

DIVINE COMEDY - PARADISO
DANTE ALIGHIERI

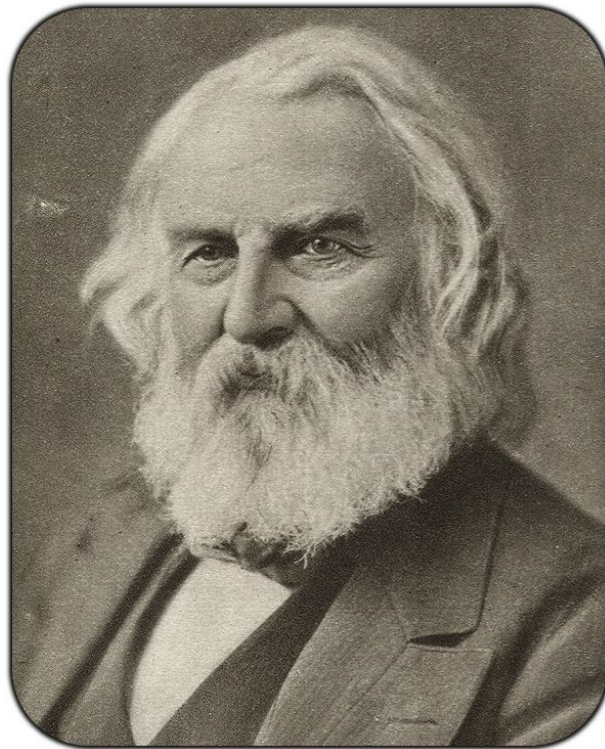


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Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



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Paradiso

Canto 1

THE glory of Him who moveth everything¹
Doth penetrate the universe, and shine
In one part more and in another less.

Within that heaven which most his light receives
Was I, and things beheld which to repeat
Nor knows, nor can, who from above descends;

Because in drawing near to its desire

¹Dante's theory of the universe is the old one, which made the earth a stationary central point, around which all the heavenly bodies revolved.

Speaking of the order of the Ten Heavens, Dante says, *Convito*, II. 4: "The first is that where the Moon is; the second is that where Mercury is; the third is that where Venus is; the fourth is that where the Sun is; the fifth is that where Mars is; the sixth is that where Jupiter is; the seventh is that where Saturn is; the eighth is that of the Stars; the ninth is not visible, save by the motion mentioned above, and is called by many the Crystalline – that is, diaphanous, or wholly transparent. Beyond all these, indeed, the Catholics place the Empyrean Heaven; that is to say, the Heaven of flame, or luminous; and this they suppose to be immovable, from having within itself, in every part, that which its matter demands. And this is the cause why the Primum Mobile has a very swift motion; from the fervent longing which each part of that ninth heaven has to be conjoined with that Divinest Heaven, the Heaven of Rest, which is next to it, it revolves therein with so great desire, that its velocity is almost incomprehensible; and quiet and peaceful is the place of that supreme Deity, who alone doth perfectly see himself."

These Ten Heavens are the heavens of the Paradiso; nine of them revolving about the earth as a central point, and the motionless Empyrean encircling and containing all.

It must be observed, however, that the lower spheres in which the spirits appear, are not assigned them as their places or dwellings. They show themselves in these different places only to indicate to Dante the different degrees of glory which they enjoy, and to show that while on earth they were under the influence of the planets in which they here appear.

The threefold main division of the Paradiso, indicated by a longer prelude, or by a natural pause in the action of the poem, is: –

1. From Canto I. to Canto X.
2. From Canto X. to Canto XXIII.
3. From Canto XXIII. to the end.

Our intellect ingulphs itself so far,
That after it the memory cannot go.

Truly whatever of the holy realm
I had the power to treasure in my mind
Shall now become the subject of my song.

O good Apollo, for this last emprise
Make of me such a vessel of thy power
As giving the beloved laurel asks!

One summit of Parnassus hitherto
Has been enough for me, but now with both
I needs must enter the arena left.

Enter into my bosom, thou, and breathe
As at the time when Marsyas thou didst draw
Out of the scabbard of those limbs of his.

O power divine, lend'st thou thyself to me
So that the shadow of the blessed realm
Stamped in my brain I can make manifest,
Thou'lt see me come unto thy darling tree,
And crown myself thereafter with those leaves
Of which the theme and thou shall make me worthy.

So seldom, Father, do we gather them
For triumph or of Caesar or of Poet,
(The fault and shame of human inclinations,)

That the Peneian foliage should bring forth
Joy to the joyous Delphic deity,
When any one it makes to thirst for it.

A little spark is followed by great flame;
Perchance with better voices after me
Shall prayer be made that Cyrrha may respond! ²

To mortal men by passages diverse
Uprises the world's lamp; but by that one
Which circles four uniteth with three crosses, ³

With better course and with a better star
Conjoined it issues, and the mundane wax ⁴

²A town at the foot of Parnassus, dedicated to Apollo, and here used for Apollo.

³That point of the horizon where the sun rises at the equinox; and where the Equator, the Zodiac, and the equinoctial Colure meet, and form each a cross with the Horizon.

⁴The world is as wax, which the sun softens and stamps with his seal.

Tempers and stamps more after its own fashion.

Almost that passage had made morning there ⁵
And evening here, and there was wholly white
That hemisphere, and black the other part,

When Beatrice towards the left-hand side
I saw turned round, and gazing at the sun;
Never did eagle fasten so upon it!

And even as a second ray is wont
To issue from the first and reascend,
Like to a pilgrim who would fain return,

Thus of her action, through the eyes infused
In my imagination, mine I made,
And sunward fixed mine eyes beyond our wont.

There much is lawful which is here unlawful
Unto our powers, by virtue of the place
Made for the human species as its own.

Not long I bore it, nor so little while
But I beheld it sparkle round about
Like iron that comes molten from the fire;

And suddenly it seemed that day to day
Was added, as if He who has the power
Had with another sun the heaven adorned.

With eyes upon the everlasting wheels
Stood Beatrice all intent, and I, on her
Fixing my vision from above removed,

Such at her aspect inwardly became
As Glaucus, tasting of the herb that made him ⁶
Peer of the other gods beneath the sea.

To represent transhumanise in words
Impossible were; the example, then, suffice
Him for whom Grace the experience reserves.

⁵"This word *almost*," says Buti, "gives us to understand that it was not the exact moment when the sun enters Aries."

⁶Glaucus, changed to a sea-god by eating of the salt-meadow grass.
"As Glaucus," says Buti, "was changed from a fisherman to a sea-god by tasting of the grass that had that power, so the human soul, tasting of things divine, becomes divine."

If I was merely what of me thou newly ⁷
 Createdst, Love who governest the heaven,
 Thou knowest, who didst lift me with thy light!
 When now the wheel, which thou dost make eternal ⁸
 Desiring thee, made me attentive to it
 By harmony thou dost modulate and measure, ⁹
 Then seemed to me so much of heaven enkindled
 By the sun's flame, that neither rain nor river
 E'er made a lake so widely spread abroad.
 The newness of the sound and the great light
 Kindled in me a longing for their cause,
 Never before with such acuteness felt;
 Whence she, who saw me as I saw myself,
 To quiet in me my perturbed mind,
 Opened her mouth, ere I did mine to ask,
 And she began: "Thou makest thyself so dull
 With false imagining, that thou seest not
 What thou wouldst see if thou hadst shaken it
 Thou art not upon earth, as thou believest;
 But lightning, fleeing its appropriate site, ¹⁰
 Ne'er ran as thou, who thitherward returnest."
 If of my former doubt I was divested
 By these brief little words more smiled than spoken,
 I in a new one was the more ensnared;
 And said: "Already did I rest content
 From great amazement; but am now amazed
 In what way I transcend these bodies light."

⁷Whether I were spirit only. One of the questions which exercised the minds of the Fathers and the Schoolmen was, whether the soul were created before the body or after it. Origen, following Plato, supposes all souls to have been created at once, and to await their bodies. Thomas Aquinas combats this opinion, *Sum. Theol.*, I. *Quaest.* CXVIII. 3, and maintains, that "creation and infusion are simultaneous in regard to the soul." This seems also to be Dante's belief.

⁸It is a doctrine of Plato that the heavens are always in motion, seeking the Soul of the World, which has no determinate place; but is everywhere diffused.

⁹The music of the spheres.

¹⁰The region of fire. Brunetto Latini, *Tresor*, Ch. CVIII.: "After the zone of the air is placed the fourth element. This is an orb of fire without any moisture, which extends as far as the moon, and surrounds this atmosphere in which we are. And know that above the fire is first the moon, and the other stars, which are all of the nature of fire."

Whereupon she, after a pitying sigh,
Her eyes directed tow'rds me with that look
A mother casts on a delirious child;
And she began: "All things whate'er they be
Have order among themselves, and this is form,
That makes the universe resemble God.
Here do the higher creatures see the footprints
Of the Eternal Power, which is the end
Whereto is made the law already mentioned.
In the order that I speak of are inclined
All natures, by their destinies diverse,
More or less near unto their origin;
Hence they move onward unto ports diverse
O'er the great sea of being; and each one
With instinct given it which bears it on.
This bears away the fire towards the moon;
This is in mortal hearts the motive power
This binds together and unites the earth.
Nor only the created things that are
Without intelligence this bow shoots forth,
But those that have both intellect and love.
The Providence that regulates all this
Makes with its light the heaven forever quiet,
Wherein that turns which has the greatest haste.¹¹
And thither now, as to a site decreed,
Bears us away the virtue of that cord
Which aims its arrows at a joyous mark.
True is it, that as oftentimes the form
Accords not with the intention of the art,
Because in answering is matter deaf,
So likewise from this course doth deviate
Sometimes the creature, who the power possesses,
Though thus impelled, to swerve some other way,
(In the same wise as one may see the fire
Fall from a cloud,) if the first impetus

¹¹The Empyrean, within which the Primum Mobile revolves "with so great desire that its velocity is almost incomprehensible."

Earthward is wrested by some false delight.
Thou shouldst not wonder more, if well I judge,
At thine ascent, than at a rivulet
From some high mount descending to the lowland.
Marvel it would be in thee, if deprived
Of hindrance, thou wert seated down below,
As if on earth the living fire were quiet.”¹²
Thereat she heavenward turned again her face.

¹²*Convito*, 111. 2: “The human soul, ennobled by the highest power, at is by reason, partakes of the divine nature in the manner of an eternal Intelligence; because the soul is so ennobled by that sovereign power, and denuded of matter; that the divine light shines in it as in an angel; and therefore man has been called by the philosophers a divine animal.”

Canto 2

O YE, who in some pretty little boat,¹³
Eager to listen, have been following
Behind my ship, that singing sails along,
Turn back to look again upon your shores;
Do not put out to sea, lest peradventure,
In losing me, you might yourselves be lost.

The sea I sail has never yet been passed;
Minerva breathes, and pilots me Apollo,¹⁴
And Muses nine point out to me the Bears.

Ye other few who have the neck uplifted
Betimes to th' bread of Angels upon which¹⁵

¹³The Heaven of the Moon, in which are seen the spirits of those who, having taken monastic vows, were forced to violate them.

In Dante's symbolism this heaven represents the first science of the Trivium. *Convito*, II. 14: "I say that the heaven of the Moon resembles Grammar; because it may be compared therewith; for if the Moon be well observed, two things are seen peculiar to it, which are not seen in the other stars. One is the shadow in it, which is nothing but the rarity of its body, in which the rays of the sun cannot terminate and be reflected as in the other parts. The other is the variation of its brightness, which now shines on one side, and now upon the other, according as the sun looks upon it. And Grammar has these two properties; since, on account of its infinity, the rays of reason do not terminate in it in any special part of its words; and it shines now on this side, and now on that, inasmuch as certain words, certain declinations, certain constructions, are in use which once were not, and many once were which will be again."

For the influences of the Moon, see Canto III. Note 30.

The introduction to this canto is at once a warning and an invitation.

¹⁴In the other parts of the poem "one summit of Parnassus" has sufficed; but in this Minerva, Apollo, and the nine Muses come to his aid, as wind, helmsman, and compass.

¹⁵The bread of the Angels is Knowledge or Science, which Dante calls the "ultimate perfection." *Convito*, I. 1: "Everything, impelled by the providence of its own nature, inclines towards its own perfection; whence, inasmuch as knowledge is the ultimate perfection of our soul, wherein consists our ultimate felicity, we are all naturally subject to its desire. ... O blessed those few who sit at the table where the bread of the Angels is

One liveth here and grows not sated by it,
 Well may you launch upon the deep salt-sea
 Your vessel, keeping still my wake before you
 Upon the water that grows smooth again.
 Those glorious ones who unto Colchos passed ¹⁶
 Were not so wonder-struck as you shall be,
 When Jason they beheld a ploughman made!
 The con-created and perpetual thirst ¹⁷
 For the realm deiform did bear us on,
 As swift almost as ye the heavens behold.
 Upward gazed Beatrice, and I at her;
 And in such space perchance as strikes a bolt ¹⁸
 And flies, and from the notch unlocks itself,
 Arrived I saw me where a wondrous thing
 Drew to itself my sight; and therefore she
 From whom no care of mine could be concealed,
 Towards me turning, blithe as beautiful,
 Said unto me: "Fix gratefully thy mind
 On God, who unto the first star has brought us."
 It seemed to me a cloud encompassed us,
 Luminous, dense, consolidate and bright
 As adamant on which the sun is striking.
 Into itself did the eternal pearl
 Receive us, even as water doth receive
 A ray of light, remaining still unbroken.

eaten."

¹⁶The Argonauts, when they saw their leader Jason ploughing with the wild bulls of Aetes, and sowing the land with serpents' teeth.

¹⁷This is generally interpreted as referring to the natural aspiration of the soul for higher things; characterized in *Purgatorio* XXI. 1, as "The natural thirst that ne'er is satisfied, Excepting with the water for whose grace The woman of Samaria besought."

But Venturi says that it means the "being borne onward by the motion of the Primum Mobile, and swept round so as to find himself directly beneath the moon."

¹⁸As if looking back upon his journey through the air, Dante thus rapidly describes it an inverse order, the arrival, the ascent, the departure; the striking of the shaft, the flight, the discharge from the bow-string. Here again we are reminded of the arrow of Pandarus, *Iliad*, IV. 120.

If I was body, (and we here conceive not
How one dimension tolerates another,
Which needs must be if body enter body,)

More the desire should be enkindled in us
That essence to behold, wherein is seen
How God and our own nature were united.

There will be seen what we receive by faith,
Not demonstrated, but self-evident
In guise of the first truth that man believes.

I made reply: "Madonna, as devoutly
As most I can do I give thanks to Him
Who has removed me from the mortal world.

But tell me what the dusky spots may be
Upon this body, which below on earth
Make people tell that fabulous tale of Cain?" ¹⁹

Somewhat she smiled; and then, "If the opinion
Of mortals be erroneous," she said,
"Where'er the key of sense doth not unlock,

Certes, the shafts of wonder should not pierce thee
Now, forasmuch as, following the senses,
Thou seest that the reason has short wings.

But tell me what thou think'st of it thyself."
And I: "What seems to us up here diverse, ²⁰
Is caused, I think, by bodies rare and dense."

And she: "Right truly shalt thou see immersed
In error thy belief, if well thou hearest
The argument that I shall make against it.

Lights many the eighth sphere displays to you ²¹
Which in their quality and quantity
May noted be of aspects different.

If this were caused by rare and dense alone,
One only virtue would there be in all

¹⁹Cain with his bush of thorns.

²⁰The spots in the Moon, which Dante thought were caused by rarity of density of the substance of the planet. *Convito*, II. 14: "The shadow in it, which is nothing but the rarity of its body, in which the rays of the sun cannot terminate and be reflected, as in the other parts."

²¹The Heaven of the Fixed Stars.

Or more or less diffused, or equally.

Virtues diverse must be perforce the fruits
Of formal principles; and these, save one,
Of course would by thy reasoning be destroyed.

Besides, if rarity were of this dimness²²
The cause thou askest, either through and through
This planet thus attenuate were of matter,

Or else, as in a body is apportioned
The fat and lean, so in like manner this
Would in its volume interchange the leaves.

Were it the former, in the sun's eclipse
It would be manifest by the shining through,
Of light, as through aught tenuous interfused.

This is not so; hence we must scan the other,
And if it chance the other I demolish,
Then falsified will thy opinion be.

But if this rarity go not through and through,
There needs must be a limit, beyond which
Its contrary prevents the further passing,

And thence the foreign radiance is reflected,
Even as a colour cometh back from glass,
The which behind itself concealeth lead.²³

Now thou wilt say the sunbeam shows itself
More dimly there than in the other parts,
By being there reflected farther back.

From this reply experiment will free thee
If e'er thou try it, which is wont to be
The fountain to the rivers of your arts.

Three mirrors shalt thou take, and two remove
Alike from thee, the other more remote
Between the former two shall meet thine eyes.

Turned towards these, cause that behind thy back
Be placed a light, illuming the three mirrors

²²Either the diaphanous parts must run through the body of the Moon, or the rarity and density must be in layers one above the other.

²³As in a mirror, which Dante elsewhere – *Inferno* XXIII 25 – calls *impiombato vetro* – leaded glass.

And coming back to thee by all reflected.

Though in its quantity be not so ample
The image most remote, there shalt thou see
How it perforce is equally resplendent.

Now, as beneath the touches of warm rays
Naked the subject of the snow remains ²⁴
Both of its former colour and its cold,

Thee thus remaining in thy intellect,
Will I inform with such a living light,
That it shall tremble in its aspect to thee. ²⁵

Within the heaven of the divine repose ²⁶
Revolves a body, in whose virtue lies
The being of whatever it contains.

The following heaven, that has so many eyes, ²⁷
Divides this being by essences diverse,
Distinguished from it, and by it contained.

The other spheres, by various differences,
All the distinctions which they have within them
Dispose unto their ends and their effects.

Thus do these organs of the world proceed,
As thou perceivest now, from grade to grade
Since from above they take, and act beneath

Observe me well, how through this place I come
Unto the truth thou wishest, that hereafter
Thou mayst alone know how to keep the ford

The power and motion of the holy spheres,
As from the artisan the hammer's craft,
Forth from the blessed motors must proceed.

²⁴The subject of the snow is what lies under it; "the mountain that remains naked," says Buti. Others give a scholastic interpretation to the word, defining it "the cause of accident," the cause of colour and cold.

²⁵Shall tremble like a star. "When a man looks at the stars," says Buti, "he sees their effulgence tremble, and this is because their splendour scintillates as fire does, and moves to and fro like the flame of the fire." The brighter they burn, the more they tremble.

²⁶The Primum Mobile, revolving in the Empyrean, and giving motion to all the heavens beneath it.

²⁷The Heaven of the Fixed Stars. *Greek Epigrams*, III. 62: – "If I were heaven, with all the eyes of heaven would I look down on thee."

The heaven, which lights so manifold make fair,
 From the Intelligence profound, which turns it. ²⁸
 The image takes, and makes of it a seal.

And even as the soul within your dust
 Through members different and accommodated
 To faculties diverse expands itself,

So likewise this Intelligence diffuses
 Its virtue multiplied among the stars.
 Itself revolving on its unity.

Virtue diverse doth a diverse alloyage
 Make with the precious body that it quickens,
 In which, as life in you, it is combined.

From the glad nature whence it is derived,
 The mingled virtue through the body shines,
 Even as gladness through the living pupil.

From this proceeds whate'er from light to light
 Appeareth different, not from dense and rare:
 This is the formal principle that produces, ²⁹

According to its goodness, dark and bright."

²⁸The Intelligences, ruling and guiding the several heavens (receiving power from above, and distributing it downward, taking their impression from God and stamping it like a seal upon the spheres below), according to Dionysius the Areopagite are as follows:– The Seraphim – Primum Mobile, The Cherubim – The Fixed Stars, The Thrones – Saturn, The Dominions – Jupiter, The Virtues – Mars, The Powers – The Sun, The Principalities – Venus, The Archangels – Mercury, The Angels – The Moon.

²⁹The principle which gives being to all created things.

Canto 3

THAT Sun, which erst with love my bosom warmed,³⁰
Of beauteous truth had unto me discovered,
By proving and reproving, the sweet aspect.

And, that I might confess myself convinced
And confident, so far as was befitting,
I lifted more erect my head to speak.

But there appeared a vision, which withdrew me
So close to it, in order to be seen,
That my confession I remembered not.

Such as through polished and transparent glass,
Or waters crystalline and undisturbed,
But not so deep as that their bed be lost,

Come back again the outlines of our faces
So feeble, that a pearl on forehead white
Comes not less speedily unto our eyes;

Such saw I many faces prompt to speak,

³⁰The Heaven of the Moon continued. Of the influence of this planet, Buti, quoting the astrologer Albumasar, says: "The Moon is cold, moist, and phlegmatic, sometimes warm, and gives lightness, aptitude in all things, desire of joy, of beauty, and of praise, beginning of all works, knowledge of the rich and noble, prosperity in life, acquisition of things desired, devotion in faith, superior sciences, multitude of thoughts, necromancy, acuteness of mind in things, geometry, knowledge of lands and waters and of their measure and number, weakness of the sentiments, noble women, marriages, pregnancies, nursings, embassies, falsehoods, accusations; the being lord among lords, servant among servants, and conformity with every man of like nature, oblivion thereof, timid, of simple heart, flattering, honourable towards men, useful to them, not betraying secrets, a multitude of infirmities and the care of healing bodies, cutting hair, liberality of food, chastity. These are the significations (influences) of the Moon upon the things it finds, the blame and honour of which, according to the astrologers, belong to the planet; but the wise man follows the good influences, and leaves the bad; though all are good and necessary to the life of the universe."

So that I ran in error opposite
To that which kindled love 'twixt man and fountain.³¹

As soon as I became aware of them,
Esteeming them as mirrored semblances,
To see of whom they were, mine eyes I turned,

And nothing saw, and once more turned them forward
Direct into the light of my sweet Guide,
Who smiling kindled in her holy eyes.

"Marvel thou not," she said to me, "because
I smile at this thy puerile conceit,
Since on the truth it trusts not yet its foot,

But turns thee, as 'tis wont, on emptiness.
True substances are these which thou beholdest,
Here relegate for breaking of some vow.

Therefore speak with them, listen and believe;
For the true light, which giveth peace to them,
Permits them not to turn from it their feet."

And I unto the shade that seemed most wishful
To speak directed me, and I began,
As one whom too great eagerness bewilders:

"O well-created spirit, who in the rays
Of life eternal dost the sweetness taste
Which being untasted ne'er is comprehended.

Grateful 'twill be to me, if thou content me³²
Both with thy name and with your destiny."
Whereat she promptly and with laughing eyes:

"Our charity doth never shut the doors
Against a just desire, except as one
Who wills that all her court be like herself.

I was a virgin sister in the world;
And if thy mind doth contemplate me well,
The being more fair will not conceal me from thee,

³¹Narcissus mistook his shadow for a substance; Dante, falling into the opposite error, mistakes these substances for shadows.

³²Your destiny; that is, of yourself and the others with you.

But thou shalt recognise I am Piccarda,³³
Who, stationed here among these other blessed,
Myself am blessed in the slowest sphere.

All our affections, that alone inflamed
Are in the pleasure of the Holy Ghost,
Rejoice at being of his order formed;

And this allotment, which appears so low,
Therefore is given us, because our vows
Have been neglected and in some part void."

Whence I to her: "In your miraculous aspects
There shines I know not what of the divine,
Which doth transform you from our first conceptions.

Therefore I was not swift in my remembrance;
But what thou tellest me now aids me so,
That the refiguring is easier to me.

But tell me, ye who in this place are happy,
Are you desirous of a higher place,
To see more or to make yourselves more friends?"

First with those other shades she smiled a little;
Thereafter answered me so full of gladness,
She seemed to burn in the first fire of love:

"Brother, our will is quieted by virtue
Of charity, that makes us wish alone
For what we have, nor gives us thirst for more.

If to be more exalted we aspired,
Discordant would our aspirations be
Unto the will of Him who here secludes us;

Which thou shalt see finds no place in these circles,
If being in charity is needful here,
And if thou lookest well into its nature;

Nay, 'tis essential to this blest existence
To keep itself within the will divine,

³³Piccarda was a sister of Forese and Corso Donati, and of Gemma, Dante's wife. She was a nun of Santa Clara, and was dragged by violence from the cloister by her brother Corso Donati, who married her to Rosselin della Tosa. As she herself says: – "God knows what afterward my life became." It was such that she did not live long. For this crime the "excellent Baron," according to the *Ottimo*, had to do penance in his shirt.

Whereby our very wishes are made one;
So that, as we are station above station
Throughout this realm, to all the realm 'tis pleasing,
As to the King, who makes his will our will.
And his will is our peace; this is the sea
To which is moving onward whatsoever
It doth create, and all that nature makes."
Then it was clear to me how everywhere
In heaven is Paradise, although the grace
Of good supreme there rain not in one measure
But as it comes to pass, if one food sates,
And for another still remains the longing,
We ask for this, and that decline with thanks,
E'en thus did I; with gesture and with word,
To learn from her what was the web wherein
She did not ply the shuttle to the end.
"A perfect life and merit high in-heaven
A lady o'er us," said she, "by whose rule
Down in your world they vest and veil themselves,
That until death they may both watch and sleep
Beside that Spouse who every vow accepts
Which charity conformeth to his pleasure.
To follow her, in girlhood from the world
I fled, and in her habit shut myself,
And pledged me to the pathway of her sect.
Then men accustomed unto evil more
Than unto good, from the sweet cloister tore me;
God knows what afterward my life became.
This other splendour, which to thee reveals
Itself on my right side, and is enkindled
With all the illumination of our sphere,
What of myself I say applies to her;
A nun was she, and likewise from her head
Was ta'en the shadow of the sacred wimple.
But when she too was to the world returned
Against her wishes and against good usage,
Of the heart's veil she never was divested.

Of great Costanza this is the effulgence,³⁴
Who from the second wind of Suabia
Brought forth the third and latest puissance.”
Thus unto me she spake, and then began
“*Ave Maria*” singing, and in singing
Vanished, as through deep water something heavy.
My sight, that followed her as long a time
As it was possible, when it had lost her
Turned round unto the mark of more desire,
And wholly unto Beatrice reverted;
But she such lightnings flashed into mine eyes,
That at the first my sight endured it not;
And this in questioning more backward made me.

³⁴Constance, daughter of Roger of Sicily. She was a nun at Palermo, but was taken from the convent and married to the Emperor Henry V., son of Barbarossa and father of Frederic II. Of these “winds of Suabia,” or Emperors of the house of Suabia, Barbarossa was the first, Henry V. the second, and Frederic II. the third, and, as Dante calls him in the *Convito*, IV. 3, “the last of the Roman Emperors,” meaning the last of the Suabian line.



Figure 1: "But thou shalt recognise I am Piccarda..."

Canto 4

BETWEEN two viands, equally removed³⁵
 And tempting, a free man would die of hunger³⁶
 Ere either he could bring unto his teeth.

So would a lamb between the ravings
 Of two fierce wolves stand fearing both alike;
 And so would stand a dog between two does.

Hence, if I held my peace, myself I blame not,
 Impelled in equal measure by my doubts,
 Since it must be so, nor do I commend.³⁷

I held my peace; but my desire was painted
 Upon my face, and questioning with that
 More fervent far than by articulate speech.

Beatrice did as Daniel had done³⁸
 Relieving Nebuchadnezzar from the wrath
 Which rendered him unjustly merciless,

And said: "Well see I how attracteth thee
 One and the other wish, so that thy care
 Binds itself so that forth it does not breathe.

Thou arguest, if good will be permanent,

³⁵The Heaven of the Moon continued.

³⁶Montaigne says: "If any one should place us between the bottle and the bacon (*entre la bouteille et le jambon*), with an equal appetite for food and drink, there would doubtless be no remedy but to die of thirst and hunger."

³⁷"A similitude," says Venturi, "of great poetic beauty, but of little philosophic soundness."

³⁸When he recalled and interpreted the forgotten dream of Nebuchadnezzar, *Daniel* 11. 10: "The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth: and there is none other that can show it before the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."

The violence of others, for what reason
Doth it decrease the measure of my merit?

Again for doubting furnish thee occasion
Souls seeming to return unto the stars,
According to the sentiment of Plato.³⁹

These are the questions which upon thy wish
Are thrusting equally; and therefore first⁴⁰
Will I treat that which hath the most of gall.

He of the Seraphim most absorbed in God,⁴¹
Moses, and Samuel, and whichever John
Thou mayst select, I say, and even Mary,

Have not in any other heaven their seats,
Than have those spirits that just appeared to thee,
Nor of existence more or fewer years;

But all make beautiful the primal circle,
And have sweet life in different degrees,
By feeling more or less the eternal breath.

They showed themselves here, not because allotted
This sphere has been to them, but to give sign
Of the celestial which is least exalted.

To speak thus is adapted to your mind,
Since only through the sense it apprehendeth
What then it worthy makes of intellect.⁴²

On this account the Scripture condescends
Unto your faculties, and feet and hands
To God attributes, and means something else;

And Holy Church under an aspect human
Gabriel and Michael represent to you,

³⁹Plato, *Timaeus*, Davis's Tr., says: – "And after having thus framed the universe, he allotted to it souls equal in number to the stars, inserting each in each. ... And he declared also, that after living well for the time appointed to him, each one should once more return to the habitation of his associate star, and spend a blessed and suitable existence."

⁴⁰The word "thrust," *pontano*, is here used in its architectural sense, as in *Inferno* XXXII. 3. There it is literal, here figurative.

⁴¹*Che più s' india* – that most in-God's himself. As in Canto IX. 81, *Si io m'intuassi come tu t'immii* – "if I could in-thee myself as thou dost in-me thyself"; and other expressions of a similar kind.

⁴²The dogma of the Peripatetics, that nothing is in Intellect which was not first in Sense.

And him who made Tobias whole again.⁴³

That which Timaeus argues of the soul⁴⁴
Doth not resemble that which here is seen,
Because it seems that as he speaks he thinks.⁴⁵

He says the soul unto its star returns,
Believing it to have been severed thence
Whenever nature gave it as a form⁴⁶

Perhaps his doctrine is of other guise
Than the words sound, and possibly may be
With meaning that is not to be derided.

If he doth mean that to these wheels return
The honour of their influence and the blame,
Perhaps his bow doth hit upon some truth.

This principle ill understood once warped
The whole world nearly, till it went astray
Invoking Jove and Mercury and Mars.⁴⁷

The other doubt which doth disquiet thee⁴⁸
Less venom has, for its malevolence
Could never lead thee elsewhere from me.

That as unjust our justice should appear
In eyes of mortals, is an argument
Of faith, and not of sin heretical.

But still, that your perception may be able
To thoroughly penetrate this verity,
As thou desirest, I will satisfy thee.

⁴³Raphael, "the affable archangel," of whom Milton says, *Par. Lost* V. 220: – "Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deigned to travel with Tobias, and secured his marriage with the seven-times-wedded maid." Dante says cause in the son are called in this line Tobia, because in the *Vulgate* both father and Tobias.

⁴⁴Plato's Dialogue, entitled *Timaeus*, the name of the philosopher of Locri.

⁴⁵Plato means it literally, and the Scriptures figuratively.

⁴⁶When it was infused into the body, or the body became informed with it.

⁴⁷Joachim di Flora, Dante's "Calabrian Abbot Joachim," the mystic of the twelfth century, says in his *Exposition of the Apocalypse*: "The deceived Gentiles believed that the planets to which they gave the names of Jupiter, Saturn, Venus, Mercury, Mars, the Moon, and the Sun, were gods."

⁴⁸Stated in line 20: –

"The violence of others, for what reason
Doth it decrease the measure of my merit?"

If it be violence when he who suffers
 Co-operates not with him who uses force,
 These souls were not on that account excused;

For will is never quenched unless it will,
 But operates as nature doth in fire
 If violence a thousand times distort it.

Hence, if it yieldeth more or less, it seconds
 The force; and these have done so, having power
 Of turning back unto the holy place.

If their will had been perfect, like to that
 Which Lawrence fast upon his gridiron held,
 And Mutius made severe to his own hand,

It would have urged them back along the road
 thence they were dragged, as soon as they were free;
 But such a solid will is all too rare.

And by these words, if thou hast gathered them
 As thou shouldst do, the argument is refuted
 That would have still annoyed thee many times.

But now another passage runs across
 Before thine eyes, and such that by thyself
 Thou couldst not thread it ere thou wouldst be weary.

I have for certain put into thy mind
 That soul beatified could never lie.
 For it is near the primal Truth,

And then thou from Piccarda might'st have heard
 Costanza kept affection for the veil,
 So that she seemeth here to contradict me.

Many times, brother, has it come to pass,
 That, to escape from peril, with reluctance
 That has been done it was not right to do,
 E'en as Alcaemon (who, being by his father⁴⁹
 Thereto entreated, his own mother slew)
 Not to lose pity pitiless became.

At this point I desire thee to remember
 That force with will commingles, and they cause

⁴⁹Alcmaeon, who slew his mother Eriphyle to avenge his father Amphiaraus the sooth-sayer.

That the offences cannot be excused.

Will absolute consenteth not to evil;
But in so far consenteth as it fears,
If it refrain, to fall into more harm

Hence when Piccarda uses this expression,
She meaneth the will absolute, and I
The other, so that both of us speak truth."

Such was the flowing of the holy river
That issued from the fount whence springs all truth;
This put to rest my wishes one and all.

"O love of the first lover, O divine,"⁵⁰
Said I forthwith, "whose speech inundates me
And warms me so, it more and more revives me,

My own affection is not so profound
As to suffice in rendering grace for grace;
Let Him, who sees and can, thereto respond.

Well I perceive that never sated is
Our intellect unless the Truth illumine it,
Beyond which nothing true expands itself.

It rests therein, as wild beast in his lair,
When it attains it; and it can attain it;
If not, then each desire would frustrate be.

Therefore springs up, in fashion of a shoot,
Doubt at the foot of truth; and this is nature,
Which to the top from height to height impels us.

This doth invite me, this assurance give me
With reverence, Lady, to inquire of you
Another true, which is obscure to me.

I wish to know if man can satisfy you
For broken vows with other good deeds, so
That in your balance they will not be light."

Beatrice gazed upon me with her eyes⁵¹

⁵⁰Beatrice, beloved of God; "that blessed Beatrice, who lives in heaven with the angels and on earth with my Soul."

⁵¹It must not be forgotten, that Beatrice is the symbol of Divine Wisdom. Dante says, *Convito*, III. 15: "In her countenance appear things which display some of the pleasures of Paradise;" and notes particularly "the eyes and smile." He then adds: "And here it

Full of the sparks of love, and so divine,
That, overcome my power, I turned my back
And almost lost myself with eyes downcast.

should be known that the eyes of Wisdom are its demonstrations, by which the truth is most clearly seen; and its smile the persuasions, in which is displayed the interior light of Wisdom under a veil; and in these two things is felt the exceeding pleasure of beatitude, which is the chief good in Paradise. This pleasure cannot exist in anything here below, except in beholding these eyes and this smile."

Canto 5

“IF in the heat of love I flame upon thee⁵²
Beyond the measure that on earth is seen,
So that the valour of thine eyes I vanquish,

Marvel thou not thereat; for this proceeds
From perfect sight, which as it apprehends
To the good apprehended moves its feet.

Well I perceive how is already shining
Into thine intellect the eternal light,
That only seen enkindles always love;

And if some other thing your love seduce,
’Tis nothing but a vestige of the same,
Ill understood, which there is shining throughe.

Thou fain wouldst know if with another service
For broken vow can such return be made
As to secure the soul from further claim.”

This Canto thus did Beatrice begin;
And, as a man who breaks not off his speech,
Continued thus her holy argument:

“The greatest gift that in his largess God

⁵²The Heaven of Mercury, where are seen the spirits of those who for the love of fame achieved great deeds. Of its symbolism Dante says, *Convito*, II. 14: “The Heaven of Mercury may be compared to Dialectics, on account of two properties – for Mercury is the smallest star of heaven, since the quantity of its diameter is not more than two thousand and thirty-two miles, according to the estimate of Alfergano who declares it to be one twenty-eighth part of the diameter of the Earth, which is six thousand and fifty-two miles. The other property is, that it is more veiled by the rays of the Sun than any other star. And these two properties are in Dialectics – for Dialectics are less in body than any Science since in them is perfectly compiled and bounded as much doctrine as is found in ancient and modern Art; and it is more veiled than any Science, inasmuch as it proceeds by more sophistic and probable arguments than any other.”

Creating made, and unto his own goodness
Nearest conformed, and that which he doth prize
Most highly, is the freedom of the will,
Wherewith the creatures of intelligence
Both all and only were and are endowed.
Now wilt thou see, if thence thou reasonest,
The high worth of a vow, if it he made
So that when thou consentest God consents:
For, closing between God and man the compact,
A sacrifice is of this treasure made,
Such as I say, and made by its own act.
What can be rendered then as compensation?
Think'st thou to make good use of what thou'st offered,
With gains ill gotten thou wouldst do good deed.
Now art thou certain of the greater point;
But because Holy Church in this dispenses,
Which seems against the truth which I have shown thee,
Behoves thee still to sit awhile at table,
Because the solid food which thou hast taken
Requireth further aid for thy digestion.
Open thy mind to that which I reveal,
And fix it there within; for 'tis not knowledge,
The having heard without retaining it.
In the essence of this sacrifice two things
Convene together; and the one is that
Of which 'tis made, the other is the agreement.
This last for evermore is cancelled not
Unless complied with, and concerning this
With such precision has above been spoken.
Therefore it was enjoined upon the Hebrews
To offer still, though sometimes what was offered
Might be commuted, as thou ought'st to know.
The other, which is known to thee as matter,⁵³
May well indeed be such that one errs not
If it for other matter be exchanged.

⁵³That which is sacrificed, or of which an offering is made.

But let none shift the burden on his shoulder
 At his arbitrament, without the turning
 Both of the white and of the yellow key;⁵⁴

And every permutation deem as foolish,
 If in the substitute the thing relinquished,
 As the four is in six, be not contained.⁵⁵

Therefore whatever thing has so great weight
 In value that it drags down every balance,
 Cannot be satisfied with other spending.

Let mortals never take a vow in jest;
 Be faithful and not blind in doing that,
 As Jephthah was in his first offering,⁵⁶

Whom more beseemed to say, 'I have done wrong,
 Than to do worse by keeping; and as foolish
 Thou the great leader of the Greeks wilt find,⁵⁷

Whence wept Iphigenia her fair face,
 And made for her both wise and simple weep,
 Who heard such kind of worship spoken of.'

Christians, be ye more serious in your movements;
 Be ye not like a feather at each wind,
 And think not every water washes you.

Ye have the Old and the New Testament,
 And the Pastor of the Church who guideth you
 Let this suffice you unto your salvation.

If evil appetite cry aught else to you,
 Be ye as men, and not as silly sheep,⁵⁸
 So that the Jew among you may not mock you.

⁵⁴Without the permission of Holy Church, symbolized by the two keys; the silver key of Knowledge, and the golden key of Authority.

⁵⁵The thing substituted must be greater than the thing relinquished.

⁵⁶*Judges* XI. 30: "And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into my hands then it shall be that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, I will offer it up for a burnt-offering. ... And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances; and she was his only child: besides her he had neither son nor daughter."

⁵⁷Agamemnon.

⁵⁸Dante, *Convito*, I. 11: "These should be called sheep, and not men; for if one sheep should throw itself down a precipice of a thousand feet, all the others would follow, and

Be ye not as the lamb that doth abandon
Its mother's milk, and frolicsome and simple
Combats at its own pleasure with itself."

Thus Beatrice to me even as I write it;
Then all desireful turned herself again
To that part where the world is most alive. ⁵⁹

Her silence and her change of countenance
Silence imposed upon my eager mind,
That had already in advance new questions;

And as an arrow that upon the mark
Strikes ere the bowstring quiet hath become,
So did we speed into the second realm.

My Lady there so joyful I beheld,
As into the brightness of that heaven she entered, ⁶⁰
More luminous thereat the planet grew;

And if the star itself was changed and smiled, ⁶¹
What became I, who by my nature am
Exceeding mutable in every guise!

As, in a fish-pond which is pure and tranquil,
The fishes draw to that which from without
Comes in such fashion that their food they deem it;

So I beheld more than a thousand splendours
Drawing towards us, and in each was heard:
"Lo, this is she who shall increase our love."

And as each one was coming unto us,
Full of beatitude the shade was seen,
By the effulgence clear that issued from it. ⁶²

Think, Reader, if what here is just beginning
No farther should proceed, how thou wouldst have

if one sheep, in passing along the road, leaps from any cause, all the others leap, though seeing no cause for it. And I once saw several leap into a well, on account of one that had leaped in, thinking perhaps it was leaping over a wall; notwithstanding that the shepherd, weeping and wailing, opposed them with arms and breast."

⁵⁹Towards the Sun, where the heaven is brightest.

⁶⁰The Heaven of Mercury.

⁶¹Brunetto Latini, *Tresor*, I., Ch. 3, says, the planet Mercury "is easily moved according to the goodness or malice of the planets to which it is joined." Dante here represents himself as being of a peculiarly mercurial temperament.

⁶²The joy of spirits in Paradise is shown by greater brightness.

An agonizing need of knowing more;
And of thyself thou'lt see how I from these
Was in desire of hearing their conditions,
As they unto mine eyes were manifest.
"O thou well-born, unto whom Grace concedes
To see the thrones of the eternal triumph,
Or ever yet the warfare be abandoned,
With light that through the whole of heaven is spread
Kindled are we, and hence if thou desirest
To know of us, at thine own pleasure sate thee."
Thus by some one among those holy spirits⁶³
Was spoken, and by Beatrice: "Speak, speak
Securely, and believe them even as Gods."
"Well I perceive how thou dost nest thyself
In thine own light, and drawest it from thine eyes,
Because they coruscate when thou dost smile,
But know not who thou art, nor why thou hast,
Spirit august, thy station in the sphere
That veils itself to men in alien rays."⁶⁴
This said I in direction of the light
Which first had spoken to me; whence it became
By far more lucent than it was before.
Even as the sun, that doth conceal himself
By too much light, when heat has worn away
The tempering influence of the vapours dense,
By greater rapture thus concealed itself
In its own radiance the figure saintly,
And thus close, close enfolded answered me
In fashion as the following Canto sings.

⁶³The spirit of Justinian.

⁶⁴Mercury is the planet nearest the Sun, and being thus "veiled with alien rays," is only visible to the naked eye at the time of its greatest elongation, and then but for a few minutes. Dante, *Convito*, II. 14, says, that Mercury "is more veiled by the rays of the Sun than any other star." And yet it will be observed that in his planetary system he places Venus between Mercury and the Sun.

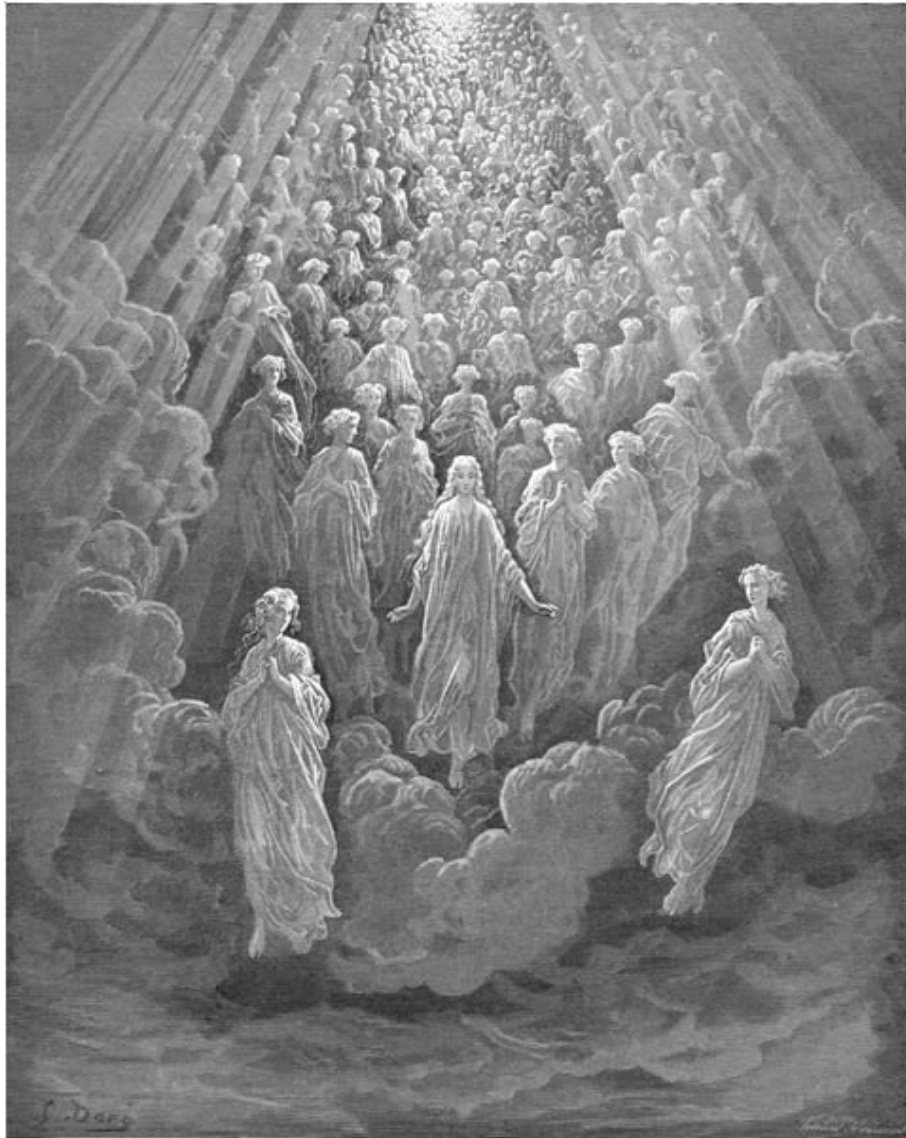


Figure 2: So I beheld more than a thousand splendours...

Canto 6

“AFTER that Constantine the eagle turned ⁶⁵
 Against the course of heaven, which it had followed
 Behind the ancient who Lavinia took,

 Two hundred years and more the bird of God ⁶⁶
 In the extreme of Europe held itself, ⁶⁷
 Near to the mountains whence it issued first;

 And under shadow of the sacred plumes
 It governed there the world from hand to hand,
 And, changing thus, upon mine own alighted.

 Caesar I was, and am Justinian, ⁶⁸
 Who, by the will of primal Love I feel,
 Took from the laws the useless and redundant; ⁶⁹

⁶⁵The Heaven of Mercury continued. In the year 330, Constantine, after his conversion and baptism by Sylvester, removed the seat of empire from Rome to Byzantium, which received from him its more modern name of Constantinople. He called it also New Rome; and, having promised to the Senators and their families that they should soon tread again on Roman soil, he had the streets of Constantinople strewn with earth which he had brought from Rome in ships. The transfer of the empire from west to east was turning the imperial eagle against the course of heaven, which it had followed in coming from Troy to Italy with Aeneas, who married Lavinia, daughter of King Latinus, and was the founder of the Roman Empire.

⁶⁶From 324, when the seat of empire was transferred to Constantinople by Constantine, to 527, when the reign of Justinian began.

⁶⁷The mountains of Asia, between Constantinople and the site of Troy.

⁶⁸Caesar, or Kaiser, the general title of all the Roman Emperors. The character of Justinian is thus sketched by Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, Ch. XLIII: – “The Emperor was easy of access, patient of hearing, courteous and affable in discourse, and a master of the angry passions, which rage with such destructive violence in the breast of a despot. ...”

⁶⁹Of the reform of the Roman Laws, by which they were reduced from two thousand volumes to fifty, Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, Ch. XLIV, says: “The vain titles of the victories of Justinian are crumbled into dust; but the name of the legislator is inscribed on a fair and everlasting monument. Under his reign, and by his care, the civil jurisprudence was digested in the immortal words of the *code*, the *pandect*, and the *institutes*; the public

And ere unto the work I was attent,
 One nature to exist in Christ, not more,⁷⁰
 Believed, and with such faith was I contented.

But blessed Agapetus, he who was⁷¹
 The supreme pastor, to the faith sincere
 Pointed me out the way by words of his.

Him I believed, and what was his assertion
 I now see clearly, even as thou seest
 Each contradiction to be false and true.

As soon as with the Church I moved my feet,
 God in his grace it pleased with this high task
 To inspire me, and I gave me wholly to it,

And to my Belisarius I commended⁷²
 The arms, to which was heaven's right hand so joined
 It was a signal that I should repose.

Now here to the first question terminates
 My answer; but the character thereof
 Constrains me to continue with a sequel,

In order that thou see with how great reason
 Men move against the standard sacrosanct,
 Both who appropriate and who oppose it.

Behold how great a power has made it worthy
 Of reverence, beginning from the hour
 When Pallas died to give it sovereignty.⁷³

reason of the Romans has been silently or studiously transfused into the domestic institutions of Europe, and the laws of Justinian still command the respect or obedience of independent nations. Wise or fortunate is the prince who connects his own reputation with the honour and interest of a perpetual order of men."

⁷⁰The heresy of Eutyches, who maintained that only the Divine nature existed in Christ, not the human; and consequently that the Christ crucified was not the real Christ, but a phantom.

⁷¹Agapetus was Pope, or Bishop of Rome, in the year 515, and was compelled by King Theodotus the Ostrogoth, to go upon an embassy to the Emperor Justinian at Constantinople, where he refused to hold any communication with Anthimus, Bishop of Trebizond, who, against the canon of the Church, had been transferred from his own see to that of Constantinople.

⁷²Belisarius, the famous general, to whom Justinian gave the leadership of his armies in Africa and Italy. In his old age he was suspected of conspiring against the Emperor's life; but the accusation was not proved.

⁷³The son of Evander, sent to assist Aeneas, and slain by Turnus.

Thou knowest it made in Alba its abode ⁷⁴
 Three hundred years and upward, till at last
 The three to three fought for it yet again. ⁷⁵

Thou knowest what it achieved from Sabine wrong ⁷⁶
 Down to Lucretia's sorrow, in seven kings
 O'ercoming round about the neighboring nations;

Thou knowest what it achieved, borne by the Romans
 Illustrious against Brennus, against Pyrrhus, ⁷⁷
 Against the other princes and confederates.

Torquatus thence and Quinctius, who from locks ⁷⁸
 Unkempt was named, Decii and Fabii, ⁷⁹
 Received the fame I willingly embalm;

It struck to earth the pride of the Arabians,
 Who, following Hannibal, had passed across
 The Alpine ridges, Po, from which thou glidest;

Beneath it triumphed while they yet were young
 Pompey and Scipio, and to the hill ⁸⁰
 Beneath which thou wast born it bitter seemed;

⁷⁴In Alba Longa, built by Ascanius, son of Aeneas, on the borders of the Alban Lake. The period of three hundred years is traditional, not historic.

⁷⁵The Horatii and Curatii.

⁷⁶From the rape of the Sabine women, in the days of Romulus, the first of the seven kings of Rome, down to the violence done to Lucretia by Tarquinius Superbus, the last of them.

⁷⁷Brennus was the king of the Gauls, who, entering Rome unopposed, found the city deserted, and the Senators seated in their ivory chairs in the Forum, so silent and motionless that his soldiers took them for the statues of gods. He burned the city and laid siege to the Capitol, whither the people had fled for safety, and which was preserved from surprise by the cackling of the sacred geese in the Temple of Juno. Finally Brennus and his army were routed by Camillus, and tradition says that not one escaped. Pyrrhus was a king of Epirus, who boasted his descent from Achilles, and whom Hannibal called "the greatest of commanders." He was nevertheless driven out of Italy by Curius, his army of eighty thousand being routed by thirty thousand Romans; whereupon he said that, "if he had soldiers like the Romans, or if the Romans had him for a general he would leave no corner of the earth unseen, and no nation unconquered."

⁷⁸Titus Manlius, surnamed Torquatus, from the collar – *torques* – which he took from a fallen foe; and Quinctius, surnamed Cincinnatus, or "the curly haired."

⁷⁹Three of the Decii – father, son, and grandson – sacrificed their lives in battle at different times for their country. The Fabii also rendered signal services to the state, but are chiefly known in history through one of their number, *Quinctius Maximus*, surnamed Cunctator, or the Delayer, from whom we have "the Fabian policy."

⁸⁰The hill of Fiesole, overlooking Florence, where Dante was born. Fiesole was destroyed by the Romans for giving refuge to Catiline and his fellow conspirators.

Then, near unto the time when heaven had willed ⁸¹
 To bring the whole world to its mood serene,
 Did Caesar by the will of Rome assume it.

What it achieved from Var unto the Rhine,
 Isere beheld and Saone, beheld the Seine,
 And every valley whence the Rhone is filled;

What it achieved when it had left Ravenna,
 And leaped the Rubicon, was such a flight
 That neither tongue nor pen could follow it.

Round towards Spain it wheeled its legions;
 Towards Durazzo, and Pharsalia smote ⁸²
 That to the calid Nile was felt the pain.

Antandros and the Simois, whence it started, ⁸³
 It saw again, and there where Hector lies,
 And ill for Ptolemy then roused itself. ⁸⁴

From thence it came like lightning upon Juba; ⁸⁵
 Then wheeled itself again into your West, ⁸⁶
 Where the Pompeian clarion it heard.

From what it wrought with the next standard-bearer ⁸⁷
 Brutus and Cassius howl in Hell together,
 And Modena and Perugia dolent were; ⁸⁸

Still doth the mournful Cleopatra weep
 Because thereof, who, fleeing from before it,
 Took from the adder sudden and black death.

⁸¹The birth of Christ.

⁸²Durazzo in Macedonia, and Pharsalia in Thessaly.

⁸³Antandros, a city, and Simois, a river, near Troy, whence came the Roman eagle with Aeneas into Italy.

⁸⁴It was an evil hour for Ptolemy, when Caesar took from him the kingdom of Egypt, and gave it to Cleopatra.

⁸⁵Juba, king of Numidia, who protected Pompey, Cato, and Scipio after the battle of Pharsalia. Being conquered by Caesar, his realm became a Roman province, of which Sallust the historian was the first governor. Milton, *Sams. Agon.*, 1695: – "But as an eagle his cloudless thunder bolted on their heads."

⁸⁶Towards Spain, where some remnants of Pompey's army still remained under his two soirs. When these were subdued the civil war was at an end.

⁸⁷Octavius Augustus, nephew of Julius Caesar. At the battle of Philippi he defeated Brutus and Cassius, and established the Empire.

⁸⁸On account of the great slaughter made by Augustus in his battles with Mark Antony and his brother Lucius, in the neighbourhood of these cities.

With him it ran even to the Red Sea shore;
 With him it placed the world in so great peace,
 That unto Janus was his temple closed.⁸⁹

But what the standard that has made me speak
 Achieved before, and after should achieve
 Throughout the mortal realm that lies beneath it,

Becometh in appearance mean and dim,
 If in the hand of the third Caesar seen⁹⁰
 With eye unclouded and affection pure,

Because the living Justice that inspires me
 Granted it, in the hand of him I speak of,
 The glory of doing vengeance for its wrath.⁹¹

Now here attend to what I answer thee;
 Later it ran with Titus to do vengeance⁹²
 Upon the vengeance of the ancient sin.

And when the tooth of Lombardy had bitten⁹³
 The Holy Church, then underneath its wings
 Did Charlemagne victorious succor her.

Now hast thou power to judge of such as those
 Whom I accused above, and of their crimes,⁹⁴
 Which are the cause of all your miseries.

To the public standard one the yellow lilies⁹⁵
 Opposes, the other claims it for a party,
 So that 'tis hard to see which sins the most.

Let, let the Ghibellines ply their handicraft

⁸⁹Augustus closed the gates of the temple of Janus as a sign of universal peace, in the year of Christ's birth.

⁹⁰Tiberius Caesar.

⁹¹The crucifixion of Christ, in which the Romans took part in the person of Pontius Pilate.

⁹²The destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, which avenged the crucifixion.

⁹³When the Church was assailed by the Lombards, who were subdued by Charlemagne.

⁹⁴Referring back to line 31: –

“In order that thou see with how great reason
 Men move against the standard sacrosanct,
 Both who appropriate and who oppose it.”

⁹⁵The Golden Lily, or Fleur-de-lis of France. The Guelfs, uniting with the French, opposed the Ghibellines, who had appropriated the imperial standard to their own party purposes.

Beneath some other standard; for this ever
 Ill follows he who it and justice parts.

And let not this new Charles e'er strike it down,⁹⁶
 He and his Guelfs, but let him fear the talons
 That from a nobler lion stripped the fell.

Already oftentimes the sons have wept
 The father's crime; and let him not believe
 That God will change His scutcheon for the lilies.⁹⁷

This little planet doth adorn itself⁹⁸
 With the good spirits that have active been,
 That fame and honour might come after them;

And whensoever the desires mount thither,
 Thus deviating, must perforce the rays
 Of the true love less vividly mount upward.

But in commensuration of our wages
 With our desert is portion of our joy,
 Because we see them neither less nor greater.

Herein doth living Justice sweeten so
 Affection in us, that for evermore
 It cannot warp to any iniquity.

Voices diverse make up sweet melodies
 So in this life of ours the seats diverse
 Render sweet harmony among these spheres;

And in the compass of this present pearl
 Shineth the sheen of Romeo, of whom
 The grand and beauteous work was ill rewarded.

But the Provincals who against him wrought,
 They have not laughed, and therefore ill goes he
 Who makes his hurt of the good deeds of others.

Four daughters, and each one of them a queen,
 Had Raymond Berenger, and this for him
 Did Romeo, a poor man and a pilgrim;

And then malicious words incited him

⁹⁶Charles II. of Apulia, son of Charles of Anjou.

⁹⁷Change the imperial eagle for the lilies of France.

⁹⁸Mercury is the smallest of the planets, with the exception of the Asteroids, being sixteen times smaller than the Earth.

To summon to a reckoning this just man,
Who rendered to him seven and five for ten.
Then he departed poor and stricken in years,
And if the world could know the heart he had,
In begging bit by bit his livelihood,
Though much it laud him, it would laud him more."

Canto 7

*“Osanna sanctus Deus Sabaoth,⁹⁹
Superillustrans claritate tua
Felices ignes horum malahoth!”*

In this wise, to his melody returning,
This substance, upon which a double light¹⁰⁰
Doubles itself, was seen by me to sing,

And to their dance this and the others moved,¹⁰¹
And in the manner of swift-hurrying sparks
Veiled themselves from me with a sudden distance.

Doubting was I, and saying, “Tell her, tell her,”¹⁰²
Within me, “tell her,” saying, “tell my Lady,”
Who slakes my thirst with her sweet effluences;

And yet that reverence which doth lord it over
The whole of me only by B and ICE,¹⁰³
Bowed me again like unto one who drowns.

Short while did Beatrice endure me thus;
And she began, lighting me with a smile
Such as would make one happy in the fire:

“According to infallible advisement,
After what manner a just vengeance justly
Could be avenged has put thee upon thinking,

But I will speedily thy mind unloose;

⁹⁹“Hosanna, holy God of Sabaoth, illuminating with thy brightness the happy fires of these realms.” Dante is still in the planet Mercury, which receives from the sun six times more light and heat than the earth.

¹⁰⁰By Substance is here meant spirit or angel.

¹⁰¹The rapidity of the motion of the flying spirits is beautifully expressed in these lines.

¹⁰²Namely, the doubt in his mind.

¹⁰³Bice, or Beatrice.

And do thou listen, for these words of mine
Of a great doctrine will a present make thee.

By not enduring on the power that wills
Curb for his good, that man who ne'er was born,
Damning himself damned all his progeny;

Whereby the human species down below
Lay sick for many centuries in great error,
Till to descend it pleased the Word of God

To where the nature, which from its own Maker
Estranged itself, he joined to him in person
By the sole act of his eternal love.

Now unto what is said direct thy sight;
This nature when united to its Maker,
Such as created, was sincere and good;¹⁰⁴

But by itself alone was banished forth
From Paradise, because it turned aside
Out of the way of truth and of its life.

Therefore the penalty the cross held out,
If measured by the nature thus assumed,
None ever yet with so great justice stung,

And none was ever of so great injustice,
Considering who the Person was that suffered,
Within whom such a nature was contracted.

From one act therefore issued things diverse;
To God and to the Jews one death was pleasing;
Earth trembled at it and the Heaven was opened.

It should no longer now seem difficult
To thee, when it is said that a just vengeance
By a just court was afterward avenged.

But now do I behold thy mind entangled
From thought to thought within a knot, from which
With great desire it waits to free itself

Thou sayest, 'Well discern I what I hear;
But it is hidden from me why God willed
For our redemption only this one mode.'

¹⁰⁴Sincere in the sense of pure.

Buried remaineth, brother, this decree
 Unto the eyes of every one whose nature
 Is in the flame of love not yet adult.

Verily, inasmuch as at this mark
 One gazes long and little is discerned,
 Wherefore this mode was worthiest will I say.

Goodness Divine, which from itself doth spurn
 All envy, burning in itself so sparkles
 That the eternal beauties it unfolds.

Whate'er from this immediately distils ¹⁰⁵
 Has afterwards no end, for ne'er removed
 Is its impression when it sets its seal.

Whate'er from this immediately rains down
 Is wholly free, because it is not subject
 Unto the influences of novel things.

The more conformed thereto, the more it pleases;
 For the blest ardour that irradiates all things
 In that most like itself is most vivacious.

With all of these things has advantaged been ¹⁰⁶
 The human creature; and if one be wanting,
 From his nobility he needs must fall.

'Tis sin alone which doth disfranchise him,
 And render him unlike the Good Supreme,
 So that he little with its light is blanched,

¹⁰⁵Dante here discriminates between the direct or immediate inspirations of God, and those influences that come indirectly through the stars. In the *Convito*, VII. 3, he says "The goodness of God is received in one manner by disembodied substances, that is, by the Angels (who are without material grossness, and as it were diaphanous on account of the purity of their form), and in another manner by the human soul, which, though in one part it is free from matter, in another is impeded by it; (as a man who is wholly in the water, except his head, of whom it cannot be said he is wholly in the water nor wholly out of it;) and in another manner by the animals, whose soul is all absorbed in matter, but somewhat ennobled; and in another manner by the metals, and in another by the earth; because it is the most material, and therefore the most remote from and the most inappropriate or the first most simple and noble virtue, which is solely intellectual, that is, God."

¹⁰⁶*Convito*, VII. 3: "Between the angelic nature, which is an intellectual thing, and the human soul there is no step, but they are both almost continuous in the order of gradation. ... Thus we are to suppose and firmly to believe, that a man may be so noble, and of such lofty condition, that he shall be almost an angel."

And to his dignity no more returns,
Unless he fill up where transgression empties
With righteous pains for criminal delights.

Your nature when it sinned so utterly
In its own seed, out of these dignities
Even as out of Paradise was driven,
Nor could itself recover, if thou notest
With nicest subtilty, by any way,
Except by passing one of these two fords:

Either that God through clemency alone
Had pardon granted, or that man himself
Had satisfaction for his folly made.

Fix now thine eye deep into the abyss
Of the eternal counsel, to my speech
As far as may be fastened steadfastly!

Man in his limitations had not power
To satisfy, not having power to sink
In his humility obeying then,

Far as he disobeying thought to rise;
And for this reason man has been from power
Of satisfying by himself excluded.

Therefore it God behoved in his own ways
Man to restore unto his perfect life
I say in one, or else in both of them.

But since the action of the doer is
So much more grateful, as it more presents
The goodness of the heart from which it issues,

Goodness Divine, that doth imprint the world,
Has been contented to proceed by each
And all its ways to lift you up again;

Nor 'twixt the first day and the final night
Such high and such magnificent proceeding
By one or by the other was or shall be;

For God more bounteous was himself to give
To make man able to uplift himself,
Than if he only of himself had pardoned;

And all the other modes were insufficient

For justice, were it not the Son of God
Himself had humbled to become incarnate.
Now, to fill fully each desire of thine,
Return I to elucidate one place,
In order that thou there mayst see as I do.
Thou sayst: 'I see the air, I see the fire,
The water, and the earth, and all their mixtures
Come to corruption, and short while endure;
And these things notwithstanding were created;
Therefore if that which I have said were true,
They should have been secure against corruption.'
The Angels, brother, and the land sincere ¹⁰⁷
In which thou art, created may be called
Just as they are in their entire existence;
But all the elements which thou hast named,
And all those things which out of them are made,
By a created virtue are informed.
Created was the matter which they have;
Created was the informing influence
Within these stars that round about them go.
The soul of every brute and of the plants
By its potential temperament attracts
The ray and motion of the holy lights;
But your own life immediately inspires
Supreme Beneficence, and enamours it
So with herself, it evermore desires her.
And thou from this mayst argue furthermore
Your resurrection, if thou think again
How human flesh was fashioned at that time
When the first parents both of them were made."

¹⁰⁷The Angels, and the Heavens, and the human soul, being immediately inspired by God, are immutable and indestructible. But the elements and the souls of brutes and plants are controlled by the stars, and are mutable and perishable.

Canto 8

THE world used in its peril to believe ¹⁰⁸
 That the fair Cypria delirious love ¹⁰⁹
 Rayed out, in the third epicycle turning; ¹¹⁰

 Wherefore not only unto her paid honour
 Of sacrifices and of votive cry
 The ancient nations in the ancient error,

 But both Dione honoured they and Cupid,
 That as her mother, this one as her son,
 And said that he had sat in Dido's lap; ¹¹¹

 And they from her, whence I beginning take, ¹¹²
 Took the denomination of the star

¹⁰⁸The ascent to the Third Heaven, or that of Venus, where are seen the spirits of Lovers. Of this Heaven Dante says, *Convito*, II. 14: – “The Heaven of Venus may be compared to Rhetoric for two properties; the first is the brightness of its aspect, which is most sweet to look upon, more than any other star; the second is its appearance, now in the morning, now in the evening. And these two properties are in Rhetoric, the sweetest of all the sciences, for that is principally its intention. It appears in the morning when the rhetorician speaks before the face of his audience; it appears in the evening, that is, retrograde, when the letter in part remote speaks for the rhetorician.” For the influences of Venus, see Canto IX. Note 33.

¹⁰⁹In the days of “the false and lying gods,” when the world was in peril of damnation for misbelief. Cypria, or Cyprigna, was a title of Venus, from the place of her birth, Cyprus.

¹¹⁰The third Epicycle, or that of Venus, the third planet, was its supposed motion from west to east, while the whole heavens were swept onward from east to west by the motion of the Primum Mobile. In the *Convito*, II. 4, Dante says: “Upon the back of this circle (the Equatorial) in the Heaven of Venus, of which we are now treating, is a little sphere, which revolves of itself in the heaven, and whose orbit the astrologers call Epicycle.” And again, II. 7: “All this heaven moves and revolves with its Epicycle from east to west, once every natural day; but whether this movement be by any Intelligence, or by the sweep of the Primum Mobile, God knoweth; in me it would be presumptuous to judge.”

¹¹¹Cupid in the semblance of Ascanius.

¹¹²Venus, with whose name this canto begins.

That woos the sun, now following, now in front. ¹¹³

I was not ware of our ascending to it;
But of our being in it gave full faith
My Lady whom I saw more beauteous grow.

And as within a flame a spark is seen,
And as within a voice a voice discerned,
When one is steadfast, and one comes and goes,

Within that light beheld I other lamps
Move in a circle, speeding more and less,
Methinks in measure of their inward vision. ¹¹⁴

From a cold cloud descended never winds,
Or visible or not, so rapidly ¹¹⁵
They would not laggard and impeded seem

To any one who had those lights divine
Seen come towards us, leaving the gyration
Begun at first in the high Seraphim. ¹¹⁶

And behind those that most in front appeared
Sounded "*Osanna!*" so that never since
To hear again was I without desire.

Then unto us more nearly one approached,
And it alone began: "We all are ready
Unto thy pleasure, that thou joy in us.

We turn around with the celestial Princes, ¹¹⁷
One gyre and one gyration and one thirst,
To whom thou in the world of old didst say,

'Ye who, intelligent, the third heaven are moving;' ¹¹⁸

¹¹³Brunetto Latini, *Tresor*, I. Ch. 3, says that Venus "always follows the sun, and is beautiful and gentle, and is called the Goddess of Love." Dante says, it plays with or caresses the sun, "now behind and now in front." When it follows, it is Hesperus, the Evening Star; when it precedes, it is Phosphor, the Morning Star.

¹¹⁴The rapidity of the motion of the spirits, as well as their brightness, is in proportion to their vision of God. Compare Canto XIV. 40: – "Its brightness is proportioned to the ardour, the ardour to the vision; and the vision equals what grace it has above its worth."

¹¹⁵Made visible by mist and cloudrack.

¹¹⁶Their motion originates in the Primum Mobile, whose Regents, or Intelligences, are the Seraphim.

¹¹⁷The Regents, or Intelligences, of Venus are the Principalities.

¹¹⁸This is the first line of the first canzone in the *Convito*, and in his commentary upon it, II. 5, Dante says: "In the first place, then, be it known, that the movers of this heaven

And are so full of love, to pleasure thee
A little quiet will not be less sweet."

After these eyes of mine themselves had offered ¹¹⁹
Unto my Lady reverently, and she
Content and certain of herself had made them,

Back to the light they turned, which so great promise
Made of itself, and "Say, who art thou?" was
My voice, imprinted with a great affection.

O how and how much I beheld it grow ¹²⁰
With the new joy that superadded was
Unto its joys, as soon as I had spoken!

Thus changed, it said to me: "The world possessed me ¹²¹
Short time below; and, if it had been more,
Much evil will be which would not have been.

My gladness keepeth me concealed from thee,
Which rayeth round about me, and doth hide me
Like as a creature swathed in its own silk.

Much didst thou love me, and thou hadst good reason;
For had I been below, I should have shown thee
Somewhat beyond the foliage of my love.

That left-hand margin, which doth bathe itself ¹²²

are substances separate from matter, that is, Intelligences, which the common people call Angels." And farther on, II. 6: "It is reasonable to believe that the motors of the Heaven of the Moon are of the order of the Angels; and those of Mercury are the Archangels; and those of Venus are the Thrones." It will be observed, however, that in line 34 he alludes to the Principalities as the Regents of Venus; and in Canto IX. 6i, speaks of the Thrones as reflecting the justice of God: – "Above us there are mirrors, Thrones you call them, From which shines out on us God Judicant;" thus referring the Thrones to a higher heaven than that of Venus.

¹¹⁹After he had by looks asked and gained assent from Beatrice.

¹²⁰The spirit shows its increase of joy by increase of brightness.

¹²¹The spirit who speaks is Charles Martel of Hungary, the friend and benefactor of Dante. He was the eldest son of Charles the Lamé (Charles II. of Naples and of Mary of Hungary). He was born in 1272, and in 1291 married the "beautiful Clemence," daughter of Rudolph of Hapsburg, Emperor of Germany. He died in 1295, at the age of twenty-three, to which he alludes in the words, "The world possessed me Short time below."

¹²²That part of Provence, embracing Avignon, Aix, Arles, and Marseilles, of which his father was lord, and which he would have inherited had he lived. This is "the great dowry of Provence," which the daughter of Raymond Berenger brought to Charles of Anjou in marriage, and which is mentioned in *Purgatorio* XX. 61, as taking the sense of shame out of the blood of the Capets.

In Rhone, when it is mingled with the Sorgue,
 Me for its lord awaited in due time,
 And that horn of Ausonia, which is town'd ¹²³
 With Bari, with Gaeta and Catona,
 Whence Tronto and Verde in the sea disgorge.
 Already flashed upon my brow the crown
 Of that dominion which the Danube waters ¹²⁴
 After the German borders it abandons;
 And beautiful Trinacria, that is murky ¹²⁵
 'Twixt Pachino and Peloro, (on the gulf ¹²⁶
 Which greatest scath from Eurus doth receive,)
 Not through Typhceus, but through nascent sulphur, ¹²⁷
 Would have awaited her own monarchs still,
 Through me from Charles descended and from Rudolph, ¹²⁸
 If evil lordship, that exasperates ever
 The subject populations, had not moved
 Palermo to the outcry of 'Death! death!' ¹²⁹
 And if my brother could but this foresee, ¹³⁰
 The greedy poverty of Catalonia
 Straight would he flee, that it might not molest him;

¹²³The kingdom of Apulia in Ausonia, or Lower Italy, embracing Bari on the Adriatic, Gaeta in the Terra di Lavoro on the Mediterranean, and Crotona in Calabria; a region bounded on the north by the Tronto emptying into the Adriatic, and the Verde (or Gangliano) emptying into the Mediterranean.

¹²⁴The kingdom of Hungary.

¹²⁵Sicily, called of old Trinacria, from its three promontories Peloro, Pachino, and Lilibeo.

¹²⁶Pachino is the south-eastern promontory of Sicily, and Peloro the northeastern. Between them lies the Gulf of Catania, receiving with open arms the east wind. Horace speaks of Eurus as riding the Sicilian seas."

¹²⁷Both Pindar and Ovid speak of the giant Typhoeus, as struck by Jove's thunderbolt, and lying buried under Aetna. Virgil says it is Enceladus, a brother of Typhoeus. Charles Martel here gives the philosophical, not the poetical, cause of the murky atmosphere of the bay.

¹²⁸Through him from his grandfather Charles of Anjou, and his father-in-law the Emperor Rudolph.

¹²⁹The Sicilian Vespers and revolt of Palermo, in 1282.

¹³⁰Robert, Duke of Calabria, third son of Charles II. and younger brother of Charles Martel. He was King of Sicily from 1309 to 1343. He brought with him from Catalonia a band of needy adventurers, whom he put into high offices of state, "and like so many leeches," says Biagioli, "they filled themselves with the blood of that poor people, not dropping off so long as there remained a drop to suck."

For verily 'tis needful to provide,
Through him or other, so that on his bark ¹³¹
Already freighted no more freight be placed.

His nature, which from liberal covetous ¹³²
Descended, such a soldiery would need
As should not care for hoarding in a chest." ¹³³

"Because I do believe the lofty joy
Thy speech infuses into me, my Lord,
Where every good thing doth begin and end ¹³⁴

Thou seest as I see it, the more grateful
Is it to me; and this too hold I dear,
That gazing upon God thou dost discern it.

Glad hast thou made me; so make clear to me,
Since speaking thou hast stirred me up to doubt,
How from sweet seed can bitter issue forth."

This I to him; and he to me: "If I
Can show to thee a truth, to what thou askest
Thy face thou'lt hold as thou dost hold thy back.

The Good which all the realm thou art ascending ¹³⁵
Turns and contents, maketh its providence
To be a power within these bodies vast

And not alone the natures are foreseen
Within the mind that in itself is perfect,
But they together with their preservation.

¹³¹Sicily already heavily laden with taxes of all kinds.

¹³²Born of generous ancestors, he was himself avaricious.

¹³³Namely, ministers and officials who were not greedy of gain.

¹³⁴In God, where all things are reflected as in a mirror. *Rev.* XXI. 6: "I am Alpha and Omega; the beginning and the end." Buti interprets thus: "Because I believe that thou seest my joy in God, even as I see it, I am pleased; and this also is dear to me, that thou seest in God, that I believe it."

¹³⁵*Convito*, III. 14: "The first agent, I that is, God, sends his influence into some things by means of direct rays, and into others by means of reflected splendour. Hence into the Intelligences the divine light rays out immediately; in others it is reflected from these Intelligences first illuminated. But as mention is here made of light and splendour, in order to a perfect understanding, I will show the difference of these words, according to Avicenna. I say, the custom of the philosophers is to call the Heaven *light*, in reference to its existence in its fountain head; to call it *ray*, in reference to its passing from the fountainhead to the first body, in which it is arrested; to call it *splendour*, in reference to its reflection upon some other part illuminated."

For whatsoever thing this bow shoots forth
Falls foreordained unto an end foreseen,
Even as a shaft directed to its mark.

If that were not, the heaven which thou dost walk
Would in such manner its effects produce,
That they no longer would be arts, but ruins.

This cannot be, if the Intelligences
That keep these stars in motion are not maimed,
And maimed the First that has not made them perfect.

Wilt thou this truth have clearer made to thee?"
And I: "Not so; for 'tis impossible
That nature tire, I see, in what is needful."

Whence he again: "Now say, would it be worse
For men on earth were they not citizens?"¹³⁶
"Yes," I replied; "and here I ask no reason."

"And can they be so, if below they live not
Diversely unto offices diverse?
No, if your master writeth well for you."¹³⁷

So came he with deductions to this point;
Then he concluded: "Therefore it behoves
The roots of your effects to be diverse.

Hence one is Solon born, another Xerxes,¹³⁸
Another Melchisedec, and another he
Who, flying through the air, his son did lose.

Revolving Nature, which a signet is
To mortal wax, doth practise well her art,
But not one inn distinguish from another;¹³⁹

Thence happens it that Esau differeth¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶If men lived isolated from each other, and not in communities.

¹³⁷Aristotle, whom Dante in the *Convito*, III. 5, calls "that glorious philosopher to whom Nature most laid open her secrets;" and in *Inferno* IV. 131, "the master of those who know."

¹³⁸The Jurist, the Warrior, the Priest and the Artisan are here typified in Solon, Xerxes, Melchisedec, and Daedalus.

¹³⁹Nature, like death, makes no distinction between palace and hovel. Her gentlemen are born alike in each, and so her churls.

¹⁴⁰Esau and Jacob, though twin brothers, differed in character, Esau being warlike and Jacob peaceable. *Genesis* XXV. 27: "And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents."

In seed from Jacob; and Quirinus comes ¹⁴¹
From sire so vile that he is given to Mars.

A generated nature its own way
Would always make like its progenitors,
If Providence divine were not triumphant.

Now that which was behind thee is before thee;
But that thou know that I with thee am pleased,
With a corollary will I mantle thee.

Evermore nature, if it fortune find
Discordant to it, like each other seed
Out of its region, maketh evil thrift; ¹⁴²

And if the world below would fix its mind
On the foundation which is laid by nature,
Pursuing that, 'twould have the people good.

But you unto religion wrench aside ¹⁴³
Him who was born to gird him with the sword,
And make a king of him who is for sermons;
Therefore your footsteps wander from the road."

¹⁴¹Romulus, called Quirinus, because he always carried a spear (*quiris*), was of such obscure birth, that the Romans, to dignify their origin, pretended he was born of Mars.

¹⁴²*Convito*, III. 3: "Animate plants have a very manifest affection for certain places, according to their character; and therefore we see certain plants rooting themselves by the water-side, and others upon mountainous places, and others on the slopes and at the foot of the mountains, which, if they are transplanted, either wholly perish, or live a kind of melancholy life, as things separated from what is friendly to them."

¹⁴³Another allusion to King Robert of Sicily. Villani, XII. 9, says of him: "This king Robert was the wisest king that had been known among Christians for five hundred years, both in natural ability and in knowledge, being a very great master in theology, and a consummate philosopher." And the *Postillatore of the Monte Cassino Codex*: "This King Robert delighted in preaching and studying, and would have made a better monk than king."



Figure 3: "Much didst thou love me, and thou hadst good reason..."

Canto 9

BEAUTIFUL Clemence, after that thy Charles ¹⁴⁴
Had me enlightened, he narrated to me
The treacheries his seed should undergo; ¹⁴⁵

But said: "Be still and let the years roll round;"
So I can only say, that lamentation
Legitimate shall follow on your wrongs.

And of that holy light the life already
Had to the Sun which fills it turned again,
As to that good which for each thing sufficeth.

Ah, souls deceived, and creatures impious,
Who from such good do turn away your hearts,
Directing upon vanity your foreheads!

And now, behold, another of those splendours
Approached me, and its will to pleasure me
It signified by brightening outwardly.

The eyes of Beatrice, that fastened were
Upon me, as before, of dear assent
To my desire assurance gave to me.

"Ah, bring swift compensation to my wish,
Thou blessed spirit," I said, "and give me proof

¹⁴⁴The Heaven of Venus is continued in this canto. The beautiful Clemence here addressed is the daughter of the Emperor Rudolph, and wife of Charles Martel. Some commentators say it is his daughter, but for what reason is not apparent, as the form of address would rather indicate the wife than the daughter; and moreover, at the date of the poem, 1300, the daughter was only six or seven years old. So great was the affection of this "beautiful Clemence" for her husband, that she is said to have fallen dead on hearing the news of his death.

¹⁴⁵Charles the Lame, dying in 1309, gave the kingdom of Naples and Sicily to his third son, Robert, Duke of Calabria, thus dispossessing Carlo Roberto (or Caroberto) son of Charles Martel and Clemence, and rightful heir to the throne.

That what I think in thee I can reflect!"
 Whereat the light, that still was new to me,¹⁴⁶
 Out of its depths, whence it before was singing,
 As one delighted to do good, continued:
 "Within that region of the land depraved¹⁴⁷
 Of Italy, that lies between Rialto
 And fountain heads of Brenta and of Piava,
 Rises a hill, and mounts not very high,¹⁴⁸
 Wherefrom descended formerly a torch
 That made upon that region great assault.
 Out of one root were born both I and it;
 Cunizza was I called, and here I shine¹⁴⁹
 Because the splendour of this star o'ercame me.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶Unknown to me by name.

¹⁴⁷The region here described is the Marca Trivigiana, lying between Venice (here indicated by one of its principal wards, the Rialto) and the Alps, dividing Italy from Germany.

¹⁴⁸The hill on which stands the Castello di Romano, the birthplace of the tyrant Ezzelino, or Azzolino, whom, for his cruelties, Dante punished in the river of boiling blood, *Inferno* XII. Before his birth his mother is said to have dreamed of a lighted torch, as Hecuba did before the birth of Paris, Althaea before the birth of Meleager, and the mother of St. Dominic before the birth of "The amorous paramour of Christian Faith, the athlete consecrate kind to his own and cruel to his foes."

¹⁴⁹Cunizza was the sister of Azzolino di Romano. Her story is told by Rolandino, *Liber Chronicorum*, in Muratori, *Rer. Ital. Script.*, VIII. 173. He says that she was first married to Richard of St. Boniface; and soon after had an intrigue with Sordello, as already mentioned, *Purgatorio* VI. Note 74. Afterwards she wandered about the world with a soldier of Treviso, named Bonius, "taking much solace," says the old chronicler, "and spending much money," – *multa habendo solatia, et maximas faciendo expensas*. After the death of Bonius, she was married to a nobleman of Braganzo; and finally and for a third time to a gentleman of Verona.

The *Ottimo* alone among the commentators takes up the defence of Cunizza, and says: "This lady lived lovingly in dress, song, and sport; but consented not to any impropriety or unlawful act; and she passed her life in enjoyment, as Solomon says in *Ecclesiastes*," – alluding probably to the first verse of the second chapter, "I said in my heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure; and, behold, this is also vanity."

¹⁵⁰Of the influences of the planet Venus, quoting Albumasar, as before, Buti says: "Venus is cold and moist, and of phlegmatic temperament, and signifies beauty, liberality, patience, sweetness, dignity of manners, love of dress and ornaments of gold and silver, humility towards friends, pride and adjunction, delectation and delight in singing and use of ornaments, joy and gladness, dancing, song with pipe and lute, bridals, ornaments and precious ointments, cunning in the composition of songs, skill in the game of chess, indolence, drunkenness, lust, adultery, gesticulations, and lasciviousness of courtesans, abundance of perjuries, of lies and all kinds of wantonness, love of children, delight in men, strength of body, weakness of mind, abundance of food and corporal delights, ob-

But gladly to myself the cause I pardon ¹⁵¹
 Of my allotment, and it does not grieve me,
 Which would perhaps seem strong unto your vulgar.

Of this so luculent and precious jewel, ¹⁵²
 Which of our heaven is nearest unto me,
 Great fame remained; and ere it die away

This hundredth year shall yet quintupled be.
 See if man ought to make him excellent,
 So that another life the first may leave!

And thus thinks not the present multitude
 Shut in by Adige and Tagliamento, ¹⁵³
 Nor yet for being scourged is penitent.

But soon 'twill be that Padua in the marsh ¹⁵⁴
 Will change the water that Vicenza bathes,
 Because the folk are stubborn against duty;

And where the Sile and Cagnano join ¹⁵⁵
 One lordeth it, and goes with lofty head, ¹⁵⁶
 For catching whom e'en now the net is making.

servance of faith and justice, traffic in odoriferous merchandise; and as was said of the Moon, all are not found in one man, but a part in one, and a part in an other, according to Divine Providence; and the wise man adheres to the good, and overcomes the others."

¹⁵¹Since God has pardoned me, I am no longer troubled for my past errors, on account of which I attain no higher glory in Paradise. She had tasted of the waters of Lethe, and all the ills and errors of the past were forgotten.

¹⁵²The spirit of Folco, or Folchetto, of Marseilles, as mentioned later in this canto; the famous Troubadour whose renown was not to perish for five centuries, but is small enough now, save in the literary histories of Millot and the Benedictines of St. Maur.

¹⁵³The Marca Trivigiana is again alluded to, lying between the Adige, that empties into the Adriatic south of Venice, and the Tagliamento to the north-east, towards Trieste. This region embraces the cities of Padua and Vicenza in the south, Treviso in the centre, and Feltro in the north.

¹⁵⁴The rout of the Paduans near Vicenza, in those endless quarrels that run through Italian history like the roll of a drum. Three times the Paduan Guelphs were defeated by the Ghibellines – in 1311, in 1314, and in 1318 – when Can Grande della Scala was chief of the Ghibelline league. The river stained with blood is the Bacchiglione, on which Vicenza stands.

¹⁵⁵In Treviso, where the Sile and Cagnano unite.

¹⁵⁶Riccardo da Camino, who was assassinated while playing at chess. He was a son of the "good Gherardo," and brother of the beautiful Gaja, mentioned *Purgatorio* XVI. 40. He succeeded his father as lord of Treviso; but carried on his love adventures so openly and with so high a hand, that he was finally assassinated by an outraged husband. The story of his assassination is told in the *Hist. Cartusiorum* in Muratori, XII. 784.

Feltro moreover of her impious pastor
 Shall weep the crime, which shall so monstrous be ¹⁵⁷
 That for the like none ever entered Malta. ¹⁵⁸

Ample exceedingly would be the vat
 That of the Ferrarese could hold the blood,
 And weary who should weigh it ounce by ounce,
 Of which this courteous priest shall make a gift ¹⁵⁹
 To show himself a partisan; and such gifts
 Will to the living of the land conform. ¹⁶⁰

Above us there are mirrors, Thrones you call them, ¹⁶¹
 From which shines out on us God Judicant,
 So that this utterance seems good to us."

Here it was silent, and it had the semblance
 Of being turned elsewhither, by the wheel
 On which it entered as it was before.

The other joy, already known to me,
 Became a thing transplendent in my sight,
 As a fine ruby smitten by the sun. ¹⁶²

Through joy effulgence is acquired above, ¹⁶³

¹⁵⁷A certain bishop of the town of Feltro in the Marca Trivigiana, whose name is doubtful; but who was both lord spiritual and temporal of the town, broke faith with certain gentlemen of Ferrara, guilty of political crimes, who sought refuge and protection in his diocese. They were delivered up, and executed in Ferrara. Afterward the Bishop himself came to a violent end, being beaten to death with bags of sand.

¹⁵⁸Malta was a prison on the shores of Lake Bolsena, where priests were incarcerated for their crimes. There Pope Boniface VIII. imprisoned the Abbot of Monte Cassino for letting the fugitive Celestine V. escape from his convent.

¹⁵⁹This "courteous priest" was a Guelph, and showed his zeal for his party in the persecution of the Ghibellines.

¹⁶⁰The treachery and cruelty of this man will be in conformity to the customs of the country.

¹⁶¹Above in the Crystalline Heaven, or Primum Mobile, is the Order of Angels called Thrones. These are mirrors reflecting the justice and judgments of God.

¹⁶²The *Balascio* (in French *rubi balais*) is supposed to take its name from the place in the East where it was found. The mystic virtues of this stone are thus enumerated by Mr. King, *Antique Gems*, p. 419 : "The *Balais Ruby* represses vain and lascivious thoughts appeases quarrels between friends, and gives health of body. Its powder taken in water cures diseases of the eyes, and pains in the liver. If you touch with this gem the four corners of a house, orchard, or vineyard, they will be safe from lightning, storms, and blight."

¹⁶³Joy is shown in heaven by greater light, as here on earth by smiles, and as in the infernal regions the grief of souls in torment is by greater darkness.

As here a smile; but down below, the shade
Outwardly darkens, as the mind is sad.

“God seeth all things, and in Him, blest spirit,¹⁶⁴
Thy sight is,” said I, “so that never will
Of his can possibly from thee be hidden;

Thy voice, then, that for ever makes the heavens
Glad, with the singing of those holy fires
Which of their six wings make themselves a cowl,¹⁶⁵

Wherefore does it not satisfy my longings?
Indeed, I would not wait thy questioning
If I in thee were as thou art in me.”

“The greatest of the valleys where the water¹⁶⁶
Expands itself,” forthwith its words began,
“That sea excepted which the earth engarlands,

Between discordant shores against the sun¹⁶⁷
Extends so far, that it meridian makes
Where it was wont before to make the horizon.

I was a dweller on that valley’s shore
’Twixt Ebro and Magra that with journey short¹⁶⁸
Doth from the Tuscan part the Genoese.

With the same sunset and same sunrise nearly
Sit Buggia and the city whence I was,¹⁶⁹
That with its blood once made the harbour hot.¹⁷⁰

Folco that people called me unto whom¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁴In Him thy sight is; in the original, *tuo veder s’inluia* – thy sight in-Himself.

¹⁶⁵The Seraphim, clothed with six wings, as seen in the vision of the Prophet Isaiah VI. 2: “Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.”

¹⁶⁶The Mediterranean, the greatest of seas, except the ocean, surrounding the earth.

¹⁶⁷Extending eastward between Europe and Africa. Dante gives the length of the Mediterranean as ninety degrees. Modern geographers make it less than fifty.

¹⁶⁸Marseilles, about equidistant from the Ebro, in Spain, and the Magra, which divides the Genoese and Tuscan territories. Being a small river, it has but a short journey to make.

¹⁶⁹Buggia is a city in Africa, on nearly the same parallel of longitude as Marseilles.

¹⁷⁰The allusion here is to the siege of Marseilles by a portion of Caesar’s army under Tribonius, and the fleet under Brutus.

¹⁷¹Folco, or Folchetto, of Marseilles (*Folquet de Marseilles*) was a noted Troubadour, who flourished at the end of the twelfth century. He was the son of a rich merchant of Marseilles, and after his father’s death, giving up business for pleasure and poetry, became a frequenter of courts and favourite of lords and princes. Among his patrons are men-

My name was known; and now with me this heaven
Imprints itself, as I did once with it;

For more the daughter of Belus never burned,¹⁷²
Offending both Sichaeus and Creusa,
Than I, so long as it became my locks,

Nor yet that Rodophean, who deluded¹⁷³
was by Demophoon, nor yet Alcides,¹⁷⁴
When Iole he in his heart had locked.

Yet here is no repenting, but we smile,
Not at the fault, which comes not back to mind,
But at the power which ordered and foresaw.

Here we behold the art that doth adorn
With such affection, and the good discover
Whereby the world above turns that below.

But that thou wholly satisfied mayst bear
Thy wishes hence which in this sphere are born,
Still farther to proceed behoveth me.

Thou fain wouldst know who is within this light
That here beside me thus is scintillating,
Even as a sunbeam in the limpid water.

Then know thou, that within there is at rest¹⁷⁵
Rahab, and being to our order joined,
With her in its supremest grade 'tis sealed.

Into this heaven, where ends the shadowy cone
Cast by your world, before all other souls
First of Christ's triumph was she taken up.¹⁷⁶

Full meet it was to leave her in some heaven,

tioned King Richard of England, King Alfonso of Aragon, Count Raymond of Toulouse, and the Sire Barral of Marseilles.

¹⁷²Dido, queen of Carthage. The *Ottimo* says "He seems to mean, that Folco loved indifferently married women, virgins, and widows, gentle and simple."

¹⁷³Phyllis of Thrace, called Rodopeia from Mount Rodope near which she lived, was deserted by her Athenian lover Demophoon.

¹⁷⁴Hercules was so subdued by love for Iole, that he sat among her maidens spinning with a distaff.

¹⁷⁵Rahab, who concealed the spies of Joshua among the flax-stalks on the roof of her house. *Joshua*, II. 6.

¹⁷⁶The first soul redeemed when Christ descended into Limbo. "The first shall be last, and the last first."

Even as a palm of the high victory
 Which he acquired with one palm and the other,¹⁷⁷
 Because she favoured the first glorious deed
 Of Joshua upon the Holy Land,
 That little stirs the memory of the Pope.
 Thy city, which an offshoot is of him¹⁷⁸
 Who first upon his Maker turned his back,
 And whose ambition is so sorely wept,
 Brings forth and scatters the accursed flower¹⁷⁹
 Which both the sheep and lambs hath led astray
 Since it has turned the shepherd to a wolf
 For this the Evangel and the mighty Doctors¹⁸⁰
 Are derelict, and only the Decretals
 So studied that it shows upon their margins.
 On this are Pope and Cardinals intent;
 Their meditations reach not Nazareth,
 There where his pinions Gabriel unfolded¹⁸¹
 But Vatican and the other parts elect
 Of Rome, which have a cemetery been
 Unto the soldiery that followed Peter
 Shall soon be free from this adultery."

¹⁷⁷The Crucifixion. If any one is disposed to criticise the play upon words in this beautiful passage, let him remember the *Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram edificabo ecclesiam meam.*

¹⁷⁸The heathen Gods were looked upon by the Christians as demons. Hence Florence was the city of Satan to Dante in his dark hours, when he thought of Mars; but in his better moments, when he remembered John the Baptist, it was "the fairest and most renowned daughter of Rome."

¹⁷⁹The Lily on the golden florin of Florence.

¹⁸⁰To gain the golden florin the study of the Gospels and the Fathers was abandoned, and the Decretals, or books of Ecclesiastical Law, so diligently conned, that their margins were worn and soiled with thumb-marks. The first five books of the Decretals were compiled by Gregory IX., and the sixth by Boniface VII.

¹⁸¹A prophecy of the death of Boniface VIII. in 1303, and the removal of the Holy See to Avignon in 1305.

Canto 10

LOOKING into his Son with all the Love ¹⁸²
 Which each of them eternally breathes forth
 The Primal and unutterable Power

Whate'er before the mind or eye revolves
 With so much order made, there can be none
 Who this beholds without enjoying Him.

Lift up then, Reader, to the lofty wheels
 With me thy vision straight unto that part

¹⁸²The Heaven of the Sun, "a good planet and imperial," says Brunetto Latini. Dante makes it the symbol of Arithmetic. *Convito*, II. 14: "The Heaven of the Sun may be compared to Arithmetic on account of two properties; the first is, that with its light all the other stars are informed; the second is, that the eye cannot behold it. And these two properties are in Arithmetic, for with its light all the sciences are illuminated, since their subjects are all considered under some number, and in the consideration thereof we always proceed with numbers; as in natural science the subject is the movable body, which movable body has in it ratio of continuity, and this has in it ratio of infinite number. And the chief consideration of natural science is to consider the principles of natural things, which are three, namely, matter, species, and form; in which this number is visible, not only in all together, but, if we consider well, in each one separately. Therefore Pythagoras, according to Aristotle in the first book of his *Physics*, gives the odd and even as the principles of natural things, considering all things to be number. The other property of the Sun is also seen in number, to which Arithmetic belongs, for the eye of the intellect cannot behold it, for number considered in itself is infinite; and this we cannot comprehend."

In this Heaven of the Sun are seen the spirits of theologians and Fathers of the Church; and its influences, according to Albumasar, cited by Buti, are as follows: "The Sun signifies the vital soul, light and splendour, reason and intellect, science and the measure of life; it signifies kings, princes and leaders, nobles and magnates and congregations of men, strength and victory, voluptuousness, beauty and grandeur, subtleness of mind, pride and praise, good desire of kingdom and of subjects, and great love of gold, and affluence of speech, and delight in neatness and beauty. It signifies faith and the worship of God, judges and wise men, fathers and brothers and mediators; it joins itself to men and mingles among them, it gives what is asked for, and is strong in vengeance, that is to say, it punishes rebels and malefactors."

Where the one motion on the other strikes,¹⁸³
 And there begin to contemplate with joy
 That Master's art, who in himself so loves it
 That never doth his eye depart therefrom.
 Behold how from that point goes branching off
 The oblique circle, which conveys the planets,¹⁸⁴
 To satisfy the world that calls upon them
 And if their pathway were not thus inflected,
 Much virtue in the heavens would be in vain,
 And almost every power below here dead.
 If from the straight line distant more or less
 Were the departure, much would wanting be
 Above and underneath of mundane order.
 Remain now, Reader, still upon thy bench,
 In thought pursuing that which is foretasted,
 If thou wouldst jocund be instead of weary.
 I've set before thee; henceforth feed thyself,
 For to itself diverteth all my care
 That theme whereof I have been made the scribe.
 The greatest of the ministers of nature,¹⁸⁵
 Who with the power of heaven the world imprints
 And measures with his light the time for us,
 With that part which above is called to mind¹⁸⁶
 Conjoined, along the spirals was revolving,¹⁸⁷
 Where each time earlier he presents himself
 And I was with him; but of the ascending
 I was not conscious, saving as a man
 Of a first thought is conscious ere it come;
 And Beatrice, she who is seen to pass

¹⁸³Where the Zodiac crosses the Equator, and the motion of the planets, which is parallel to the former, comes into apparent collision with that of the fixed stars, which is parallel to the latter.

¹⁸⁴The Zodiac, which cuts the Equator obliquely.

¹⁸⁵The Sun.

¹⁸⁶The Sun in Aries, as indicated in line 9; that being the sign in which the Sun is at the vernal equinox.

¹⁸⁷Such is the apparent motion of the Sun round the earth, as he rises earlier and earlier in Spring.

From good to better, and so suddenly
 That not by time her action is expressed,
 How lucent in herself must she have been!
 And what was in the sun, wherein I entered,
 Apparent not by colour but by light,
 I, though I call on genius, art, and practice,
 Cannot so tell that it could be imagined;
 Believe one can, and let him long to see it.
 And if our fantasies too lowly are
 For altitude so great, it is no marvel,
 Since o'er the sun was never eye could go. ¹⁸⁸
 Such in this place was the fourth family
 Of the high Father, who forever sates it,
 Showing how he breathes forth and how begets ¹⁸⁹
 And Beatrice began: "Give thanks, give thanks
 Unto the Sun of Angels, who to this
 Sensible one has raised thee by his grace!"
 Never was heart of mortal so disposed
 To worship, nor to give itself to God
 With all its gratitude was it so ready,
 As at those words did I myself become;
 And all my love was so absorbed in Him,
 That in oblivion Beatrice was eclipsed.
 Nor this displeased her; but she smiled at it
 So that the splendour of her laughing eyes
 My single mind on many things divided.
 Lights many saw I, vivid and triumphant,
 Make us a centre and themselves a circle,
 More sweet in voice than luminous in aspect.
 Thus girt about the daughter of Latona ¹⁹⁰
 We sometimes see, when pregnant is the air,

¹⁸⁸No eye has ever seen any light greater than that of the Sun, nor can we conceive of any greater.

¹⁸⁹How the Son is begotten of the Father, and how from these two is breathed forth the Holy Ghost. The Heaven of the Sun being the Fourth Heaven, the spirits seen in it are called the fourth family of the Father; and to these theologians is revealed the mystery of the Trinity.

¹⁹⁰The moon with a halo about her.

So that it holds the thread which makes her zone.

Within the court of Heaven, whence I return,
Are many jewels found, so fair and precious
They cannot be transported from the realm;

And of them was the singing of those lights.
Who takes not wings that he may fly up thither,
The tidings thence may from the dumb await!

As soon as singing thus those burning suns
Had round about us whirled themselves three times,
Like unto stars neighbouring the steadfast poles,
Ladies they seemed, not from the dance released,
But who stop short, in silence listening
Till they have gathered the new melody.

And within one I heard beginning: "When ¹⁹¹
The radiance of grace, by which is kindled
True love, and which thereafter grows by loving,

Within thee multiplied is so resplendent
That it conducts thee upward by that stair,
Where without reascending none descends, ¹⁹²

Who should deny the wine out of his vial
Unto thy thirst, in liberty were not
Except as water which descends not seaward. ¹⁹³

Fain wouldst thou know with what plants is enflowered
This garland that encircles with delight
The Lady fair who makes thee strong for heaven.

Of the lambs was I of the holy flock
Which Dominic conducteth by a road
Where well one fattens if he strayeth not.

He who is nearest to me on the right
My brother and master was; and he Albertus ¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹The spirit of Thomas Aquinas.

¹⁹²The stairway of Jacob's dream, with its angels ascending and descending.

¹⁹³Whoever should refuse to gratify thy desire for knowledge, would no more follow his natural inclination than water which did not flow downward.

¹⁹⁴Albertus Magnus, at whose twenty-one ponderous folios one gazes with awe and amazement, was born of a noble Swabian family at the beginning of the thirteenth century. In his youth he studied at Paris and at Padua; became a Dominican monk, and, retiring to a convent in Cologne, taught in the schools of that city. He became Provincial

Is of Cologne, I Thomas of Aquinum. ¹⁹⁵

If thou of all the others wouldst be certain,
Follow behind my speaking with thy sight
Upward along the blessed garland turning.

That next effulgence issues from the smile
Of Gratian, who assisted both the courts ¹⁹⁶
In such wise that it pleased in Paradise.

The other which near by adorns our choir
That Peter was who, e'en as the poor widow, ¹⁹⁷
Offered his treasure unto Holy Church.

The fifth light, that among us is the fairest, ¹⁹⁸
Breathes forth from such a love, that all the world
Below is greedy to learn tidings of it. ¹⁹⁹

Within it is the lofty mind, where knowledge
So deep was put, that, if the true be true,
To see so much there never rose a second.

Thou seest next the lustre of that taper, ²⁰⁰

of his Order in Germany; and was afterward made Grand-Master of the Palace at Rome, and then Bishop of Ratisbon. Resigning his bishopric in 1262, he returned to his convent in Cologne, where he died in 1280, leaving behind him great fame for his learning and his labour.

¹⁹⁵Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor of the Schools. Milman, *Hist. Latin Christ.*, VIII. 265, gives the following sketch of him: "Of all the schoolmen Thomas Aquinas has left the greatest name. He was a son of the Count of Aquino, a rich fief in the kingdom of Naples. His mother, Theodora, was of the line of the old Norman kings; his brothers, Reginald and Landolph, held high rank in the Imperial armies. His family was connected by marriage with the Hohenstaufens; they had Swabian blood in their veins, and so the great schoolman was of the race of Frederick II. Monasticism seized on Thomas in his early youth; he became an inmate of Monte Casino; at sixteen years of age he caught the more fiery and vigorous enthusiasm of the Dominicans. ..."

¹⁹⁶Gratian was a Franciscan friar, and teacher in the school of the convent of St. Felix in Bologna. He wrote the *Decretum Gratiani* or "Concord of the Discordant Canons," in which he brought into agreement the laws of the courts secular and ecclesiastical.

¹⁹⁷Peter Lombard, the "Master of Sentences," so called from his *Libri Sententiarum*. In the dedication of this work to the Church he says that he wishes "to contribute, like the poor widow, his mite to the treasury of the Lord." He was born at the beginning of the twelfth century, when the Novarese territory, his birthplace, was a part of Lombardy, and hence his name. He studied at the University of Paris, under Abelard; was afterwards made Professor of Theology in the University, and then Bishop of Paris. He died in 1164.

¹⁹⁸Solomon, whose Song of Songs breathes such impassioned love.

¹⁹⁹To know if he were saved or not, a grave question having been raised upon that point by theologians.

²⁰⁰Dionysius the Areopagite, who was converted by St. Paul.

Which in the flesh below looked most within
The angelic nature and its ministry.

Within that other little light is smiling
The advocate of the Christian centuries,²⁰¹
Out of whose rhetoric Augustine was furnished.

Now if thou trainest thy mind's eye along
From light to light pursuant of my praise,
With thirst already of the eighth thou waitest.

By seeing every good therein exults
The sainted soul, which the fallacious world²⁰²
Makes manifest to him who listeneth well;

The body whence 'twas hunted forth is lying
Down in Cieldauro, and from martyrdom²⁰³
And banishment it came unto this peace.

See farther onward flame the burning breath
Of Isidore, of Beda, and of Richard²⁰⁴

²⁰¹Paul Orosius. He was a Spanish presbyter, born at Tarragona near the close of the fourth century. In his youth he visited St. Augustine in Africa, who in one of his books describes him thus: "There came to me a young monk, in the catholic peace our brother, in age our son, in honour our fellow-presbyter, Orosius, alert in intellect, ready of speech, eager in study, desiring to be a useful vessel in the house of the Lord for the refutation of false and pernicious doctrines, which have slain the souls of the Spaniards much more unhappily than the sword of the barbarians their bodies." On leaving St. Augustine, he went to Palestine to complete his studies under St. Jerome at Bethlehem, and while there arraigned Palagius for heresy before the Bishop of Jerusalem. The work by which he is chiefly known is his "*Seven Books of Histories*" – a world-chronicle from the creation to his own time.

Dante calls Orosius "the advocate of the Christian centuries," because this work was written to refute the misbelievers who asserted that Christianity had done more harm to the world than good.

²⁰²Severinus Boethius, the Roman Senator and philosopher in the days of Theodoric the Goth, born in 475, and put to death in 524.

²⁰³Boethius was buried in the church of San Pietro di Cieldauro in Pavia.

²⁰⁴St. Isidore, a learned prelate of Spain, was born in Cartagena, date unknown. In 600 he became Bishop of Seville, and died 636. He was indefatigable in converting the Visigoths from Arianism, wrote many theological and scientific works, and finished the Mosarabic missal and breviary, begun by his brother and predecessor, St. Leander.

"The Venerable Bede," or Beda, an Anglo-Saxon monk, was born at Wearmouth in 672, and in 735 died and was buried in the monastery of Yarrow, where he had been educated and had passed his life. His bones were afterward removed to the Cathedral of Durham, and placed in the same coffin with those of St. Cuthbert. He was the author of more than forty volumes; among which his *Ecclesiastical History of England* is the most known and valued, and, like the *Histories* of Orosius, had the honour of being translated

Who was in contemplation more than man.
 This, whence to me returneth thy regard,
 The light is of a spirit unto whom
 In his grave meditations death seemed slow.
 It is the light eternal of Sigier,²⁰⁵
 Who, reading lectures in the Street of Straw,²⁰⁶
 Did syllogize invidious verities.”
 Then, as a horologe that calleth us
 What time the Bride of God is rising up
 With matins to her Spouse that he may love her,
 Wherein one part the other draws and urges,
 Ting! ting! resounding with so sweet a note,
 That swells with love the spirit well disposed,
 Thus I beheld the glorious wheel move round,
 And render voice to voice, in modulation
 And sweetness that can not be comprehended,
 Excepting there where joy is made eternal.

by King Alfred from the Latin into Anglo-Saxon.

“Richard of St. Victor was a monk in the monastery of that name near Paris, and wrote a book on the Trinity,” says the *Ottimo* “and many other beautiful and sublime works”; praise which seems justified by Dante’s words, if not suggested by them.

²⁰⁵“This is Master Sigier,” says the *Ottimo*, “who wrote and lectured on Logic in Paris.” Very little more is known of him than this, and that he was supposed to hold some odious, if not heretical opinions. Even his name has perished out of literary history, and survives only in the verse of Dante and the notes of his commentators.

²⁰⁶The Rue du Foin, or Street of Straw, originally called Rue de l’Ecole, is famous among the old streets of Paris, as having been the cradle of the University. It was in early times a hay and straw market, and hence derives its name. Others derive the name from the fact, that the students covered the benches of their lecture-rooms with straw, or used it instead of benches; which they would not have done if a straw-market had not been near at hand.

Canto 11

O THOU insensate care of mortal men,²⁰⁷
How inconclusive are the syllogisms
That make thee beat thy wings in downward flight!

One after laws and one to aphorisms
Was going, and one following the priesthood,
And one to reign by force or sophistry,

And one in theft, and one in state affairs,
One in the pleasures of the flesh involved
Wearied himself, one gave himself to ease;

When I, from all these things emancipate,
With Beatrice above there in the Heavens
With such exceeding glory was received!

When each one had returned unto that point
Within the circle where it was before,
It stood as in a candlestick a candle;

And from within the effulgence which at first²⁰⁸
Had spoken unto me, I heard begin
Smiling while it more luminous became:

“Even as I am kindled in its ray,²⁰⁹
So, looking into the Eternal Light,
The occasion of thy thoughts I apprehend.

Thou doubttest, and wouldst have me to resift
In language so extended and so open
My speech, that to thy sense it may be plain,

²⁰⁷The Heaven of the Sun continued. The praise of St. Francis by Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican.

²⁰⁸Thomas Aquinas.

²⁰⁹The spirits see the thoughts of men in God.

Where just before I said, 'where well one fattens,'²¹⁰
 And where I said, 'there never rose a second';²¹¹
 And here 'tis needful we distinguish well.

The Providence, which governeth the world
 With counsel, wherein all created vision
 Is vanquished ere it reach unto the bottom,
 (So that towards her own Beloved might go
 The bride of Him who, uttering a loud cry,²¹²
 Espoused her with his consecrated blood,
 Self-confident and unto Him more faithful,
 Two Princes did ordain in her behoof,²¹³
 Which on this side and that might be her guide.

The one was all seraphical in ardour;²¹⁴
 The other by his wisdom upon earth
 A splendour was of light cherubical.

One will I speak of, for of both is spoken²¹⁵
 In praising one, whichever may be taken,
 Because unto one end their labours were.

Between Tupino and the stream that falls²¹⁶
 Down from the hill elect of blessed Ubald,

²¹⁰Canto X. 94: "The holy flock: Which Dominic conducteth by a road: Where well one fattens if he strayeth not."

²¹¹Canto X. 112: "Where knowledge: So deep was put, that, if the true be true,: To see so much there never rose a second."

²¹²The Church. *Luke XXIII. 46*: "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."

²¹³St. Francis and St. Dominic.

²¹⁴The Seraphs love most, the Cherubs know most. Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. Quaest. CVIII. 5, says, in substance, that the Seraphim are so called from burning; according to the three properties of fire, namely, continual motion upward, excess of heat, and of light. And again, in the same article, that Cherubim, being interpreted, is plenitude of knowledge, which in them is fourfold; namely, perfect vision of God, full reception of divine light, contemplation of beauty in the order of things, and copious effusion of the divine cognition upon others.

²¹⁵Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican, here celebrates the life and deeds of St. Francis, leaving the praise of his own Saint to Bonaventura, a Franciscan, to show that in heaven there are no rivalries nor jealousies between the two orders, as there were on earth.

²¹⁶The town of Ascesi, or Assisi, as it is now called, where St. Francis was born, is situated between the rivers Tupino and Chiasi, on the slope of Monte Subaso, where St. Ubald had his hermitage. From this mountain the summer heats are reflected, and the cold winds of winter blow through the Porta Sole of Perugia. The towns of Nocera and Gualdo are neighbouring towns, that suffered under the oppression of the Perugians.

A fertile slope of lofty mountain hangs,
 From which Perugia feels the cold and heat
 Through Porta Sole, and behind it weep
 Gualdo and Nocera their grievous yoke.

From out that slope, there where it breaketh most
 Its steepness, rose upon the world a sun ²¹⁷
 As this one does sometimes from out the Ganges; ²¹⁸

Therefore let him who speaketh of that place,
 Say not Ascesi, for he would say little, ²¹⁹
 But Orient, if he properly would speak.

He was not yet far distant from his rising
 Before he had begun to make the earth
 Some comfort from his mighty virtue feel.

For he in youth his father's wrath incurred

²¹⁷Revelation VII. 2: "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God." These words Bonaventura applies to St. Francis, the beautiful enthusiast and Pater Seraphicus of the Church, to follow out whose wonderful life through the details of history and legend would be too long for these notes. A few hints must suffice. St. Francis was the son of Peter Bernadone, a wool-merchant of Assisi, and was born in 1182. He was in the war between Assisi and Perugia, was taken prisoner, and passed a year in confinement. On his return home a severe illness fell upon him, which gave him more serious thoughts. In the church of St. Damiano he heard a voice say three times, "Francis, repair my house, which thou seest falling." In order to do this, he sold his father's horse and some cloth at Foligno, and took the money to the priest of St. Damiano, who to his credit refused to receive it.

He washed the feet of lepers in the hospital, and kissed their sores. He begged from door to door in Assisi for the repairs of the church of St. Damiano, and carried stones for the masons. He did the same for the church of St. Peter; he did the same for the church of Our Lady of Angels at Portiuncula, in the neighbourhood of Assisi, where he remained two years.

In 1215 his convent was removed to Alvernia, among the solitudes of the Apennines. In 1219 he went to Egypt to convert the Sultan, and preached to him in his camp near Damietta, but without the desired effect. He returned to the duties of his convent with unabated zeal; and was sometimes seen by his followers lifted from the ground by the fervour of his prayers; and here he received in a vision of the Crucifixion the stigmata in his hands and feet and side.

Two years afterwards St. Francis died, exclaiming, "Welcome, Sister Death;" and multitudes came to kiss his sacred wounds. His body was buried in the church of St. George at Assisi, but four years afterwards removed to a church outside the walls.

²¹⁸Namely, in winter, when the sun is far south; or, as Biagioli prefers, glowing with unwonted splendour.

²¹⁹It will be noticed that there is a play of words on the name Ascesi (I ascended), which Padre Venturi irreverently calls a *conchetto di tre quattrini*.

For certain Dame, to whom, as unto death, ²²⁰
 The gate of pleasure no one doth unlock;
 And was before his spiritual court ²²¹
Et coram patre unto her united;
 Then day by day more fervently he loved her.
 She, reft of her first husband, scorned, obscure,
 One thousand and one hundred years and more, ²²²
 Waited without a suitor till he came.
 Naught it availed to hear, that with Amyclas
 Found her unmoved at sounding of his voice
 He who struck terror into all the world;
 Naught it availed being constant and undaunted,
 So that, when Mary still remained below,
 She mounted up with Christ upon the cross?
 But that too darkly I may not proceed,
 Francis and Poverty for these two lovers
 Take thou henceforward in my speech diffuse.
 Their concord and their joyous semblances,
 The love, the wonder, and the sweet regard,
 They made to be the cause of holy thoughts;
 So much so that the venerable Bernard ²²³
 First bared his feet, and after so great peace
 Ran, and, in running, thought himself too slow.
 O wealth unknown! O veritable good!
 Giles bares his feet, and bares his feet Sylvester ²²⁴
 Behind the bridegroom, so doth please the bride!
 Then goes his way that father and that master,
 He and his Lady and that family
 Which now was girding on the humble cord;
 Nor cowardice of heart weighed down his brow

²²⁰His vow of poverty, in opposition to the wishes of his father.

²²¹In the presence of his father and of the Bishop of the diocese.

²²²After the death of Christ, she waited eleven hundred years and more till St. Francis came.

²²³Bernard of Quintavalle, the first follower of St. Francis.

²²⁴Giles, or Egidius, the second follower of St. Francis, died at Perugia, in 1272. He was the author of a book called *Verba Aurea* – Golden Words.

At being son of Peter Bernardone,²²⁵
 Nor for appearing marvellously scorned;
 But regally his hard determination
 To Innocent he opened, and from him
 Received the primal seal upon his Order.²²⁶
 After the people mendicant increased
 Behind this man, whose admirable life
 Better in glory of the heavens were sung,²²⁷
 Incoronated with a second crown
 Was through Honorius by the Eternal Spirit²²⁸
 The holy purpose of this Archimandrite.²²⁹
 And when he had, through thirst of martyrdom,
 In the proud presence of the Sultan preached²³⁰
 Christ and the others who came after him,
 And, finding for conversion too unripe
 The folk, and not to tarry there in vain,
 Returned to fruit of the Italic grass,
 On the rude rock 'twixt Tiber and the Arno²³¹

²²⁵Peter Bernadone, the father of St. Francis, was a wool-merchant. Of this humble origin the saint was not ashamed.

²²⁶The permission to establish his religious Order, granted by Pope Innocent III., in 1214.

²²⁷Better here in heaven by the Angels, than on earth by Franciscan friars in their churches, as the custom was. Or perhaps, as Buti interprets it, better above in the glory of Paradise, "where is the College of all the Saints," than here in the Sun.

²²⁸The permission to found the Order of Minor Friars, or Franciscans, granted by Pope Innocent III., in 1214, was confirmed by Pope Honorius III., in 1223.

²²⁹The title of Archimandrite, or Patriarch, was given in the Greek Church to one who had supervision over many convents.

²³⁰Namely, before the Sultan of Egypt in his camp near Damietta.

²³¹On Mount Alvernia, St. Francis, absorbed in prayer, received in his hands and feet and breast the stigmata of Christ, that is, the wounds of the nails and the spear of the crucifixion, the final seal of the Order.

Forsyth, *Italy*, p. 122: "This singular convent, which stands on the cliffs of a lofty Apennine, was built by St. Francis himself, and is celebrated for the miracle which the motto records. Here reigns all the terrible of nature, a rocky mountain, a ruin of the elements, broken, sawn, and piled in sublime confusion, precipices crowned with old, gloomy, visionary woods, black chasms in the rock where curiosity shudders to look down, haunted caverns, sanctified by miraculous crosses, long excavated stairs that restore you to daylight. ... On entering the Chapel of the Stigmata, we caught the religion of the place; we knelt round the rail, and gazed with a kind of local devotion at the holy spot where St. Francis received the five wounds of Christ. The whole hill is legendary ground. Here the Seraphic Father was saluted by two crows which still haunt the convent; there the Devil hurled him down a precipice, yet was not permitted to bruise a bone of him."

From Christ did he receive the final seal,
Which during two whole years his members bore.

When He, who chose him unto so much good,
Was pleased to draw him up to the reward
That he had merited by being lowly,

Unto his friars, as to the rightful heirs,
His most dear Lady did he recommend,
And bade that they should love her faithfully;

And from her bosom the illustrious soul
Wished to depart, returning to its realm,
And for its body wished no other bier.²³²

Think now what man was he, who was a fit²³³
Companion over the high seas to keep
The bark of Peter to its proper bearings.

And this man was our Patriarch; hence whoever
Doth follow him as he commands can see
That he is laden with good merchandise.

But for new pasturage his flock has grown
So greedy, that it is impossible
They be not scattered over fields diverse;

And in proportion as his sheep remote
And vagabond go farther off from him,
More void of milk return they to the fold.

Verily some there are that fear a hurt,
And keep close to the shepherd; but so few,
That little cloth doth furnish forth their hoods.

Now if my utterance be not indistinct,
If thine own hearing hath attentive been,
If thou recall to mind what I have said,

In part contented shall thy wishes be;

²³²When St. Francis was dying, he desired to be buried among the malefactors at the place of execution, called the *Colle d'Inferno*, or Hill of Hull. A church was afterwards built on this spot; its name was changed to *Colle di Paradiso*, and the body of the saint transferred thither in 1230. The popular tradition is, that it is standing upright under the principal altar of the chapel devoted to the saint.

²³³If St. Francis were as here described, what must his companion, St. Dominic, have been, who was Patriarch, or founder of the Order to which Thomas Aquinas belonged. To the degeneracy of this Order the remainder of the canto is devoted.

For thou shalt see the plant that's chipped away,²³⁴
And the rebuke that lieth in the words,²³⁵
'Where well one fattens, if he strayeth not.' "

²³⁴The Order of the Dominicans diminished in numbers, by its members going in search of prelaties and other ecclesiastical offices, till it is like a tree hacked and hewn.

²³⁵Buti interprets this passage differently. He says: "*Vedrai 'l corregger*; that is, thou, Dante, shalt see St. Dominic, whom he calls *corregger*, because he wore about his waist the *correggia*, or leathern thong, and made his friars wear it, as St. Francis made his wear the cord; *che argomenta*, that is, who proves by true arguments in his constitutions, that his friars ought to study sacred theology, studying which their souls will grow fat with a good fatness; that is, with the grace of God, and the knowledge of things divine, if they do not go astray after the other sciences, which are vanity, and make the soul vain and proud."

Canto 12

SOON as the blessed flame had taken up ²³⁶
 The final word to give it utterance,
 Began the holy millstone to revolve, ²³⁷
 And in its gyre had not turned wholly round,
 Before another in a ring enclosed it,
 And motion joined to motion, song to song;
 Song that as greatly doth transcend our Muses,
 Our Sirens, in those dulcet clarions,
 As primal splendour that which is reflected.
 And as are spanned athwart a tender cloud
 Two rainbows parallel and like in colour, ²³⁸
 When Juno to her handmaid gives command, ²³⁹
 (The one without born of the one within,
 Like to the speaking of that vagrant one ²⁴⁰
 Whom love consumed as doth the sun the vapours,)
 And make the people here, through covenant ²⁴¹
 God set with Noah, presageful of the world
 That shall no more be covered with a flood,
 In such wise of those sempiternal roses

²³⁶The Heaven of the Sun continued. The praise of St. Dominic by St Bonaventura, a Franciscan.

²³⁷By this figure Dante indicates that the circle of spirits was revolving horizontally, and not vertically. In the *Convito*, III. 5, he makes the same comparison in speaking of the apparent rotation of the sun; *non a modo di mola, ma di rota* – not in fashion of a millstone, but of a wheel.

²³⁸*Ezekiel* I. 28: "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about."

²³⁹Iris, Juno's messenger.

²⁴⁰Echo.

²⁴¹*Genesis* IX. 13: "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth."

The garlands twain encompassed us about,
And thus the outer to the inner answered.
After the dance, and other grand rejoicings,
Both of the singing, and the flaming forth
Effulgence with effulgence blithe and tender,
Together, at once, with one accord had stopped,
(Even as the eyes, that, as volition moves them,
Must needs together shut and lift themselves,)
Out of the heart of one of the new lights
There came a voice, that needle to the star
Made me appear in turning thitherward.
And it began: "The love that makes me fair ²⁴²
Draws me to speak about the other leader, ²⁴³
By whom so well is spoken here of mine.
'Tis right, where one is, to bring in the other,
That, as they were united in their warfare,
Together likewise may their glory shine.
The soldiery of Christ, which it had cost ²⁴⁴
So dear to arm again, behind the standard
Moved slow and doubtful and in numbers few,
When the Emperor who reigneth evermore
Provided for the host that was in peril,
Through grace alone and not that it was worthy;
And, as was said, he to his Bride brought succour
With champions twain, at whose deed, at whose word
The straggling people were together drawn.
Within that region where the sweet west wind ²⁴⁵
Rises to open the new leaves, wherewith
Europe is seen to clothe herself afresh,
Not far off from the beating of the waves,
Behind which in his long career the sun
Sometimes conceals himself from every man,

²⁴²It is the spirit of St. Bonaventura, a Franciscan, that speaks.

²⁴³St. Dominic, by whom, through the mouth of his follower, St. Francis has been eulogized.

²⁴⁴The Church re-allied and re-armed by the death of Christ against "all evil and mischief," and "the crafts and assaults of the Devil."

²⁴⁵In the west of Europe, namely in Spain.

Is situate the fortunate Calahorra,²⁴⁶
 Under protection of the mighty shield²⁴⁷
 In which the Lion subject is and sovereign.
 Therein was born the amorous paramour²⁴⁸
 Of Christian Faith, the athlete consecrate,
 Kind to his own and cruel to his foes;
 And when it was created was his mind²⁴⁹
 Replete with such a living energy,
 'That in his mother her it made prophetic.²⁵⁰
 As soon as the espousals were complete
 Between him and the Faith at holy font,
 Where they with mutual safety dowered each
 The woman, who for him had given assent,²⁵¹
 Saw in a dream the admirable fruit
 That issue would from him and from his heirs;
 And that he might be construed as he was,
 A spirit from this place went forth to name him
 With His possessive whose he wholly was.²⁵²
 Dominic was he called; and him I speak of²⁵³

²⁴⁶The town of Calahorra, the birthplace of St. Dominic, is situated in the province of Old Castile.

²⁴⁷In one of the quarterings of the arms of Spain the Lion is above the Castle, in another beneath it.

²⁴⁸St. Dominic.

²⁴⁹Dante believed with Thomas Aquinas, that "the creation and infusion" of the soul were simultaneous.

²⁵⁰Before the birth of St. Dominic, his mother dreamed that she had brought forth a dog, spotted black and white, and bearing a lighted torch in his mouth; symbols of the black and white habit of the Order, and of the fiery zeal of its founder. In art the dog has become the attribute of St. Dominic, as may be seen in many paintings, and in the statue over the portal of the convent of St. Mark at Florence.

²⁵¹The godmother of St. Dominic dreamed that he had a star on the forehead, and another on the back of his head, which illuminated the east and the west.

²⁵²Dominicus, from Dominus, the Lord.

²⁵³St. Dominic, Founder of the Preaching Friars, and Persecutor of Heretics, was born in the town of Calaroga, now Calahorra, in Old Castile, in the year 1170, and died in Bologna in 1221. He was of the illustrious family of the Guzmans; in his youth he studied ten years at the University of Palencia; was devout, abstemious, charitable; sold his clothes to feed the poor, and even offered to sell himself to the Moors, to ransom the brother of a poor woman who sought his aid. In his twenty-fifth year he became a canon under the Bishop of Osma, preaching in the various churches of the province for nine year, and at times teaching theology at Palencia. In 1203, he accompanied his Bishop on

Even as of the husbandman whom Christ
Elected to his garden to assist him.

Envoy and servant sooth he seemed of Christ,
For the first love made manifest in him
Was the first counsel that was given by Christ. ²⁵⁴

Silent and wakeful many a time was he
Discovered by his nurse upon the ground,
As if he would have said, 'For this I came.'

O thou his father, Felix verily! ²⁵⁵
O thou his mother, verily Joanna,
If this, interpreted, means as is said!

Not for the world which people toil for now
In following Ostiense and Taddeo, ²⁵⁶
But through his longing after the true manna,

He in short time became so great a teacher,
That he began to go about the vineyard,
Which fadeth soon, if faithless be the dresser;

a diplomatic mission to Denmark; and on his return stopped in Languedoc, to help root out the Albigensian heresy; but how far he authorized or justified the religious crusades against these persecuted people, and what part he took in them, is a contested point, enough it would seem to obtain for him, from the Inquisition of Toulouse, the title of the Persecutor of Heretics.

In 1215, St. Dominic founded the Order of Preaching Friars, and in the year following was made Master of the Sacred Palace at Rome. In 1219 the centre of the Order was established at Bologna, and there, in 1221, St. Dominic died, and was buried in the Church of St. Nicholas.

It has been generally supposed that St. Dominic founded the Inquisition. It would appear, however, that the special guardianship of that institution was not intrusted to the Dominicans till the year 1233, or twelve years after the death of their founder.

²⁵⁴*Matthew XIX. 21:* "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me."

While still a young man and a student, in a season of great want, St. Dominic sold his books, and all that he possessed, to feed the poor.

²⁵⁵Felix signifying happy, and Joanna, full of grace.

²⁵⁶Henry of Susa, Cardinal, and Bishop of Ostia, and thence called Ostiense. He lived in the thirteenth century, and wrote a commentary on the *Decretals* or *Books of Ecclesiastical Law*.

Taddeo Alderotti was a distinguished physician and Professor of Bologna, who flourished in the thirteenth century, and translated the *Ethics* of Aristotle. Villani, VIII. 66, says of him "At this time (1303) died in Bologna Maestro Taddeo, surnamed the Bolognese, though he was a Florentine, and our fellow-citizen; he was the greatest physicist in all Christendom."

And of the See, (that once was more benignant ²⁵⁷
 Unto the righteous poor, not through itself,
 But him who sits there and degenerates,) ²⁵⁸

Not to dispense or two or three for six, ²⁵⁹
 Not any fortune of first vacancy,
Non decimas quae sunt pauperum Dei,

He asked for, but against the errant world
 Permission to do battle for the seed,
 Of which these four and twenty plants surround

When with the doctrine and the will together,
 With office apostolical he moved,
 Like torrent which some lofty vein out-presses;

And in among the shoots heretical
 His impetus with greater fury smote,
 Wherever the resistance was the greatest.

Of him were made thereafter divers runnels,
 Whereby the garden catholic is watered,
 So that more living its plantations stand.

If such the one wheel of the Biga was, ²⁶⁰
 In which the Holy Church itself defended
 And in the field its civic battle won,

Truly full manifest should be to thee
 The excellence of the other, unto whom
 Thomas so courteous was before my coming.

But still the orbit, which the highest part ²⁶¹
 Of its circumference made, is derelict,

²⁵⁷Buti says that in early times the prelates used to divide the incomes of the Church into four parts; "the first, for the prelate personally; the second for the clergy who performed the services; the third, for the embellishment of the Church; the fourth, for Christ's poor; which division is now-a-days little observed."

²⁵⁸Pope Boniface VIII., whom Dante never forgets, and to whom he never fails to deal a blow.

²⁵⁹He did not ask of the Holy See the power of grasping six, and giving but two or three to pious uses; not the first vacant benefice; nor the tithes that belonged to God's poor; but the right to defend the faith, of which the four-and-twenty spirits in the two circles around them were the seed.

²⁶⁰One wheel of the chariot of the Church Militant, of which St. Francis was the other.

²⁶¹The track made by this wheel of the chariot; that is, the strict rule of St. Francis, is now abandoned by his followers.

So that the mould is where was once the crust.²⁶²

His family, that had straight forward moved
With feet upon his footprints, are turned round
So that they set the point upon the heel.²⁶³

And soon aware they will be of the harvest
Of this bad husbandry, when shall the tares
Complain the granary is taken from them.²⁶⁴

Yet say I, he who searcheth leaf by leaf²⁶⁵
Our volume through, would still some page discover
Where he could read, 'I am as I am wont.'

'Twill not be from Casal nor Acquasparta,²⁶⁶
From whence come such unto the written word
That one avoids it, and the other narrows.

Bonaventura of Bagnoregio's life²⁶⁷
Am I, who always in great offices
Postponed considerations sinister.

Here are Illuminato and Agostino,²⁶⁸

²⁶²Good wine produces crust in the cask, bad wine mould.

²⁶³Set the points of their feet upon the heel of the footprints, showing that they walked in a direction directly opposite to that of their founder.

²⁶⁴When they find themselves in Hell, and not in Paradise. *Matthew XIII. 30*: "Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

²⁶⁵Whoever examines one by one the members of our Order, as he would turn over a book leaf by leaf, will find some as good and faithful as the first.

²⁶⁶In 1287, Matteo d' Acquasparta, general of the Franciscans, relaxed the severities of the Order. Later a reaction followed; and in 1310 Frate Ubaldino of Casale became the head of a party of zealots among the Franciscans who took the name of Spiritualists, and produced a kind of schism in the Order, by narrower or stricter interpretation of the Scriptures.

²⁶⁷In this line Dante uses the word *life* for *spirit* John of Fidenza, surnamed Bonaventura, – who "postponed considerations sinister," or made things temporal subservient to things spiritual, and of whom one of his teachers said that it seemed as if in him "Adam had not sinned," – was born in 1221 at Bagnoregio, near Orvieto. In his childhood, being extremely ill, he was laid by his mother at the feet of St. Francis, and healed by the prayers of the Saint, who, when he beheld him, exclaimed "*O buona ventura!*" and by this name the mother dedicated her son to God. He lived to become a Franciscan, to be called the "Seraphic Doctor," and to write the Life of St. Francis; which, according to the Spanish legend, being left unfinished at his death, he was allowed to return to earth for three days to complete it.

²⁶⁸Of these two barefooted friars nothing remains but the name and the good report of

Who of the first barefooted beggars were
That with the cord the friends of God became.

Hugh of Saint Victor is among them here,²⁶⁹
And Peter Mangiador, and Peter of Spain,²⁷⁰
Who down below in volumes twelve is shining;

Nathan the seer, and metropolitan²⁷¹
Chrysostom, and Anselmus, and Donatus²⁷²

holy lives. The *Ottimo* says they were authors of books.

Bonaventura says that Illuminato accompanied St. Francis to Egypt, and was present when he preached in the camp of the Sultan. Later he overcame the scruples of the Saint, and persuaded him to make known to the world the miracle of the stigmata.

Agostino became the head of his Order in the Terra di Lavoro, and there received a miraculous revelation of the death of St. Francis. He was lying ill in his bed, when suddenly he cried out, "Wait for me! Wait for me! I am coming with thee!" And when asked to whom he was speaking, he answered, "Do ye not see our Father Francis ascending into heaven?" and immediately expired.

²⁶⁹Hugh of St. Victor was a monk in the monastery of that name near Paris.

²⁷⁰Peter Mangiadore, or Peter Comestor, as he is more generally called, was born at Troyes in France, and became in 1164 Chancellor of the University of Paris. He was the author of a work on Ecclesiastical History, "from the beginning of the world to the times of the Apostles;" and died in the monastery of St. Victor in 1198. He was surnamed Comestor, the Eater, because he was a great devourer of books.

Peter of Spain was the son of a physician of Lisbon, and was the author of a work on Logic. He was Bishop of Braga, afterwards Cardinal and Bishop of Tusculum, and in 1276 became Pope, under the title of John XIX. In the following year he was killed by the fall a portion of the Papal palace at Viterbo.

²⁷¹Why Nathan the Prophet should be put here is a great puzzle to the commentators. "*Buon salto!* a good leap," says Venturi. Lombardi thinks it is no leap at all. The only reason given is, that Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man." As Buti says: "The author puts him among these Doctors, because he revealed his sin to David, as these revealed the vices and virtues in their writings."

²⁷²John, surnamed from his eloquence Chrysostom, or Golden Mouth, was born in Antioch, about the year 344. He was first a lawyer, then a monk, next a popular preacher, and finally a metropolitan Bishop of Constantinople. His whole life, from his boyhood in Antioch to his death in banishment on the borders of the Black Sea, – his austerities as a monk, his fame as a preacher, his troubles as Bishop of Constantinople, his controversy with Theophilus of Alexandria, his exile by the Emperor Arcadius and the earthquake that followed it, his triumphant return, his second banishment, and his death, – is more like a romance than a narrative of facts.

Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, was born at Aost in Piedmont, about the year 1033, and was educated at the abbey of Bec in Normandy, where, in the year 1060, he became a monk, and afterwards Prior and Abbot. In 1093 he was made Archbishop of Canterbury by King William Rufus; and after many troubles died, and was buried in his cathedral, in 1109. His life was written by the monk Eadmer of Canterbury.

Aelius Donatus was a Roman grammarian, who flourished about the middle of the fourth century. He had St. Jerome among his pupils, and was immortalized by his Latin Gram-

Who deigned to lay his hand to the first art;
Here is Rabanus, and beside me here ²⁷³
Shines the Calabrian Abbot Joachim, ²⁷⁴
He with the spirit of prophecy endowed.
To celebrate so great a paladin
Have moved me the impassioned courtesy
And the discreet discourses of Friar Thomas,
And with me they have moved this company."

mar, which was used in all the schools of the Middle Ages, so that the name passed into a proverb.

²⁷³Rabanus Maurus, a learned theologian was born at Mayence in 786, and died at Winfel, in the same neighbourhood, in 856. He studied first at the abbey of Fulda, and then at St. Martin's of Tours, under the celebrated Alcuin. He became a teacher at Fulda, then Abbot, then Bishop of Mayence. He left behind him works that fill six folios. One of them is entitled "*The Universe, or a Book about All Things*"; but they chiefly consist of homilies, and commentaries on the Bible.

²⁷⁴This distinguished mystic and enthusiast of the twelfth century was born in 1130 at the village of Celio, near Cosenza in Calabria, on the river Busento, in whose bed the remains of Attila were buried. A part of his youth was passed at Naples, where his father held some office in the court of King Roger; but from the temptations of this gay capital he escaped, and, like St. Francis, renouncing the world, gave himself up to monastic life. On his return to Italy, Joachim became a Cistercian monk in the monastery of Corazzo in Calabria, of which ere long he became Abbot; but, wishing for greater seclusion, he soon withdrew to Flora, among the mountains, where he founded another monastery, and passed the remainder of his life in study and contemplation. He died in 1202, being seventy-two years of age. Joachim succeeded in laying the foundations of the *Eternal Gospel*. In Abbot Joachim's time at least, this *Eternal Gospel* was not a book, but a doctrine, pervading all his writings. Later, in the middle of the thirteenth century, some such book existed, and was attributed to John of Parma. The *Eternal Gospel* taught that there were three epochs in the history of the world, two of which were already passed, and the third about to begin. The first was that of the *Old Testament*, or the reign of the Father; the second, that of the *New Testament*, or the reign of the Son; and the third, that of Love, or the reign of the Holy Spirit.

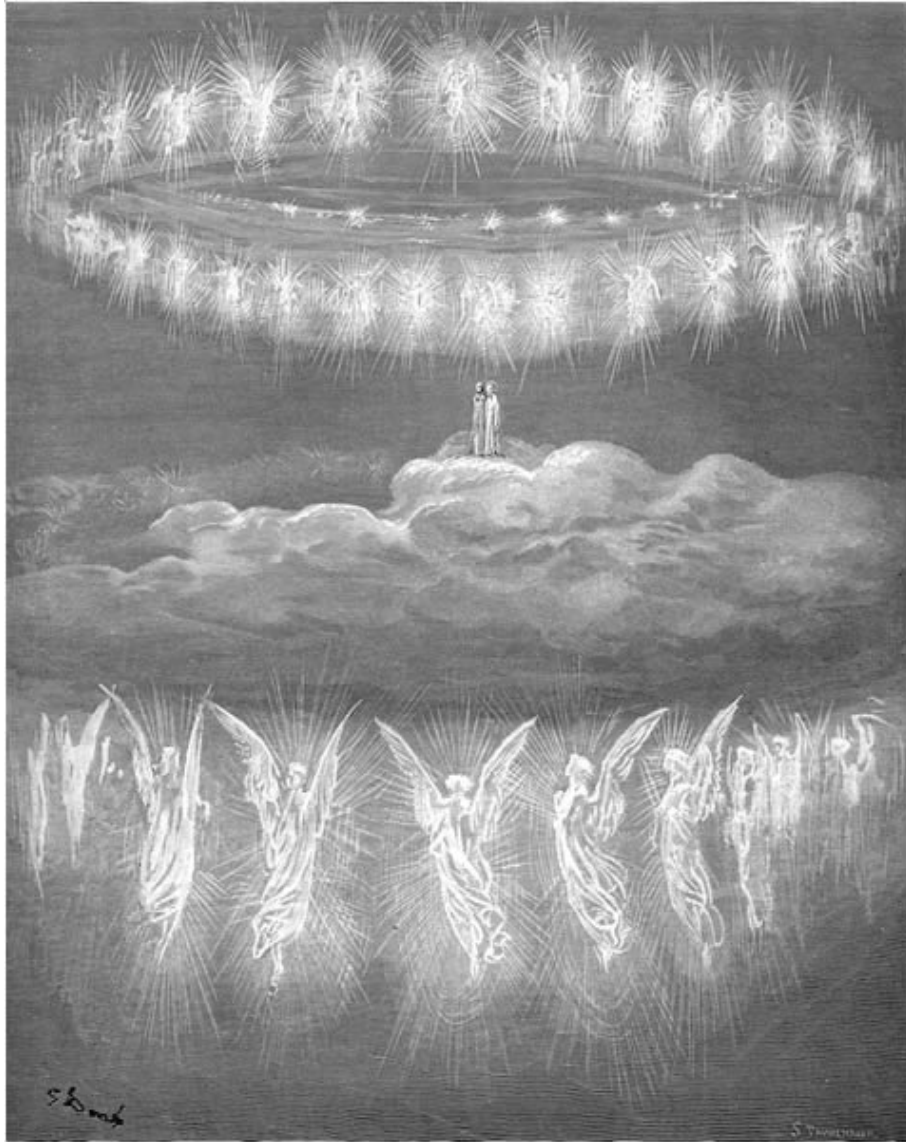


Figure 4: And in its gyre had not turned wholly round, before another in a ring enclosed it...

Canto 13

LET him imagine, who would well conceive ²⁷⁵
 What now I saw, and let him while I speak
 Retain the image as a steadfast rock,
 The fifteen stars, that in their divers regions
 The sky enliven with a light so great
 That it transcends all clusters of the air;
 Let him the Wain imagine unto which ²⁷⁶
 Our vault of heaven sufficeth night and day,
 So that in turning of its pole it fails not;
 Let him the mouth imagine of the horn ²⁷⁷
 That in the point beginneth of the axis
 Round about which the primal wheel revolves,emdash
 To have fashioned of themselves two signs in heaven,
 Like unto that which Minos' daughter made, ²⁷⁸
 The moment when she felt the frost of death;
 And one to have its rays within the other,
 And both to whirl themselves in such a manner
 That one should forward go, the other backward;
 And he will have some shadowing forth of that
 True constellation and the double dance
 That circled round the point at which I was;

²⁷⁵The Heaven of the Sun continued. Let the reader imagine fifteen of the largest stars, and to these add the seven of Charles's Wain, and the two last stars of the Little Bear, making in all twenty-four, and let him arrange them in two concentric circles, revolving in opposite directions, and he will have the image of what Dante now beheld.

²⁷⁶*Iliad*, XVIII. 487: "The Bear, which they also call by the appellation of the Wain, which there revolves and watches Orion; but it alone is free from the baths of the ocean."

²⁷⁷The constellation of the Little Bear as much resembles a horn as it does a bear. Of this horn the Pole Star forms the smaller end.

²⁷⁸Ariadne, whose crown was, at her death, changed by Bacchus into a constellation.

Because it is as much beyond our wont,
 As swifter than the motion of the Chiana ²⁷⁹
 Moveth the heaven that all the rest outspeeds. ²⁸⁰

There sang they neither Bacchus, nor Apollo,
 But in the divine nature Persons three,
 And in one person the divine and human.

The singing and the dance fulfilled their measure,
 And unto us those holy lights gave need,
 Growing in happiness from care to care.

Then broke the silence of those saints concordant
 The light in which the admirable life ²⁸¹
 Of God's own mendicant was told to me,

And said: "Now that one straw is trodden out ²⁸²
 Now that its seed is garnered up already,
 Sweet love invites me to thresh out the other.

Into that bosom, thou believest, whence ²⁸³
 Was drawn the rib to form the beauteous cheek
 Whose taste to all the world is costing dear,

And into that which, by the lance transfixed, ²⁸⁴
 Before and since, such satisfaction made
 That it weighs down the balance of all sin,

Whate'er of light it has to human nature
 Been lawful to possess was all infused
 By the same power that both of them created;

And hence at what I said above dost wonder,
 When I narrated that no second had
 The good which in the fifth light is enclosed. ²⁸⁵

²⁷⁹The Chiana empties into the Arno near Arezzo. In Dante's time it was a sluggish stream, stagnating in the marshes of Valdichiana. See note in *Inferno* XXIX.

²⁸⁰The Primum Mobile.

²⁸¹St. Thomas Aquinas, who had related the life of St. Francis.

²⁸²The first doubt in Dante's mind was in regard to the expression in Canto X. 96, "Where well one fattens if he strayeth not," which was explained by Thomas Aquinas in Canto XI. The second, which he now prepares to thresh out, is in Canto X. 114, "To see so much there never rose a second," referring to Solomon, as being peerless; in knowledge.

²⁸³Adam.

²⁸⁴Christ.

²⁸⁵Solomon.

Now ope thine eyes to what I answer thee,
And thou shalt see thy creed and my discourse
Fit in the truth as centre in a circle.

That which can die, and that which dieth not,²⁸⁶
Are nothing but the splendour of the idea
Which by his love our Lord brings into being

Because that living Light, which from its fount²⁸⁷
Effulgent flows, so that it disunites not
From Him nor from the Love in them intrined,
Through its own goodness reunites its rays²⁸⁸
In nine subsistences, as in a mirror,
Itself eternally remaining One.

Thence it descends to the last potencies,²⁸⁹
Downward from act to act becoming such
That only brief contingencies it makes;

And these contingencies I hold to be²⁹⁰
Things generated, which the heaven produces
By its own motion, with seed and without.

Neither their wax, nor that which tempers it,²⁹¹
Remains immutable, and hence beneath
The ideal signet more and less shines through;

Therefore it happens, that the selfsame tree
After its kind bears worse and better fruit,
And ye are born with characters diverse.

If in perfection tempered were the wax,²⁹²

²⁸⁶All things are but the thought of God, and by Him created in love.

²⁸⁷The living Light, the Word, proceeding from the Father, is not separated from Him nor from his Love, the Holy Spirit.

²⁸⁸Its rays are centred in the nine choirs of Angels, ruling the nine heavens, here called subsistences, according to the definition of Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. Quaest. XXIX. 2: "What exists by itself, and not in anything else, is called subsistence."

²⁸⁹From those nine heavens it descends to the elements, the lowest potencies, till it produces only imperfect and perishable results, or mere contingencies.

²⁹⁰These contingencies are animals, plants, and the like, produced by the influences of the planets from seeds, and certain insects and plants, believed of old to be born without seed.

²⁹¹Neither their matter nor the influences of the planets being immutable, the stamp of the divinity is more or less clearly seen in them, and hence the varieties in plants and animals.

²⁹²If the matter were perfect, and the divine influence at its highest power, the result

And were the heaven in its supremest virtue,
The brilliance of the seal would all appear;

But nature gives it evermore deficient,
In the like manner working as the artist,
Who has the skill of art and hand that trembles.

If then the fervent Love, the Vision clear,²⁹³
Of primal Virtue do dispose and seal,
Perfection absolute is there acquired.

Thus was of old the earth created worthy
Of all and every animal perfection;
And thus the Virgin was impregnate made;

So that thine own opinion I commend,
That human nature never yet has been,
Nor will be, what it was in, those two persons.

Now if no farther forth I should proceed,
'Then in what way was he without a peer?'²⁹⁴
Would be the first beginning of thy words.

But, that may well appear what now appears not,
Think who he was, and what occasion moved him
To make request, when it was told him, 'Ask.'

I've not so spoken that thou canst not see
Clearly he was a king who asked for wisdom,
That he might be sufficiently a king;

'Twas not to know the number in which are
The motors here above, or if *necesse*²⁹⁵
With a contingent e'er *necesse* make,²⁹⁶

*Non si est dare primum motum esse,*²⁹⁷
Or if in semicircle can be made

would likewise be perfect; but by transmission through the planets it becomes more and more deficient, the hand of nature trembles, and imperfection is the result.

²⁹³But if Love – the Holy Spirit – and the Vision – the Son – proceeding from the Primal Power – the Father – act immediately, then the work is perfect, as in Adam and the human nature of Christ.

²⁹⁴Then how was Solomon so peerless, that none like him ever existed?

²⁹⁵The number of the celestial Intelligences, or Regents of the Planets.

²⁹⁶Whether from two premises, one of which is necessary, and the other contingent, or only possible, the conclusion drawn will be necessary; which Buti says is a question belonging to "the garrulity of dialectics."

²⁹⁷Whether the existence of a first motion is to be conceded.

Triangle so that it have no right angle. ²⁹⁸

Whence, if thou notest this and what I said, ²⁹⁹

A regal prudence is that peerless seeing ³⁰⁰

In which the shaft of my intention strikes

And if on 'rose' thou turnest thy clear eyes,

Thou'lt see that it has reference alone

To kings who're many, and the good are rare.

With this distinction take thou what I said,

And thus it can consist with thy belief

Of the first father and of our Delight.

And lead shall this be always to thy feet,

To make thee, like a weary man, move slowly

Both to the Yes and No thou seest not;

For very low among the fools is he

Who affirms without distinction, or denies,

As well in one as in the other case;

Because it happens that full often bends

Current opinion in the false direction,

And then the feelings bind the intellect.

Far more than uselessly he leaves the shore,

(Since he returneth not the same he went,)

Who fishes for the truth, and has no skill;

And in the world proofs manifest thereof

Parmenides, Melissus, Brissus are, ³⁰¹

And many who went on and knew not whither;

Thus did Sabellius, Arius, and those fools ³⁰²

²⁹⁸That is, a triangle, one side of which shall be the diameter of the circle.

²⁹⁹If thou notest, in a word, that Solomon did not ask for wisdom in astrology, nor in dialects, nor in metaphysics, nor in geometry.

³⁰⁰The peerless seeing is a reference to Canto X. 114: "To see so much there never rose a second." It will be observed that the word "rose" is the Biblical word in the phrase "neither after thee shall any rise like unto thee," as given in note 93.

³⁰¹Parmenides was an Eleatic philosopher, and pupil of Xenophanes. Melissus of Samos was a follower of Parmenides, and maintained substantially the same doctrines.

Brissus was a philosopher of less note. Mention is hardly made of him in the histories of philosophy, except as one of those who pursued that *Fata Morgana* of mathematicians, the quadrature of the circle.

³⁰²"Infamous heresiarchs;" exclaims Venturi, "put as an example of innumerable oth-

Who have been even as swords unto the Scriptures ³⁰³
 In rendering distorted their straight faces.
 Nor yet shall people be too confident
 In judging, even as he is who doth count
 The corn in field or ever it be ripe.
 For I have seen all winter long the thorn
 First show itself intractable and fierce,
 And after bear the rose upon its top;
 And I have seen a ship direct and swift
 Run o'er the sea throughout its course entire,
 To perish at the harbour's mouth at last.
 Let not Dame Bertha nor Ser Martin think, ³⁰⁴
 Seeing one steal, another offering make,
 To see them in the arbitrament divine; ³⁰⁵
 For one may rise, and fall the other may."

ers, who, having erred in the understanding of the Holy Scriptures, persevered in their errors."

Sabellius was by birth an African, and flourished as Presbyter of Ptolemais, in the third century. He denied the three persons in the Godhead, maintaining that the Son and Holy Ghost were only temporary manifestations of God in creation, redemption, and sanctification, and would finally return to Father.

Arius was a Presbyter of Alexandria in the fourth century. He believed the Son to be equal in power with the Father, but of a different essence or nature, a doctrine which gave rise to the famous Heterousian and Homoiousian controversy, that distracted the Church for three hundred years.

These doctrines of Sabellius and of Arius are both heretical, when tried by the standard of the *Quicumque vult* the authoritative formula of the Catholic faith; "which faith, except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly," says St. Athanasius, or some one in his name.

³⁰³These men, say some of the commentators, were as swords that mutilated and distorted the Scriptures. Other, that in them the features of the Scriptures were distorted, as the features of a man reflected in the grooved or concave surface of a sword.

³⁰⁴Names used to indicate any common simpletons and gossips.

³⁰⁵In writing this line Dante had evidently in mind the beautiful wise words of St. Francis: "What every one is in the eyes of God, that he is, and no more."

Canto 14

FROM centre unto rim, from rim to centre,³⁰⁶
In a round vase the water moves itself,³⁰⁷
As from without 'tis struck or from within.

Into my mind upon a sudden dropped
What I am saying, at the moment when
Silent became the glorious life of Thomas,³⁰⁸

Because of the resemblance that was born
Of his discourse and that of Beatrice,
Whom, after him, it pleased thus to begin:

“This man has need (and does not tell you so,
Nor with the voice, nor even in his thought)
Of going to the root of one truth more.

Declare unto him if the light wherewith
Blossoms your substance shall remain with you
Eternally the same that it is now;

And if it do remain, say in what manner,
After ye are again made visible,
It can be that it injure not your sight.”

As by a greater gladness urged and drawn
They who are dancing in a ring sometimes
Uplift their voices and their motions quicken;

So, at that orison devout and prompt,
The holy circles a new joy displayed
In their revolving and their wondrous song.

³⁰⁶The ascent to the Planet Mars, where are seen the spirits of Martyrs, and Crusaders who died fighting for the Faith.

³⁰⁷In this similitude Dante describes the effect of the alternate voices of St. Thomas Aquinas in the circumference of the circle, and of Beatrice in the centre.

³⁰⁸Life is here used, as before, in the sense of spirit.

Whoso lamenteth him that here we die
That we may live above, has never there
Seen the refreshment of the eternal rain.

The One and Two and Three who ever liveth,
And reigneth ever in Three and Two and One,
Not circumscribed and all things circumscribing,

Three several times was chanted by each one
Among those spirits, with such melody
That for all merit it were just reward;

And, in the lustre most divine of all
The lesser ring, I heard a modest voice,³⁰⁹
Such as perhaps the Angel's was to Mary,

Answer: "As long as the festivity
Of Paradise shall be, so long our love
Shall radiate round about us such a vesture.

Its brightness is proportioned to the ardour,
The ardour to the vision; and the vision
Equals what grace it has above its worth.

When, glorious and sanctified, our flesh
Is reassumed, then shall our persons be
More pleasing by their being all complete;

For will increase whate'er bestows on us
Of light gratuitous the Good Supreme,
Light which enables us to look on Him;

Therefore the vision must perforce increase,
Increase the ardour which from that is kindled,
Increase the radiance which from this proceeds.

But even as a coal that sends forth flame,
And by its vivid whiteness overpowers it
So that its own appearance it maintains,

Thus the effulgence that surrounds us now
Shall be o'erpowered in aspect by the flesh,
Which still to-day the earth doth cover up;

Nor can so great a splendour weary us,
For strong will be the organs of the body

³⁰⁹The voice of Solomon.

To everything which hath the power to please us.”

So sudden and alert appeared to me
Both one and the other choir to say Amen,
That well they showed desire for their dead bodies;

Nor sole for them perhaps, but for the mothers,
The fathers, and the rest who had been dear
Or ever they became eternal flames.

And lo! all round about of equal brightness
Arose a lustre over what was there,
Like an horizon that is clearing up.

And as at rise of early eve begin
Along the welkin new appearances,
So that the sight seems real and unreal,

It seemed to me that new subsistences³¹⁰
Began there to be seen, and make a circle
Outside the other two circumferences.

O very sparkling of the Holy Spirit,
How sudden and incandescent it became
Unto mine eyes that vanquished bore it not!

But Beatrice so beautiful and smiling
Appeared to me, that with the other sights
That followed not my memory I must leave her.

Then to uplift themselves mine eyes resumed
The power, and I beheld myself translated
To higher salvation with my Lady only.

Well was I ware that I was more uplifted
By the enkindled smiling of the star,³¹¹

³¹⁰According to Buti, “Spirits newly arrived;” or Angels, such being the interpretation given by the Schoolmen to the word Subsistences. See Canto XIII. Note 58.

³¹¹The planet Mars. Of this planet Brunetto Latini, *Tresor*, I. III. 3, says “Mars is hot and warlike and evil, and is called the God of Battles.”

Of its symbolism Dante, *Convito*, II. 14, says: “The Heaven of Mars may be compared to Music, for two properties. The first is its very beautiful relation [to the others]; for, enumerating the moveable heavens, from whichever you begin, whether from the lowest or the highest, the Heaven of Mars is the fifth; it is the centre of all. ... The other is, that Mars dries up and burns things, because its heat is like to that of the fire; and this is the reason why it appears fiery in colour, sometimes more, and sometimes less, according to the density and rarity of the vapours which follow it, which sometimes take fire of themselves, as is declared in the first book of Meteors. (And therefore Albumasar says,

That seemed to me more ruddy than its wont. ³¹²

With all my heart, and in that dialect ³¹³

Which is the same in all, such holocaust

To God I made as the new grace beseemed;

And not yet from my bosom was exhausted

The ardour of sacrifice, before I knew

This offering was accepted and auspicious;

For with so great a lustre and so red

Splendours appeared to me in twofold rays,

I said: "O Helios who dost so adorn them!" ³¹⁴

Even as distinct with less and greater lights

that the ignition of these vapours signifies death of kings, and change of empires, being effects of the dominion of Mars. And accordingly Seneca says that at the death of the Emperor Augustus a ball of fire was seen in the heavens. And in Florence, at the beginning of its downfall, a great quantity of these vapours, which follow Mars, were seen in the air in the form of a cross.) And these two properties are in Music, which is wholly relative, as may be seen in harmonized words, and in songs, in which the more beautiful the relation, the sweeter the harmony, since such is chiefly its intent. Also Music attracts to itself the spirits of men, which are principally as it were vapours of the heart, so that they almost cease from any operation; so entire is the soul when it listens, and the power of all as it were runs to the sensible spirit that hears the sounds."

Of the influences of Mars, Buti, as usual following Albumasar, writes: "Its nature is hot, igneous, dry, choleric, of a bitter savour, and it signifies youth, strength, and acuteness of mind; heats, fires, and burnings, and every sudden event; powerful kings, consuls, dukes, and knights, and companies of soldiery; desire of praise and memory of one's name; strategies and instruments of battle; robberies and machinations, and scattering of relations by plunderings and highway robberies; boldness and anger; the unlawful for the lawful torments and imprisonments; scourges and bonds; anguish, flight, thefts, pilfering of servants, fears, contentions, insults, acuteness of mind, impiety, inconstancy, want of foresight, celerity and anticipation in things, evil eloquence and ferocity of speech, foulness of words, incontinence of tongue, demonstrations of love, gay apparel, insolence and falseness of words, swiftness of reply and sudden penitence therefor, want of religion, unfaithfulness to promises, multitude of lies and whisperings, deceits and perjuries; machinations and evil deeds; want of means; waste of means; multitude of thoughts about things; instability and change of opinion in things, from one to another; haste to return; want of shame; multitude of toils and cares; peregrinations, solitary existence, bad company; ... breaking open of tombs, and spoliations of the dead."

³¹²Buti interprets this, as redder than the Sun, to whose light Dante had become accustomed, and continues "Literally, it is true that the splendour of Mars is more fiery than that of the Sun, because it is red, and the Sun is yellow; but allegorically we are to understand, that a greater ardour of love, that is, more burning, is in those who fight and conquer the three above-mentioned above [the world, the flesh, and the devil], than in those who exercise themselves with the Scriptures."

³¹³The silent language of the heart.

³¹⁴In Hebrew, *El, Eli*, God, from which the Greeks made Helios, the Sun.

Glimmers between the two poles of the world
 The Galaxy that maketh wise men doubt,³¹⁵
 Thus constellated in the depths of Mars,³¹⁶
 Those rays described the venerable sign
 That quadrants joining in a circle make.
 Here doth my memory overcome my genius;
 For on that cross as levin gleamed forth Christ,
 So that I cannot find ensample worthy;
 But he who takes his cross and follows Christ
 Again will pardon me what I omit,
 Seeing in that aurora lighten Christ.
 From horn to horn, and 'twixt the top and base,³¹⁷
 Lights were in motion, brightly scintillating
 As they together met and passed each other;
 Thus level and aslant and swift and slow
 We here behold, renewing still the sight,
 The particles of bodies long and short,
 Across the sunbeam move, wherewith is listed
 Sometimes the shade, which for their own defence
 People with cunning and with art contrive.
 And as a lute and harp, accordant strung
 With many strings, a dulcet tinkling make
 To him by whom the notes are not distinguished,

³¹⁵Dante, *Convito*, II. 15, says "It must be known that philosophers have different opinions concerning this Galaxy. For the Pythagoreans said that the Sun once wandered out of his way, and passing through other regions not adapted to his heat, he burned the place through which he passed, and traces of the burning remained. I think they took this from the fable of Phaeton, which Ovid narrates in the beginning of the second book of the *Metamorphoses*. Others, and among them Anaxagoras and Democritus, that was the light of the Sun reflected in at part. And these opinions they prove by demonstrative reasons. What Aristotle says of this we cannot well know; for his opinion is not the same in one translation as in the other. And I think this was an error of the translators; for in the new one he appears to say, that it was a gathering of vapours under the stars of that region, for they always attract them; and this does not appear to be the true reason. In the old, it says, that the Galaxy is only a multitude of fixed stars in that region, so small that they cannot be distinguished here below; but from them is apparent that whiteness which we call the Galaxy. And it may be that the heaven in that part is more dense, and therefore retains and reflects that light; and this opinion seems to have been entertained by Aristotle, Avicenna, and Ptolemy."

³¹⁶The sign of the cross, drawn upon the planet Mars, as upon the breast of a crusader.

³¹⁷From arm to arm of the cross, and from top to bottom.

So from the lights that there to me appeared
Upgathered through the cross a melody,
Which rapt me, not distinguishing the hymn.

Well was I ware it was of lofty laud,
Because there came to me, "Arise and conquer!"³¹⁸
As unto him who hears and comprehends not.

So much enamoured I became therewith,
That until then there was not anything
That e'er had fettered me with such sweet bonds.

Perhaps my word appears somewhat too bold,
Postponing the delight of those fair eyes,
Into which gazing my desire has rest;

But who bethinks him that the living seals³¹⁹
Of every beauty grow in power ascending,
And that I there had not turned round to those,³²⁰

Can me excuse, if I myself accuse
To excuse myself, and see that I speak truly:
For here the holy joy is not disclosed,
Because ascending it becomes more pure.³²¹

³¹⁸Words from a hymn in praise of Christ, say the commentators, but they do not say from what hymn.

³¹⁹The living seals are the celestial spheres, which impress themselves on all beneath them, and increase in power as they are higher.

³²⁰That is, to the eyes of Beatrice, whose beauty he may seem to postpone, or regard as inferior to the splendours that surround him. He excuses himself by saying that he does not speak of them, well knowing that they have grown more beautiful in ascending.

³²¹Sincere in the sense of pure.



Figure 5: Even as distinct with less and greater lights glimmers between the two poles of the world the Galaxy that maketh wise men doubt...



Figure 6: On that cross as levin gleamed forth Christ...

Canto 15

A WILL benign, in which reveals itself ³²²
 Ever the love that righteously inspires,
 As in the iniquitous, cupidity,
 Silence imposed upon that dulcet lyre,
 And quieted the consecrated chords,
 That Heaven's right hand doth tighten and relax
 How unto just entreaties shall be deaf
 Those substances, which, to give me desire
 Of praying them, with one accord grew silent?
 'Tis well that without end he should lament,
 Who for the love of thing that doth not last
 Eternally despoils him of that love!
 As through the pure and tranquil evening air
 There shoots from time to time a sudden fire,
 Moving the eyes that steadfast were before,
 And seems to be a star that changeth place,
 Except that in the part where it is kindled
 Nothing is missed, and this endureth little;
 So from the horn that to the right extends
 Unto that cross's foot there ran a star
 Out of the constellation shining there;
 Nor was the gem dissevered from its ribbon, ³²³
 But down the radiant fillet ran along,
 So that fire seemed it behind alabaster. ³²⁴
 Thus piteous did Anchises' shade reach forward,

³²²The Heaven of Mars continued.

³²³This star, or spirit, did not, in changing place, pass out of the cross, but along the right arm and down the trunk or body of it.

³²⁴A light in a vase of alabaster.

If any faith our greatest Muse deserve,
When in Elysium he his son perceived.

*“O sanguis meus, O super infusa³²⁵
Gratia Dei, sicut tibi, cui
Bis unquam Coeli janua reclusa?”*

Thus that effulgence; whence I gave it heed;
Then round unto my Lady turned my sight,
And on this side and that was stupefied;

For in her eyes was burning such a smile
That with mine own methought I touched the bottom
Both of my grace and of my Paradise!

Then, pleasant to the hearing and the sight,
The spirit joined to its beginning things
I understood not, so profound it spake;

Nor did it hide itself from me by choice,
But by necessity; for its conception
Above the mark of mortals set itself

And when the bow of burning sympathy
Was so far slackened, that its speech descended
Towards the mark of our intelligence,

The first thing that was understood by me
Was “Benedight be Thou, O Trine and One,
Who hast unto my seed so courteous been!”

And it continued: “Hunger long and grateful,³²⁶
Drawn from the reading of the mighty volume³²⁷
Wherein is never changed the white nor dark,

Thou hast appeased, my son, within this light
In which I speak to thee, by grace of her

³²⁵Biagioli and Fraticelli think that this ancestor of Dante, Cacciaguیدا, who is speaking, makes use of the Latin language because it was the language of his day in Italy. It certainly gives to the passage a certain gravity and tinge of antiquity, which is in keeping with this antique spirit and with what he afterwards says. His words may be thus translated:—

“O blood of mine! O grace of God infused
Superlative! To whom as unto thee
Were ever twice the gates of heaven unclosed.”

³²⁶His longing to see Dante.

³²⁷The mighty volume of the Divine Mind, in which the dark or written parts are not changed by erasures, nor the white spaces by interlineations.

Who to this lofty flight with plumage clothed thee.

Thou thinkest that to me thy thought doth pass
From Him who is the first, as from the unit,³²⁸
If that be known, ray out the five and six;

And therefore who I am thou askest not,
And why I seem more joyous unto thee
Than any other of this gladsome crowd.

Thou think'st the truth; because the small and great³²⁹
Of this existence look into the mirror
Wherein, before thou think'st, thy thought thou showest.

But that the sacred love, in which I watch
With sight perpetual, and which makes me thirst
With sweet desire, may better be fulfilled,

Now let thy voice secure and frank and glad
Proclaim the wishes, the desire proclaim,
To which my answer is decreed already."

To Beatrice I turned me, and she heard
Before I spake, and smiled to me a sign,
That made the wings of my desire increase;

Then in this wise began I: "Love and knowledge,
When on you dawned the first Equality,³³⁰
Of the same weight for each of you became;

³²⁸The Pythagorean doctrine of numbers, Ritter, *Hist. Anc. Phil.*, Morrison's Tr., I 361, says: "In the Pythagorean doctrine, number comprises within itself two species – odd and even; it is therefore the unity of these two contraries; it is the odd and the even. Now the Pythagoreans said also that one, or the unit, is the odd and the even; and thus we arrive at this result, that one, or the unit, is the essence of number, or number absolutely. As such, it is also the ground of all numbers, and is therefore named the first one, of whose origin nothing further can be said. In this respect the Pythagorean theory of numbers is merely an expression for 'all is from the original one' – from one being, to which they also gave the name of God; for in the words of Philolaus, 'God embraces and actuates all, and is but one.' ... But in the essence of number, or in the first original one, all other numbers, and consequently the elements of numbers, and the elements of the whole world, and all nature, are contained. The elements of number are the even and the odd; on this account the first one is the even-odd, which the Pythagoreans, in their occasionally strained mode of symbolizing, attempted to prove thus; that one being added to the even makes odd, and to the odd, even."

³²⁹All the spirits of Paradise look upon God, and see in him as in a mirror even the thoughts of men.

³³⁰The first Equality is God, all whose attributes are equal and eternal; and living in Him, the love and knowledge of spirits are also equal.

For in the Sun, which lighted you and burned
 With heat and radiance, they so equal are,
 That all similitudes are insufficient.

But among mortals will and argument,³³¹
 For reason that to you is manifest,
 Diversely feathered in their pinions are.

Whence I, who mortal am, feel in myself
 This inequality; so give not thanks
 Save in my heart, for this paternal welcome.

Truly do I entreat thee, living topaz!³³²
 Set in this precious jewel as a gem,
 That thou wilt satisfy me with thy name."

"O leaf of mine, in whom I pleasure took
 E'en while awaiting, I was thine own root!"³³³
 Such a beginning he in answer made me

Then said to me: "That one from whom is named³³⁴
 Thy race, and who a hundred years and more
 Has circled round the mount on the first cornice,

A son of mine and thy great-grandsire was;
 Well it behoves thee that the long fatigue
 Thou shouldst for him make shorter with thy works.

Florence, within the ancient boundary
 From which she taketh still her tierce and nones,³³⁵

³³¹Will and power. Dante would fain thank the spirit that has addressed him, but knows not how. He has the will, but not the power. Dante uses the word argument in this sense of power, or means, or appliance.

³³²Dante calls the spirit of Cacciaguida a living topaz set in the celestial cross, probably from the brilliancy and golden light of this precious stone. He may also have had in his mind the many wonderful qualities, as well as the beauty, of the gem. The *Ottimo* says, that he who wears the topaz cannot be injured by an enemy.

³³³He had been for the coming of Dante, with the "hunger long and grateful" spoken of in line 49.

³³⁴The first of the Florence who bore the name of Alighieri, still punished in the circle of Pride in Purgatory, and needing the prayers and good offices of Dante to set him free.

³³⁵Tierce, or Terza, is the first division of the canonical day, from six to nine; *Nones*, or *Nona*, the third, from twelve to three in the afternoon. The bells of the Abbey within the old walls of Florence still rang these hours in Dante's time, and measured the day of the Florentines, like the bells of morning, noon, and night in our New England towns. In the *Convito*, IV. 23, Dante says: "The service of the first part of the day, that is, of Tierce, is said at the end of it; and that of the third and fourth, at the beginning. And therefore be it known unto all, that properly *Nones* should always ring at the beginning of the seventh

Abode in quiet, temperate and chaste. ³³⁶

No golden chain she had, nor coronal, ³³⁷
 Nor ladies shod with sandal shoon, nor girdle
 That caught the eye more than the person did. ³³⁸

Not yet the daughter at her birth struck fear
 Into the father, for the time and dower
 Did not o'errun this side or that the measure.

No houses had she void of families,
 Not yet had thither come Sardanapalus
 To show what in a chamber can be done; ³³⁹

Not yet surpassed had Montemalo been ³⁴⁰
 By your Uccellatojo, which surpassed ³⁴¹

hour of the day."

³³⁶What Florence had become in Dante's time may be seen from the following extract from Frate Francesco Pippino, who wrote in 1313, and whose account is thus given by Napier, 11.542: "Now indeed, in the present luxurious age, many shameful practices are introduced instead of the former customs; many indeed to the injury of people's minds, because frugality is exchanged for magnificence; the clothing being now remarkable for its exquisite materials, workmanship, and superfluous ornaments of silver, gold, and pearls; admirable fabrics; wide-spreading embroidery; silk for vests, painted or variously coloured, and lined with divers precious furs from foreign countries. Excitement to gluttony is not wanting; foreign wines are much esteemed, and almost all the people drink in public. The viands are sumptuous; the chief cooks are held in great honour; provocatives of the palate are eagerly sought after; ostentation increases; money-makers exert themselves to supply these tastes; hence usuries, frauds, rapine, extortion, pillage, and contentions in the commonwealth also unlawful taxes; oppression of the innocent; banishment of citizens, and the combinations of rich men. Our true god is our belly..."

³³⁷Villani, *Cronica*, VI., 69: "The women used unornamented buskins, and even the most distinguished were content with a close gown of scarlet serge or camlet, confined by a leathern waist-belt of the ancient fashion, and a hooded cloak lined with miniver; and the poorer classes wore a coarse green cloth dress of the same form."

³³⁸Dante, *Convito*, I. 10: "Like the beauty of a woman, when the ornaments of her apparel cause more admiration than she herself."

³³⁹Eastern effeminacy in general; what Boccaccio calls the *morbidezza d'Egitto*. Paul Orosius, the advocate of the Christian centuries, as quoted by the *Ottimo*, says: "The last king of Syria was Sardanapalus, a man more corrupt than a woman – *corrotto piu che femmina* – who was seen by his prefect Arabetes, among a herd of courtesans, clad in female attire."

³⁴⁰Montemalo, or Montemario, is the hill from which the traveller coming from Viterbo first catches sight of Rome. The Uccellatojo is the hill from which the traveller coming from Bologna first catches sight of Florence. Here the two hills are used to signify what is seen from them; namely, the two cities; and Dante means to say, that Florence had not yet surpassed Rome in the splendour of its buildings; but as Rome would one day be surpassed by Florence in its rise, so would it be in its downfall.

³⁴¹The "which" in this line refers to Montemalo of the preceding.

Shall in its downfall be as in its rise.

Bellincion Berti saw I go begirt ³⁴²
 With leather and with bone, and from the mirror
 His dame depart without a painted face;

And him of Nerli saw, and him of Vecchio, ³⁴³
 Contented with their simple suits of buff
 And with the spindle and the flax their dames

O fortunate women! and each one was certain
 Of her own burial-place, and none as yet
 For sake of France was in her bed deserted. ³⁴⁴

One o'er the cradle kept her studious watch,
 And in her lullaby the language used
 That first delights the fathers and the mothers;

Another, drawing tresses from her distaff,
 Told o'er among her family the tales
 Of Trojans and of Fesole and Rome.

As great a marvel then would have been held
 A Lapo Salterello, a Cianghella, ³⁴⁵
 As Cincinnatus or Cornelia now. ³⁴⁶

³⁴²Bellincion Berti, whom Dante selects as a type of the good citizen of Florence in the olden time, and whom Villani calls "the best and most honoured gentleman of Florence," was of the noble family of the Ravnani. He was the father of the "good Gualdrada," whose story shines out so pleasantly in Boccaccio's commentary. See *Inferno* XVI. note to line 37.

³⁴³"Two ancient houses of the city," says the *Ottimo*; "and he saw the chiefs of these houses were content with leathern jerkins without any drapery; he who should dress so now-a-days would be laughed at: and he saw their dames spinning, as who should say, 'Now-a-days not even the maid will spin, much less the lady.'" And Buti upon the same text: "They wore leathern dresses without any cloth over them; they did not make to themselves long robes, nor cloaks of scarlet lined with vaire, as they do now."

³⁴⁴They were not abandoned by their husbands, who, content with little, did not go to trade in France.

³⁴⁵Monna Cianghella della Tosa was a gay widow of Florence, who led such a life of pleasure that her name has passed into a proverb, or a common name for a dissolute woman.

Lapo Salterello was a Florentine lawyer, and a man of dissipated habits; and Crescimbeni, whose mill grinds everything that comes to it, counts him among the poets, *Volgar Poesia*, III. 82, and calls him a *Rimatore di non poco grido* – a rhymer of no little renown. Unluckily he quotes one of his sonnets.

³⁴⁶Quinctius, surnamed Cincinnatus from his neglected locks, taken from his plough and made Dictator by the Roman Senate, and, after he had defeated the Volscians and saved the city, returning to his plough again.

To such a quiet, such a beautiful
 Life of the citizen, to such a safe
 Community, and to so sweet an inn,
 Did Mary give me, with loud cries invoked,³⁴⁷
 And in your ancient Baptistery at once³⁴⁸
 Christian and Cacciaguida I became.³⁴⁹
 Moronto was my brother, and Eliseo;
 From Val di Pado came to me my wife,³⁵⁰
 And from that place thy surname was derived.
 I followed afterward the Emperor Conrad,³⁵¹
 And he begirt me of his chivalry,³⁵²
 So much I pleased him with my noble deeds.
 I followed in his train against that law's³⁵³
 Iniquity, whose people doth usurp
 Your just possession, through your Pastor's fault
 There by that execrable race was I
 Released from bonds of the fallacious world,
 The love of which defileth many souls,
 And came from martyrdom unto this peace."

Cornelia, daughter of Scipio Africanus, and mother of the Gracchi, who preferred for her husband a Roman citizen to a king, and boasted that her children were her only jewels.

³⁴⁷The Virgin Mary, invoked in the pains of childbirth.

³⁴⁸The baptistery of the church of St. John in Florence; *il mio bel San Giovanni* – my beautiful St. John, as Dante calls it *Inferno* XIX. line 17.

³⁴⁹Of this ancestor of Dante, Cacciaguida, nothing is known but what the poet here tells us, and so clearly that it is not necessary to repeat it in prose.

³⁵⁰Cacciaguida's wife came from Ferrara in the Val di Pado, or Val di Po, the Valley of the Po. She was of the Aldighieri or Alighieri family, and from her Dante derived his surname.

³⁵¹The Emperor Conrad III. of Swabia, uncle of Frederic Barbarossa. in 1143 he joined Louis VII. of France in the Second Crusade, of which St. Bernard was the great preacher in 1152, after his return from this crusade.

³⁵²Cacciaguida was knighted by the Emperor Conrad.

³⁵³The law or religion of Mahomet.

Canto 16

OTHOU our poor nobility of blood,³⁵⁴
 If thou dost make the people glory in thee
 Down here where our affection languishes,

 A marvellous thing it ne'er will be to me;
 For there where appetite is not perverted,
 I say in Heaven, of thee I made a boast!

 Truly thou art a cloak that quickly shortens,
 So that unless we piece thee day by day
 Time goeth round about thee with his shears!

 With *You*, which Rome was first to tolerate,³⁵⁵
 (Wherein her family less perseveres,)
 Yet once again my words beginning made;

 Whence Beatrice, who stood somewhat apart,
 Smiling, appeared like unto her who coughed³⁵⁶
 At the first failing writ of Guenever.

 And I began: "You are my ancestor,
 You give to me all hardihood to speak,
 You lift me so that I am more than I.

 So many rivulets with gladness fill
 My mind, that of itself it makes a joy³⁵⁷

³⁵⁴The Heaven of Mars continued.

³⁵⁵The use of *You* for *Thou* – the plural for the singular – is said to have been introduced in the time of Julius Caesar. Lucan, V., Rowe's Tr.: "Then was the time when sycophants began to heap all titles on one lordly man." Dante uses it by way of compliment to his ancestor; though he says the descendants of the Romans were not so persevering in its use as other Italians.

³⁵⁶Beatrice smiled to give notice to Dante that she observed his flattering style of address; as the Lady of Malehault coughed when she saw Launcelot kiss Queen Guinevere, as related in the old romance of Launcelot of the Lake.

³⁵⁷Rejoiced within itself that it can endure so much joy.

Because it can endure this and not burst.

Then tell me, my beloved root ancestral,
Who were your ancestors, and what the years
That in your boyhood chronicled themselves?

Tell me about the sheepfold of Saint John,³⁵⁸
How large it was, and who the people were
Within it worthy of the highest seats."

As at the blowing of the winds a coal
Quickens to flame, so I beheld that light
Become resplendent at my blandishments.

And as unto mine eyes it grew more fair,
With voice more sweet and tender, but not in
This modern dialect, it said to me:³⁵⁹

"From uttering of the *Ave*, till the birth³⁶⁰
In which my mother, who is now a saint,
Of me was lightened who had been her burden,

³⁵⁸The city of Florence, which, in Canto XXV. 5, Dante calls "the fair sheepfold, where a lamb I slumbered." It will be remembered that St. John the Baptist is the patron saint of Florence.

³⁵⁹Not in Italian, but in Latin, which was the language of cultivated people in Cacciaguیدا's time.

³⁶⁰From the Incarnation of Christ down to his own birth, the planet Mars had returned to the sign of the Lion five hundred and eighty times, or made this number of revolutions in its orbit. Brunetto Latini, Dante's schoolmaster, *Tresor*, I. Ch. CXI., says, that Mars "goes through all the signs in 2 years and 1 month and 30 days." This would make Cacciaguیدا born long after the crusade in which he died. But Dante, who had perhaps seen the astronomical tables of King Alfonso of Castile, knew more of the matter than his schoolmaster, and was aware that the period of a revolution of Mars is less than two years. Witte, who cites these tables in his notes to this canto, says they give "686 days 22 hours and 24 minutes"; and continues: "Five hundred and eighty such revolutions give then (due regard being had to the leap-years) 1090 years and not quite four months. Cacciaguیدا, therefore, at the time of the Second Crusade, was in his fifty-seventh year." Pietro di Dante (the poet's son and commentator, and who, as Biagioli, with rather gratuitous harshness, says, was smaller compared to his father "than a point is to the universe") assumed two years as a revolution of Mars; but as this made Cacciaguیدا born in 1160, twelve years after his death, he suggested the reading of "three," instead of "thirty," in the text, which reading was adopted by the Cruscan Academy, and makes the year of Cacciaguیدا's birth 1106. But that Dante computed the revolution of Mars at less than two years evident from a passage in the *Convito*, II. 15, referred to by Philalethes, where he speaks of half a revolution of this planet as *un anno quasi* – almost a year. The common reading of "thirty" is undoubtedly then the true one. In Astrology, the Lion is the House of the Sun; but Mars, as well as the Sun and Jupiter, is a Lord of the Lion and hence Dante says "its Lion."

Unto its Lion had this fire returned
 Five hundred fifty times and thirty more,
 To rekindle itself beneath his paw.

My ancestors and I our birthplace had
 Where first is found the last ward of the city
 By him who runneth in your annual game.³⁶¹

Suffice it of my elders to hear this;
 But who they were, and whence they thither came,
 Silence is more considerate than speech.

All those who at that time were there between
 Mars and the Baptist, fit for bearing arms,³⁶²
 Were a fifth part of those who now are living;

But the community, that now is mixed
 With Campi and Certaldo and Figghine,³⁶³
 Pure in the lowest artisan was seen.

O how much better 'twere to have as neighbours
 The folk of whom I speak, and at Galluzzo³⁶⁴
 And at Trespiano have your boundary,

Than have them in the town, and bear the stench
 Of Aguglione's churl, and him of Signa³⁶⁵
 Who has sharp eyes for trickery already.

³⁶¹The annual races of Florence on the 24th of June, the festival of St. John the Baptist. The prize was the *Pallio*, or mantle of "crimson silk velvet," as Villani says; and the race was run from San Pancrazio, the western ward of the city, through the Mercato Vecchio, to the eastern ward of San Piero. According to Benvenuto, the Florentine races were horse-races; but the *Pallio* of Verona, where the prize was the "Green Mantle," was manifestly a foot-race. See *Inferno* XV. line 122 and accompanying note.

³⁶²Between the Ponte Vecchio, where once stood the statue of Mars, and the church of St. John the Baptist.

³⁶³Campi is a village between Prato and Florence, in "the valley whence Bisenzio descends." Certaldo is in the Val d'Elsa, and is chiefly celebrated as being the birthplace of Boccaccio, – "true *Bocca d'Oro* – Mouth of Gold," says Benvenuto, with enthusiasm, "my venerated master, and a most diligent and familiar student of Dante, and who wrote a certain book that greatly helps us to understand him." Figghine, or Figline, is a town in the Val d'Arno, some twelve miles distant from Florence; and hateful to Dante as the birthplace of the "ribald lawyer, Ser Dego," as Campi was of another ribald lawyer, Ser Fozio; and Certaldo of a certain Giacomo, who thrust the Podestà of Florence from his seat, and undertook to govern the city.

³⁶⁴Galluzzo lies to the south of Florence on the road to Siena, and Trespiano about the same distance to the north, on the road to Bologna.

³⁶⁵Aguglione and Signa are also Tuscan towns in the neighbourhood of Florence. According to Covino, *Descriz. Geog. dell' Italia*, p. 18, it was a certain Baldo d'Aguglione,

Had not the folk, which most of all the world ³⁶⁶
 Degenerates, been a step-dame unto Caesar,
 But as a mother to her son benignant,

Some who turn Florentines, and trade and discount,
 Would have gone back again to Simifonte ³⁶⁷
 There where their grandsires went about as beggars.

At Montemurlo still would be the Counts, ³⁶⁸
 The Cerchi in the parish of Acone, ³⁶⁹
 Perhaps in Valdigueve the Buondelmonti. ³⁷⁰

Ever the intermingling of the people
 Has been the source of malady in cities,
 As in the body food it surfeits on;

And a blind bull more headlong plunges down ³⁷¹
 Than a blind lamb; and very often cuts
 Better and more a single sword than five. ³⁷²

who condemned Dante to be burned; and Bonifazio da Signa, according to Buti, "tyrannized over the city, and sold the favours and offices of the Commune."

³⁶⁶The clergy. "Popes, cardinals, Bishops, and Archbishops, who govern the Holy Church," says Buti; and continues: "If the Church had been a mother, instead of a step-mother to the Emperors, and had not excommunicated, and persecuted, and published them as heretics, Italy would have been well governed, and there would have been none of those civil wars, that dismantled and devastated the smaller towns, and drove their inhabitants into Florence, to trade and discount." Napier, *Florent. Hist.*, I. 597, says: "The *Arte del Cambio*, or money-trade, in which Florence shone pre-eminent, soon made her bankers known and almost necessary to all Europe. ..."

³⁶⁷Simifonte, a village near Certaldo. It was captured by the Florentines, and made part of their territory, in 1202.

³⁶⁸In the valley of the Ombrone, east of Pistoia, are still to be seen the ruins of Montemurlo, once owned by the Counts Guidi, and by them sold to the Florentines in 1203, because they could not defend it against the Pistoians.

³⁶⁹The *Pivier d'Acone*, or parish of Acone, is in the Val di Sieve, or Valley of the Sieve, one of the affluents of the Arno. Here the powerful family of the Cerchi had their castle of Monte di Croce, which was taken and destroyed by the Florentines in 1053, and the Cerchi and others came to live in Florence, where they became the leaders of the *Parte Bianca*.

³⁷⁰The Buondelmonti were a wealthy and powerful family of Valdigueve, or Valley of the Grieve, which, like the Sieve, is an affluent of the Arno. They too, like the Cerchi, came to Florence, when their lands were taken by the Florentines, and were in a certain sense cause of Guelph and Ghibelline quarrels in the city.

³⁷¹The downfall of a great city is more swift and terrible than that of smaller one.

³⁷²In this line we have in brief Dante's political faith, which is given in detail in his treatise *De Monarchia*.

If Luni thou regard, and Urbisaglia,³⁷³
 How they have passed away, and how are passing
 Chiusi and Sinigaglia after them,³⁷⁴

To hear how races waste themselves away
 Will seem to thee no novel thing nor hard
 Seeing that even cities have an end.

All things of yours have their mortality,
 Even as yourselves; but it is hidden in some
 That a long while endure, and lives are short;³⁷⁵

And as the turning of the lunar heaven
 Covers and bares the shores without a pause,
 In the like manner fortune does with Florence.

Therefore should not appear a marvellous thing
 What I shall say of the great Florentines
 Of whom the fame is hidden in the Past.

I saw the Ughi, saw the Catellini,
 Filippi, Greci, Ormanni, and Alberichi,
 Even in their fall illustrious citizens;

And saw, as mighty as they ancient were,
 With him of La Sannella him of Arca,
 And Soldanier, Ardinghi, and Bostichi.³⁷⁶

Near to the gate that is at present laden
 With a new felony of so much weight³⁷⁷
 That soon it shall be jetsam from the bark,

The Ravignani were, from whom descended
 The County Guido, and whoe'er the name
 Of the great Bellincione since hath taken.³⁷⁸

He of La Pressa knew the art of ruling
 Already, and already Galigajo

³⁷³Luni, an old Etruscan city in the Lunigiana; and Urbisaglia, a Roman city in the Marca d'Ancona.

³⁷⁴Chiusi is in the Sienese territory, and Sinigaglia on the Adriatic, east of Rome. This latter place has somewhat revived since Dante's time.

³⁷⁵The lives of men are too short for them to measure the decay of things around them.

³⁷⁶Gianni del Soldanier is put among the traitors "with Ganellon and Tebaldello," *Inferno* XXXII. line 121.

³⁷⁷The Cerchi, who lived near the Porta San Piero, and produced dissension in the city with their White and Black factions.

³⁷⁸Bellincion Berti. See Canto XV. 112, and *Inferno* XVI. Note 37.

Had hilt and pommel gilded in his house.³⁷⁹
 Mighty already was the Column Vair,³⁸⁰
 Sacchetti, Giuochi, Fifant, and Barucci,
 And Galli, and they who for the bushel blush.³⁸¹
 The stock from which were the Calfucci born
 Was great already, and already chosen
 To curule chairs the Sizii and Arrigucci.
 O how beheld I those who are undone³⁸²
 By their own pride! and how the Balls of Gold³⁸³
 Florence enflowered in all their mighty deeds!
 So likewise did the ancestors of those³⁸⁴
 Who evermore, when vacant is your church,
 Fatten by staying in consistory.
 The insolent race, that like a dragon follows³⁸⁵
 Whoever flees, and unto him that shows
 His teeth or purse is gentle as a lamb,
 Already rising was, but from low people;
 So that it pleased not Ubertin Donato³⁸⁶
 That his wife's father should make him their kin.

³⁷⁹The insignia of knighthood.

³⁸⁰The Billi, or Pigli, family; their arms being "a Column Vair in a red field." The Column Vair was the bar of the shield variegated with argent and azure. The vair, in Italian *vajo*, is a kind of squirrel; and the heraldic mingling of colours was taken from its spotted skin.

³⁸¹The Chiamontesi, one of whom, a certain Ser Durante, an officer in the customs, falsified the bushel, or *stajo*, of Florence, by having it made one stave less, so as to defraud in the measure. Dante alludes to this in *Purgatorio* XII. 105.

³⁸²The Uberti, of whom was Farinata. See *Inferno* X. 32.

³⁸³The Balls of Gold were the arms of the Lamberti family. Dante mentions them by their arms, says the *Ottimo*, "as who should say, as the ball is the symbol of the universe, and gold surpasses every other metal, so in goodness and valour these surpassed the other citizens." Dante puts Mosca de' Lamberti among the Schismatics in *Inferno* XXVIII. 103, with both hands cut off and "The stumps uplifting through the dusky air."

³⁸⁴The Vidomini, Tosinghi, and Cortigiani, custodians and defenders of the Bishopric of Florence. Their fathers were honourable men, and, like the Lamberti, embellished the city with their name and deeds; but they, when bishop died, took possession of the episcopal palace, and, as custodians and defenders, feasted and slept there till his successor was appointed.

³⁸⁵The Adimari. One of this family, Boccaccio Adimari, got possession of Dante's property in Florence when he was banished, and always bitterly opposed his return.

³⁸⁶Ubertin Donato, a gentleman of Florence, had married one of the Ravignani, and was offended that her sister should be given in marriage to one of the Adimari, who were of ignoble origin.

Already had Caponsacco to the Market ³⁸⁷
 From Fesole descended, and already
 Giuda and Infangato were good burghers.
 I'll tell a thing incredible, but true; ³⁸⁸
 One entered the small circuit by a gate
 Which from the Della Pera took its name!
 Each one that bears the beautiful escutcheon ³⁸⁹
 Of the great baron whose renown and name
 The festival of Thomas keepeth fresh,
 Knighthood and privilege from him received; ³⁹⁰
 Though with the populace unites himself
 To-day the man who binds it with a border.
 Already were Gualterotti and Importuni;
 And still more quiet would the Borgo be ³⁹¹
 If with new neighbours it remained unfed.

³⁸⁷The Caponsacchi lived in the Mercato Vecchio, or Old Market One of the daughters was the wife of Folco Portinari and mother of Beatrice.

³⁸⁸The thing incredible is that there should have been so little jealousy among the citizens of Florence as to suffer one of the city gates, Porta Peruzza, to be named after a particular family.

³⁸⁹Five Florentine families, according to Benvenuto, bore the arms of the Hugo of Brandenburg, and received from him the titles and privileges of nobility. These were the Pulci, Nerli, Giandonati, Gangalandi, and Della Bella. This Marquis Hugo, whom Dante here calls "the great baron," was Viceroy of the Emperor Otho III. in Tuscany. Villani, *Cronica*, IV., Ch. 2, relates the following story of him: "It came to pass, as it pleased God, that, hunting in the neighbourhood of Bonsollazzo, he was lost in the forest, and came, as it seemed to him, to a smithy. Finding there men swarthy and hideous, who, instead of iron, seemed to be tormenting human beings with fire and hammers, he asked the meaning of it. He was told that these were lost souls, and that to a like punishment was condemned the soul of the Marquis Hugo, on account of his worldly life, unless he repented. In great terror he commended himself to the Virgin Mary; and, when the vision vanished, remained so contrite in spirit, that, having returned to Florence, he had all his patrimony in Germany sold, and ordered seven abbeys to be built; the first of which was the Badia of Florence, in honour of Santa Maria; the second, that of Bonsollazzo, where he saw the vision." The Marquis Hugo died on St. Thomas's day, December 31, 1006, and was buried in the Badia of Florence, where every year on that day the monks, in grateful memory of him, kept the anniversary of his death with great solemnity.

³⁹⁰Giano della Bella, who disguised the arms of Hugo, quartered in his own, with a fringe of gold. A nobleman by birth and education, he was by conviction a friend of the people, and espoused their cause against the nobles. By reforming the abuses of both parties, he gained the ill-will of both; and in 1294, after some popular tumult which he in vain strove to quell, went into voluntary exile, and died in France.

³⁹¹The Borgo Sauti Apostoli would be a quieter place, if the Buondelmonti had not moved into it from Oltrarno.

The house from which is born your lamentation,³⁹²
Through just disdain that death among you brought
And put an end unto your joyous life,
Was honoured in itself and its companions.
O Buondelmonte, how in evil hour
Thou fled'st the bridal at another's promptings!
Many would be rejoicing who are sad,³⁹³
If God had thee surrendered to the Ema
The first time that thou camest to the city.
But it behoved the mutilated stone³⁹⁴
Which guards the bridge, that Florence should provide
A victim in her latest hour of peace.
With all these families, and others with them,
Florence beheld I in so great repose,
That no occasion had she whence to weep;
With all these families beheld so just
And glorious her people, that the lily
Never upon the spear was placed reversed,³⁹⁵
Nor by division was vermilion made."³⁹⁶

³⁹²The house of Amidei, whose quarrel with the Buondelmonti was the origin of the Guelf and Ghibelline parties in Florence, and put an end to the joyous life of her citizens.

³⁹³Much sorrow and suffering would have been spared, if the first Buondelmonte that came from his castle of Montebuono to Florence had been drowned in the Ema, he had small stream he had to cross on the way.

³⁹⁴Young Buondelmonte was murdered at the foot of the mutilated statue of Mars on the Ponte Vecchio, and after this Florence had no more peace.

³⁹⁵The banner of Florence had never been reversed in sign of defeat.

³⁹⁶The arms of Florence were a white lily in a field of red; after the expulsion of the Ghibellines, the Guelfs changed them to a red lily in a field of white.



Figure 7: *The soul of Caddiaguida speaks of Florence.*

Canto 17

As came to Clymene, to be made certain ³⁹⁷
Of that which he had heard against himself,
He who makes fathers chary still to children, ³⁹⁸

Even such was I, and such was I perceived
By Beatrice and by the holy light
That first on my account had changed its place.

Therefore my Lady said to me: "Send forth
The flame of thy desire, so that it issue
Imprinted well with the internal stamp;

Not that our knowledge may be greater made
By speech of thine, but to accustom thee
To tell thy thirst, that we may give thee drink."

"O my beloved tree, (that so dost lift thee,
That even as minds terrestrial perceive
No triangle containeth two obtuse,

So thou beholdest the contingent things ³⁹⁹
Ere in themselves they are, fixing thine eyes
Upon the point in which all times are present,) ⁴⁰⁰

While I was with Virgilius conjoined
Upon the mountain that the souls doth heal, ⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁷The Heaven of Mars continued. The prophecy of Dante's banishment.

³⁹⁸Phaeton, having heard from Epaphus that he was not the son of Apollo, ran in great eagerness and anxiety to his father, Clymene, to ascertain the truth.

³⁹⁹Who seest in God all possible contingencies as clearly as the human mind perceives the commonest geometrical problem.

⁴⁰⁰God, "whose centre is everywhere, whose circumference nowhere."

⁴⁰¹The heavy words which Dante heard on the mount of Purgatory; foreshadowing his exile, are those of Currado Malaspina, *Purgatorio* VIII. 133.

And when descending into the dead world, ⁴⁰²
 Were spoken to me of my future life
 Some grievous words; although I feel myself
 In sooth foursquare against the blows of chance. ⁴⁰³
 On this account my wish would be content
 To hear what fortune is approaching me,
 Because foreseen an arrow comes more slowly."
 Thus did I say unto that selfsame light ⁴⁰⁴
 That unto me had spoken before, and even
 As Beatrice willed was my own will confessed.
 Not in vague phrase, in which the foolish folk ⁴⁰⁵
 Ensnared themselves of old, ere yet was slain
 The Lamb of God who taketh sins away,
 But with clear words and unambiguous
 Language responded that paternal love, ⁴⁰⁶
 Hid and revealed by its own proper smile:
 "Contingency, that outside of the volume ⁴⁰⁷
 Of your materiality extends not,
 Is all depicted in the eternal aspect.
 Necessity however thence it takes not,
 Except as from the eye, in which 'tis mirrored,
 A ship that with the current down descends.
 From thence, e'en as there cometh to the ear
 Sweet harmony from an organ, comes in sight
 To me the time that is preparing for thee.
 As forth from Athens went Hippolytus, ⁴⁰⁸
 By reason of his step-dame false and cruel,

⁴⁰²The words he heard "when descending into the dead world", are those of Farinata, *Inferno* X. 79.

⁴⁰³Aristotle, *Ethics*, I. Ch. 10: "Always and everywhere the virtuous man bears prosperous and adverse fortune prudently, as a perfect tetragon."

⁴⁰⁴To the spirit of Cacciaguida.

⁴⁰⁵Not like the ambiguous utterance of oracles in Pagan times.

⁴⁰⁶The word here rendered. Language is in the original Latin; used as in Canto XII. 144.

⁴⁰⁷Contingency, accident, or casualty, belongs only to the material world, and in the spiritual world finds no place. As Dante makes St. Bernard say, in Canto XXXII. 53.

⁴⁰⁸As Hippolytus was banished from Athens on the false and cruel accusations of Phaedra, his step-mother, so Dante shall be from Florence on accusations equally false and cruel.

So thou from Florence must perforce depart.
 Already this is willed, and this is sought for;⁴⁰⁹
 And soon it shall be done by him who thinks it,
 Where every day the Christ is bought and sold.
 The blame shall follow the offended party
 In outcry as is usual; but the vengeance⁴¹⁰
 Shall witness to the truth that doth dispense it.
 Thou shalt abandon everything beloved
 Most tenderly, and this the arrow is
 Which first the bow of banishment shoots forth.
 Thou shalt have proof how savourest of salt
 The bread of others, and how hard a road
 The going down and up another's stairs.
 And that which most shall weigh upon thy shoulders
 Will be the bad and foolish company⁴¹¹
 With which into this valley thou shalt fall;
 For all ingrate, all mad and impious
 Will they become against thee; but soon after
 They, and not thou, shall have the forehead scarlet⁴¹²
 Of their bestiality their own proceedings
 Shall furnish proof; so 'twill be well for thee
 A party to have made thee by thyself.
 Thine earliest refuge and thine earliest inn
 Shall be the mighty Lombard's courtesy,
 Who on the Ladder bears the holy bird,⁴¹³

⁴⁰⁹By instigation of Pope Boniface VIII. in Rome, as Dante here declares. In April, 1302, the Bianchi were banished from Florence on account or under pretext of a conspiracy against Charles of Valois, who had been called to Florence by the Guelfs as pacificator of Tuscany. In this conspiracy Dante could have had no part, as he was then absent on an embassy to Rome. For more, see chapter "Dante Alighieri" at the end of this book.

⁴¹⁰At the beginning of *Inferno* XXVI. Dante foreshadows the vengeance of God that is to fall on Florence.

⁴¹¹Among the fellow-exiles of Dante, as appears by the list of names preserved, was Lapo Salterello, the Florentine lawyer, of whom Dante speaks so contemptuously in Canto XV. 128. Benvenuto says he was "a litigious and loquacious man, and very annoying to Dante during his exile." Altogether the company of his fellow-exiles seems to have been disagreeable to him, and it better suited him to "make a party by himself."

⁴¹²Shall blush with shame.

⁴¹³Bartolommeo della Scala, Lord of Verona. The arms of the Scaligers were a golden ladder in a red field, surmounted by a black eagle. "For a tyrant," says Benvenuto, "he

Who such benign regard shall have for thee
That 'twixt you twain, in doing and in asking,
That shall be first which is with others last.

With him shalt thou see one who at his birth ⁴¹⁴
Has by this star of strength been so impressed,
That notable shall his achievements be.

Not yet the people are aware of him
Through his young age, since only nine years yet
Around about him have these wheels revolved

But ere the Gascon cheat the noble Henry, ⁴¹⁵
Some sparkles of his virtue shall appear
In caring not for silver nor for toil.

So recognized shall his magnificence
Become hereafter, that his enemies
Will not have power to keep mute tongues about it.

On him rely, and on his benefits;
By him shall many people be transformed,
Changing condition rich and mendicant;

And written in thy mind thou hence shalt bear
Of him, but shalt not say it" – and things said he
Incredible to those who shall be present.

Then added: "Son, these are the commentaries ⁴¹⁶
On what was said to thee; behold the snares

was reputed just and prudent."

⁴¹⁴Can Grande della Scala, at this time only nine years old, but showing, says Benvenuto, "that he would be a true son of Mars, bold and prompt in battle, and victorious exceedingly." He was a younger brother of Bartolommeo, and became sole Lord of Verona in 1311. He was the chief captain of the Ghibellines, and his court the refuge of some of the principal of the exiles. Dante was there in 1317 with Guido da Castello and Ugucione della Faggluola. To Can Grande he dedicated some cantos of the Paradiso, and presented them with that long Latin letter so difficult to associate with the name of Dante. At this time the court of Verona seems to have displayed a kind of barbaric splendour and magnificence, as if in imitation of the gay court of Frederick II. of Sicily.

⁴¹⁵The Gascon is Clement V., Archbishop of Bordeaux, and elected Pope in 1305. The noble Henry is the Emperor Henry of Luxemburg, who, the *Ottimo* says, "was valiant in arms, liberal and courteous, compassionate and gentle, and the friend of virtue." Pope Clement is said to have been secretly his enemy, while publicly he professed to be his friend; and finally to have instigated or connived at his death by poison. See *Purgatorio* VI. note to line 97. Henry came to Italy in 1310, when Can Grande was about nineteen years of age.

⁴¹⁶The commentary on the things told to Dante in the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*.

That are concealed behind few revolutions;
Yet would I not thy neighbours thou shouldst envy,
Because thy life into the future reaches
Beyond the punishment of their perfidies.”

When by its silence showed that sainted soul
That it had finished putting in the woof
Into that web which I had given it warped,
Began I, even as he who yearneth after,
Being in doubt, some counsel from a person
Who seeth, and uprightly wills, and loves:

“Well see I, father mine, how spurreth on
The time towards me such a blow to deal me
As heaviest is to him who most gives way.

Therefore with foresight it is well I arm me,
That, if the dearest place be taken from me,
I may not lose the others by my songs.

Down through the world of infinite bitterness,
And o’er the mountain, from whose beauteous summit
The eyes of my own Lady lifted me,
And afterward through heaven from light to light,
I have learned that which, if I tell again,
Will be a savour of strong herbs to many.

And if I am a timid friend to truth,
I fear lest I may lose my life with those
Who will hereafter call this time the olden.”

The light in which was smiling my own treasure
Which there I had discovered, flashed at first
As in the sunshine doth a golden mirror;
Then made reply: “A conscience overcast
Or with its own or with another’s shame,
Will taste forsooth the tartness of thy word;
But ne’ertheless, ail falsehood laid aside,
Make manifest thy vision utterly,
And let them scratch wherever is the itch;
For if thine utterance shall offensive be
At the first taste, a vital nutriment
’Twill leave thereafter, when it is digested.

This cry of thine shall do as doth the wind,
Which smiteth most the most exalted summits,
And that is no slight argument of honour.

Therefore are shown to thee within these wheels,
Upon the mount and in the dolorous valley,
Only the souls that unto fame are known;

Because the spirit of the hearer rests not,
Nor doth confirm its faith by an example
Which has the root of it unknown and hidden,

Or other reason that is not apparent."

Canto 18

Now was alone rejoicing in its word ⁴¹⁷
That soul beatified, and I was tasting ⁴¹⁸
My own, the bitter tempering with the sweet,
And the Lady who to God was leading me
Said: "Change thy thought; consider that I am
Near unto Him who every wrong disburdens."

Unto the loving accents of my comfort
I turned me round, and then what love I saw
Within those holy eyes I here relinquish; ⁴¹⁹

Not only that my language I distrust,
But that my mind cannot return so far
Above itself, unless another guide it.

Thus much upon that point can I repeat,
That, her again beholding, my affection
From every other longing was released.

While the eternal pleasure, which direct
Rayed upon Beatrice, from her fair face
Contented me with its reflected aspect,

Conquering me with the radiance of a smile,
She said to me, "Turn thee about and listen;
Not in mine eyes alone is Paradise."

Even as sometimes here do we behold
The affection in the look, if it be such
That all the soul is wrapt away by it,

⁴¹⁷The Heaven of Mars continued; and the ascent to the Heaven of Jupiter, where are seen the spirits of righteous kings and rulers.

⁴¹⁸Enjoying his own thought in silence.

⁴¹⁹Relinquish the hope and attempt of expressing.

So, by the flaming of the effulgence holy
 To which I turned, I recognized therein
 The wish of speaking to me somewhat farther.

And it began: "In this fifth resting-place
 Upon the tree that liveth by its summit,⁴²⁰
 And aye bears fruit, and never loses leaf,

Are blessed spirits that below, ere yet
 They came to Heaven, were of such great renown
 That every Muse therewith would affluent be.

Therefore look thou upon the cross's horns;
 He whom I now shall name will there enact
 What doth within a cloud its own swift fire."

I saw athwart the Cross a splendour drawn
 By naming Joshua, (even as he did it),⁴²¹
 Nor noted I the word before the deed;

And at the name of the great Maccabee⁴²²
 I saw another move itself revolving,
 And gladness was the whip unto that top.

Likewise for Charlemagne and for Orlando,
 Two of them my regard attentive followed
 As followeth the eye its falcon flying.

William thereafterward, and Renouard,⁴²³

⁴²⁰Paradise, or the system of the heavens, which lives by the divine influences from above, and whose fruit and foliage are eternal. The fifth resting-place or division of this tree is the planet Mars.

⁴²¹Joshua, the leader of the Israelites after the death of Moses, to whom God said, *Joshua* I. 5: "As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee: I will not fail thee; nor forsake thee."

⁴²²The great Maccabee was Judas Maccabaeus, who, as is stated in Biblical history, *I Maccabees* III. 3, "gat his people great honour, and put on a breast-plate as a giant, and girt his warlike harness about him, and he made battles, protecting the host with his sword. In his acts he was like a lion, and like a lion's whelp roaring for his prey."

⁴²³"This William," says Buti, being obliged to say something, "was a great prince, who fought and died for the faith of Christ; I have not been able to find out distinctly who he was." The *Ottimo* says it is William, Count of Orange in Provence; who, after fighting for the faith against the Saracens, "took the cowl, and finished his life holily in the service of God; and he is called Saint William of the Desert." He is the same hero, then, that figures in the old romances of the Twelve Peers of France, as Guillaume au Court Nez, or William of the Short Nose, so called from having had his nose cut off by a Saracen in battle. He is said to have been taken prisoner and carried to Africa by the Moorish King Tobaldo, whose wife Arabella he first converted to Christianity, and then eloped with. And who was Renouard? He was a young Moor, who was taken prisoner and up at the court of

And the Duke Godfrey, did attract my sight ⁴²⁴
 Along upon that Cross, and Robert Guiscard. ⁴²⁵

Then, moved and mingled with the other lights
 The soul that had addressed me showed how great
 An artist 'twas among the heavenly singers.

To my right side I turned myself around,
 My duty to behold in Beatrice
 Either by words or gesture signified;

And so translucent I beheld her eyes,
 So full of pleasure, that her countenance
 Surpassed its other and its latest wont.

And as, by feeling greater delectation,
 A man in doing good from day to day
 Becomes aware his virtue is increasing,

So I became aware that my gyration
 With heaven together had increased its arc,
 That miracle beholding more adorned. ⁴²⁶

And such as is the change, in little lapse
 Of time, in a pale woman, when her face
 Is from the load of bashfulness unladen.

Saint Louis with the king's daughter Alice, whom, after achieving unheard of wonders in battle and siege, he, being duly baptized, married. Later in life he also became a monk, and frightened the brotherhood by his greediness, and by going to sleep when he should have gone to mass. So say the old romances.

⁴²⁴Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, and leader of the First Crusade. He was born in 1061, and died, king of Jerusalem, in 1109.

⁴²⁵Robert Guiscard, founder of the kingdom of Naples, was the sixth of the twelve sons of the Baron Tancred de Hauteville of the diocese of Coutance in Lower Normandy, where he was born in the year 1015. In his youth he left his father's castle as a military adventurer, and crossed the Alps to join the Norman army in Apulia, whither three of his brothers had gone before him, and whither at different times six others followed him. Here he gradually won his way by his sword; and having rendered some signal service to Pope Nicholas II., he was made Duke of Apulia and Calabria, and of the lands in Italy and Sicily which he wrested from the Greeks and Saracens. Thus from a needy adventurer he rose to be the founder of a kingdom. Robert died in 1085, on an expedition against Constantinople, undertaken at the venerable age of seventy-five. Such was the career of Robert the Cunning, this being the meaning of the old Norman word *guiscard*, or *guischar*.

⁴²⁶The miracle is Beatrice, of whom Dante says, in the *Vita Nuova*: "Many, when she had passed, said, 'This is not a woman, rather is she one of the most beautiful angels of heaven.' Others said, 'She is a miracle. Blessed be the Lord, who can perform such a marvel!'"

Such was it in mine eyes, when I had turned,⁴²⁷
 Caused by the whiteness of the temperate star,
 The sixth, which to itself had gathered me.

Within that Jovial torch did I behold
 The sparkling of the love which was therein
 Delineate our language to mine eyes.

And even as birds uprisen from the shore,
 As in congratulation o'er their food,
 Make squadrons of themselves, now round, now long,

So from within those lights the holy creatures
 Sang flying to and fro, and in their figures
 Made of themselves now D, now I, now L.⁴²⁸

First singing they to their own music moved;
 Then one becoming of these characters,
 A little while they rested and were silent.

⁴²⁷The change from the red light of Mars to the white light of Jupiter. "This planet," says Brunetto Latini, *Tresor*, I. Ch. CXI., "is gentle and piteous, and full of all good things." Of its symbolism Dante, *Convito*, II. 14, says: "The heaven of Jupiter may be compared to Geometry on account of two properties – it moves between two heavens repugnant to its good temperateness, midway between the coldness of Saturn and the heat of Mars; and, that among all the stars it shows itself white, almost silvery. Geometry moves between two opposites – between the point and the circle; for, as Euclid says, the point is the beginning of Geometry, and the circle is its most perfect figure, and may therefore be considered its end. And moreover Geometry is very white, inasmuch as it is without spot of error, and very exact in itself and its handmaiden which is called Perspective." Of the influences of Jupiter, Buti, quoting as usual Albumasar, speaks thus: "The planet Jupiter is of a cold, humid, airy, temperate nature, and signifies the natural soul, and life, and animate bodies, children and grandchildren, and beauty, and wise men and doctors of laws, and just judges, and firmness, and knowledge, and intellect, and interpretation of dreams, truth and divine worship, doctrine of law and faith, religion, veneration and fear of God, unity of faith and providence thereof, and regulation of manners and behaviour, and will be laudable, and signifies patient observation, and perhaps also to it belong swiftness of mind, improvidence and boldness in dangers, and patience and delay, and it signifies beatitude, and acquisition, and victory, ... and veneration, and kingdom, and kings, and rich men, nobles and magnates, hope and joy, and cupidity in commodities, also of fortune, in new kinds of grain, and harvests, and wealth, and security in all things, and good habits of mind, and liberality, command and goodness, boasting and bravery of mind, and boldness, true love and delight of supremacy over the citizens of a city, delight of potentates and magnates, ... and beauty and ornament of dress, and joy and laughter, and affluence of speech, and glibness of tongue, ... and hate of evil, and attachments among men, and command of the known, and avoidance of the unknown. These are the significations of the planet Jupiter, and such the influences it exerts."

⁴²⁸The first letters of the word Diligite, completed afterward.

O divine Pegasea, thou who genius ⁴²⁹
 Dost glorious make, and render it long-lived,
 And this through thee the cities and the kingdoms,
 Illume me with thyself, that I may bring
 Their figures out as I have them conceived!
 Apparent be thy power in these brief verses!
 Themselves then they displayed in five times seven
 Vowels and consonants; and I observed
 The parts as they seemed spoken unto me.

Diligite justitiam, these were
 First verb and noun of all that was depicted;
Qui judicatis terram were the last. ⁴³⁰

Thereafter in the M of the fifth word
 Remained they so arranged, that Jupiter
 Seemed to be silver there with gold inlaid.

And other lights I saw descend where was
 The summit of the M, and pause there singing
 The good, I think, that draws them to itself

Then, as in striking upon burning logs
 Upward there fly innumerable sparks,
 Whence fools are wont to look for auguries,

More than a thousand lights seemed thence to rise, ⁴³¹
 And to ascend, some more, and others less,
 Even as the Sun that lights them had allotted;

And, each one being quiet in its place,
 The head and neck beheld I of an eagle ⁴³²
 Delineated by that inlaid fire.

He who there paints has none to be his guide;
 But Himself guides; and is from Him remembered

⁴²⁹Dante gives this title to the Muse, because from the hoof-beat of Pegasus sprang the fountain of the Muses, Hippocrene. The invocation is here to Calliope, the Muse of epic verse.

⁴³⁰*Wisdom of Solomon* I. 1: "Love righteousness, ye that be judges of the earth."

⁴³¹Divination by fire, and other childish fancies about sparks, such as wishes for golden sequins, and nuns going into a chapel.

⁴³²In this eagle, the symbol of Imperialism, Dante displays his political faith. Among just rulers, this is the shape in which the true government of the world appears to him. In the invective against Pope Boniface VIII., with which the canto closes, he gives still further expression of his intense Imperialism.

That virtue which is form unto the nest.
 The other beatitude, that contented seemed ⁴³³
 At first to bloom a lily on the M,
 By a slight motion followed out the imprint.
 O gentle star! what and how many gems
 Did demonstrate to me, that all our justice
 Effect is of that heaven which thou ingemmet!
 Wherefore I pray the Mind, in which begin
 Thy motion and thy virtue, to regard
 Whence comes the smoke that vitiates thy rays;
 So that a second time it now be wroth
 With buying and with selling in the temple
 Whose walls were built with signs and martyrdoms! ⁴³⁴
 O soldiery of heaven, whom I contemplate,
 Implore for those who are upon the earth
 All gone astray after the bad example! ⁴³⁵
 Once 'twas the custom to make war with swords;
 But now 'tis made by taking here and there ⁴³⁶
 The bread the pitying Father shuts from none.
 Yet thou, who writest but to cancel, think ⁴³⁷
 That Peter and that Paul, who for this vineyard
 Which thou art spoiling died, are still alive!
 Well canst thou say: "So steadfast my desire
 Is unto him who willed to live alone,
 And for a dance was led to martyrdom, ⁴³⁸
 That I know not the Fisherman nor Paul."

⁴³³The other group of beatified spirits.

⁴³⁴As Tertullian says: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

⁴³⁵The bad example of the head of the Church.

⁴³⁶By excommunication, which shut out its victims from the table of the Lord.

⁴³⁷Pope Boniface VIII., who is here accused of dealing out ecclesiastical censures only to be paid for revoking them.

⁴³⁸John the Baptist. But here is meant his image on the golden florin of Florence.

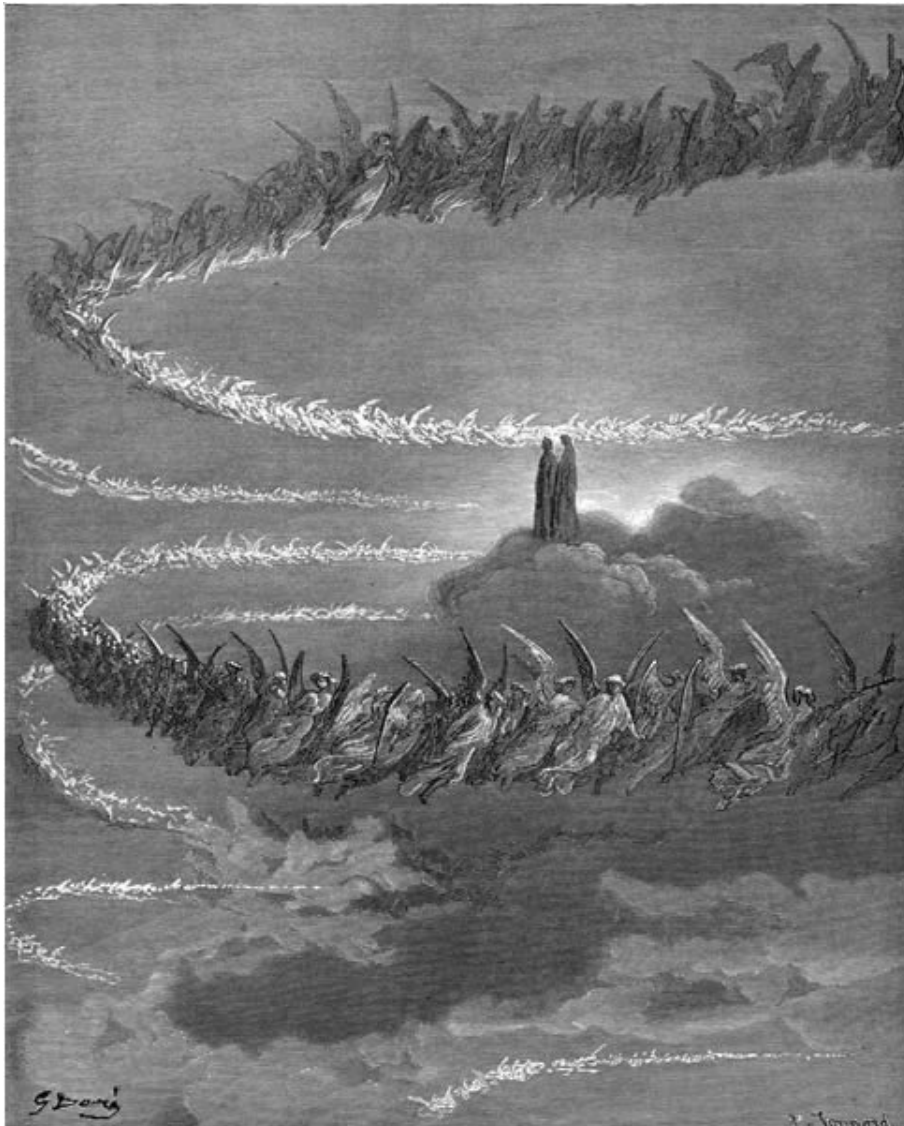


Figure 8: *In the sphere of Jupiter, the blessed souls circle to form letters.*



Figure 9: *Dante and Beatrice translated to the sphere of Jupiter.*

Canto 19

APPEARED before me with its wings outspread ⁴³⁹
The beautiful image that in sweet fruition
Made jubilant the interwoven souls;

Appeared a little ruby each, wherein
Ray of the sun was burning so enkindled
That each into mine eyes refracted it.

And what it now behoves me to retrace
Nor voice has e'er reported, nor ink written,
Nor was by fantasy e'er comprehended;

For speak I saw, and likewise heard, the beak,
And utter with its voice both *I* and *My*,
When in conception it was *We* and *Our*. ⁴⁴⁰

And it began: "Being just and merciful
Am I exalted here unto that glory
Which cannot be exceeded by desire;

And upon earth I left my memory
Such, that the evil-minded people there
Commend it, but continue not the story."

So doth a single heat from many embers
Make itself felt, even as from many loves
Issued a single sound from out that image.

Whence I thereafter: "O perpetual flowers
Of the eternal joy, that only one
Make me perceive your odours manifold,

Exhaling, break within me the great fast

⁴³⁹The Heaven of Jupiter continued.

⁴⁴⁰The eagle speaks as one person, though composed of a multitude of spirits. Here Dante's idea of unity under the Empire finds expression.

Which a long season has in hunger held me,
Not finding for it any food on earth.

Well do I know, that if in heaven its mirror ⁴⁴¹
Justice Divine another realm doth make,
Yours apprehends it not through any veil.

You know how I attentively address me
To listen; and you know what is the doubt ⁴⁴²
That is in me so very old a fast."

Even as a falcon issuing from his hood,
Doth move his head, and with his wings applaud him
Showing desire, and making himself fine,

Saw I become that standard, which of lauds ⁴⁴³
Was interwoven of the grace divine,
With such songs as he knows who there rejoices.

Then it began: "He who a compass turned
On the world's outer verge, and who within it
Devised so much occult and manifest,

Could not the impress of his power so make
On all the universe, as that his Word ⁴⁴⁴
Should not remain in infinite excess.

And this makes certain that the first proud being,
Who was the paragon of every creature,
By not awaiting light fell immature.

And hence appears it, that each minor nature
Is scant receptacle unto that good
Which has no end, and by itself is measured.

In consequence our vision, which perforce
Must be some ray of that intelligence
With which all things whatever are replete,

⁴⁴¹This Mirror of Divine Justice is the planet Saturn, to which Dante alludes in Canto IX. 61, where, speaking of the Intelligences of Saturn, he says: "Above us there are mirrors, Thrones you call them, From which shines out on us God Judicant."

⁴⁴²Whether a good life outside the pale of the holy Catholic faith could lead to Paradise.

⁴⁴³Dante here calls the blessed spirits lauds, or "praises of the grace divine," as in *Inferno* II. 103, he calls Beatrice "the true praise of God."

⁴⁴⁴The Word or Wisdom of the Deity far exceeds any manifestation of it in the creation.

Cannot in its own nature be so potent,⁴⁴⁵
That it shall not its origin discern
Far beyond that which is apparent to it.

Therefore into the justice sempiternal
The power of vision that your world receives,
As eye into the ocean, penetrates;

Which, though it see the bottom near the shore,
Upon the deep perceives it not, and yet
'Tis there, but it is hidden by the depth.

There is no light but comes from the serene
That never is o'ercast, nay, it is darkness
Or shadow of the flesh, or else its poison.

Amply to thee is opened now the cavern
Which has concealed from thee the living justice
Of which thou mad'st such frequent questioning.

For saidst thou: 'Born a man is on the shore
Of Indus, and is none who there can speak
Of Christ, nor who can read, nor who can write;

And all his inclinations and his actions
Are good, so far as human reason sees,
Without a sin in life or in discourse:

He dieth unbaptised and without faith;
Where is this justice that condemneth him?
Where is his fault, if he do not believe?'

Now who art thou, that on the bench wouldst sit
In judgment at a thousand miles away,
With the short vision of a single span?

Truly to him who with me subtilizes,
If so the Scripture were not over you,
For doubting there were marvellous occasion.

O animals terrene, O stolid minds,
The primal will, that in itself is good,
Ne'er from itself, the Good Supreme, has moved.

⁴⁴⁵The human mind can never be so powerful but that it will perceive the Divine Mind to be infinitely beyond its comprehension; or, as Buti interprets – reading *gli è parvente*, which reading I have followed – “much greater than what appears to the human mind, and what the human intellect sees.”

So much is just as is accordant with it;
 No good created draws it to itself,
 But it, by raying forth, occasions that."

Even as above her nest goes circling round
 The stork when she has fed her little ones,
 And he who has been fed looks up at her,

So lifted I my brows, and even such
 Became the blessed image, which its wings
 Was moving, by so many counsels urged.

Circling around it sang, and said: "As are
 My notes to thee, who dost not comprehend them,
 Such is the eternal judgment to you mortals."

Those lucent splendours of the Holy Spirit
 Grew quiet then, but still within the standard
 That made the Romans reverend to the world.

It recommenced: "Unto this kingdom never
 Ascended one who had not faith in Christ,⁴⁴⁶
 Before or since he to the tree was nailed.

But look thou, many crying are, 'Christ, Christ!'⁴⁴⁷
 Who at the judgment shall be far less near
 To him than some shall be who knew not Christ.

Such Christians shall the Ethiop condemn⁴⁴⁸
 When the two companies shall be divided,⁴⁴⁹
 The one for ever rich, the other poor.

What to your kings may not the Persians say,
 When they that volume opened shall behold⁴⁵⁰
 In which are written down all their dispraises?

⁴⁴⁶*Galatians* III. 23: "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed."

⁴⁴⁷*Matthew* VII. 21: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

⁴⁴⁸*Matthew* XII. 41: "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it.

⁴⁴⁹The righteous and the unrighteous at the day of judgment.

⁴⁵⁰*Revelations* XX. 12: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

There shall be seen, among the deeds of Albert,⁴⁵¹
That which ere long shall set the pen in motion,
For which the realm of Prague shall be deserted.

There shall be seen the woe that on the Seine
He brings by falsifying of the coin,
Who by the blow of a wild boar shall die.⁴⁵²

There shall be seen the pride that causes thirst,
Which makes the Scot and Englishman so mad⁴⁵³
That they within their boundaries cannot rest;

Be seen the luxury and effeminate life
Of him of Spain, and the Bohemian,⁴⁵⁴
Who valour never knew and never wished;

Be seen the Cripple of Jerusalem,⁴⁵⁵
His goodness represented by an I,
While the reverse an M shall represent;

Be seen the avarice and poltroonery
Of him who guards the Island of the Fire,⁴⁵⁶
Wherein Anchises finished his long life;

⁴⁵¹This is the German Albert of *Purgatorio* VI. 97. The deed which was soon to move the pen of the Recording Angel was the invasion of Bohemia in 1303.

⁴⁵²Philip the Fair of France, who, after his defeat at Courtray in 1302, falsified the coin of the realm, with which he paid his troops. He was killed in 1314 by a fall from his horse, caused by the attack of a wild boar. Dante uses the word *cotenna*, the skin of the wild boar, for the boar itself.

⁴⁵³The allusion here is to the border wars between John Baliol of Scotland, and Edward I. of England.

⁴⁵⁴Most of the commentators say that this king of Spain was one of the Alphonsos, but do not agree as to which one. Tommaseo says it was Ferdinand IV. (1295-1312), and he is probably of right. It was this monarch, or rather that his generals, who took Gibraltar from the Moors. In 1312 he put to death unjustly the brothers Carvajal, who on the scaffold summoned him to appear before the judgment seat of God thirty days; and before the time had expired he was found dead upon his sofa. From this event, he received the surname *El Emplazado* – the Summoned. It is said that his death was caused by intemperance.

The Bohemian is Wincelous II., son of Ottocar. He is mentioned, *Purgatorio* VII. 101, as one "who feeds in luxury and ease."

⁴⁵⁵Charles II., king of Apulia, whose virtues may be represented by a unit and his vices by a thousand. He was called the "Cripple of Jerusalem," on account of his lameness, and because as king of Apulia he also bore the title of King of Jerusalem. See *Purgatorio* XX. note to line 79.

⁴⁵⁶Frederick, son of Peter of Aragon, and king, or in some form ruler of Sicily, called from Mount Etna the "Island of the Fire." The *Ottimo* comments thus: "Peter of Aragon was liberal and magnanimous, and the author says that this man is avaricious and pusil-

And to declare how pitiful he is
 Shall be his record in contracted letters ⁴⁵⁷
 Which shall make note of much in little space.

And shall appear to each one the foul deeds
 Of uncle and of brother who a nation ⁴⁵⁸
 So famous have dishonoured, and two crowns.

And he of Portugal and he of Norway ⁴⁵⁹
 Shall there be known, and he of Rascia too, ⁴⁶⁰
 Who saw in evil hour the coin of Venice. ⁴⁶¹

O happy Hungary, if she let herself ⁴⁶²

lanimous." Perhaps his greatest crime in the eyes of Dante was his abandoning the cause of the Imperialists. According to Virgil, Anchises died in Sicily, "on the joyless coast of Drepanum."

⁴⁵⁷In diminutive letters, and not in Roman capitals, like the *diligite justitiam* of Canto XVIII. 91, and the record of the virtues and vices of the "Cripple of Jerusalem."

⁴⁵⁸The uncle of Frederick of Sicily was James, king of the Balearic Islands. He joined Philip the Bold of France in his disastrous invasion of Catalonia; and in consequence lost his own crown.

The brother of Frederick was James of Aragon, who, on becoming king of that realm, gave up Sicily, which his father had acquired.

By these acts they dishonoured their native land and the crowns they wore.

⁴⁵⁹Dionysius, king of Portugal, who reigned from 1279 to 1325. The *Ottimo* says that, "given up wholly to the acquisition of wealth, he led the life of a merchant, and had money dealings with all the great merchants of his reign; nothing regal, nothing magnificent, can be recorded of him."

Philalethes is disposed to vindicate the character of Dionysius against these aspersions, and to think them founded only in the fact that Dionysius loved the arts of peace better than the more shining art of war, joined in no crusade against the Moors, and was a patron of manufactures and commerce.

The *Ottimo's* note on this nameless Norwegian is curious: "As his islands are situated at the uttermost extremities of the earth, so his life is on the extreme of reasonableness and civilization."

Benvenuto remarks only that "Norway is a cold northern region, where the days are very short, and whence come excellent falcons." Buti is still more brief. He says "That is, the king of Norway." Neither of these commentators, nor any of the later ones, suggest the name of this monarch, except the Germans, Philalethes and Witte, who think it may be Eric the Priest-Hater, or Hakon Longshanks.

⁴⁶⁰Rascia or Ragusa is a city in Dalmatia, situated on the Adriatic, and capital of the kingdom of that name. The king here alluded to is Uroscius II., who married a daughter of the Emperor Michael Palaeologus, and counterfeited the Venetian coin.

⁴⁶¹In this line I have followed the reading *male ha visto*, instead of the more common one, *male agguistò*.

⁴⁶²The *Ottimo* comments as follows: "Here he reproves the vile and unseemly lives of the kings of Hungary, down to Andrea" – Dante's contemporary – "whose life the Hungarians praised, and whose death they wept."

Be wronged no farther! and Navarre the happy,
If with the hills that gird her she be armed! ⁴⁶³

And each one may believe that now, as hanel ⁴⁶⁴
Thereof, do Nicosia and Famagosta ⁴⁶⁵
Lament and rage because of their own beast,
Who from the others' flank departeth not." ⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶³If it can make the Pyrenees a bulwark to protect it against the invasion of Philip the Fair of France. It was not till four centuries later that Louis XIV. made his famous boast, "*Il n'y a plus de Pyrenees.*"

⁴⁶⁴In proof of this prediction the example of Cyprus is given.

⁴⁶⁵Nicosia and Famagosta are cities of Cyprus, here taken for the whole island, in 1300 badly governed by Henry II. of the house of the Lusignani. "And well he may call him beast," says the *Ottimo*, "for he was wholly given up to lust and sensuality, which should be far removed from every king."

⁴⁶⁶Upon this line Benvenuto comments with unusual vehemence. "This king," he says, "does not differ nor depart from the side of the other beasts; that is, of the other vicious kings. And of a truth, Cyprus with her people differeth not, nor is separated from the bestial life of the rest; rather it surpasseth and exceedeth all peoples and kings of the kingdoms of Christendom to superfluity of luxury, gluttony, effeminacy, and every kind of pleasure. Put to attempt to describe the kinds, the sumptuousness, the variety, and the frequency of their banquets, would be disgusting to narrate, and tedious and harmful to write. Therefore men who live soberly and temperately should avert their eyes from beholding, and their ears from hearing, the meretricious, lewd, and fetid manners of that island, which, with God's permission, the Genoese have now invaded, captured, and evil entreated and laid under contribution."



Figure 10: *The blessed souls form an eagle in the sky.*

Canto 20

WHEN he who all the world illuminates ⁴⁶⁷
Out of our hemisphere so far descends
That on all sides the daylight is consumed,
The heaven, that erst by him alone was kindled,
Doth suddenly reveal itself again
By many lights, wherein is one resplendent.
And came into my mind this act of heaven,
When the ensign of the world and of its leaders
Had silent in the blessed beak become;
Because those living luminaries all,
By far more luminous, did songs begin
Lapsing and falling from my memory.
O gentle Love, that with a smile dost cloak thee,
How ardent in those sparks didst thou appear,
That had the breath alone of holy thoughts!
After the precious and pellucid crystals,
With which begemmed the sixth light I beheld,
Silence imposed on the angelic bells,
I seemed to hear the murmuring of a river
That clear descendeth down from rock to rock,
Showing the affluence of its mountain-top.
And as the sound upon the cithern's neck
Taketh its form, and as upon the vent
Of rustic pipe the wind that enters it,
Even thus, relieved from the delay of waiting,
That murmuring of the eagle mounted up
Along its neck, as if it had been hollow.

⁴⁶⁷The Heaven of Jupiter continued.

There it became a voice, and issued thence
 From out its beak, in such a form of words
 As the heart waited for wherein I wrote them.

“The part in me which sees and bears the sun
 In mortal eagles,” it began to me,
 “Now fixedly must needs be looked upon;

For of the fires of which I make my figure,
 Those whence the eye doth sparkle in my head
 Of all their orders the supremest are.

He who is shining in the midst as pupil ⁴⁶⁸
 Was once the singer of the Holy Spirit,
 Who bore the ark from city unto city;

Now knoweth he the merit of his song,
 In so far as effect of his own counsel, ⁴⁶⁹
 By the reward which is commensurate.

Of five, that make a circle for my brow,
 He that approacheth nearest to my beak ⁴⁷⁰
 Did the poor widow for her son console;

Now knoweth he how dearly it doth cost
 Not following Christ, by the experience
 Of this sweet life and of its opposite.

He who comes next in the circumference ⁴⁷¹
 Of which I speak, upon its highest arc,
 Did death postpone by penitence sincere; ⁴⁷²

Now knoweth he that the eternal judgment
 Suffers no change, albeit worthy prayer
 Maketh below to-morrow of to-day.

The next who follows, with the laws and me, ⁴⁷³

⁴⁶⁸King David, who carried the Ark of the Covenant from Kirjath-jearim to the house of Obed-Edom, and thence to Jerusalem. See 2 *Samuel* VI.

⁴⁶⁹In so far as the Psalms were the result of his own free will, and not of divine inspiration.

⁴⁷⁰The Emperor Trajan, whose soul was saved by the prayers of St. Gregory. For the story of the poor widow, see *Purgatorio* X. 73, and accompanying note.

⁴⁷¹King Hezekiah.

⁴⁷²2 *Kings* XX. II: “And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord; and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.”

⁴⁷³Constantine, who transferred the seat of empire, the Roman laws, and the Roman standard to Byzantium, thus in a poetic sense becoming a Greek.

Under the good intent that bore bad fruit ⁴⁷⁴
 Became a Greek by ceding to the pastor;
 Now knoweth he how all the ill deduced
 From his good action is not harmful to him,
 Although the world thereby may be destroyed.
 And he, whom in the downward arc thou seest,
 Guglielmo was, whom the same land deploras ⁴⁷⁵
 That weepeth Charles and Frederick yet alive;
 Now knoweth he how heaven enamoured is
 With a just king; and in the outward show
 Of his effulgence he reveals it still.
 Who would believe, down in the errant world,
 That e'er the Trojan Ripheus in this round ⁴⁷⁶
 Could be the fifth one of the holy lights
 Now knoweth he enough of what the world
 Has not the power to see of grace divine,
 Although his sight may not discern the bottom."
 Like as a lark that in the air expatiates,
 First singing and then silent with content
 Of the last sweetness that doth satisfy her,

⁴⁷⁴This refers to the supposed gift of Constantine to Pope Sylvester, known in ecclesiastical history as the patrimony of Saint Peter. See *Inferno* XXI. 115.

⁴⁷⁵William the Second, surnamed the Good, son of Robert Guiscard, and king of Apulia and Sicily, which kingdoms were then lamenting the living presence of such kings as Charles the Lamé, "the Cripple of Jerusalem," king of Apulia, and Frederick of Aragon, king of Sicily. "King Guilielmo," says the *Ottimo*, "was just and reasonable, loved his subjects, and kept them in such peace, that king in Sicily might then be esteemed living in a terrestrial paradise. He was liberal to all, and proportioned his bounties to the virtue [of the receiver]. And he had this rule, that if a vicious or evil-speaking courtier came to his court, he was immediately noticed by the masters of ceremony, and provided with gifts and robes, so that he might have a cause to depart. If he was wise, he departed; if not, he was politely dismissed." The Vicar of Wakefield seems to have followed the example of the good King William, for he says: "When it any one of our relations was found to be a person of very bad character, a troublesome guest, or one we desired to get rid of, upon his leaving my house I ever took care to lend him a riding-coat, or a pair of boots, or sometimes a horse of small value, and I always had the satisfaction of finding he never came back to return them."

⁴⁷⁶A Trojan hero slain at the sack of Troy. *Aeneid*, II. 426: "Ripheus also falls, the most just among the Trojans, and most observant of the right." Venturi thinks that, if Dante must needs introduce a Pagan into Paradise, he would have done better to have chosen Aeneas, who was the hero of his master, Virgil, and, moreover, the founder of the Roman empire.

Such seemed to me the image of the imprint
Of the eternal pleasure, by whose will
Doth everything become the thing it is.

And notwithstanding to my doubt I was
As glass is to the colour that invests it,
To wait the time in silence it endured not,

But forth from out my mouth, "What things are"
Extorted with the force of its own weight;
Whereat I saw great joy of coruscation.

Thereafterward with eye still more enkindled
The blessed standard made to me reply,
To keep me not in wonderment suspended:

"I see that thou believest in these things
Because I say them, but thou seest not how;
So that, although believed in, they are hidden.

Thou doest as he doth who a thing by name
Well apprehendeth, but its quiddity ⁴⁷⁷
Cannot perceive, unless another show it.

Regnum coelorum suffereth violence ⁴⁷⁸
From fervent love, and from that living hope
That overcometh the Divine volition;

Not in the guise that man o'ercometh man,
But conquers it because it will be conquered,
And conquered conquers by benignity.

The first life of the eyebrow and the fifth ⁴⁷⁹
Cause thee astonishment, because with them
Thou seest the region of the angels painted.

They passed not from their bodies, as thou thinkest,
Gentiles. but Christians in the steadfast faith
Of feet that were to suffer and had suffered. ⁴⁸⁰

For one from Hell, where no one e'er turns back ⁴⁸¹

⁴⁷⁷In scholastic language the quiddity of a thing is its essence, or that by which it is what it is.

⁴⁷⁸*Matthew* XI. 12: "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

⁴⁷⁹Trajan and Ripheus.

⁴⁸⁰Ripheus lived before Christ, and Trajan after.

⁴⁸¹Trajan.

Unto good will, returned unto his bones,
And that of living hope was the reward,emdash

Of living hope, that placed its efficacy
In prayers to God made to resuscitate him,
So that 'twere possible to move his will. ⁴⁸²

The glorious soul concerning which I speak, ⁴⁸³
Returning to the flesh, where brief its stay,
Believed in Him who had the power to aid it;

And, in believing, kindled to such fire
Of genuine love, that at the second death
Worthy it was to come unto this joy.

The other one, through grace, that from so deep ⁴⁸⁴
A fountain wells that never hath the eye
Of any creature reached its primal wave,

Set all his love below on righteousness;
Wherefore from grace to grace did God uncloze
His eye to our redemption yet to be,

Whence he believed therein, and suffered not
From that day forth the stench of paganism,
And he reprov'd therefor the folk perverse.

Those Maidens three, whom at the right-hand wheel ⁴⁸⁵
Thou didst behold, were unto him for baptism
More than a thousand years before baptizing.

O thou predestination, how remote
Thy root is from the aspect of all those
Who the First Cause do not behold entire!

And you, O mortals! hold yourselves restrained
In judging; for ourselves, who look on God,
We do not know as yet all the elect;

And sweet to us is such a deprivation,

⁴⁸²Being in hell, he could not repent; being resuscitated, his inclinations could turn towards good.

⁴⁸³The legend of Trajan is, that by the prayers of St. Gregory the Great he was restored to life, after he had been dead four hundred years; that he lived long enough to be baptized, and was then received into Paradise. See *Purgatorio* X. note to line 73.

⁴⁸⁴Ripheus. "This is a fiction of our author," says Buti, "as the intelligent reader may imagine; for there is no proof that Ripheus the Trojan is saved."

⁴⁸⁵Faith, hope, and Charity. See *Purgatorio* XXIX. line 121.

Because our good in this good is made perfect,
That whatsoe'er God wills, we also will."

After this manner by that shape divine,
To make clear in me my short-sightedness,
Was given to me a pleasant medicine;

And as good singer a good lutanist
Accompanies with vibrations of the chords,
Whereby more pleasantness the song acquires,

So, while it spake, do I remember me
That I beheld both of those blessed lights,
Even as the winking of the eyes concords,
Moving unto the words their little flames.



Figure 11: First singing and then silent with content...

Canto 21

ALREADY on my Lady's face mine eyes⁴⁸⁶
 Again were fastened, and with these my mind,
 And from all other purpose was withdrawn;
 And she smiled not; but "If I were to smile,"

⁴⁸⁶The Heaven of Saturn, where are seen the Spirits of the Contemplative. "This planet," says Brunetto Latini, "is cruel, felonious, and of a cold nature." Dante, *Convito*, II. 14, makes it the symbol of Astrology. "The Heaven of Saturn," he says, "has two properties by which it may be compared to Astrology. The first is the slowness of its movement through the twelve signs; for, according to the writings of Astrologers, its revolution requires twenty-nine years and more. The second is, that it is the highest of all the planets. And these two properties are in Astrology; for in completing its circle, that is, in learning it, a great space of time passes; both on account of its demonstrations, which are in any of the above-mentioned sciences, and on account of the experience which is necessary to judge rightly in it. And, the moreover, it is the highest of all; for, as Aristotle says at the beginning of his treatise on the Soul, Science is of high nobility, from the nobleness of its subject, and from its certainty; and this more than any of the above-mentioned is noble and high, from its noble and high subject, which is the movement of the heavens; and high and noble from its certainty, which is without any defect, as one that proceeds from a most perfect and regular source. And if any one thinks there is any defect in it, the defect is not on the side of the Science, but, as Ptolemy says, it comes from our negligence, and to that it should be attributed." Of the influences of Saturn, Buti, quoting Albumasar, says: "The nature of Saturn is cold, dry, melancholy, sombre, of grave asperity, and may be cold and moist, and of ugly colour, and is of much eating and of true love. ... And it signifies ships at sea, and journeyings long and perilous, and malice, and envy, and tricks, and seductions, and boldness in dangers, ... and singularity, and little companionship of men, and pride and magnanimity, and simulation and boasting, and servitude of rulers, and every deed done with force and malice, and injuries, and anger, and strife, and bonds and imprisonment, truth in words, delight, and beauty, and intellect; experiments and diligence in cunning, and affluence of thought, and profoundness of counsel. ... And it signifies old and ponderous men, and gravity and fear, lamentation and sadness, embarrassment of mind, and fraud, and affliction, and destruction, and loss, and dead men, and remains of the dead; weeping and orphanhood, and ancient things, ancestors, uncles, elder brothers, servants and muleteers, and men despised, and robbers, and those who dig graves, and those who steal the garments of the dead, and tanners, vituperators, magicians, and warriors, and vile men."

She unto me began, "thou wouldst become
Like Semele, when she was turned to ashes.⁴⁸⁷

Because my beauty, that along the stairs
Of the eternal palace more enkindles,
As thou hast seen, the farther we ascend,
If it were tempered not, is so resplendent
That all thy mortal power in its effulgence
Would seem a leaflet that the thunder crushes.

We are uplifted to the seventh splendour,⁴⁸⁸
That underneath the burning Lion's breast
Now radiates downward mingled with his power.

Fix in direction of thine eyes the mind,
And make of them a mirror for the figure
That in this mirror shall appear to thee."

He who could know what was the pasturage
My sight had in that blessed countenance,
When I transferred me to another care,

Would recognize how grateful was to me
Obedience unto my celestial escort,
By counterpoising one side with the other.

Within the crystal which, around the world
Revolving, bears the name of its dear leader,
Under whom every wickedness lay dead,⁴⁸⁹

Coloured like gold, on which the sunshine gleams,
A stairway I beheld to such a height⁴⁹⁰
Uplifted, that mine eye pursued it not.

Likewise beheld I down the steps descending
So many splendours, that I thought each light
That in the heaven appears was there diffused.

⁴⁸⁷Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, who besought her lover, Jupiter, to come to her, as he went to Juno, "in all the pomp of his divinity."

⁴⁸⁸To the Planet Saturn, which was now in the sign of the Lion, and sent down its influence warmed by the heat of this constellation.

⁴⁸⁹The peaceful reign of Saturn, in the Age of Gold.

⁴⁹⁰"As in Mars," comments the *Ottimo*, "he placed the Cross for a stair-way, to denote that through martyrdom the spirits had ascended to God; and in Jupiter, the Eagle, as a sign of the Empire; so here he places a golden stairway, to denote that the ascent of these souls, which was by contemplation, is more supreme and more lofty than any other."

And as accordant with their natural custom
 The rooks together at the break of day
 Bestir themselves to warm their feathers cold;
 Then some of them fly off without return,
 Others come back to where they started from,
 And others, wheeling round, still keep at home;
 Such fashion it appeared to me was there
 Within the sparkling that together came,
 As soon as on a certain step it struck,
 And that which nearest unto us remained ⁴⁹¹
 Became so clear, that in my thought I said,
 "Well I perceive the love thou showest me;
 But she, from whom I wait the how and when ⁴⁹²
 Of speech and silence, standeth still; whence I
 Against desire do well if I ask not."
 She thereupon, who saw my silentness
 In the sight of Him who seeth everything,
 Said unto me, "Let loose thy warm desire."
 And I began: "No merit of my own
 Renders me worthy of response from thee;
 But for her sake who granteth me the asking,
 Thou blessed life that dost remain concealed
 In thy beatitude, make known to me
 The cause which draweth thee so near my side;
 And tell me why is silent in this wheel
 The dulcet symphony of Paradise,
 That through the rest below sounds so devoutly."
 "Thou hast thy hearing mortal as thy sight,"
 It answer made to me;" they sing not here,
 For the same cause that Beatrice has not smiled. ⁴⁹³
 Thus far adown the holy stairway's steps
 Have I descended but to give thee welcome
 With words, and with the light that mantles me;

⁴⁹¹The spirit of Peter Damiano.

⁴⁹²Beatrice.

⁴⁹³Because your mortal ear could not endure the sound of our singing, as your mortal eye could not the splendour of Beatrice's smile.

Nor did more love cause me to be more ready,
 For love as much and more up there is burning,
 As doth the flaming manifest to thee.

But the high charity, that makes us servants
 Prompt to the counsel which controls the world,
 Allotteth here, even as thou dost observe."

"I see full well," said I, "O sacred lamp!
 How love unfettered in this court sufficeth
 To follow the eternal Providence;

But this is what seems hard for me to see,
 Wherefore predestinate wast thou alone
 Unto this office from among thy consorts."

No sooner had I come to the last word,
 Than of its middle made the light a centre,
 Whirling itself about like a swift millstone. ⁴⁹⁴

When answer made the love that was therein:
 "On me directed is a light divine,
 Piercing through this in which I am embosomed,
 Of which the virtue with my sight conjoined
 Lifts me above myself so far, I see
 The supreme essence from which this is drawn.

Hence comes the joyfulness with which I flame,
 For to my sight, as far as it is clear,
 The clearness of the flame I equal make. ⁴⁹⁵

But that soul in the heaven which is most pure,
 That seraph which his eye on God most fixes,
 Could this demand of thine not satisfy;

Because so deeply sinks in the abyss
 Of the eternal statute what thou askest,
 From all created sight it is cut off.

And to the mortal world, when thou returnest,
 This carry back, that it may not presume

⁴⁹⁴As in Canto XII. 3: "Began the holy millstone to revolve."

⁴⁹⁵As in Canto XIV. 40:-

"Its brightness is proportioned to its ardour,
 The ardour to the vision and the vision
 Equals what grace it has above its worth."

Longer tow'rd such a goal to move its feet.
The mind, that shineth here, on earth doth smoke;
From this observe how can it do below
That which it cannot though the heaven assume it?"

Such limit did its words prescribe to me,
The question I relinquished, and restricted
Myself to ask it humbly who it was.

"Between two shores of Italy rise cliffs,⁴⁹⁶
And not far distant from thy native place,
So high, the thunders far below them sound,
And form a ridge that Catria is called,
'Neath which is consecrate a hermitage
Wont to be dedicate to worship only."

Thus unto me the third speech recommenced,
And then, continuing, it said: "Therein
Unto God's service I became so steadfast,
That feeding only on the juice of olives
Lightly I passed away the heats and frosts,
Contented in my thoughts contemplative.

That cloister used to render to these heavens
Abundantly, and now is empty grown,
So that perforce it soon must be revealed.

I in that place was Peter Damiano;
And Peter the Sinner was I in the house
Of Our Lady on the Adriatic shore.

Little of mortal life remained to me,
When I was called and dragged forth to the hat
Which shifteth evermore from bad to worse.

Came Cephas, and the mighty Vessel came
Of the Holy Spirit, meagre and barefooted,
Taking the food of any hostelry.

Now some one to support them on each side
The modern shepherds need, and some to lead them,
So heavy are they, and to hold their trains.

⁴⁹⁶Among the Apennines, east of Arezzo, rises Mount Catria, sometimes called, from its forked or double summit, the *Forca di Fano*. On its slope stands the monastery of Santa Croce di Fonte Avellana. Troya, in his *Veltro Allegorico*, as quoted in Balbo's *Life*.

They cover up their palfreys with their cloaks,
So that two beasts go underneath one skin;
O Patience, that dost tolerate so much!"

At this voice saw I many little flames
From step to step descending and revolving,
And every revolution made them fairer.

Round about this one came they and stood still,
And a cry uttered of so loud a sound,
It here could find no parallel, nor I
Distinguished it, the thunder so o'ercame me.



Figure 12: *Blessed Beatrice in the seventh circle.*



Figure 13: *Beatrice and Dante in the sphere of Saturn.*

Canto 22

OPPRESSED with stupor, I unto my guide ⁴⁹⁷
Turned like a little child who always runs
For refuge there where he confideth most;
And she, even as a mother who straightway
Gives comfort to her pale and breathless boy
With voice whose wont it is to reassure him,
Said to me: "Knowest thou not thou art in heaven,
And knowest thou not that heaven is holy all
And what is done here cometh from good zeal?
After what wise the singing would have changed thee
And I by smiling, thou canst now imagine,
Since that the cry has startled thee so much,
In which if thou hadst understood its prayers
Already would be known to thee the vengeance
Which thou shalt look upon before thou diest.
The sword above here smiteth not in haste
Nor tardily, howe'er it seem to him
Who fearing or desiring waits for it.
But turn thee round towards the others now,
For very illustrious spirits shalt thou see,
If thou thy sight directest as I say."
As it seemed good to her mine eyes I turned,
And saw a hundred spherules that together
With mutual rays each other more embellished.
I stood as one who in himself represses
The point of his desire, and ventures not
To question, he so feareth the too much.

⁴⁹⁷The Heaven of Saturn continued; and the ascent to the Heaven of the Fixed Stars.

And now the largest and most luculent
Among those pearls came forward, that it might
Make my desire concerning it content.

Within it then I heard: "If thou couldst see ⁴⁹⁸
Even as myself the charity that burns
Among us, thy conceits would be expressed;

But, that by waiting thou mayst not come late
To the high end, I will make answer even
Unto the thought of which thou art so chary.

That mountain on whose slope Cassino stands ⁴⁹⁹
Was frequented of old upon its summit
By a deluded folk and ill-disposed;

And I am he who first up thither bore ⁵⁰⁰
The name of Him who brought upon the earth
The truth that so much sublimateth us.

And such abundant grace upon me shone
That all the neighbouring towns I drew away
From the impious worship that seduced the world.

These other fires, each one of them, were men
Contemplative, enkindled by that heat
Which maketh holy flowers and fruits spring up.

Here is Macarius, here is Romualdus, ⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁸It is the spirit of St. Benedict that speaks.

⁴⁹⁹Not far from Aquinum in the Terra di Lavoro, the birthplace of Juvenal and of Thomas Aquinas, rises Monte Cassino, celebrated for its Benedictine monastery.

⁵⁰⁰St. Benedict was born at Norcia, in the Duchy of Spoleto, in 480, and died at Monte Cassino in 543. In his early youth he was sent to school in Rome; but being shocked at the wild life of Roman school-boys, he fled from the city at the age of fourteen, and hid himself among the mountains of Subiaco, some forty miles away. A monk from a neighbouring convent gave him a monastic dress, and pointed out to him a cave, in which he lived for three years, the monk supplying him with food, which he let down to him from above by a cord. In this retreat he was finally discovered by some shepherds, and the fame of his sanctity was spread through the land. The monks of Vicovara chose him for their Abbot, and then tried to poison him in his wine. He left them and returned to Subiaco; and there built twelve monasteries, placing twelve monks with a superior in each.

⁵⁰¹St. Macarius, who established the monastic rule of the East, as St. Benedict did that of the West, was a confectioner of Alexandria, who, carried away by religious enthusiasm, became an anchorite in the Thebaid of Upper Egypt, about 335. In 373 he came to Lower Egypt, and lived in the Desert of the Cells, so called from the great multitude of its hermit-cells. He had also hermitages in the deserts of Scete and Nitria; and in these sev-

Here are my brethren, who within the cloisters
Their footsteps stayed and kept a steadfast heart."

And I to him: "The affection which thou showest
Speaking with me, and the good countenance
Which I behold and note in all your ardours,

In me have so my confidence dilated
As the sun doth the rose, when it becomes
As far unfolded as it hath the power.

Therefore I pray, and thou assure me, father,
If I may so much grace receive, that I
May thee behold with countenance unveiled."

He thereupon: "Brother, thy high desire
In the remotest sphere shall be fulfilled,
Where are fulfilled all others and my own.

There perfect is, and ripened, and complete,
Every desire; within that one alone ⁵⁰²
Is every part where it has always been;

eral places he passed upwards of sixty years in holy contemplation, saying to his soul, "Having taken up thine abode in heaven, where thou hast God and his holy angels to converse with, see that thou descend not thence; regard not earthly things."

St. Romualdus, founder of the Order of Camaldoli, or Reformed Benedictines, was born of the noble family of the Onesti, in Ravenna, about 956. Brought up in luxury and ease, he still had glimpses of better things, and, while hunting the wild boar in the pine woods of Ravenna, would sometimes stop to muse, and, uttering a prayer, exclaim: "How happy were the ancient hermits who had such habitations." At the age of twenty he saw his father kill his adversary in a duel; and, smitten with remorse, imagined that he must expiate the crime by doing penance in his own person. He accordingly retired to a Benedictine convent in the neighbourhood of Ravenna, and became a monk. At the end of seven years, scandalised with the irregular lives of the brotherhood, and their disregard of the rules of the Order, he undertook the difficult task of bringing them back to the austere life of their founder. After a conflict of many years, during which he encountered and overcame the usual perils that beset the path of a reformer, he succeeded in winning over some hundreds of his brethren, and established his new Order of Reformed Benedictines. St. Romualdus built many monasteries; but chief among them is that of Camaldoli, thirty miles east of Florence, which was founded in 1009. It takes its name from the former owner of the land, a certain Maldoli, who gave it to St. Romualdus. *Campo Maldoli*, say the authorities, became Camaldoli. It is more likely to be the Tuscan *Ca' Mal doli*, for *Casa Maldoli*. The legend of St. Romualdus says that he lived to the age of one hundred and twenty. It says, also, that in 1466, nearly four hundred years after his death, his body was found still uncorrupted; but that four years later, when it was stolen from its tomb, it crumbled into dust.

⁵⁰²In that sphere alone; that is, in the Empyrean, which is eternal and immutable.

For it is not in space, nor turns on poles,
 And unto it our stairway reaches up,
 Whence thus from out thy sight it steals away.

Up to that height the Patriarch Jacob saw it ⁵⁰³
 Extending its supernal part, what time
 So thronged with angels it appeared to him.

But to ascend it now no one uplifts
 His feet from off the earth, and now my Rule
 Below remaineth for mere waste of paper. ⁵⁰⁴

The walls that used of old to be an Abbey
 Are changed to dens of robbers, and the cowls ⁵⁰⁵
 Are sacks filled full of miserable flour.

But heavy usury is not taken up ⁵⁰⁶
 So much against God's pleasure as that fruit
 Which maketh so insane the heart of monks;

⁵⁰³*Genesis XXVIII. 12:* "And he dreamed, and, behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it."

⁵⁰⁴So neglected, that it is mere waste of paper to transcribe it. In commenting upon this line, Benvenuto gives an interesting description of Boccaccio's visit to the library of Monte Cassino, which he had from his own lips. "To the clearer understanding of this passage," he says, "I will repeat what my venerable preceptor, Boccaccio of Certaldo, pleasantly narrated to me. He said, that when he was in Apulia, being attracted by the fame of the place, he went to the noble monastery of Monte Cassino, of which we are speaking. And being eager to see the library, which he had heard was very noble, he humbly – gentle creature that he was! – besought a monk to do him the favour to open it. Pointing to a lofty staircase, he answered stiffly, 'Go up; it is open.' Joyfully ascending, he found the place of so great a treasure without door or fastening; and having entered, he saw the grass growing upon the windows, and all the books and shelves covered with dust. And, wondering, he began to open and turn over, now this book and now that, and found there many and various volumes of ancient and rare works. From some of them whole sheets had been torn out, in others the margins of the leaves were clipped, and thus they were greatly defaced. At length, full of pity that the labours and studies of so many illustrious minds should have fallen into the hands of such profligate men, grieving and weeping he withdrew. And coming into the cloister, he asked a monk whom he met, why those most precious books were so vilely mutilated. He replied, that some of the monks, wishing to gain a few ducats, cut out a handful of leaves, and made psalters which they sold to boys; and likewise of the margins they made breviaries which they sold to women. Now, therefore, o scholar, rack thy brains in the making of books!"

⁵⁰⁵To dens of thieves. "And the monks' hoods and habits are full," says Buti, "of wicked and sinful souls, of evil thoughts and ill-will. And as from bad flour bad bread is made, so from ill-will, which is in the monks, come evil deeds."

⁵⁰⁶The usurer is not so offensive to God as the monk who squanders the revenues of the Church in his own pleasures and vices.

For whatsoever hath the Church in keeping
Is for the folk that ask it in God's name,
Not for one's kindred or for something worse.

The flesh of mortals is so very soft,
That good beginnings down below suffice not
From springing of the oak to bearing acorns.

Peter began with neither gold nor silver,
And I with orison and abstinence,
And Francis with humility his convent.

And if thou lookest at each one's beginning,
And then regardest whither he has run,
Thou shalt behold the white changed into brown.

In verity the Jordan backward turned,⁵⁰⁷
And the sea's fleeing, when God willed were more
A wonder to behold, than succour here."

Thus unto me he said; and then withdrew
To his own band, and the band closed together
Then like a whirlwind all was upward rapt.

The gentle Lady urged me on behind them
Up o'er that stairway by a single sign,
So did her virtue overcome my nature;

Nor here below, where one goes up and down
By natural law, was motion e'er so swift
That it could be compared unto my wing.

Reader, as I may unto that devout
Triumph return, on whose account I often⁵⁰⁸
For my transgressions weep and beat my breast, –

Thou hadst not thrust thy finger in the fire
And drawn it out again, before I saw
The sign that follows Taurus, and was in it.⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁷*Psalms* CXIV. 5: "What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?" The power that wrought these miracles can also bring help to the corruptions of the Church, great as the impossibility may seem.

⁵⁰⁸Paradise. "Truly," says Buti, "the glory of Paradise may be called a triumph, for the blessed triumph in their victory over the world, the flesh, and the Devil."

⁵⁰⁹The sign that follows Taurus is the sign of the Gemini, under which Dante was born.

O glorious stars, O light impregnated ⁵¹⁰
 With mighty virtue, from which I acknowledge
 All of my genius, whatsoe'er it be,
 With you was born, and hid himself with you, ⁵¹¹
 He who is father of all mortal life,
 When first I tasted of the Tuscan air;
 And then when grace was freely given to me
 To enter the high wheel which turns you round, ⁵¹²
 Your region was allotted unto me.
 To you devoutly at this hour my soul
 Is sighing, that it virtue may acquire
 For the stern pass that draws it to itself.
 "Thou art so near unto the last salvation,"
 Thus Beatrice began, "thou oughtest now
 To have thine eyes unclouded and acute;
 And therefore, ere thou enter farther in,
 Look down once more, and see how vast a world
 Thou hast already put beneath thy feet;
 So that thy heart, as jocund as it may,
 Present itself to the triumphant throng
 That comes rejoicing through this rounded ether."
 I with my sight returned through one and all

⁵¹⁰Of the influences of Gemini, Buti, quoting Albumasar, says: "The sign of the Gemini signifies great devotion and genius, such as became our author speaking of such lofty theme. It signifies, also, sterility, and moderation in manners and in religion, beauty, deportment, and cleanliness, when the sign is in the ascendant, or the the descendant is present, or the Moon; and largeness of mind, and goodness, and liberality in spending."

⁵¹¹Dante was born May 14th, 1265, when the Sun rose and set in Gemini; or as Barlow, *Study of Div. Com.*, p. 505, says, "the day on which in that year the Sun entered the constellation Gemini." He continues: "Giovanni Villani gives an account of a remarkable comet which preceded the birth of Dante by nine months, and lasted three, from July to October. ... This marvellous meteor, much more worthy of notice than Donna Bella's dream related by Boccaccio, has not hitherto found its way into the biography of the poet."

⁵¹²The Heaven of the Fixed Stars. Of the symbolism of this heaven, Dante, *Convito*, II. 15, says: "The Starry Heaven may be compared to Physics on account of three properties, and to Metaphysics on account of three others; for it shows us two visible things, such as its many stars, and the Galaxy; that is, the white circle which the vulgar call the Road of St. James; and it shows us one of its poles, and the other it conceals from us; and it shows us only one motion from east to west, and another which it has from west to east it keeps almost hidden from us. [...]"

The sevenfold spheres, and I beheld this globe
Such that I smiled at its ignoble semblance;
And that opinion I approve as best
Which doth account it least; and he who thinks
Of something else may truly be called just.
I saw the daughter of Latona shining ⁵¹³
Without that shadow, which to me was cause
That once I had believed her rare and dense. ⁵¹⁴
The aspect of thy son, Hyperion, ⁵¹⁵
Here I sustained, and saw how move themselves
Around and near him Maia and Dione. ⁵¹⁶
Thence there appeared the temperateness of Jove ⁵¹⁷
'Twixt son and father, and to me was clear
The change that of their whereabouts they make;
And all the seven made manifest to me
How great they are, and eke how swift they are,
And how they are in distant habitations.
The threshing-floor that maketh us so proud, ⁵¹⁸
To me revolving with the eternal Twins,
Was all apparent made from hill to harbour!
Then to the beauteous eyes mine eyes I turned.

⁵¹³The Moon, called in heaven Diana, on earth Luna, and in the infernal regions Proserpina.

⁵¹⁴See Canto II. 59:—

“And I: ‘What seems to us up here diverse,
Is caused, I think, by bodies rare and dense.’ ”

⁵¹⁵The Sun.

⁵¹⁶Mercury, son of Maia, and Venus, daughter of Dione.

⁵¹⁷The temperate planet Jupiter, between Mars and Saturn. In Canto XVIII. 68, Dante calls it “the temperate star;” and in the *Convito*, II. 14, quoting the opinion of Ptolemy: “Jupiter is a star of a temperate complexion, midway between the coldness of Saturn and the heat of Mars.”

⁵¹⁸The threshing-floor, or little area of our earth. The word *ajuola* would also bear the rendering of garden-plot; but to Dante this world was rather a threshing-floor than a flower-bed. Perhaps Dante uses it to signify in general any small enclosure.

Canto 23

EVEN as a bird, 'mid the beloved leaves,⁵¹⁹
 Quiet upon the nest of her sweet brood
 Throughout the night, that hideth all things from us,

Who, that she may behold their longed-for looks
 And find the food wherewith to nourish them,
 In which, to her, grave labours grateful are,

Anticipates the time on open spray
 And with an ardent longing waits the sun,
 Gazing intent as soon as breaks the dawn:

Even thus my Lady standing was, erect
 And vigilant, turned round towards the zone
 Underneath which the sun displays less haste;⁵²⁰

So that beholding her distraught and wistful,
 Such I became as he is who desiring
 For something yearns, and hoping is appeased.

But brief the space from one When to the other;
 Of my awaiting, say I, and the seeing
 The welkin grow resplendent more and more.

And Beatrice exclaimed: "Behold the hosts
 Of Christ's triumphal march, and all the fruit
 Harvested by the rolling of these spheres!"⁵²¹

It seemed to me her face was all aflame;
 And eyes she had so full of ecstasy
 That I must needs pass on without describing.

⁵¹⁹The Heaven of the Fixed Stars continued. The Triumph of Christ.

⁵²⁰Towards the meridian, where the sun seems to move slower than when nearer the horizon.

⁵²¹By the beneficent influences of the stars.

As when in nights serene of the full moon
 Smiles Trivia among the nymphs eternal ⁵²²
 Who paint the firmament through all its gulfs,
 Saw I, above the myriads of lamps,
 A Sun that one and all of them enkindled,
 E'en as our own doth the supernal sights,
 And through the living light transparent shone
 The lucent substance so intensely clear
 Into my sight, that I sustained it not.
 O Beatrice, thou gentle guide and dear!
 To me she said: "What overmasters thee
 A virtue is from which naught shields itself
 There are the wisdom and the omnipotence
 That oped the thoroughfares 'twixt heaven and earth,
 For which there erst had been so long a yearning."
 As fire from out a cloud unlocks itself,
 Dilating so it finds not room therein,
 And down, against its nature, falls to earth,
 So did my mind, among those aliments
 Becoming larger, issue from itself,
 And that which it became cannot remember.
 "Open thine eyes, and look at what I am: ⁵²³
 Thou hast beheld such things, that strong enough
 Hast thou become to tolerate my smile."
 I was as one who still retains the feeling
 Of a forgotten vision, and endeavours
 In vain to bring it back into his mind,
 When I this invitation heard, deserving
 Of so much gratitude, it never fades
 out of the book that chronicles the past.
 If at this moment sounded all the tongues
 That Polyhymnia and her sisters made ⁵²⁴
 Most lubrical with their delicious milk,

⁵²²The Moon Trivia is one of the surnames of Diana, given her because she presided over all the places where three roads met.

⁵²³Beatrice speaks.

⁵²⁴The Muse of harmony.

To aid me, to a thousandth of the truth
It would not reach, singing the holy smile
And how the holy aspect it illumed.

And therefore, representing Paradise,
The sacred poem must perforce leap over,
Even as a man who finds his way cut off;

But whoso thinketh of the ponderous theme,
And of the mortal shoulder laden with it
Should blame it not, if under this it tremble.

It is no passage for a little boat
This which goes cleaving the audacious prow,
Nor for a pilot who would spare himself.

“Why doth my face so much enamour thee,⁵²⁵
That to the garden fair thou turnest not,
Which under the rays of Christ is blossoming?

There is the Rose in which the Word Divine⁵²⁶
Became incarnate; there the lilies are⁵²⁷
By whose perfume the good way was discovered.”

Thus Beatrice; and I, who to her counsels
Was wholly ready, once again betook me
Unto the battle of the feeble brows.⁵²⁸

As in the sunshine, that unsullied streams
Through fractured cloud, ere now a meadow of flowers
Mine eyes with shadow covered o’er have seen,

So troops of splendours manifold I saw
Illumined from above with burning rays,
Beholding not the source of the effulgence.

O power benignant that dost so imprint them!⁵²⁹
Thou didst exalt thyself to give more scope
There to mine eyes, that were not strong enough.⁵³⁰

⁵²⁵Beatrice speaks again.

⁵²⁶The Virgin Mary, *Rosa Mundi*, *Rosa Mystica*.

⁵²⁷The Apostles, by following whom the good way was found.

⁵²⁸The struggle between his eyes and the light.

⁵²⁹

⁵³⁰Christ, who had reascended, so that Dante’s eyes, too feeble to bear the light of his presence, could now behold the splendour of this “meadow of flowers.”

The name of that fair flower I e'er invoke ⁵³¹
Morning and evening utterly enthralled
My soul to gaze upon the greater fire. ⁵³²

And when in both mine eyes depicted were
The glory and greatness of the living star ⁵³³
Which there excelleth, as it here excelled,

Athwart the heavens a little torch descended ⁵³⁴
Formed in a circle like a coronal,
And cinctured it, and whirled itself about it.

Whatever melody most sweetly soundeth
On earth, and to itself most draws the soul,
Would seem a cloud that, rent asunder, thunders,

Compared unto the sounding of that lyre
Wherewith was crowned the sapphire beautiful, ⁵³⁵
Which gives the clearest heaven its sapphire hue.

"I am Angelic Love, that circle round
The joy sublime which breathes from out the womb
That was the hostelry of our Desire; ⁵³⁶

And I shall circle, Lady of Heaven, while
Thou followest thy Son, and mak'st diviner
The sphere supreme, because thou enterest there."

Thus did the circulated melody
Seal itself up; and all the other lights
Were making to resound the name of Mary.

The regal mantle of the volumes all ⁵³⁷
Of that world, which most fervid is and living
With breath of God and with his works and ways,

⁵³¹The Rose, or the the Virgin Mary, to whom Beatrice alludes in line 73. Afterwards he hears the hosts of heaven repeat her name.

⁵³²This greater fire is also the Virgin, greatest of the remaining splendours.

⁵³³*Stella Maris, Stella Matutina*, are likewise titles of the Virgin, who surpasses in brightness all other souls in heaven, as she did here on earth.

⁵³⁴The Angel Gabriel.

⁵³⁵Sapphire is the colour in which the old painters arrayed the Virgin, "its hue," says Mr. King, "being the exact shade of the air or atmosphere in the climate of Rome." This is Dante's "Dolce color d' oriental zaffiro," in *Purgatorio* I. 113.

⁵³⁶*Haggai* II. 7: "The desire of all nations shall come."

⁵³⁷The Primum Mobile, or Crystalline Heaven, which infolds all the other volumes or rolling orbs of the universe like a mantle.

Extended over us its inner border,
 So very distant, that the semblance of it
 There where I was not yet appeared to me.
 Therefore mine eyes did not possess the power
 Of following the incoronated flame.
 Which mounted upward near to its own seed. ⁵³⁸
 And as a little child, that towards its mother
 Stretches its arms, when it the milk has taken,
 Through impulse kindled into outward flame,
 Each of those gleams of whiteness upward reached
 So with its summit, that the deep affection
 They had for Mary was revealed to me.
 Thereafter they remained there in my sight,
Regina coeli singing with such sweetness, ⁵³⁹
 That ne'er from me has the delight departed.
 O, what exuberance is garnered up
 Within those richest coffers, which had been
 Good husbandmen for sowing here below!
 There they enjoy and live upon the treasure
 Which was acquired while weeping in the exile
 Of Babylon, wherein the gold was left. ⁵⁴⁰
 There triumpheth, beneath the exalted Son
 Of God and Mary, in his victory,
 Both with the ancient council and the new,
 He who doth keep the keys of such a glory. ⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁸The Virgin ascending to her son.

⁵³⁹An Easter Hymn to the Virgin:—

“Regina coeli, laetare! Alleluia.

Quia quem meruisti portare, Alleluia,

Resurrexit, sicut dixit. Alleluia.”

This hymn, according to Collin de Plancy, *Légendes des Commandements de l'Église*, p. 14, Pope Gregory the Great heard the angels singing, in the pestilence of Rome in 890, and on hearing it added another line:—

“Ora pro nobis Deum! Alleluia.”

⁵⁴⁰Caring not for gold and silver in the Babylonian exile of this life, they laid up treasures in the other.

⁵⁴¹St. Peter, keeper of the keys, with the saints of the Old and New Testament.

Canto 24

“**O** COMPANY elect to the great supper ⁵⁴²
 Of the Lamb benedight, who feedeth you
 So that for ever full is your desire,
 If by the grace of God this man foretaste
 Something of that which falleth from your table,
 Or ever death prescribe to him the time,
 Direct your mind to his immense desire,
 And him somewhat bedew; ye drinking are
 For ever at the fount whence comes his thought.”

Thus Beatrice; and those souls beatified
 Transformed themselves to spheres on steadfast poles,
 Flaming intensely in the guise of comets.

And as the wheels in works of horologes
 Revolve so that the first to the beholder
 Motionless seems, and the last one to fly,

So in like manner did those carols, dancing ⁵⁴³
 In different measure, of their affluence ⁵⁴⁴
 Give me the gauge, as they were swift or slow.

From that one which I noted of most beauty ⁵⁴⁵
 Beheld I issue forth a fire so happy ⁵⁴⁶
 That none it left there of a greater brightness;

⁵⁴²The Heaven of the Fixed Stars continued. St. Peter examines Dante on Faith. *Revelation* XIX. 9: “And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb.”

⁵⁴³The carol was a dance as well as a song; or, to speak more exactly, a dance accompanied by a song.

⁵⁴⁴“That is,” says Buti, “of the abundance of their beatitude. ... And is swiftness and slowness signified the fervour of love which was in them.”

⁵⁴⁵From the brightest of these carols or dances.

⁵⁴⁶St. Peter.

And around Beatrice three several times ⁵⁴⁷
It whirled itself with so divine a song,
My fantasy repeats it not to me;
Therefore the pen skips, and I write it not,
Since our imagination for such folds,
Much more our speech, is of a tint too glaring. ⁵⁴⁸
“O holy sister mine, who us implorest ⁵⁴⁹
With such devotion, by thine ardent love
Thou dost unbind me from that beautiful sphere!”
Thereafter, having stopped, the blessed fire
Unto my Lady did direct its breath,
Which spake in fashion as I here have said.
And she: “O light eterne of the great man
To whom our Lord delivered up the keys
He carried down of this miraculous joy,
This one examine on points light and grave,
As good beseemeth thee, about the Faith
By means of which thou on the sea didst walk.
If he love well, and hope well, and believe,
From thee 'tis hid not; for thou hast thy sight ⁵⁵⁰
There where depicted everything is seen.
But since this kingdom has made citizens
By means of the true Faith, to glorify it
'Tis well he have the chance to speak thereof.”
As baccalaureate arms himself, and speaks not
Until the master doth propose the question,
To argue it, and not to terminate it,
So did I arm myself with every reason,
While she was speaking, that I might be ready
For such a questioner and such profession.
“Say, thou good Christian; manifest thyself;
What is the Faith?” Whereat I raised my brow
Unto that light wherefrom was this breathed forth.

⁵⁴⁷Three times, in sign of the Trinity.

⁵⁴⁸Tints too coarse and glaring to paint such delicate draperies of song.

⁵⁴⁹St. Peter speaks to Beatrice.

⁵⁵⁰Fixed upon God, in whom all things are reflected.

Then turned I round to Beatrice, and she
 Prompt signals made to me that I should pour
 The water forth from my internal fountain.

“May grace, that suffers me to make confession,”
 Began I, “to the great centurion,⁵⁵¹
 Cause my conceptions all to be explicit!”

And I continued: “As the truthful pen,
 Father, of thy dear brother wrote of it,⁵⁵²
 Who put with thee Rome into the good way,
 Faith is the substance of the things we hope for,⁵⁵³
 And evidence of those that are not seen;
 And this appears to me its quiddity.”⁵⁵⁴

Then heard I: “Very rightly thou perceivest,
 If well thou understandest why he placed it
 With substances and then with evidences.”

And I thereafterward: “The things profound,
 That here vouchsafe to me their apparition,
 Unto all eyes below are so concealed,

That they exist there only in belief,
 Upon the which is founded the high hope,
 And hence it takes the nature of a substance.

And it behoveth us from this belief
 To reason without having other sight,
 And hence it has the nature of evidence.”

Then heard I: “If whatever is acquired
 Below by doctrine were thus understood,

⁵⁵¹The captain of the first cohort of the Church Militant.

⁵⁵²St. Paul. Mrs. Jameson, *Sacred and Legendary Art*, I. 159, says: “The early Christian Church was always considered under two great divisions: the church of the converted Jews, and the church of the Gentiles. The first was represented by St. Peter, the second by St. Paul. Standing together in this mutual relation, they represent the universal church of Christ; hence in works of art they are seldom separated, and are indispensable in all ecclesiastical decoration. Their proper place is on each side of the Saviour, or of the Virgin throned; or on each side of the altar; or on each side of the arch over the choir. In any case, where they stand together, not merely as Apostles, but Founders, their place is next after the Evangelists and the Prophets.”

⁵⁵³*Hebrews* XI. 1: “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

⁵⁵⁴In Scholastic language the essence of a thing, distinguishing it from all other things, is called its quiddity; in answer to the question, *Quid est?*

No sophist's subtlety would there find place."
 Thus was breathed forth from that enkindled love;
 Then added: "Very well has been gone over
 Already of this coin the alloy and weight;
 But tell me if thou hast it in thy purse?"
 And I: "Yes, both so shining and so round
 That in its stamp there is no peradventure."⁵⁵⁵
 Thereafter issued from the light profound
 That there resplendent was: "This precious jewel,
 Upon the which is every virtue founded,
 Whence hadst thou it?" And I: "The large outpouring
 Of Holy Spirit, which has been diffused
 Upon the ancient parchments and the new,⁵⁵⁶
 A syllogism is, which proved it to me
 With such acuteness, that, compared therewith,
 All demonstration seems to me obtuse."
 And then I heard: "The ancient and the new
 Postulates, that to thee are so conclusive,
 Why dost thou take them for the word divine?"
 And I: "The proofs, which show the truth to me,
 Are the works subsequent, whereunto Nature
 Ne'er heated iron yet, nor anvil beat."
 'Twas answered me: "Say, who assureth thee
 That those works ever were? the thing itself
 That must be proved, nought else to thee affirms it."
 "Were the world to Christianity converted,"
 I said, "withouten miracles, this one
 Is such, the rest are not its hundredth part;
 Because that poor and fasting thou didst enter
 Into the field to sow there the good plant,
 Which was a vine and has become a thorn!"
 This being finished, the high, holy Court
 Resounded through the spheres, "One God we praise!"
 In melody that there above is chanted.

⁵⁵⁵"The purified, righteous man," says Tertullian, "has become a coin of the Lord, and has the impress of his King stamped upon him."

⁵⁵⁶The Old and New Testaments.

And then that Baron, who from branch to branch,⁵⁵⁷
Examining, had thus conducted me,
Till the extremest leaves we were approaching,
Again began: "The Grace that dallying⁵⁵⁸
Plays with thine intellect thy mouth has opened,
Up to this point, as it should opened be,
So that I do approve what forth emerged;
But now thou must express what thou believest,
And whence to thy belief it was presented."
"O holy father, spirit who beholdest
What thou believedst so that thou o'ercamest,
Towards the sepulchre, more youthful feet,"⁵⁵⁹
Began I, "thou dost wish me in this place
The form to manifest of my prompt belief,
And likewise thou the cause thereof demandest.
And I respond: In one God I believe,
Sole and eterne, who moveth all the heavens
With love and with desire, himself unmoved;⁵⁶⁰
And of such faith not only have I proofs
Physical and metaphysical, but gives them
Likewise the truth that from this place rains down
Through Moses, through the Prophets and the Psalms,
Through the Evangel, and through you, who wrote⁵⁶¹

⁵⁵⁷In the Middle Ages titles of nobility were given to the saints and to other renowned personages of sacred history. Thus Boccaccio, in his story of Fra Cipolla, *Decamerone*, Gior. VI. Nov. 10, speaks of the Baron Messer Santo Antonio; and in Juan Lorenzo's Poema de Alexandro, we have Don Job, Don Bacchus, and Don Satan.

⁵⁵⁸The word *donnea*, which I have rendered "like a lover plays," is from the Provençal *donnear*. In its old French form, *dosnoier*, it occurs in some editions of the *Roman de la Rose*. The word expresses the gallantry of the knight towards his lady.

⁵⁵⁹St. John was the first to reach the sepulchre, but St. Peter the first to enter it. *John XX. 4*: "So they ran both together; and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he, stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie."

⁵⁶⁰Dante, *Convito*, II. 4, speaking of the motion of the Primum Mobile, or Crystalline Heaven, which moves all the others, says: "From the fervent longing which each part of that ninth heaven has to be conjoined with that Divinest Heaven, the Heaven of Rest, which is next to it, it revolves therein with so great desire, that its velocity is almost incomprehensible."

⁵⁶¹St. Peter and the other Apostles after Pentecost.

After the fiery Spirit sanctified you;
In Persons three eterne believe, and these
One essence I believe, so one and trine
They bear conjunction both with *sunt* and *est*.⁵⁶²
With the profound condition and divine
Which now I touch upon, doth stamp my mind
Ofttimes the doctrine evangelical.
This the beginning is, this is the spark
Which afterwards dilates to vivid flame,
And, like a star in heaven, is sparkling in me.”
Even as a lord who hears what pleaseth him
His servant straight embraces, gratulating
For the good news as soon as he is silent;
So, giving me its benediction, singing,
Three times encircled me, when I was silent,⁵⁶³
The apostolic light, at whose command
I spoken had, in speaking I so pleased him.

⁵⁶²Both three and one, both plural and singular.

⁵⁶³Again the sign of the Trinity.

Canto 25

IF e'er it happen that the Poem Sacred,⁵⁶⁴
 To which both heaven and earth have set their hand,
 So that it many a year hath made me lean,

 O'ercome the cruelty that bars me out
 From the fair sheepfold, where a lamb I slumbered,⁵⁶⁵
 An enemy to the wolves that war upon it,

 With other voice forthwith, with other fleece⁵⁶⁶
 Poet will I return, and at my font⁵⁶⁷
 Baptismal will I take the laurel crown;

 Because into the Faith that maketh known
 All souls to God there entered I, and then
 Peter for her sake thus my brow encircled.⁵⁶⁸

 Thereafterward towards us moved a light

⁵⁶⁴Heaven of the Fixed Stars continued. St. James examines Dante on Hope.

⁵⁶⁵Florence the Fair, *Fiorenza la bella*. In one of his *Canzoni* Dante says:—
 "O mountain song of mine, thou goest thy way;
 Florence my town thou shalt perchance behold,
 Which bars me from itself,
 Devoid of love and naked compassion."

⁵⁶⁶In one of Dante's *Eclogues*, written at Ravenna and addressed to Giovanni del Virgilio of Bologna, who had invited him to that city to receive the poet's crown, he says: "Were it not better, on the banks of my native Arno, if ever I should return thither, to adorn and hide beneath the interwoven leaves my triumphal gray hairs, which once were golden? ... When the bodies that wander round the earth, and the dwellers among the stars, shall be revealed in my song, as the infernal realm has been, then it will delight me to encircle my head with ivy and with laurel." It would seem from this extract that Dante's hair had once been light, and not black, as Boccaccio describes it.

⁵⁶⁷This allusion to the church of San Giovanni, where Dante was baptized, and which in *Inferno* XIX. 17 he calls "*il mio bel San Giovanni*", is a fitting prelude to the canto in which St. John is to appear.

⁵⁶⁸As described in Canto XXIV. 152: "So, giving me its benediction, singing, three times encircled me, when I was silent, the apostolic light."

Out of that band whence issued the first-fruits ⁵⁶⁹
Which of his vicars Christ behind him left,

And then my Lady, full of ecstasy,
Said unto me: "Look, look! behold the Baron ⁵⁷⁰
For whom below Galicia is frequented."

In the same way as, when a dove alights
Near his companion, both of them pour forth,
Circling about and murmuring, their affection,

So one beheld I by the other grand
Prince glorified to be with welcome greeted,
Lauding the food that there above is eaten.

But when their gratulations were complete,
Silently *coram me* each one stood still, ⁵⁷¹
So incandescent it o'ercame my sight.

Smiling thereafterwards, said Beatrice:
"Illustrious life, by whom the benefactions ⁵⁷²
Of our Basilica have been described,

Make Hope resound within this altitude;
Thou knowest as oft thou dost personify it ⁵⁷³
As Jesus to the three gave greater clearness." –

"Lift up thy head, and make thyself assured; ⁵⁷⁴
For what comes hither from the mortal world

⁵⁶⁹The band or carol in which St. Peter was. *James* I. 18: "That we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures."

⁵⁷⁰St. James, to whose tomb at Cornpostella, in Galicia, pilgrimages were and are still made. The legend says that the body of St. James was put on board a ship and abandoned to the sea; but the ship, being guided by an angel, landed safely in Galicia. There the body was buried; but in the course of time the place of its burial was forgotten, and not discovered again till the year 800, when it was miraculously revealed to a friar.

⁵⁷¹Before me.

⁵⁷²*James* I. 5 and 117: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. ... Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness; neither shadow of turning." In this line, instead of *largezza*, some editions read *allegrezza*; but as James describes the bounties of heaven, and not its joys, the former reading is undoubtedly the correct one.

⁵⁷³St. Peter personifies Faith; St. James, Hope; and St. John, Charity. These three were distinguished above the other Apostles by clearer manifestations of their Master's favour, as, for example, their being present at the Transfiguration.

⁵⁷⁴These words are addressed by St. James to Dante.

Must needs be ripened in our radiance.”⁵⁷⁵

This comfort came to me from the second fire;
Wherefore mine eyes I lifted to the hills,⁵⁷⁶
Which bent them down before with too great weight.

“Since, through his grace, our Emperor wills that thou
Shouldst find thee face to face, before thy death,
In the most secret chamber, with his Counts,⁵⁷⁷

So that, the truth beholden of this court,
Hope, which below there rightfully enamours,
Thereby thou strengthen in thyself and others,

Say what it is, and how is flowering with it
Thy mind, and say from whence it came to thee.”
Thus did the second light again continue.

And the Compassionate, who piloted⁵⁷⁸
The plumage of my wings in such high flight,
Did in reply anticipate me thus:

“No child whatever the Church Militant
Of greater hope possesses, as is written
In that Sun which irradiates all our band;⁵⁷⁹

Therefore it is conceded him from Egypt
To come into Jerusalem to see,
Or ever yet his warfare be completed.

The two remaining points, that not for knowledge⁵⁸⁰
Have been demanded, but that he report
How much this virtue unto thee is pleasing,

To him I leave; for hard he will not find them,
Nor of self-praise; and let him answer them;⁵⁸¹
And may the grace of God in this assist him!”

As a disciple, who his teacher follows,

⁵⁷⁵In the radiance of the three theological virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity.

⁵⁷⁶To the three Apostles luminous above him and overwhelming him with their light.

Psalm CXXI. 1: “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.”

⁵⁷⁷With the most august spirits of the celestial city. See Canto XXIV. note to line 115.

⁵⁷⁸Beatrice.

⁵⁷⁹In God.

⁵⁸⁰“Say what it is,” and “whence it came to be.”

⁵⁸¹The answer to these two questions involves no self-praise, as the answer to the other would have done, if it had come from Dante’s lips.

Ready and willing, where he is expert,
That his proficiency may be displayed,

"Hope," said I, "is the certain expectation ⁵⁸²
Of future glory, which is the effect
Of grace divine and merit precedent.

From many stars this light comes unto me;
But he instilled it first into my heart
Who was chief singer unto the chief captain. ⁵⁸³

'*Sperant in te,*' in the high Theody ⁵⁸⁴
He sayeth, 'those who know thy name;' and who
Knoweth it not, if he my faith possess?

Thou didst instil me, then, with his instilling
In the Epistle, so that I am full,
And upon others rain again your rain." ⁵⁸⁵

While I was speaking, in the living bosom
Of that combustion quivered an effulgence,
Sudden and frequent, in the guise of lightning;

Then breathed: "The love wherewith I am inflamed
Towards the virtue still which followed me
Unto the palm and issue of the field, ⁵⁸⁶

Wills that I breathe to thee that thou delight
In her; and grateful to me is thy telling
Whatever things Hope promises to thee."

And I: "The ancient Scriptures and the new
The mark establish, and this shows it me, ⁵⁸⁷
Of all the souls whom God hath made his friends. ⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸²This definition of Hope is from Peter Lombard's *Lib. Sent.*, Book III. Dist. 26: "*Est spes certa expectatio futura beatitudinis, veniens ex Dei gratia, et meritis praecedentibus.*"

⁵⁸³The Psalmist David.

⁵⁸⁴In his divine songs, or songs of God. *Psalm IX. 10*: "And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee."

⁵⁸⁵Your rain; that is, of David and St. James.

⁵⁸⁶According to the legend, St. James suffered martyrdom under Herod Agrippa.

⁵⁸⁷"The mark of the high calling and election sure," namely Paradise, which is the aim and object of "all the friends of God;" or, as a St. James expresses it in his *Epistle*, I. 12: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

⁵⁸⁸This expression is from the *Epistle* of James, II. 23: "And he was called the Friend of God."

Isaiah saith, that each one garmented ⁵⁸⁹
 In his own land shall be with twofold garments,
 And his own land is this delightful life.

Thy brother, too, far more explicitly,
 There where he treateth of the robes of white, ⁵⁹⁰
 This revelation manifests to us."

And first, and near the ending of these words,
 "Sperent in te" from over us was heard,
 To which responsive answered all the carols.

Thereafterward a light among them brightened, ⁵⁹¹
 So that, if Cancer one such crystal had, ⁵⁹²
 Winter would have a month of one sole day.

And as uprises, goes, and enters the dance
 A winsome maiden, only to do honour
 To the new bride, and not from any failing, ⁵⁹³

Even thus did I behold the brightened splendour
 Approach the two, who in a wheel revolved ⁵⁹⁴
 As was beseeming to their ardent love.

Into the song and music there it entered;
 And fixed on them my Lady kept her look,
 Even as a bride silent and motionless.

"This is the one who lay upon the breast
 Of him our Pelican; and this is he ⁵⁹⁵
 To the great office from the cross elected." ⁵⁹⁶

My Lady thus; but therefore none the more

⁵⁸⁹The spiritual body and the glorified earthly body. *Isaiah* IXI. 7: "Therefore in their land they shall possess the double; everlasting joy shall be unto them."

⁵⁹⁰St. John in *Revelation* VII. 9: "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands."

⁵⁹¹St. John.

⁵⁹²If Cancer, which in winter rises at sunset, had one star as bright as this, it would turn night into day.

⁵⁹³Any failing, such as vanity, ostentation, or the like.

⁵⁹⁴St. Peter and St. James.

⁵⁹⁵This symbol or allegory of the Pelican, applied to Christ, was popular during the Middle Ages, and was seen not only in the songs of poets, but in sculpture on the portals of churches.

⁵⁹⁶*John* XIX. 27: "Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home."

Did move her sight from its attentive gaze
Before or afterward these words of hers.

Even as a man who gazes, and endeavours
To see the eclipsing of the sun a little,
And who, by seeing, sightless doth become,

So I became before that latest fire,⁵⁹⁷
While it was said, "Why dost thou daze thyself
To see a thing which here hath no existence?"

Earth in the earth my body is, and shall be
With all the others there, until our number
With the eternal proposition tallies.⁵⁹⁸

With the two garments in the blessed cloister⁵⁹⁹
Are the two lights alone that have ascended:⁶⁰⁰
And this shalt thou take back into your world."

And at this utterance the flaming circle
Grew quiet, with the dulcet intermingling
Of sound that by the trinal breath was made,⁶⁰¹

As to escape from danger or fatigue
The oars that erst were in the water beaten
Are all suspended at a whistle's sound.

Ah, how much in my mind was I disturbed,
When I turned round to look on Beatrice,
That her I could not see, although I was⁶⁰²

Close at her side and in the Happy World!

⁵⁹⁷St. John.

⁵⁹⁸Till the predestined number of the elect is complete. *Revelation* VI. 11: "And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."

⁵⁹⁹The spiritual body and the glorified earthly body.

⁶⁰⁰Christ and the Virgin Mary.

⁶⁰¹By the sacred trio of St. Peter, St. James, and St. John.

⁶⁰²Because his eyes were so blinded by the splendour of the beloved disciple.

Canto 26

WHILE I was doubting for my vision quenched,⁶⁰³
 Out of the flame refulgent that had quenched it
 Issued a breathing, that attentive made me,
 Saying: "While thou recoverest the sense
 Of seeing which in me thou hast consumed,
 'Tis well that speaking thou shouldst compensate it.
 Begin then, and declare to what thy soul
 Is aimed, and count it for a certainty,
 Sight is in thee bewildered and not dead;
 Because the Lady, who through this divine
 Region conducteth thee, has in her look
 The power the hand of Ananias had."⁶⁰⁴
 I said: "As pleaseth her, or soon or late
 Let the cure come to eyes that portals were
 When she with fire I ever burn with entered.
 The Good, that gives contentment to this Court,
 The Alpha and Omega is of all⁶⁰⁵
 The writing that love reads me low or loud."
 The selfsame voice, that taken had from me
 The terror of the sudden dazzlement,
 To speak still farther put it in my thought;

⁶⁰³The Heaven of the Fixed Stars continued. St. John examines Dante on Charity, in the sense of Love.

⁶⁰⁴Ananias, the disciple at Damascus, whose touch restored the sight of Saul. *Acts IX. 17*: "And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house, and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized."

⁶⁰⁵God is the beginning and end of all my love.

And said: "In verity with finer sieve
Behoveth thee to sift; thee it behoveth
To say who aimed thy bow at such a target."

And I: "By philosophic arguments,
And by authority that hence descends,
Such love must needs imprint itself in me;

For Good, so far as good, when comprehended
Doth straight enkindle love, and so much greater
As more of goodness in itself it holds;

Then to that Essence (whose is such advantage
That every good which out of it is found
Is nothing but a ray of its own light)

More than elsewhere must the mind be moved
Of every one, in loving, who discerns
The truth in which this evidence is founded.

Such truth he to my intellect reveals
Who demonstrates to me the primal love ⁶⁰⁶
Of all the sempiternal substances. ⁶⁰⁷

The voice reveals it of the truthful Author,
Who says to Moses, speaking of Himself,
'I will make all my goodness pass before thee.' ⁶⁰⁸

Thou too revealest it to me, beginning
The loud Evangel, that proclaims the secret ⁶⁰⁹
Of heaven to earth above all other edict."

And I heard say: "By human intellect ⁶¹⁰
And by authority concordant with it,
Of all thy loves reserve for God the highest.

But say again if other cords thou feelest,
Draw thee towards Him, that thou mayst proclaim
With how many teeth this love is biting thee."

⁶⁰⁶The commentators differ as to which of the philosophers Dante here refers; whether to Aristotle, Plato, or Pythagoras.

⁶⁰⁷The angels.

⁶⁰⁸*Exodus* XXXIII. 19: "And he said, I will make all my goodliess pass before thee."

⁶⁰⁹*John* I. 1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us full of grace and truth."

⁶¹⁰By all the dictates of human reason and divine authority.

The holy purpose of the Eagle of Christ ⁶¹¹
 Not latent was, nay, rather I perceived
 Whither he fain would my profession lead.

Therefore I recommenced: "All of those bites
 Which have the power to turn the heart to God
 Unto my charity have been concurrent.

The being of the world, and my own being,
 The death which He endured that I may live,
 And that which all the faithful hope, as I do,

With the forementioned vivid consciousness
 Have drawn me from the sea of love perverse,
 And of the right have placed me on the shore.

The leaves, wherewith embowered is all the garden ⁶¹²
 Of the Eternal Gardener, do I love
 As much as he has granted them of good."

As soon as I had ceased, a song most sweet
 Throughout the heaven resounded, and my Lady
 Said with the others, "Holy, holy, holy!" ⁶¹³

And as at some keen light one wakes from sleep
 By reason of the visual spirit that runs
 Unto the splendour passed from coat to coat,

And he who wakes abhorreth what he sees,
 So all unconscious is his sudden waking,
 Until the judgment cometh to his aid,

So from before mine eyes did Beatrice
 Chase every mote with radiance of her own,
 That cast its light a thousand miles and more.

Whence better after than before I saw,
 And in a kind of wonderment I asked
 About a fourth light that I saw with us.

And said my Lady: "There within those rays

⁶¹¹In Christian art the eagle is the symbol of St. John, indicating his more fervid imagination and deeper insight into divine mysteries. Sometimes even the saint was represented with the head and feet of an eagle, and the hands and body of a man.

⁶¹²All living creatures.

⁶¹³*Isaiah* VI. 3: "As one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory."

Gazes upon its Maker the first soul ⁶¹⁴
That ever the first virtue did create."

Even as the bough that downward bends its top
At transit of the wind, and then is lifted
By its own virtue, which inclines it upward,

Likewise did I, the while that she was speaking,
Being amazed, and then I was made bold
By a desire to speak wherewith I burned.

And I began: "O apple, that mature
Alone hast been produced, O ancient father,
To whom each wife is daughter and daughter-in-law,

Devoutly as I can I supplicate thee
That thou wouldst speak to me; thou seest my wish;
And I, to hear thee quickly, speak it not."

Sometimes an animal, when covered, struggles
So that his impulse needs must be apparent,
By reason of the wrappage following it;

And in like manner the primeval soul
Made clear to me athwart its covering
How jubilant it was to give me pleasure.

Then breathed: "Without thy uttering it to me,
Thine inclination better I discern
Than thou whatever thing is surest to thee;

For I behold it in the truthful mirror,
That of Himself all things parhelion makes, ⁶¹⁵
And none makes Him parhelion of itself.

Thou fain wouldst hear how long ago God placed me
Within the lofty garden, where this Lady
Unto so long a stairway thee disposed.

And how long to mine eyes it was a pleasure,
And of the great disdain the proper cause,
And the language that I used and that I made.

⁶¹⁴The soul of Adam.

⁶¹⁵Parhelion is an imperfect image of the sun, formed by reflection in the clouds. All things are such faint reflections of the Creator; but he is the reflection of none of them. Buti interprets the passage differently, giving to the word *pareglio* the meaning of *ricettacolo* – receptacle.

Now, son of mine, the tasting of the tree
 Not in itself was cause of so great exile,
 But solely the o'erstepping of the bounds.

There, whence thy Lady moved Virgilius,⁶¹⁶
 Four thousand and three hundred and two circuits
 Made by the sun, this Council I desired;

And him I saw return to all the lights
 Of his highway nine hundred times and thirty,
 Whilst I upon the earth was tarrying.

The language that I spake was quite extinct⁶¹⁷
 Before that in the work interminable
 The people under Nimrod were employed;

For nevermore result of reasoning
 (Because of human pleasure that doth change,
 Obedient to the heavens) was durable.⁶¹⁸

A natural action is it that man speaks;
 But whether thus or thus, doth nature leave
 To your own art, as seemeth best to you.

Ere I descended to the infernal anguish,
El was on earth the name of the Chief Good,⁶¹⁹
 From whom comes all the joy that wraps me round

Eli he then was called, and that is proper,⁶²⁰
 Because the use of men is like a leaf⁶²¹
 On bough, which goeth and another cometh.

⁶¹⁶In Limbo, longing for Paradise, where the only punishment is to live in desire, but without hope. *Inferno* IV. 41: "Lost are we, and are only so far punished, that without hope we live on in desire."

⁶¹⁷Most of the Oriental languages claim the honour of being the language spoken by Adam in Paradise. Juan Bautista de Erro claims it for the Basque, or Vascongada. See *Alphabet of Prim. Lang. of Spain*, Pt. II. Ch. 2, Erving's Tr.

⁶¹⁸See Canto XVI. 79: "All things of yours have their mortality, even as yourselves."

⁶¹⁹Dante, *De Volg. Eloq.*, I. Ch. 4, says, speaking of Adam: "What was the first word he spake will, I doubt not, readily suggest itself to every one of sound mind as being what God is, namely, *El*, either in the way of question or of answer."

⁶²⁰The word used by *Matthew*, XXVII. 46, is *Eli*, and by *Mark*, XV. 34, *Eloi*, which Dante assumes to be of later use than *El*. There is, I believe, no authority for this. *El* is God; *Eli*, or *Eloi*, my God.

⁶²¹Horace, *Ars Poet.*, 60: "As the woods change their leaves in autumn, and the earliest fall, so the ancient words pass away, and the new flourish in the freshness of youth. ... Many that now have fallen shall spring up again, and others fall which now are held in honour, if usage wills, which is the judge, the law, and the rule of language."

Upon the mount that highest o'er the wave ⁶²²
Rises was I, in life or pure or sinful,
From the first hour to that which is the second,
As the sun changes quadrant, to the sixth." ⁶²³

⁶²²The mount of Purgatory, on whose summit was the Terrestrial Paradise.

⁶²³The sixth hour is noon in the old way of reckoning; and at noon the sun has completed one quarter or quadrant of the arc of his revolution, and changes to the next. The hour which is second to the sixth, is the hour which follows it, or one o'clock. This gives seven hours for Adam's stay in Paradise; and so says Peter Comestor (Dante's Peter Mangiador) in his ecclesiastical history. The *Talmud*, as quoted by Stehelin, *Traditions of the Jews*, I. 20, gives the following account: "The day has twelve hours. In the first hour the dust of which Adam was formed was brought together. In the second, this dust was made a rude, unshapely mass. In the third, the limbs were stretched out. In the fourth, a soul was lodged in it. In the fifth, Adam stood upon his feet. In the sixth, he assigned the names of all things that were created. In the seventh, he received Eve for his consort. In the eighth, two went to bed and four rose out of it; the begetting and birth of two children in that time, namely, Cain and his sister. In the ninth, he was forbid to eat of the fruit of the tree. In the tenth, he disobeyed. In the eleventh, he was tried, convicted, and sentenced. In the twelfth, he was banished, or driven out of the garden."

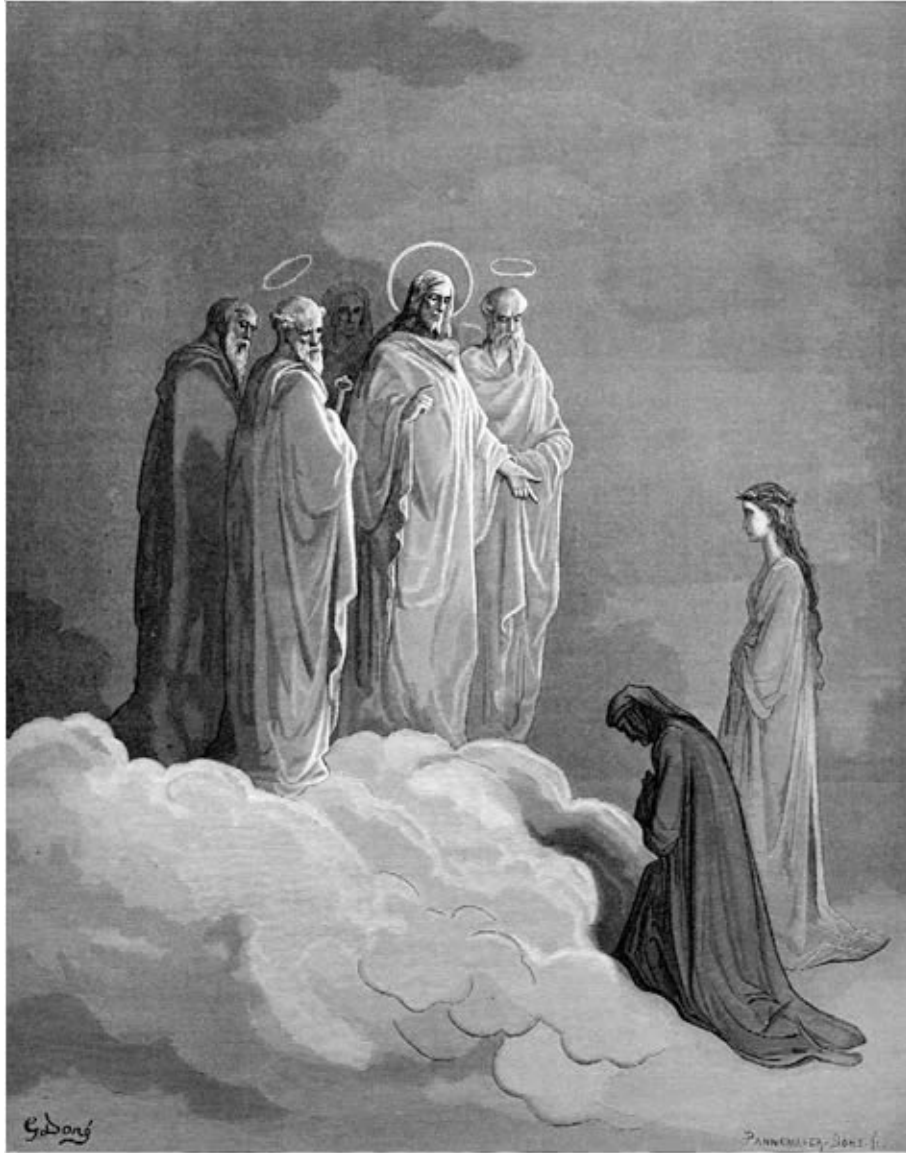


Figure 14: *St. John examines Dante concerning love.*

Canto 27

“GLORY be to the Father, to the Son,⁶²⁴
And Holy Ghost!” all Paradise began,
So that the melody inebriate made me.

What I beheld seemed unto me a smile
Of the universe; for my inebriation
Found entrance through the hearing and the sight.

O joy! O gladness inexpressible!
O perfect life of love and peacefulness!
O riches without hankering secure!⁶²⁵

⁶²⁴The Heaven of the Fixed Stars continued. The anger of St. Peter; and the ascent to the Primum Mobile, or Crystalline Heaven.

Dante, *Convito*, II. 15, makes this Crystalline Heaven the symbol of Moral Philosophy. He says: “The Crystalline Heaven, which has previously been called the Primum Mobile, has a very manifest resemblance to Moral Philosophy; for Moral Philosophy, as Thomas says in treating of the second book of the Ethics, directs us to the other sciences. For, as the Philosopher says in the fifth of the Ethics, legal justice directs us to learn the sciences, and orders them to be learned and mastered, so that they may not be abandoned; so this heaven directs with its movement the daily revolutions of all the others, by which daily they all receive here below the virtue of all their parts. For if its revolution did not thus direct, little of their virtues would reach here below, and little of their sight. Hence, supposing it were possible for this ninth heaven to stand still, the third part of heaven would not be seen in each part of the earth; and Saturn would be hidden from each part of the earth fourteen years and a half; and Jupiter, six years; and Mars, almost a year; and the Sun, one hundred and eighty-two days and fourteen hours (I say days, that is, so much time as so many days would measure); and Venus and Mercury would conceal and show themselves nearly as the Sun; and the Moon would be hidden from all people for the space of fourteen days and a half. Truly there would be here below no production, nor life of animals, nor plants; there would be night, nor day, nor week, nor month, nor year; but the whole universe would be deranged, and the movement of the stars in vain. And not otherwise, were Moral Philosophy to cease, the other sciences would be for a time concealed, and there would be no production, nor life of felicity, and in vain would be the writings or discoveries of antiquity. Wherefore it is very manifest that this heaven bears a resemblance to Moral Philosophy.

⁶²⁵Without desire for more.

Before mine eyes were standing the four torches ⁶²⁶
 Enkindled, and the one that first had come
 Began to make itself more luminous;
 And even such in semblance it became
 As Jupiter would become, if he and Mars ⁶²⁷
 Were birds, and they should interchange their feathers.
 That Providence, which here distributeth
 Season and service, in the blessed choir
 Had silence upon every side imposed.
 When I heard say: "If I my colour change,
 Marvel not at it; for while I am speaking
 Thou shalt behold all these their colour change.
 He who usurps upon the earth my place, ⁶²⁸
 My place, my place, which vacant has become
 Before the presence of the Son of God,
 Has of my cemetery made a sewer ⁶²⁹
 Of blood and stench, whereby the Perverse One,
 Who fell from here, below there is appeased!"
 With the same colour which, through sun adverse,
 Painteth the clouds at evening or at morn,
 Beheld I then the whole of heaven suffused.
 And as a modest woman, who abides
 Sure of herself, and at another's failing,
 From listening only, timorous becomes,
 Even thus did Beatrice change countenance;
 And I believe in heaven was such eclipse,
 When suffered the supreme Omnipotence; ⁶³⁰
 Thereafterward proceeded forth his words
 With voice so much transmuted from itself,
 The very countenance was not more changed.
 "The spouse of Christ has never nurtured been

⁶²⁶St. Peter, St. James, St. John, and Adam.

⁶²⁷If the white planet Jupiter should become as red as Mars.

⁶²⁸Pope Boniface VIII., who won his way to the Popedom by intrigue. See *Inferno* XIX. note to line 53.

⁶²⁹The Vatican hill, to which the body of St. Peter was transferred from the catacombs.

⁶³⁰*Luke* XXIII. 44: "And there was darkness over all the earth And the sun was darkened."

On blood of mine, of Linus and of Cletus,⁶³¹
 To be made use of in acquest of gold;
 But in acquest of this delightful life
 Sixtus and Pius, Urban and Calixtus,⁶³²
 After much lamentation, shed their blood.
 Our purpose was not, that on the right hand
 Of our successors should in part be seated⁶³³
 The Christian folk, in part upon the other;
 Nor that the keys which were to me confided
 Should e'er become the escutcheon on a banner,⁶³⁴
 That should wage war on those who are baptized;⁶³⁵
 Nor I be made the figure of a seal
 To privileges venal and mendacious,⁶³⁶
 Whereat I often redden and flash with fire.
 In garb of shepherds the rapacious wolves⁶³⁷
 Are seen from here above o'er all the pastures!
 O wrath of God, why dost thou slumber still?⁶³⁸
 To drink our blood the Caorsines and Gascons⁶³⁹
 Are making ready. O thou good beginning,
 Unto how vile an end must thou needs fall!
 But the high Providence, that with Scipio⁶⁴⁰

⁶³¹Linus was the immediate successor of St. Peter as Bishop of Rome, and Cletus of Linus. They were both martyrs of the first age of the Church.

⁶³²Sixtus and Pius were Popes and martyrs of the second age of the Church; Calixtus and Urban, of the third.

⁶³³On the right hand of the Pope the favoured Guelfs, and on the left the persecuted Ghibellines.

⁶³⁴The Papal banner, on which are the keys of St. Peter.

⁶³⁵The wars against the Ghibellines in general, and particularly that waged against the Colonna family, ending in the destruction of Palestrina. See *Inferno* XXVII. line 85.

⁶³⁶The sale of indulgences, stamped with the Papal seal, bearing the head of St. Peter.

⁶³⁷*Matthew* VII. 15: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."

⁶³⁸*Psalms* XLIV. 23: "Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord?"

⁶³⁹Clement V. of Gascony, made Pope in 1305, and John XXII. of Cahors in France, in 1316. Buti makes the allusion more general: "They of Cahors and Gascony are preparing to drink the blood of the martyrs, because they were preparing to be Popes, Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops, and prelates in the Church of God, that is built with the blood of the martyrs."

⁶⁴⁰Dante alludes elsewhere to this intervention of Providence to save the Roman Empire by the hand of Scipio. *Convito*, IV. 5, he says: "Is not the hand of God visible, when in the

At Rome the glory of the world defended,
Will speedily bring aid, as I conceive;

And thou, my son, who by thy mortal weight
Shalt down return again, open thy mouth;
What I conceal not, do not thou conceal."

As with its frozen vapours downward falls
In flakes our atmosphere, what time the horn ⁶⁴¹
Of the celestial Goat doth touch the sun, ⁶⁴²

Upward in such array saw I the ether
Become, and flaked with the triumphant vapours,
Which there together with us had remained. ⁶⁴³

My sight was following up their semblances,
And followed till the medium, by excess, ⁶⁴⁴
The passing farther onward took from it;

Whereat the Lady, who beheld me freed
From gazing upward, said to me: "Cast down
Thy sight, and see how far thou art turned round."

Since the first time that I had downward looked, ⁶⁴⁵
I saw that I had moved through the whole arc
Which the first climate makes from midst to end; ⁶⁴⁶

So that I saw the mad track of Ulysses ⁶⁴⁷

war with Hannibal, having lost so many citizens, that thee bushels of rings were carried to Africa, the Romans would have abandoned the land, if that blessed youth Scipio had not undertaken the expedition to Africa, to secure its freedom?"

⁶⁴¹Boccaccio, *Ninfale d'Ameto*, describing a battle between two flocks of swans, says the spectators "saw the air full of feathers, as when the nurse of Jove [Amalthea, the Goat] holds Apollo, the white snow is seen to fall in flakes."

⁶⁴²When the sun is in Capricorn; that is, from the middle of December to the middle of January.

⁶⁴³The spirits described in Canto XXII. 131, as "The triumphant throng That comes rejoicing through this rounded ether," and had remained behind when Christ and the Virgin Mary ascended.

⁶⁴⁴Till his sight could follow them no more, on account of the exceeding vastness of the space between.

⁶⁴⁵Canto XXII. 133.

⁶⁴⁶The first climate is the torrid zone, the first from the equator. From midst to end, is from the meridian to the horizon. Dante had been, then, six hours in the Heaven of the Fixed Stars.

⁶⁴⁷Being now in the meridian of the Straits of Gibraltar, Dante sees to the westward of Cadiz the sea Ulysses sailed, when he turned his stern unto morning and made his oars wings for his mad flight, as described in *Inferno* XXVI.

Past Gades, and this side, well nigh the shore ⁶⁴⁸
Whereon became Europa a sweet burden. ⁶⁴⁹

And of this threshing-floor the site to me ⁶⁵⁰
Were more unveiled, but the sun was proceeding
Under my feet, a sign and more removed. ⁶⁵¹

My mind enamoured, which is dallying ⁶⁵²
At all times with my Lady, to bring back
To her mine eyes was more than ever ardent.

And if or Art or Nature has made bait
To catch the eyes and so possess the mind,
In human flesh or in its portraiture,

All joined together would appear as nought
To the divine delight which shone upon me
When to her smiling face I turned me round.

The virtue that her look endowed me with
From the fair nest of Leda tore me forth, ⁶⁵³
And up into the swiftest heaven impelled me.

Its parts exceeding full of life and lofty
Are all so uniform, I cannot say
Which Beatrice selected for my place.

But she, who was aware of my desire, ⁶⁵⁴
Began, the while she smiled so joyously
That God seemed in her countenance to rejoice:

“The nature of that motion, which keeps quiet
The centre and all the rest about it moves,
From hence begins as from its starting point.

⁶⁴⁸Eastward he almost sees the Phoenician coast; almost, and not quite, because, say the commentators, it was already night there.

⁶⁴⁹Europa, daughter of King Agenor, borne to the island of Crete on the back of Jupiter, who had taken the shape of a bull.

⁶⁵⁰See Canto XXII. note to line 151.

⁶⁵¹The sun was in Aries, two signs in advance of Gemini, in which Dante was.

⁶⁵²*Donnea* again. See Canto XXIV. note to line 118.

⁶⁵³The Gemini, or Twins, are Castor and Pollux, the sons of Leda, and as Jupiter, their father, came to her in the shape of a swan, this sign of the zodiac is called the nest of Leda. Dante now mounts up from the Heaven of the fixed stars to the Primum Mobile, or Crystalline Heaven.

⁶⁵⁴Dante's desire to know in what part of this heaven he was.

And in this heaven there is no other Where ⁶⁵⁵
 Than in the Mind Divine, wherein is kindled
 The love that turns it, and the power it rains.

Within a circle light and love embrace it,
 Even as this doth the others, and that precinct ⁶⁵⁶
 He who encircles it alone controls.

Its motion is not by another meted,
 But all the others measured are by this,
 As ten is by the half and by the fifth. ⁶⁵⁷

And in what manner time in such a pot
 May have its roots, and in the rest its leaves,
 Now unto thee can manifest be made.

O Covetousness, that mortals dost ingulf
 Beneath thee so, that no one hath the power
 Of drawing back his eyes from out thy waves!

Full fairly blossoms in mankind the will;
 But the uninterrupted rain converts
 Into abortive wildings the true plums.

Fidelity and innocence are found
 Only in children; afterwards they both
 Take flight or e'er the cheeks with down are covered.

One, while he prattles still, observes the fasts,
 Who, when his tongue is loosed, forthwith devours
 Whatever food under whatever moon;

Another, while he prattles, loves and listens
 Unto his mother, who when speech is perfect
 Forthwith desires to see her in her grave.

⁶⁵⁵All the other heavens have their Regents or Intelligences. See Canto II. note to line 131. But the Primum Mobile has the Divine Mind alone.

⁶⁵⁶By that precinct Dante means the Empyrean, which embraces the Primum Mobile, as that does all the other heavens below it. Mrs. Jameson, *Sacred and Legendary Art*, I. 139, remarks: "The legend which supposes St. John reserved alive has not been generally received in the Church, and as a subject of painting it is very uncommon. It occurs in the *Menologium Græcum*, where the grave into which St. John descends is, according to the legend, *fossa in crucis figuram* – in the form of a cross. In a series of the deaths of the Apostles, St. John is ascending from the grave; for, according to the Greek legend, St. John died without pain or change, and immediately rose again in bodily form, and ascended into heaven to rejoin Christ and the Virgin."

⁶⁵⁷The half of ten is five, and the fifth is two. The product of these, when multiplied together, is ten.

Even thus is swarthy made the skin so white
 In its first aspect of the daughter fair ⁶⁵⁸
 Of him who brings the morn, and leaves the night.

Thou, that it may not be a marvel to thee,
 Think that on earth there is no one who governs; ⁶⁵⁹
 Whence goes astray the human family.

Ere January be unwintered wholly
 By the centesimal on earth neglected, ⁶⁶⁰
 Shall these supernal circles roar so loud

The tempest that has been so long awaited ⁶⁶¹
 Shall whirl the poops about where are the prows;
 So that the fleet shall run its course direct,

And the true fruit shall follow on the flower."

⁶⁵⁸ Aurora, daughter of *Hyperion*, or the Sun.

⁶⁵⁹ Or, perhaps, to steer, and "Over the high seas to keep The barque of Peter to its proper bearings."

⁶⁶⁰ This neglected centesimal was the omission of some inconsiderable fraction or centesimal part, in the computation of the year according to the Julian calendar, which was corrected in the Gregorian, some two centuries and a half after Dante's death. By this error, in long lapse of time, the months would cease to correspond to the seasons, and January be no longer a winter, but a spring month.

Sir John Herschel, *Treatise on Astronomy*, Ch. XIII., says: "The Julian rule made every fourth year, without exception, a bissextile. This is, in fact, an over-correction; it supposes the length of the tropical year to be 365 1/4 d., which is too great, and thereby induces an error of 7 days in 900 years, as will easily appear on trial. Accordingly, so early as the year 1414, it began to be perceived that the equinoxes were gradually creeping away from the 21st of March and September, where they ought to have always fallen had the Julian year been exact, and happening (as it appeared) too early. The necessity of a fresh and effectual reform in the calendar was from that time continually urged, and at length admitted. The change (which took place under the Popedom of Gregory XIII.) consisted in the omission of ten nominal days after the 4th of October, 1582, (so that the next day was called the 15th and not the 5th), and the promulgation of the rule explained for future regulation."

It will appear from the verse of Dante, that this error and its consequences had been noticed a century earlier than the year mentioned by Herschel. Dante speaks ironically; naming a very long period, and meaning a very short one.

⁶⁶¹ Dante here refers either to the reforms he expected from the Emperor Henry VII., or to those he as confidently looked for from Can Grande della Scala, the Veltro, or greyhound, of *Inferno* I. line 101, who was to slay the she-wolf, and make her "perish in her pain," and whom he so warmly eulogize in Canto XVII. of the *Paradiso*. Alas for the vanity of human wishes! Patient Italy has waited more than five centuries for the fulfilment of this prophecy, but at length she has touched the bones of her prophet, and "is revived and stands upon her feet."



Figure 15: *The heavenly host singing "Gloria In Excelsis Deo"*.

Canto 28

AFTER the truth against the present life ⁶⁶²
 Of miserable mortals was unfolded
 By her who doth imparadise my mind,
 As in a looking-glass a taper's flame
 He sees who from behind is lighted by it,
 Before he has it in his sight or thought,
 And turns him round to see if so the glass
 Tell him the truth, and sees that it accords
 Therewith as doth a music with its metre,
 In similar wise my memory recollecteth
 That I did, looking into those fair eyes,
 Of which Love made the springes to ensnare me.
 And as I turned me round, and mine were touched
 By that which is apparent in that volume, ⁶⁶³
 Whenever on its gyre we gaze intent,
 A point beheld I, that was raying out ⁶⁶⁴
 Light so acute, the sight which it enkindles
 Must close perforce before such great acuteness.
 And whatsoever star seems smallest here
 Would seem to be a moon, if placed beside it.
 As one star with another star is placed.
 Perhaps at such a distance as appears
 A halo cincturing the light that paints it,
 When densest is the vapour that sustains it,
 Thus distant round the point a circle of fire

⁶⁶²The Primum Mobile, or Crystalline Heaven, continued.

⁶⁶³That Crystalline Heaven, which Dante calls a volume, or scroll, as in Canto XXIII.
 line 112: "The regal mantle of the volumes all."

⁶⁶⁴The light of God, represented as a single point, to indicate its unity and indivisibility.

So swiftly whirled, that it would have surpassed
Whatever motion soonest girds the world;

And this was by another circumcinct,
That by a third, the third then by a fourth,
By a fifth the fourth, and then by a sixth the fifth;

The seventh followed thereupon in width
So ample now, that Juno's messenger ⁶⁶⁵
Entire would be too narrow to contain it.

Even so the eighth and ninth; and every one ⁶⁶⁶
More slowly moved, according as it was
In number distant farther from the first.

And that one had its flame most crystalline
From which less distant was the stainless spark,
I think because more with its truth imbued.

My Lady, who in my anxiety
Beheld me much perplexed, said: "From that point
Dependent is the heaven and nature all.

Behold that circle most conjoined to it,
And know thou, that its motion is so swift
Through burning love whereby it is spurred on."

And I to her: "If the world were arranged
In the order which I see in yonder wheels,
What's set before me would have satisfied me;

But in the world of sense we can perceive
That evermore the circles are diviner
As they are from the centre more remote

⁶⁶⁵Iris, or the rainbow.

⁶⁶⁶These nine circles of fire are the nine Orders of Angels in the three Celestial Hierarchies. Dante, *Convito*, II. 16, says that the holy Church divides the Angels into "three Hierarchies, that is to say, three holy or divine Principalities; and each Hierarchy has three Orders; so that the Church believes and affirms nine Orders of spiritual beings. The first is that of the Angels; the second, that of the Archangels; the third, that of the Thrones. And these three Orders form the first Hierarchy; not first in reference to rank nor creation (for the others are more noble, and all were created together), but first in reference to our ascent to their height. Then follow the Dominions; next the Virtues; then the Principalities; and these form the second Hierarchy. Above these are the Powers, and the Cherubim, and above all are the Seraphim; and these form the third Hierarchy." It will be observed that this arrangement of the several Orders does not agree with that followed in the poem.

Wherefore if my desire is to be ended
 In this miraculous and angelic temple,
 That has for confines only love and light,
 To hear behoves me still how the example ⁶⁶⁷
 And the exemplar go not in one fashion,
 Since for myself in vain I contemplate it."

"If thine own fingers unto such a knot
 Be insufficient, it is no great wonder,
 So hard hath it become for want of trying." ⁶⁶⁸

My Lady thus; then said she: "Do thou take
 What I shall tell thee, if thou wouldst be sated,
 And exercise on that thy subtlety.

The circles corporal are wide and narrow ⁶⁶⁹
 According to the more or less of virtue
 Which is distributed through all their parts.

The greater goodness works the greater weal,
 The greater weal the greater body holds,
 If perfect equally are all its parts.

Therefore this one which sweeps along with it ⁶⁷⁰
 The universe sublime, doth correspond
 Unto the circle which most loves and knows.

On which account, if thou unto the virtue
 Apply thy measure, not to the appearance
 Of substances that unto thee seem round,
 Thou wilt behold a marvellous agreement,

⁶⁶⁷Barlow, *Study of the Div. Com.*, p. 533, remarks: "Within a circle of ineffable joy, circumscribed only by light and love, a point of intense brightness so dazzled the eyes of Dante that he could not sustain the sight of it. Around this vivid centre, from which the heavens and all nature depend, nine concentric circles of the Celestial Hierarchy revolved with a velocity inversely proportioned to their distance from it, the nearer circles moving more rapidly, the remoter ones less. The poet at first is surprised at this, it being the reverse of the relative movement, from the same source of propulsion, of the heavens themselves around the earth as their centre. But the infallible Beatrice assures him that this difference arises, in fact, from the same cause, proximity to the Divine presence, which in the celestial spheres is greater the farther they are from the centre, but in the circles of angels, on the contrary, it is greater the nearer they are to it.

⁶⁶⁸Because the subject has not been investigated and discussed.

⁶⁶⁹The nine heavens are here called corporal circles, as we call the stars the heavenly bodies. Latimer says: "A corporal heaven, ... where the stars are."

⁶⁷⁰The Primum Mobile, in which Dante and Beatrice now are.

Of more to greater, and of less to smaller,⁶⁷¹
In every heaven, with its Intelligence."

Even as remaineth splendid and serene
The hemisphere of air, when Boreas⁶⁷²
Is blowing from that cheek where he is mildest,
Because is purified and resolved the rack
That erst disturbed it, till the welkin laughs
With all the beauties of its pageantry;

Thus did I likewise, after that my Lady
Had me provided with her clear response,
And like a star in heaven the truth was seen.

And soon as to a stop her words had come,
Not otherwise does iron scintillate
When molten, than those circles scintillated.⁶⁷³

Their coruscation all the sparks repeated,
And they so many were, their number makes
More millions than the doubling of the chess.⁶⁷⁴

I heard them sing hosanna choir by choir
To the fixed point which holds them at the *Ubi*,⁶⁷⁵

⁶⁷¹The nearer God the circle is, so much greater virtue it possesses. Hence the outermost of the heavens, revolving round the earth, corresponds to the innermost of the Orders of Angels revolving round God, and is controlled by it as its Regent or Intelligence. To make this more intelligible I will repeat here the three Triads of Angels, and the heavens of which they are severally the intelligences, as already given in Canto II. note to line 131: The Seraphim – Primum Mobile, The Cherubim – The Fixed Stars, The Thrones – Saturn, The Dominions – Jupiter, The Virtues – Mars, The Powers – The Sun, The Principalities – Venus, The Archangels – Mercury, The Angels – The Moon.

⁶⁷²*Aeneid*, XII. 365, Davidson's Tr.: "As when the blast of Thracian Boreas roars on the Aegean Sea, and to the shore pursues the waves, wherever the winds exert their incumbent force, the clouds fly through the air."

Each of the four winds blow three different blasts; either directly in front, or from the right cheek, or the left. According to Boccaccio, the northeast wind in Italy is milder than the northwest.

⁶⁷³Dante uses this comparison before, Canto I. 60: "But I beheld it sparkle round about Like iron that comes molten from the fire."

⁶⁷⁴The inventor of the game of chess brought it to a Persian king, who was so delighted with it, that he offered him in return whatever reward he might ask. The inventor said he wished only a grain of wheat, doubled as many times as there were squares on the chess-board; that is, one grain for the first square, two for the second, four for the third, and so on to sixty-four. This the king readily granted; but when the amount was reckoned up, he had not wheat enough in his whole kingdom to pay it.

⁶⁷⁵Their appointed place or whereabouts.

And ever will, where they have ever been.

And she, who saw the dubious meditations
Within my mind, "The primal circles," said,
"Have shown thee Seraphim and Cherubim."⁶⁷⁶

Thus rapidly they follow their own bonds,⁶⁷⁷
To be as like the point as most they can,
And can as far as they are high in vision.

Those other Loves, that round about them go,
Thrones of the countenance divine are called,⁶⁷⁸

⁶⁷⁶Thomas Aquinas, the Doctor Angelicus of the Schools, treats the subject of Angels at great length in the first volume of his *Summa Theologica*, from Quæst. L. to LXIV., and from Quæst. CVI. to CXIV. he constantly quotes Dionysius, sometimes giving his exact words, but oftener amplifying and interpreting his meaning. In Quæst. CVIII. he discusses the names of the Angels, and of the Seraphim and Cherubim speaks as follows:—"The name of Seraphim is not given from love alone, but from excess of love, which the name of heat or burning implies. Hence Dionysius (Cap. VII. *Coel. Hier.*, a princ.) interprets the name Seraphim according to the properties of fire, in which is excess of heat. In fire, however, we may consider three things. First, a certain motion which is upward, and which is continuous; by which is signified, that they are unchangingly moving towards God. Secondly, its active power, which is heat; ... and by this is signified the influence of this kind of Angels, which they exercise powerfully on those beneath them, exciting them to a sublime fervour, and thoroughly purifying them by burning. Thirdly, in fire its brightness must be considered; and this signifies that such angels have within themselves an inextinguishable light, and that they perfectly illuminate others."

"In the same way the name of Cherubim is given from a certain excess of knowledge; hence it is interpreted *plenitudo scientiæ* which Dionysius (Cap. VII. *Coel. Hier.*, a princ.) explains in four ways: first, as perfect vision of God; secondly, full reception of divine light; thirdly, that in God himself they contemplate the beauty of the order of things emanating from God; fourthly, that, being themselves full of this kind of knowledge, they copiously pour it out upon others."

⁶⁷⁷The love of God, which holds them fast to this central point as with a band. *Job* XXXVIII. 31: "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleides, or loose the bands of Orion?"

⁶⁷⁸Canto IX. 61: "Above us there are mirrors, Thrones you call them, From which shines out on us God Judicant."

Of the Thrones, Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, CVIII. 5, says: "The Order of Thrones excels the inferior Orders in this, that it has the power of perceiving immediately in God the reasons of the Divine operations ... Dionysius (Cap. VII. *Coel. Hier.*) explains the name of Thrones from their resemblance to material chairs, in which four things are to be considered. First, in reference to position, because chairs are raised above the ground; and thus these Angels, which are called Thrones, are raised so far that they can perceive immediately in God the reasons of things. Secondly, in material chairs firmness must be considered, because one sits firmly in them; but this is *e converso*, for the Angels themselves are made firm by God. Thirdly, because the chair receives the sitter, and he can be carried in it; and thus the Angels receive God in themselves, and in a certain sense carry

Because they terminate the primal Triad.
 And thou shouldst know that they all have delight
 As much as their own vision penetrates
 The Truth, in which all intellect finds rest.
 From this it may be seen how blessedness
 Is founded in the faculty which sees,⁶⁷⁹
 And not in that which loves, and follows next;
 And of this seeing merit is the measure,
 Which is brought forth by grace, and by good will;⁶⁸⁰
 Thus on from grade to grade doth it proceed.
 The second Triad, which is germinating
 In such wise in this sempiternal spring,⁶⁸¹
 That no nocturnal Aries despoils,
 Perpetually *hosanna* warbles forth
 With threefold melody, that sounds in three
 Orders of joy, with which it is intrined.
 The three Divine are in this hierarchy,
 First the Dominions, and the Virtues next;⁶⁸²

him to their inferiors. Fourthly, from their shape, because the chair is open on one side, to receive the sitter; and thus these Angels, by their promptitude, are open to receive God and to serve him."

⁶⁷⁹Dante, *Convito*, I. 1, says: "Knowledge is the ultimate perfection of our soul, in which consists our ultimate felicity." It was one of the great questions of the Schools, whether the beatitude of the soul consisted in knowing or in loving. Thomas Aquinas maintains the former part of this proposition, and Duns Scotus the latter.

⁶⁸⁰By the grace of God, and the Co-operation of the good will of the recipient.

⁶⁸¹The perpetual spring of Paradise, which knows no falling autumnal leaves, no season in which Aries is a nocturnal sign.

⁶⁸²Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. Quæst. CVIII. 6, says: "And thus Dionysius (Cap. VII. *Coel. Hier.*), from the names of the Orders inferring the properties thereof, placed in the first Hierarchy those Orders whose names were given them in reference to God, namely, the *Seraphim*, *Cherubim*, and *Thrones*; but in the middle Hierarchy he placed those whose names designate a certain common government or disposition, that is, the *Dominions*, *Virtues*, and *Powers*; and in the third Order he placed those whose names designate the execution of the work, namely, the *Principalities*, *Angels*, and *Archangels*. But to the rule of government three things belong, the first of which is the distinction of the things to be done, which is the province of the Dominions; the second is to provide the faculty of fulfilling, which belongs to the Virtues; but the third is to arrange in what way the things prescribed, or defined, can be fulfilled, so that some one may execute them, and this belongs to the Powers. But the execution of the angelic ministry consists in announcing things divine. In the execution, however, of any act, there are some who begin the act, and lead the others, as in singing the precentors, and in battle those who lead and direct

And the third order is that of the Powers.
 Then in the dances twain penultimate
 The Principalities and Archangels wheel;
 The last is wholly of angelic sports.
 These orders upward all of them are gazing,
 And downward so prevail, that unto God
 They all attracted are and all attract.
 And Dionysius with so great desire ⁶⁸³
 To contemplate these Orders set himself,
 He named them and distinguished them as I do.
 But Gregory afterwards dissented from him; ⁶⁸⁴
 Wherefore, as soon as he unclosed his eyes
 Within this heaven, he at himself did smile.
 And if so much of secret truth a mortal
 Proffered on earth, I would not have thee marvel,
 For he who saw it here revealed it to him, ⁶⁸⁵
 With much more of the truth about these circles."

the rest; and this belongs to the Principalities. There are others who simply execute, and this is the part of the Angels. Others hold an intermediate position, which belongs to the Archangels."

⁶⁸³The Athenian convert of St. Paul. *Acts* XVII. 34: "Howbeit, certain men clave unto him, and believed; among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite." Dante places him among the theologians in the Heaven of the Sun. To Dionysius was attributed a work, called *The Celestial Hierarchy*, which the great storehouse of all that relates the nature and operations of Angels. Venturi calls him "the false Areo-agite;" and Dalbaeus, *De Script. Dion. Areop.*, says that this work was not known till the sixth century. The *Legenda Aurea* confounds St. Dionysius the Areopagite with St. Denis, Bishop of Paris in the third century, and patron saint of France. It says he was called the Areopagite from the quarter where he lived; that he was surnamed Theosoph – the Wise in God; that he was converted, not by the preaching of St. Paul, but by a miracle the saint wrought in restoring a blind man to sight; and that "the woman named Damaris," who was converted with him, was his wife.

⁶⁸⁴St. Gregory differed from St. Dionysius in the arrangement of the Orders, placing the Principalities in the second triad, and the Virtues in the third.

⁶⁸⁵St. Paul, who, *2 Corinthians* XII. 4, "was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

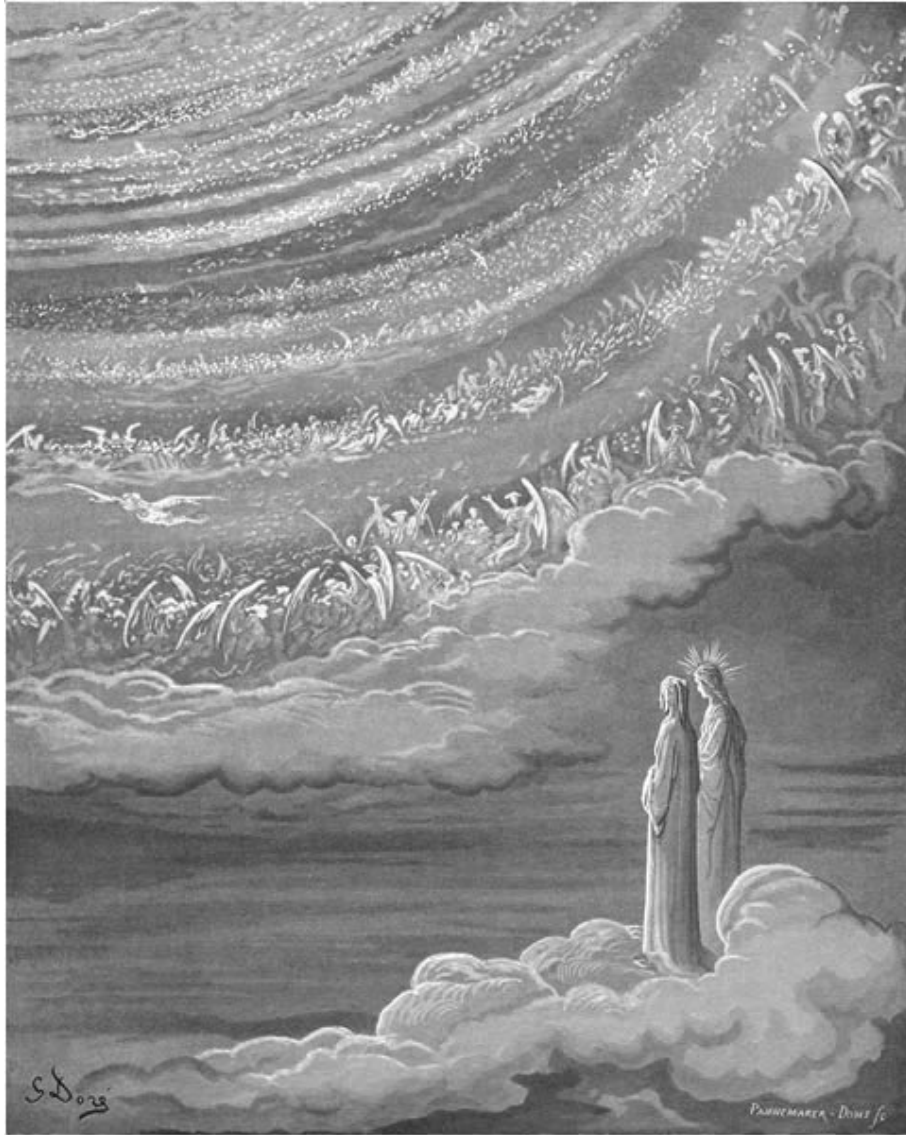


Figure 16: They so many were, their number makes more millions than the doubling of the chess.

Canto 29

AT what time both the children of Latona,⁶⁸⁶
 Surmounted by the Ram and by the Scales,⁶⁸⁷
 Together make a zone of the horizon,⁶⁸⁸

As long as from the time the zenith holds them
 In equipoise, till from that girdle both
 Changing their hemisphere disturb the balance,

So long, her face depicted with a smile,
 Did Beatrice keep silence while she gazed
 Fixedly at the point which had o'ercome me.⁶⁸⁹

Then she began: "I say, and I ask not
 What thou dost wish to hear, for I have seen it⁶⁹⁰
 Where centres every When and every *Ubi*.⁶⁹¹

Not to acquire some good unto himself,
 Which is impossible, but that his splendour⁶⁹²
 In its resplendency may say, '*Subsisto*,'

In his eternity outside of time,⁶⁹³

⁶⁸⁶The Primum Mobile, or Crystalline Heaven, continued. The children of Latona are Apollo and Diana – the Sun and Moon.

⁶⁸⁷When the Sun is in Aries and the Moon in Libra, and when the Sun is setting and the full Moon rising, so that they are both on the horizon at the same time.

⁶⁸⁸So long as they remained thus equipoised, as if in the opposite scales of an invisible balance suspended from the zenith.

⁶⁸⁹God, whom Dante could not look upon, even as reflected in the eyes of Beatrice.

⁶⁹⁰What Dante wishes to know is, where, when, and how the Angels were created.

⁶⁹¹Every When and every Where.

⁶⁹²Dante, *Convito*, III. 114, defines splendour as "reflected light." Here it means the creation; the reflected light of God.

Job XXXVIII. 7: "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." And again, 35: "Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?"

⁶⁹³Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. Quæst. LXI. 3: "The angelic nature was made before

Outside all other limits, as it pleased him,
Into new Loves the Eternal Love unfolded. ⁶⁹⁴

Nor as if torpid did he lie before;
For neither after nor before proceeded
The going forth of God upon these waters. ⁶⁹⁵

Matter and Form unmingled and conjoined ⁶⁹⁶
Came into being that had no defect,
E'en as three arrows from a three-stringed bow.

And as in glass, in amber, or in crystal
A sunbeam flashes so, that from its coming
To its full being is no interval,

So from its Lord did the triform effect
Ray forth into its being all together,
Without discrimination of beginning.

Order was con-created and constructed
In substances, and summit of the world
Were those wherein the pure act was produced. ⁶⁹⁷

Pure potentiality held the lowest part; ⁶⁹⁸
Midway bound potentiality with act ⁶⁹⁹
Such bond that it shall never be unbound. ⁷⁰⁰

Jerome has written unto you of angels ⁷⁰¹

the creation of time, and after eternity."

⁶⁹⁴In the creation of the Angels. Some editions read *nove Amori* – the nine Loves, or nine choirs of Angels.

⁶⁹⁵*Genesis* I. 2: "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

⁶⁹⁶Pure Matter, or the elements; pure Form, or the Angels; and the two conjoined, the human race. Form, in the language of the Schools, and as defined by Thomas Aquinas, is the principle "by which we first think, whether it be called intellect, or intellectual soul."

⁶⁹⁷The Angels. Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. Quæst. L. 2, says "Form is act. Therefore whatever is form alone, is pure act."

⁶⁹⁸Pure matter, which is passive and only possesses potentiality, or power of assuming various forms when united with mind. "It is called potentiality," comments Buti, "because it can receive many forms; and the forms are called act, because they change, and act by changing matter into various forms."

⁶⁹⁹The union of the soul and body in man, who occupies the intermediate place between Angels and pure matter.

⁷⁰⁰This bond, though suspended by death, will be resumed again at the resurrection, and remain for ever.

⁷⁰¹St. Jerome, the greatest of the Latin Fathers of the Church, and author of the translation of the *Scriptures* known as the *Vulgate*, was born of wealthy parents in Dalmatia, in 342. He studied at Rome under the grammarian Donatus, and became a lawyer in that

Created a long lapse of centuries
Or ever yet the other world was made;

But written is this truth in many places ⁷⁰²
By writers of the Holy Ghost, and thou ⁷⁰³
Shalt see it, if thou lookest well thereat.

And even reason seeth it somewhat,
For it would not concede that for so long
Could be the motors without their perfection. ⁷⁰⁴

Now dost thou know both where and when these Loves
Created were, and how; so that extinct
In thy desire already are three fires.

Nor could one reach, in counting, unto twenty
So swiftly, as a portion of these angels
Disturbed the subject of your elements. ⁷⁰⁵

The rest remained, and they began this art
Which thou discernest, with so great delight
That never from their circling do they cease.

The occasion of the fall was the accursed
Presumption of that One, whom thou hast seen ⁷⁰⁶
By all the burden of the world constrained.

city. At the age of thirty he visited the Holy Land, and, withdrawing from the world, became an anchorite in the desert of Chalcida, on the borders of Arabia. Here he underwent the bodily privations and temptations, and enjoyed the spiritual triumphs, of the hermit's life. He was haunted by demons, and consoled by voices and visions from heaven. At the end of five years he was driven from his solitude by the persecution of the Eastern monks, and lived successively in Jerusalem, Antioch, Constantinople, Rome, and Alexandria. Finally, in 385, he returned to the Holy Land, and built a monastery at Bethlehem. Here he wrote his translation of the *Scriptures*, and his *Lives of the Fathers of the Desert*; but in 416 this monastery, and others that had risen up in its neighbourhood, were burned by the Pelagians, and St. Jerome took refuge in a strong tower or fortified castle. Four years afterwards he died, and was buried in the ruins of his monastery.

⁷⁰²This truth of the simultaneous creation of the mind and matter as stated in line 29.

⁷⁰³The opinion of St. Jerome and other Fathers of the Church, that the Angels were created long ages before the rest of the universe, is refuted by Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. Quæst. LXI 3.

⁷⁰⁴That the Intelligences or Motors of the heavens should be so long without any heavens to move.

⁷⁰⁵The subject of the elements is the earth, so called as being the lowest, or underlying the others, fire, air, and water.

⁷⁰⁶The pride of Lucifer, who lies at the centre of the earth, towards which all things gravitate, and "Down upon which thrust all the other rocks."

Those whom thou here beholdest modest were
To recognise themselves as of that goodness
Which made them apt for so much understanding;

On which account their vision was exalted
By the enlightening grace and their own merit,
So that they have a full and steadfast will.

I would not have thee doubt, but certain be,
'Tis meritorious to receive this grace,⁷⁰⁷
According as the affection opens to it.

Now round about in this consistory
Much mayst thou contemplate, if these my words
Be gathered up, without all further aid.

But since upon the earth, throughout your schools,
They teach that such is the angelic nature
That it doth hear, and recollect, and will,

More will I say, that thou mayst see unmixed
The truth that is confounded there below,
Equivocating in such like prelections.

These substances, since in God's countenance
They jocund were, turned not away their sight
From that wherefrom not anything is hidden;

Hence they have not their vision intercepted
By object new, and hence they do not need
To recollect, through interrupted thought.

So that below, not sleeping, people dream,
Believing they speak truth, and not believing;
And in the last is greater sin and shame.

Below you do not journey by one path
Philosophising; so transporteth you
Love of appearance and the thought thereof.

And even this above here is endured
With less disdain, than when is set aside
The Holy Writ, or when it is distorted.

They think not there how much of blood it costs
To sow it in the world, and how he pleases

⁷⁰⁷The merit consists in being willing to receive this grace.

Who in humility keeps close to it.

Each striveth for appearance, and doth make
His own inventions; and these treated are
By preachers, and the Evangel holds its peace.

One sayeth that the moon did backward turn,
In the Passion of Christ, and interpose herself
So that the sunlight reached not down below;

And lies; for of its own accord the light
Hid itself; whence to Spaniards and to Indians,
As to the Jews, did such eclipse respond.

Florence has not so many Lapi and Bindi ⁷⁰⁸
As fables such as these, that every year
Are shouted from the pulpit back and forth,

In such wise that the lambs, who do not know,
Come back from pasture fed upon the wind,
And not to see the harm doth not excuse them.

Christ did not to his first disciples say,
'Go forth, and to the world preach idle tales,'
But unto them a true foundation gave;

And this so loudly sounded from their lips,
That, in the warfare to enkindle Faith,
They made of the Evangel shields and lances.

Now men go forth with jests and drolleries
To preach, and if but well the people laugh,
The hood puffs out, and nothing more is asked.

But in the cowl there nestles such a bird, ⁷⁰⁹
That, if the common people were to see it,
They would perceive what pardons they confide in,

For which so great on earth has grown the folly,
That, without proof of any testimony,
To each indulgence they would flock together.

⁷⁰⁸Lapo is the abbreviation of Jacopo, and Bindi of Aldobrandi, both familiar names in Florence.

⁷⁰⁹The Devil, who is often represented in early Christian art under the shape of a coal-black bird.

By this Saint Anthony his pig doth fatten,⁷¹⁰
 And many others, who are worse than pigs,
 Paying in money without mark of coinage.⁷¹¹
 But since we have digressed abundantly,
 Turn back thine eyes forthwith to the right path,
 So that the way be shortened with the time.
 This nature doth so multiply itself⁷¹²
 In numbers, that there never yet was speech
 Nor mortal fancy that can go so far.
 And if thou notest that which is revealed
 By Daniel, thou wilt see that in his thousands⁷¹³
 Number determinate is kept concealed.
 The primal light, that all irradiates it,⁷¹⁴
 By modes as many is received therein,
 As are the splendours wherewith it is mated.⁷¹⁵
 Hence, inasmuch as on the act conceptive
 The affection followeth, of love the sweetness⁷¹⁶
 Therein diversely fervid is or tepid.
 The height behold now and the amplitude
 Of the eternal power, since it hath made
 Itself so many mirrors, where 'tis broken,
 One in itself remaining as before."

⁷¹⁰In early paintings the swine is the symbol of St. Anthony, as the cherub of St. Matthew, the lion of St. Mark, and the eagle of St. John. There is an old tradition that St. Anthony was once swineherd. This is quite a mistake. The hog was the representative of the demon of sensuality and gluttony, which Anthony is supposed to have vanquished by the exercises of piety and by divine aid. The ancient custom of placing in all his effigies a black pig at his feet, or under his feet, gave rise to the superstition that this unclean animal was especially dedicated to him, and under his protection. The monks of the Order of St. Anthony kept herds of consecrated pigs, which were allowed to feed at the public charge, and which it was a profanation to steal or kill: hence the proverb about the fatness of a 'Tantony pig.'"

⁷¹¹Giving false indulgences, without the true stamp upon them, in return for the alms received.

⁷¹²The nature of the Angels.

⁷¹³*Daniel* VII. 10: "Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him."

⁷¹⁴That irradiates this angelic nature.

⁷¹⁵The splendours are the reflected lights, or the Angels.

⁷¹⁶The fervour of the Angels is proportioned to their capacity of receiving the divine light.

Canto 30

PERCHANCE six thousand miles remote from us ⁷¹⁷
 Is glowing the sixth hour, and now this world ⁷¹⁸
 Inclines its shadow almost to a level,
 When the mid-heaven begins to make itself
 So deep to us, that here and there a star
 Ceases to shine so far down as this depth,
 And as advances bright exceedingly
 The handmaid of the sun, the heaven is closed
 Light after light to the most beautiful;
 Not otherwise the Triumph, which for ever ⁷¹⁹
 Plays round about the point that vanquished me,
 Seeming enclosed by what itself encloses,
 Little by little from my vision faded;
 Whereat to turn mine eyes on Beatrice
 My seeing nothing and my love constrained me.
 If what has hitherto been said of her
 Were all concluded in a single praise,
 Scant would it be to serve the present turn.
 Not only does the beauty I beheld
 Transcend ourselves, but truly I believe
 Its Maker only may enjoy it all.

⁷¹⁷The ascent to the Empyrean, the tenth and last Heaven. Of this Heaven, Dante, *Convito*, II. 4, says: "This is the sovereign edifice of the world, in which the whole world is included, and outside of which nothing is. And it is not in space, but was formed solely in the primal Mind, which the Greeks call Protonope. This is that magnificence of which the Psalmist spake, when he says to God, 'Thy magnificence is exalted above the heavens.'"

⁷¹⁸The sixth hour is noon, and when noon is some six thousand miles away from us, the dawn is approaching, the shadow of the earth lies almost on a plane with it, and gradually the stars disappear.

⁷¹⁹The nine circles of Angels, described in Canto XXVIII.

Vanquished do I confess me by this passage
 More than by problem of his theme was ever
 O'ercome the comic or the tragic poet;

For as the sun the sight that trembles most,
 Even so the memory of that sweet smile
 My mind depriveth of its very self.

From the first day that I beheld her face
 In this life, to the moment of this look,
 The sequence of my song has ne'er been severed;

But now perforce this sequence must desist
 From following her beauty with my verse,
 As every artist at his uttermost.

Such as I leave her to a greater fame
 Than any of my trumpet, which is bringing
 Its arduous matter to a final close,

With voice and gesture of a perfect leader
 She recommenced: "We from the greatest body ⁷²⁰
 Have issued to the heaven that is pure light;

Light intellectual replete with love,
 Love of true good replete with ecstasy,
 Ecstasy that transcendeth every sweetness. ⁷²¹

Here shalt thou see the one host and the other ⁷²²
 Of Paradise, and one in the same aspects
 Which at the final judgment thou shalt see." ⁷²³

⁷²⁰From the Crystalline Heaven to the Empyrean. Dante, *Convito*, II. 15, makes the Empyrean the symbol of Theology – the Divine Science: "The Empyrean Heaven, by its peace, resembles the Divine Science, which is full of all peace; and which suffers no strife of opinions or sophistical arguments, because of the exceeding certitude of its subject, which is God. And of this he says to his disciples, 'My peace I give unto you; my peace I leave you;' giving and leaving them his doctrine, which is this science of which I speak. Of this Solomon says: 'There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number; my dove, my undefiled, is but one.' All sciences he calls queens and paramours and virgins; and this he calls a dove, because it is without blemish of strife; and this he calls perfect, because it makes us perfectly to see the truth in which our soul has rest."

⁷²¹*Philippians* IV. 7: "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding."

⁷²²The Angels and the souls of the saints.

⁷²³The Angels will be seen in the same aspect after the last judgment as before; but the souls of the saints will wear "the twofold garments," spoken of in Canto XXV. 92, the spiritual body, and the glorified earthly body.

Even as a sudden lightning that disperses
 The visual spirits, so that it deprives
 The eye of impress from the strongest objects,
 Thus round about me flashed a living light,
 And left me swathed around with such a veil
 Of its effulgence, that I nothing saw.

“Ever the Love which quieteth this heaven
 Welcomes into itself with such salute,
 To make the candle ready for its flame.”

No sooner had within me these brief words
 An entrance found, than I perceived myself
 To be uplifted over my own power,

And I with vision new rekindled me,
 Such that no light whatever is so pure
 But that mine eyes were fortified against it.

And light I saw in fashion of a river ⁷²⁴
 Fulvid with its effulgence, 'twixt two banks
 Depicted with an admirable Spring.

Out of this river issued living sparks, ⁷²⁵
 And on all sides sank down into the flowers,
 Like unto rubies that are set in gold; ⁷²⁶

And then, as if inebriate with the odours,
 They plunged again into the wondrous torrent,
 And as one entered issued forth another.

“The high desire, that now inflames and moves thee
 To have intelligence of what thou seest,
 Pleaseth me all the more, the more it swells.

But of this water it behoves thee drink
 Before so great a thirst in thee be slaked.”
 Thus said to me the sunshine of mine eyes;

And added: “The river and the topazes
 Going in and out, and the laughing of the herbage,

⁷²⁴*Daniel VII. 10: “A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him.” And Revelation XXII. 1: “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.”*

⁷²⁵The sparks are Angels, and the flowers the souls of the blessed.

⁷²⁶For the mystic virtues of the ruby, see Canto IX. note to line 69.

Are of their truth foreshadowing prefaces;
Not that these things are difficult in themselves,
But the deficiency is on thy side,
For yet thou hast not vision so exalted.”

There is no babe that leaps so suddenly
With face towards the milk, if he awake
Much later than his usual custom is,
As I did, that I might make better mirrors
Still of mine eyes, down stooping to the wave
Which flows that we therein be better made.

And even as the penthouse of mine eyelids
Drank of it, it forthwith appeared to me
Out of its length to be transformed to round.

Then as a folk who have been under masks
Seem other than before, if they divest
The semblance not their own they disappeared in,
Thus into greater pomp were changed for me
The flowerets and the sparks, so that I saw
Both of the Courts of Heaven made manifest.

O splendour of God! by means of which I saw
The lofty triumph of the realm veracious,
Give me the power to say how it I saw!

There is a light above, which visible
Makes the Creator unto every creature,
Who only in beholding Him has peace,
And it expands itself in circular form
To such extent, that its circumference
Would be too large a girdle for the sun.

The semblance of it is all made of rays
Reflected from the top of Primal Motion,
Which takes therefrom vitality and power.

And as a hill in water at its base
Mirrors itself, as if to see its beauty
When affluent most in verdure and in flowers,
So, ranged aloft all round about the light,
Mirrored I saw in more ranks than a thousand
All who above there have from us returned.

And if the lowest row collect within it
So great a light, how vast the amplitude
Is of this Rose in its extremest leaves!
My vision in the vastness and the height
Lost not itself, but comprehended all
The quantity and quality of that gladness.
There near and far nor add nor take away;
For there where God immediately doth govern,
The natural law in naught is relevant.
Into the yellow of the Rose Eternal
That spreads, and multiplies, and breathes an odour
Of praise unto the ever-vernal Sun,
As one who silent is and fain would speak,
Me Beatrice drew on, and said: "Behold
Of the white stoles how vast the convent is!
Behold how vast the circuit of our city!
Behold our seats so filled to overflowing,
That here henceforward are few people wanting!
On that great throne whereon thine eyes are fixed
For the crown's sake already placed upon it,
Before thou suppest at this wedding feast
Shall sit the soul (that is to be Augustus
On earth) of noble Henry, who shall come
To redress Italy ere she be ready.
Blind covetousness, that casts its spell upon you,
Has made you like unto the little child,
Who dies of hunger and drives off the nurse.
And in the sacred forum then shall be
A Prefect such, that openly or covert
On the same road he will not walk with him.
But long of God he will not be endured
In holy office; he shall be thrust down
Where Simon Magus is for his deserts,
And make him of Alagna lower go!"⁷²⁷

⁷²⁷Pope Boniface VIII., a native of Alagna, now Anagni. Dante has already his punishment prepared. He is to be thrust head downward into a narrow hole in the rock of Malebolge, and to be driven down still lower when Clement V. shall follow him.

Canto 31

IN fashion then as of a snow-white rose ⁷²⁸
Displayed itself to me the saintly host,
Whom Christ in his own blood had made his bride,
But the other host, that flying sees and sings
The glory of Him who doth enamour it,
And the goodness that created it so noble,
Even as a swarm of bees, that sinks in flowers
One moment, and the next returns again
To where its labour is to sweetness turned,
Sank into the great flower, that is adorned
With leaves so many, and thence reascended
To where its love abideth evermore.
Their faces had they all of living flame,
And wings of gold, and all the rest so white
No snow unto that limit doth attain.
From bench to bench, into the flower descending,
They carried something of the peace and ardour
Which by the fanning of their flanks they won.
Nor did the interposing 'twixt the flower
And what was o'er it of such plenitude
Of flying shapes impede the sight and splendour;
Because the light divine so penetrates
The universe, according to its merit,
That naught can be an obstacle against it.
This realm secure and full of gladsomeness,
Crowded with ancient people and with modern,
Unto one mark had all its look and love.

⁷²⁸The White Rose of Paradise.

O Trinal Light, that in a single star
 Sparkling upon their sight so satisfies them,
 Look down upon our tempest here below!
 If the barbarians, coming from some region
 That every day by Helice is covered,⁷²⁹
 Revolving with her son whom she delights in,
 Beholding Rome and all her noble works,⁷³⁰
 Were wonder-struck, what time the Lateran⁷³¹
 Above all mortal things was eminent,—
 I who to the divine had from the human,
 From time unto eternity, had come,
 From Florence to a people just and sane,
 With what amazement must I have been filled!
 Truly between this and the joy, it was
 My pleasure not to hear, and to be mute.
 And as a pilgrim who delighteth him
 In gazing round the temple of his vow,
 And hopes some day to retell how it was,
 So through the living light my way pursuing
 Directed I mine eyes o'er all the ranks,
 Now up, now down, and now all round about.
 Faces I saw of charity persuasive,
 Embellished by His light and their own smile,
 And attitudes adorned with every grace.
 The general form of Paradise already
 My glance had comprehended as a whole,
 In no part hitherto remaining fixed,

⁷²⁹The nymph Callisto, or Helice, was changed by Jupiter into the constellation of the Great Bear, and her son into that of the Little Bear. See *Purgatorio* XXV., note to line 131.

⁷³⁰Rome and her superb edifices, before the removal of the Papal See to Avignon.

⁷³¹Speaking of Petrarch's visit to Rome, Mr. Norton, *Travel and Study in Italy*, p. 288, says: "The great church of St. John Lateran, 'the mother and head of all the churches of the city and the world,' — *mater urbis et orbis*, — had been almost destroyed by fire, with its adjoining palace, and the houses of the canons, on the Eve of St. John, in 1308. The palace and the canons' houses were rebuilt not long after; but at the time of Petrarch's latest visit to Rome, and for years afterward, the church was without a roof, and its walls were ruinous. The poet addressed three at least of the Popes at Avignon with urgent appeals that this disgrace should no longer be permitted, but the Popes gave no heed to his words; for the ruin of Roman churches, or of Rome itself, was a matter of little concern to these Transalpine prelates."

And round I turned me with rekindled wish
My Lady to interrogate of things
Concerning which my mind was in suspense.

One thing I meant, another answered me;
I thought I should see Beatrice, and saw
An Old Man habited like the glorious people.

O'erflowing was he in his eyes and cheeks
With joy benign, in attitude of pity
As to a tender father is becoming.

And "She, where is she?" instantly I said;
Whence he: "To put an end to thy desire,
Me Beatrice hath sent from mine own place.

And if thou lookest up to the third round
Of the first rank, again shalt thou behold her
Upon the throne her merits have assigned her."

Without reply I lifted up mine eyes,
And saw her, as she made herself a crown
Reflecting from herself the eternal rays.

Not from that region which the highest thunders ⁷³²
Is any mortal eye so far removed,
In whatsoever sea it deepest sinks,

As there from Beatrice my sight; but this
Was nothing unto me; because her image
Descended not to me by medium blurred.

"O Lady, thou in whom my hope is strong,
And who for my salvation didst endure
In Hell to leave the imprint of thy feet,

Of whatsoever things I have beheld,
As coming from thy power and from thy goodness
I recognise the virtue and the grace.

Thou from a slave hast brought me unto freedom,
By all those ways, by all the expedients,
Whereby thou hadst the power of doing it.

Preserve towards me thy magnificence,
So that this soul of mine, which thou hast healed,

⁷³²From the highest regions of the air to the lowest depth of the sea.

Pleasing to thee be loosened from the body.”

Thus I implored; and she, so far away,
Smiled, as it seemed, and looked once more at me;
Then unto the eternal fountain turned.

And said the Old Man holy: “That thou mayst
Accomplish perfectly thy journeying,
Whereunto prayer and holy love have sent me,

Fly with thine eyes all round about this garden;
For seeing it will discipline thy sight
Farther to mount along the ray divine.

And she, the Queen of Heaven, for whom I burn
Wholly with love, will grant us every grace,
Because that I her faithful Bernard am.”⁷³³

As he who peradventure from Croatia
Cometh to gaze at our Veronica,⁷³⁴
Who through its ancient fame is never sated,

But says in thought, the while it is displayed,
“My Lord, Christ Jesus, God of very God,
Now was your semblance made like unto this?”

Even such was I while gazing at the living
Charity of the man, who in this world

⁷³³St. Bernard, the great Abbot of Clairvaux, the *Doctor Mellifluus* of the Church, and preacher of the disastrous Second Crusade, was born of noble parents in the village of Fontaine, near Dijon, in Burgundy, in the year 1190. After studying at Paris, at the age of twenty he entered the Benedictine monastery of Citeaux; and when, five years later, this monastery had become overcrowded with monks, he was sent out to found a new one. Bernard led his followers to a wilderness, called the *Valley of Wormwood*, and there, at his bidding, arose the since renowned abbey of Clairvaux. They felled the trees, built themselves huts, tilled and sowed the ground, and changed whole face of the country round; that which had been a dismal solitude, the resort of wolves and robbers, became a land of vines and corn, rich, populous, and prosperous. This incident forms the subject of one Murillo’s most famous paintings, and suggestive of the saint’s intense devotion to the Virgin, which Dante expresses in this line.

⁷³⁴The Veronica is the portrait of our Saviour impressed upon a veil or kerchief, preserved with great care in the church of the Santi Apostoli at Rome. Of the Veronica there are four copies in existence, each claiming to be the original; one at Rome, another at Paris, a third at Laon, and a fourth at Xaen in Andalusia. The traveller who has crossed the Sierra Morena cannot easily forget the stone column, surmounted by an iron cross, which marks the boundary between La Mancha and Andalusia, with the melancholy stone face upon it, and the inscription, “*El verdadero Retrato de La Santa Cara del Dios de Xaen.*”

By contemplation tasted of that peace.
"Thou son of grace, this jocund life," began he,
"Will not be known to thee by keeping ever
Thine eyes below here on the lowest place;
But mark the circles to the most remote,
Until thou shalt behold enthroned the Queen⁷³⁵
To whom this realm is subject and devoted."
I lifted up mine eyes, and as at morn
The oriental part of the horizon
Surpasses that wherein the sun goes down,
Thus, as if going with mine eyes from vale
To mount, I saw a part in the remoteness
Surpass in splendour all the other front.
And even as there where we await the pole
That Phaeton drove badly, blazes more⁷³⁶
The light, and is on either side diminished,
So likewise that pacific oriflamme
Gleamed brightest in the centre, and each side
In equal measure did the flame abate.
And at that centre, with their wings expanded,
More than a thousand jubilant Angels saw I,
Each differing in effulgence and in kind.
I saw there at their sports and at their songs
A beauty smiling, which the gladness was
Within the eyes of all the other saints;
And if I had in speaking as much wealth
As in imagining, I should not dare
To attempt the smallest part of its delight.
Bernard, as soon as he beheld mine eyes
Fixed and intent upon its fervid fervour,
His own with such affection turned to her
That it made mine more ardent to behold.

⁷³⁵The Virgin Mary, *Regina Coeli*.

⁷³⁶The chariot of the sun.



Figure 17: In fashion then as of a snow-white rose displayed itself to me the saintly host...



Figure 18: "Thou shalt behold enthroned the Queen to whom this realm is subject and devoted."

Canto 32

ABSORBED in his delight, that contemplator⁷³⁷
 Assumed the willing office of a teacher,
 And gave beginning to these holy words:

“The wound that Mary closed up and anointed,
 She at her feet who is so beautiful,⁷³⁸
 She is the one who opened it and pierced it.

Within that order which the third seats make
 Is seated Rachel, lower than the other,⁷³⁹
 With Beatrice, in manner as thou seest.

Sarah, Rebecca, Judith, and her who was
 Ancestress of the Singer, who for dole⁷⁴⁰
 Of the misdeed said, ‘*Miserere mei*,’⁷⁴¹

Canst thou behold from seat to seat descending
 Down in gradation, as with each one’s name
 I through the Rose go down from leaf to leaf.

And downward from the seventh row, even as
 Above the same, succeed the Hebrew women,
 Dividing all the tresses of the flower;

Because, according to the view which Faith
 In Christ had taken, these are the partition
 By which the sacred stairways are divided.

Upon this side, where perfect is the flower

⁷³⁷St. Bernard, absorbed in contemplation of the Virgin.

⁷³⁸Eve. St. Augustine, Sermon 18 *De Sanctis*, says: “*Illa percussit, ista sanavit.*”

⁷³⁹Rachel is an emblem of Divine Contemplation. *Inferno* II. 101, Beatrice says: “And came unto the place where I was sitting with the ancient Rachel.”

⁷⁴⁰Ruth the Moabitess, ancestress of King David.

⁷⁴¹“Have mercy upon me,” are the first words of *Psalms* II. – a Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him.

With each one of its petals, seated are
Those who believed in Christ who was to come. ⁷⁴²

Upon the other side, where intersected
With vacant spaces are the semicircles,
Are those who looked to Christ already come. ⁷⁴³

And as, upon this side, the glorious seat
Of the Lady of Heaven, and the other seats
Below it, such a great division make,

So opposite doth that of the great John, ⁷⁴⁴
Who, ever holy, desert and martyrdom
Endured, and afterwards two years in Hell.

And under him thus to divide were chosen
Francis, and Benedict, and Augustine,
And down to us the rest from round to round.

Behold now the high providence divine;
For one and other aspect of the Faith
In equal measure shall this garden fill.

And know that downward from that rank which cleaves ⁷⁴⁵
Midway the sequence of the two divisions,
Not by their proper merit are they seated;

But by another's under fixed conditions; ⁷⁴⁶
For these are spirits one and all assoiled
Before they any true election had.

Well canst thou recognise it in their faces,
And also in their voices puerile,
If thou regard them well and hearken to them.

Now doubtest thou, and doubting thou art silent;
But I will loosen for thee the strong bond

⁷⁴²The saints of the Old Testament.

⁷⁴³The saints of the New Testament.

⁷⁴⁴John the Baptist, seated at the point of the mystic Rose, opposite to the Virgin Mary. He died two years before Christ's resurrection, and during these two years was in the Limbo of the Fathers.

⁷⁴⁵The row of seats which divides the Rose horizontally, and crosses the two vertical lines of division, made by the seat of the Virgin Mary and those of the other Hebrew women on one side, and on the other the seats of John the Baptist and of the other saints of the New Testament beneath him.

⁷⁴⁶That is to say, by the faith of their parents, by circumcision, and by baptism, as explained line 76 *et seq.*

In which thy subtile fancies hold thee fast.
 Within the amplitude of this domain
 No casual point can possibly find place,
 No more than sadness can, or thirst, or hunger;
 For by eternal law has been established
 Whatever thou beholdest, so that closely
 The ring is fitted to the finger here.
 And therefore are these people, festinate ⁷⁴⁷
 Unto true life, not *sine causa* here
 More and less excellent among themselves.
 The King, by means of whom this realm reposes
 In so great love and in so great delight
 That no will ventureth to ask for more,
 In his own joyous aspect every mind
 Creating, at his pleasure dowers with grace
 Diversely; and let here the effect suffice.
 And this is clearly and expressly noted
 For you in Holy Scripture, in those twins ⁷⁴⁸
 Who in their mother had their anger roused.
 According to the colour of the hair, ⁷⁴⁹
 Therefore, with such a grace the light supreme
 Consenteth that they worthily be crowned.
 Without, then, any merit of their deeds,
 Stationed are they in different gradations,
 Differing only in their first acuteness. ⁷⁵⁰
 'Tis true that in the early centuries, ⁷⁵¹
 With innocence, to work out their salvation
 Sufficient was the faith of parents only.

⁷⁴⁷*Festinata gente* – dying in infancy; and thus hurried into the life eternal.

⁷⁴⁸Jacob and Esau. *Genesis* XXV. 22: "And the children struggled together within her." And *Romans* IX. 11: "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth."

⁷⁴⁹Buti comments thus: "As it pleased God to give black hair to one, and to the other red, so it pleased him to give more grace to one than to the other." And the *Ottimo* says: "One was red, the other black; which colours denote the temperaments of men, and accordingly the inclination of their minds."

⁷⁵⁰The keenness of vision with which they are originally endowed.

⁷⁵¹From Adam to Abraham.

After the earlier ages were completed,⁷⁵²
Behoved it that the males by circumcision
Unto their innocent wings should virtue add;

But after that the time of grace had come
Without the baptism absolute of Christ,
Such innocence below there was retained.

Look now into the face that unto Christ⁷⁵³
Hath most resemblance; for its brightness only
Is able to prepare thee to see Christ."

On her did I behold so great a gladness
Rain down, borne onward in the holy minds
Created through that altitude to fly,

That whatsoever I had seen before
Did not suspend me in such admiration,
Nor show me such similitude of God.

And the same Love that first descended there,⁷⁵⁴
"Ave Maria, gratia plena," singing,
In front of her his wings expanded wide.

Unto the canticle divine responded
From every part the court beatified,
So that each sight became serener for it.⁷⁵⁵

"O holy father, who for me endurest
To be below here, leaving the sweet place
In which thou sittest by eternal lot,

Who is the Angel that with so much joy
Into the eyes is looking of our Queen,
Enamoured so that he seems made of fire?"

Thus I again recourse had to the teaching
Of that one who delighted him in Mary⁷⁵⁶

⁷⁵²From Abraham to Christ. *Genesis* XVII. 10: "This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you, and thy seed after thee: Every man-child among you shall be circumcised."

⁷⁵³The face of the Virgin Mary.

⁷⁵⁴The Angel Gabriel. *Luke* I. 28: "And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women."

⁷⁵⁵The countenance of each saint became brighter.

⁷⁵⁶The word in the original is *abbelliva*, which Dante here uses in the sense of the Provençal, *abellis*, of *Purgatorio* XXVI. 140. He uses the word in the same sense in *Convito*, II. 7:

As doth the star of morning in the sun.⁷⁵⁷

And he to me: "Such gallantry and grace
As there can be in Angel and in soul,
All is in him; and thus we fain would have it;

Because he is the one who bore the palm
Down unto Mary, when the Son of God
To take our burden on himself decreed.

But now come onward with thine eyes, as I
Speaking shall go, and note the great patricians
Of this most just and merciful of empires.

Those two that sit above there most enrapture
As being very near unto Augusta,⁷⁵⁸
Are as it were the two roots of this Rose.

He who upon the left is near her placed⁷⁵⁹
The father is, by whose audacious taste
The human species so much bitter tastes.

Upon the right thou seest that ancient father⁷⁶⁰
Of Holy Church, into whose keeping Christ
The keys committed of this lovely flower.

And he who all the evil days beheld,⁷⁶¹
Before his death, of her the beauteous bride
Who with the spear and with the nails was won,

Beside him sits, and by the other rests
That leader under whom on manna lived⁷⁶²
The people ingrate, fickle, and stiff-necked.⁷⁶³

Opposite Peter seest thou Anna seated,⁷⁶⁴

"In all speech the speaker is chiefly bent on persuasion, that is, on pleasing the audience, *all' abbellire dell' audienza*, which is the source of all other persuasions."

⁷⁵⁷"The star of morning delighting in the sun," is from Canto VIII. 12, where Dante speaks of Venus as "The star that woos, the sun, now following, now in front."

⁷⁵⁸The Virgin Mary, the Queen of this empire.

⁷⁵⁹Adam.

⁷⁶⁰St. Peter.

⁷⁶¹St. John, who lived till the evil days and persecutions of the Church, the bride of Christ, won by the crucifixion.

⁷⁶²Moses.

⁷⁶³*Exodus* XXXII. 9: "And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people."

⁷⁶⁴Anna, mother of the Virgin Mary.

So well content to look upon her daughter,
Her eyes she moves not while she sings *Hosanna*.
And opposite the eldest household father
Lucia sits, she who thy Lady moved ⁷⁶⁵
When to rush downward thou didst bend thy brows.
But since the moments of thy vision fly,
Here will we make full stop, as a good tailor
Who makes the gown according to his cloth,
And unto the first Love will turn our eyes,
That looking upon Him thou penetrate
As far as possible through his effulgence.
Truly, lest peradventure thou recede,
Moving thy wings believing to advance, ⁷⁶⁶
By prayer behoves it that grace be obtained;
Grace from that one who has the power to aid thee;
And thou shalt follow me with thy affection
That from my words thy heart turn not aside.”
And he began this holy orison.

⁷⁶⁵Santa Lucia, virgin and martyr. Dante, *Inferno* II. 100, makes her, as the emblem of illuminating grace, intercede with Beatrice for his salvation.

⁷⁶⁶Trusting only to thine own efforts.

Canto 33

“**T**HOU Virgin Mother, daughter of thy Son,
Humble and high beyond all other creature,
The limit fixed of the eternal counsel,
Thou art the one who such nobility
To human nature gave, that its Creator
Did not disdain to make himself its creature.
Within thy womb rekindled was the love,
By heat of which in the eternal peace
After such wise this flower has germinated.
Here unto us thou art a noontide torch
Of charity, and below there among mortals
Thou art the living fountain-head of hope.
Lady, thou art so great, and so prevailing,
That he who wishes grace, nor runs to thee,
His aspirations without wings would fly.
Not only thy benignity gives succour
To him who asketh it, but oftentimes
Forerunneth of its own accord the asking.
In thee compassion is, in thee is pity,
In thee magnificence; in thee unites
Whate'er of goodness is in any creature.
Now doth this man, who from the lowest depth
Of the universe as far as here has seen
One after one the spiritual lives,
Supplicate thee through grace for so much power
That with his eyes he may uplift himself
Higher towards the uttermost salvation.
And I, who never burned for my own seeing

More than I do for his, all of my prayers
 Proffer to thee, and pray they come not short,
 That thou wouldst scatter from him every cloud
 Of his mortality so with thy prayers,
 That the Chief Pleasure be to him displayed.
 Still farther do I pray thee, Queen, who canst
 Whate'er thou wilt, that sound thou mayst preserve
 After so great a vision his affections. ⁷⁶⁷
 Let thy protection conquer human movements;
 See Beatrice and all the blessed ones
 My prayers to second clasp their hands to thee!"
 The eyes beloved and revered of God,
 Fastened upon the speaker, showed to us
 How grateful unto her are prayers devout;
 Then unto the Eternal Light they turned,
 On which it is not credible could be
 By any creature bent an eye so clear.
 And I, who to the end of all desires
 Was now approaching, even as I ought
 The ardour of desire within me ended. ⁷⁶⁸
 Bernard was beckoning unto me, and smiling,
 That I should upward look; but I already
 Was of my own accord such as he wished;
 Because my sight, becoming purified,
 Was entering more and more into the ray
 Of the High Light which of itself is true.
 From that time forward what I saw was greater
 Than our discourse, that to such vision yields,
 And yields the memory unto such excess.
 Even as he is who seeth in a dream,
 And after dreaming the imprinted passion
 Remains, and to his mind the rest returns not,
 Even such am I, for almost utterly

⁷⁶⁷As St. Macarius said to his soul: "Having taken up thine abode in heaven, where thou hast God and his holy angels to converse with, see that thou descend not thence; regard not earthly things."

⁷⁶⁸Finished the ardour of desire in its accomplishment.

Ceases my vision, and distilleth yet
Within my heart the sweetness born of it;

Even thus the snow is in the sun unsealed,
Even thus upon the wind in the light leaves
Were the soothsayings of the Sibyl lost.

O Light Supreme, that dost so far uplift thee
From the conceits of mortals, to my mind
Of what thou didst appear re-lend a little,

And make my tongue of so great puissance,
That but a single sparkle of thy glory
It may bequeath unto the future people;

For by returning to my memory somewhat,
And by a little sounding in these verses,
More of thy victory shall be conceived!

I think the keenness of the living ray
Which I endured would have bewildered me,
If but mine eyes had been averted from it;⁷⁶⁹

And I remember that I was more bold
On this account to bear, so that I joined
My aspect with the Glory Infinite.

O grace abundant, by which I presumed
To fix my sight upon the Light Eternal,
So that the seeing I consumed therein!

I saw that in its depth far down is lying
Bound up with love together in one volume,⁷⁷⁰
What through the universe in leaves is scattered;

Substance, and accident, and their operations,
All interfused together in such wise
That what I speak of is one simple light.⁷⁷¹

The universal fashion of this knot

⁷⁶⁹Luke IX. 62: "No man having put his hand to the pough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

⁷⁷⁰Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. Quæst. IV. 2: "If therefore God be the first efficient cause of things, the perfections of all things must pre-exist pre-eminently in God." And Buti: "In God are all things that are made, as in the First Cause, that foresees everything."

⁷⁷¹Of all the commentaries which I have consulted, that of Buti alone sustains this rendering of the line. The rest interpret it, "What I say is but a simple or feeble glimmer of what I saw."

Methinks I saw, since more abundantly
In saying this I feel that I rejoice.

One moment is more lethargy to me,⁷⁷²
Than five and twenty centuries to the emprise
That startled Neptune with the shade of Argo!

My mind in this wise wholly in suspense,
Steadfast, immovable, attentive gazed,
And evermore with gazing grew enkindled.

In presence of that light one such becomes,
That to withdraw therefrom for other prospect
It is impossible he e'er consent;

Because the good, which object is of will,⁷⁷³
Is gathered all in this, and out of it
That is defective which is perfect there.

Shorter henceforward will my language fall
Of what I yet remember, than an infant's
Who still his tongue doth moisten at the breast.

Not because more than one unmingled semblance
Was in the living light on which I looked,
For it is always what it was before;

But through the sight, that fortified itself
In me by looking, one appearance only
To me was ever changing as I changed.⁷⁷⁴

Within the deep and luminous subsistence⁷⁷⁵
Of the High Light appeared to me three circles,⁷⁷⁶

⁷⁷²There are almost as many interpretations of this passage as there are commentators. The most intelligible is, that Dante forgot in a single moment more of the glory he had seen, than the world had forgotten in five-and-twenty centuries of the Argonautic expedition, when Neptune wondered at the shadow of the first ship that ever crossed the sea.

⁷⁷³Aristotle, *Ethics* I., 1, Gillies's Tr.: "Since every art and every kind of knowledge, as well as all the actions and all the deliberations of men, constantly aim at something which they call good, good in general may be justly defined, that which all desire."

⁷⁷⁴In the same manner the reflection of the Griffin in Beatrice's eyes, *Purgatorio* XXXI. 124, is described as changing, while the object itself remained unchanged – "Think, Reader, if within myself I marvelled, when I beheld the thing itself stand stand still, and in its image it transformed itself."

⁷⁷⁵Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. Quæst. XXIX. 2: "What exists by itself, and not in another, is called subsistence."

⁷⁷⁶The three Persons of the Trinity.

Of threefold colour and of one dimension,
And by the second seemed the first reflected
As Iris is by Iris, and the third
Seemed fire that equally from both is breathed.
O how all speech is feeble and falls short
Of my conceit, and this to what I saw
Is such, 'tis not enough to call it little!
O Light Eterne, sole in thyself that dwellest,
Sole knowest thyself, and, known unto thyself
And knowing, lovest and smilest on thyself!
That circulation, which being thus conceived
Appeared in thee as a reflected light,⁷⁷⁷
When somewhat contemplated by mine eyes,
Within itself, of its own very colour
Seemed to me painted with our effigy,⁷⁷⁸
Wherefore my sight was all absorbed therein.
As the geometrician, who endeavours
To square the circle, and discovers not,
By taking thought, the principle he wants,
Even such was I at that new apparition;
I wished to see how the image to the circle
Conformed itself, and how it there finds place;
But my own wings were not enough for this,
Had it not been that then my mind there smote
A flash of lightning, wherein came its wish.⁷⁷⁹
Here vigour failed the lofty fantasy:
But now was turning my desire and will,
Even as a wheel that equally is moved,
The Love which moves the sun and the other stars.⁷⁸⁰

⁷⁷⁷The second circle, or second Person of the Trinity.

⁷⁷⁸The human nature of Christ; the incarnation of the Word.

⁷⁷⁹In this new light of God's grace, the mystery of the union of the Divine and human nature in Christ is revealed to Dante.

⁷⁸⁰¹ *John* IV. 16: "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

Dante Alighieri

Dante Alighieri, or simply **Dante** (May 14/June 13, 1265 – September 13/14, 1321), was an Italian poet from Florence. His central work, the *Commedia* (*Divine Comedy*), is considered the greatest literary work composed in the Italian language and a masterpiece of world literature. In Italian he is known as “the Supreme Poet” (*il Sommo Poeta*). Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio are also known as “the three fountains” or “the three crowns”. Dante is also called “the Father of the Italian language”. The first biography written on him was by his contemporary Giovanni Villani (1276 – 1348).

Life

Dante Alighieri was born in 1265, between May 14 and June 13, under the name “Durante Alighieri.”

His family was prominent in Florence, with loyalties to the Guelphs, a political alliance that supported the Papacy and which was involved in complex opposition to the Ghibellines, who were backed by the Holy Roman Emperor.

Dante pretended that his family descended from the ancient Romans (*Inferno*, XV, 76), but the earliest relative he can mention by name is Cacciaguida degli Elisei (*Paradiso*, XV, 135), of no earlier than about 1100. Dante’s father, Alighiero di Bellincione, was a White Guelph (see Politics section) who suffered no reprisals after the Ghibellines won the Battle of Montaperti in the mid 13th century. This suggests that Alighiero or his family enjoyed some protective prestige and status.

The poet’s mother was Bella degli Abati. She died when Dante was 7 years old, and Alighiero soon married again, to Lapa di Chiarissimo Cialuffi. It is uncertain whether he really married her, as widowers had social limitations in these matters. This woman definitely bore two children, Dante’s brother Francesco and sister Tana (Gaetana).

Dante fought in the front rank of the Guelph cavalry at the battle of Campaldino (June 11, 1289). This victory brought forth a reformation of the Florentine constitution. To take any part in public life, one had to be enrolled in one of "the arts". So Dante entered the guild of physicians and apothecaries. In following years, his name is frequently found recorded as speaking or voting in the various councils of the republic.

When Dante was 12, in 1277, he was promised in marriage to Gemma di Manetto Donati, daughter of Messer Manetto Donati. Contracting marriages at this early age was quite common and involved a formal ceremony, including contracts signed before a notary. Dante had already fallen in love with another girl, Beatrice Portinari (known also as Bice). Years after Dante's marriage to Gemma he met Beatrice again. He had become interested in writing verse, and although he wrote several sonnets to Beatrice, he never mentioned his wife Gemma in any of his poems.

Dante had several children with Gemma. As often happens with significant figures, many people subsequently claimed to be Dante's offspring; however, it is likely that Jacopo, Pietro, Giovanni, Gabrielle Alighieri, and Antonia were truly his children. Antonia became a nun with the name of Sister Beatrice.

Education and Poetry

Not much is known about Dante's education, and it is presumed he studied at home. It is known that he studied Tuscan poetry, at a time when the Sicilian School (*Scuola poetica siciliana*), a cultural group from Sicily, was becoming known in Tuscany. His interests brought him to discover the Occitan poetry of the troubadours and the Latin poetry of classical antiquity (with a particular devotion to Virgil).

During the "Secoli Bui" (Dark Ages), Italy had become a mosaic of small states, Sicily being the largest one, at the time under the Angevine dominations, and as far (culturally and politically) from Tuscany as Occitania was: the regions did not share a language, culture, or easy communications. Nevertheless, we can assume that Dante was a keen up-to-date intellectual with international interests.

At 18, Dante met Guido Cavalcanti, Lapo Gianni, Cino da Pistoia, and soon after Brunetto Latini; together they became the leaders of *Dolce Stil Novo* ("The Sweet New Style"). Brunetto later received a special mention in the *Divine Comedy* (*Inferno*, XV, 28), for what he had taught Dante. "*Nor speaking less on that account, I go With Ser Brunetto, and I ask who are His most known and most eminent companions*". Some fifty poetical components by

Dante are known (the so-called *Rime*, rhymes), others being included in the later *Vita Nuova* and *Convivio*. Other studies are reported, or deduced from *Vita Nuova* or the *Comedy*, regarding painting and music.

When he was nine years old he met Beatrice Portinari, daughter of Folco Portinari, with whom he fell in love “at first sight”, and apparently without even having spoken to her. He saw her frequently after age 18, often exchanging greetings in the street, but he never knew her well – he effectively set the example for the so-called “courtly love”. It is hard now to understand what this love actually comprised, but something extremely important for Italian culture was happening. It was in the name of this love that Dante gave his imprint to the *Stil Novo* and would lead poets and writers to discover the themes of Love (*Amore*), which had never been so emphasized before. Love for Beatrice (as in a different manner Petrarch would show for his Laura) would apparently be the reason for poetry and for living, together with political passions. In many of his poems, she is depicted as semi-divine, watching over him constantly.

When Beatrice died in 1290, Dante tried to find a refuge in Latin literature. The *Convivio* reveals that he had read Boethius’s *De consolazione philosophiae* and Cicero’s *De amicitia*.

He then dedicated himself to philosophical studies at religious schools like the Dominican one in Santa Maria Novella. He took part in the disputes that the two principal mendicant orders (Franciscan and Dominican) publicly or indirectly held in Florence, the former explaining the doctrine of the mystics and of Saint Bonaventure, the latter presenting Saint Thomas Aquinas’ theories.

This “excessive” passion for philosophy would later be criticized by the character Beatrice, in *Purgatorio*, the second book of the *Comedy*.

Florence and Politics

Dante, like most Florentines of his day, was embroiled in the Guelph-Ghibelline conflict. He fought in the battle of Campaldino (June 11, 1289), with the Florentine Guelphs against Arezzo Ghibellines, then in 1294 he was among the escorts of Charles Martel d’Anjou (son of Charles of Anjou) while he was in Florence.

To further his political career, he became a pharmacist. He did not intend to actually practice as one, but a law issued in 1295 required that nobles who wanted public office had to be enrolled in one of the *Corporazioni delle Arti e dei Mestieri*, so Dante obtained admission to the apothecaries’ guild. This profession was not entirely inapt, since at that time books were

sold from apothecaries' shops. As a politician, he accomplished little, but he held various offices over a number of years in a city undergoing political unrest.

After defeating the Ghibellines, the Guelphs divided into two factions: the White Guelphs (*Guelfi Bianchi*) – Dante's party, led by Vieri dei Cerchi – and the Black Guelphs (*Guelfi Neri*), led by Corso Donati. Although initially the split was along family lines, ideological differences rose based on opposing views of the papal role in Florentine affairs, with the Blacks supporting the Pope and the Whites wanting more freedom from Rome. Initially the Whites were in power and kicked out the Blacks.

In response, Pope Boniface VIII planned a military occupation of Florence. In 1301, Charles de Valois, brother of Philip the Fair king of France, was expected to visit Florence because the Pope had appointed him peacemaker for Tuscany. But the city's government had treated the Pope's ambassadors badly a few weeks before, seeking independence from papal influence. It was believed that Charles de Valois would eventually have received other unofficial instructions. So the council sent a delegation to Rome to ascertain the Pope's intentions. Dante was one of the delegates.

Exile and Death

Boniface quickly dismissed the other delegates and asked Dante alone to remain in Rome. At the same time (November 1, 1301), Charles de Valois entered Florence with Black Guelphs, who in the next six days destroyed much of the city and killed many of their enemies. A new Black Guelph government was installed and Messer Cante dei Gabrielli di Gubbio was appointed *Podestà* of Florence. Dante was condemned to exile for two years, and ordered to pay a large fine. The poet was still in Rome, where the Pope had "suggested" he stay, and was therefore considered an absconder. He did not pay the fine, in part because he believed he was not guilty, and in part because all his assets in Florence had been seized by the Black Guelphs. He was condemned to perpetual exile, and if he returned to Florence without paying the fine, he could be burned at the stake.

The poet took part in several attempts by the White Guelphs to regain power, but these failed due to treachery. Dante, bitter at the treatment he received from his enemies, also grew disgusted with the infighting and ineffectiveness of his erstwhile allies, and vowed to become a party of one. At this point, he began sketching the foundation for the *Divine Comedy*, a work in 100 cantos, divided into three books of thirty-three cantos each, with a single introductory canto.

He went to Verona as a guest of Bartolomeo I della Scala, then moved to Sarzana in Liguria. Later, he is supposed to have lived in Lucca with Madame Gentucca, who made his stay comfortable (and was later gratefully mentioned in *Purgatorio*, XXIV, 37). Some speculative sources say that he was also in Paris between 1308 and 1310. Other sources, even less trustworthy, take him to Oxford.

In 1310, the Holy Roman Emperor Henry VII of Luxembourg, marched 5,000 troops into Italy. Dante saw in him a new Charlemagne who would restore the office of the Holy Roman Emperor to its former glory and also re-take Florence from the Black Guelphs. He wrote to Henry and several Italian princes, demanding that they destroy the Black Guelphs. Mixing religion and private concerns, he invoked the worst anger of God against his city, suggesting several particular targets that coincided with his personal enemies. It was during this time that he wrote the first two books of the *Divine Comedy*.

In Florence, Baldo d'Aguglione pardoned most of the White Guelphs in exile and allowed them to return; however, Dante had gone too far in his violent letters to *Arrigo* (Henry VII), and he was not recalled.

In 1312, Henry assaulted Florence and defeated the Black Guelphs, but there is no evidence that Dante was involved. Some say he refused to participate in the assault on his city by a foreigner; others suggest that he had become unpopular with the White Guelphs too and that any trace of his passage had carefully been removed. In 1313, Henry VII died, and with him any hope for Dante to see Florence again. He returned to Verona, where Cangrande I della Scala allowed him to live in a certain security and, presumably, in a fair amount of prosperity. Cangrande was admitted to Dante's Paradise (*Paradiso*, XVII, 76).

In 1315, Florence was forced by Ugucione della Faggiuola (the military officer controlling the town) to grant an amnesty to people in exile, including Dante. But Florence required that as well as paying a sum of money, these exiles would do public penance. Dante refused, preferring to remain in exile.

When Ugucione defeated Florence, Dante's death sentence was commuted to house arrest, on condition that he go to Florence to swear that he would never enter the town again. Dante refused to go. His death sentence was confirmed and extended to his sons.

Dante still hoped late in life that he might be invited back to Florence on honourable terms. For Dante, exile was nearly a form of death, stripping him of much of his identity.

Of course it never happened. Prince Guido Novello da Polenta invited him to Ravenna in 1318, and he accepted. He finished the *Paradiso*, and

died in 1321 (at the age of 56) while returning to Ravenna from a diplomatic mission to Venice, perhaps of malaria contracted there. Dante was buried in Ravenna at the Church of San Pier Maggiore (later called San Francesco). Bernardo Bembo, praetor of Venice in 1483, took care of his remains by building a better tomb.

On the grave, some verses of Bernardo Canaccio, a friend of Dante, dedicated to Florence:

parvi Florentia mater amoris
Florence, mother of little love

Eventually, Florence came to regret Dante's exile, and made repeated requests for the return of his remains. The custodians of the body at Ravenna refused to comply, at one point going so far as to conceal the bones in a false wall of the monastery. Nevertheless, in 1829, a tomb was built for him in Florence in the basilica of Santa Croce. That tomb has been empty ever since, with Dante's body remaining in Ravenna, far from the land he loved so dearly. The front of his tomb in Florence reads *Onorate l'altissimo poeta* – which roughly translates as “Honour the most exalted poet”. The phrase is a quote from the fourth canto of the *Inferno*, depicting Virgil's welcome as he returns among the great ancient poets spending eternity in Limbo. The continuation of the line, *L'ombra sua torna, ch'era dipartita* (“his spirit, which had left us, returns”), is poignantly absent from the empty tomb.

from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dante_Alighieri

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (February 27, 1807 – March 24, 1882) was an American poet whose works include “Paul Revere’s Ride”, “A Psalm of Life”, “The Song of Hiawatha”, “Evangeline”, and “Christmas Bells”. He also wrote the first American translation of Dante Alighieri’s “**Divine Comedy**” and was one of the five members of the group known as the Fireside Poets. Longfellow was born and raised in the region of Portland, Maine. He attended university at an early age at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. After several journeys overseas, Longfellow settled for the last forty-five years of his life in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Life and work

Early life and education

Longfellow was born on February 27, 1807, to Stephen and Zilpah (Wadsworth) Longfellow in Portland, Maine, and grew up in what is now known as the Wadsworth-Longfellow House. His father was a lawyer, and his maternal grandfather, Peleg Wadsworth, Sr., was a general in the American Revolutionary War. He was named after his mother’s brother Henry Wadsworth, a Navy lieutenant who died only three years earlier.

Longfellow’s siblings were Stephen, Elizabeth, Anne, Alexander, Mary, Ellen, and Samuel. Henry was enrolled in a dame school at the age of only three and by age six was enrolled at the private Portland Academy. In his years there, he earned a reputation as being very studious and became fluent in Latin. He printed his first poem – a patriotic and historical four stanza poem called “*The Battle of Lovell’s Pond*” – in the *Portland Gazette* on November 17, 1820. He remained at the Portland Academy until the age of fourteen.

In the fall of 1822, the 15-year old Longfellow enrolled at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine alongside his brother Stephen. His grandfather was a founder of the college and his father was a trustee. There,

Longfellow met Nathaniel Hawthorne, who would later become his life-long friend. He boarded with a clergyman for a time before rooming on the third floor of what is now Maine Hall in 1823. He joined the Peucinian Society, a group of students with Federalist leanings. In his senior year, Longfellow wrote to his father about his aspirations:

“I will not disguise it in the least... the fact is, I most eagerly aspire after future eminence in literature, my whole soul burns most ardently after it, and every earthly thought centres in it... I am almost confident in believing, that if I can ever rise in the world it must be by the exercise of my talents in the wide field of literature.”

He pursued his literary goals by submitting poetry and prose to various newspapers and magazines. Between January 1824 and his graduation in 1825, he had published nearly 40 minor poems. About 24 of them appeared in the short-lived Boston periodical *The United States Literary Gazette*.

European tours and professorships

After graduating in 1825, he was offered a job as professor of modern languages at his *alma mater*. The story, possibly apocryphal, is that an influential trustee, Benjamin Orr, had been so impressed Longfellow's translation of Horace that he was hired under the condition that he travel to Europe to study French, Spanish and Italian. Whatever the motivation, he began his tour of Europe in May 1826 aboard a ship named *Cadmus*. His time abroad would last three years and cost his father an estimated \$2,604.24. He traveled to France, Spain, Italy, Germany, back to France, then England before returning to the United States in mid-August 1829. Longfellow was saddened to learn his favorite sister Elizabeth had died of tuberculosis at the age of 20 that May while he was abroad.

On August 27, 1829, he wrote to the president of Bowdoin that he was turning down the professorship because he considered the \$600 salary “disproportionate to the duties required.” The trustees raised his salary to \$800 with an additional \$100 to serve as the college's librarian, a post which required one hour of work per day. During his years at the college, he wrote textbooks in French, Italian, and Spanish and a travel book, *Outre-Mer: A Pilgrimage Beyond the Sea*. On September 14, 1831, he married Mary Storer Potter, a childhood friend from Portland. The couple settled in Brunswick, though the two were not happy there.

In December 1834, Longfellow received a letter from Josiah Quincy III, president of Harvard College, offering him a position as the Smith Professorship of Modern Languages with the stipulation that he spend a year or so abroad. In October 1835, during the trip, his wife Mary had a miscarriage about six months into her pregnancy. She did not recover and died after several weeks of illness at the age of 22 on November 29, 1835. Longfellow had her body embalmed immediately and placed into a lead coffin inside an oak coffin which was then shipped to Mount Auburn Cemetery near Boston. Three years later, he was inspired to write "Footsteps of Angels" about their love.

When he returned to the United States in 1836, Longfellow took up the professorship at Harvard University. He was required to live in Cambridge to be close to the campus and moved in to the Craigie House in the spring of 1837. The home, built in 1759, had once been the headquarters of George Washington during the siege of Boston in July 1775. Longfellow began publishing his poetry, including "*Voices of the Night*" in 1839 and *Ballads and Other Poems*, which included his famous poem "*The Village Blacksmith*", in 1841.

Courtship of Frances "Fanny" Appleton

Longfellow began courting Frances "Fanny" Appleton, the daughter of a wealthy Boston industrialist, Nathan Appleton. At first, she was not interested but Longfellow was determined. In July 1839, he wrote to a friend: "victory hangs doubtful. The lady says she will not! I say she shall! It is not pride, but the madness of passion." During the courtship, he frequently walked from Harvard to her home in Boston, crossing the Boston Bridge. That bridge was subsequently demolished and replaced in 1906 by a new bridge, which was eventually renamed as the Longfellow Bridge. Longfellow continued writing, however, and in the fall of 1839 published *Hyperion*, a book of travel writings discussing his trips abroad.

After seven years, Fanny finally agreed to marriage, and they were wed in 1843. Nathan Appleton bought the Craigie House, overlooking the Charles River, as a wedding present to the pair.

His love for Fanny is evident in the following lines from Longfellow's only love poem, the sonnet "*The Evening Star*", which he wrote in October, 1845: "O my beloved, my sweet Hesperus! My morning and my evening star of love!"

He and Fanny had six children: Charles Appleton (1844-1893), Ernest Wadsworth (1845-1921), Fanny (1847-1848), Alice Mary (1850-1928), Edith

(1853-1915) – who married Richard Henry Dana III, son of Richard Henry Dana, and Anne Allegra (1855-1934).

When the younger Fanny was born on April 7, 1847, Dr. Nathan Cooley Keep administered ether as the first obstetric anesthetic in the United States to Fanny Longfellow. A few months later, on November 1, 1847, the poem “Evangeline” was published for the first time.

On June 14, 1853, Longfellow held a farewell dinner party at his Cambridge home for his friend Nathaniel Hawthorne as he prepared to move overseas. Shortly after, Longfellow retired from Harvard in 1854, devoting himself entirely to writing. He was awarded an honorary doctorate of Laws from Harvard in 1859.

Death of Frances

Longfellow was a devoted husband and father with a keen feeling for the pleasures of home. But each of his marriages ended in sadness and tragedy.

On a hot July day, while Fanny was putting a lock of a child’s hair into an envelope and attempting to seal it with hot sealing wax, her dress caught fire causing severe burns. She died the next day, aged 44, on July 10, 1861. Longfellow was devastated by her death and never fully recovered. The strength of his grief is still evident in these lines from a sonnet, “*The Cross of Snow*” (1879), which he wrote eighteen years later to commemorate her death:

Such is the cross I wear upon my breast
These eighteen years, through all the changing scenes
And seasons, changeless since the day she died.

Death

In March 1882, Longfellow went to bed with severe stomach pain. He endured the pain for several days with the help of opium before he died surrounded by family on Friday, March 24, 1882. He had been suffering from peritonitis.

He is buried with both of his wives at Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Massachusetts. In 1884 he was the first and only American poet for whom a commemorative sculpted bust was placed in *Poet’s Corner* of Westminster Abbey in London.

Writing

Longfellow often used allegory in his work. In *"Nature"*, death is depicted as bedtime for a cranky child.

Critical response

Contemporary writer *Edgar Allan Poe* wrote to Longfellow in May 1841 of his "fervent admiration which [your] genius has inspired in me" and later called him "unquestionably the best poet in America". However, after Poe's reputation as a critic increased, he publicly accused Longfellow of plagiarism in what has been since termed by Poe biographers as "The Longfellow War". His assessment was that Longfellow was "a determined imitator and a dextrous adapter of the ideas of other people", specifically Alfred Tennyson, 1st Baron Tennyson.

Margaret Fuller judged him "artificial and imitative" and lacking force. Poet Walt Whitman also considered Longfellow an imitator of European forms, though he praised his ability to reach a popular audience as "the expressor of common themes – of the little songs of the masses."

Legacy

Longfellow was the most popular poet of his day. He was such an admired figure in the United States during his life that his 70th birthday in 1877 took on the air of a national holiday, with parades, speeches, and the reading of his poetry. He had become one of the first American celebrities.

His work was immensely popular during his time and is still today, although some modern critics consider him too sentimental. His poetry is based on familiar and easily understood themes with simple, clear, and flowing language. His poetry created an audience in America and contributed to creating American mythology.

from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Wadsworth_Longfellow

Paul Gustave Doré

Paul Gustave Doré (January 6, 1832 – January 23, 1883) was a French artist, engraver, illustrator and sculptor. Doré worked primarily with wood engraving and steel engraving.

Life

Doré was born in Strasbourg and his first illustrated story was published at the age of fifteen. Doré began work as a literary illustrator in Paris. Doré commissions include works by **Rabelais**, **Balzac**, **Milton** and **Dante**. In 1853 Doré was asked to illustrate the works of Lord Byron. This commission was followed by additional work for British publishers, including a new illustrated English Bible. Doré also illustrated an oversized edition of **Edgar Allan Poe's** "*The Raven*", an endeavor that earned him 30,000 francs from publisher Harper and Brothers in 1883.

Doré's *English Bible* (1866) was a great success, and in 1867 Doré had a major exhibition of his work in London. This exhibition led to the foundation of the Doré Gallery in New Bond Street. In 1869, Blanchard Jerrold, the son of Douglas William Jerrold, suggested that they work together to produce a comprehensive portrait of London. Jerrold had gotten the idea from *The Microcosm of London* produced by Rudolph Ackermann, William Pyne, and Thomas Rowlandson in 1808. Doré signed a five-year project with the publishers Grant&Co. that involved his staying in London for three months a year. He was paid the vast sum of £10,000 a year for his work.

The book, *London: A Pilgrimage*, with 180 engravings, was published in 1872. It enjoyed commercial success, but the work was disliked by many contemporary critics. Some critics were concerned with the fact that Doré appeared to focus on poverty that existed in London. Doré was accused by the *Art Journal* of "inventing rather than copying." The *Westminster Review* claimed that "Doré gives us sketches in which the commonest, the vulgarst external features are set down." The book was also a financial success,

and Doré received commissions from other British publishers. Doré's later works included Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Tennyson's *The Idylls of the King*, *The Works of Thomas Hood*, and **The Divine Comedy**. His work also appeared in the *Illustrated London News*. Doré continued to illustrate books until his death in Paris in 1883. He is buried in the city's Père Lachaise Cemetery.

In "*Pickman's Model*", author H. P. Lovecraft's praises Doré: "There's something those fellows catch – beyond life – that they're able to make us catch for a second. Doré had it. [Sidney] Sime has it."

– For a partial list of Doré's works see Wikipedia.

from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustave_Dore