoughts with subtle skill.

"Quickly shall come," he said, "what I expect;
Thine eye discover quickly that, whereof
Thy thought is dreaming." Ever to that truth,
Which but the semblance of a falsehood wears,
A man, if possible, should bar his lip;
Since, although blameless, he incurs reproach.
But silence here were vain; and by these notes,
Which now I sing, reader, I swear to thee,
So may they favor find to latest times!
That through the gross and murky air I spied
A shape come swimming up, that might have quell'd
The stoutest heart with wonder; in such guise
As one returns, who hath been down to loose
An anchor grappled fast against some rock,
Or to aught else that in the salt wave lies,
Who, upward springing, close draws in his feet.

CANTO XVII

The monster Geryon is described. By permission,
Dante gets a closer view of those who have
done violence to Art.

“LO! the fell monster with the deadly sting,
Who passes mountains, breaks through fenced walls
And firm embattled spears, and with his filth
Taints all the world.” Thus me my guide address’d,
And beckon’d him, that he should come to shore,
Near to the stony causeway’s utmost edge.

Forthwith that image vile of Fraud appear’d,
His head and upper part exposed on land,
But laid not on the shore his bestial train.
His face the semblance of a just man’s wore,
So kind and gracious was its outward cheer;
The rest was serpent all: two shaggy claws.
Reach’d to the arm-pits; and the back and breast,
And either side, were painted o’er with nodes

And orbits. Colors variegated more
Nor Turks nor Tartars e'er on cloth of state
With interchangeable embroidery wove,
Nor spread Arachne o'er her curious loom.
As ofttimes a light skiff, moor'd to the shore,
Stands part in water, part upon the land;
Or, as where dwells the greedy German boor,
The beaver settles, watching for his prey;
So on the rim, that fenced the sand with rock,
Sat perch'd the fiend of evil. In the void
Glancing, his tail upturn'd its venomous fork,
With sting like scorpion's arm'd. Then thus my guide,
"Now need our way must turn few steps apart,
Far as to that ill beast, who couches there."

Thereat, toward the right our downward course
We shaped, and, better to escape the flame
And burning marle, ten paces on the verge
Proceeded. Soon as we to him arrive,
A little further on mine eye beholds
A tribe of spirits, seated on the sand
Near to the void. Forthwith my master spake:

“That to the full thy knowledge may extend
Of all this round contains, go now, and mark
The mien these wear: but hold not long discourse.
Till thou returnest, I with him meantime
Will parley, that to us he may vouchsafe
The aid of his strong shoulders.” Thus alone,
Yet forward on the extremity I paced
Of that seventh circle, where the mournful tribe
Were seated. At the eyes forth gush’d their pangs,
Against the vapors and the torrid soil
Alternately their shifting hands they plied.
Thus use the dogs in summer still to ply
Their jaws and feet by turns, when bitten sore
By gnats, or flies, or gadflies swarming round.

Noting the visages of some, who lay
Beneath the pelting of that dolorous fire,
One of them all I knew not; but perceived,
That pendent from his neck each bore a pouch
With colors and with emblems various mark’d,
On which it seem’d as if their eye did feed.

And when, amongst them, looking round I came,
A yellow purse I saw with azure wrought,
That wore a lion's countenance and port.
Then, still my sight pursuing its career,
Another I beheld, than blood more red,
A goose display of whiter wing than curd.
And one, who bore a fat and azure swine
Pictured on his white scrip, address'd me thus:
"What dost thou in this deep? Go now and know,
Since yet thou livest, that my neighbor here
Vitaliano on my left shall sit.
A Paduan with these Florentines am I.
Of times they thunder in mine ears, exclaiming,
'Oh! haste that noble knight, he who the pouch
With the three goats will bring.'" This said, he writhed
The mouth, and loll'd the tongue out, like an ox
That licks his nostrils. I, lest longer stay
He ill might brook, who bade me stay not long,
Backward my steps from those sad spirits turn'd.

My guide already seated on the haunch
Of the fierce animal I found; and thus

He me encouraged. "Be thou stout: be bold.
Down such a steep flight must we now descend.
Mount thou before: for, that no power the tail
May have to harm thee, I will be i' th' midst.

As one, who hath an ague fit so near,
His nails already are turn'd blue, and he
Quivers all o'er, if he but eye the shade;
Such was my cheer at hearing of his words.
But shame soon interposed her threat, who makes
The servant bold in presence of his lord.

I settled me upon those shoulders huge,
And would have said, but that the words to aid
My purpose came not, "Look thou clasp me firm."

But he whose succor then not first I proved,
Soon as I mounted, in his arms aloft,
Embracing, held me up; and thus he spake:
"Geryon! now move thee: be thy wheeling gyres
Of ample circuit, easy thy descent.
Think on the unusual burden thou sustain'st."

As a small vessel, backening out from land,
Her station quits; so thence the monster loosed,
And, when he felt himself at large, turn'd round
There, where the breast had been, his forked tail.
Thus, like an eel, outstretch'd at length he steer'd,
Gathering the air up with retractile claws.

Not greater was the dread, when Phaeton
The reins let drop at random, whence high heaven,
Whereof signs yet appear, was wrapt in flames;
Nor when ill-fated Icarus perceived,
By liquefaction of the scalded wax,
The trusted pennons loosen'd from his loins,
His sire exclaiming loud, "Ill way thou keep'st,
Than was my dread, when round me on each part
The air I view'd, and other object none
Save the fell beast. He, slowly sailing, wheels
His downward motion, unobserved of me,
But that the wind, arising to my face,
Breathes on me from below. Now on our right
I heard the cataract beneath us leap

With hideous crash; whence bending down to explore,
New terror I conceived at the steep plunge;
For flames I saw, and wailings smote mine ear:
So that, all trembling, close I crouch'd my limbs,
And then distinguish'd, unperceived before,
By the dread torments that on every side
Drew nearer, how our downward course we wound.

As falcon, that hath long been on the wing,
But lure nor bird hath seen, while in despair
The falconer cries, "Ah me! thou stoop'st to earth,"
Wearied descends, whence nimbly he arose
In many an airy wheel, and lighting sits
At distance from his lord in angry mood;
So Geryon lighting places us on foot
Low down at base of the deep-furrow'd rock,
And, of his burden there discharged, forthwith
Sprang forward, like an arrow from the string.

CANTO XVIII

The poet describes the eighth circle divided into ten gulfs of fraudulent sinners, but treats only those who have seduced any woman from her duty and the flatterers.

THERE is a place within the depths of Hell
Call'd Malebolge, all of rock dark-stain'd
With hue ferruginous, e'en as the steep
That round it circling winds. Right in the midst
Of that abominable region yawns
A spacious gulf profound, whereof the frame
Due time shall tell. The circle, that remains,
Throughout its round, between the gulf and base
Of the high craggy banks, successive forms
Ten bastions, in its hollow bottom raised.

As where, to guard the walls, full many a foss
Begirds some stately castle, sure defence
Affording to the space within; so here
Were model'd these: and as like fortresses,

E'en from their threshold to the brink without,
Are flank'd with bridges; from the rock's low base
Thus flinty paths advanced, that 'cross the moles
And dykes struck onward far as to the gulf,
That in one bound collected cuts them off.
Such was the place, wherein we found ourselves
From Geryon's back dislodged. The bard to left
Held on his way, and I behind him moved.

On our right hand new misery I saw,
New pains, new executioners of wrath,
That swarming peopled the first chasm. Below
Were naked sinners. Hitherward they came,
Meeting our faces, from the middle point;
With us beyond, but with a larger stride.
E'en thus the Romans, when the year returns
Of Jubilee, with better speed to rid
The thronging multitudes, their means devise
For such as pass the bridge; that on one side
All front toward the castle, and approach
Saint Peter's fane, on the other toward the mount.

Each diverse way, along the grisly rock,
Horn'd demons I beheld, with lashes huge,
That on their back unmercifully smote.
Ah! how they made them bound at the first stripe!
None for the second waited, nor the third.

Meantime, as on I pass'd, one met my sight,
Whom soon as view'd, "Of him," cried I, "not yet
Mine eye hath had his fill." I therefore stay'd
My feet to scan him, and the teacher kind
Paused with me, and consented I should walk
Backward a space; and the tormented spirit,
Who thought to hide him, bent his visage down.
But it avail'd him naught; for I exclaim'd:
"Thou who dost cast thine eye upon the ground,
Unless thy features do belie thee much,
Venedico art thou. But what brings thee
Into this bitter seasoning?" He replied:
"Unwillingly I answer to thy words.
But thy clear speech, that to my mind recalls
The world I once inhabited, constrains me.
Know then 'twas I who led fair Ghisola

To do the Marquis' will, however fame
The shameful tale have bruited. Nor alone
Bologna hither sendeth me to mourn.
Rather with us the place is so o'erthrong'd,
That not so many tongues this day are taught,
Betwixt the Reno and Savena's stream,
To answer Sipa in their country's phrase.
And if of that securer proof thou need,
Remember but our craving thirst for gold."

Him speaking thus, a demon with his thong
Struck and exclaim'd, "Away, corrupter! here
Women are none for sale." Forthwith I join'd
My escort, and few paces thence we came
To where a rock forth issued from the bank.
That easily ascended, to the right
Upon its splinter turning, we depart
From those eternal barriers. When arrived
Where, underneath, the gaping arch lets pass
The scourged souls: "Pause here," the teacher said,
"And let these others miserable now
Strike on thy ken; faces not yet beheld,

For that together they with us have walk'd."

From the old bridge we eyed the pack, who came
From the other side toward us, like the rest,
Excoriate from the lash. My gentle guide,
By me unquestion'd, thus his speech resumed:
"Behold that lofty shade, who this way tends,
And seems too woe-begone to drop a tear.
How yet the regal aspect he retains!
Jason is he, whose skill and prowess won
The ram from Colchos. To the Lemnian isle
His passage thither led him, when those bold
And pitiless women had slain all their males.
There he with tokens and fair witching words
Hypsipyle beguiled, a virgin young,
Who first had all the rest herself beguiled.
Impregnated, he left her there forlorn.
Such is the guilt condemns him to this pain.
Here too Medea's injuries are avenged.
All bear him company, who like deceit
To his have practised. And thus much to know
Of the first vale suffice thee, and of those

Whom its keen torments urge." Now had we come
Where, crossing the next pier, the straiten'd path
Bestrides its shoulders to another arch.

Hence, in the second chasm we heard the ghosts,
Who gibber in low melancholy sounds,
With wide-stretch'd nostrils snort, and on themselves
Smite with their palms. Upon the banks a scurf,
From the foul steam condensed, encrusting hung,
That held sharp combat with the sight and smell.

So hollow is the depth, that from no part,
Save on the summit of the rocky span,
Could I distinguish aught. Thus far we came;
And thence I saw, within the foss below,
A crowd immersed in ordure, that appear'd
Druff of the human body. There beneath
Searching with eye inquisitive, I mark'd
One with his head so grimed, 'twere hard to deem
If he were clerk or layman. Loud he cried:
"Why greedily thus bendest more on me,
Than on these other filthy ones, thy ken?"

“Because, if true my memory,” I replied,
“I heretofore have seen thee with dry locks;
And thou Alessio art, of Lucca sprung.
Therefore than all the rest I scan thee more.”

Then beating on his brain, these words he spake:
“Me thus low down my flatteries have sunk,
Wherewith I ne’er enough could glut my tongue.”

My leader thus: “A little further stretch
Thy face, that thou the visage well mayst note
Of that besotted, sluttish courtesan,
Who there doth rend her with defiled nails,
Now crouching down, now risen on her feet.
Thais is this, the harlot, whose false lip
Answer’d her doting paramour that ask’d,
‘Thankest me much!’- ‘Say rather, wondrously,’
And, seeing this, here satiate be our view.”

CANTO XIX

At the third gulf where those guilty of simony are punished,
Dante finds Pope Nicholas V whose evil deeds
are bitterly reprehended.

WOE to thee, Simon Magus! woe to you,
His wretched followers! who the things of God,
Which should be wedded unto goodness, them,
Rapacious as ye are, do prostitute
For gold and silver in adultery.
Now must the trumpet sound for you, since yours
Is the third chasm. Upon the following vault
We now had mounted, where the rock impends
Directly o'er the centre of the foss.

Wisdom Supreme! how wonderful the art,
Which thou dost manifest in heaven, in earth,
And in the evil world, how just a meed
Allotting by thy virtue unto all.

I saw the livid stone, throughout the sides
And in its bottom full of apertures,
All equal in their width, and circular each.
Nor ample less nor larger they appear'd
Than, in Saint John's fair dome of me beloved,
Those framed to hold the pure baptismal streams,
One of the which I brake, some few years past,
To save a whelming infant: and be this
A seal to undeceive whoever doubts
The motive of my deed. From out the mouth
Of every one emerged a sinner's feet,
And of the legs high upward as the calf.
The rest beneath was hid. On either foot
The soles were burning; whence the flexile joints
Glanced with such violent motion, as had snapt
Asunder cords or twisted withes. As flame,
Feeding on unctuous matter, glides along
The surface, scarcely touching where it moves;
So here, from heel to point, glided the flames.

“Master! say who is he, than all the rest
Glancing in fiercer agony, on whom

A ruddier flame doth prey?" I thus inquired.

"If thou be willing," he replied, "that I
Carry thee down, where least the slope bank falls,
He of himself shall tell thee, and his wrongs."

I then: "As pleases thee, to me is best.
Thou art my lord; and know'st that ne'er I quit
Thy will: what silence hides, that knowest thou."

Thereat on the fourth pier we came, we turn'd
And on our left descended to the depth,
A narrow strait, and perforated close.
Nor from his side my leader set me down,
Till to his orifice he brought, whose limb
Quivering express'd his pang. "Whoe'er thou art,
Sad spirit! thus reversed, and as a stake
Driven in the soil," I in these words began;
"If thou be able, utter forth thy voice."

There stood I like the friar, that doth shrive
A wretch for murder doom'd, who, e'en when fix'd,

Calleth him back, whence death awhile delays.

He shouted: "Ha! already standest there?
Already standest there, O Boniface!
By many a year the writing play'd me false.
So early dost thou surfeit with the wealth,
For which thou fearedst not in guile to take
The lovely lady, and then mangle her?"

I felt as those who, piercing not the drift
Of answer made them, stand as if exposed
In mockery, nor know what to reply;
When Virgil thus admonish'd: "Tell him quick,
'I am not he, not he whom thou believest.'"

And I, as was enjoin'd me, straight replied.

That heard, the spirit all did wrench his feet,
And, sighing, next in woful accent spake:
"What then of me requirest? If to know
So much imports thee, who I am, that thou
Hast therefore down the bank descended, learn

That in the mighty mantle I was robed,
And of a she-bear was indeed the son,
So eager to advance my whelps, that there
My having in my purse above I stow'd,
And here myself. Under my head are dragg'd
The rest, my predecessors in the guilt
Of simony. Stretch'd at their length, they lie
Along an opening in the rock. 'Midst them
I also low shall fall, soon as he comes,
For whom I took thee, when so hastily
I question'd. But already longer time
Hath past, since my soles kindled, and I thus
Upturn'd have stood, than is his doom to stand
Planted with fiery feet. For after him,
One yet of deeds more ugly shall arrive,
From forth the west, a shepherd without law,
Fated to cover both his form and mine.
He a new Jason shall be call'd, of whom
In Maccabees we read; and favor such
As to that priest his King indulgent show'd,
Shall be of France's monarch shown to him."

I know not if I here too far presumed,
But in this strain I answer'd: "Tell me now
What treasures from Saint Peter at the first
Our Lord demanded, when he put the keys
Into his charge? Surely he ask'd no more
But 'Follow me!' Nor Peter, nor the rest,
Or gold or silver of Matthias took,
When lots were cast upon the forfeit place
Of the condemned soul. Abide thou then;
Thy punishment of right is merited:
And look thou well to that ill-gotten coin,
Which against Charles thy hardihood inspired.
If reverence of the keys restrain'd me not,
Which thou in happier time didst hold, I yet
Severer speech might use. Your avarice
O'ercasts the world with mourning, under foot
Treading the good, and raising bad men up.
Of shepherds like to you, the Evangelist
Was ware, when her, who sits upon the waves,
With kings in filthy whoredom he beheld;
She who with seven heads tower'd at her birth,
And from ten horns her proof of glory drew,

Long as her spouse in virtue took delight.
Of gold and silver ye have made your god,
Differing wherein from the idolater,
But that he worships one, a hundred ye?
Ah, Constantine! to how much ill gave birth,
Not thy conversion, but that plenteous dower,
Which the first wealthy Father gain'd from thee."

Meanwhile, as thus I sung, he, whether wrath
Or conscience smote him, violent upsprang
Spinning on either sole. I do believe
My teacher well was pleased, with so composed
A lip he listen'd ever to the sound
Of the true words I utter'd. In both arms
He caught, and, to his bosom lifting me,
Upward retraced the way of his descent.

Nor weary of his weight, he press'd me close,
Till to the summit of the rock we came,
Our passage from the fourth to the fifth pier.
His cherish'd burden there gently he placed
Upon the rugged rock and steep, a path

Not easy for the clambering goat to mount.
Thence to my view another vale appear'd.

CANTO XX

The poet relates the punishment of those who presumed to predict future events while still living.

AND now the verse proceeds to torments new,
Fit argument of this the twentieth strain
Of the first song, whose awful theme records
The spirits whelm'd in woe. Earnest I look'd
Into the depth, that open'd to my view,
Moisten'd with tears of anguish, and beheld
A tribe, that came along the hollow vale,
In silence weeping: such their step as walk
Quires, chanting solemn litanies, on earth.

As on them more direct mine eye descends,
Each wondrously seem'd to be reversed
At the neck-bone, so that the countenance
Was from the reins averted; and because
None might before him look, they were compell'd
To advance with backward gait. Thus one perhaps

Hath been by force of palsy clean transposed,
But I ne'er saw it nor believe it so.

Now, reader! think within thyself, so God
Fruit of thy reading give thee! how I long
Could keep my visage dry, when I beheld
Near me our form distorted in such guise,
That on the hinder parts fallen from the face
The tears down-streaming roll'd. Against a rock
I leant and wept, so that my guide exclaim'd:
“What, and art thou, too, witless as the rest?
Here pity most doth show herself alive,
When she is dead. What guilt exceedeth his,
Who with Heaven's judgment in his passion strives?
Raise up thy head, raise up, and see the man
Before whose eyes earth gaped in Thebes, when all
Cried out ‘Amphiaraus, whither rushest?
Why leavest thou the war?’ He not the less
Fell ruining far as to Minos down,
Whose grapple none eludes. Lo! how he makes
The breast his shoulders; and who once too far
Before him wish'd to see, now backward looks,

And treads reverse his path. Tiresias note,
Who semblance changed, when woman he became
Of male, through every limb transform'd; and then
Once more behoved him with his rod to strike
The two entwining serpents, ere the plumes,
That mark'd the better sex, might shoot again.

“Aruns, with rere his belly facing, comes.
On Luni's mountains 'midst the marbles white,
Where delves Carrara's hind, who once beneath,
A cavern was his dwelling, whence the stars
And main-sea wide in boundless view he held.

“The next, whose loosen'd tresses overspread
Her bosom, which thou seest not (for each hair
On that side grows) was Manto, she who search'd
Through many regions, and at length her seat
Fix'd in my native land: whence a short space
My words detain thy audience. When her sire
From life departed, and in servitude
The city dedicate to Bacchus mourn'd,
Long time she went a wanderer through the world.

Aloft in Italy's delightful land
A lake there lies, at foot of that proud Alp
That o'er the Tyrol locks Germania in,
Its name Benacus, from whose ample breast
A thousand springs, methinks, and more, between
Camonica and Garda, issuing forth,
Water the Apennine. There is a spot
At midway of that lake, where he who bears
Of Trento's flock the pastoral staff, with him
Of Brescia, and the Veronese, might each
Passing that way his benediction give.
A garrison of goodly site and strong
Peschiera stands, to awe with front opposed
The Bergamese and Brescian, whence the shore
More slope each way descends. There, whatsoever
Benacus' bosom holds not, tumbling o'er
Down falls, and winds a river flood beneath
Through the green pastures. Soon as in his course
The stream makes head, Benacus then no more
They call the name, but Mincius, till at last
Reaching Governo, into Po he falls.
Not far his course hath run, when a wide flat

It finds, which overstretching as a marsh
It covers, pestilent in summer oft.
Hence journeying, the savage maiden saw
Midst of the fen a territory waste
And naked of inhabitants. To shun
All human converse, here she with her slaves,
Plying her arts, remain'd, and liv'd, and left
Her body tenantless. Thenceforth the tribes,
Who round were scatter'd, gathering to that place,
Assembled; for its strength was great, enclosed
On all parts by the fen. On those dead bones
They rear'd themselves a city, for her sake
Calling it Mantua, who first chose the spot,
Nor ask'd another omen for the name;
Wherein more numerous the people dwelt,
Ere Casalodi's madness by deceit
Was wronged of Pinamonte. If thou hear
Henceforth another origin assign'd
Of that my country, I forewarn thee now,
That falsehood none beguile thee of the truth."

I answer'd, "Teacher, I conclude thy words

So certain, that all else shall be to me
As embers lacking life. But now of these,
Who here proceed, instruct me, if thou see
Any that merit more especial note.
For thereon is my mind alone intent."

He straight replied: "That spirit, from whose cheek
The beard sweeps o'er his shoulders brown, what time
Graecia was emptied of her males, that scarce
The cradles were supplied, the seer was he
In Aulis, who with Calchas gave the sign
When first to cut the cable. Him they named
Eurypilus: so sings my tragic strain,
In which majestic measure well thou know'st,
Who know'st it all. That other, round the loins
So slender of his shape, was Michael Scot,
Practised in every slight of magic wile.

"Guido Bonatti see: Asdente mark,
Who now were willing he had tended still
The thread and cordwain, and too late repents.

“See next the wretches, who the needle left,
The shuttle and the spindle, and became
Diviners: baneful witcheries they wrought
With images and herbs. But onward now:
For now doth Cain with fork of thorns confine
On either hemisphere, touching the wave
Beneath the towers of Seville. Yesternight
The moon was round. Thou mayst remember well:
For she good service did thee in the gloom
Of the deep wood.” This said, both onward moved.

CANTO XXI

They look down upon the barterers or public speculators
who are plunged in a lake of boiling pitch
and guarded by Demons.

THUS we from bridge to bridge, with other talk,
The which my drama cares not to rehearse,
Pass'd on; and to the summit reaching, stood
To view another gap, within the round
Of Malebolge, other bootless pangs.

Marvellous darkness shadow'd o'er the place.
In the Venetians' arsenal as boils
Through wintry months tenacious pitch, to smear
Their unsound vessels; for the inclement time
Seafaring men restrains, and in that while
His bark one builds anew, another stops
The ribs of his that hath made many a voyage,
One hammers at the prow, one at the poop,
This shapeth oars, that other cables twirls,

The mizzen one repairs, and main-sail rent;
So, not by force of fire but art divine,
Boil'd here a glutinous thick mass, that round
Limed all the shore beneath. I that beheld,
But herein naught distinguish'd, save the bubbles
Raised by the boiling, and one mighty swell
Heave, and by turns subsiding fall. While there
I fix'd my ken below, "Mark! mark!" my guide
Exclaiming, drew me toward him from the place
Wherein I stood. I turn'd myself, as one
Impatient to behold that which beheld
He needs must shun, whom sudden fear unmans,
That he his flight delays not for the view.
Behind me I discern'd a devil black,
That running up advanced along the rock.
Ah! what fierce cruelty his look bespake.
In act how bitter did he seem, with wings
Buoyant outstretch'd and feet of nimblest tread.
His shoulder, proudly eminent and sharp,
Was with a sinner charged; by either haunch
He held him, the foot's sinew griping fast.

“Ye of our bridge!” he cried, “keen-talon’d fiends!
Lo! one of Santa Zita’s elders. Him
Whelm ye beneath, while I return for more.
That land hath store of such. All men are there,
Except Bonturo, barterers: of ‘no’
For lucre there an ‘ay’ is quickly made.”

Him dashing down, o’er the rough rock he turn’d;
Nor ever after thief a mastiff loosed
Sped with like eager haste. That other sank,
And forthwith writhing to the surface rose.
But those dark demons, shrouded by the bridge,
Cried, “Here the hallow’d visage saves not: here
Is other swimming than in Serchio’s wave,
Wherefore, if thou desire we rend thee not,
Take heed thou mount not o’er the pitch.” This said,
They grappled him with more than hundred hooks,
And shouted: “Cover’d thou must sport thee here;
So, if thou canst, in secret mayst thou filch.”
E’en thus the cook bestirs him, with his grooms,
To thrust the flesh into the caldron down
With flesh-hooks, that it float not on the top.

Me then my guide bespake: "Lest they descry
That thou art here, behind a craggy rock
Bend low and screen thee: and whate'er of force
Be offer'd me, or insult, fear thou not;
For I am well advised, who have been erst
In the like fray." Beyond the bridge's head
Therewith he pass'd; and reaching the sixth pier,
Behoved him then a forehead terror-proof.

With storm and fury, as when dogs rush forth
Upon the poor man's back, who suddenly
From whence he standeth makes his suit; so rush'd
Those from beneath the arch, and against him
Their weapons all they pointed. He, aloud:
"Be none of you outrageous: ere your time
Dare seize me, come forth from amongst you one,
Who have heard my words, decide he then
If he shall tear these limbs." They shouted loud,
"Go, Malacoda!" Whereat one advanced,
The others standing firm, and as he came,
"What may this turn avail him?" he exclaim'd.

“Believest thou, Malacoda! I had come
Thus far from all your skirmishing secure,”
My teacher answer’d, “without will divine
And destiny propitious? Pass we then;
For so Heaven’s pleasure is, that I should lead
Another through this savage wilderness.”

Forthwith so fell his pride, that he let drop
The instrument of torture at his feet,
And to the rest exclaim’d: “We have no power
To strike him.” Then to me my guide: “O thou!
Who on the bridge among the crags dost sit
Low crouching, safely now to me return.”

I rose, and toward him moved with speed; the fiends
Meantime all forward drew: me terror seized,
Lest they should break the compact they had made.
Thus issuing from Caprona, once I saw
The infantry, dreading lest his covenant
The foe should break; so close he hemm’d them round.

I to my leader's side adhered, mine eyes
With fixt and motionless observance bent
On their unkindly visage. They their hooks
Protruding, one the other thus bespake:
"Wilt thou I touch him on the hip?" To whom
Was answer'd: "Even so; nor miss thy aim."

But he, who was in conference with my guide,
Turn'd rapid round; and thus the demon spake:
"Stay, stay thee, Scarmiglione!" Then to us
He added: "Further footing to your step
This rock affords not, shiver'd to the base
Of the sixth arch. But would ye still proceed,
Up by this cavern go: not distant far,
Another rock will yield you passage safe.
Yesterday, later by five hours than now,
Twelve hundred threescore years and six had fill'd
The circuit of their course, since here the way
Was broken. Thitherward I straight despatch
Certain of these my scouts, who shall espy
If any on the surface bask. With them
Go ye: for ye shall find them nothing fell.

Come, Alichino, forth," with that he cried,
"And Calcabrina, and Cagnazzo thou!
The troop of ten let Barbariccia lead.
With Libicocco, Draghinazzo haste,
Fang'd Ciratta, Graffiacane fierce,
And Farfarello, and mad Rubicant.
Search ye around the bubbling tar. For these,
In safety lead them, where the other crag
Uninterrupted traverses the dens."

I then: "O master! what a sight is there.
Ah! without escort, journey we alone,
Which, if thou know the way, I covet not.
Unless thy prudence fail thee, dost not mark
How they do gnarl upon us, and their scowl
Threatens us present tortures?" He replied:
"I charge thee, fear not: let them, as they will,
Gnarl on: 'tis but in token of their spite
Against the souls who mourn in torment steep'd."

To leftward o'er the pier they turn'd; but each
Had first between his teeth prest close the tongue,

Toward their leader for a signal looking,
Which he with sound obscene triumphant gave.

CANTO XXII

Accompanied by the Demons, they see other sinners of the same description.

IT hath been heretofore my chance to see
Horsemen with martial order shifting camp,
To onset sallying, or in muster ranged,
Or in retreat sometimes outstretch'd for flight:
Light-armed squadrons and fleet foragers
Scouring thy plains, Arezzo! have I seen,
And clashing tournaments, and tilting jousts,
Now with the sound of trumpets, now of bells,
Tabors, or signals made from castled heights,
And with inventions multiform, our own,
Or introduced from foreign land; but ne'er
To such a strange recorder I beheld,
In evolution moving, horse nor foot,
Nor ship, that tack'd by sign from land or star.

With the ten Demons on our way we went;

Ah, fearful company! but in the Church
With saints, with gluttons at the tavern's mess.

Still earnest on the pitch I gazed, to mark
All things whate'er the chasm contain'd, and those
Who burn'd within. As dolphins that, in sign
To mariners, heave high their arched backs,
That thence forewarn'd they may advise to save
Their threaten'd vessel; so, at intervals,
To ease the pain, his back some sinner show'd,
Then hid more nimbly than the lightning-glance.

E'en as the frogs, that of a watery moat
Stand at the brink, with the jaws only out,
Their feet and of the trunk all else conceal'd,
Thus on each part the sinners stood; but soon
As Barbariccia was at hand, so they
Drew back under the wave. I saw, and yet
My heart doth stagger, one, that waited thus,
As it befalls that oft one frog remains,
While the next springs away: and Graffiacan,
Who of the fiends was nearest, grappling seized

His clotted locks, and dragg'd him sprawling up,
That he appear'd to me an otter. Each
Already by their names I knew, so well
When they were chosen I observed, and mark'd
How one the other call'd. "O Rubicant!
See that his hide thou with thy talons flay,"
Shouted together all the cursed crew.

Then I: "Inform thee, Master! if thou may,
What wretched soul is this, on whom their hands
His foes have laid." My leader to his side
Approach'd, and whence he came inquired; to whom
Was answer'd thus: "Born in Navarre's domain,
My mother placed me in a lord's retinue;
For she had borne me to a losel vile,
A spendthrift of his substance and himself.
The good King Thibault after that I served:
To peculating here my thoughts were turn'd,
Whereof I give account in this dire heat."

Straight Ciratto, from whose mouth a tusk
Issued on either side, as from a boar,

Ripp'd him with one of these. 'Twixt evil claws
The mouse had fallen: but Barbariccia cried,
Seizing him with both arms: "Stand thou apart
While I do fix him on my prong transpierced."
Then added, turning to my guide his face,
"Inquire of him, if more thou wish to learn,
Ere he again be rent." My leader thus:
"Then tell us of the partners in thy guilt;
Knowest thou any sprung of Latin land
Under the tar?" "I parted," he replied,
"But now from one, who sojourn'd not far thence;
So were I under shelter now with him,
Nor hook nor talon then should scare me more."

"Too long we suffer," Libicocco cried;
Then, darting forth a prong, seized on his arm,
And mangled bore away the sinewy part.
Him Draghinazzo by his thighs beneath
Would next have caught; whence angrily their chief,
Turning on all sides round, with threatening brow
Restrain'd them. When their strife a little ceased,
Of him, who yet was gazing on his wound,

My teacher thus without delay inquired:

“Who was the spirit, from whom by evil hap
Parting, as thou hast told, thou camest to shore?”

“It was the friar Gomita,” he rejoin’d,
“He of Gallura, vessel of all guile,
Who had his master’s enemies in hand,
And used them so that they commend him well.
Money he took, and them at large dismiss’d;
So he reports; and in each other charge
Committed to his keeping play’d the part
Of barterer to the height. With him doth herd
The chief of Logodoro, Michel Zanche.
Sardinia is a theme whereof their tongue
Is never weary. Out! alas! behold
That other, how he grins. More would I say,
But tremble lest he mean to maul me sore.”

Their captain then to Farfarello turning,
Who roll’d his moony eyes in act to strike,
Rebuked him thus: “Off, cursed bird! avaunt!”

“If ye desire to see or hear,” he thus
Quaking with dread resumed, “or Tuscan spirits
Or Lombard, I will cause them to appear.
Meantime let these ill talons bate their fury,
So that no vengeance they may fear from them,
And I, remaining in this self-same place,
Will, for myself but one, make seven appear,
When my shrill whistle shall be heard; for so
Our custom is to call each other up.”

Cagnazzo at that word deriding grinn’d,
Then wagg’d the head and spake: “Hear his device,
Mischievous as he is, to plunge him down.”

Whereto he thus, who fail’d not in rich store
Of nice-wove toils: “Mischief, forsooth, extreme!
Meant only to procure myself more woe.”

No longer Alichino then refrain’d,
But thus, the rest gainsaying, him bespake:
“If thou do cast thee down, I not on foot
Will chase thee, but above the pitch will beat

My plumes. Quit we the vantage ground, and let
The bank be as a shield; that we may see,
If singly thou prevail against us all."

Now, reader, of new sport expect to hear.

They each one turn'd his eyes to the other shore,
He first, who was the hardest to persuade.
The spirit of Navarre chose well his time,
Planted his feet on land, and at one leap
Escaping, disappointed their resolve.

Them quick resentment stung, but him the most
Who was the cause of failure: in pursuit
He therefore sped, exclaiming, "Thou art caught."

But little it avail'd; terror outstripp'd
His following flight; the other plunged beneath,
And he with upward pinion raised his breast:
E'en thus the water-fowl, when she perceives
The falcon near, dives instant down, while he
Enraged and spent retires. That mockery

In Calabrina fury stirr'd, who flew
After him, with desire of strife inflamed;
And, for the barterer had 'scaped, so turn'd
His talons on his comrade. O'er the dyke
In grapple close they join'd; but the other proved
A goshawk able to rend well his foe;
And in the boiling lake both fell. The heat
Was umpire soon between them; but in vain
To lift themselves they strove, so fast were glued
Their pennons. Barbariccia, as the rest,
That chance lamenting, four in flight despatch'd
From the other coast, with all their weapons arm'd.
They, to their post on each side speedily
Descending, stretch'd their hooks toward the fiends,
Who flounder'd, inly burning from their scars:
And we departing left them to that broil.

CANTO XXIII

The enraged Demons pursue Dante, hut he is preserved from them by Virgil. At the sixth gulf, Dante beholds the punishment of the hypocrites.

IN silence and in solitude we went,
One first, the other following his steps,
As minor friars journeying on their road.

The present fray had turn'd my thoughts to muse
Upon old AEsop's fable, where he told
What fate unto the mouse and frog befell;
For language hath not sounds more like in sense,
Than are these chances, if the origin
And end of each be heedfully compared.
And as one thought bursts from another forth,
So afterward from that another sprang,
Which added doubly to my former fear.
For thus I reason'd: "These through us have been
So foil'd, with loss and mockery so complete,

As needs must sting them sore. If anger then
Be to their evil will conjoin'd, more fell
They shall pursue us, than the savage hound
Snatches the leveret panting 'twixt his jaws."

Already I perceived my hair stand all
On end with terror, and look'd eager back.

"Teacher," I thus began, "if speedily
Thyself and me thou hide not, much I dread
Those evil talons. Even now behind
They urge us: quick imagination works
So forcibly, that I already feel them."

He answer'd: "Were I form'd of leaded glass,
I should not sooner draw unto myself
Thy outward image, than I now imprint
That from within. This moment came thy thoughts
Presented before mine, with similar act
And countenance similar, so that from both
I one design have framed. If the right coast
Incline so much, that we may thence descend

Into the other chasm, we shall escape
Secure from this imagined pursuit."

He had not spoke his purpose to the end,
When I from far beheld them with spread wings
Approach to take us. Suddenly my guide
Caught me, even as a mother that from sleep
Is by the noise aroused, and near her sees
The climbing fires, who snatches up her babe
And flies ne'er pausing, careful more of him
Than of herself, that but a single vest
Clings round her limbs. Down from the jutting beach
Supine he cast him to that pendent rock,
Which closes on one part the other chasm.

Never ran water with such hurrying pace
Adown the tube to turn a land-mill's wheel,
When nearest it approaches to the spokes,
As then along that edge my master ran,
Carrying me in his bosom, as a child,
Not a companion. Scarcely had his feet
Reach'd to the lowest of the bed beneath,

When over us the steep they reach'd: but fear
In him was none; for that high Providence,
Which placed them ministers of the fifth foss,
Power of departing thence took from them all.

There in the depth we saw a painted tribe,
Who paced with tardy steps around, and wept,
Faint in appearance and o'ercome with toil.
Caps had they on, with hoods, that fell low down
Before their eyes, in fashion like to those
Worn by the monks in Cologne. Their outside
Was overlaid with gold, dazzling to view,
But leaden all within, and of such weight,
That Frederick's compared to these were straw.
Oh, everlasting wearisome attire!

We yet once more with them together turn'd
To leftward, on their dismal moan intent.
But by the weight opprest, so slowly came
The fainting people, that our company
Was changed, at every movement of the step.

Whence I my guide address'd: "See that thou find
Some spirit, whose name may by his deeds be known;
And to that end look round thee as thou go'st."

Then one, who understood the Tuscan voice,
Cried after us aloud: "Hold in your feet,
Ye who so swiftly speed through the dusk air.
Perchance from me thou shalt obtain thy wish."

Whereat my leader, turning, me bespake:
"Pause, and then onward at their pace proceed."

I staid, and saw two spirits in whose look
Impatient eagerness of mind was mark'd
To overtake me; but the load they bare
And narrow path retarded their approach.

Soon as arrived, they with an eye askance
Perused me, but spake not: then turning, each
To other thus conferring said: "This one
Seems, by the action of his throat, alive;
And, be they dead, what privilege allows

They walk unmantled by the cumbrous stole?"

Then thus to me: "Tuscan, who visitest
The college of the mourning hypocrites,
Disdain not to instruct us who thou art."

"By Arno's pleasant stream," I thus replied,
"In the great city I was bred and grew,
And wear the body I have ever worn.
But who are ye, from whom such mighty grief,
As now I witness, courseth down your cheeks?
What torment breaks forth in this bitter woe?"

"Our bonnets gleaming bright with orange hue,"
One of them answer'd, "are so leaden gross,
That with their weight they make the balances
To crack beneath them. Joyous friars we were,
Bologna's natives; Catalano I,
He Loderingo named; and by thy land
Together taken, as men use to take
A single and indifferent arbiter,
To reconcile their strifes. How there we sped,

Gardingo's vicinage can best declare."

"O friars!" I began, "your miseries—"

But there brake off, for one had caught mine eye,
Fix'd to a cross with three stakes on the ground:
He, when he saw me, writhed himself, throughout
Distorted, ruffling with deep sighs his beard.
And Catalano, who thereof was 'ware,
Thus spake: "That pierced spirit, whom intent
Thou view'st, was he who gave the Pharisees
Counsel, that it were fitting for one man
To suffer for the people. He doth lie
Transverse; nor any passes, but him first.
Behoves make feeling trial how each weighs.
In straits like this along the foss are placed
The father of his consort, and the rest
Partakers in that council, seed of ill
And sorrow to the Jews." I noted then,
How Virgil gazed with wonder upon him,
Thus abjectly extended on the cross
In banishment eternal. To the friar
He next his words address'd: "We pray ye tell,

If so be lawful, whether on our right
Lies any opening in the rock, whereby
We both may issue hence, without constraint
On the dark angels, that compell'd they come
To lead us from this depth." He thus replied:
"Nearer than thou dost hope, there is a rock
From the great circle moving, which o'ersteps
Each vale of horror, save that here his cope
Is shatter'd. By the ruin ye may mount:
For on the side it slants, and most the height
Rises below." With head bent down awhile
My leader stood; then spake: "He warn'd us ill,
Who yonder hangs the sinners on his hook."

To whom the friar: "At Bologna erst
I many voices of the devil heard;
Among the rest was said, 'He is a liar,
And the father of lies!'" When he had spoke,
My leader with large strides proceeded on,
Somewhat disturb'd with anger in his look.

I therefore left the spirits heavy laden,

And, following, his beloved footsteps mark'd.

CANTO XXIV

In the seventh gulf, Dante sees the robbers tormented
by venomous and pestilent serpents.

IN the year's early nonage, when the sun
Tempers his tresses in Aquarius' urn,
And now toward equal day the nights recede;
When as the rime upon the earth puts on
Her dazzling sister's image, but not long
Her milder sway endures; then riseth up
The village hind, whom fails his wintry store,
And looking out beholds the plain around
All whiten'd; whence impatiently he smites
His thighs, and to his hut returning in,
There paces to and fro, wailing his lot,
As a discomfited and helpless man;
Then comes he forth again, and feels new hope
Spring in his bosom, finding e'en thus soon
The world hath changed its countenance, grasps his crook,
And forth to pasture drives his little flock:

So me my guide dishearten'd, when I saw
His troubled forehead; and so speedily
That ill was cured; for at the fallen bridge
Arriving, toward me with a look as sweet,
He turn'd him back, as that I first beheld
At the steep mountain's foot. Regarding well
The ruin, and some counsel first maintain'd
With his own thought, he open'd wide his arm
And took me up. As one, who, while he works,
Computes his labor's issue, that he seems
Still to foresee the effect; so lifting me
Up to the summit of one peak, he fix'd
His eye upon another. "Grapple that,"
Said he, "but first make proof, if it be such
As will sustain thee." For one capt with lead
This were no journey. Scarcely he, though light,
And I, though onward push'd from crag to crag,
Could mount. And if the precinct of this coast
Were not less ample than the last, for him
I know not, but my strength had surely fail'd.
But Malebolge all toward the mouth
Inclining of the nethermost abyss,

The site of every valley hence requires,
That one side upward slope, the other fall.

At length the point from whence the utmost stone
Juts down, we reach'd; soon as to that arrived,
So was the breath exhausted from my lungs
I could no further, but did seat me there.

"Now needs thy best of man"; so spake my guide:
"For not on downy plumes, nor under shade
Of canopy reposing, fame is won;
Without which whosoe'er consumes his days,
Leaveth such vestige of himself on earth,
As smoke in air or foam upon the wave.
Thou therefore rise: vanquish thy weariness
By the mind's effort, in each struggle form'd
To vanquish, if she suffer not the weight
Of her corporeal frame to crush her down.
A longer ladder yet remains to scale.
From these to have escaped sufficeth not,
If well thou note me, profit by my words."

I straightway rose, and show'd myself less spent
Than I in truth did feel me. "On," I cried,
"For I am stout and fearless." Up the rock
Our way we held, more rugged than before,
Narrower, and steeper far to climb. From talk
I ceased not, as we journey'd, so to seem
Least faint; whereat a voice from the other foss
Did issue forth, for utterance suited ill.
Though on the arch that crosses there I stood,
What were the words I knew not, but who spake
Seem'd moved in anger. Down I stoop'd to look;
But my quick eye might reach not to the depth
For shrouding darkness; wherefore thus I spake:
"To the next circle, teacher, bend thy steps,
And from the wall dismount we; for as hence
I hear and understand not, so I see
Beneath, and naught discern." "I answer not,"
Said he, "but by the deed. To fair request
Silent performance maketh best return."

We from the bridge's head descended, where
To the eighth mound it joins; and then, the chasm

Opening to view, I saw a crowd within
Of serpents terrible, so strange of shape
And hideous, that remembrance in my veins
Yet shrinks the vital current. Of her sands
Let Libya vaunt no more: if Jaculus,
Pareas and Chelyder be her brood,
Cenchris and Amphisbaena, plagues so dire
Or in such numbers swarming ne'er she show'd,
Not with all Ethiopia, and whate'er
Above the Erythraean sea is spawn'd.

Amid this dread exuberance of woe
Ran naked spirits wing'd with horrid fear,
Nor hope had they of crevice where to hide,
Or heliotrope to charm them out of view.
With serpents were their hands behind them bound,
Which through their reins infix'd the tail and head,
Twisted in folds before. And lo! on one
Near to our side, darted an adder up,
And, where the neck is on the shoulders tied,
Transpierced him. Far more quickly than e'er pen
Wrote O or I, he kindled, burn'd, and changed

To ashes all, pour'd out upon the earth.
When there dissolved he lay, the dust again
Uproll'd spontaneous, and the self-same form
Instant resumed. So mighty sages tell,
The Arabian Phoenix, when five hundred years
Have well-nigh circled, dies, and springs forthwith
Renascent: blade nor herb throughout his life
He tastes, but tears of frankincense alone
And odorous amomum: swaths of nard
And myrrh his funeral shroud. As one that falls,
He knows not how, by force demoniac dragg'd
To earth, or through obstruction fettering up
In chains invisible the powers of man,
Who, risen from his trance, gazeth around,
Bewilder'd with the monstrous agony
He hath endured, and wildly staring sighs;
So stood aghast the sinner when he rose.

Oh! how severe God's judgment, that deals out
Such blows in stormy vengeance. Who he was,
My teacher next inquired; and thus in few
He answer'd: "Vanni Fucci am I call'd,

Not long since rained down from Tuscany
To this dire gullet. Me the bestial life
And not the human pleased, mule that I was,
Who in Pistoia found my worthy den."

I then to Virgil: "Bid him stir not hence;
And ask what crime did thrust him thither: once
A man I knew him, choleric and bloody."

The sinner heard and feign'd not, but toward me
His mind directing and his face, wherein
Was dismal shame depicted, thus he spake:
"It grieves me more to have been caught by thee
In this sad plight, which thou beholdest, than
When I was taken from the other life.
I have no power permitted to deny
What thou inquirest. I am doom'd thus low
To dwell, for that the sacristy by me
Was rifled of its goodly ornaments,
And with the guilt another falsely charged.
But that thou mayst not joy to see me thus,
So as thou e'er shalt 'scape this darksome realm,

Open thine ears and hear what I forebode.
Reft of the Neri first Pistoia pines;
Then Florence changeth citizens and laws;
From Valdimagra, drawn by wrathful Mars,
A vapor rises, wrapt in turbid mists,
And sharp and eager driveth on the storm
With arrowy hurtling o'er Piceno's field,
Whence suddenly the cloud shall burst, and strike
Each helpless Bianco prostrate to the ground.
This have I told, that grief may rend thy heart."

CANTO XXV

The sacrilegious Fucci vents his fury in blasphemy
and the poet finds the spirits of three countrymen.

WHEN he had spoke, the sinner raised his hands
Pointed in mockery and cried: "Take them, God!
I level them at thee." From that day forth
The serpents were my friends; for round his neck
One of them rolling twisted, as it said,
"Be silent, tongue!" Another, to his arms
Upgliding, tied them, riveting itself
So close, it took from them the power to move.

Pistoia! ah, Pistoia! why dost doubt
To turn thee into ashes, cumbering earth
No longer, since in evil act so far
Thou hast outdone thy seed? I did not mark,
Through all the gloomy circles of the abyss,
Spirit, that swell'd so proudly 'gainst his God;
Not him, who headlong fell from Thebes. He fled,

Nor utter'd more; and after him there came
A centaur full of fury, shouting, "Where,
Where is the caitiff?" On Maremma's marsh
Swarm not the serpent tribe, as on his haunch
They swarm'd, to where the human face begins.
Behind his head, upon the shoulders, lay
With open wings a dragon, breathing fire
On whomsoe'er he met. To me my guide:
"Cacus is this, who underneath the rock
Of Aventine spread oft a lake of blood.
He, from his brethren parted, here must tread
A different journey, for his fraudulent theft
Of the great herd that near him stall'd; whence found
His felon deeds their end, beneath the mace
Of stout Alcides, that perchance laid on
A hundred blows, and not the tenth was felt."

While yet he spake, the centaur sped away:
And under us three spirits came, of whom
Nor I nor he was ware, till they exclaim'd,
"Say who are ye!" We then brake off discourse,
Intent on these alone. I knew them not:

But, as it chanceth oft, befell, that one
Had need to name another. "Where," said he,
"Doth Cianfa lurk?" I, for a sign my guide
Should stand attentive, placed against my lips
The finger lifted. If, O reader! now
Thou be not apt to credit what I tell,
No marvel; for myself do scarce allow
The witness of mine eyes. But as I look'd
Toward them, lo! a serpent with six feet
Springs forth on one, and fastens full upon him:
His midmost grasp'd the belly, a forefoot
Seized on each arm (while deep in either cheek
He flesh'd his fangs); the hinder on the thighs
Were spread, 'twixt which the tail inserted curl'd
Upon the reins behind. Ivy ne'er clasp'd
A dodder'd oak, as round the other's limbs
The hideous monster intertwined his own.
Then, as they both had been of burning wax,
Each melted into other, mingling hues,
That which was either now was seen no more.
Thus up the shrinking paper, ere it burns,
A brown tint glides, not turning yet to black,

And the clean white expires. The other two
Look'd on exclaiming, "Ah! how dost thou change,
Agnello! See! Thou art nor double now,
Nor only one." The two heads now became
One, and two figures blended in one form
Appear'd, where both were lost. Of the four lengths
Two arms were made: the belly and the chest,
The thighs and legs, into such members changed
As never eye hath seen. Of former shape
All trace was vanish'd. Two, yet neither, seem'd
That image miscreate, and so pass'd on
With tardy steps. As underneath the scourge
Of the fierce dog-star that lays bare the fields,
Shifting from brake to brake the lizard seems
A flash of lightning, if he thwart the road;
So toward the entrails of the other two
Approaching seem'd an adder all on fire,
As the dark pepper-grain livid and swart.
In that part, whence our life is nourish'd first,
Once he transpierced; then down before him fell
Stretch'd out. The pierced spirit look'd on him,
But spake not; yea, stood motionless and yawn'd,

As if by sleep or feverous fit assail'd.
He eyed the serpent, and the serpent him.
One from the wound, the other from the mouth
Breathed a thick smoke, whose vapory columns join'd.

Lucan in mute attention now may hear,
Nor thy disastrous fate, Sabellus, tell,
Nor thine, Nasidius. Ovid now be mute.
What if in warbling fiction he record
Cadmus and Arethusa, to a snake
Him changed, and her into a fountain clear,
I envy not; for never face to face
Two natures thus transmuted did he sing,
Wherein both shapes were ready to assume
The other's substance. They in mutual guise
So answer'd that the serpent split his train
Divided to a fork, and the pierced spirit,
Drew close his steps together, legs and thighs
Compacted, that no sign of juncture soon
Was visible: the tail, disparted, took
The figure which the spirit lost; its skin
Softening, his indurated to a rind.

The shoulders next I mark'd, that entering join'd
The monster's arm-pits, whose two shorter feet
So lengthen'd, as the others dwindling shrunk.
The feet behind then twisting up became
That part that man conceals, which in the wretch
Was cleft in twain. While both the shadowy smoke
With a new color veils, and generates
The excrescent pile on one, peeling it off
From the other body, lo! upon his feet
One upright rose, and prone the other fell.
Nor yet their glaring and malignant lamps
Were shifted, though each feature changed beneath.
Of him who stood erect, the mounting face
Retreated toward the temples, and what there
Superfluous matter came, shot out in ears
From the smooth cheeks; the rest, not backward dragg'd,
Of its excess did shape the nose; and swell'd
Into due size protuberant the lips.
He, on the earth who lay, meanwhile extends
His sharpen'd visage, and draws down the ears
Into the head, as doth the slug his horns.
His tongue, continuous before and apt

For utterance, severs; and the other's fork
Closing unites. That done, the smoke was laid.
The soul, transform'd into the brute, glides off,
Hissing along the vale, and after him
The other talking sputters; but soon turn'd
His new-grown shoulders on him, and in few
Thus to another spake: "Along this path
Crawling, as I have done, speed Buoso now!"

So saw I fluctuate in successive change
The unsteady ballast of the seventh hold:
And here if aught my pen have swerved, events
So strange may be its warrant. O'er mine eyes
Confusion hung, and on my thoughts amaze.

Yet 'scaped they not so covertly, but well
I mark'd Sciancato: he alone it was
Of the three first that came, who changed not: tho'
The other's fate, Gaville! still dost rue.

CANTO XXVI

He beholds numberless flames, each containing an evil
counsellor save one which holds both
Ulysses and Diomedes.

FLORENCE, exult! for thou so mightily
Hast thriven, that o'er land and sea thy wings
Thou beatest, and thy name spreads over Hell.
Among the plunderers, such the three I found
Thy citizens; whence shame to me thy son,
And no proud honor to thyself redounds.

But if our minds, when dreaming near the dawn,
Are of the truth presageful, thou ere long
Shalt feel what Prato (not to say the rest)
Would fain might come upon thee; and that chance
Were in good time, if it befell thee now.
Would so it were, since it must needs befall!
For as time wears me, I shall grieve the more.

We from the depth departed; and my guide
Remounting scaled the flinty steps, which late
We downward traced, and drew me up the steep.
Pursuing thus our solitary way
Among the crags and splinters of the rock,
Sped not our feet without the help of hands.

Then sorrow seized me, which e'en now revives,
As my thought turns again to what I saw,
And, more than I am wont, I rein and curb
The powers of nature in me, lest they run
Where Virtue guides not; that, if aught of good
My gentle star or something better gave me,
I envy not myself the precious boon.

As in that season, when the sun least veils
His face that lightens all, what time the fly
Gives way to the shrill gnat, the peasant then,
Upon some cliff reclined, beneath him sees
Fire-flies innumerable spangling o'er the vale,
Vineyard or tilth, where his day-labor lies;
With flames so numberless throughout its space

Shone the eighth chasm, apparent, when the depth
Was to my view exposed. As he, whose wrongs
The bears avenged, at its departure saw
Elijah's chariot, when the steeds erect
Raised their steep flight for heaven; his eyes meanwhile,
Straining pursued them, till the flame alone,
Upsoaring like a misty speck, he kenn'd:
E'en thus along the gulf moves every flame,
A sinner so enfolded close in each,
That none exhibits token of the theft.

Upon the bridge I forward bent to look,
And grasp'd a flinty mass, or else had fallen,
Though push'd not from the height. The guide, who mark'd
How I did gaze attentive, thus began:
"Within these ardors are the spirits, each
Swathed in confining fire." "Master! thy word,"
I answer'd, "hath assured me; yet I deem'd
Already of the truth, already wish'd
To ask thee who is in yon fire, that comes
So parted at the summit, as it seem'd
Ascending from that funeral pile where lay

The Theban brothers." He replied: "Within,
Ulysses there and Diomedes endure
Their penal tortures, thus to vengeance now
Together hasting, as erewhile to wrath
These in the flame with ceaseless groans deplore
The ambush of the horse, that open'd wide
A portal for the goodly seed to pass,
Which sow'd imperial Rome; nor less the guile
Lament they, whence, of her Achilles reft,
Deidamia yet in death complains.
And there is rued the stratagem that Troy
Of her Palladium spoil'd." - "If they have power
Of utterance from within these sparks," said I,
"O master! think my prayer a thousand-fold
In repetition urged, that thou vouchsafe
To pause till here the homed flame arrive.
See, how toward it with desires I bend."

He thus: "Thy prayer is worthy of much praise,
And I accept it therefore; but do thou
Thy tongue refrain: to question them be mine;
For I divine thy wish; and they perchance,

For they were Greeks, might shun discourse with thee."

When there the flame had come, where time and place
Seem'd fitting to my guide, he thus began:
"O ye, who dwell two spirits in one fire!
If, living, I of you did merit aught,
Whate'er the measure were of that desert,
When in the world my lofty strain I pour'd,
Move ye not on, till one of you unfold
In what clime death o'ertook him self-destroy'd."

Of the old flame forthwith the greater horn
Began to roll, murmuring, as a fire
That labors with the wind, then to and fro
Wagging the top, as a tongue uttering sounds,
Threw out its voice, and spake: "When I escaped
From Circe, who beyond a circling year
Had held me near Caieta by her charms,
Ere thus AEneas yet had named the shore;
Nor fondness for my son, nor reverence
Of my old father, nor return of love,
That should have crown'd Penelope with joy,

Could overcome in me the zeal I had
To explore the world, and search the ways of life,
Man's evil and his virtue. Forth I sail'd
Into the deep illimitable main,
With but one bark, and the small faithful band
That yet cleaved to me. As Iberia far,
Far as Marocco, either shore I saw,
And the Sardinian and each isle beside
Which round that ocean bathes. Tardy with age
Were I and my companions, when we came
To the strait pass, where Hercules ordain'd
The boundaries not to be o'erstepp'd by man.
The walls of Seville to my right I left,
On the other hand already Ceuta past.
'O brothers!' I began, 'who to the west
Through perils without number now have reach'd;
To this the short remaining watch, that yet
Our senses have to wake, refuse not proof
Of the unpeopled world, following the track
Of Phoebus. Call to mind from whence ye sprang:
Ye were not form'd to live the life of brutes,
But virtue to pursue and knowledge high.'

With these few words I sharpen'd for the voyage
The mind of my associates, that I then
Could scarcely have withheld them. To the dawn
Our poop we turn'd, and for the witless flight
Made our oars wings, still gaining on the left.
Each star of the other pole night now beheld,
And ours so low, that from the ocean floor
It rose not. Five times reillumed, as oft
Vanish'd the light from underneath the moon,
Since the deep way we enter'd, when from far
Appear'd a mountain dim, loftiest methought
Of all I e'er beheld. Joy seized us straight;
But soon to mourning changed. From the new land
A whirlwind sprung, and at her foremost side
Did strike the vessel. Thrice it whirl'd her round
With all the waves; the fourth time lifted up
The poop, and sank the prow: so fate decreed:
And over us the booming billow closed."

CANTO XXVII

The poet converses with Count Guido da Montefeltro
on the state of Romagna.

NOW upward rose the flame, and still'd its light
To speak no more, and now pass'd on with leave
From the mild poet gain'd; when following came
Another, from whose top a sound confused,
Forth issuing, drew our eyes that way to look.

As the Sicilian bull, that rightfully
His cries first echoed who had shaped its mould,
Did so rebellow, with the voice of him
Tormented, that the brazen monster seem'd
Pierced through with pain; thus, while no way they found,
Nor avenue immediate through the flame,
Into its language turn'd the dismal words:
But soon as they had won their passage forth,
Up from the point, which vibrating obey'd
Their motion at the tongue, these sounds were heard:

“O thou! to whom I now direct my voice,
That lately didst exclaim in Lombard phrase,
‘Depart thou; I solicit thee no more’;
Though somewhat tardy I perchance arrive,
Let it not irk thee here to pause awhile,
And with me parley: lo! it irks not me,
And yet I burn. If but e’en now thou fall
Into this blind world, from that pleasant land
Of Latium, whence I draw my sum of guilt,
Tell me if those who in Romagna dwell
Have peace or war. For of the mountains there
Was I, betwixt Urbino and the height
Whence Tiber first unlocks his mighty flood.”

Leaning I listen’d yet with heedful ear,
When, as he touch’d my side, the leader thus:
“Speak thou: he is a Latian.” My reply
Was ready, and I spake without delay:
“O spirit! who art hidden here below,
Never was thy Romagna without war
In her proud tyrants’ bosoms, nor is now:
But open war there left I none. The state,

Ravenna hath maintain'd this many a year,
Is steadfast. There Polenta's eagle broods;
And in his broad circumference of plume
O'ershadows Cervia. The green talons grasp
The land, that stood erewhile the proof so long
And piled in bloody heap the host of France.

"The old mastiff of Verruchio and the young,
That tore Montagna in their wrath, still make,
Where they are wont, an auger of their fangs.

"Lamone's city, and Santerno's, range
Under the lion of the snowy lair,
Inconstant partisan, that changeth sides,
Or ever summer yields to winter's frost.
And she, whose flank is wash'd of Savio's wave,
As 'twixt the level and the steep she lies,
Lives so 'twixt tyrant power and liberty.

"Now tell us, I entreat thee, who art thou:
Be not more hard than others. In the world,
So may thy name still rear its forehead high."

Then roar'd awhile the fire, its sharpen'd point
On either side waved, and thus breathed at last:
"If I did think my answer were to one
Who ever could return unto the world,
This flame should rest unshaken. But since ne'er,
If true be told me, any from this depth
Has found his upward way, I answer thee,
Nor fear lest infamy record the words.

"A man of arms at first, I clothed me, then
In good Saint Francis' girdle, hoping so
To have made amends. And certainly my hope
Had fail'd not, but that he, whom curses light on,
The high priest, again seduced me into sin.
And how, and wherefore, listen while I tell.
Long as this spirit moved the bones and pulp
My mother gave me, less my deeds bespake
The nature of the lion than the fox.
All ways of winding subtlety I knew,
And with such art conducted, that the sound
Reach'd the world's limit. Soon as to that part

Of life I found me come, when each behoves
To lower sails and gather in the lines;
That, which before had pleased me, then I rued,
And to repentance and confession turn'd,
Wretch that I was; and well it had bested me.
The chief of the new Pharisees meantime,
Waging his warfare near the Lateran,
Not with the Saracens or Jews (his foes
All Christians were, nor against Acre one
Had fought, nor traffick'd in the Soldan's land),
He, his great charge nor sacred ministry,
In himself revered, nor in me that cord
Which used to mark with leanness whom it girded.
As in Soracte, Constantine besought,
To cure his leprosy, Sylvester's aid;
So me, to cure the fever of his pride,
This man besought: my counsel to that end
He ask'd; and I was silent; for his words
Seem'd drunken: but forthwith he thus resumed:
'From thy heart banish fear: of all offence
I hitherto absolve thee. In return,
Teach me my purpose so to execute,

That Penestrino cumber earth no more.
Heaven, as thou knowest, I have power to shut
And open: and the keys are therefore twain,
The which my predecessor meanly prized.'

“Then, yielding to the forceful arguments,
Of silence as more perilous I deem'd,
And answer'd: 'Father! since thou washest me
Clear of that guilt wherein I now must fall,
Large promise with performance scant, be sure,
Shall make thee triumph in thy lofty seat.'

“When I was number'd with the dead, then came
Saint Francis for me; but a cherub dark
He met, who cried, 'Wrong me not; he is mine,
And must below to join the wretched crew,
For the deceitful counsel which he gave.
E'er since I watch'd him, hovering at his hair.
No power can the impenitent absolve;
Nor to repent, and will, at once consist,
By contradiction absolute forbid.'
Oh misery! how I shook myself, when he

Seized me, and cried, 'Thou haply thought'st me not
A disputant in logic so exact!
To Minos down he bore me; and the judge
Twined eight times round his callous back the tail,
Which biting with excess of rage, he spake:
'This is a guilty soul, that in the fire
Must vanish.' Hence, perdition-doom'd, I rove
A prey to rankling sorrow, in this garb."

When he had thus fulfil'd his words, the flame
In dolor parted, beating to and fro,
And writhing its sharp horn. We onward went,
I and my leader, up along the rock,
Far as another arch, that overhangs
The foss, wherein the penalty is paid
Of those who load them with committed sin.

CANTO XXVIII

In the ninth gulf, the sowers of scandal, schismatics
and heretics are seen with their limbs
miserably maimed and divided.

WHO, e'en words unfetter'd, might at full
Tell of the wounds and blood that now I saw,
Though he repeated oft the tale? No tongue
So vast a theme could equal, speech and thought
Both impotent alike. If in one band
Collected, stood the people all, who e'er
Pour'd on Apulia's happy soil their blood,
Slain by the Trojans, and in that long war,
When of the rings the measured booty made
A pile so high, as Rome's historian writes
Who errs not; with the multitude, that felt
The grinding force of Guiscard's Norman steel,
And those the rest, whose bones are gather'd yet
At Ceperano, there where treachery
Branded the Apulian name, or where beyond

Thy walls, O Tagliacozzo, without arms
The old Alardo conquer'd; and his limbs
One were to show transpierced, another his
Clean lopt away; a spectacle like this
Were but a thing of naught, to the hideous sight
Of the ninth chasm. A rundlet, that hath lost
Its middle or side stave, gapes not so wide
As one I mark'd, torn from the chin throughout
Down to the hinder passage: 'twixt the legs
Dangling his entrails hung, the midriff lay
Open to view, and wretched ventricle,
That turns the englutted aliment to dross.

Whilst eagerly I fix on him my gaze,
He eyed me, with his hands laid his breast bare,
And cried, "Now mark how I do rip me: lo!
How is Mohammed mangled: before me
Walks Ali weeping, from the chin his face
Cleft to the forelock; and the others all,
Whom here thou seest, while they lived, did sow
Scandal and schism, and therefore thus are rent.
A fiend is here behind, who with his sword

Hacks us thus cruelly, slivering again
Each of this ream, when we have compass round
The dismal way; for first our gashes close
Ere we repass before him. But, say who
Art thou, that standest musing on the rock,
Haply so lingering to delay the pain
Sentenced upon thy crimes." "Him death not yet,"
My guide rejoin'd, "hath overta'en, nor sin
Conducts to torment; but, that he may make
Full trial of your state, I who am dead
Must through the depths of Hell, from orb to orb,
Conduct him. Trust my words; for they are true."

More than a hundred spirits, when that they heard,
Stood in the foss to mark me through amaze
Forgetful of their pangs. "Thou, who perchance
Shalt shortly view the sun, this warning thou
Bear to Dolcino: bid him, if he wish not
Here soon to follow me, that with good store
Of food he arm him, lest imprisoning snows
Yield him a victim to Novara's power;
No easy conquest else": with foot upraised

For stepping, spake Mohammed, on the ground
Then fix'd it to depart. Another shade,
Pierced in the throat, his nostrils mutilate
E'en from beneath the eyebrows, and one ear
Lopt off, who, with the rest, through wonder stood
Gazing, before the rest advanced, and bared
His wind-pipe, that without was all o'ersmear'd
With crimson stain. "O thou!" said he, "whom sin
Condemns not, and whom erst (unless too near
Resemblance to deceive me) I aloft
Have seen on Latian ground, call thou to mind
Piero of Medicina, if again
Returning, thou behold'st the pleasant land
That from Vercelli slopes to Mercabo;
And there instruct the twain, whom Fano boasts
Her worthiest sons, Guido and Angelo,
That if 'tis given us here to scan aright
The future, they out of life's tenement
Shall be cast forth, and whelm'd under the waves
Near to Catholica, through perfidy
Of a fell tyrant. 'Twixt the Cyprian isle
And Balearic, ne'er hath Neptune seen

An injury so foul, by pirates done,
Or Argive crew of old. That one-eyed traitor
(Whose realm there is a spirit here were fain
His eye had still lack'd sight of) them shall bring
To conference with him, then so shape his end,
That they shall need not 'gainst Focara's wind
Offer up vow nor prayer." I answering thus:
"Declare, as thou dost wish that I above
May carry tidings of thee, who is he,
In whom that sight doth wake such sad remembrance."

Forthwith he laid his hand on the cheek-bone
Of one, his fellow-spirit, and his jaws
Expanding, cried: "Lo! this is he I wot of:
He speaks not for himself: the outcast this,
Who overwhelm'd the doubt in Caesar's mind,
Affirming that delay to men prepared
Was ever harmful." Oh! how terrified
Methought was Curio, from whose throat was cut
The tongue, which spake that hardy word. Then one,
Maim'd of each hand, uplifted in the gloom
The bleeding stumps, that they with gory spots

Sullied his face, and cried: "Remember thee
Of Mosca too; I who, alas! exclaim'd,
'The deed once done, there is an end' that proved
A seed of sorrow to the Tuscan race."

I added: "Ay, and death to thine own tribe."

Whence, heaping woe on woe, he hurried off,
As one grief-stung to madness. But I there
Still linger'd to behold the troop, and saw
Things, such as I may fear without more proof
To tell of, but that conscience makes me firm,
The boon companion, who her strong breastplate
Buckles on him, that feels no guilt within,
And bids him on and fear not. Without doubt
I saw, and yet it seems to pass before me,
A headless trunk, that even as the rest
Of the sad flock paced onward. By the hair
It bore the sever'd member, lantern-wise
Pendent in hand, which look'd at us, and said,
"Woe's me!" The spirit lighted thus himself;
And two there were in one, and one in two.

How that may be, he knows who ordereth so.

When at the bridge's foot direct he stood,
His arm aloft he rear'd, thrusting the head
Full in our view, that nearer we might hear
The words, which thus it utter'd: "Now behold
This grievous torment, thou, who breathing go'st
To spy the dead: behold, if any else
Be terrible as this. And, that on earth
Thou mayst bear tidings of me, know that I
Am Bertrand, he of Born, who gave King John
The counsel mischievous. Father and son
I set at mutual war. For Absalom
And David more did not Ahitophel,
Spurring them on maliciously to strife.
For parting those so closely knit, my brain
Parted, alas! I carry from its source,
That in this trunk inhabits. Thus the law
Of retribution fiercely works in me."

CANTO XXIX

Dante hears the cries of the alchemists and forgers,
and beholds the spirits afflicted by
divers plagues and diseases.

SO were mine eyes inebriate with the view
Of the vast multitude, whom various wounds
Disfigured, that they long'd to stay and weep.

But Virgil roused me: "What yet gazest on?
Wherefore doth fasten yet thy sight below
Among the maim'd and miserable shades?
Thou hast not shown in any chasm beside
This weakness. Know, if thou wouldst number them,
That two and twenty miles the valley winds
Its circuit, and already is the moon
Beneath our feet: the time permitted now
Is short; and more, not seen, remains to see."

"If thou," I straight replied, "hadst weigh'd the cause,

For which I look'd, thou hadst perchance excused
The tarrying still." My leader part pursued
His way, the while, I follow'd, answering him,
And adding thus: "Within that cave I deem,
Whereon so fixedly I held my ken,
There is a spirit dwells, one of my blood,
Wailing the crime that costs him now so dear."

Then spake my master: "Let thy soul no more
Afflict itself for him. Direct elsewhere
Its thought, and leave him. At the bridge's foot
I mark'd how he did point with menacing look
At thee, and heard him by the others named
Geri of Bello. Thou so wholly then
Wert busied with his spirit, who once ruled
The towers of Hautefort, that thou lookedst not
That way, ere he was gone." "O guide beloved!
His violent death yet unavenged," said I,
"By any, who are partners in his shame,
Made him contemptuous; therefore, as I think,
He pass'd me speechless by; and, doing so,
Hath made me more compassionate his fate."

So we discoursed to where the rock first show'd
The other valley, had more light been there,
E'en to the lowest depth. Soon as we came
O'er the last cloister in the dismal rounds
Of Malebolge, and the brotherhood
Were to our view exposed, then many a dart
Of sore lament assail'd me, headed all
With points of thrilling pity, that I closed
Both ears against the volley with mine hands.

As were the torment, if each lazar-house
Of Valdichiana, in the sultry time
'Twixt July and September, with the isle
Sardinia and Maremma's pestilent fen,
Had heap'd their maladies all in one foss
Together; such was here the torment: dire
The stench, as issuing streams from fester'd limbs.

We on the utmost shore of the long rock
Descended still to leftward. Then my sight
Was livelier to explore the depth, wherein

The minister of the most mighty Lord,
All-searching Justice, dooms to punishment
The forgers noted on her dread record.

More rueful was it not methinks to see
The nation in AEGina droop, what time
Each living thing, e'en to the little worm,
All fell, so full of malice was the air,
(And afterward, as bards of yore have told,
The ancient people were restored anew
From seed of emmets), than was here to see
The spirits, that languish'd through the murky vale,
Up-piled on many a stack. Confused they lay,
One o'er the belly, o'er the shoulders one
Roll'd of another; sideling crawl'd a third
Along the dismal pathway. Step by step
We journey'd on, in silence looking round,
And listening those diseased, who strove in vain
To lift their forms. Then two I mark'd, that sat
Propt 'gainst each other, as two brazen pans
Set to retain the heat. From head to foot,
A tetter bark'd them round. Nor saw I e'er

Groom currying so fast, for whom his lord
Impatient waited, or himself perchance
Tired with long watching, as of these each one
Plied quickly his keen nails, through furiousness
Of ne'er abated pruriency. The crust
Came drawn from underneath, in flakes, like scales
Scraped from the bream, or fish of broader mail.

"O thou! who with thy fingers rendest off
Thy coat of proof," thus spake my guide to one,
"And sometimes makest tearing pincers of them,
Tell me if any born of Latian land
Be among these within: so may thy nails
Serve thee for everlasting to this toil."

"Both are of Latium," weeping he replied,
"Whom tortured thus thou seest: but who art thou
That hast inquired of us?" To whom my guide:
"One that descend with this man, who yet lives,
From rock to rock, and show him Hell's abyss."

Then started they asunder, and each turn'd

Trembling toward us, with the rest, whose ear
Those words redounding struck. To me my liege
Address'd him: "Speak to them whate'er thou list."

And I therewith began: "So may no time
Filch your remembrance from the thoughts of men
In the upper world, but after many suns
Survive it, as ye tell me, who ye are,
And of what race ye come. Your punishment,
Unseemly and disgustful in its kind,
Deter you not from opening thus much to me."

"Arezzo was my dwelling," answer'd one,
"And me Albero of Sienna brought
To die by fire: but that, for which I died,
Leads me not here. True is, in sport I told him,
That I had learn'd to wing my flight in air;
And he, admiring much, as he was void
Of wisdom, will'd me to declare to him
The secret of mine art: and only hence,
Because I made him not a Daedalus,
Prevail'd on one supposed his sire to burn me.

But Minos to this chasm, last of the ten,
For that I practised alchemy on earth,
Has doom'd me. Him no subterfuge eludes."

Then to the bard I spake: "Was ever race
Light as Sienna's? Sure not France herself
Can show a tribe so frivolous and vain."

The other leprous spirit heard my words,
And thus return'd: "Be Stricca from this charge
Exempted, he who knew so temperately
To lay out fortune's gifts; and Niccolo,
Who first the spice's costly luxury
Discover'd in that garden, where such seed
Roots deepest in the soil: and be that troop
Exempted, with whom Caccia of Asciano
Lavish'd his vineyards and wide-spreading woods,
And his rare wisdom Abbagliato show'd
A spectacle for all. That thou mayst know
Who seconds thee against the Siennese
Thus gladly, bend this way thy sharpen'd sight,
That well my face may answer to thy ken;

So shalt thou see I am Capocchio's ghost,
Who forged transmuted metals by the power
Of alchemy; and if I scan thee right,
Thou needs must well remember how I aped
Creative nature by my subtle art."

CANTO XXX

Other kinds of impostors like counterfeiters of persons, coinage, or speech are described as suffering diseases.

WHAT time resentment burn'd in Juno's breast
For Semele against the Theban blood,
As more than once in dire mischance was rued;
Such fatal frenzy seized on Athamas,
That he his spouse beholding with a babe
Laden on either arm, "Spread out," he cried,
"The meshes, that I take the lioness
And the young lions at the pass": then forth
Stretch'd he his merciless talons, grasping one,
One helpless innocent, Learchus named,
Whom swinging down he dash'd upon a rock;
And with her other burden, self-destroy'd,
The hapless mother plunged. And when the pride,
Of all presuming Troy fell from its height,
By fortune overwhelm'd, and the old king
With his realm perish'd; then did Hecuba,

A wretch forlorn and captive, when she saw
Polyxena first slaughter'd, and her son,
Her Polydorus, on the wild sea-beach
Next met the mourner's view, then reft of sense
Did she run barking even as a dog;
Such mighty power had grief to wrench her soul.
But ne'er the Furies, or of Thebes, or Troy,
With such fell cruelty were seen, their goads
Infixing in the limbs of man or beast,
As now two pale and naked ghosts I saw,
That gnarling wildly scamper'd, like the swine
Excluded from his sty. One reach'd Capocchio,
And in the neck-joint sticking deep his fangs,
Dragg'd him, that, o'er the solid pavement rubb'd
His belly stretch'd out prone. The other shape,
He of Arezzo, there left trembling, spake:
"That sprite of air is Schicchi, in like mood
Of random mischief vents he still his spite."

To whom I answering: "Oh! as thou dost hope
The other may not flesh its jaws on thee,
Be patient to inform us, who it is,

Ere it speed hence."- "That is the ancient soul
Of wretched Myrrha," he replied, "who burn'd
With most unholy flame for her own sire,
And a false shape assuming, so perform'd
The deed of sin; e'en as the other there,
That onward passes, dared to counterfeit
Donati's features, to feign'd testament
The seal affixing, that himself might gain,
For his own share, the lady of the herd."

When vanish'd the two furious shades, on whom
Mine eye was held, I turn'd it back to view
The other cursed spirits. One I saw
In fashion like a lute, had but the groin
Been sever'd where it meets the forked part.
Swol'n dropsy, disproportioning the limbs
With ill-converted moisture, that the paunch
Suits not the visage, open'd wide his lips,
Gasping as in the hectic man for drought,
One toward the chin, the other upward curl'd.

"O ye! who in this world of misery,

Wherefore I know not, are exempt from pain,"
Thus he began, "attentively regard
Adamo's woe. When living, full supply
Ne'er lack'd me of what most I coveted;
One drop of water now, alas! I crave.
The rills, that glitter down the grassy slopes
Of Casentino, making fresh and soft
The banks whereby they glide to Arno's stream,
Stand ever in my view; and not in vain;
For more the pictured semblance dries me up,
Much more than the disease, which makes the flesh
Desert these shrivel'd cheeks. So from the place,
Where I transgress'd, stern justice urging me,
Takes means to quicken more my laboring sighs.
There is Romena, where I falsified
The metal with the Baptist's form imprest,
For which on earth I left my body burnt.
But if I here might see the sorrowing soul
Of Guido, Alessandro, or their brother,
For Branda's limpid spring I would not change
The welcome sight. One is e'en now within,
If truly the mad spirits tell, that round

Are wandering. But wherein besteads me that?
My limbs are fetter'd. Were I but so light,
That I each hundred years might move one inch,
I had set forth already on this path,
Seeking him out amidst the shapeless crew,
Although eleven miles it wind, not less
Than half of one across. They brought me down
Among this tribe; induced by them, I stamp'd
The florens with three carats of alloy."

"Who are that abject pair," I next inquired,
"That closely bounding thee upon thy right
Lie smoking, like a hand in winter steep'd
In the chill stream?" "When to this gulf I dropp'd,"
He answer'd, "here I found them; since that hour
They have not turn'd, nor ever shall, I ween,
Till time hath run his course. One is that dame,
The false accuser of the Hebrew youth;
Sinon the other, that false Greek from Troy.
Sharp fever drains the reeky moistness out,
In such a cloud upsteam'd." When that he heard,
One, gall'd perchance to be so darkly named,

With clenched hand smote him on the braced paunch,
That like a drum resounded: but forthwith
Adamo smote him on the face, the blow
Returning with his arm, that seemed as hard.

"Though my overweighted limbs have taken from me
The power to move," said he, "I have an arm
At liberty for such employ." To whom
Was answered: "When thou wentest to the fire,
Thou hadst it not so ready at command,
Then readier when it coined the impostor gold."

And thus the dropsied: "Ay, now speak'st thou true:
But there thou gavest not such true testimony,
When thou wast questioned of the truth, at Troy."

"If I speak false, thou falsely stamp'st the coin,"
Said, Sinon; "I am here for but one fault,
And thou for more than any impostor beside."

"Remember," he replied, "O perjured one!
The horse remember, that did teem with death;

And all the world be witness to thy guilt."

"To thine," return'd the Greek, "witness the thirst
Whence thy tongue cracks, witness the fluid mound
Rear'd by the belly up before thine eyes,
A mass corrupt." To whom the coiner thus:
"Thy mouth gapes wide as ever to let pass
Its evil saying. Me if thirst assails,
Yet I am stuff with moisture. Thou art parch'd:
Pains rack thy head: no urging wouldst thou need
To make thee lap Narcissus' mirror up."

I was all fix'd to listen, when my guide
Admonish'd: "Now beware. A little more,
And I do quarrel with thee." I perceived
How angrily he spake, and toward him turn'd
With shame so poignant, as remember'd yet
Confounds me. As a man that dreams of harm
Befallen him, dreaming wishes it a dream,
And that which is, desires as if it were not;
Such then was I, who, wanting power to speak,
Wish'd to excuse myself, and all the while

Excused me, though unweeting that I did.

“More grievous fault than thine has been, less shame,”

My master cried, “might expiate. Therefore cast

All sorrow from thy soul; and if again

Chance bring thee where like conference is held,

Think I am ever at thy side. To hear

Such wrangling is a joy for vulgar minds.”

CANTO XXXI

The poets are led to the ninth circle encompassed by Giants;
Antaeus places them at the bottom of the circle.

THE very tongue, whose keen reproof before
Had wounded me, that either cheek was stain'd,
Now minister'd my cure. So have I heard,
Achilles' and his father's javelin caused
Pain first, and then the boon of health restored.

Turning our back upon the vale of woe,
We cross'd the encircled mound in silence. There
Was less than day and less than night, that far
Mine eye advanced not: but I heard a horn
Sounded so loud, the peal it rang had made
The thunder feeble. Following its course
The adverse way, my strained eyes were bent
On that one spot. So terrible a blast
Orlando blew not, when that dismal rout
O'erthrew the host of Charlemain, and quench'd

His saintly warfare. Thitherward not long
My head was raised, when many a lofty tower
Methought I spied. "Master," said I, "what land
Is this?" He answer'd straight: "Too long a space
Of intervening darkness has thine eye
To traverse: thou hast therefore widely err'd
In thy imagining. Thither arrived
Thou well shalt see, how distance can delude
The sense. A little therefore urge thee on."

Then tenderly he caught me by the hand;
"Yet know," said he, "ere further we advance,
That it less strange may seem, these are not towers,
But giants. In the pit they stand immersed,
Each from his navel downward, round the bank."

As when a fog disperseth gradually,
Our vision traces what the mist involves
Condensed in air; so piercing through the gross
And gloomy atmosphere, as more and more
We near'd toward the brink, mine error fled
And fear came o'er me. As with circling round

Of turrets, Monteregion crowns his walls;
E'en thus the shore, encompassing the abyss,
Was turreted with giants, half their length
Uprearing, horrible, whom Jove from heaven
Yet threatens, when his muttering thunder rolls.

Of one already I descried the face,
Shoulders, and breast, and of the belly huge
Great part, and both arms down along his ribs.

All-teeming Nature, when her plastic hand
Left framing of these monsters, did display
Past doubt her wisdom, taking from mad War
Such slaves to do his bidding; and if she
Repent her not of the elephant and whale,
Who ponders well confesses her therein
Wiser and more discreet; for when brute force
And evil will are back'd with subtlety,
Resistance none avails. His visage seem'd
In length and bulk, as doth the pine that tops
Saint Peter's Roman fane; and the other bones
Of like proportion, so that from above

The bank, which girdled him below, such height
Arose his stature, that three Friezelanders
Had striven in vain to reach but to his hair.
Full thirty ample palms was he exposed
Downward from whence a man his garment loops.
“Raphel bai ameth, sabi almi”:
So shouted his fierce lips, which sweeter hymns
Became not; and my guide address’d him thus:
“O senseless spirit! let thy horn for thee
Interpret: therewith vent thy rage, if rage
Or other passion wring thee. Search thy neck.
There shalt thou find the belt that binds it on.
Spirit confused! lo, on thy mighty breast
Where hangs the baldrick!” Then to me he spake:
“He doth accuse himself. Nimrod is this,
Through whose ill counsel in the world no more
One tongue prevails. But pass we on, nor waste
Our words; for so each language is to him,
As his to others, understood by none.”

Then to the leftward turning sped we forth,
And at a sling’s throw found another shade

Far fiercer and more huge. I cannot say
What master hand had girt him; but he held
Behind the right arm fetter'd, and before,
The other, with a chain, that fasten'd him
From the neck down; and five times round his form
Apparent met the wreathed links. "This proud one
Would of his strength against almighty Jove
Make trial," said my guide: "whence he is thus
Requited: Ephialtes him they call.
Great was his prowess, when the giants brought
Fear on the gods: those arms, which then he plied,
Now moves he never." Forthwith I return'd:
"Fain would I, if 'twere possible, mine eyes,
Of Briareus immeasurable, gain'd
Experience next." He answered: "Thou shalt see
Not far from hence Antaeus, who both speaks
And is unfetter'd, who shall place us there
Where guilt is at its depth. Far onward stands
Whom thou wouldst fain behold, in chains, and made
Like to this spirit, save that in his looks
More fell he seems." By violent earthquake rock'd
Ne'er shook a tower, so reeling to its base,

As Ephialtes. More than ever then
I dreaded death; nor than the terror more
Had needed, if I had not seen the cords
That held him fast. We, straightway journeying on,
Came to Antaeus, who, five ells complete
Without the head, forth issued from the cave.

“O thou, who in the fortunate vale, that made
Great Scipio heir of glory, when his sword
Drove back the troop of Hannibal in flight,
Who thence of old didst carry for thy spoil
An hundred lions; and if thou hadst fought
In the high conflict on thy brethren’s side,
Seems as men yet believed, that through thine arm
The sons of earth had conquer’d; now vouchsafe
To place us down beneath, where numbing cold
Locks up Cocytus. Force not that we crave
Or Tityus’ help or Typhon’s. Here is one
Can give what in this realm ye covet. Stoop
Therefore, nor scornfully distort thy lip.
He in the upper world can yet bestow
Renown on thee; for he doth live, and looks

For life yet longer, if before the time
Grace call him not unto herself." Thus spake
The teacher. He in haste forth stretch'd his hands
And caught my guide. Alcides whilom felt
That grapple, straiten'd sore. Soon as my guide
Had felt it, he bespake me thus: "This way,
That I may clasp thee;" then so caught me up,
That we were both one burden. As appears
The tower of Carisenda, from beneath
Where it doth lean, if chance a passing cloud
So sail across, that opposite it hangs;
Such then Antaeus seem'd, as at mine ease
I mark'd him stooping. I were fain at times
To have passed another way. Yet in the abyss,
That Lucifer with Judas low ingulfs,
Lightly he placed us; nor, there leaning, stay'd;
But rose, as in a bark the stately mast.

CANTO XXXII

This canto treats of the first two rounds of the last
or frozen circle of Hell.

COULD I command rough rhymes and hoarse, to suit
That hole of sorrow o'er which every rock
His firm abutment rears, then might the vein
Of fancy rise full springing; but not mine
Such measures, and with faltering awe I touch
The mighty theme; for to describe the depth
Of all the universe, is no emprise
To jest with, and demands a tongue not used
To infant babbling. But let them assist
My song, the tuneful maidens, by whose aid
Amphion wall'd in Thebes; so with the truth
My speech shall best accord. Oh ill-starr'd folk,
Beyond all others wretched! who abide
In such a mansion, as scarce thought finds words
To speak of, better had ye here on earth
Been flocks, or mountain goats. As down we stood

In the dark pit beneath the giants' feet,
But lower far than they, and I did gaze
Still on the lofty battlement, a voice
Bespoke me thus: "Look how thou walkest. Take
Good heed, thy soles do tread not on the heads
Of thy poor brethren." Thereupon I turn'd,
And saw before and underneath my feet
A lake, whose frozen surface liker seem'd
To glass than water. Not so thick a veil
In winter e'er hath Austrian Danube spread
O'er his still course, nor Tanais far remote
Under the chilling sky. Roll'd o'er that mass
Had Tabernich or Pietrapana fallen,
Not e'en its rim had creak'd. As peeps the frog
Croaking above the wave, what time in dreams
The village gleaner oft pursues her toil,
So, to where modest shame appears, thus low
Blue pinch'd and shrined in ice the spirits stood,
Moving their teeth in shrill note like the stork.
His face each downward held; their mouth the cold,
Their eyes express'd the dolor of their heart.

A space I look'd around, then at my feet
Saw two so strictly join'd, that of their head
The very hairs were mingled. "Tell me ye,
Whose bosoms thus together press," said I,
"Who are ye?" At that sound their necks they bent;
And when their looks were lifted up to me,
Straightway their eyes, before all moist within,
Distill'd upon their lips, and the frost bound
The tears betwixt those orbs, and held them there.
Plank unto plank hath never cramp closed up
So stoutly. Whence, like two enraged goats,
They clash'd together: them such fury seized.

And one, from whom the cold both ears had reft,
Exclaim'd, still looking downward: "Why on us
Dost speculate so long? If thou wouldst know
Who are these two, the valley, whence his wave
Bisenzio slopes, did for its master own
Their sire Alberto, and next him themselves.
They from one body issued: and throughout
Caina thou mayst search, nor find a shade
More worthy in congealment to be fix'd;

Not him, whose breast and shadow Arthur's hand
At that one blow dissever'd; not Focaccia;
No, not this spirit, whose o'erjutting head
Obstructs my onward view: he bore the name
Of Mascheroni: Tuscan if thou be,
Well knowest who he was. And to cut short
All further question, in my form behold
What once was Camiccione. I await
Carlino here my kinsman, whose deep guilt
Shall wash out mine." A thousand visages
Then mark'd I, which the keen and eager cold
Had shaped into a doggish grin; whence creeps
A shivering horror o'er me, at the thought
Of those frore shallows. While we journey'd on
Toward the middle, at whose point unites
All heavy substance, and I trembling went
Through that eternal chillness, I know not
If will it were, or destiny, or chance,
But, passing 'midst the heads, my foot did strike
With violent blow against the face of one.

"Wherefore dost bruise me?" weeping he exclaim'd

“Unless thy errand be some fresh revenge
For Montaperto, wherefore troublest me?”

I thus: “Instructor, now await me here,
That I through him may rid me of my doubt:
Thenceforth what haste thou wilt.” The teacher paused
And to that shade I spake, who bitterly
Still cursed me in his wrath. “What art thou, speak,
That railest thus on others?” He replied:
“Now who art thou, that smiting others’ cheeks,
Through Antenora roamest, with such force
As were past sufferance, wert thou living still?”

“And I am living, to thy joy perchance,”
Was my reply, “if fame be dear to thee,
That with the rest I may thy name enroll.”

“The contrary of what I covet most,”
Said he, “thou tender’st: hence! nor vex me more.
Ill knowest thou to flatter in this vale.”

Then seizing on his hinder scalp I cried:

“Name thee, or not a hair shall tarry here.”

“Rend all away,” he answer’d, “yet for that
I will not tell, nor show thee, who I am,
Though at my head thou pluck a thousand times.”

Now I had grasp’d his tresses, and stript off
More than one tuft, he barking, with his eyes
Drawn in and downward, when another cried,
“What ails thee, Bocca? Sound not loud enough
Thy chattering teeth, but thou must bark outright?
What devil wrings thee?”- “Now,” said I, “be dumb,
Accursed traitor! To thy shame, of thee
True tidings will I bear.”- “Off!” he replied;
“Tell what thou list: but, as thou ‘scape from hence,
To speak of him whose tongue hath been so glib,
Forget not: here he wails the Frenchman’s gold.
‘Him of Duera,’ thou canst say, ‘I mark’d,
Where the starved sinners pine.’ If thou be ask’d
What other shade was with them, at thy side
Is Beccaria, whose red gorge distain’d
The biting axe of Florence. Further on,

If I misdeem not, Soldanieri bides,
With Ganellon, and Tribaldello, him
Who oped Faenza when the people slept."

We now had left him, passing on our way,
When I beheld two spirits by the ice
Pent in one hollow, that the head of one
Was cowl unto the other; and as bread
Is raven'd up through hunger, the uppermost
Did so apply his fangs to the other's brain,
Where the spine joins it. Not more furiously
On Menalippus' temples Tydeus gnawed,
Than on that skull and on its garbage he.

"O thou! who show'st so beastly sign of hate
'Gainst him thou prey'st on, let me hear," said I,
"The cause, on such condition, that if right
Warrant thy grievance, knowing who ye are,
And what the color of his sinning was,
I may repay thee in the world above,
If that, wherewith I speak, be moist so long."

CANTO XXXIII

Count Ugolino de' Gherardeschi tells of the cruel manner
in which he and his children famished to death and
discourses of the third round called Ptolomea.

HIS jaws uplifting from their fell repast,
That sinner wiped them on the hairs o' the head,
Which he behind had mangled, then began:
"Thy will obeying, I call up afresh
Sorrow past cure; which, but to think of, wrings
My heart, or ere I tell on't. But if words,
That I may utter, shall prove seed to bear
Fruit of eternal infamy to him,
The traitor whom I gnaw at, thou at once
Shalt see me speak and weep. Who thou mayst be
I know not, nor how here below art come:
But Florentine thou seemest of a truth,
When I do hear thee. Know, I was on earth
Count Ugolino, and the Archbishop he
Ruggieri. Why I neighbor him so close,

Now list. That through effect of his ill-thoughts
In him my trust reposing, I was ta'en
And after murder'd, need is not I tell.
What therefore thou canst not have heard, that is,
How cruel was the murder, shalt thou hear,
And know if he have wrong'd me. A small grate
Within that mew, which for my sake the name
Of Famine bears, where others yet must pine,
Already through its opening several moons
Had shown me, when I slept the evil sleep
That from the future tore the curtain off.
This one, methought, as master of the sport,
Rode forth to chase the gaunt wolf, and his whelps,
Unto the mountain which forbids the sight
Of Lucca to the Pisan. With lean brachs
Inquisitive and keen, before him ranged
Lanfranchi with Sismondi and Gualandi.
After short course the father and the sons
Seem'd tired and lagging, and methought I saw
The sharp tusks gore their sides. When I awoke,
Before the dawn, amid their sleep I heard
My sons (for they were with me) weep and ask

For bread. Right cruel art thou, if no pang
Thou feel at thinking what my heart foretold;
And if not now, why use thy tears to flow?
Now had they waken'd; and the hour drew near
When they were wont to bring us food; the mind
Of each misgave him, through his dream, and I
Heard, at its outlet underneath lock'd up
The horrible tower: whence, uttering not a word,
I look'd upon the visage of my sons.
I wept not: so all stone I felt within.
They wept: and one, my little Anselm, cried,
'Thou lookest so! Father, what ails thee?' Yet
I shed no tear, nor answer'd all that day
Nor the next night, until another sun
Came out upon the world. When a faint beam
Had to our doleful prison made its way,
And in four countenances I descried
The image of my own, on either hand
Through agony I bit; and they, who thought
I did it through desire of feeding, rose
O' the sudden, and cried, 'Father, we should grieve
Far less, if thou wouldst eat of us: thou gavest

These weeds of miserable flesh we wear;
And do thou strip them off from us again.'
Then, not to make them sadder, I kept down
My spirit in stillness. That day and the next
We all were silent. Ah, obdurate earth!
Why open'st not upon us? When we came
To the fourth day, then Gaddo at my feet
Outstretch'd did fling him, crying, 'Hast no help
For me, my father!' There he died; and e'en
Plainly as thou seest me, saw I the three
Fall one by one 'twixt the fifth day and sixth:
Whence I betook me, now grown blind, to grope
Over them all, and for three days aloud
Call'd on them who were dead. Then, fasting got
The mastery of grief." Thus having spoke,
Once more upon the wretched skull his teeth
He fasten'd like a mastiff's 'gainst the bone,
Firm and unyielding. O thou Pisa! shame
Of all the people, who their dwelling make
In that fair region, where the Italian voice
Is heard; since that thy neighbors are so slack
To punish, from their deep foundations rise

Capraia and Gorgona, and dam up
The mouth of Arno; that each soul in thee
May perish in the waters. What if fame
Reported that thy castles were betray'd
By Ugolino, yet no right hadst thou
To stretch his children on the rack. For them,
Brigata, Uguccione, and the pair
Of gentle ones, of whom my song hath told,
Their tender years, thou modern Thebes, did make
Uncapable of guilt. Onward we pass'd,
Where others, skarf'd in rugged folds of ice,
Not on their feet were turn'd, but each reversed.

There, very weeping suffers not to weep;
For, at their eyes, grief, seeking passage, finds
Impediment, and rolling inward turns
For increase of sharp anguish: the first tears
Hang cluster'd, and like crystal vizors show,
Under the socket brimming all the cup.

Now though the cold had from my face dislodged
Each feeling, as 'twere callous, yet me seem'd

Some breath of wind I felt. "Whence cometh this,"
Said I, "my Master? Is not here below
All vapor quench'd?" "Thou shalt be speedily,"
He answer'd, "where thine eyes shall tell thee whence,
The cause descrying of this airy shower."

Then cried out one, in the chill crust who mourn'd:
"O souls! so cruel, that the farthest post
Hath been assign'd you, from this face remove
The harden'd veil; that I may vent the grief
Impregnate at my heart, some little space,
Ere it congeal again." I thus replied:
"Say who thou wast, if thou wouldst have mine aid;
And if I extricate thee not, far down
As to the lowest ice may I descend."

"The friar Alberigo," answer'd he,
"Am I, who from the evil garden pluck'd
Its fruitage, and am here repaid, the date
More luscious for my fig." "Hah!" I exclaim'd,
"Art thou, too, dead?" "How in the world aloft
It fareth with my body," answer'd he,

“I am right ignorant. Such privilege
Hath Ptolomea, that oftentimes the soul
Drops hither, ere by Atropos divorced.
And that thou mayst wipe out more willingly
The glazed tear-drops that o’erlay mine eyes,
Know that the soul, that moment she betrays,
As I did, yields her body to a fiend
Who after moves and governs it at will,
Till all its time be rounded: headlong she
Falls to this cistern. And perchance above
Doth yet appear the body of a ghost,
Who here behind me winters. Him thou know’st,
If thou but newly art arrived below.
The years are many that have passed away,
Since to this fastness Branca Doria came.”

“Now,” answer’d I, “methinks thou mockest me;
For Branca Doria never yet hath died,
But doth all natural functions of a man,
Eats, drinks, and sleeps, and putteth raiment on.”

He thus: “Not yet unto that upper foss

By th' evil talons guarded, where the pitch
Tenacious boils, had Michel Zanche reach'd,
When this one left a demon in his stead
In his own body, and of one his kin,
Who with him treachery wrought. But now put forth
Thy hand, and ope mine eyes." I oped them not.
Ill manners were best courtesy to him.

Ah Genoese! men perverse in every way,
With every foulness stain'd, why from the earth
Are ye not cancel'd? Such an one of yours
I with Romagna's darkest spirit found,
As, for his doings, even now in soul
Is in Cocytus plunged, and yet doth seem
In body still alive upon the earth.

CANTO XXXIV

In the last round is Lucifer on whose back Dante and
Virgil ascend to the other hemisphere of the earth.

“THE banners of Hell’s Monarch do come forth
Toward us; therefore look," so spake my guide,
“If thou discern him.” As, when breathes a cloud
Heavy and dense, or when the shades of night
Fall on our hemisphere, seems view’d from far
A windmill, which the blast stirs briskly round;
Such was the fabric then methought I saw.

To shield me from the wind, forthwith I drew
Behind my guide: no covert else was there.

Now came I (and with fear I bid my strain
Record the marvel) where the souls were all
Whelm’d underneath, transparent, as through glass
Pellucid the frail stem. Some prone were laid;
Others stood upright, this upon the soles,

That on his head, a third with face to feet
Arch'd like a bow. When to the point we came,
Whereat my guide was pleased that I should see
The creature eminent in beauty once,
He from before me stepp'd and made me pause.

“Lo!” he exclaim'd, “lo! Dis; and lo! the place,
Where thou hast need to arm thy heart with strength.”

How frozen and how faint I then became,
Ask me not, reader! for I write it not;
Since words would fail to tell thee of my state.
I was not dead nor living. Think thyself,
If quick conception work in thee at all,
How I did feel. That emperor, who sways
The realm of sorrow, at mid breast from the ice
Stood forth; and I in stature am more like
A giant, than the giants are his arms.
Mark now how great that whole must be, which suits
With such a part. If he were beautiful
As he is hideous now, and yet did dare
To scowl upon his Maker, well from him

May all our misery flow. Oh what a sight!
How passing strange it seem'd, when I did spy
Upon his head three faces: one in front
Of hue vermilion, the other two with this
Midway each shoulder join'd and at the crest;
The right 'twixt wan and yellow seem'd; the left
To look on, such as come from whence old Nile
Stoops to the lowlands. Under each shot forth
Two mighty wings, enormous as became
A bird so vast. Sails never such I saw
Outstretch'd on the wide sea. No plumes had they,
But were in texture like a bat; and these
He flapp'd i' th' air, that from him issued still
Three winds, wherewith Cocytus to its depth
Was frozen. At six eyes he wept: the tears
Adown three chins distill'd with bloody foam.
At every mouth his teeth a sinner champ'd,
Bruised as with ponderous engine; so that three
Were in this guise tormented. But far more
Than from that gnawing, was the foremost pang'd
By the fierce rending, whence ofttimes the back
Was stript of all its skin. "That upper spirit,

Who hath worst punishment," so spake my guide,
"Is Judas, he that hath his head within
And plies the feet without. Of th' other two,
Whose heads are under, from the murky jaw
Who hangs, is Brutus: lo! how he doth writhe
And speaks not. The other, Cassius, that appears
So large of limb. But night now reascends;
And it is time for parting. All is seen."

I clipp'd him round the neck; for so he bade:
And noting time and place, he, when the wings
Enough were oped, caught fast the shaggy sides,
And down from pile to pile descending stepp'd
Between the thick fell and the jagged ice.

Soon as he reach'd the point, whereat the thigh
Upon the swelling of the haunches turns,
My leader there, with pain and struggling hard,
Turn'd round his head where his feet stood before,
And grappled at the fell as one who mounts;
That into hell methought we turn'd again.

“Expect that by such stairs as these,” thus spake
The teacher, panting like a man forespent,
“We must depart from evil so extreme”:
Then at a rocky opening issued forth,
And placed me on the brink to sit, next join’d
With wary step my side. I raised mine eyes,
Believing that I Lucifer should see
Where he was lately left, but saw him now
With legs held upward. Let the grosser sort,
Who see not what the point was I had past,
Bethink them if sore toil oppress’d me then.

“Arise,” my master cried, “upon thy feet.
The way is long, and much uncouth the road;
And now within one hour and half of noon
The sun returns.” It was no palace-hall
Lofty and luminous wherein we stood,
But natural dungeon where ill-footing was
And scant supply of light. “Ere from the abyss
I separate,” thus when risen I began:
“My guide! vouchsafe few words to set me free
From error’s thralldom. Where is now the ice?

How standeth he in posture thus reversed?
And how from eve to morn in space so brief
Hath the sun made his transit?" He in few
Thus answering spake: "Thou deemest thou art still
On the other side the centre, where I grasp'd
The abhorred worm that boreth through the world.
Thou wast on the other side, so long as I
Descended; when I turn'd, thou didst o'erpass
That point, to which from every part is dragg'd
All heavy substance. Thou art now arrived
Under the hemisphere opposed to that,
Which the great continent doth overspread,
And underneath whose canopy expired
The Man, that was born sinless and so lived.
Thy feet are planted on the smallest sphere,
Whose other aspect is Judecca. Morn
Here rises, when there evening sets: and he,
Whose shaggy pile we scaled, yet standeth fix'd,
As at the first. On this part he fell down
From heaven; and th' earth, here prominent before,
Through fear of him did veil her with the sea,
And to our hemisphere retired. Perchance,

To shun him, was the vacant space left here,
By what of firm land on this side appears,
That sprang aloof." There is a place beneath,
From Belzebub as distant, as extends
The vaulted tomb; discover'd not by sight,
But by the sound of brooklet, that descends
This way along the hollow of a rock,
Which, as it winds with no precipitous course,
The wave hath eaten. By that hidden way
My guide and I did enter, to return
To the fair world: and heedless of repose
We climb'd, he first, I following his steps,
Till on our view the beautiful lights of heaven
Dawn'd through a circular opening in the cave:
Thence issuing we again beheld the stars.

NOTES - CANTO I.

In the midway.

The thirty-fifth year of the poet, 1300 A.D.

Which to remember.

“Even when I remember I am afraid and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.”

Job xxi, 6.

A mountain's foot.

The mountain of salvation.

That planet's beam.

The sun.

A panther.

Pleasure or luxury.

With those stars.

The sun was in Aries, the sign in which it is supposed to have begun its course at the creation.

The sweet season.

Spring according to the terminology of the Middle Ages.

A lion.

Pride or ambition.

A she-wolf.

Avarice.

Mantuans.

Virgil was born in Andes, today Pietola, a village near Mantua, twenty-five years before Julius Caesar assumed dictatorial power.

That greyhound.

Commonly understood to be Can Grande della Scala, Lord of Verona.

'Twixt either Feltro.

Verona was situated between Feltro and Monte Feltro.

Camilla, etc.

Characters in The Aeneid which ended with the death of Turnus.

A second death.

“And in these days men shall seek death and shall not find it; and shall desire to die and death shall flee from them.” Rev. ix, 6.

Content in fire.

The spirits in Purgatory.

A spirit worthier.

Beatrice who conducts Dante through Paradise and represents Divine Wisdom while Virgil represents Earthly Wisdom.

Saint Peter's gate. The gate of Purgatory which the poet pretends is guarded by an angel placed there by St. Peter.

NOTES - CANTO II.

Silvius' sire.

Aeneas.

High effect.

Founding of Rome.

Peter's sacred chair.

The papal throne.

The chosen vessel.

St. Paul; Acts ix. 15.

Who rest suspended.

The spirits in Limbo who are not admitted to a state of glory nor doomed to punishment.

Beatrice.

The daughter of Folco Portinari who is invested in the poem with the character of celestial wisdom or theology.

Whatever is contained.

Everything within the lunar heaven which is the lowest of all and has the smallest circle.

This centre.

The earth is the centre of the heavenly spheres and Hell extends to the centre of the earth.

A blessed dame.

The Divine Mercy.

Lucia.

The enlightening Grace of Heaven.

Three maids.

The Divine Mercy, Lucia and Beatrice.

NOTES - CANTO III.

A flag.

Those who in life were blown about by every wind of doctrine.

...Who to base fear

Yielding, abjured his high estate.

Commonly understood to be Celestine V who abdicated as pope in 1294 and made way for Boniface VIII.

A great stream.

The Acheron.

A nimble boat.

Perhaps the bark “swift and light” (Purg., ii) in which the Angel conducts the spirits to Purgatory; the saved souls go to the mouth of the Tiber and are carried over the ocean to Purgatory.

NOTES - CANTO IV.

The first circle.

Limbo containing the souls of unbaptized children and the virtuous adults who lived before Christ.

New to that estate.

Virgil died in 19 B.C., and had been in Limbo fifty years when Christ came to free the virtuous of the old dispensation.

A puissant one.

Christ.

The monarch of sublimest song.

Homer.

A magnificent castle.

Human knowledge symbolized.

With lofty walls.

The seven cardinal virtues.

Seven gates.

The seven liberal arts.

Electra.

The daughter of Atlas and mother of Dardanus, the founder of Troy.

Camilla.

Also mentioned in Canto i.

Penthesilea.

Queen of the Amazons who fell fighting for the Trojans in Asia.

Latinus.

Father-in-law of Aeneas.

Brutus.

Junius Brutus, the first consul.

Julia.

Daughter of Julius Caesar and wife of Pompey.

Cornelia.

Daughter of Scipio Africanus and mother of the Gracchi.

The Soldan fierce.

Saladin, sultan of Egypt and Syria, the rival of Richard the Lion-Hearted; died
1193.

The master of the sapient throng.

Aristotle.

Democritus.

Who maintained the world had been formed by the fortuitous concourse of atoms.

Thales sage.

Thales of Miletus, the founder of the Ionic school.

Zeno.

Chief of the Stoics.

Dioscorides.

Who wrote a treatise on properties of plants and stone.

Linus.

Possibly the son of Apollo who was fabled as a singer.

Tully.

Marcus Tullius Cicero.

Avicen.

Avicenna, the Arab physician whom Dante presents with two other famous physicians of antiquity.

Averroes.

An Arab philosopher who wrote a celebrated commentary on Aristotle.

NOTES - CANTO V.

Minos.

King of Crete whom Virgil made one of the judges in Hell.

Semiramis.

Queen of Assyria famous for her licentiousness.

Soldan.

The Sultan of Egypt was also called the Sultan of Babylon in Dante's time.

With love fought to the end.

Polyxena whom Achilles loved; her brother, Paris, killed Achilles while the marriage was taking place.

The land.

Ravenna.

Caina.

The place to which murderers are doomed.

Francesca.

Francesca da Rimini who was given by her father, lord of Ravenna, in marriage to Lanciotto, son of the lord of Rimini; she fell in love with Lanciotto's brother, Paolo, and with him was put to death for adultery by the enraged Lanciotto.

NOTES - CANTO VI.

Ciacco.

In Italian, signifying pig.

The divided city.

Florence, divided into the Bianchi and Neri factions.

The wild party from the woods.

So called because it was headed by Veri de' Cerchi whose family had come from the woody country of the Val di Nievole.

The other.

The opposite party of the Neri, headed by Corso Donati.

This must fall.

The Bianchi.

Three solar circles.

Within three years; the Bianchi were banished in 1302, and so was Dante.

...of one, who under shore

Now rests.

Charles of Valois by whom the Neri were replaced.

The just are two in number.

Unknown.

Of Farinata and Tegghiaio.

See notes to Canto x, Farinata and xvi, Albobrandi.

Giacopo.

Giacopo Rusticucci. See notes to Canto xvi, Rusticucci.

Arrigo.

Of Arrigo who, commentators say, came from the noble family of Fifanti.

Mosca.

Mosca degli Uberti is introduced in Canto xxviii.

Plutus.

Following his custom with mythological characters. Dante makes Plutus, the god of riches, a demon.

NOTES - CANTO VII.

The first adulterer proud.

Satan; the word is here used in the sense of one who experiences a revolt of affections from God, and appears often in this way in the Bible. See Rev. xii, 7-9.

Each part.

Each hemisphere of the heavens shines upon the hemisphere of the earth placed under it.

Each star is falling now.

From the zenith so that it is past midnight.

NOTES - CANTO VIII.

Phlegyas.

Who was so incensed against Apollo for violating his daughter, Coronis, that he set fire to Apollo's temple, and was cast into Tartarus. See Virg. Aen., I, vi.

Filippo Argenti.

According to Boccaccio, "a man remarkable for the large proportions and extraordinary vigor of his bodily frame and the extreme waywardness and irascibility of his temper."

Dis.

The city of Dis which forms the sixth circle of Hell and was fortified with walls, moats and towers.

Seven times.

Reckoning the beasts in the first canto as one, and adding Charon, Minos, Cerberus, Plutus, Phlegyas and Filippo Argenti as the rest, the number is seven; but Dante may have put a definite number for an indeterminate number.

This their insolence, not new.

These spirits had shown the same insolence when Christ descended into Hell.

NOTES - CANTO IX.

Erictho.

A Thessalian sorceress employed by Sextus, son of Pompey the Great, to conjure up a spirit who would inform him of the outcome of the civil wars between his father and Caesar. This may refer to some other incident or be an anachronism because Sextus died thirty years before Virgil's death.

Lowest place of all.

Hell's lowest circle where arch-traitors are punished; see Canto xxxiv.

All-circling orb. The primum mobile, or outermost of the Nine Spheres.

Erynnis.

The female divinities who were the avengers of iniquity in Greek mythology.

Your Cerberus.

When Cerberus tried to oppose his entrance to Hell, Hercules bound him with a threefold chain and dragged him out of the gate.

Arles.

The Roman antiquities there include a theatre, a forum and a cemetery.

Pola.

Also contains Roman antiquities.

NOTES - CANTO X.

Josaphat.

A common opinion among Jews as well as Christians was that the final judgment would be held in the valley of Josaphat, or Jehoshaphat; see Joel iii, 2.

Farinata.

Farinata degli Uberti, a noble Florentine, leader of the Ghibelline faction; exiled from Florence, he regained the city with the help of Manfred, king of the Two Sicilies, in 1260. He saved Florence when his party wished to burn it to the ground.

Twice.

The first time in 1248 when they were driven out by Frederick II and the second in 1260, after the battle of Montaperti.

Return'd.

Dante's ancestors returned to Florence in 1251 after the defeat of the Ghibellines at Figliione, and in 1266 after the death of Manfred.

A shade.

The spirit of Cavalcante Cavalcanti, a noble Florentine, of the Guelph party.

My son.

Guido, the son of Cavalcante Cavalcanti, whom Dante calls “the first of my friends” in the Vita Nuova; he died either in exile in Serrazana or soon after his return to Florence in December, 1300. during the spring of which year the action of this poem is supposed to be taking place.

Had in contempt.

Guido, more given to philosophy than poetry, may not have been an admirer of Virgil.

Not yet fifty times.

Fifty months will not pass before Dante will learn the difficulty of returning to his native city from banishment.

Queen of this realm.

The moon, who bore the title of Proserpine, queen of the shades below, in heathen mythology.

The slaughter.

By means of Farinata degli Uberti, the Guelphs were conquered by the army of Manfred near the river Arbia with so great a slaughter that those who escaped took refuge in Lucca; they considered Florence was lost.

Such orisons.

May refer to prayers in the churches of Florence for the deliverance from the Uberti; or perhaps public counsels were held in the churches, and the speeches were called "orisons."

Singly there I stood.

Guido Novello assembled a council of the Ghibellines at Empoli where it was agreed that in order to maintain the ascendancy of the Ghibelline party in Tuscany, it was necessary to destroy Florence. This cruel sentence, passed upon so noble a city, met with no opposition from any of its citizens or friends, except Farinata degli Uberti.

We view.

The departed spirits know things of the past and future, but are ignorant of present things.

Frederick.

The Emperor Frederick II who died in 1250.

The Lord Cardinal.

Ottaviano Ubaldini, a Florentine, made cardinal in 1245, and deceased about 1273. On account of his great influence, he was generally known as “the Cardinal.” It is reported of him, that he declared, if there were any such thing as a human soul, he had lost his for the Ghibellini.

Her gracious beam.

Beatrice.

NOTES - CANTO XI.

Anastasius.

Anastasius II, made pope in 496, died in 498.

Photinus.

Bishop of Sirmio, condemned as a heretic by the synod of Antioch in 351;

Dante confuses him with Photinus, deacon of Thessalonica and follower of Aca-cius.

Cahors.

A city in France which had the name of being frequented by usurers in the Middle Ages.

Dis.

Lucifer.

Whom the rain beats, etc.

The gluttonous and licentious.

With tongues.

Misers and prodigals.

Thy ethic page.
Aristotle's Ethics.

Fell spirits.
The violent, fraudulent and traitorous.

Her laws.
Aristotle's Physics.

Creation's holy book.
Genesis ii, 15.

Pisces.
Pisces is already above the horizon, and the sun, in Aries, will rise shortly.

The Wain.
The constellation Bootes, called Charles's Wain.

NOTES - CANTO XII.

The infamy of Crete.

The Minotaur.

The feign'd heifer.

Pasiphae, the mother of the Minotaur, by a bull sent by Poseidon.

The king of Athens.

Theseus who was able to destroy the Minotaur by the instruction of Ariadne, his sister.

He arrived.

Christ who, according to Dante, carried with him the souls of the Patriarchs and other just men from the first circle when he ascended from Hell; see Canto iv.

Been into chaos turn'd.

This opinion is attributed to Empedocles.

Chiron.

Son of Saturn and Philyra, pupil of Apollo, instructor of Achilles, friend of Peleus; renowned for his wisdom and skill in medicine, hunting and music.

And wrought himself revenge.

Nessus, when dying by the hand of Hercules, charged Deianira to preserve the gore from his wound; if the affections of Hercules should at any time be estranged from her, he said it would act as a charm, and recall them. Deianira had occasion to try the experiment, and the venom caused Hercules to expire in torments.

Pholus.

A Centaur who threatened the wives of the Lapithae at the wedding of Pirithous when he was over-heated with wine.

Dionysius.

Tyrant of Syracuse, died 367 B.C.

Azzolino.

Or Ezzolino di Romano, a noted Ghibelline leader, notorious for his cruelty, who died 1260; he was lord of Padua, Vicenza, Verona and Brescia, and the subject of a Latin tragedy, *Eccerinis*, by Albertino Mussato, a contemporary of Dante.

Obizzo of Este.

Marquis of Ferrara and of Marc d'Ancona murdered by his own son for the sake of the wealth he had amassed by his rapacity.

He.

Henry, nephew of Henry III of England, was slain at Viterbo, Italy, by Guy de Montfort, the son of Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, in revenge for his father's death. Henry's heart was reputedly put in a golden cup and placed on a pillar of the London Bridge.

Attila.

King of Huns who began his reign in 433.

On Sextus and on Pyrrhus.

Sextus was the son either of Pompey the Great or Tarquin the Proud; Pyrrhus was king of Epirus.

...the Rinieri, of Corneto this,
Pazzo, the other named.

Two noted marauders who preyed on the public ways of Italy. The latter was of the noble family of Pazzi in Florence.

NOTES - CANTO XIII.

Betwixt Corneto and Cecina's stream.

A wild and woody tract of country abounding in deer, goats and wild boars.

I it was.

Piero delle Vigne, a native of Capua who raised himself to the office of Chancellor to Emperor Frederick II who had great confidence in him. Courtiers by means of forged letters convinced Frederick that he held a secret and traitorous intercourse with the Pope, then at odds with the Emperor. Piero was condemned to lose his eyes, and driven to despair, dashed out his brains against the walls of a church in 1245.

The harlot.

Envy.

The fierce soul.

A suicide.

Lano.

A Siennese who was reduced by prodigality to a state of extreme want and took the opportunity of exposing himself to sure death in the military expedition which the Siennese sent to assist the Florentines against the Aretini.

O Giacomo of Sant' Andea!

Jacopo da Sant' Andrea, a Paduan who killed himself after he had wasted his property in the most wanton acts of profusion.

In that city.

Florence who changed her first patron, Mars, for St. John.

Ashes left by Attila.

According to the tradition of Dante's time, Attila destroyed Florence and Charlemagne rebuilt it.

NOTES - CANTO XIV.

By Cato's foot.

The Libyan desert where Cato led the remnant of Pompey's army to Juba, the king of Numidia.

As, in the torrid Indian clime.

A reference to Alexander the Great's supposed account to Aristotle of the falling of snow, then fire, upon his soldiers. Dante has apparently confused the story.

Yon huge spirit.

Capaneus, one of the seven kings besieging Thebes, who defied Jupiter to help the city and was destroyed for his presumption.

Mongibello.

Mt. Aetna.

Little brook.

Phlegethon.

Bulicame.

Warm, medicinal spring near Viterbo which passed by a place of ill fame.

Under whose monarch.

Saturn's reign, regarded as the golden age.

At Rome.

Rome was ordained by God as the centre of spiritual and temporal power.

The red seething wave.

Phlegethon.

Whither.

The other side of Purgatory.

NOTES - CANTO XV.

Chiarentana.

A part of the Alps where the river Brenta rises.

Brunetto.

Brunetto Latini, born in 1220 of a noble family, a noted scholar of his day, and Dante's teacher; he wrote *Il Tesoretto*, an allegorical didactic poem in Italian, and *Li Tresors*, a variety of encyclopedia, in French.

Fesole.

The first city built in Europe, according to Florentine tradition; destroyed by J. Caesar, a new city, called Florence, was built on its foundations by the Romans.

Either party.

The Bianchi and Neri parties.

Priscian.

There was a grammarian by that name, but most commentators believe Dante here uses an individual name for the species because he wishes to imply the fre-

quency of the crime among those who abused their opportunities in educating youth.

Francesco.

Accorso, a Florentine, who interpreted the Roman law at Bologna, and died in 1229.

Him.

Andrea de' Mozzi, who was translated by Pope Nicholas III or Pope Boniface VIII from the see of Florence to Vicenza so that his scandalous life would be less exposed to observation.

I commend my treasure to thee.

Brunetto's great work.

NOTES - CANTO XVI.

Gualdrada.

Daughter of Bellincione Berti whom Emperor Otho IV married because he was so impressed with her modesty and loveliness; Guidoguerra was her grandson, a man of great military skill and prowess who led four hundred Florentines of the Guelph party in the victory of Charles of Anjou over Manfred, King of Naples, in 1266. By this victory, the Ghibellines were expelled from Florence, and the Guelphs re-established there.

Aldobrandi.

Tegghiaio Aldobrandi of the noble family of Adimari; the rejection of his advice caused the memorable defeat of the Florentines at the hands of the Siennese at Montaperto, and the consequent banishment of the Guelphs from Florence.

Rusticucci.

Giacopo Rusticucci, a Florentine, noted for his opulence and generous spirit.

Borsiere.

Guglielmo Borsiere, another Florentine, whom Boccaccio calls “a man of courteous and elegant manners, and of great readiness in conversation.”

E'en as the river.

The fall of Phlegethon is likened to that of Montone in the Apennines above the Abbey of St. Benedict.

At Forli.

Because there it loses the name of Acquacheta and takes that of Montone.

Where space.

Either because the abbey was capable of containing more than those who occupied it or because the lords of that territory intended to build a castle near the waterfall and collect within its walls the population of surrounding villages.

A cord.

It is believed that Dante entered the order of St. Francis in an earlier part of his life. By observing the rules of that order, he had wanted to mortify his carnal appetites or "take the painted leopard," representing Pleasure, "with his cord," the rope Franciscans wore around their waists as a symbol for this purpose.

NOTES - CANTO XVII.

The fell monster.

Fraud.

A pouch.

A purse bearing the armorial bearing of each.

A yellow purse.

The arms of the Gianfigliuzzi of Florence.

Another.

Those of the Ubbriachi, another Florentine family of high distinction.

A fat and azure swine.

The arms of the Scrovigni, a noble family of Padua.

Vitaliano.

Vitaliano del Dente, a Paduan.

That noble knight.

Giovanni Bujamonti, a Florentine usurer, the most infamous of his time.

NOTES - CANTO XVIII.

With us beyond.

Beyond the middle point they went the same way with us, but their pace was quicker than ours.

E'en thus the Romans.

In the year 1300, Pope Boniface VIII, to remedy the inconvenience occasioned by the press of people who were passing over the bridge of St. Angelo during the time of the Jubilee, caused it to be divided lengthwise by a partition; and ordered that all those who were going to St. Peter's should keep one side, and those returning the other.

The castle.

Sant' Angelo, originally the mausoleum of Adrian, and made a citadel in the Middle Ages.

Venedico.

Venedico Caccianimico, a Bolognese, who prevailed on his sister, Ghisola, to prostitute herself to Obizzo da Este, Marquis of Ferrara, who appeared in Canto xii.

To answer Sipa.

He denotes Bologna by its situation between the rivers Savena and Reno and by a peculiarity of dialect which uses the affirmative sipa instead of si or sia.

Hypsipyle.

She deceived the other women of Lemnos by concealing her father, Thoas, when they had agreed to put all their males to death.

Alessio.

Of an ancient and considerable family in Lucca, called the Interminei.

NOTES - CANTO XIX.

Saint John's fair dome.

The fonts of St. John the Baptist in Florence.

O Boniface.

The spirit mistakes Dante for Boniface VIII who was then alive and whom he did not expect to arrive so soon because of a prophecy predicting his death at a later period. Boniface died in 1303.

In guile.

He means that he arrived at papal power by fraudulent means and afterwards abused it.

In the mighty mantle I was robed.

Nicholas III of the Orsini family whom Dante therefore calls "figliuol dell' orsa," son of the she-bear. He died in 1281.

From forth the west, a shepherd without law.

Bertrand de Got, Archbishop of Bordeaux, who succeeded to the pontificate in 1305 under the name of Clement V. He transferred the holy see to Avignon in 1308 where it remained until 1376. He died in 1314.

A new Jason.

Son of Simon the High Priest, who offered King Antiochus a huge sum for the high-priesthood. See 2 Maccab., iv.

Of France's monarch.

Philip IV of France.

Nor Peter.

Acts of the Apostles i, 26.

The condemned soul.

Judas.

Against Charles.

Nicholas III was enraged against Charles I, King of Sicily, because he rejected with scorn a proposition made by that pope for an alliance between their families.

The Evangelist.

Rev. xvii, 1-3.

Ah, Constantine.

Reference to the pretended gift of the Lateran by Constantine to Sylvester.

NOTES - CANTO XX.

When she is dead.

A play on the words “pity” and “piety.”

Before whose eyes.

Amphiaraus, a soothsayer and one of the seven kings against Thebes, who is said to have been swallowed up by an opening of the earth.

Tiresias.

The Theban soothsayer who went to Troy with the Greeks. By striking two serpents entwined together, he changed to woman’s shape, and only regained the figure of a man at the end of seven years.

Aruns.

Etruscan diviner who foretold the victory of Caesar over Pompey.

Manto.

The daughter of Tiresias of Thebes, a city dedicated to Bacchus. She founded Mantua, the country of Virgil.

Camonica.

Large valley of Lombardy.

There is a spot.

Prato di Fame, where the dioceses of Trento, Verona and Brescia meet.

Peschiera.

A garrison situated to the south of the lake where it empties to form the Min-
cius; owned by the Scala family against whom the Bergamese and Brescians
banded together.

Casalodi's madness.

Alberto da Casalodi, who had got possession of Mantua, was persuaded, by
Pinamonte Buonacossi, that he might ingratiate himself with the people, by ban-
ishing to their own castles the nobles, obnoxious to them. No sooner was this
done than Pinamonte put himself at the head of the populace, drove out Casalodi
and his adherents, and obtained the sovereignty for himself.

Michael Scot.

A Scottish scholar who flourished in the thirteenth century and gained the
name of being a great necromancer after his death; he superintended the transla-
tion of Aristotle at the invitation of Frederick II and wrote several treatises on
natural philosophy.

Guido Bonatti.

An astrologer of Forli on whose skill Guido da Montefeltro, lord of Forli, so much relied that he is reported never to have gone into battle except at the hour recommended by Bonatti as fortunate.

Asdente.

A shoemaker of Padua who deserted his business to practice divination and attracted much public notice at the time.

Cain with fork of thorns.

The moon designated by a phrase comparable to “the man in the moon.”

NOTES - CANTO XXI.

One of Santa Zita's elders.

The elders or chief magistrates of Lucca where Santa Zita was held in special veneration. This sinner is supposed to have been named Martino Botaio.

Except Bonturo, barterers.

Said ironically of Bonturo de' Dati. By "barterers" are meant speculators of every description, all who traffic the interests of the public for their own private advantage.

The hallow'd visage.

A representation of the head of Christ, worshipped at Lucca.

Is other swimming than in Serchio's wave.

The river that flows by Lucca.

From Caprona.

The surrender of the castle of Caprona to the combined forces of Florence and Lucca on the condition that the garrison should march out in safety; Dante was a witness of this event which took place in 1290.

Yesterday.

This passage fixes the time of Dante's descent at Good Friday of the year 1300, and at the thirty-fifth year of the poet's life. At Christ's death, the convulsion which shook the earth reached even to Hell and the bridge over the pits of the hypocrites was destroyed.

NOTES - CANTO XXII.

Scouring thy plains.

Probably reference to the battle of Camaldino when the Guelphs of Florence defeated the Ghibellines of Arezzo; Dante took part.

Born in Navarre's domain.

The name of this speculator is said to have been Ciampolo.

The good King Thibault.

Thibault I, King of Navarre, whom the historian Mariana commends for his desire to aid in the war in the Holy Land and reprehends for oppressing the rights and privileges of the church; died in 1233.

Their chief.

Barbariccia, head of the ten sent to escort the two poets.

The friar Gomita.

Entrusted by Nino de' Viconti with the government of Gallura, one of the four jurisdictions into which Sardinia is divided. He took a bribe from Nino's enemies whom he had in his power and allowed them to escape.

Michel Zanche.

The president of Logodoro, another of the four Sardinian jurisdictions.

NOTES - CANTO XXIII.

Aesop's fable.

Reference to a fable, not in Aesop, about the frog who offered to carry the mouse across ditch with the intention of drowning him, but who was carried off, with his victim, by a kite.

Monks in Cologne.

They wore their cowls unusually large.

Frederick's.

The Emperor Frederick II is said to have punished those who were guilty of high treason by wrapping them in lead and casting them into a furnace.

Joyous friars.

Two knights, M. Catalano de' Malavolti, a Guelph, and M. Loderingo degli Andalò, a Ghibelline, who were imported by the Ghibelline rulers of Florence to pacify the discontented people; they were of the order of Joyous Friars, called Knights of St. Mary, and were supposed to act in this situation as mediators and helpers of the people, and save the commonwealth unnecessary expense. but they

connived with each other and promoted their own advantage rather than that of the public.

Gardingo's vicinage.

The name of that part of the city which was inhabited by the powerful Ghibelline family of the Uberti, and destroyed under the partial and iniquitous administration of Catalano and Loderingo.

That pierced spirit.

Caiaphas.

The father of his consort.

Annas, father-in-law to Caiaphas.

He is a liar.

John viii. 44.

NOTES - CANTO XXIV.

In the year's early nonage.

The latter part of January when the sun enters Aquarius and the equinox is drawing near, when the hoar-frosts often wear the appearance of snow in the morning, but are melted by the rising sun.

A longer ladder.

Purgatory.

Vanni Fucci.

Said to have been an illegitimate offspring of the family of Lazari in Pistoia, who robbed the sacristy of the church of St. James in Pistoia and charged Vanni della Nona with the sacrilege for which he was put to death.

Pistoia.

In May, 1301, the Bianchi party of Pistoia, with the assistance of the Bianchi, who ruled Florence, drove out the Neri from the former place, destroying their houses, palaces, and farms.

Then Florence.

Soon after the Bianchi will be expelled from Florence, the Neri will prevail, and the laws and people will be changed.

From Valdimagra.

The commentators explain this prophetic threat as alluding to the victory by the Marquis Morello Malaspina of Valdimagra who put himself at the head of the Neri and defeated the Bianchi at Campo Piceno near Pistoia.

NOTES - CANTO XXV.

Thy seed.

Thy ancestry.

Not him.

Capaneus. See Canto xiv.

On Maremma's marsh.

An extensive tract near the seashore of Tuscany.

Cacus.

Son of Vulcan who stole from Hercules some of Geryon's cattle and dragged them to his cave under the Aventine.

A hundred blows.

Less than ten blows out of the hundred Hercules gave him had deprived him of feeling.

Cianfa.

Said to have been of the family of Donati, Florence.

Agnello.
Agnello Brunelleschi.

In that part.
The navel.

Sabellus.
With Nasidius, soldier in Cato's army; both met horrible deaths from the bite of animals.

Cadmus and Arethusa.
The first was changed to a snake, the second, to a fountain.

Buoso. Said by some to have been of the Donati family, but by others, of the Abbati.

Sciancato.
Puccio Sciancato, a noted robber.

Gaville.
Francesco Guercio Cavalcante was killed at Gaville near Florence and in revenge for his death several inhabitants of the district were put to death.

NOTES - CANTO XXVI

Shalt feel what Prato.

A prophecy of the calamities soon to befall Florence which, Dante says, even her nearest neighbor, Prato, would wish her.

As he whose wrongs.

II Kings ii.

Ascending from that funeral pile.

The flame is said to have divided on the funeral piles of Eteocles and Polynices, as if conscious of the enmity that actuated them while living.

The ambush of the horse.

The ambush of the wooden horse, that caused Aeneas to quit the city of Troy and seek his fortune in Italy, where his descendants founded the Roman empire.

Deidamia.

Daughter of Lycomedes, king of Sciros, to whom Achilles was sent by his mother to save him from the fate awaiting him at Troy.

Her Palladium.

Ulysses and Diomedes, disguised as beggars, stole the Palladium from the temple of Minerva.

Caieta.

Virgil, Aeneid, vii.

The strait pass.

The straits of Gibraltar.

Ceuta.

African city on Strait of Gibraltar.

A mountain dim.

Purgatory, supposedly separated by a long space of sea or land from regions inhabited by men and placed in the ocean reaching as far as the lunar circle so that the waters of the deluge did not reach it.

NOTES - CANTO XXVII.

The Sicilian bull.

The engine of torture invented by Perillus for the tyrant Phalaris.

Romagna.

A territorial division of Italy which now stretches over the provinces of Bologna, Ferrara, Ravenna and Forli.

Of the mountains there.

Montefeltro.

Polenta's eagle.

The arms of Guido Novello da Polenta, Dante's last and most munificent patron: Guido made himself master of Ravenna in 1265, but was deprived of his sovereignty in 1322 and died in Bologna. During his supremacy, he extended his rule over Cervia, a small maritime city about fifteen miles south of Ravenna.

The land.

The inhabitants of the territory of Forli in 1282 were able to defeat the French army besieging them through a stratagem of Guido da Montefeltro, their gover-

nor. Dante informs the former ruler that Forli is now in possession of Sinibalde Ordolaffi, or Ardelaffi, whom he designates by his coat of arms, a lion vert.

The old mastiff of Verruchio and the young.

Malatesta and Malatestino, his son, lords of Rimini; Verruchio was the name of their castle. Malatestino was perhaps the husband of Francesca, see note, Canto v, Francesca.

Montagna.

Montagna de' Parcitati, a noble knight and leader of the Ghibelline party at Rimini, murdered by Malatestino.

Lamone's city and Santerno's.

Lamone is the river at Faenza, and Santerno at Imola.

The lion of the snowy lair.

Machinardo Pagano whose arms were a lion azure on a field argent.

Whose flank is wash'd of Savio's wave.

Cesena, situated at the foot of a mountain and washed by the river Savio which often descends with rapidity from the Apennines.

A man of arms.

Guido da Montefeltro.

The high priest.
Boniface VIII.

The chief of the new Pharisees.

Boniface VIII, whose enmity to the family of Colonna prompted him to destroy their houses near the Lateran. Wishing to obtain possession of their other seat, Penestrino, he consulted with Guido da Montefeltro and offered him absolution for his past sins, and for that which he was then tempting him to commit. Guido's advice was that kind words and fair promises would put his enemies into his power, and they accordingly soon afterwards fell into the snare laid for them, A.D. 1298.

Nor against Acre.

Allusion to the renegade Christians who assisted the Saracens in 1291 to recover St. John d'Acre, the last possession of the Christians in the Holy Land and a valuable trading centre.

Constantine.

Sylvester had to flee from Constantine's persecution according to the legend, but when Constantine contracted leprosy, he sent for Sylvester who healed him.

My predecessor.
Celestine V.

With performance scant.

Boniface VIII broke his promise of restoring to them the estates and dignities
of the Colonnas.

NOTES - CANTO XXVIII.

In that long war.

The war of Hannibal in Italy. "When Mago brought news of his victories to Carthage, in order to make his successes more easily credited, he commanded the golden rings to be poured out in the senate-house, which made so large a heap, that, as some relate, they filled three modii and a half." Livy, Hist., xxiii. 12.

Guiscard's Norman steel.

Robert Guiscard, who conquered the kingdom Naples, and died in 1110. He is introduced in Paradise, xviii.

And those the rest.

The army of Manfred through the treachery of the Apulian troops was overcome by Charles of Anjou in 1265 and fell in such number that the bones of the slain were still gathered near Ceperano. See Purg., iii.

O Tagliacozzo.

Reference to the victory which Charles gained in 1268 over Conradino by the sage advice of Sieur de Valeri.

Ali.

The disciple of Mahomet who later founded his own sect.

Dolcino.

In 1305, a friar called Dolcino who belonged to no regular order raised in Novara, Lombardy, a large company of the meaner sort of people, declared himself a true apostle of Christ, and promulgated a community of property and wives and many other heretical doctrines. His more than three thousand followers lived promiscuously in the mountains, but after about two years, the sect diminished, and Dolcino was taken by the people of Novara and burnt with Margarita, his companion, and many others of his followers.

Medicina.

A place in the territory of Bologna. Piero fomented dissensions there and among the leaders of neighboring states.

The pleasant land.

Lombardy.

Vercelli... Mercabo.

A city and castle marking the beginning of Lombardy.

The twain.

Guido del Cassero and Angiolello da Cagnano, two of the worthiest and most distinguished citizens of Fano; invited by Malatestino da Rimini to an entertainment on the pretence that he had some important business to transact with them, they were drowned according to Malatestino's instructions as they crossed the river near Cattolica.

Focara's wind.

Focara is a mountain from which blows a wind peculiarly dangerous to navigators.

The doubt in Caesar's mind.

Curio, whose speech determined Julius Caesar to proceed when he had arrived at Rimini (Ariminum) and doubted whether he should prosecute the civil war.

Mosca.

Buondelmonte was engaged to marry a lady of the Amidei family, but broke his promise and married one of the Donati. At a meeting of the Amidei to consider the best means of revenging the insult. Mosca degli Uberti urged the assassination of Buondelmonte. This advice was the source of many terrible calamities that happened to Florence and was the beginning of the Guelph and Ghibelline parties there.

Bertrand.

Bertrand de Born, Vicomte de Hautefort, near Perigueux in Guienne, who incited John to rebel against his father, Henry II of England.

NOTES - CANTO XXIX.

The time.

A little after mid-day.

Geri of Bello.

A kinsman of Dante's, murdered by one of the Sacchetti family; he was the son of Bello, the poet's great-uncle.

Of Valdichiana.

Stagnation of water made this valley unwholesome in the heat of autumn until the Emperor Leopold II had the valley drained.

Maremma's pestilent fen.

See note, xxv, On Maremma's marsh.

In Aegina.

The fable of the ants changed into Myrmidons.

Arezzo was my dwelling.

Grifolino of Arezzo.

Albero of Sienna.

The son of the Bishop of Sienna who put Grifolino to death at Albero's request.

...was ever race

Light as Sienna's?

See also Purg., xiii.

Stricca.

This is said ironically. Stricca, Niccolo Salimbeni, Caccia of Asciano, and Abbagliato, or Meo de' Folcacchieri, belonged to a company of prodigal and luxurious young men in Sienna. Niccolo was the inventor of a new manner of using cloves. Out of the sum raised from the sale of their estates, they built in common a palace designed for luxurious enjoyment.

In that garden.

Sienna.

Capocchio's ghost.

Said to have been a fellow-student of Dante's in natural philosophy.

NOTES - CANTO XXX.

Athamas.

King of Thebes, husband of Semele's sister, Ino.

Polyxena.

Sacrificed by demand of the spirit of Achilles when the Greeks landed at Thrace.

Polydorus.

Hecuba's only remaining son whom she found murdered by the king of Thrace as she returned from seeking water to wash the dead Polyxena's wounds.

Schicchi.

Gianni Schicchi of the family of Cavalcanti impersonated others so well that he was employed by Simon Donati to pretend to be Buoso Donati, recently deceased, and to make up a will leaving Simon his heir; Schicchi's reward was a mare of great value called "the lady of the herd."

Myrrha.

See Ovid, *Metam.*, x.

Adamo's woe.

Adamo of Brescia, at the instigation of Guido, Alessandro, and their brother Aghinulfo, lords of Romena, counterfeited the coin of Florence and was burnt for the crime.

Casentino.

Romena is a part of Casentino.

Romena.

Castle near the source of the Arno.

Branda's limpid spring.

Fountain in Sienna.

Three carats of alloy.

The florin was a coin that ought to have had twenty-four carats of pure gold.

The false accuser.

Potiphar's wife.

Sinon.

Who persuaded the Trojans to admit the wooden horse into the city.

NOTES - CANTO XXXI.

His father's javelin.

Telephos, king of Mysia, was wounded by Achilles' spear and could only be healed by its rust; he had inherited the spear from his father.

Orlando.

Or Roland, Charlemagne's famous knight, who won this horn from the giant Jatmund; the horn was magical and could be heard twenty miles away.

Montereggion.

Castle near Sienna.

The pine.

A large pine made of bronze which decorated the top of the belfry of St. Peter.

Raphel, etc.

These unmeaning sounds are meant to express the confusion of languages at the building of the tower of Babel.

Ephialtes.

Son of Neptune, brother of Otus.

Briareus.

Son of Neptune and Terra.

Antaeus.

Son of same.

The fortunate vale.

Country near Carthage, where Scipio conquered Hannibal.

Tityus.

Son of Jupiter slain by Apollo for attempted assault on Latona.

Typhon.

A giant destroyed by Jupiter and buried under Mt. Aetna.

Alcides.

Hercules.

The tower of Carisenda.

Leaning tower of Bologna.

NOTES - CANTO XXXII.

Amphion.

Induced the rocks to form of a wall around Thebes by charming them with his lyre.

Tabernich or Pietrapana.

The one a mountain in Solavonia, the other in that tract country called the Garfagnana, not far from Lucca.

To where modest shame appears.

As high as the face.

Who are these two.

Alessandro and Napoleone, sons of Alberto Alberti, who murdered each other. They were proprietors of the valley of Falterona, where the Bisenzio has its source, a river that falls into the Arno about six miles from Florence.

Not him.

Mordrec, son of King Arthur. In the romance of Lancelot of the Lake, Arthur having discovered the traitorous intentions of his son, pierces him through with the stroke of his lance so that the sunbeam passes through the body of Mordrec.

Focaccia.

Focaccia of Cancellieri (the Pistoian family) whose atrocious act of revenge against his uncle is said to have given rise to the parties of the Bianchi and Neri, in the year 1300.

Mascheroni.

Sasso Mascheroni, a Florentine, who also murdered his uncle.

Camiccione.

Camiccione de' Pazzi of Valdarno who treacherously put to death his kinsman Ubertino.

Carlino.

Of the same family, he betrayed the Castel di Piano Travigne in Valdarno to the Florentines after the refugees of the Bianca and Ghibelline party had defended against a siege for 29 days in the summer of 1302.

Montaperto.

The defeat of the Guelphs here was caused by the treachery of Bocca degli Abbati who, during the engagement, cut off the hand of Giacompo del Vacca de' Pazzi, the Florentine standard-bearer.

Antenora.

So-called from Antenor who betrayed Troy, his country.

Him of Duera.

Buoso of Cremona, who was bribed by Guy de Montfort to leave a pass he was supposed to defend for the Ghibellines open to the army of Charles of Anjou in 1265; the people of Cremona were so enraged they extirpated the whole family.

Beccaria.

Abbot of Vallombrosa, the Pope's Legate at Florence where he was beheaded on the discovery of his intrigues for the Ghibellines.

Soldanieri.

Gianni Soldanieri put himself at the head of the people of Florence and thereby brought mischief to the Ghibelline party and his own ruin.

Ganellon.

Betrayer of Charlemagne.

Tribaldello.

Trobaldello de' Manfredi, bribed to betray the city of Faenza, 1282.

Tydeus.

One of the seven kings at Thebes who called for the head of the killed Menalippus and gnawed on it before he expired himself.

NOTES - CANTO XXXIII.

Count Ugolino.

During the factional strife between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines in Pisa in 1288, the Pisan people, enraged against this man for many treacheries, imprisoned him with two sons and two grandchildren in a tower on the Piazza of the Anziani; the tower was locked, the key thrown into the Arno and all food was withheld from them so that they died of hunger in a few days. The Archbishop Ruggiero degli Ubaldini of the Ghibelline faction was instrumental in turning the people against Count Ugolino. Judge Nino di Gallura de' Visconti of the Guelph faction was one of those betrayed by Ugolino; he is mentioned in Purgatory, vii.

Unto the mountain.

S. Giuliano between Pisa and Lucca.

Lanfranchi. etc.

Members of the Archbishop's party.

Capraia and Gorgona.

Small islands near the mouth of the Arno.

The friar Alberigo.

Alberigo de' Manfredi of Faenza, one of the Joyous Friars who quarrelled with some of his brotherhood, and under the pretense of wishing to be reconciled, invited them to a banquet where, at the signal of his calling for the fruit, assassins rushed in and murdered them.

Ptolomea.

Named for Ptolemy, son of Abubus, by whom Simon and his sons were murdered at a great banquet he had for them; see Maccab., xvi. Or from Ptolemy, king of Egypt, the betrayer of Pompey the Great.

Branca Doria.

The family of Doria possessed great influence in Genoa. Branca is said to have murdered his father-in-law, Michel Zanche, introduced in Canto xxii.

Romagna's darkest spirit.

The friar Alberigo.

NOTES - CANTO XXXIV.

Three faces.

The first is anger, signified by red; the second, envy, signified by being between pale and yellow; the third, melancholy signified by black.

Brutus.

Commentators explain the presence of Brutus and Cassius in the same place of punishment as Judas as the result of the belief that Julius Caesar whom they betrayed was the founder of the Roman Empire; since the Empire is the temporal arm of God's authority, its betrayers would go to the same place as the betrayer of Christ, the founder of the Church.

THE END