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THE DIVINE COMEDY  
PARADISE







*Alinari*

DANTE ALIGHIERI.  
From a Fresco of Paradise, National Museum, Florence.



DANTE ALIGHIERI

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THE  
DIVINE COMEDY

TRANSLATED BY

C. E. WHEELER



VOLUME THREE  
PARADISE

LONDON: J. M. DENT & SONS LTD.

NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & CO.

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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

I HAVE been enabled to increase the value of this attempt to render the *Divine Comedy* into English, by the addition of the arguments and notes from the Temple Edition. I owe this great privilege to the kindness of the distinguished editor of that edition, the Rev. Philip Wicksteed, who extends his sympathy to all attempts to do honour to Dante. The arguments and the longer notes are from his own pen; the latter are signed with his initials. The notes to the text are taken from those prepared for the Temple Edition by Dr. Oelsner with only such modifications as were necessary to adapt notes to the Italian original into notes to a particular translation. The editor of the Temple Edition is in no way responsible for any of this translation: he has only allowed me to reinforce its shortcomings with his most admirable expositions and explanations, and I desire to express here my gratitude for his kindness. My debt to his edition, however, does not end here. Its prose translations (by Mr. Carlyle, Mr. T. Okey, and Mr. Wicksteed himself) have been my court of appeal whenever I was in doubt, and have enabled me better to conceal the limitations of

my Dante scholarship. Of the many instances where my translation coincides with that given in the Temple Edition, about two-thirds are cases wherein (to the best of my belief) I have independently reached the same rendering. The remaining third are cases wherein I deliberately adopted the Temple version, as being superior to any form of words which had occurred to me, and I make here my most grateful acknowledgment of the help which it has given to me.

# PARADISE

## CANTO I

SUBJECT matter and invocation. The sun is in the equinoctial point. It is midday at Purgatory and midnight at Jerusalem, when Dante sees Beatrice gazing at the sun and instinctively imitates her gesture, looking away from her and straight at the sun. The light glows as though God had made a second sun, and Dante now turns once more to Beatrice who is gazing heavenward. As he looks his human nature is transmuted to the quality of heaven and he knows not whether he is still in the flesh or no. They pass through the sphere of fire and hear the harmonies of heaven, but Dante is bewildered because he knows not that they have left the earth, and when enlightened by Beatrice he is still perplexed to know how he can rise, counter to gravitation. Beatrice, pitying the delirium of his earthly mind, explains to him the law of universal (material and spiritual) gravitation. All things seek their true place, and in the orderly movement thereto, and rest therein, consists the likeness of the universe to God. Man's place is God, and to rise to him is therefore natural to man. It is departing from him that (like fire darting downwards) is the anomaly that needs to be explained.

The glory of the Lord Who all things sways,  
Down throughout all our universe descendeth;  
Here more, here less, it gives its glowing rays.

Within that heav'n where most His light He lendeth, 4  
Lo! I have been; and things have seen which now  
To tell again, knowledge and power transcendeth,

- Because our intellect such depths doth know 7  
 When drawing near to its desire profound,  
 That memory no more can backward flow.
- Yet all the treasure that by me was bound 10  
 Within my memory of that kingdom blest,  
 Shall now be matter for this song to sound.
- O high Apollo for this task, the last, 13  
 Make me a vessel with thy worth so fraught,  
 That on my brows may thy dear laurel rest.
- Till now, one of Parnassus' peaks has brought 16  
 Me aid enough, but now on both I call,  
 Ere this my final wrestling may be wrought.
- Enter my bosom, and there breathe withal, 19  
 As when thou drewest forth Marsyas in pain  
 Out from the sheath that clad his members all.
- Virtue divine, if thou to lend wouldst deign 22  
 Enough, as shall the shadow e'en set free  
 Of the blessed kingdom graven on my brain,
- Then shalt thou see me come to thy fair tree, 25  
 Then crown me with those leaves, for which the theme  
 And thou, shall make my worth sufficient be.
- So rarely, Father, doth its beauty gleam 28  
 For Caesar's or for poet's triumphing,  
 (Through fault and shame of human wills I deem),

## CANTO I

3

That in the joyous Delphic god should spring 31  
Gladness, by leaf Peneian brought to birth,  
When any soul for it is hungering.

Great flame can rise from spark of little worth, 34  
Perchance shall prayers of better voices gain  
Response from Cirrha after me on earth.

The lantern of the world to mortal men 37  
Rises through diverse straits; but from that one  
Which joins four circles in three crosses plain,

Linked to a happier star, and free to run 40  
A better course, he comes, and tempereth more  
The wax o' the world, to stamp his seal thereon.

This strait had all but wrought that day should pour  
On this side, night on that; this hemisphere 44  
All white, and black the hue the other wore;

When on her left side turned, I saw appear 46  
Beatrice, while on the sun she set her gaze;  
No eagle ever fixed its sight so clear.

And as from out the first the second rays 49  
Will ever come and upward rise anon,  
(As pilgrims longing for the homeward ways,)

So to her deed, which through mine eyes upon 52  
Imagination poured, mine own replied,  
And past all wont I gazed upon the sun.

- There much is granted, which is here denied 55  
 To mortal powers, through virtue of the place,  
 Made that the race of man should there abide.
- Not long endured I, nor so little space 58  
 But that round him I saw the sparkles fly,  
 Like iron molten from the furnaces.
- It seemed as day to day were suddenly 61  
 Added, as though the Power unsurpassed,  
 Had set a second sun within the sky.
- With eyes upon th'eternal wheels fixed fast 64  
 Stood Beatrice; and I fixed mine on her,  
 Withdrawn from things above perforce at last.
- Within me, at the sight, new feelings stir; 67  
 E'en as felt Glaucus, who the grass did taste  
 That made him such as all the sea-gods were.
- Beyond humanity thus to be placed 70  
 Transcendeth speech; th'example serves enow  
 Him who may be by this experience graded.
- If, of myself, I was but that which thou 73  
 Createdst new, Love by whom heav'n is swayed,  
 Thou know'st, whose light uplifted me, I trow.
- That wheel, which longs for thee and so is made 76  
 Eternal, drew my mind with harmonies  
 By thee all tempered and distinguished;



And so much heav'n seemed kindled to my eyes 79  
 With the sun's flame, that rain or river, ne'er  
 Spread near so wide a vast lake's boundaries.

The newness of the sound, the light's great flare, 82  
 Enkindled great desire their cause to see,  
 Keener than aught before 'twas mine to bear.

Whence she, who as myself I knew, knew me, 85  
 To still my mind, stirred to excitement tense,  
 Opened her lips ere mine could parted be,

Saying, "Thyself thou makest e'en so dense 88  
 "With false conceits, that thou canst not discern  
 "All thou wouldst see, if thou couldst cast them  
 hence.

"Thou'rt not on earth, as still thou deemest; learn  
 "That lightning, from its own place taking flight 92  
 "Ne'er sped, as thou who thither dost return."

If then my first perplexity seemed light, 94  
 Through the brief smiling words I was the more  
 Anew enmeshed, and in the self same plight,

And said, "Content I rest, from what before 97  
 "Roused wonder great, but marvel now must I  
 "How more than lightest bodies I should soar."

Then she, by gentle pity moved to sigh, 100  
 Looked as the mother looks, who is afraid  
 Her fevered child babbles deliriously.

- " All things soe'er have order," then she said, 103  
 " Among themselves; this is the form I trow  
 " Whereby the universe like God is made.
- " Exalted creatures here the imprint know 106  
 " Of the eternal worth, the goal in fine  
 " Whereto was made the norm I speak of now.
- " And in this order that I show, incline 109  
 " All things, by diverse lots, more or less near  
 " Unto their principle; so thou'lt divine
- " To diverse parts in diverse ways, they steer 112  
 " O'er the great sea of being; each one's boon  
 " Is instinct, given to make it persevere.
- " This 'tis that bears the fire toward the moon; 115  
 " This 'tis that in each mortal heart doth move;  
 " This binds the earth together in one tune.
- " This bow not only sends its shafts to prove 118  
 " Creatures that are without intelligence,  
 " But them that know both intellect and love.
- " With all things ordered thus, High Providence 121  
 " Makes ever peaceful with His light, the heaven  
 " Wherein that whirls whose speed is most intense.
- " As to a place decreed, now are we driven 124  
 " By virtue of that bowstring, by whose will  
 " A joyful mark for all it speeds is given.

" True 'tis, as oft the form doth not fulfil 127

" All the intention of the art perforce,

" If the material respondeth ill,

" So sometimes may the creature from this course 130

" Depart, since power it hath, though thus impelled,

" To swerve away, (as from the cloud, its source,

" Fire swift downrushing thou hast oft beheld,) 133

" If it's first impetus should bring it low

" To earth, by love of false delight compelled.

" If I deem right, no wonder more should grow 136

" In thee, at rising, than a stream to see

" Down from a hilltop to the valley flow.

" If thou hadst stayed beneath when once set free 139

" Of every hindrance, marvel were it then,

" As if on earth stillness in flame should be."

Thereon tow'rd heaven she turned her gaze again. 142

## CANTO II

WARNING and promise to the reader, who shall see a stranger tilth than when Jason sowed the dragon's teeth. They reach the moon and inconceivably penetrate into her substance without cleaving it, even as deity penetrated into humanity in Christ; which mystery shall in heaven be seen as axiomatic truth. Dante, dimly aware of the inadequacy of his science, questions Beatrice as to the dark patches on the moon which he had thought were due to rarity of substance. She explains that if such rarity pierced right through the moon in the dark parts, the sun would shine through them when eclipsed; and if not, the dense matter behind the rare would cast back the sun's light; and describes to him an experiment by which he may satisfy himself that in that case the light reflected from the dense matter at the surface and from that in the interior of the moon would be equally bright. She then explains that Dante has gone wrong and accepted a scientifically inadequate explanation, because he has not understood that all heavenly phenomena are direct utterances of God and of his Angels. The undivided power of God, differentiated through the various heavenly bodies and agencies, shines in the diverse quality and brightness of the fixed stars, of the planets and of the parts of the moon, as the vital principle manifests itself diversely in the several members of the body, and as joy beams through the pupil of the eye.

O ye, who in your little skiff, all fain  
To listen, follow yet with constancy  
My ship, that singing cleaves the open main;  
Turn to your shores, and put not forth to sea, 4  
For now perchance too rashly may ye fare,  
And stray bewildered, losing touch with me.

The seas I sail have been passed over ne'er; 7  
Apollo guides, Minerva sends the wind,  
And the nine Muses point me to the Bear.

Ye other few, who, necks outstretched, have pined 10  
Timely for bread of angels, which doth keep  
Life here, though none full satisfaction find;

Well now may ye thrust forth unto the deep 13  
Your bark, and keep my furrow's line, before  
The waters can subside again to sleep.

The famed ones who to Colchis fared, not more 16  
Did marvel, than shall ye, when in their sight  
Jason the labour of the ploughman bore.

The thirst, born with us of unfailing might 19  
For kingdoms god-like, swept us near as fast  
As ye can see the wheeling heaven bright.

Mine eyes on Beatrice, upward hers, were cast; 22  
Perchance in time as long as an arrow stays  
And flies, and from the notch is loosed, I passed

To where a thing, that set me all amaze, 25  
Compelled my sight to it; and therefore she,  
(Since that no act of mine escaped her gaze,)

Equal in joy and beauty turned to me, 28  
And said, " Give thanks to God Who makes us one  
" With the first star of heaven's company."

- There seemed a veil of cloud about us spun, 31  
 But shining, solid, glittering and dense,  
 As diamond sharp smitten by the sun.
- The eternal pearl in its circumference, 34  
 Received us there, as takes the water deep  
 The ray of light, itself uncloven thence.
- If we know not, (if manhood I did keep) 37  
 How one dimension bore the other, though  
 It must, if body into body creep,
- The more desire within our hearts should glow, 40  
 To see that essence, wherein 'tis enscrolled  
 How human nature into God's could flow.
- There shall be seen, what now by faith we hold, 43  
 Not demonstrated, but self known, appraised  
 Like primal truth man's credence can unfold.
- " My lady," answered I, the while I gazed, 46  
 " Devout indeed is now my thankfulness  
 " To Him Who from the mortal world hath raised;
- " But tell me how this body doth possess 49  
 " These shadowy marks, by which on earth are led  
 " The folk to speak of Cain and vainly guess."
- Somewhat she smiled, and then, " And if," she said, 52  
 " Mortal opinion err, when by the key  
 " Of sense the lock may not be openèd;

“ Nowise should shafts of wonder pierce through thee,  
 “ Since even following in the wake of sense, 56  
 “ Thou seest how short the wings of reason be.

“ But tell me what thou hast concluded thence.” 58  
 And I, “ That which appears diversely wrought,  
 “ I hold is made by bodies rare and dense.”

And she, “ In falsity thou’lt see thy thought 61  
 “ Submersed, when thou hast heard the argument  
 “ Opposed to it, which shall by me be brought.

“ From the eighth sphere to you the lights are sent 64  
 “ Many, which diverse countenances bring  
 “ In kind or quantity of their content.

“ If rare or dense alone produced this thing, 67  
 “ One self same virtue then were in them all,  
 “ Though more to this and less to that might cling.

“ But diverse virtues, needs as fruits must fall 70  
 “ Of formal principles, which must all fade  
 “ Save one, if right thy reasoning I call.

“ Again if rarity the darkness made 73  
 “ Whose cause thou seekest, either then there were  
 “ Within this planet, parts on which are laid

“ Less matter, or as fat and lean occur 76  
 “ In bodies, so would here be alternated,  
 “ The pages of its volume’s register.

- " Were the first true, the proof would be created 79  
 " At sun eclipses, by light shining through,  
 " As when by aught else thin it is translated.
- " This is not so; now must we turn to view 82  
 " The other case, and false thy thought I'll show,  
 " If I perchance make vain this second too.
- " If this rare matter not throughout doth go, 85  
 " Needs must there be a limit furnishèd,  
 " Through which it may not pass, and this will throw
- " Backward the other's ray discomfited, 88  
 " Even as colour doth from glass return,  
 " When at its back is hidden store of lead.
- " Now wilt thou say that darkened we discern 91  
 " The ray in this place rather than elsewhere,  
 " Because recast from further back; but learn
- " How from this plea, if thou for proof shouldst care,  
 " Experiment may disentangle thee, 95  
 " A fount the rivers of your arts should share.
- " Three mirrors shalt thou take, two equally 97  
 " Remove from thee, between them let thine eyes  
 " Seek out the third one, more remote to see:
- " Then at thy back, turned on them let arise 100  
 " A light, the three to kindle, and from all  
 " To come back to thee, smitten equalwise.



- " Although the distant shall not show withal 103  
 " As great in its extent, thou'lt see no less,  
 " Its brilliance will in equal measure fall.
- " Now,—as beneath the warm rays' eager stress, 106  
 " Is stripped from off the deeper layers of snow,  
 " Their primal colour and their iciness—
- " O'er thee, stripped in thine intellect, shall flow 109  
 " A light whose life doth with such brightness shine,  
 " That quivering to thy vision it will show.
- " Within the heaven of the peace divine 112  
 " Whirleth a body, in whose virtue clings  
 " The life of all within its boundary line.
- " The heaven following next, (of many things,) 115  
 " This being divides, 'mid diverse essences,  
 " Which it distinguisheth and so enrings.
- " The other circles by varieties 118  
 " Of difference, control the end and seed  
 " Of powers distinct that in each sphere increase.
- " These organs of the universe proceed, 121  
 " Thou seest, from grade to grade, for from above  
 " They thus receive, and downward shape their deed.
- " Now mark thou well, how by this path I move 124  
 " To truth desired of thee, so that alone  
 " Able to keep the ford henceforth thou'lt prove.

- " From the blest moving spirits must have grown 127  
 " Motion and virtue of each heavenly wheel,  
 " As from the smith the hammer's art is known,  
  
 " And Heav'n, whose fairness all its lamps reveal, 130  
 " From the deep Mind, that maketh it to roll,  
 " Taking the image, makes thereof the seal;  
  
 " And as within your mortal dust, the soul 133  
 " Through members different, (conformed to be  
 " For diverse powers), diffuses through the whole,  
  
 " So the intelligence doth multiply 136  
 " Its goodness, spreading constellations through,  
 " Revolving still on its own unity.  
  
 " Virtue diverse makes diverse alloys new 139  
 " E'en with the precious body it makes live,  
 " Wherein 'tis bound, as life is bound in you.  
  
 " By the glad nature whence it doth derive, 142  
 " The mingled virtue through the body glows,  
 " As gladness through the pupil doth arrive.  
  
 " Hence that which seemeth different arose 145  
 " 'Twixt light and light, and not from rare to dense;  
 " This is the formal principle that bestows  
  
 " Or dusk, or clear, as fits its excellence. 148

### CANTO III

As Dante is about to speak he sees the faint outlines of human features and taking them for reflections looks behind him but sees nothing. Beatrice smiles at his taking the most real existences he has ever yet beheld for mere semblances, tells him why they are there and bids him address them. Dante learns from Piccarda that each soul in heaven rejoices in the whole order of which it is part, and therefore desires no higher place than is assigned to it, for such desire would violate the law of love, and therefore the harmony of heaven, and with it the joy of the unduly aspiring soul itself. He further learns Piccarda's history and that of Constance. After which the souls disappear and Dante's eyes return to Beatrice.

That sun, which warmed my heart with love in youth,  
Had shown by proof and refutation's stress,  
The fair and pleasant aspect of the truth;

And I, as was but fitting, to confess 4  
Myself corrected and assured in mind,  
Threw up my head to speak with eagerness.

But then appeared a sight with power to bind 7  
Itself so close, that as I, gazing, stayed,  
No thought for my confession could I find.

As from transparent glass and polishèd, 10  
Or from a stream that clear and tranquil lies,  
Yet not so deep that darkness veils its bed,

Notes of our faces come in such faint guise, 13  
 That pearls on a' white brow come not more slow  
 To recognition; so unto mine eyes

Came many faces, rife for speech, and lo! 16  
 I fell into th' opposing error there,  
 To that made love 'twixt man and fountain glow.

As quickly as of these I grew aware, 19  
 Since they must be reflected forms I thought,  
 I turned mine eyes to see from whence they were,

Then turned them back again, beholding nought, 22  
 Straight on the light of that sweet guide of me,  
 Whose eyes more shining by her smile were wrought.

"Marvel not that I smile," thereon said she, 25  
 "Before thy childlike thought, that makes thee veer,  
 "Even as is its wont, to vanity,

"And on the truth, trusts not its foot for fear. 28  
 "True substances are these thou hast descried,  
 "For their vows' failure relegated here.

"So speak with them, and hear, and satisfied 31  
 "Believe, for that true light, that sates their need,  
 "Lets not their feet from it be turned aside."

Then to that shade that seemed most fain indeed 34  
 To speak, as one who all o'erwhelmèd stays  
 By great desire, I turned to say with heed;

“ O well-created soul, that in the rays 37

“ Of life eternal dost that sweetness taste,

“ That he who feels not, cannot learn to praise;

“ Wouldst thou content me, thus were I well graced 40

“ To know thy name, and what may be your fate.”

Then she with smiling eyes and eager haste;

“ Our love no further seeks to bar the gate, 43

“ To the first wish, than doth that love whose will

“ Is that her court her love should imitate.

“ On earth a virgin sister, I; if still 46

“ Thy memory be searched, my greater show

“ Of beauty will no more my name conceal,

“ And lo! Piccarda thou again wilt know, 49

“ Who with these other blessed ones at peace,

“ Is happy in the sphere that moves most slow.

“ Our loves, that only flame as it doth please 52

“ The Holy Spirit, are right glad to be

“ Shaped in the order that His will decrees,

“ And this our lot that lowly seems to thee, 55

“ Is given for vows neglected once by us,

“ Or in some way made void unfittingly.”

Then I: “ Within your aspects marvellous, 58

“ Gloweth again a something all divine,

“ To change you from your earlier semblance thus;

- " Therefore delayed this memory of mine; 61  
 " But now thy speech doth give me so much aid,  
 " That clearer far I can thy face define.
- " But tell me, ye whose bliss is here displayed, 64  
 " Desire ye ever spheres that are more high,  
 " To have more sight or dearer to be made? "
- They smiled a little; then she made reply, 67  
 With such a joyous mien, it seemed methought  
 Love's springtide flame possessed her utterly;
- " Brother, our will to peacefulness is wrought 70  
 " By worth of love, that makes us long alone  
 " For what we have, else makes us thirst for nought.
- " Did we desire a higher sphere to own, 73  
 " Then would our longing all discordant be,  
 " Unto His will, to Whom our place is known.
- " And that, these circles must forbid thou'lt see, 76  
 " If it is needful here to live in love,  
 " And if love's nature be conceived by thee.
- " The essence of this blest life is to prove 79  
 " One with the will divine, blending until  
 " Our wills themselves unto one ending move.
- " That we from threshold unto threshold still 82  
 " Mount through this realm, makes all its joy increase,  
 " And His, who draws our wills unto His will,

## CANTO III

19

“ And His desire is our abiding peace; 85  
“ All it creates, and Nature shapeth fair,  
“ Moves on to it, as rivers to the seas.”

Clear was it then to me, how everywhere 88  
In Heav'n is Paradise, though Highest Good  
Its grace not only in one way sheds there.

But as it happens when a certain food 91  
Sateth, if yet a second stirs desire,  
We ask for it though thankful in our mood;

So did I in both act and word require 94  
Of her to learn, what was the web, whereon  
She had not drawn the shuttle yet entire.

“ A loftier heaven hath a lady won 97  
“ By perfect life and merit, for whose sake,  
“ The veil and garments women oft will don

“ On earth, that unto Death, they sleep and wake 100  
“ With Him, the Bridegroom, Who by vows is wed  
“ Which love well pleasing to Him strives to make.

“ To follow her while yet a girl, I fled, 103  
“ And in her habit wrapped, the world resigning,  
“ Vowed in the pathway of her band to tread.

“ Then men to evil more than good inclining, 106  
“ Tore me from my sweet cloister, and God knows  
“ Thereafter what my life was. And this shining,

- " This other splendour that before thee shows, 109  
 " Who on my right hand kindled seems to be  
 " With all the light within our sphere that glows,
- " She understands all that I tell to thee; 112  
 " The shadow of the sacred veil was ta'en  
 " From off her head, although a sister she.
- " But though thus turned unto the world again, 115  
 " Against good custom, in her will's despite,  
 " From her heart's veil unloosed did she remain.
- " For this of that great Constance is the light, 118  
 " Who from the second Swabian stormblast,  
 " Conceived the third and final power of might."
- Thus spoke she, and " Ave Maria " at last 121  
 Began to sing, and like a heavy weight  
 Through the deep water, from my vision passed.
- Mine eyes that followed her departing straight 124  
 As far as could be, when that sight must cease,  
 Turned to the mark of a desire more great,
- And bent their gaze in all on Beatrice. 127  
 But she so flashed upon my look, that first  
 My vision could not bear the light's increase,
- Wherefore I lingered, ere to ask I durst. 130



## CANTO IV

PICCARDA has left Dante entangled in two perplexities. Why are the nuns shorn of what had else been the full measure of their glory because they were torn *against their will* from the cloister? And if the inconstant moon is the abode of such as have left their vows unfulfilled, was Plato right after all in saying that men's souls come down from the planets conatural with them, and return thereto? This latter speculation might lead to dangerous heresy, and Beatrice hastens to explain that the souls who come to meet Dante in the several spheres all have their permanent abiding place with God and the Angels in the Empyrean. Their meeting places with Dante are but symbolical of their spiritual state. But Plato may have had in mind the divine influences that, through the agency of the planets, act upon men's dispositions and produce good or ill effects which should be credited to them rather than to the human will. And indeed it was a confused perception of these divine influences that led men into idolatry. The other difficulty is removed by a distinction between what we wish to do and what, under pressure, we consent to do; for if we consent we cannot plead violence in excuse, although we have done what we did not wish to do. More questions are started in Dante's mind, for only in the all-embracing truth of God can the human mind find that restful possession which its nature promises it. Short of that each newly acquired truth leads on to further questions. Beatrice, who had sighed at Dante's previous bewildered questions, smiles approval now, for he asks her a question as to vows which has some spiritual import.

Between two distant foods, for which desire  
Was equal, might a man though wholly free,  
For hunger, ere one reached his mouth, expire.

- So might a lamb stand still, in jeopardy 4  
 'Twixt two fierce wolves, in equal balanced dread;  
 So 'twixt two hinds a dog might rooted be.
- Wherefore I blame not that no word I said, 7  
 ('Twixt doubts of equal weight as 'twere suspended,)  
 Nor praise since 'twas my need that I obeyed.
- I spoke no word, but in my face were blended 10  
 My longing, and my questioning, both wrought  
 So vivid, that no speech could have amended.
- And Beatrice did as Daniel, when he sought 13  
 Nebuchadnezzar from the wrath to raise,  
 Which made him cruel, being unjust in thought,
- And said; " I see how thou art drawn two ways, 16  
 " By this and that desire, so eagerness  
 " Can breathe not forth, but self-entangled stays,
- " Thou thinkest, ' If right purpose grow not less, 19  
 " ' What justice lets another's violence  
 " ' Cut short the measure merit should possess?'
- " Further it moveth thy intelligence 22  
 " To doubt, that souls to stars seem to return,  
 " To Plato's doctrine bearing evidence.
- " These are the questions which I can discern 25  
 " Thrust equally thy will, so first to the one  
 " Which hath most gall, the answer shalt thou learn.

- “ I say not Moses, Samuel, nor John, 28  
“ (Which e’er thou take) nor Seraph who doth bide  
“ Nearest to God, nor Mary on her throne,
- “ In any other heav’n is glorified, 31  
“ Than that where dwell these spirits seen of us,  
“ Nor with more life nor less is satisfied.
- “ The first of circles all make beauteous, 34  
“ But less or more the breath eternal feel  
“ And share glad life in different measure thus.
- “ Not as allotted here, did they appeal 37  
“ To thee within this sphere, but meaning thence  
“ A lower height celestial to reveal.
- “ Thus must we speak to man’s intelligence, 40  
“ Which only maketh worthy for the mind,  
“ Things which it learns through channels worn by  
sense.
- “ And Scripture condescending thou wilt find 43  
“ To man’s capacity, when foot and hand,  
“ With other meaning, are to God assigned.
- “ And holy church doth show you Gabriel stand 46  
“ In human aspect, Michael too, and he  
“ Who Tobit healed again, by God’s command.
- “ That which Timaeus argueth to be 49  
“ Of souls, is unlike all we here discern,  
“ (For what he saith, he thinketh seemingly);

- " He saith the soul must to its star return, 52  
 " Deeming it cleft therefrom, when nature gave  
 " To it a form. Perchance we yet may learn
- " That other meaning may his doctrine have 55  
 " Than soundeth in its voice, and may have there  
 " A purport that itself from scorn would save.
- " If means he, to these wheels, honour soe'er 58  
 " And blame of influence returneth, then maybe  
 " His bow upon a certain truth strikes fair.
- " This fact, ill understood, once made the plea, 61  
 " When almost all the world rushed far astray  
 " To call on Jove and Mars and Mercury.
- " The other doubt that irks thy mind's free play, 64  
 " Hath less of poison, since its malice all  
 " Could lead thee not from me elsewhere away.
- " That mortal vision should our justice call 67  
 " Injustice, is of faith an argument,  
 " Not of iniquity heretical.
- " But since unto man's wit, the power is lent 70  
 " To penetrate into this truth and share it,  
 " Thy mind as thou desir'st I'll make content.
- " If violence 'tis, when he, who has to bear it 73  
 " Contributes nought to that by which he's tried,  
 " Then have these souls in that excuse no merit;

- “ The will except it wills, in vain is plied; 76  
“ It acts like fire and steadfast will remain,  
“ Though force a thousand times wrench it aside.
- “ So if it yields or much or little, then 79  
“ The force it doth abet; so did these here,  
“ Who could have sought the holy place again.
- “ If that their will had been entire and clear, 82  
“ As that which on the grid held Lawrence bound,  
“ Or Mucius made to his own hand severe,
- “ Back on the path, it would have turned them  
    round 85  
“ Whence they were dragged, the moment they were  
    free;  
“ But such a will is all too rarely found.
- “ And by these words, if thou hast gleaned from me 88  
“ All that thou shouldst, the argument’s whole stress  
“ Is vain, which else had after troubled thee.
- “ But now across thy pathway looms no less 91  
“ Another strait, through which ere thou alone  
“ Couldst win, well spent thou’dst be with weariness.
- “ Through me one certain thing thy mind hath  
    known; 94  
“ No soul of all the blessed, can ever lie,  
“ Since near the primal truth its life has grown.

“ Yet didst thou hear Piccarda testify                    97  
 “ That Constance kept the love she bore the veil,  
 “ So here she seems my sentence to deny.

“ Brother, it is an oft repeated tale,                    100  
 “ How 'gainst the will, some peril to evade,  
 “ Things that should not be done will yet prevail;

“ E'en so Alcmæon, when his father prayed,            103  
 “ Slew his own mother, and lest he should lose  
 “ His filial piety, was impious made.

“ Now I am sure thy mind cannot refuse                106  
 “ To see how violence with will is blent,  
 “ And sins resulting thence have no excuse.

“ The absolute will to wrong can ne'er consent,    109  
 “ But yet will yield so far as it doth dread,  
 “ If it draw back, a greater punishment.

“ So what Piccarda doth express, is said                112  
 “ Of the absolute will, and I of the other tell;  
 “ So speak we, in the truth together wed.”

Thus from the fount, whence only true things well,  
 Such rippling of the holy stream did move,            116  
 And on both longings full contentment fell.

“ Divine one, thou the primal Lover's love,”        118  
 I said thereon, “ whose speech so warm o'erfloweth,  
 “ That more and more of life in me I prove,

- “ Not to such depths sufficing my love goeth, 121  
“ As can avail to render grace for grace,  
“ May He respond Who can, and seeing knoweth.
- “ Our intellect I see can ne'er embrace 124  
“ Full satisfaction, till a light it gain  
“ From Truth, past which no truth hath range or  
place.
- “ It rests therein as wild beast in its den, 127  
“ Soon as it reacheth it; and reach it may,  
“ Else were all longing futile found and vain;
- “ Wherefore there springeth like a shoot alway 130  
“ Doubt, at the foot of truth, and nature kind  
“ Thrusts us from ridge to ridge, to highest day.
- “ This makes me confident and well inclined, 133  
“ To ask thee, Lady, with humility,  
“ Another truth yet dark unto my mind.
- “ Tell me, if any man could satisfy 136  
“ Your courts for broken vows, with aught instead  
“ Which on your scales should not short weighted lie.”
- Beatrice looked on me with her eyes that shed 139  
Such sparks of love, and so divinely blazed,  
I turned aside as one discomfited,  
And stood with downcast eyes, my senses dazed. 142

## CANTO V

BEATRICE, rejoicing in Dante's progress, explains the supreme gift of Free Will, shared by angels and men and by no other creature. Hence may be deduced the supreme significance of vows, wherein this Free Will, by its own act, sacrifices itself. Wherefore there can be nothing so august as to form a fitting substitute, nor any use of the once consecrated thing so hallowed as to excuse the breaking of the vow. And yet Holy Church grants dispensations. The explanation lies in the distinction between the content of the vow (the specific thing consecrated) and the act of vowing. The vow must in every case be kept, but he who has made it, may, under due authority, sometimes substitute for the specific content of the vow some other, worth half as much again; which last condition precludes any substitute for the complete self-dedication of monastic vows. And he who makes a vow such as God cannot sanction, has in that act already done evil; to keep such a vow is only to deepen his guilt; and, kept or broken, it brings his religion into contempt. Dante's further questioning is cut short by their ascent to Mercury, which grows brighter at their presence. Here, in the star that scarce asserts itself, but is lost to mortals in the sun's rays, are the once ambitious souls, that now rejoice in the access of fresh objects of love. They approach Dante, and one of them, with lofty gratulations, offers himself as the vehicle of divine enlightenment. Dante questions him as to his history and the place assigned to him in heaven; whereon the spirit (Justinian) so glows with joy that his outward form is lost in light.

" If beyond any worth to men revealed,  
" In flames of love upon thee thus I glow,  
" So that thine eyesight's power is forced to yield,



“ Marvel thou not; for this effect doth grow 4

“ From perfect vision, which as it apprehendeth

“ Advances in the good it learns to know,

“ Well see I how again, shining, ascendeth 7

“ Within thy mind the light of endless day,

“ Upon whose aspect fire of love attendeth.

“ And if aught else should lead man’s love astray, 10

“ Naught is it but a vestige of this light,

“ Ill understood, that sends therethrough its ray.

“ Thou’ldst know, hath any other service might, 13

“ For broken vows to pay such reckoning,

“ As saves the soul from lawful claims of right,”

Thus Beatrice began at first to sing, 16

And as a man, who stayeth not his word

Pursued her sacred path, continuing,

“ The greatest gift God’s bounty e’er conferred, 19

“ The gift conformed unto His excellence

“ The most, and most of all by Him preferred,

“ Was liberty of will, abiding thence 22

“ Both then and now in all, and all alone

“ Of creatures gifted with intelligence.

“ Now (if thou argue well) thou need’st must own 25

“ The great worth of a vow, if thou dost yield

“ Consent where God’s consent is also shown.

- " For when 'twixt God and man the pact is sealed, 28  
 " From out this treasure which I name is wrought  
 " The victim, and by its own act revealed.
- " And what amends can then avail thee aught, 31  
 " E'en were't well used what thou to God didst vow?  
 " Then would good works from evil gains be sought.
- " Thus on the greater point assured art thou; 34  
 " But since the Church permits that men be freed  
 " From oaths, that seems this truth to disallow;
- " Awhile at table must thou stay indeed, 37  
 " Because the stubborn food thou'st taken, so  
 " Requires more aid ere it can serve thy need.
- " Open thy mind to that which I shall show 40  
 " And fix it there; because to apprehend,  
 " Yet not to keep, is surely not to know.
- " Two things there are that in this essence blend 43  
 " Of sacrifice: the first whereof 'tis made,  
 " The vow itself the second. To the end,
- " This last can ne'er be cancelled, save 'tis paid 46  
 " By being kept, and to this point applied  
 " Exactly, all the words anon I said.
- " So must the Hebrews sacrifice provide 49  
 " In any case, though as is known to thee,  
 " To change the offered thing was not denied,

## CANTO V

31

- “ The other thing, the substance, verily 52  
“ May be so wrought, that no offence appear  
“ If changed for other matter it should be;
- “ But let none shift by his own judgment here 55  
“ His shoulder’s load, unless the double turn  
“ Of both the white and yellow key is clear.
- “ And every change as folly he should spurn, 58  
“ Save in the offered thing the thing denied  
“ In four to six proportion he discern.
- “ Wherefore the things wherein can be descried 61  
“ Worth of a weight to turn all balances,  
“ Can for no other wealth be set aside.
- “ Let men ne’er pledge themselves in sportiveness; 64  
“ Be loyal, be in this not squint-eyed still,  
“ As Jephthah in his first vow’s foolishness.
- “ For better had he said ‘ I have done ill,’ 67  
“ Than keep it and do worse; to folly turned  
“ The great Greek leader, when at his mad will
- “ Iphigenia for her beauty mourned, 70  
“ And made the wise and simple weep for her,  
“ When rumour of so strange a rite they learned.
- “ Ye Christians, be in judgment weightier, 73  
“ Be not as feathers to each gust of wind,  
“ Nor think that every water makes you fair.

“ The Testaments, the old and new combined, 76  
 “ Ye have, and shepherds of your church to guide;  
 “ Enough for your salvation ye should find.

“ If perverse greed aught else hath glorified, 79  
 “ Be men, not senseless sheep, lest the sharp sting  
 “ Of laughter pierce you when the Jews deride.

“ Not as the lamb, silly and wantoning, 82  
 “ Be ye, that leaves his mother’s milk, to go  
 “ Himself for his own pleasure combating.”

E’en as I write, spake Beatrice, and lo! 85  
 She turned her then all longing to that land  
 Wherein the universe most life doth know.

Her ceasing, and changed semblance, laid com-  
 mand 88  
 Of silence on my eager mind, though I  
 Found questions new already at my hand.

And as an arrow to the mark will fly 91  
 Ere yet the cord is still, so fled we there  
 Into the second kingdom of the sky.

And now my lady showed so glad an air, 94  
 When to this heaven’s light she did attain,  
 That all the planet shone thereat more fair.

And if the star changed thus and laughed, what then 97  
 Did I, who while my body doth endure,  
 Subject to change in every way remain,

As in a fish pool which is still and pure, 100  
 The fish will crowd where anything doth fall,  
 If that the thought of food therein allure,

So more than a thousand splendours magical 103  
 I saw come near, and each one murmured thus;  
 "Lo! one to make more great the loves of all."

I saw as each one came more close to us, 106  
 How every shade seemed filled with joy within,  
 By the clear glow that made it luminous.

Think, reader, if the words I now begin 109  
 Proceeded not, what anguish to know more  
 Thou wouldst in dearth of knowledge surely win,

Then by thyself wilt thou perceive how sore 112  
 I longed to hear from these of their estate,  
 As soon as they appeared mine eyes before.

"O happy born, to whom grace grants the fate 115  
 "To see the Thrones of endless triumphing,  
 "Ere yet thy days of warfare may abate,

"By light that spreads through all the heaven's  
     ring 118

"Are we enkindled; so if thirst there is  
 "To draw light from us, sate thee at the spring."

So said one soul devout, and Beatrice 121  
 Cried, "Speak, speak now with confidence confessed,  
 "And trust their words, as they were deities."

“ Truly I see how thou art in a nest 124  
“ Of thine own light, which from thine eyes doth blaze,  
“ Sparkling to make thy smiling manifest;

“ But know not who thou art, nor what law stays 127  
“ Thee, upright soul, allotted to this sphere,  
“ Which hides from mortals in another’s rays.”

This said I, eager then that light to hear 130  
Who first had spoken to me; whence more bright  
It glowed, e’en than before it did appear.

Like to the sun who with excess of light 133  
Conceals himself, when heat has gnawed away  
The vapours dense that tempered erst the sight;

So by excess of joy in his own ray 136  
The holy figure veiled his form, and so  
Hidden, ah! hidden, answering me did say

All that the song that follows sings to show. 139

## CANTO VI

NOTE that Justinian, the Lawgiver, is the spokesman of the Roman Empire, whereby is indicated that the true significance of the Empire lies in its imposing and fostering the arts of peace. Justinian tells how Constantine removed the seat of Empire east from Rome to Byzantium, reversing the progress of Aeneas west from Troy to Rome, and how he, Justinian, came to the throne two hundred years later. He was a believer in the divine but not in the human nature of Christ, till converted by Agapetus to the truth which he now sees as clearly as logicians see the axiomatic law of contradictories. After his conversion God inspired him with the project of codifying the Roman Law, and he resigned the conduct of war to Belisarius. He goes on to rebuke the Guelf and Ghibelline factions by showing the august nature of the Roman Empire. In his exposition we note that the key of self-sacrifice is at once struck in the name of Pallas, the Etruscan-Greek volunteer who died for the Trojan cause, and is maintained till it leads up to the great struggles with Carthage and the East, and against internal factiousness; the founding of the Empire under Julius and Augustus and the establishment of universal peace; the great act of Redemption for which all was a preparation, and the subsequent fall of Jerusalem; and the Empire's championship of the Church which had been born under its protection. It is equally wicked, therefore, to think of opposing the Empire or of turning it to factious purposes. The story of Rome has been told in the star adorned by those souls whose virtuous deeds had in them some taint of worldly ambition or anxiety for good repute, but who are now free from all envious desire to have a greater reward, and rejoice rather in

the harmony of which their estate is part. Here too is the lowly Romeo who was so disinterested, but so sensitive concerning his reputation.

“ When Constantine ’gainst heaven’s path had turned  
 “ The eagle back, which followed it before,  
 “ ’Neath him of old who fair Lavinia earned,

“ A hundred years and yet a hundred more,                    4  
 “ The bird of God on Europe’s margin stayed,  
 “ Close to the mountains whence he first did soar.

“ And underneath his sacred pinion’s shade                    7  
 “ Governed the world there, on from hand to hand,  
 “ Till changing into mine the power was laid.

“ Caesar I was, Justinian; by command                    10  
 “ Of Primal Love which now I feel, excess  
 “ To take from laws and vain defect, I planned.

“ Ere to that work my will I could address,                    13  
 “ One nature and no more in Christ I thought,  
 “ And in such faith found all contentedness;

“ But Agapetus the high shepherd sought                    16  
 “ My weal, with blessed words which surely drew  
 “ Me to the true faith which he held and taught.

“ Him I believed, and now with clearest view                    19  
 “ I see all his faith meant, as seest thou  
 “ In contradictions both the false and true.



- “ God’s grace an inspiration did allow, 22  
“ When with the Church I moved me, and provided  
“ A lofty task where I my strength did vow.
- “ My arms to Belisarius I confided, 25  
“ In whose right arm did heaven so appear,  
“ That I at rest in confidence abided.
- “ To thy first question is my answer clear 28  
“ With this, but yet it’s nature doth invite  
“ That I should add a further comment here;
- “ So may’st thou see with what a scanty right 31  
“ Some claim the sacred standard for their own,  
“ While some oppose it and against it fight.
- “ See what great worth in it has clearly shown 34  
“ Its claim to reverence, even from that hour  
“ When Pallas died to set it on its throne.
- “ Thou know’st in Alba sojourned all its power 37  
“ Three hundred years and more, till three with three  
“ Fought at the end for all its mighty dower.
- “ ’Neath seven Kings, from when so wrongfully 40  
“ The Sabines suffered, till Lucretia’s woe,  
“ It swept o’er neighbouring lands in victory.
- “ How noble Romans bore it, thou dost know, 43  
“ ’Gainst Brennus, Pyrrhus and so many more  
“ Great powers and princes, when the fame did grow

- “ (Which gladly I embalm,) which Decii wore, 46  
 “ Fabii, Torquatus, Quinctius, whose hair  
 “ In tangled locks gave him the name he bore.
- “ It crushed the pride, which made the Arabs dare 49  
 “ The passes of the Alps whence thou dost glide  
 “ O Po! when Hannibal had led them there;
- “ Beneath it triumphed in their youthful pride 52  
 “ Pompey and Scipio; bitter to the hill  
 “ It proved, 'neath which thy birthplace doth abide.
- “ Not long ere heaven its purpose could fulfil, 55  
 “ And back unto its peace the world was led,  
 “ Caesar laid hold on Rome, at Rome's own will.
- “ And how from Var to Rhine its power was spread 58  
 “ Isère and Arar knows, and knows the Seine,  
 “ And every vale from whence the Rhone is fed.
- “ Its deeds when he forsook Ravenna's plain 61  
 “ And leapt the Rubicon, soared up so high  
 “ That tongue or pen strives to pursue in vain.
- “ First towards Spain it wheeled its soldiery, 64  
 “ Then tow'rd Durazzo, and Pharsalia's blows  
 “ E'en to the warm Nile stream brought misery.
- “ Antandros and Simois, whence it rose 67  
 “ It saw again, and saw where Hector lies;  
 “ Ruffling again, wrought Ptolemy his woes,

## CANTO VI

39

- “ Then fell on Juba, as the lightning flies, 70  
“ Then turned towards your west, from whence was  
borne  
“ The loud Pompeian trumpet’s battle-cries.
- “ Brutus and Cassius howl in hell forlorn, 73  
“ For what with its new Marshal then it wrought;  
“ Modena and Perugia came to mourn.
- “ Still Cleopatra is with grief distraught, 76  
“ Who, flying from its might which she feared more,  
“ Black death and sudden from the serpent caught.
- “ With him it ran unto the Red Sea’s shore, 79  
“ With him such peace unto the world did teach  
“ That barred at last was Janus’ temple door.
- “ But all that th’ensign moving me to speech 82  
“ Had done before, and all it was to do,  
“ Through mortal realms o’er which its power should  
reach,
- “ Becometh small and darkling to the view 85  
“ In the third Caesar’s hand, though sight require  
“ A heart made pure and vision clear and true.
- “ For Living Justice (deigning to inspire 88  
“ My words) gave to it, while his hand did hold,  
“ The glory to do vengeance for His ire.
- “ Now see a double marvel I unfold! 91  
“ It ran ’neath Titus to revenge at last  
“ The vengeance on the iniquity of old.

- " And when the Lombard tooth had bitten fast 94  
 " In Holy Church, beneath the sheltering wing  
 " Of Charles the Great, the conqueror, it passed.
- " Now on those men canst thou due judgment bring 97  
 " Whom I but now accused, their sins are those  
 " Whence your misfortunes altogether spring.
- " One to the common ensign doth oppose 100  
 " The yellow lilies, one for his own side,  
 " Claims it; which sin is greater hardly shows.
- " Ye Ghibellines, 'neath other standards' pride, 103  
 " Ply, ply your arts! ill doth he follow this,  
 " Who seeks its might from justice to divide.
- " Nor let the new Charles and those Guelfs of his 106  
 " O'erwhelm it, for the eagle's claws have rent  
 " The hides of lions mightier than he is.
- " Sons for their fathers' sins must oft lament; 109  
 " Nor let him think to change God's ensign fair  
 " Into his lilies disobedient.
- " This little star throughout adorneth her 112  
 " With spirits good, who strove persistently  
 " Both fame and honour in their lives to wear;
- " And when desires tend there, yet swerve, thereby 115  
 " Needs must the rays of truest lovingness  
 " Stream upward with less life and liberty.

- “ But part of all the joy our hearts to bless, 118  
“ Is that our wage is matched with our deserving,  
“ Because we see it neither more nor less ;
- “ Whereby the living Justice moves preserving 121  
“ Love’s sweetness in us, so it can nowise  
“ To any thought of malice go a-swerving.
- “ From diverse voices come sweet melodies 124  
“ On earth, and in our life these wheels between,  
“ Our diverse thrones render sweet harmonies.
- “ And lo! within this present pearl is seen 127  
“ The light of Romeo, whose work was fair  
“ And great, though ill-requited it hath been.
- “ But his Provençal foes can laugh not there, 130  
“ For he who from the good by others done  
“ Works his own harm, by evil paths doth fare.
- “ Four daughters truly, and a queen each one, 133  
“ Had Raymond Berengar; and this he wrought,  
“ Romeo, an alien, and a poor man’s son;
- “ Then moved by crooked words, account was  
sought 136  
“ By Raymond from this just man, who alway  
“ Seven and five to him for ten had brought.
- “ In age and poverty he went his way; 139  
“ And if the world could know the heart he bore,  
“ Begging from crust to crust his life each day,  
“ Much as it praiseth, it would praise him more.” 142

## CANTO VII

IN significant connection with the Empire comes the treatment of the Redemption, the chief theological discourse in the Paradiso. Justinian and the other spirits vanish with hymns of triumph. Dante would fain ask a question, but when he raises his head to speak, he is overcome by awe, and bends it down again. Beatrice reads his thought, and bids him give good heed to her discourse. After man's fall, the Word of God united to himself in his own person the once pure now contaminated human nature. That human Nature bore on the cross the just penalty of its sin, but that divine Person suffered by the same act the supremest outrage. At the act of justice God rejoiced and heaven opened. At the outrage the Jews exulted and the earth trembled; and vengeance fell upon Jerusalem. But why this method of redemption? Only those who love can understand the answer. God's love ungrudgingly reveals itself, and whatever it creates without intermediary is immortal, free, and god-like. Such was man till made unlike God by sin, and so disfranchised, only to be reinstated by a free pardon, or by full atonement. But man cannot humble himself below what he is entitled to, as much as he had striven to exalt himself above it; and therefore he cannot make atonement. So God must reinstate man; and since "all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth," God proceeded both by the way of mercy, and by the way of truth or justice, since by the incarnation man was made capable of reinstating himself. Beatrice further explains that the elements and their compounds are made not direct by God, but by angels, who also draw the life of animal and plant out of compound matter that has the potentiality of such life in it; whereas first matter, the angels, and the heavens are direct creations of

God; and so were the bodies of Adam and Eve, which were therefore immortal, save for sin; as are therefore the bodies of the redeemed who are restored to all the privileges of unfallen man.

“ O Holy God of Sabaoth, Whose flame,  
 “ Shining, the happy fires all glorifies  
 “ That dwell with Thee, Hosannah to Thy name! ”

So, circling to its own song's harmonies, 4  
 My eager eyes beheld that being sing  
 O'er whom twin lights, in twofold radiance rise;

And with the rest it moved to the dance's ring, 7  
 While all, like sparks more swift than ever were,  
 Veiled them from me by sudden distancing.

Doubting, I said, “ Speak to her, speak to her, 10  
 “ Speak to my lady,” in my heart I said,  
 “ Who can sweet drops to quench thy thirst confer.”

But reverence through which is masterèd 13  
 Only by half her name the whole of me,  
 Bowed down as though I slept, my doubting head.

This Beatrice allowed short space ere she, 16  
 Smiling a smile so radiant that 'twould make  
 A man, though wrapt in flame, content to be,

Began, “ My thought that cannot e'er mistake, 19  
 “ Perceives it seems most hard unto thy mind,  
 “ A just revenge on vengeance just to take.

- " But speedily will I thy thought unbind: 22  
 " And listen well, for as my words shall fall,  
 " A saying of great moment thou shalt find.
- " Because the curb of Power that wills did gall 25  
 " Him past enduring, he who ne'er knew birth,  
 " Damning himself, condemned his offspring all.
- " Wherefore the human race of little worth, 28  
 " For many an age in error great was laid,  
 " Until God's Word was pleased descend to earth.
- " The Nature which had from its Maker strayed, 31  
 " By act of His eternal love alone,  
 " One with Himself in person there was made.
- " Now turn thy sight to what I here make known; 34  
 " This Nature (to its Maker joined) when first  
 " Created, pure and good throughout was shown;
- " But through itself it was cast forth accursed 37  
 " From Paradise, because it turned aside  
 " From ways of truth and life it followed erst.
- " Therefore that judgment which the cross applied, 40  
 " More justly bit than any other one,  
 " If by the Nature taken on 'tis tried;
- " But if we see to Whom the deed was done, 43  
 " Who on Himself this Nature's load had taken,  
 " Ne'er was such outrage seen beneath the sun.



## CANTO VII

45

“ Diverse effects from this one act awaken, 46  
“ God and the Jews rejoiced in one same death,  
“ Then heaven oped, earth was in horror shaken.

“ No more then deem it hard, if any saith, 49  
“ How afterward a court where justice reigns,  
“ Vengeance on just revenge accomplisheth.

“ But now I see how thought on thought remains, 52  
“ Thy mind entangling in a knot; to earn  
“ Release from which it longs, but nowise gains.

“ Thou sayest, ‘ The thing I hear, I well discern; 55  
“ ‘ But why God willed that our redemption came  
“ ‘ This way alone, is hid and hard to learn.’

“ Brother, of this decree the very frame 58  
“ Is buried from all eyes, excepting where  
“ Their wit has grown mature within love’s flame.

“ But truly since this target oftener 61  
“ Mankind has aimed at, than has clear descried,  
“ I’ll tell why such a way was worthier.

“ Goodness divine, which spurneth from its side 64  
“ All envy, sparkles as it blazes, till  
“ Eternal beauty showeth far and wide.

“ What doth immediate from itself distill, 67  
“ Hath afterward no end, for ne’er again  
“ The imprint fades that once has felt the seal.

- " What without intermediary it doth rain 70  
 " Downward, is wholly free, since not veiled o'er  
 " By power of changing things, that might restrain;
- " 'Tis more conformed to it, so pleases more; 73  
 " For that blest glow that sends its rays o'er all,  
 " In things most like itself, most life doth pour.
- " Each of these things advantage brings withal 76  
 " To human kind, and should one fail, we know  
 " Perforce from its nobility 'twill fall.
- " Sin only doth disfranchise it, and so 79  
 " Maketh it unlike to the good most fair,  
 " So that the light therein less bright doth glow;
- " Back to its dignity it cometh ne'er, 82  
 " Save it refill the guilt-wrought emptiness,  
 " When ill delight just punishment shall bear.
- " Man's nature had to lose these dignities, 85  
 " Even as Paradise, when in its seed  
 " It fell entirely into sinfulness;
- " Nor might they be recovered, if indeed 88  
 " Thou look with subtlety, save by a way  
 " Which passing one of these two fords should lead;
- " Either that God His clemency display 91  
 " By courtesy alone, or that mankind  
 " Full satisfaction for its folly pay.

## CANTO VII

47

- " Within the abyss of the Eternal Mind 94  
 " Fix now thine eye, attached as close as e'er  
 " To my discoursing, thou thyself canst bind.
- " Within its boundaries mankind could ne'er 97  
 " Its debt discharge, since could not go so low  
 " In humbleness obeying, to compare
- " With all the upward height it thought to go 100  
 " When disobeying; here the cause perceive  
 " Why man as man no quittance can bestow.
- " Therefore must God in His own ways achieve, 103  
 " That by one way or both be re-instated  
 " Man, in the life complete he had to leave.
- " But since more gracious is the deed, when mated 106  
 " With more of the heart's goodness whence it came,  
 "(To be by the doer into act created),
- " God's goodness, printing on the world His name, 109  
 " By all His ways proceeding, was content  
 " To raise man up again and so reclaim;
- " Nor ever was nor will be evident, 112  
 " 'Twixt the first day and final night to us,  
 " An act so lofty and magnificent.
- " To give Himself was God more generous, 115  
 " (That man should have the power to live again),  
 " Than had He just remission granted us.

- “ And all the other ways fell short in vain 118  
“ Of justice, save the Son of God most High  
“ To put on flesh as man should not disdain.
- “ Now, that desire be sated utterly, 121  
“ To make one place clear I return, that there  
“ Thou mayest see it even as do I.
- “ Thou sayest, ‘ I see the earth and see the air, 124  
“ ‘ The fire and water, and their minglings all  
“ ‘ Come to corruption, so endure they ne’er;’
- “ Yet these things were created things withal, 127  
“ So if ’tis true which I have told thee here,  
“ Into corruption should they nowise fall.
- “ The angels, brother, and this land sincere 130  
“ Wherein thou art, created well can be  
“ In their entirety, as they appear;
- “ But all the elements now named by thee, 133  
“ Informed are by created virtue deep,  
“ And things of them compounded, equally.
- “ Created was the matter which they keep, 136  
“ Created was informing virtue’s play  
“ Within the stars that round about them sweep.
- “ Drawn from compoundings of a potent sway, 139  
“ Is life of every brute and every plant,  
“ By movement of the holy lights and ray.

- " Your life, beneficence all dominant 142  
" Immediate breathes, and rouses there such love,  
" Your life for ever after feels its want.  
" Hence further argument thou'lt draw to prove 145  
" Your resurrection, if thou think again  
" How once the web of human flesh God wove,  
" Forming the parents of the race of men." 148

## CANTO VIII

THE planet Venus and ancient idolatry. All angels, heavens and blessed spirits, from the Seraphim nearest God outwards, are twined in one concerted cosmic dance; this dance the spirits in Venus leave to minister to Dante, singing *Hosannah* as they come; and one of them declares their kinship of movement and of love with the celestial Beings to whom he had once addressed his love hymn. Dante, with Beatrice's sanction, asks who the spirit is, and he with a flash of joy reveals himself as Dante's friend, Carlo Martello, once heir to the lordship of Provence and the kingdom of Naples, and actual king of Hungary, though Sicily had revolted from his house in consequence of that ill government against which his brother, Robert of Naples, mean offspring of a generous sire, would do well to take warning. Dante's joy in meeting his friend is increased by the knowledge that it is seen as clearly by that friend as by himself, and further, by the thought that it is in God that it is thus discerned. He asks him how it is that degenerate children can spring from noble parents. Carlo explains that for every natural attribute of any being there is provision of a corresponding good, and that since God is perfect and has made his ministers perfect for their offices, it follows that there is a fit place for everything and every one, for which place it is designed and at which it is aimed. The social relations of man demand diversity of gift, which diversity is provided for by the action of the heavens on human natures, but without regard to descent, so that natural heredity is overruled by celestial influences. Whereas we in assigning a man's place to him give heed only to hereditary position or such-like irrelevancies instead of studying his natural gift. Hence general confusion and incompetency.

Once men believed when peril wrapped the world,  
That ever from the Cyprian fair down-rayed  
Mad love, in the third epicycle whirled;

Whence not alone to her they honour paid, 4  
As sacrifice and votive cry was due,  
The folk of old, in olden error strayed,

But Dione revered, and Cupid too, 7  
That, as her mother, this, e'en as her son,  
And deemed his place on Dido's lap was true;

And from her whence these verses are begun 10  
A name they took, and gave that star to wear  
That now with nape, now brow, courteth the sun.

I felt no sense of rising to it there; 13  
But faith enough of entrance gave she me,  
My lady, when I saw her grow more fair.

And as within a flame a spark we see, 16  
(When one stays firm, the other comes and goes,)  
Or voice within a voice, discerned may be,

So in that light new torches there arose, 19  
Moving in circles, swift, or more or less,  
In measure as eternal vision grows.

Ne'er from an icy cloud did winds down press, 22  
Or visible or no, of speed so fine,  
As not to seem held back in slothfulness,

To him who should have seen those lights divine 25  
 Advance toward us, and leave that dance which erst  
 The lofty Seraphim began to twine.

Within the ones who seemed to come the first, 28  
 Hosannah sounded; with desire to hear  
 It once again, e'en from that hour, I thirst.

Then one of them drew unto us more near, 31  
 And so began alone; "We all are fain,  
 "To give thee all the joy thou findest dear.

"We circle where those heavenly princes reign, 34  
 "(Sharing their orbit and their thirst of love,)  
 "Of whom thou said'st once in the world of men,

" 'Oh ye who, understanding, cause to move 37  
 " 'Heaven's third circle,' and we love thee, hence  
 "Our stillness not less sweet to thee shall prove."

After my eyes were raised in reverence 40  
 Unto my Lady, and by her were made  
 Content with her, and full of confidence,

They turned back to that light, that thus had said 43  
 In promise of itself, and "Who are ye?"  
 With deep affection in my voice, I prayed.

Greater it grew and brighter far to see, 46  
 At that new joy which made its joyousness  
 Increase yet further through the speech of me.



- Thus changed it said, " For but a little space 49  
 " I dwelt on earth, had it been longer found,  
 " Much evil that must be would prove far less.
- " My joy, that rayeth here my form around, 52  
 " Hides me from thee and holdeth me unknown,  
 " Like to a creature in its own silk bound.
- " Much didst thou love me, and good cause didst  
 own, 55  
 " For had my days below been longer made,  
 " More than mere leaves of love to thee I'd shown.
- " The bank that leftward to Rhone's flood is laid, 58  
 " Whence, when with Sorgue 'tis joined, the stream  
 is pent,  
 " In time as lord had my behest obeyed,
- " And that Ausonian corner, town besprent 61  
 " By Bari, Gaeta, Catona, where  
 " Tronto and Verde with the sea are blent.
- " My brow already the bright crown did wear 64  
 " Of all that land the Danube watereth  
 " When German banks it leaves; Trinacria fair,
- " Trinacria the land which darkeneth, 67  
 "( Betwixt Pachinus and Pelorus, o'er  
 " The gulf that most from Eurus suffereth,)
- " Not through Typhæus, through fumes of sulphur  
 more, 70  
 " Would yet be ruled by my descendants, those  
 " Who Charles and Rudolph have for ancestor;

- " But evil rule, which bringeth deadly woes 73  
 " To subject peoples' hearts, would not amend,  
 " Wherefore Palermo's yell, ' Die, die,' arose.
- " And if my brother could foresee the end, 76  
 " From Catalonia's greedy poverty  
 " He'd fly already lest it should offend;
- " By him or by another needs must be 79  
 " Provision made, lest greater load should rock  
 " His barque, already laden heavily.
- " His nature, mean, though sprung from generous  
     stock, 82  
 " Hath need of servants, with another care  
 " Than to set wealth in charge of bolt and lock."
- " Since I believe all lofty joy soe'er 85  
 " Poured on me by thy speech, O! lord of mine,  
 " Is seen by thee e'en as I see it, there
- " Where every good begins and ends, more fine 88  
 " My joy is to me; and the thought is dear,  
 " That thou shouldst see this in the Worth Divine.
- " Thou'st made me glad, now further make it clear, 91  
 " (Since speaking thou hast made a doubt to grow,)  
 " How from sweet seed can bitterness appear."
- Thus I to him; and he: " If I can show 94  
 " One truth to thee, then where thy mind is bent  
 " Thou'lt turn thy sight, and not thy back bestow.

- " The Good which circling maketh all content 97  
 " The whole realm thou dost climb, makes its fore-  
 sight  
 " Be virtue in these mighty bodies pent;  
 " And in the Mind, perfect in Its own right, 100  
 " Are not alone foreseen the natures all,  
 " But all things which to shape their weal have might.  
 " Wherefore, whate'er this bow shoots forth, will  
 fall 103  
 " Rightly directed to a foreseen end,  
 " E'en as an arrow on its target shall.  
 " Were this not so, this heav'n, where through now  
 wend 106  
 " Thy ways, would so bring forth all its effects  
 " As would to ruin, not adjustment tend.  
 " This may not be, unless the intellects 109  
 " That move these stars should be a-wanting found,  
 " And the first star, which wrought them with defects.  
 " Wouldst thou more light should shine this truth  
 around? " 112  
 And I, " Nay, I perceive it may not be  
 " That Nature lack one thing that should abound."  
 " Now say, would it be worse," continued he, 115  
 " For man on earth, were he no citizen? "  
 " This," said I, " needs no reasoning for me."

- " And may that be, except diversely men 118  
 " Should live below with diverse offices?  
 " No, if your master write with truthful pen."
- So far he brought deduction's sentences, 121  
 " And therefore," (thus did his conclusion run,)  
 " Must roots of your effects have differences.
- " So one is Xerxes born, and one Solon, 124  
 " And one Melchizedek, and one the wight  
 " Who flying through the heavens lost his son.
- " The circling nature plies its art aright, 127  
 " Sealing your mortal wax, but there's no bar  
 " 'Twixt one and another hostel in its sight.
- " Whence Esau separates in seed afar 130  
 " From Jacob, and Quirinus hath so low  
 " A father, that he claims the god of war.
- " Begotten nature would its journey go 133  
 " Like its begetters ever, were there nought  
 " Of providence divine to overthrow.
- " What was behind thee now's before thee brought; 136  
 " But that thou know how I delight in thee,  
 " I'll wrap thee in corollary well-wrought.
- " If ever nature find disharmony 139  
 " 'Twixt fortune and herself, like seed'soe'er  
 " Reft from its country, she fails woefully.

CANTO VIII

57

- “ And if the world below would but have care 142  
“ Nature’s foundations to be following,  
“ Then worthier by far its people were.
- “ But one designed to gird the sword ye bring 145  
“ Into religion, wrenching him awry,  
“ And one fit for discourses, make ye king;
- “ Wherefore your track beyond the road doth lie.” 148

## CANTO IX

CHARLES, after a note of warning, turns again to God, whom we so impiously neglect. Cunizza approaches; she describes the site of Romano whence she and the tyrant Ezzelin, her brother, sprang. She tells how her past sins no longer trouble her. She speaks of the fair fame on earth of the troubadour Folco, and laments that no such fame is now sought by her countrymen of Venetia; whose woes she predicts and whose crimes she denounces; and then seeming no longer to heed Dante drops again into her place in the cosmic dance. Folco now flashes brighter in Dante's sight, and at his entreaty diverts his voice from its place in the universal song (which, like the universal dance, takes its note from Seraphim) to minister to his special need. He indicates his birthplace of Marseilles. He tells of his amorous youth, but shows how in heaven there is no repentance, because the sin is only seen or remembered as the occasion of the act of God by which the fallen one was uplifted again into his true element: and it is on this divine power and grace that the soul's whole thought and love are centred. He points out to Dante the light of Rahab, speaks of this heaven as just within the range of the cone of the earth's shadow, thereby indicating that the place of these souls in heaven is, in part, determined by the earthly sin that is now no longer in their minds; refers to Rahab's help given to Joshua in conquering the Holy Land, and denounces the Pope for his indifference to its recovery. It is devil-planted Florence that corrupts the world, both shepherd and flock, by her *florins*. But vengeance shall not lag.

After thy Charles, fair Clemence, made me sure  
In understanding, presently he told  
The frauds that his descendants must endure.

But said; "Keep silence, till the years have rolled 4  
"Away;" so more I tell not. Just lament  
Yet following your wrongs shall men behold.

And now that holy flame's life backward went 7  
Unto the Sun which fills it utterly,  
The Good which gives to all things full content.

Ah souls deceived and impious creatures, ye 10  
Who from such good can twist your hearts aside,  
And turn your thoughts alone to vanity!

And lo! another of these splendours hied 13  
Towards me, and its brightness, glowing more,  
Its will to please me clearly signified.

The eyes of Beatrice, which as before 16  
Rested upon me, unto my desire  
Gave dear assenting in the look they wore.

"All that whereto thou seest my will aspire 19  
"Grant soon, blest spirit," said I, "and so prove  
"My thought can be reflected in thy fire."

Thereon a voice from that new light did move, 22  
From depths whence first I heard its song arise,  
And said, as one who joys in deeds of love;

"Far in the vile Italian land which lies 25  
"Betwixt the fountains which Piave fill,  
"And Brenta and Rialto's boundaries,

- " There rises up, not very high, a hill 28  
 " Whence once swept down a little torch of war,  
 " Assailing all that land with fiercest will.
- " Both I and it, born of one root-stock are; 31  
 " Cunizza was I named, and here I shine  
 " Since vanquished by the radiance of this star.
- " But all the deeds which did this fate assign, 34  
 " I pardon joyously, nor grieves it me  
 " Though strange the crowd may deem this lot of  
 mine.
- " This dear and shining gem of jewelry 37  
 " Set in our heaven, closest to my side,  
 " Left splendid fame, and ere it cease to be,
- " Five times this hundredth year away shall glide;  
 " See how a man should make him excellent, 41  
 " And leave more life behind when he has died!
- " Little on this, the thoughts of those are bent 43  
 " 'Twixt Tagliamento and Adigé living,  
 " Nor although smitten will they yet repent.
- " But Padua soon shall find a day arriving 46  
 " To tinge Vicenza's river as it flows,  
 " For ever hard 'gainst duty is she striving.
- " And one where Sile near Cagnano goes, 49  
 " Lords it, and walks with head uplifted high,  
 " Whom now the net is woven to enclose.



“ Feltro shall yet lament the treachery 52  
“ Its impious pastor plans, fouler I say  
“ Than aught for which in Malta sinners lie.

“ Weary were he who ounce by ounce should weigh,  
“ And over deep the vessel that should hold, 56  
“ The blood, Ferrara yet shall come to pay,

“ Shed by that courteous priest, who is enrolled 58  
“ Thereby a partizan; that country side  
“ Is well accustomed to such gifts of old.

“ Above, the mirrors ye call thrones abide, 61  
“ God’s judgments so reflecting to us here,  
“ That what I say therein shines glorified.”

With this she ended; and at once ’twas clear 64  
She turned to other cares, because once more  
She joined the wheel where erst she did appear.

The other joy which I had seen before 67  
And known as precious, flashed before mine eyes  
As when a sunray strikes the ruby’s core.

In heaven new splendour doth from joy arise, 70  
As smiles do here; but down in Hell, the shade  
Outwardly darkeneth through its miseries.

“ God seeth all, and thy sight,” then I said, 73  
“ Thou blessèd Spirit, sinks in Him, till all  
“ That I can wish is clear to thee displayed.

- " Why does thy voice, which maketh musical 76  
 " Heaven for ever (with the pious singing  
 " Of flames, whose six wings make their cowls withal),  
  
 " Not satisfy my longings quick upspringing? 79  
 " Were I in thee as thou in me, more speed  
 " I'd give to speech surely than thou art bringing."  
  
 " That vale of waters which doth all exceed," 82  
 Thus then his words began at last to say,  
 " Save the sea garland of the earth indeed,  
  
 " Betwixt opposing shores against the day 85  
 " Stretcheth, until it makes meridian be  
 " Where first the line of its horizon lay.  
  
 " A shoresman of this valley know in me, 88  
 " 'Twixt Ebro and the Macra, whose short flood  
 " Divides the Genoese from Tuscany.  
  
 " For sunrise and for sunset almost stood 91  
 " Alike, Bougiah and that land mine own,  
 " Which once made warm the harbour with its blood.  
  
 " Folco they called me unto whom was known 94  
 " My name, and on this heaven my seal is pressed,  
 " E'en as its seal on me was stamped and shown.  
  
 " No fires that burnt in Belus' daughter's breast, 97  
 " Wronging Sicheus and Creüsa, were  
 " Like mine while youthful locks I still possessed;

- " She whom Demophöon deserted, ne'er 100  
 " Loved as did I, nor when Iole reigned  
 " Over Alcides' heart was more love there.
- " Yet we repent not here; with joy unfeigned 103  
 " We smile, not at our sin, but to approve  
 " The all-foreseeing Worth, that so ordained.
- " Here at the Art which beautifies, in love, 106  
 " We look and here behold the Good that brings  
 " The world below back to the world above.
- " But that thou bear away fulfilled, all things 109  
 " Which thy desires conceived within this sphere,  
 " Further I still must speak. The wish yet clings
- " To know who is within this light, which here 112  
 " Beside me sparkleth ever on and on,  
 " As doth the sun's ray in the water clear.
- " Now know within Rahab her peace hath won, 115  
 " And sealeth, joined unto our company,  
 " That grade, of all our grades the highest one.
- " After Christ's triumphing, ascended she 118  
 " Sooner than any soul unto this heaven,  
 " Where thy world's shadow endeth finally.
- " Truly 'twas fitting that she should be given 121  
 " Unto some sphere, to be a sign displayed  
 " Of victory high for which both hands had striven.

- “ To Joshua’s first glory she brought aid, 124  
“ When to the Holy land he entered in  
“ That quickly from Rome’s memory doth fade.
- “ Thy city,—planted by that soul of sin 127  
“ Who from his Maker’s face first turned aside,  
“ Whose envy was it made man’s woes begin,—
- “ Brings forth that cursèd flower and spreads it wide,  
“ Which long hath led the sheep and lambs astray, 131  
“ Turning to wolf the shepherd who should guide.
- “ For this the Gospels and great doctors may 133  
“ Deserted lie, Decretals only claim  
“ The students, as their margins well display.
- “ The Pope and Cardinals are lost in them; 136  
“ Never to Nazareth they give a thought,  
“ Where Gabriel once on outspread pinions came;
- “ But Vatican and every part men ought 139  
“ To reverence in Rome, the burial place  
“ Of soldiery who under Peter fought,
- “ Shall soon lose this adultery’s disgrace.” 142

## CANTO X

GOD as self-existent contemplating himself as manifested, in that love which in either aspect he breathes forth, made all objects of intelligence or sense with that order which speaks of him to all beholders. Let the reader, then, look upon the equinoctial point, which so clearly displays that art of God which he himself ever contemplates, in love. Let him reflect how the influences of the sun and planets—the seasons and other alternations—would be effective over a smaller part of the earth if the inclination of the ecliptic were less, and would be too violent in their contrasts if it were greater. If the reader will not give himself time to work out these and other such hints, weary listlessness instead of enjoyment will be the fruit of his study, for the author cannot pause to elaborate them for him. The sun is in the spring equinoctial point and Dante is with him. Standing out against the sun by their very brightness are spirits rejoicing in the vision of the relation of the Father to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Beatrice calls on Dante to thank the sun of the angels; and he thereon so concentrates his thought on God as to forget Beatrice; in pleasure whereat she smiles so beautifully as to shatter the undivided unity of his mind; which thus broken up distributes itself amongst the wondrous objects that claim it. Twelve spirits surround Dante and Beatrice, as with a crown, and thrice circle them, uttering music that may not be conceived on earth; then pause, while one of them, Thomas Aquinas, declares that since the divine grace has kindled in Dante such true love as must ever increase itself by the mere act of loving, and has revealed to him that heavenly bliss to which he who has once known it must ever return, it follows that every blessed soul must freely love to

do him pleasure; whereon he tells him who are the other flames; whereon the wheel of lights again begins to revolve with ineffable music.

The Primal Worth, which never told can be,  
Gazing upon His Son, with all the Love  
Which emanates from both eternally,

Made all, that or through mind or eye doth move, 4  
With such perfection, that all men must feel  
Some touch of Him, who seek these things to prove.

Then reader, raise thine eyes at my appeal 7  
To the great sweeping circles, even there  
Where upon one striketh another's wheel;

Look on the Master's art with loving care; 10  
So dear it is unto its Lord and King,  
His eye departeth from its essence ne'er.

See how from thence there branches off the ring 13  
Oblique, which bears the planets, to content  
The world, that for their power is clamouring.

And if perchance awry their pathway went, 16  
Much virtue in the heaven were in vain,  
And almost all the force of earth were spent;

And if from out the straight course it should gain 19  
More or less distance, then both high and low,  
Great loss the cosmic order would sustain.

## CANTO X

67

Now stay thee, reader, on thy bench, that so 22  
Upon this prelude thou may'st think indeed,  
If joy thou'dst have ere thou dost weary grow

'Tis set before thee; eat as claims thy need! 25  
That matter which hath made its scribe of me,  
Wrests to itself all of my care and heed.

The greatest minister of Nature, he 28  
Who stamps upon the world the worth of heaven,  
And by whose light our time can measured be,

Along his spiral course was being driven, 31  
Where sooner to our sight he rises e'er,  
Joined with that part whereof to speak I've striven,

And I was with him; but of mounting there 34  
I knew no more, than of his primal thought  
Before it come, a man can be aware.

'Tis Beatrice through whom I thus am brought 37  
From good to better, and so suddenly  
That without space of time her act is wrought.

How brilliant in itself that needs must be, 40  
Which in the sun, where I was entered then,  
Not by its colour, but its light, I see.

Knowledge or art or genius, all are vain 43  
Here, where imagination is undone;  
Yet can mankind believe it and grow fain;

- And that our fantasy can master none 46  
 Of these great heights, need cause no marvelling,  
 Since no man's eye can pass beyond the sun.
- Thus saw I the fourth household of the King 49  
 And Father, Who doth make it all content,  
 Showing how Son and Spirit from Him spring.
- “ Give thanks, give thanks ; ” command from Beatrice  
 went, 52  
 “ Unto the Sun of angels ; Who in grace,  
 “ To sun of sense hath granted thy ascent.
- Never had mortal heart such eagerness 55  
 For God, nor such a swift desire to be  
 Given to Him, as there sprang up to bless
- The soul of me, who heard ; and verily 58  
 My heart towards Him so utterly I bore,  
 That Beatrice vanished from my memory.
- It vexed her not, such smiles her visage wore, 61  
 Her laughing eyes made with their dazzling light  
 My mind divided, which was one before.
- I saw more living conquering fire-flames bright 64  
 Forming a crown, centred on us alone,  
 More sweet to hear than glowing to the sight ;
- Thus girt Latona's daughter may be known 67  
 Sometimes, when so impregnate is the air,  
 That it retains the thread that makes her zone.



So many jewels all so dear and fair 70  
 Are found in Heaven's court, whence I return,  
 That from that kingdom may be taken ne'er,

And such this song was; whoso shall not earn 73  
 Wings for himself, that thither he may fly,  
 News of it from the dumb must look to learn.

When singing so, those burning suns swept by 76  
 And circled round us thrice, as stars must do,  
 That to the fixèd poles are neighbourly,

They seemed as ladies, pausing silent, who 79  
 Are not from dance released, but listening, pay  
 Due heed until they catch the measure new.

From within one I heard; " Since that the ray 82  
 " Of grace, whereby true love enkindled grows,  
 " Then doth increase and multiply alway

" By loving,—since in thee so clear it flows, 85  
 " That up this stairway it hath power to guide,  
 " Where, save to mount again, none downward goes;

" Whoso to thee his vial's wine denied 88  
 " To quench thy thirst, would know not freedom's  
 dower,

" More than the flood that shuns the ocean's tide;

" Thou'dst know what plants they are, that break in  
 flower 91

" Upon this garland, that doth crown in love  
 " The lady fair who gives thee heavenly power.

- " A lamb I was of those blest flocks who move 94  
 " Following Dominic, where pastures lie,  
 " Which, if they stray not, will for fattening prove.
- " This one, unto my right hand neighbourly, 97.  
 " Brother and master was, and of Cologne  
 " Albert is called; Thomas Aquinas, I.
- " Wouldst thou the others have to thee made  
     known 100  
 " Let then thy sight, along the blessèd wreath  
 " Circling behind my words, their guidance own.
- " This next flame, from the smiling issueth 103  
 " Of Gratian, who to both forums gave  
 " Such aid as Paradise recompenseth.
- " The next one who in turn our choir makes brave, 106  
 " That Peter was, who like the widow poor,  
 " His treasure for the holy Church did save.
- " The fifth who doth 'mid us most fair endure, 109  
 " Breathes from such love, that all the world below  
 " Craves to have news of it, to know for sure:
- " Within is the lofty mind, wherewith did go 112  
 " Wisdom so deep, that if the truth be true,  
 " No second e'er could such a vision know.
- " Next wilt thou come that taper's light to view, 115  
 " Which in the flesh below had deepest sight  
 " Of Angels' nature, and its service knew.

“ There smiles within the next, the little light, 118  
 “ That advocate of Christian days, whose word  
 “ Furnished Augustin with a sword of might.

“ Now if behind my praises here proffered, 121  
 “ From light to light thy mind’s eye followeth,  
 “ Already for the eighth with thirst thou’rt stirred.

“ The blessed soul within is glad to see 124  
 “ All things, who unto all who rightly hear,  
 “ Showed how deceitful still the world can be.

“ The body lieth Cieldauro near 127  
 “ From which ’twas chased; from exile and torment  
 “ It issued forth to find this peaceful sphere.

“ See flaming next, the breath of Bede ardent, 130  
 “ Of Isidore, and of that Richard who  
 “ Was more than man, on contemplation bent.

“ This one, whence turns thy glance to me anew, 133  
 “ A spirit’s flame is, who in weighty thought,  
 “ Deemed that too slowly nearer death he grew;

“ Of Sigier ’tis the light eternal wrought, 136  
 “ Who in the street of straw lecturing withal  
 “ Syllogised truths, that hate upon him brought.”

Then as the horologue which men doth call, 139  
 What time God’s spouse, with glad uplifted heart  
 In morning song, entreats His love to fall;

Where one part draws and thrusts another part, 142  
Sounding a chime so sweet that in each soul  
That's well inclined, new flow'rs of love must start,

So did I see that glorious circle roll, 145  
And voice return to voice in harmony,  
And sweetness whereof none can know the whole,

Save in that land where joys eternal be. 148

## CANTO XI

CONTRAST between earth and heaven. Thomas, reading Dante's thoughts, renews his discourse in order to remove certain difficulties. Providence raised up Francis and Dominic to succour the Church. From Assisi Francis rose sunlike, even as the sun in which Doctor and Poet are now discoursing rises to mortals from Ganges or elsewhere according to the place of their abode. His marriage with poverty. The founding and confirming of his order. He preaches to the Soldan, receives the stigmata, and dies commending his bride to his disciples. If he was such, what must Dominic have been, seeing that he was worthy to be his colleague. But almost all his followers are degenerate.

Ah me! Insensate care of mortal things,  
How far defective is all argument  
That makes thee ever downward beat thy wings!

One after law, one after medicine went,                    4  
Another sought out priesthood's subtleties,  
And one by force or fraud on power was bent;

And plunder one, one civic businesses,                    7  
One by the pleasures of the flesh seduced  
Wearied himself and one was lost in ease;

Whilst I, from all these binding things unloosed,    10  
With Beatrice was in the heavenly land,  
And glorious welcome for my joy was used.

- When was returned each one of that fair band 13  
 Unto the point, whereat he was before,  
 He stayed as candle in the candlestand;
- And thus I knew what smiling aspect wore 16  
 That light, which first had spoken unto me,  
 For as it smiled its brightness grew yet more;
- “ As with its ray I shine thus splendidly, 19  
 “ So gazing on eternal light, I learn,  
 “ Whence thou dost draw the thoughts that rise in  
 thee.
- “ Thou questionest, and eagerly dost yearn 22  
 “ To have my words in language all outspread  
 “ And open, such as can thy mind discern,
- “ Wherein, ‘ for fattening prove,’ but now I said, 25  
 “ And where I said, ‘ No second e’er could know,’  
 “ And clear distinction must in these be made.
- “ The Providence which rules the world below, 28  
 “ (With counsel such, that every creature’s eyes  
 “ Are vanquished ere unto its depth they go),
- “ So that the bride of Him, Who with loud cries 31  
 “ Wedded her with the blessed blood, might fare  
 “ Toward her joy, in more secure a guise,
- “ And faithfuller to Him, in His great care, 34  
 “ Ordained two Princes for her need, upon  
 “ This side and that, to be as guides for her.

## CANTO XI

75

- “ One all seraphic was in ardour, one 37  
“ Upon the earth, his wondrous wisdom through,  
“ With all a cherub’s light in splendour shone.
- “ One will I speak of, since of both the two 40  
“ He speaks who praises one, which e’er he will,  
“ Since works of both one purpose only knew.
- “ Betwixt Tupino and the mountain rill 43  
“ Whose source the blest Ubaldo chose, down sweeping  
“ A fertile slope hangs from the lofty hill,
- “ Wherefrom Perugia heat or cold is reaping 46  
“ Through Porta Sole, while behind, the yoke  
“ Severe sets Gualdo and Nocera weeping.
- “ And from this place, there where it most hath broke  
“ The steepness, rising on the world a sun 50  
“ (E’en as this sun from Ganges) once awoke.
- “ Wherefore should he who speaks of this place, shun  
“ To say Ascesi, wishing to be brief, 53  
“ For Orient’s name remains the truest one.
- “ Nor had he risen far, ere in its grief 55  
“ The world began to know him, when he brought  
“ His shining worth for comfort and relief.
- “ Against his father, as a youth, he fought 58  
“ For a fair lady, whom men shut away  
“ From their delight as though like Death she wrought.

- " Before his spiritual court for aye, 61  
 " And 'fore his father, he made her his bride,  
 " And more he loved her there from day to day.
- " Eleven hundred years did she abide 64  
 " Obscure, despised, uncalled, until he came,  
 " Since her first husband parted from her side.
- " Nought it availed her that the voice of fame 67  
 " Found her with Amyclas, unmoved, to know  
 " His call, whence fear ran through the world like  
 flame:
- " Nor that she steadfast was and staunch, e'en so 70  
 " That she with Christ upon the cross did rise,  
 " When even Mary must remain below.
- " But ere my meaning all too hidden lies, 73  
 " Francis and Poverty, these lovers twain,  
 " In speech more free now canst thou recognise.
- " Their concord and their semblance glad and fain, 76  
 " Through love and wonder and sweet looks did call  
 " Forth many holy thoughts in many men;
- " Till venerable Bernard first of all 79  
 " Unsandaled him, and ran that peace to share,  
 " And running deemed too slow his feet did fall.
- " O fruitful good! O hidden riches rare! 82  
 " Egidius bares his feet, bares his Silvester,  
 " Following the spouse, they find the bride so fair;



- “ Thence took his road that father and that master 85  
“ With his own lady, and that household, now  
“ Already by the humble cord bound faster;
- “ Nor did an abject heart weigh down his brow 88  
“ That he was Pietro Bernadone’s son,  
“ Nor that ’neath great despite he had to bow.
- “ But he revealed, as might a king have done, 91  
“ His purpose stern to Innocent, and thus  
“ His order’s earliest seal from him he won.
- “ When the poor folk had waxed more numerous, 94  
“ Following him, whose life by Heaven’s choir  
“ Is better chanted, ’twas so marvellous,
- “ Then, as eternal wisdom did inspire, 97  
“ Honorius a second crowning gave  
“ To that chief shepherd’s holiest desire.
- “ After, all eager for a martyr’s grave, 100  
“ He preached before the Soldan proud and great,  
“ Christ, and His followers and His power to save.
- “ Then finding folk to be too obstinate 103  
“ Against the truth, turned back from labour vain  
“ To gather fruit from Italy’s estate.
- “ Then was from Christ the final imprint ta’en, 106  
“ On the harsh rock between the Tiber’s flood  
“ And Arno’s: and two years he bore it plain,

" When Him it pleased Who chose him for such good,  
 " To draw him upward for the well-earned wage 110  
 " Merited by his life of servanthood,

" Then to his brethren, as right heritage, 112  
 " His dearest lady, lo! he recommended,  
 " To love her faithfully from age to age;

" Then to its own realm from her bosom wended 115  
 " That soul bright shining, as its own will bade,  
 " And from all other bier his corpse defended.

" Think then what he was, who had worth to aid 118  
 " In steering Peter's ship to its right mark  
 " In the deep sea, whatever winds withstayed!

" And such an one was he, our patriarch: 121  
 " Wherefore who follows him where he doth guide  
 " Taketh good merchandise aboard his barque.

" But lo! his greedy flock ill satisfied 124  
 " Seek pastures new, that nought can now withhold,  
 " But that through many a glade they scatter wide.

" And aye the more they wander uncontrolled 127  
 " His sheep, and distant from him, emptier doth  
 " Each one of milk return into the fold.

" True there are some, who fearing loss, are loth 130  
 " To leave their shepherd, but there cling so few,  
 " Their cowl's are furnished forth with little cloth.

- “ Now if my words have not been faint, if due 133  
“ Intentness thou hast brought to listening,  
“ If that thy mind recall my words anew,  
“ To see the plant from which they're cleft will  
bring 136  
“ Content in part unto thy will, and move  
“ Thy mind to know in this a bitter sting,  
“ ‘ Which if they stray not, will for fattening  
prove.’ ” 139

## CANTO XII

A SECOND circle of lights encloses the first and—with music whereof our sweetest strains are but as the reflection—the two, like the parallels of a double rainbow, circle Dante and Beatrice, first moving and then at rest. Like the needle of the compass to the north star so Dante is swept round to one of the new-come lights at the sound of its voice. It is Bonaventura, the Franciscan, who undertakes the encomium of Dominic, just as Thomas, the Dominican, had pronounced that of Francis. Dominic's zeal for true learning and against heresy. If he was such, what must his colleague have been? But his disciples are ruined by the extremes of the strict and lax schools of observance. Bonaventura names himself and the other lights that circle with him.

Soon as the blessèd flame in its resolve  
Made with its final word an end of sound,  
Began the holy mill-stone to revolve;

And had not in its wheeling turned full round,      4  
When, circling it, another ring did show,  
Which song to song, movement to movement, bound;

Song, which in those sweet pipes doth far outgo      7  
Muses' and Sirens' lays, as vanquisheth  
The primal splendour its reflected glow;

And as two bows curve o'er the thin cloud wreath      10  
Parallel, and alike in colour, when  
Juno at her command her handmaid hath,

The one without born of the one within, 13  
 (Like speech of the wandering nymph, whom love for  
 wage

Consumed, as doth the sun the vapours thin),

Making the folk who dwell on earth presage 16  
 No flood again above the world shall close,  
 Since this God's pact with Noah doth engage;

So these two garlands of the eternal rose 19  
 Round us revolved, and each to each did call  
 Outer to inner, these songs answering those.

Soon as the dance and great high festival, 22  
 Alike of song and of the flashing flame,  
 (Light meeting light, gracious, and joyful all,)

With like desire, together stilled became, 25  
 As eyes which closed or open must abide  
 Together, as the moving will shall claim,

Out of the heart of one new light there cried 28  
 A voice, which made me like the needle there,  
 That turns, as I turned, to the Pole Star's side:

" Stirred am I by the love that makes me fair, 31  
 " To tell of him, the other chief, for love  
 " Of whom my leader finds such favouring care.

" Where one is rightly doth the other move, 34  
 " Because their glory shines together most,  
 " As both together did their valour prove.

- " Christ's army, re-equipped at such a cost, 37  
 " Was following its standard to the war,  
 " A scanty, straggling, and discouraged host,
- " When that the ever-reigning Emperor 40  
 " Took counsel for his soldiers in their need,  
 " Through grace alone, not for the worth they bore;
- " And by two champions, through whose word and  
 deed 43  
 " The straggling army closed its ranks again,  
 " He, as 'twas said, His Bride from peril freed.
- " Within that land whose zephyr riseth fain 46  
 " To open the new leaves, wherewith in Spring  
 " A new-clad Europe is beheld of men,
- " Nor far from where the waves are combating, 49  
 " 'Neath which, because they stretch so far in space,  
 " The sun oft-times from all goes vanishing,
- " Lies Calahorra, fortune favoured place. 52  
 " The Lion is subdued and conquereth  
 " On the great shield which grants the town its grace.
- " The amorous lover of the Christian faith 55  
 " Therein was born, the holy athlete, kind  
 " Unto his own, to foes as stern as death.
- " As soon as 'twas created, was his mind 58  
 " Filled with such living worth, unborn, its power  
 " In light prophetic from his mother shined,

- “ When at the sacred font the marriage hour      61  
“ Was ended, 'twixt the faith and him, whereby  
“ Of mutual salvation each gave dower;
- “ Whilst she who gave assent asleep did lie,      64  
“ She saw in dream what wondrous fruit should fall  
“ From him and from his heirs in ministry;
- “ And they were moved by spirits here to call      67  
“ Him, that his name should show his nature well  
“ By His possessive, Whose he was in all.
- “ Dominic was he named; of him I tell      70  
“ As of the husbandman, chosen by Christ  
“ To bring his orchard aid incomparable.
- “ True messenger he showed and friend of Christ; 73  
“ For the first love that manifest he made,  
“ Was for the counsel that first came from Christ.
- “ Oft-times awake his nurse would find him, laid 76  
“ Silent upon the ground, as though, ‘ I came  
“ For this cause hither,’ would he then have said.
- “ ‘ Father Felice.’ Ah! how right the name!      79  
“ Thy mother, ‘ Giovanna,’ Ah! how right!  
“ If these in meaning are as men do claim.
- “ Soon waxed he to a teacher great in might,      82  
“ Not for the world’s sake, for which men to-day,  
“ Toil after Thaddeus and the Ostian wight,

- " But for the Manna true he loved for aye; 85  
 " Then set himself to pace the vineyard round,  
 " Which, if its dressers fail, soon withereth grey.
- " And from the seat, erst with more kindness crowned  
 " To the just poor, (not through itself, but through 89  
 " Him seated there, now all degenerate found),
- " Not to dispense for six, or three, or two, 91  
 " Not the next vacant fortune to receive,  
 " Not for the tithes, which to God's poor are due,
- " He asked; but 'gainst an erring world for leave 94  
 " To combat for that seed whence twenty-four  
 " These plants have sprung that round thee make  
 a sheaf.
- " With the apostle's duty which he bore, 97  
 " And doctrine blent with will, forth sallied he,  
 " As from a deep vein doth a torrent pour.
- " His onset 'mid the stumps of heresy 100  
 " Struck, and more vigorous it battled there  
 " Where the opposèd strength more great might be.
- " Then many rivulets from him did fare, 103  
 " Which watered so the Catholic orchard plot,  
 " That now its plants a fuller life can wear.
- " If such was one wheel of the chariot, 106  
 " Wherein the holy church herself defended,  
 " And o'er her civil strife the victory got,



“ Well should the worth by thee be apprehended 109  
“ Of that great other, of whom Thomas told  
“ Such courteous tale ere hither I had wended.

“ But now abandoned is the track where rolled 112  
“ The part of its circumference most blest,  
“ So that where once was crust there now is mould.

“ His household so hath turned about, which pressed  
“ Once in his track, his footsteps following, 116  
“ That now their toes upon their heelprints rest.

“ And soon there shall be seen the harvesting 118  
“ Of evil husbandry, when shall the tare  
“ Lament, because 'tis left from garnering.

“ 'Tis true, who searches leaf by leaf with care 121  
“ Our volume, yet may find a page whereon  
“ ‘ I am as I was wont,’ is written fair;

“ But Acquasparta or Casal' gives none, 124  
“ For thence our Scripture is such aid deriving,  
“ One draws it tighter, flies the other one.

“ Bonaventura am I herein living, 127  
“ Of Bagnoreggio, who in great offices,  
“ To shun the left hand care was ever striving;

“ Augustine and Illuminato these, 130  
“ From those first brethren all unshod and poor,  
“ Who with the cord moved God to friendliness,

- " Hugh of St. Victor, Pietro Mangiador' 133  
 " Are here with them, and Spain's Pietro too,  
 " Who in twelve books sheds light the wide world o'er;  
  
 " Nathan the prophet, and Donatus who 136  
 " The first art deigned to practise, here abide;  
 " Anselm and Chrysostom here may'st thou view;  
  
 " Here is Rabanus; shineth at my side 139  
 " The Abbot of Calabria, Joachin,  
 " Whose spirit with prophetic ardour cried.  
  
 " To emulate so great a paladin, 142  
 " The burning courtesy encouraged me  
 " Of brother Thomas, and his speech herein  
  
 " Well-framed, moved with me all this company." 145

## CANTO XIII

THE four and twenty brightest stars of heaven, ranged in two crowns, will give a feeble image of the two circles that swept round Dante and his guide. They sing of the Three Persons in the one nature of God and of the two natures in the one Person of Christ. Then they pause again, and Thomas once more speaks. He reads Dante's perplexity: "Did not both Adam and Christ possess all human knowledge in perfection? How then can it be that *none ever rose* to equal Solomon's wisdom?" Behold the answer: All mortal and immortal things are but a reflection of the divine Idea—*i.e.* of the loving self-utterance of the divine power—which remains one in itself while it is broken into countless manifestations. But the imprinting influences of heaven and the imprinted matter of earth are not always in equally propitious habit, and hence individual diversities of excellence. But matter was perfectly disposed and the heaven was in supreme excellence of power when Adam was created and when the Virgin conceived. Therefore Dante's initial supposition is true. But there is no contradiction; for Solomon desired not astronomical, nor logical, nor metaphysical, nor geometrical, but regal wisdom. Of all who ever *rose* to kingly rule (which Adam and Christ did not) none had such wisdom as Solomon. Let Dante take warning from this discussion and observe extremest caution in making unqualified deductions however obvious they may appear; for when once we are committed our own vanity prevents us from retreating and we had better not have thought about a problem than so thought as to fortify ourselves against the truth. Philosophy and Theology alike furnish sad examples. And seeming-obvious moral judgments may be as hasty and false as intellectual ones.

Let him imagine, who would understand  
 What now I saw, (and grip the image there  
 In listening, like a firm rock for the hand,)

Some fifteen stars that in the heavens wear                    4  
 Such living light that wheresoe'er they be,  
 Their brightness overcomes the close-knit air,

That wain for which sufficeth endlessly                    7  
 The bosom of our heaven day and night,  
 Unfailing as the chariot pole sweeps free,

Imagine too the horn's mouth glowing bright,            10  
 Which at the axle point beginneth even  
 Round which the primal circling takes its flight,

All, to have made of them two signs in heaven,        13  
 Such as by Minos' daughter fashioned were  
 When life from her by death's dread chill was driven,

And beams of one within the other there,            16  
 And both to turn so that from out the two  
 One should go first and one be follower;

Thus shall he have the shadow of the true            19  
 Great constellation, and the two-fold glow  
 Whose dance in widening circles round me flew;

For it as far transcendeth all we know,            22  
 As doth the heav'n which swiftest speeds along  
 Surpass the movement of Chiana's flow.

Three persons in God's Being, all the throng 25  
 Sang then, not Bacchus nor the Paeon pealing, 26  
 And God and Man in One fulfilled the song. 27

When ended was the song and circled wheeling, 28  
 Intent those holy lights became on us, 29  
 From change to change a mutual joy revealing. 30

Silence, 'mid those blest ones harmonious, 31  
 Was broken by that light whence ran the rede 32  
 Of that poor man of God, so marvellous. 33

It said: " Since now thou holdest stored the seed 34  
 " From the one sheaf threshed out, sweet love doth 35  
 pray 36  
 " That I thrash out the other for thy need. 37

" Thou deem'st that in the breast whence drawn away 38  
 " The rib was, (forming thus the face so fair 39  
 " For whose desire to taste the world doth pay,) 40

" And in that One which pierced by the lance did there 41  
 " For past and future so far clear the debt, 42  
 " It turns the scale 'gainst trespass whatsoe'er, 43

" As much light as in human nature yet 44  
 " Can be, was all infused and 'stablishèd, 45  
 " By that Worth which did both of them beget. 46

" So dost thou marvel over what I said, 47  
 " Declaring that the good from which doth spring 48  
 " The fifth fair light no second ever had. 49

" Unto my answer now thine eyesight bring, 49  
 " And thou shalt see my words and this thy faith  
 " Meet on the truth, as centre in the ring.

" All that can die and all untouched by death, 52  
 " But as the glowing of that thought thou'lt prove  
 " Which in his love our Sire begotten hath;

" Because that Living Light which forth doth move 55  
 " In such wise that its Source it leaveth ne'er,  
 " Nor leaves the third o' the three whose name is Love,

" Doth, of Its goodness, bring Its rays to bear, 58  
 " Mirrored as 'twere, on nine existences,  
 " While one It is, and so abideth e'er.

" To the last potencies descends It thence, 61  
 " Down, down, from act to act, till It is seen  
 " As that which now makes brief contingencies;

" By which contingencies the things I mean 64  
 " Which born from seed, or seedless generated  
 " By the revolving heaven may have been.

" Their wax and all which is to mould it fated, 67  
 " Beneath the ideal stamp is more or less  
 " Translucent, being in divers modes created:

" Therefore a better fruit or worse may bless 70  
 " Trees of the one same kind; and born are ye  
 " With genius of the greatest diverseness.

“ For should the wax exactly moulded be, 73  
“ And did Heaven’s worth at its supremest stand,  
“ The light o’ the seal would be for all to see.

“ But Nature yields it faulty at command 76  
“ Ever, and thus will as the artist prove,  
“ In art well practised, but with trembling hand.

“ If then dispose and stamp the burning love 79  
“ And the clear vision of the Primal Worth,  
“ Then to that place must all perfection move.

“ Thus was the clay made worthy once on earth 82  
“ Of fullest animate perfection, when  
“ The Virgin did conceive for the great birth.

“ So I commend thy thought, that ne’er ’mid men 85  
“ Was human nature all it was indeed  
“ In those two persons, nor shall be again.

“ Now if no further yet I should proceed, 88  
“ ‘ How then was he without an equal?’ would  
“ Begin the words that should express thy need;

“ But that things now concealed may yet be viewed, 91  
“ Think who he was, and what the cause which stirred,  
“ When he was bidden ‘ choose,’ his eager mood.

“ Only for thee to note I speak this word, 94  
“ That he was king when that such wit he chose  
“ As for a king were well to be preferred;

- " Not to know if to a necessary close 97  
 " Contingent e'er with necessary lead,  
 " How great the moving spirits' number grows,
- " If *primum motum* we must e'en concede, 100  
 " Nor if a non right-angled triangle  
 " Can in a semi-circle be agreed.
- " Wherefore a kingly prudence must thou call, 103  
 " (Heeding my words), that insight without peer,  
 " Whereon the shaft of my intent doth fall.
- " And if on ' rose ' thou look with eyesight clear, 106  
 " That it concerns kings only will be plain,  
 " Who many are, but good ones few I fear.
- " With this distinction take my sayings then; 109  
 " So may it stand with what thou dost believe  
 " Of our first sire and of our Joyous Gain.
- " Let this like lead unto thy feet e'er cleave, 112  
 " To make thee slowly move, as tired men pace,  
 " To ' yea ' and ' nay,' which thou canst not perceive.
- " For low amid the fools he has his place 115  
 " Who either will affirm or will deny,  
 " Without distinguishing 'twixt case and case.
- " For oft it haps that swift opinions fly 118  
 " But to the wrong side, and then all the more  
 " Conceit doth bind the intellect thereby.



- “ For worse than vainly he doth leave the shore 121  
“ Who fishes for the truth and has no skill,  
“ Since he returns not as he went before.
- “ Parmenides, Melissus, Bryson, will 124  
“ With many more give open proof of this,  
“ For knowing not whereto, they went on still;
- “ So did Sabellius and Arius, 127  
“ And fools who as a sword to Scripture were,  
“ Turning straight faces into crookedness.
- “ Too sure a judgment let the people spare! 130  
“ Not be as he who, ere the harvest, goes  
“ To count the wheat ears that his field should bear.
- “ Oft have I seen how stark and bitter shows 133  
“ The thorn bush till the wintertide hath passed,  
“ Then after on its summit bears the rose.
- “ Ere now I’ve seen a gallant vessel fast 136  
“ And straight sail her whole course across the sea,  
“ Then perish at the harbour mouth at last.
- “ Let not Dame Bertha or Sir Martin be 139  
“ Sure, when one steals and one makes sacrifice,  
“ That they can see them e’en as God doth see.
- “ For one may fall yet and the other rise.” 142

## CANTO XIV

As vibrations pass outward and inward in a vessel filled with water, when disturbed by a blow, so the speech of the blessed spirits passed from Thomas in the circumference to Beatrice in the centre, and then back from her to the circumference. Dante has now become accustomed to the spirit world freed from those limitations of corporeal sense-organs of which he is himself still conscious, and the perplexity is diffusing itself within him, though not yet precipitated into definite thought, as to how it can be that the resurrection of the body shall not reimpose limitations and weariness upon the now emancipated souls, making the very glory of heaven painful. Or will that glory be then tempered? Beatrice requests an answer for this yet unspoken and even unthought demand; and when all have sung a hymn of praise, Solomon tells how human nature includes body and soul, and therefore the disembodied soul is less complete than the whole person when the soul shall be reclad with the glorified body. When more complete it will be more pleasing to God, and will so receive more of his grace (above its merit, though not given without relation thereto), and will thus see him more adequately and therefore love him more warmly and therein have greater joy, expressed in more dazzling brightness. But the organs of sense will be incapable of pain or weariness; no excess of delight will be beyond their joyous grasp. The souls quiver in response to the reference to the resurrection. A third circle shows itself, first in dubious faintness, then with a sudden flash, at the very moment when Dante and his guide pass into the red-glowing Mars. A cross gleams white athwart the red planet, whereon Christ flashes in such fashion as tongue may not tell. Souls in light move and pass upon the limbs of the cross, uttering divine melody and singing hymns of victory but half comprehended by Dante, yet more entrancing than aught that he

had hitherto experienced;—experienced *hitherto*, but he had not yet looked upon the beloved eyes of his guide in this fifth heaven, and therefore he must not be taken, by implication, to place the heavenly song above the ever deepening beauty of Beatrice's eyes.

From centre outwards, or from outward in,  
Will water in a rounded vase vibrate,  
As it is struck without or from within.

Into my mind this thought dropped swift and straight,  
The moment when was silent finally 5  
The life of Thomas, glorious and great:

Because of the resemblance I did see 7  
Spring from his speech and that of Beatrice,  
Who after him was pleased to say of me:

“Needs must this man another truth than this 10  
“Probe to the root, although he tells it not,  
“Neither with voice nor yet with thought of his.

“Tell if the light, whence is your being brought 13  
“To flowering, with you will yet remain  
“Eternally, as now with it ye are fraught;

“And if it shall abide, then make it plain 16  
“How that your vision it will not oppress  
“When visible ye shall become again.”

As when impelled and drawn by joyfulness 19  
Increased, they, who have circled dancing, will  
Make glad their gestures, and their voices raise,

- So did the eager reverent prayer fill 22  
 The holy circles with new joy, whereby  
 Their circling and their songs waxed gayer still.
- Whoso laments that here we have to die 25  
 To live up yonder, seeth not down here  
 What solace the eternal showers supply.
- That One and Two and Three that liveth e'er 28  
 And ever reigneth, Three and Two and One,  
 All circumscribing, circumscribèd ne'er,
- Three times was hymned; the melody alone 31  
 By all those spirits sung, were fit reward  
 For any merit found beneath the sun.
- Thereon a voice of humbleness I heard 34  
 Within the smallest ring's divinest light,  
 As unto Mary came the Angel's word;
- It answered then: " So long as we unite 37  
 " In happy festivals of Paradise,  
 " Our love will wrap us in such garments bright;
- " Like to our ardour shall its radiance rise, 40  
 " Our ardour with our vision shall compete,  
 " While grace beyond their worth makes clear our eyes.
- " Then when our flesh, made glorious and meet 43  
 " For heaven, is resumed, at last shall we  
 " Become more pleasing, being more complete,

“ Whereby the light unearned increased shall be, 46

“ Which from the Highest Good descends to us,

“ The light through which His Glory we can see.

“ The vision then must grow more vigorous, 49

“ The ardour kindled thence new worth must claim,

“ And the ray grow which issues from it thus;

“ But like the coal which giveth out the flame, 52

“ And by its living glow so vanquisheth

“ It, that its seeming is maintained the same,

“ So shall this glow which us encompasseth 55

“ Already, in appearance be outdone

“ By flesh which, yonder, earth o’ercovereth.

“ Nor by such light shall any power be won 58

“ To weary us, for strong for all delight

“ Shall be that body’s organs every one.”

So swift and eager seemed then to my sight 61

Both choirs to say “ Amen,” that their desire

For their dead bodies showed thereby its might.

Not for themselves alone did they aspire, 64

But for their mothers, fathers, and all those

They loved ere they became eternal fire.

And lo! around a radiance arose 67

More even than before and equal glowing,

Like the horizon at a long night’s close.

And as, with the first shades of evening growing, 70  
 New things in heaven eager vision sees,  
 Till true yet not true doth appear their showing,

So there a glimpse of new existences 73  
 Came to my ken, which a new circle made  
 Beyond the other two circumferences.

O sparkling of the Holy Breath! How sped 76  
 Thy glowing fierce and sudden 'gainst mine eyes,  
 That might not bear it but were vanquishèd.

But Beatrice such fair and smiling guise 79  
 Shewed there to me, it must perforce be kept  
 Among the sights my memory less doth prize.

Thence power again to raise mine eyelids leapt 82  
 Back to me, and I saw myself alone  
 To higher welfare with my lady swept.

That I was more uplifted then was shown 85  
 By the star's burning smile, which seemingly  
 More ruddy than its former wont had grown.

With all my heart, and in that speech made free 88  
 To all alike, burnt offering I made  
 To God, befitting His new grace to me.

And ere the ardour from my breast did fade 91  
 Of sacrifice, I knew acceptance mine,  
 And heavenly favour for the prayer I prayed;

## CANTO XIV

99

Because within two rays splendours so fine 94  
In glory and in redness did appear,  
I cried, " O God! Who makest them to shine! "

As with its lights greater and less made clear, 97  
Betwixt the Poles gleams white the Milky Way,  
So that e'en sages come to questioning here,

So in the depth of Mars, star-set each ray, 100  
The two made up the sign revered, adored,  
As quadrants crossing in a circle may.

Here hath my memory my wit out-soared, 103  
For so from out that cross flashed forth the Christ,  
I find no image worthy of our Lord.

But whoso takes his cross and follows Christ 106  
Will pardon me for all I leave unsaid,  
When in that lightning glory he sees Christ.

From horn to horn the moving lights were sped, 109  
From summit unto base, and sparkling glow,  
E'en as they met and passed, from all was shed.

So see we here, straight, twisted, swift or slow, 112  
Or changing their appearance as they stray,  
Or long, or short, the motes of bodies go

Moving throughout the glimmer of the ray 115  
Which streaks across the shade, wrought with all skill  
And art, to shield men from the burning day;

And as from viol and harp sweet chiming will 118  
Be heard from chords harmoniously at one,  
By him who all the notes ignoreth still,

So from the lights that on the cross outshone, 121  
Music was gathered up and caught my soul,  
Though the hymn's meaning was to me unknown.

Well could I feel therefrom high praise outroll, 124  
Since came to me "Rise up and conquer," e'en  
As when one hearing graspeth not the whole.

Thereat, so full of love I was, I ween, 127  
That up till then nothing so excellent,  
With chains so sweet to bind my heart had been.

Perchance too bold may seem my words' intent, 130  
Slighting the joy that from the fair eyes shone,  
Wherein to look gave longing full content:

But he who notes how the more height we won, 133  
The more those living seals of beauty wrought  
With power, and notes I had not looked thereon,

May find excuse in the accusation, brought 136  
By me to be excused, and see truth so;  
For here that sacred joy is banished not,

Which as it mounts more pure doth ever grow. 139



## CANTO XV

THE souls of the warriors of God upon the cross of Mars cease their hymn, that Dante may converse with one of their number, who shoots like a falling star from his place and, approaching Dante with such joy as Anchises showed to Aeneas in the Elysian fields, greets him as his offspring and as the recipient of unique grace, the twice-received (now and at his death) of heaven. Dante, giving heed to him and (now first in this higher sphere) looking on Beatrice, is smitten with two-fold marvel. The spirit, after rapturous words beyond the scope of the poet's comprehension, gives thanks to God, tells Dante how eager yet how sweet has been his longing for his arrival, fore-read in the heavens; confirms his thought that the spirits see all things in God, as the true mathematician sees all number in the conception of unity; but bids him none the less speak out his questions, though already known to him, in God, with their appointed answers. Dante, unlike the souls in glory, has no utterance adequate to show forth his thanks. The spirit, in answer to his question, reveals himself as his great-great-grandfather, the father of Alighieri from whom the poet's family name is derived. He describes the ancient Florence, confined within the walls to which the Badia was adjacent, and dwells upon the simple ways of her citizens. In such a city was he born, baptized, and married. Thence he followed Conrad in his crusade, was knighted, was slain, and arose to the peace of heaven.

The will benign, (wherein for aye distilleth  
Sweet perfumed love, as in the will that shows  
Injustice still cupidity indwelleth,)

Wrought that sweet lyre to silence, and repose 4  
Laid on the sacred strings, where every one  
'Neath Heaven's right hand or tense or slackened  
grows.

The prayers of righteous men how shall they shun 7  
Those beings who, longing my will to move  
To pray to them, were thus to silence won?

Endless, in very deed, his grief should prove 10  
Who, for the love of that which cannot last,  
Eternally doth strip him of this love.

As oft through pure and tranquil skies darts past 13  
From time to time a sudden flame afar,  
Which makes e'en steady eyes to move in haste,

And seemeth as it were a shifting star, 16  
Save that no star is lost where it shows light,  
And brief the moments of its being are;

Such from the horn that reacheth to the right, 19  
Unto the cross's foot a star flash came,  
From where a constellation shineth bright;

Nor from its riband ever slipped the gem, 22  
But ran along the radial line, displayed,  
As 'neath the alabaster glows the flame.

So in Elysium Anchises' shade, 25  
Seeing his son, stood forth thus tenderly,  
If true is all our greatest Muse hath said.

“ O blood of mine! O grace of God! shed free 28  
“ About thee. Lo! To whom was Heaven’s gate  
“ Ever thrown open twice, as unto thee? ”

So spake that light; I gave him heed thereat, 31  
Then turned, my Lady’s will to recognise,  
And was astonished on this side and that;

For such a smile blazed in her lovely eyes, 34  
That with mine own I thought the depths to sound  
Both of my grace and of my Paradise.

Then, both to sight and hearing joy encrowned, 37  
The spirit spake yet more, and things revealed  
I understood not, they were so profound.

’Twas not by choice he held himself concealed, 40  
But from necessity, because his thought  
To higher aims than mortals know appealed.

And when the bow of burning love was wrought 43  
To such a temper that his speech descended,  
And human intellect as target sought,

The earliest word that then I comprehended 46  
Was “ Blessed be Thou, thou Three and One, Who here  
“ Hast with such courtesy my seed befriended.”

And further, “ Hunger, long endured and dear, 49  
“ Drawn from the reading of that book of might  
“ Wherein nor white nor black is changèd e’er,

- "Hast thou, my son, assuaged within this light 52  
 "Wherein I speak to thee, by her fair grace  
 "Who found thee wings to try this lofty flight.
- "Thou thinkest that thy thoughts wend now their  
     ways 55  
 "To me from Primal Thought, as men may see  
 "From one come forth of six or five the rays;
- "And therefore who I am, why I should be 58  
 "More joyous to thee than all others 'mid  
 "This gladsome throng, thou askest not of me.
- "Thy thought is true; for less and great are led 61  
 "To gaze in this life on that glass where thou,  
 "Or e'er thou think it, dost thy thought outspread.
- "But that the better be accomplished now 64  
 "That sacred love wherein I watch for aye,  
 "Which doth with sweet desire my thirst endow,
- "With voice secure and bold and joyful say 67  
 "Thy will. Sound forth thy longing whereunto  
 "My answer is decreed when thou shalt pray."
- I turned to Beatrice and she foreknew 70  
 E'er yet I spoke, and made a signal whence  
 The wings of my desire yet greater grew.
- Then I began, "Love and intelligence 73  
 "Became to each of you of equal weight  
 "Through prime Equality's omnipotence,

“ Because the Sun which with due light and heat 76  
“ Illumed and warmed, hath such equality  
“ As all comparisons must underrate:

“ But for the reason which you clearly see, 79  
“ In mortal men the will and instrument  
“ Are feathered in their wings unequally.

“ Since I, a mortal, feel the full extent 82  
“ Of this unequalness, my heart alone  
“ Can to this father’s welcome thanks present.

“ But I entreat thee, living topaz stone 85  
“ Gemming this precious jewel, let thy might  
“ Appease me, and thy name to me make known.”

“ O leaf of me, in whom I took delight 88  
“ E’en in awaiting thee, thy root I was.”  
In such beginning was his answer dight;

Then; “ He who of thy kindred’s name was cause, 91  
“ Who round the Mount, more than a hundred year,  
“ On the first terrace goeth without pause,

“ Lo! was my son, and thy great grandfather. 94  
“ Meet ’tis that with thy deeds he should be graced  
“ That so an end to his long toil there, were.

“ Florence, within the ancient circuit placed, 97  
“ Whence tierce and nones she is receiving yet,  
“ In peace abided, sober, ay! and chaste.

- " No dames adorned, no chain, nor coronet 100  
 " There was, nor girdle wrought, that minds of men  
 " Less on its owner than on it were set.
- " No fear from daughter's birth as yet need gain 103  
 " The father; wedding day and dowry too,  
 " This side and that, due measure did restrain.
- " No houses lacking households then we knew; 106  
 " Sardanapalus had not come to show  
 " What things within the chamber men may do.
- " Not yet had Montemalo fallen below 109  
 " Uccellatoio, which hath been in its rise  
 " Surpassed and shall be in its overthrow.
- " Bellincion Berti have seen mine eyes 112  
 " With bone and leather girt, seen still unpainted  
 " His lady leave her mirrors' vanities;
- " Del Nerlo and del Vecchio contented 115  
 " With a skin tunic have I seen, and found  
 " Their wives with flax and spindle well acquainted.
- " O fortunate! each of her burial ground 118  
 " Assurèd was, and none through France need fear  
 " To a deserted couch to be fast bound.
- " One o'er the cradle kept her watch and here 121  
 " For soothing used that speech whose first essay  
 " To fathers and to mothers is so dear;

## CANTO XV

107

- “ Another, as its webs she drew away 124  
“ From off the distaff, would her household tell  
“ Of Troy, of Rome and of Fiesolè.
- “ A Cianghella or Lapo Saltarell’ 127  
“ Had seemed a marvel, as Cornelia now  
“ Or Cincinnatus, were they possible.
- “ A life so restful and so fair to know, 130  
“ When every townsman was a citizen  
“ Right trusty, in so sweet a home to grow,
- “ Did Mary grant me, called by cries of pain, 133  
“ And I became in your loved Baptistry  
“ Both Cacciaguida and a Christian man.
- “ Moronto and Eliseo were to me 136  
“ Brothers, my wife a Padan valley bore;  
“ From her a surname hath been made for thee.
- “ I followed Conrad then, the Emperor, 139  
“ Who made me knight; so great a favour came  
“ From deeds of valiance, which my manhood wore.
- “ With him I marched against the evil fame 142  
“ Of that ill Law, whose folk usurp instead  
“ Of you, your rights, unto your pastor’s shame.
- “ Then through that evil folk, from me I shed 145  
“ This world deceitful, love whereof doth please  
“ Many a soul who thence to shame is led,
- “ And came from martyrdom unto this peace.” 148

## CANTO XVI

IN profound reverence for his ancestor, and not without a sense of his own derived dignity, Dante addresses the spirit with the ceremonious plural, said to have originated in Rome, though no longer in use there; and hereon Beatrice (only moderately interested in Florentine antiquities, and so standing a little apart, but keenly alert to all that may affect the moral or spiritual weal of her charge) checks his rising vanity with a warning smile. Dante, full of such lofty joy as would on earth strain the mind to bursting, questions Cacciaguida as to ancient Florence, whereon he, in the speech of an earlier day, tells the date of his birth and the place where his forebears dwelt, declining, in enigmatical terms, to say more of them. The population of military age was then but a fifth of what it had since become, and the narrow limits of the territory of Florence kept the blood of her citizens pure. Would that it were so yet! But lust of power, the confusion resulting from Papal ambition, and the fatal quarrel between the Buondelmonti and Amidei, have ruined all, and have given unwieldy bulk to Florence while polluting her blood. Then follows a dirge on the great families of ancient Florence, introduced by tragic reflections on the tide-like instability of all earthly things. Many of these families are mentioned by name, others are indicated by their characteristics or their blazon. Count Hugo ennobled the six families that bear his coat of arms, with various differences, though Giano della Bella had since joined the people. The Gualterotti and Importuni were already in Florence, but the Buondelmonti were not yet—would that they had never been!—their neighbours. The Amidei and their associates were held in honour. Alas that Buondelmonte broke his marriage word with them, and gave rise to all the internal



strife of Florence. How much ill had been avoided if God had plunged him into the Ema as he rode into Florence. But it was fated that she should make her sacrifice to that torso of Mars, at whose feet he was slain.

O petty thing, our blood nobility!  
 If down below where our affections wane  
 Thou makest men to glory but for thee,

No marvel e'er to me 'twill seem again,                     4  
 For there where all unwarped desire doth grow,  
 Even in Heaven, I gloried in thee then.

A quickly shrinking cloak thou art, I trow,                 7  
 So that, if nought be added day by day,  
 Time with his shears doth round about it go.

With "you," that word that first from Rome made  
       way,   10  
 Though least therein her household persevere,  
 Began again the words I longed to say:

Whence Beatrice who stood apart though near,             13  
 Smiling, seemed like to her who coughed to see  
 The first recorded fault of Guinevere.

"You are my father," I began, "and me                     16  
 "You so uplift, all valour so you lend,  
 "That I am now more than I else could be.

"Gladness in many streams fills without end             19  
 "My mind. Thus round it now such joy doth cling,  
 "That it can bear what else would break and rend.

“Tell me therefore, dear root from which I spring, 22  
 “Who were your ancestors, what years bygone  
 “From out your boyhood still a record bring;

“Speak to me of the sheepfold of St. John, 25  
 “How great it was. Those people call to mind  
 “Who worthily in its high places shone.”

As quickeneth beneath the breath of wind 28  
 The coal to flame, so at my courteous word  
 I saw how vividly that light outshined;

As 'neath mine eyes a greater beauty stirred, 31  
 So with a voice more sweet and gentle made,  
 But in no speech these modern days have heard,

“Since ‘Ave’ was proclaimed,” to me he said, 34  
 “Till to my mother, sainted now, it came  
 “To lose the burden I on her had laid,

“Five hundred, fifty, thirty times, this flame 37  
 “Returned to his own Lion, 'neath his feet  
 “A re-enkindled light thereby to claim.

“My ancestors and I in birth did greet 40  
 “That spot, where he who runs your yearly race  
 “The sesto that comes last begins to meet.

“And of my ancestors and of the place 43  
 “From whence they came have thou no further care,  
 “Than to know silence hath the greater grace.

- “ From Mars unto the Baptist all there were 46  
“ Then able to bear arms, with every man,  
“ Were but a fifth of those now living there.
- “ But then the citizenship, mixed now each clan 49  
“ With Campi and Certaldo and Fighin’,  
“ Was pure down to the humblest artizan.
- “ O! how much better were it had they been 52  
“ Your neighbours still, and if your boundaries  
“ At Trespian’ and Galluzzo had been seen,
- “ Than thus to ward them, bear the foulnesses 55  
“ Aguglion’s knave and Signa’s now create,  
“ Whose eye alert for malversation is!
- “ Had but that race, Earth’s most degenerate, 58  
“ Been unto Caesar as a mother kind,  
“ Instead of showing a stepmother’s hate,
- “ One money-changing huckster Florentined 61  
“ Had been packed off to Simifonti, where  
“ Once his grandfather as a beggar whined;
- “ Still would the Conti Montemurlo share, 64  
“ The Cerchi hold Acone: still, who knows,  
“ In Val di Greve Buondelmonti were.
- “ Ever the source of all the city’s woes 67  
“ Was mingling of all persons, as the food  
“ Too much heaped up will cause the body’s throes.

- "The blind bull's fall is of more grievous mood 70  
 "Than the blind lamb's, and many a time we find  
 "One sword cuts better than five ever could.
- "Take Luni, Urbisaglia, to thy mind; 73  
 "Think how they've perished, see Chiusi go  
 "With Sinigaglia following behind!
- "How families undo themselves I trow 76  
 "Will seem to thee nor hard nor new to hear,  
 "Since even cities can such endings show.
- "All things of yours have Death for ever near 79  
 "Even as ye, but 'tis forgotten soon  
 "In one that lasts, so short your lives appear.
- "And as the wheeling heaven of the moon 82  
 "Endlessly covers and lays bare the shore,  
 "In such a way to Florence doth Fortune.
- "No marvel need it seem to thee therefore, 85  
 "My story of past glories Florentine,  
 "Whose fame by lapse of time is covered o'er.
- "Ughi and Catellin', Filippi's line, 88  
 "Greci, Ormanni, Alberichi fair,  
 "Illustrious citizens, though in decline,
- "I saw, and great as they were ancient there, 91  
 "Him of the Arca and Sannella's head,  
 "Ardinghi and Bastichi and Soldanier'.

- "Over that door now laden as with lead 94  
 "With newer evil, (that such weight doth lend  
 "The bark will be thereby to shipwreck sped,)
- "The Ravignani were, whence doth descend 97  
 "Count Guy and he who's ta'en that name for dower  
 "The proud Bellincione did defend.
- "E'en then the House of Pressa had the power 100  
 "Of ruling well; at Galighaio's will  
 "Pommel and hilt were gilded in his tower.
- "The Column of vair, Sacchetti, Giuochi, still 103  
 "Were great, Fifant', Barucci, Galli too,  
 "And they whom the bushel with such shame doth fill.
- "That stock was great whence the Calfucci grew 106  
 "Already, and to wear a civic crown  
 "Came Sizzi and Arigucci not a few.
- "O! how I saw them who are now cast down 109  
 "By pride! And Florence found the balls of gold  
 "In all the mighty deeds of her renown.
- "So did the fathers of those heroes bold 112  
 "Who, when your church is vacant, stand and feed  
 "And fatten while consistory they hold.
- "That clan outrageous that with dragon speed 115  
 "Pursues who flies, but if his teeth be shown  
 "Or purse, becomes a quiet lamb indeed,

- " Had risen, though from humble folk, and so 118  
 " Was Ubertin Donato wroth the day  
 " His father-in-law their kinship did bestow.
- " Down to the market place from Fiesole 121  
 " Was Caponsacco come; good townsmen too  
 " Giuda and Infangato were alway.
- " Words will I say, incredible but true; 124  
 " Named after them of Pera was the door,  
 " The little circuit then was entered through.
- " Each one who aught of the fair ensign wore 127  
 " Of the great baron, of whose worth and fame  
 " St. Thomas' feast the memory doth restore,
- " Knighthood and privilege from him could claim; 130  
 " Though he who hath a border round it set  
 " To-day unto the people joins his name.
- " Importuni and Gualterotti met 133  
 " Already, and in Borgo were more peace  
 " If from new neighbours they were fasting yet.
- " The house from which your wailing did increase, 136  
 " Because of just disdain that struck you dead  
 " And made your joyful life for ever cease,
- " Was honoured, and those too that with it wed. 139  
 " O! Buondelmonte, what ill fated scheme  
 " It was, which flight from its alliance bade!

## CANTO XVI

115

- “ Joyous were many that now saddened seem, · 142  
“ If, ere thou first a citizen wert grown,  
“ God had committed thee to Ema’s stream.
- “ But meet it was that mutilated stone 145  
“ That guards the bridge, from Florence should receive  
“ A victim in the last peace she hath known.
- “ With these, and others with them, well believe 148  
“ I saw our Florence in such peace immersed  
“ She had but little cause thereat to grieve.
- “ For glory and for justice so did thirst 151  
“ Her people who before mine eyesight shone,  
“ Ne’er was the lily on the shaft reversed,
- “ Nor by division dyed vermilion.” 154

## CANTO XVII

As Phaeton came to Clymene to have his doubts resolved, so, encouraged by Beatrice, did Dante turn to Cacciaguida to learn from him the meaning of all the dark hints as to his future lot which he had heard in the three realms. Cacciaguida, not in oracular ambiguities but in plain speech, tells how contingency is but relative to material and human limitations (though free will is an absolute reality), and therefore he already sees, as a harmonious part of the blessed whole, the future that as a fragment of Dante's experience shall be so bitter. Florence shall accuse him of that treachery of which herself is guilty, and shall do it at the instigation of the Pope. Slandered, exiled, and in penury, he must go his way, in evil company, till he isolates himself from all, and is justified in so doing by the event. His first refuge shall be in the court of the Scaliger who will anticipate all his requests by granting them, and with whom he shall find the now youthful hero who shall give proof of his worth before Henry VII.'s mission, and shall at last do deeds which even they who see them shall not credit. He further bids Dante not envy the wrong-doers, whose downfall he shall long outlive, and in answer to the timid suggestions of prudence urges him to reveal to the world the whole content of his vision.

As he who maketh fathers grudging still  
Unto their sons, to Clymene came to know  
The truth of rumours that his ears did fill,

Such then was I, and was regarded so  
By Beatrice and by that holy fire,  
That erst for me had found new place to glow.

4



- Wherefore my lady said, " Of thy desire 7  
" Send forth the heat, that so it may proceed  
" Marked with the inward stamp it doth require;
- " Not that thy speaking can create indeed 10  
" A greater knowledge, but to learn thereby  
" To tell thy thirst, that men may slake thy need."
- " Dear turf wherefrom I grow, thou, raised so high 13  
" That as in one triangle earthly lore  
" Can see two obtuse angles cannot lie,
- " So thou dost see contingent things before 16  
" They in themselves exist, for thou dost see  
" That point where time is present evermore;
- " Whilst Virgil's comradeship was mine and we 19  
" Traversed the mountains that can heal the soul,  
" Or sought the dead world's depths in company,
- " Then of my future life were words of dole 22  
" Said unto me. Natheless I am, I ween,  
" To Fortune's blows, set now foursquare and whole;
- " Wherefore contented were my longing keen 25  
" To hear what draweth near of Fortune's stress,  
" For arrows fly more slowly if foreseen."
- Thus said I to that light whose graciousness 28  
Had found me words before, and moved again  
By Beatrice, did I my wish confess.

- Not in dark sayings whereby fools were fain 31  
 To be entangled, ere the Heavenly Source  
 Of grace for sin, the Lamb of God, was slain,
- But in clear words and in precise discourse, 34  
 By the same smile concealed from me and shown,  
 Replied that love that knew a father's force.
- "Contingency, which cannot stretch alone 37  
 "Beyond the sheet of your material,  
 "In the Eternal Sight is limned and known;
- "Though no necessity it takes withal, 40  
 "More than the ship that doth the stream descend,  
 "Takes from the sight wherein its image fall.
- "Thence as the ear the sweetness can attend 43  
 "The organ's harmony, my sight can know  
 "The time that soon for thee attains its end.
- "From Athens as Hippolytus must go 46  
 "Through Phaedra's cruelty and falsehood's tale,  
 "Thou, from thy Florence must depart, I trow.
- "'Tis willed. Already doth the plot prevail; 49  
 "Soon shall he see it done who gives it thought  
 "Where every day is Christ set forth for sale.
- "The blame shall by the injured side be caught 52  
 "In rumour, as is wont, till vengeance prove  
 "A witness to the truth by which 'tis wrought.

“ Thou shalt abandon all that thou dost love 55

“ Most dear. This shaft is that first messenger

“ The bow of exile darteth from above.

“ Well shalt thou learn how salt a taste doth bear 58

“ The bread of others, and how hard the road

“ To mount and to descend another's stair.

“ And the most grievous of thy shoulders' load 61

“ Will be that vicious, evil company,

“ With whom thou'lt fall to that obscure abode.

“ For mad, ungrateful, impious shall they be 64

“ Against thee, all; yet ere long time shall go,

“ Their temples reddened they, not thou, shall see.

“ The progress of their brutishness shall show 67

“ A proof: so by the party at thy word

“ Formed for thyself, fairer thy fame shall grow.

“ First for thy hostelry and refuge, stirred 70

“ Shall be the courtesy of the great Lombard,

“ Who on the ladder bears the sacred bird:

“ For on thee he shall cast such kind regard, 73

“ That of ' to do ' and to ' demand ' shall be

“ That first for you which others find most hard.

“ With him thou'lt know that one, to such degree 76

“ Stamped at his birth by this o'erwhelming star,

“ That fame shall waft his deeds o'er land and sea.

- " Not yet aware of him the nations are 79  
 " For his young age; since that these wheels have rolled  
 " Nine years alone around him from afar;
- " But ere the Gascon with deceit enfold 82  
 " Proud Henry, sparks of virtue shall show clear,  
 " In caring neither for fatigue nor gold.
- " And his munificence shall yet appear 85  
 " So manifest, that of his enemies  
 " None shall keep silent who has seen it near.
- " On him look and his generousities; 88  
 " By him shall many people come to change  
 " To new conditions, wealths and poverties.
- " And thou shalt hold within thy memory's range 91  
 " But shalt not tell,"—And things thereon he said  
 Will make belief, for those who'll see them, strange.
- Then added; " Son, thus is the comment made 94  
 " On what was told to thee: behold the snare  
 " That hid behind few circlings thus is laid.
- " Yet would I not that envy in thee were 97  
 " Of any neighbours, since e'er life be done,  
 " Long punishment their perjuries shall bear."
- When by his silence showed the holy one 100  
 That o'er the warp I held in readiness  
 Toward him, was the woof completely run,

Then I began as one whom doubts distress, 103  
 Who for a counsel then from one will pray  
 Who sees and wills aright, yet loves no less;

“ Well see I, father, how the time’s array 106  
 “ Spurs tow’rd me, weighty with a blow, whose wrong  
 “ More grievous falls the more one shrinks away.

“ Good foresight were it then to make me strong; 109  
 “ So when that place is reft that most I prize,  
 “ I lose not all the others through my song.

“ Down through the world of endless bitter cries, 112  
 “ And up the mountain from whose summit fair  
 “ I was uplifted through my lady’s eyes,

“ And then from light to light through Heaven’s air, 115  
 “ Have I learnt that which, if again ’twere told,  
 “ Harsh bitter taste ’mid many men would share.

“ Yet if to truth I prove a friend less bold, 118  
 “ I fear to lose my fame in future days  
 “ Which this time for an ancient time shall hold.”

First flashed and sparkled all the light ablaze, 121  
 (When smiled the treasure that I found therein,  
 As golden mirrors flash to sunlight rays,

Then answered: “ Consciences all dark within 124  
 “ With sense of shame, another’s or their own,  
 “ Harshness from out thy speech will surely win;

- “ But none the less, all lies aside being thrown, 127  
“ Make all the vision manifest and clear,  
“ And let them scratch on whom the scab hath grown.
- “ For though thy speaking grievous shall appear 130  
“ At the first taste, digested, they will find  
“ A vital nutriment for them ’twill bear.
- “ This cry of thine shall do as doth the wind, 133  
“ That smiteth most the highest mountain crest;  
“ Thereto great proof of honour is assigned;
- “ Wherefore no souls but those fame loveth best 136  
“ Within these wheels have been set forth to thee,  
“ And up the mount and in the vale oppressed,
- “ For no conviction will thy hearers see 139  
“ From thy examples, nor with faith assent,  
“ If hidden or unknown their root may be,
- “ Nor yield to other lowly argument.” 142

## CANTO XVIII

DANTE, pondering Cacciaguida's revelation, is roused from his reverie by the consoling words and by the beauty of Beatrice who directs him once again to the spirit of his ancestor; who names to him some of the warrior saints that shoot, as he speaks, along the cross; and who then himself joins in their hymn. Dante turns again to Beatrice and sees, by her yet greater beauty, that they have risen into a higher heaven. Then as he looks again upon the star he sees that the white glowing Jupiter has replaced the ruddy Mars. The spirits here form themselves into successive letters and spell out the opening words of the book of *Wisdom*, "Love righteousness ye that be judges of the earth." Then other spirits gather upon the crest of the last letter, twine round its limbs and insensibly form it into an eagle, the symbol of Roman law and justice. From this star, then, proceeds our justice. O that the divine mind whence it draws its power would once more, in wrath, cleanse the mercenary temple which pollutes its rays! O that the chivalry of heaven would pray for the misled world! As for the Pope who makes a traffic of his awful power to grant or withhold Communion, let him think of Peter and Paul! But he will plead that John Baptist, whose image is stamped upon the golden florins, has absorbed all his thoughts.

Now was that blessèd mirror glad alone  
With his discourse, and I the taste had tried  
That tempered sweet with bitter in mine own;

When she, the lady who to God did guide, 4  
Said, "Change thy thought and think that I am near-  
"To Him Who layeth every wrong aside."

- I turned me toward the voice so loving clear      7  
Of her, my comfort, and the love displayed  
Then in her sacred eyes I tell not here:
- Not only since of speech I am afraid,      10  
But since my memory cannot again  
Ascend so high without a guide to aid.
- Yet this at least I can re-tell, that when      13  
I gazed on her, was my devotion freed  
From any other kind of longing then.
- Whilst the eternal joy, whose rays indeed      16  
Fell full on Beatrice, contented me,  
From her fair face reflected for my need,
- Her smile o'ercoming me with light, " Turn thee,"      19  
She said, " and listen, for all Paradise  
" Surely not in mine eyes alone can be."
- As sometimes in the face we recognise      22  
Love here, if it perchance so great doth grow  
That all the mind thereby is made a prize,
- So in the flaming of the blessèd glow      25  
To which I turned myself, then I became  
Aware he willed that further speech should flow.
- And he: " In this fifth branching of the stem      28  
" Which from the summit lives and fruiteth e'er,  
" Nor sheds a leaf of all its diadem,



“ Are spirits blest who mighty names did bear      31  
“ On earth, ere they to Heaven came, whereby  
“ Might every Muse find great enrichment there.

“ Gaze then upon the horns o’ the cross, as I      34  
“ Shall call each soul. Each one shall be as flame  
“ Which darteth onward in its cloud on high.”

I saw along the cross at Joshua’s name      37  
A light drawn fast, e’en at the call’s appealing,  
No later than the word the action came.

And yet another did I see move, wheeling,      40  
At naming of the mighty Maccabee,  
Gladness, as whip unto the top, revealing.

My gaze two others followed eagerly      43  
In Charlemagne and in Orlando, as  
The eye will strain the falcon’s flight to see.

Drawing my vision next did William pass      46  
Along the cross, and Rinoardo wended  
Where Robert Guiscard with Duke Godfrey was.

Thereon the soul whose speech had so befriended, 49  
Showed amidst Heaven’s singers all his skill,  
When with the other lights he moved and blended.

I turned to my right hand with eager will      52  
To see in Beatrice my duty, e’en  
As words or gesture her desire should tell;

- And then her eyes so deeply clear were seen 55  
And joyful, that her semblance vanquished so  
All memories of what it erst had been.
- And as a man from day to day may know 58  
His virtue gaineth strength, if he has found  
From deeds of worth delight yet greater grow,
- So could I tell then that my circling round 61  
With Heaven had increased its arc, when I  
That wonder saw with greater beauty crowned.
- And such a change as passeth presently 64  
O'er a fair lady's face, if it unload  
Shame's burden which before on it did lie,
- When I turned round before mine eyes abode, 67  
There where the temperate star shone clear and white,  
The sixth which had received me on my road.
- Lo! in that torch of Jove came to my sight 70  
The sparkle of the love that there was strong,  
As signals in our speech it 'gan to write.
- And e'en as birds rising the bank along, 73  
As though together joying o'er their field,  
Make now a long streak, now a swarming throng,
- So, in the lights, the blest creations wheeled 76  
In flight, singing, and shaping letters plain,  
Which now a D, now I, now L, revealed.

First, singing to their note they moved, and then 79  
A space would stay, when that they did contrive  
One of these signs, and silent so remain.

O Goddess Pegasean, who dost give 82  
To genius life and glory, as through thee  
Genius can make kingdoms and cities live,

Let men thy might in these brief verses see! 85  
That as I have conceived them I may throw  
These figures in relief, illumine me!

In consonants and vowels they did show 88  
E'en five times seven, and I marked, as fast  
As each one came, the speech that thus should grow.

"Diligite justitiam" went past, 91  
First verb and noun which there the pageant told,  
"Qui judicatis terram" were the last.

Then in the "M" of that fifth word, behold! 94  
They stood in order, till the whole of Jove  
As silver seemed made glorious with gold.

And other lights I saw come from above 97  
To the "M's" summit, and there rest to sing,  
Methinks, the Good Which moves them towards His  
love.

Then as innumerable sparks upspring 100  
When the burnt brands are struck, a sight from  
whence

Fools among men will augur many a thing,

So more than a thousand lights it seemed from thence  
 Shot up, some more, some less, e'en as the Sun 104  
 Which kindleth them gave each his ordinance;

And when was quiet in his place each one, 106  
 An eagle's head and neck were manifest,  
 Visible by the sparks of fire thereon.

He, Who there painteth, hath no guide, but best 109  
 He guides Himself, and to the mind is sent  
 From Him that power which shapeth every nest.

The other blessedness, which first content 112  
 Seemed to adorn the " M " with lilies there,  
 Moving a little, followed the imprint.

Sweet star, how many gems of beauty rare 115  
 Showed me that all the justice we call ours  
 Comes from that heaven which thou makest fair!

Wherefore I pray the Mind wherefrom thy powers 118  
 And movement issue, that Its glance may fall  
 There, whence the smoke streams which thy ray  
 deflow'rs;

So that wrath wax once more against them all 121  
 Who buy and sell in the temple, known to be  
 Built up of martyrdom and miracle.

O ye I look on, Heaven's soldiery, 124  
 Entreat for those on earth who go astray,  
 Following foul example foolishly.

Once would the sword wage war; the present way 127  
Is to withhold, now here, now there, the bread  
Which no kind father ever would gainsay.

But thou beware whose bond is cancellèd 130  
As soon as writ; Peter and Paul, who sought  
Death for thy vineyard wasted, are not dead.

Well canst thou say: " My longing so is caught 133  
" By him who lived his life apart from all,  
" Whose martyrdom by dancing feet was wrought,

" I neither know the Fisherman nor Paul." 136

## CANTO XIX

THE just Kings, who compose the eagle of Jupiter, speak as one person, just as many brands give out one warmth, so indicating that the work of all righteous governors is one and the same, the voice of all of them being the one voice of justice. In the heaven of justice, there rises in Dante's mind a passion of hope that he may find the solution of the problem, which so long has tortured him, as to the exclusion of the virtuous heathen from heaven, so contrary in seeming to God's justice. The divine eagle first responds with a burst of triumphant joy, then tells how God's wisdom is in excess of all that the whole creation expresses; and since Lucifer himself, the highest of created things, could not see all (and fell because he would not wait for the full measure of light God would have given him) it follows far more that lesser minds cannot so see but that God sees unutterably deeper. Wherefore our sight must needs be lost in the depths of divine justice, which God's eye alone can pierce. But our very idea of justice is from God, and this thought must quiet Dante's protest as to the exclusion of the virtuous heathen. Who is he that he should judge? There were matter enough for the human mind to boggle at, had we not the authority of Scripture for our guidance and did we not know that the Will of God is itself the perfect standard of goodness and of justice, not to be called to account by any other standard. As the little stork (the symbol of obedient docility) looks up, when fed, to the parent bird that wheels over the nest, so Dante gazes on the eagle; which sings a hymn as far above our understanding as God's judgments are; and then, while reasserting without qualification that belief in Christ is the sole means of access to heaven, yet

declares that many heathen will be far nearer Christ on the judgment day than many who call upon his name; whereon follows a long denunciation, in detail, of contemporary Christian monarchs.

The image fair appeared with wings outspread  
Before me, which those souls enwoven there,  
Rejoicing in their sweet fruition made.

Each one appeared to me a ruby where                    4  
The sun's ray burned, so kindled that it might  
Upon mine eyes throw back the sunlight fair.

And voice ne'er told, nor ever ink did write,            7  
Nor e'er by fantasy was comprehended,  
What now I must, retracing, bring to light;

Because I saw and heard how speech descended    10  
Out from the beak, and " I " and " mine " were said,  
When in conception " we " and " our " were blended.

And it began: " By duty I was led                    13  
" And justice, therefore to this glory I  
" Am raised, which no desire hath vanquishèd;

" And on the earth have left my memory            16  
" So wrought that evil-doers praise it, though  
" They follow not its shining history."

E'en as from many coals a single glow            19  
Is felt, so there a single sound displayed  
The many loves which from that form did flow.

- And I, at once: " O flowers that never fade 22  
 " Of the eternal gladness, who at last  
 " All of your odours into one have made,
- " End for me, as ye breathe, that weary fast 25  
 " Which long on earth hath held me hungering,  
 " Because I found no food where'er I passed.
- " If divine justice make its mirroring 28  
 " In any other realm of heav'n, full well  
 " I know yours sees it with no covering.
- " Ye know what eagerness to hear doth fill 31  
 " My being; and ye know the doubt in me  
 " Wherewith so long in hunger I must dwell."
- E'en as the falcon, from the hood set free, 34  
 Shakes head and claps his wings, to make him fair,  
 And show how ready his desire may be,
- So did that ensign, where enwoven were 37  
 Praises of grace divine and songs whose sound  
 Is known to all who live rejoicing there.
- And then: " He Who hath set a compass round 40  
 " About the ends of all the world, and made  
 " Things hidden and things manifest abound,
- " Could not so stamp the universe outspread 43  
 " With worth of His, but that His word endure  
 " In infinite excess establishèd.



## CANTO XIX

133

- “ And this the first proud being maketh sure, 46  
“ Who, unripe, from creation’s summit fell,  
“ Because he would not wait for light more pure.
- “ Hence, far too scanty a receptacle 49  
“ Seem lesser natures for that endless Good,  
“ Which with Itself alone is measurable.
- “ Wherefore our sight (which must be understood 52  
“ As one ray from the radiance of that Mind  
“ Wherewith all things are filled in plenitude,)
- “ Cannot such power unto its nature bind, 55  
“ But that the vision of its Cause should be  
“ In range far greater, leaving it behind.
- “ Wherefore the sight your world hath, finally 58  
“ Is gathered in eternal justice more  
“ Than is man’s eyesight gazing in the sea;
- “ Albeit it reach the bottom near the shore, 61  
“ It cannot in the open main, for though  
“ ’Tis there, the depth conceals the ocean’s floor.
- “ Save from the Source, serene, untroubled, know 64  
“ There is no light, else is it darkness dread,  
“ Shadow of flesh, or else its poison flow.
- “ Enough the labyrinth is openèd 67  
“ Now, which God’s justice hath concealed from sight,  
“ Whereof so oft thy question thou hast made;

- " For thou didst say: ' A man will see the light    70  
 " ' On Indus bank where there is none to tell  
 " ' Of Christ, and none to read and none to write;
- " ' And all his deeds are good and all his will    73  
 " ' As far as human reason sees, no breath  
 " ' Of sin in life or in discourse may dwell;
- " ' He dies all unbaptized and lacking faith;    76  
 " ' Where is the justice that condemns? Where can  
 " ' His fault be found, if no belief he hath? '
- " Now who art thou to wield the justice ban,    79  
 " Judging a cause a thousand miles away,  
 " With the short sight that reaches scarce a span?
- " Truly who groweth subtle with me may    82  
 " Find wondrous cause for question come to him,  
 " But that the Scripture o'er you stands for aye.
- " Creatures of earth, how gross your minds must seem!  
 " The Primal Will, good in Itself, denies    86  
 " Its own self never, which is Worth supreme.
- " All things are just which with It harmonise;    88  
 " No good created draws It, but Its rays  
 " Outstreaming, make all good so'er arise."
- As circling o'er her nest oft the stork stays,    91  
 When she hath fed her little ones, and even  
 As he that's fed upward on her will gaze,

## CANTO XIX

135

So I uplifted there my brow to heaven, 94  
 And so then that blest image moved its wing,  
 Which by so many counsels fair was driven.

Wheeling it sang and said: "Lo! what I sing 97  
 "Thou canst not apprehend, nor yet can men  
 "Perceive eternal judgment's secret spring."

After the Holy Spirit's flames were then 100  
 Stilled, shaping yet the ensign glowingly,  
 Whence Rome from all the world did reverence gain,

Once more it spoke: "None ever rose to be 103  
 "Of this realm's chosen without faith in Christ,  
 "After or ere He suffered on the Tree.

"But many are there who do cry 'Christ, Christ,' 106  
 "Who at the judgment shall be far less near  
 "To Him than many an one who knows not Christ.

"The Ethiop shall condemn these Christians there, 109  
 "When the two companies go each their way,  
 "One rich for ever, one all stripped and bare.

"Unto your kings what shall the Persians say 112  
 "When by that open volume they are tried,  
 "Wherein their record of dispraise doth stay?

"There amidst Albert's deeds shall one abide 115  
 "Which soon shall move its wing, and ruin then  
 "Shall fall upon Prague's kingdom far and wide.

- " Then shall be seen the woe which to the Seine 118  
 " He'll bring, (who by the wild boar's stroke shall die,)  
 " By making false the coinage for his gain.
- " Then shall the thirsting pride be seen whereby 121  
 " Madness so grows in Englishman and Scot,  
 " That they can rest not in their boundary.
- " Clear shall be seen the luxury which doth rot 124  
 " Spain's and Bohemia's Kings, their sins of sense,  
 " Who willed no worthiness and knew it not.
- " An ' I ' shall stand for all the excellence 127  
 " The cripple of Jerusalem hath shown,  
 " Whilst ' M ' shall mark his evil eminence.
- " The avarice and vileness shall be known 130  
 " Of him who guards the fiery isle, where ended  
 " The long life which Anchises there laid down;
- " And that his littleness be comprehended, 133  
 " In stunted letters shall his record run,  
 " Where with small space much evil shall be blended.
- " And the vile deeds his uncle too hath done 136  
 " And brother, who have fouled a house so fair  
 " And two great crowns, shall then be plain each one.
- " And he of Portugal and Norway there 139  
 " Shall be revealed, and Rascia's lord, e'en he  
 " To whom the coins of Venice fatal were,

CANTO XIX

137

“ O! happy Hungary, if now she be 142

“ Mangled no more! Happy Navarre were too

“ If armèd with her mountain boundary!

“ And all should deem that 'tis for warning true 145

“ That Nicosia and Famagosta wail

“ And shriek by reason of their monster, who

“ Beside the others stays and will not fail.” 148

## CANTO XX

As when the one light of the sun disappears, the heaven is straightway rekindled by many stars, so when the one voice of the eagle ceased the many beings that composed it, shining yet more brightly, burst into an angelic chime of many notes, which was followed by a murmuring as of falling waters, gathering once more in the neck of the eagle into a single voice. The eagle declares that the six lights which form its pupil and eyebrow are the greatest of all, and goes on to enumerate them, using, in most cases, rich and pregnant circumlocution, but expressly naming Ripheus the Trojan, that there may be no room to misconceive a statement so incredible as that he (as well as Trajan, the heathen emperor, already indicated by a paraphrase not to be misunderstood) is in heaven. Then once more the eagle bursts into rapturous song, and when it pauses, Dante, though he knows that the spirits read his inmost thoughts as we on earth see colour through a sheet of glass, yet can not restrain the utterance of his amazement at the presence of these two heathen; whereon the eagle declares that both of them died in the true faith, Ripheus in Christ to come and Trajan in Christ come; and so explains the former case as to suggest that revelations may have been vouchsafed to other righteous pagans. So little do men fathom the divine counsels! Nay, the redeemed souls, as they look on God, know not yet who shall be the saved; and in this very limitation of their knowledge they rejoice, for it is a point of conscious contact with the will of God. Thus, as the souls of Trajan and Ripheus glint responsive to the eagle's discourse, Dante receives sweet solace partly from the thought that he knows not, after all, how many of the supposed heathen are in truth saved, and partly from the spectacle of the souls in bliss rejoicing in the limitations of their knowledge no less than in its conquests.

When he who unto all the earth gives light,  
Descends and from our hemisphere is ta'en,  
So that on every side day yields to night,

The sky which light through him alone did gain, 4  
Suddenly makes itself to re-appear  
Through many fires where shines the one again.

This act of heaven rose to memory clear, 7  
When in the sacred beak the world's ensign  
And the world's leaders I no more could hear:

For all these living lights which still did shine 10  
More vivid yet, such songs to being brought  
As slip and fall from memory of mine.

O gentle love, with mantle smile-enwrought, 13  
How through those flutes appeared the fire of thee,  
Flutes only breathed on by most holy thought.

When the dear shining jewels seen of me, 16  
Which make the sixth fair light a lovely thing,  
Brought silence on the angelic minstrelsy,

I seemed to hear a river murmuring, 19  
A stream that falleth clear from stone to stone,  
Showing th' abundance of its source and spring.

As sound takes form at the lute's neck alone, 22  
And at the opening of the pipes where through  
The wind that entereth is subtly blown,

- The murmuring of the eagle rose anew, 25  
 (Delay of expectation being o'er,)  
 Up through the neck as though it hollow grew.
- There it was made a voice and thence once more 28  
 Issued from out its beak; my heart awaited  
 Each word and wrote it in its inmost core.
- “ Let now the part in me be contemplated ” 31  
 (So it began,) “ which seeing, unafraid  
 “ Endures the sun, in eagles earth-created;
- “ For of the fires whereof my form is made, 34  
 “ Those which now cause the eye to sparkle fair,  
 “ Are all the chiefs of all the ranks arrayed.
- “ The pupil of the eye the midmost there, 37  
 “ The Holy Spirit's singer was on earth,  
 “ Who on from town to town the ark did bear:
- “ Now knows he well his song's surpassing worth 40  
 “ By the reward measured in equal mould,  
 “ So far as from his wisdom it found birth.
- “ Of five who make the eyebrow's arch, behold 43  
 “ The one who neighboureth the beak the most,  
 “ On earth the widow for her son consoled;
- “ Now well he knows how dear may be the cost 46  
 “ When Christ is followed not, by knowing thence  
 “ This sweet life and the life lived by the lost



- “ And he, the next on the circumference 49  
“ Upon the upper arch, whereof I tell,  
“ Delayed his death through his true penitence.
- “ Eternal judgment, now he knoweth well, 52  
“ Changes no whit, if things to-day should own  
“ Become to-morrow’s, through a prayer’s spell.
- “ Who next with me and with the laws is shown, 55  
“ With good intent that bore a fruit of bane,  
“ To yield the Pastor place, made Greek his throne.
- “ Now knows he how the ill that follows plain 58  
“ From his good deed to him no hurt can give,  
“ Though ruin o’er the world thereby should reign.
- “ And where the arch declines thou seest arrive 61  
“ That William whom the country doth regret,  
“ Which weepeth now that Charles and Frederick live.
- “ Now knows he how the love of heaven is set 64  
“ On righteous kings, and by his glowing rays  
“ His semblance strives to make it clearer yet.
- “ Down in the erring world how ’twould amaze 67  
“ To hear the Trojan Ripheus fifth doth burn,  
“ Where in this ring the holy beacons blaze:
- “ Now knows he much the world can never learn 70  
“ Of grace divine, though howsoe’er he try,  
“ The utmost of its depth he’ll not discern.”

- Like to the lark that soaring through the sky 73  
 First sings and then is silent, well content  
 With the last sweetness that doth satisfy,
- So seemed the image of that imprint sent 76  
 From joy eternal, whereby everything  
 Desiring it, to its own form is bent.
- And though I was unto my questioning 79  
 Like glass unto the colour that it clothes,  
 No patience to keep silence thence could spring,
- But from my mouth it thrust, "What things are  
 those?" 82  
 E'en by the force of its o'erpowering weight;  
 Whence as I saw great joy of sparkling rose.
- Then with its eye more kindled than of late, 85  
 At once the blessèd ensign answered me,  
 To slack the tension of my wondering state;
- "That thou believest all these things, I see, 88  
 "Because I tell them, but canst grasp not how;  
 "So they, although believed, are hid from thee.
- "As those who know a thing by name, thou'rt now;  
 "But only see the substance which it hath 92  
 "If other presentation may allow.
- "Violence the realm of heaven suffereth 94  
 "From burning love and living hope away,  
 "And o'er the Will Divine each triumpheth;

- " Not as man over man asserts his sway, 97  
 " But since It wills to be subdued, and still  
 " Being conquered, by Its love yet wins the day.
- " The first and fifth life in the eyebrow, fill 100  
 " Thy soul with wonder, seeing them adorn  
 " This very region where the angels dwell.
- " Not Gentiles came they from their bodies worn, 103  
 " But Christians, faithful to the feet whose pain  
 " For one was passed, for one was yet unborn.
- " For one from Hell, whence to right will again 106  
 " None comes, unto his bones returned, and proved  
 " Reward to which did living hope attain,
- " The living hope which with such fervour loved, 109  
 " When to upraise him unto God it prayed,  
 " That His will might be able to be moved.
- " The glorious soul, whereon my speech is stayed, 112  
 " Returning to the flesh a little time  
 " Believed on Him Who had the power to aid;
- " And from its faith was lit such fire sublime 115  
 " Of truest love, that at the second death  
 " 'Twas worthy held unto this joy to climb.
- " The other, by that grace that surely hath 118  
 " A fount so deep that to its primal wave  
 " No eye can pierce of creature that draws breath,

- " With all his love on earth did virtue crave;      121  
 " So that from grace to grace God laid before  
 " His eyes our great redemption that should save;
- " Whence he, believed in it, nor suffered more      124  
 " Thereafter miry paths of heathenry,  
 " And witness 'gainst the folk perverse he bore.
- " For his baptism served those ladies three      127  
 " Whom by the right wheel thou hast seen to stay,  
 " A thousand years ere baptism could be.
- " Predestination, O! how far away      130  
 " Thy root is, from such sight as cannot grow  
 " To see the First Cause whole, nor ever may.
- " And ye, O! mortals, keep ye back, be slow      133  
 " To judge, for we who look on God, as yet  
 " The number of the chosen do not know.
- " But sweetness from our ignorance we get,      136  
 " For in this good our good is made more fine,  
 " Till all our will on what God wills is set."
- Thus by this blessed image all divine,      139  
 Sweet medicine was given to me there,  
 To make more clear that feeble sight of mine.
- As a good harpist for a singer rare      142  
 With strings vibrating close accompanies,  
 Whereby more sweetness makes the song more fair,

So while he spake I hold the memories 145  
How both the blessèd lights together stirred,  
E'en as the beating of concordant eyes,  
And made their flames to vibrate with the word. 148

## CANTO XXI

BEATRICE and Dante have risen to Saturn, now in the constellation of Leo, and there Beatrice smiles not (lest her beauty should shatter Dante's mortal senses as Jove's undisguised presence burned Semele to ashes) but bids him gaze upon that which shall be revealed to him. The joy it gives him to obey her behests is compensation even for the withdrawal of his eyes from her countenance, whereon they feasted; and he sees the golden Jacob's ladder stretch up from Saturn; while a throng of splendours descends, as though all heaven had been emptied, and splashes in light upon a certain step of the ladder. Dante addresses the light that arrests itself nearest to him, first with silent thought, then, when Beatrice gives him leave, with open speech; and asks why he more than others has approached him, and why the harmony of heaven is no longer heard. The spirit answers that Dante's senses are not yet sufficiently inured to bear the divine music in this higher sphere; and that he has approached to welcome him not because he has greater love than others, but because the divine love, to which all eagerly respond, has assigned that office to him. Dante though satisfied by the answer within its limits, yet pushes his demand further and asks why God assigned this office just to his interlocutor and no other. Hereon the spirit whirls and glows, rapt into such immediate and intense communion with God as to see his very essence, and yet declares that neither he nor the highest of the Seraphim sees the answer to this question, which lies unfathomably deep in the being of God. Let Dante warn the world, with its smoke-dimmed faculties, not to presume henceforth to attempt a problem which even in heaven is insoluble. Appalled by this reply, Dante now bashfully

requests to know who it is that has thus checked his presumptuous enquiry, and he learns that it is Peter Damiani, who called himself Peter the Sinner, and who had dwelt in the now degenerate convent of Fonte Avellana, and in that of S. Maria in Pomposa. In connection with his reception, shortly before his death, of the Cardinal's hat he denounces the pomp and obesity of the Church dignitaries, whereupon there comes whirling down a throng of flames that group themselves round him and raise a cry which so stuns Dante that he understands not what it says.

Already to my lady's countenance  
 Mine eyes and with them all my mind were fast,  
 Removed from every other influence;

And she smiled not. But, "Should I smile," at last 4  
 She said, "thou wouldst become as Semele  
 "Who through the fiery glow to ashes passed.

"For if my loveliness, which thou dost see, 7  
 "Kindling the more the higher we ascend  
 "Th' eternal palace stairs, were not to thee

"Tempered, it doth such glowing power expend 10  
 "That at its lightning flash thy mortal might  
 "Would be as leaves the thunder-bolt doth rend.

"Now are we at the seventh splendour's height, 13  
 "Which underneath the blazing Lion's breast,  
 "Blent with that worth, shoots down its rays of light.

"Let now thy mind close on thine eyes be pressed, 16  
 "And make them mirrors to the form which here  
 "Within this mirror shall be manifest."

- He who should know what was the pasture dear 19  
Which in that aspect blest I found, when I  
Changed myself to a new desire, he, clear
- Would understand and know how joyfully 22  
(When one side with the other side I weighed,)  
I did obey my escort from on high.
- Within the crystal where is aye displayed, 25  
Circling the world, the name of its great king,  
Beneath whose rule all wickedness lay dead,
- Coloured like gold which back the rays will fling, 28  
I saw a ladder raised to such a height  
My vision wholly failed in following,
- And down its steps descended in my sight 31  
So many splendours, that the fires untold  
Of Heaven methought upon it did alight.
- And as at dawn of day we may behold 34  
The daws together, as their wont is then,  
Set out to warm their feathers stiff with cold;
- And some fly off and come not back again, 37  
And some return from whence they started, and  
Some, circling round their resting place, remain.
- Such fashion, seemed it, governed all the band 40  
That sparkling came together, as soon as they  
Upon a certain step might take their stand.



And one, which nearest unto us did stay, 43

Grew all so bright, I said within my thought:

“ I note what thoughts of love thou send’st this way;

“ But she by whom the ‘ how ’ and ‘ when ’ is wrought,

“ Bidding me speak or no, is still, and I 47

“ Do well, against my will, to ask for nought.”

Then she, who saw my silence perfectly 49

Within His sight Who seeth all things, said:

“ Set free thy warm desire and let it fly.”

And I began: “ No worth of mine has made 52

“ Me worthy that thou shouldst reply, natheless

“ For her sake, through whose grace I am not stayed,

“ O blessed life, that in thy happiness 55

“ Abidest hidden, unto me make known

“ What cause hath brought thee near, my way to  
bless;

“ And say why silent in this wheel alone 58

“ Is the sweet symphony of Paradise,

“ Which so devoutly through the rest hath grown.”

“ Mortal thy hearing is as are thine eyes,” 61

He answered me: “ As Beatrice smiled not here,

“ So here no song sets free its harmonies.

“ Adown the sacred ladder’s rungs thus near 64

“ Have I descended now, to gladden thee

“ With speech and with the light, my mantle clear;

“ Though swifter, there was not more love in me; 67  
 “ For love as much and more on high doth burn,  
 “ As by the flashing flames is plain to see;

“ But the deep love which makes us prompt to turn,  
 “ And serve the wisdom whence the world is led, 71  
 “ Assigns each duty, as thou may'st discern.”

“ Well do I see, O sacred lamp,” I said, 73  
 “ How in this court free love sufficeth thus  
 “ To go where Providence eterne hath sped;

“ But 'tis this thought to me is tyrannous, 76  
 “ Why was this duty upon thee conferred,  
 “ Predestinate 'mid consorts numerous? ”

Before I e'en had reached the final word, 79  
 That light of his midpoint a centre wrought,  
 And like a millstone swift around he whirred.

Then love within replied to what I sought: 82  
 “ On me doth concentrate divinest light,  
 “ Piercing through this wherewith my soul is fraught.

“ The power thereof conjoined unto my sight, 85  
 “ Lifts me above myself, till I can know  
 “ The very essence whence is drawn its might.

“ Thence the joy cometh with whose fire I glow, 88  
 “ For as to be more clear my sight hath striven,  
 “ More clear and bright the flame from me doth flow,

“ But by the soul illumined most in Heaven, 91  
 “ The Seraph who on God the most doth gaze,  
 “ No answer to thy question will be given;

“ Since what thou askest lies in hidden ways, 94  
 “ So far within the abyss of law eterne,  
 “ That severed from created sight it stays.

“ And when to the mortal world thou shalt return, 97  
 “ This message give it, that so great a sign  
 “ Is not a goal whereto man's feet may yearn.

“ The mind on earth doth smoke, which here doth  
 shine; 100  
 “ Think therefore how it could have power there,  
 “ Which here it hath not, blent with grace divine.”

His words set up so firm a barrier 103  
 That I that question left, and then alone  
 Humbly to ask him who he was might dare.

“ 'Twixt Italy's two shores rise cliffs of stone, 106  
 “ Not distant from thy fatherland, so high  
 “ The thunder peels far down below their throne;

“ They make a mass, Catria named. Near by 109  
 “ Beneath, a hermitage is consecrate,  
 “ Which prayer alone at first could satisfy.”

The third discourse he thus began and straight 112  
 He said continuing: “ So firm I stood  
 “ Therein, to God's high service dedicate,

- " That only with the Lenten olive food 115  
 " Lightly I passed through heat and cold, content  
 " With thoughts contemplative in solitude.
- " That cloister once unto these heavens was bent 118  
 " Good fruit to bear, and now is grown so vain  
 " That its unmasking shame is imminent.
- " Therein I lived, Peter of Damian, 121  
 " And in our Lady's house beside the sea,  
 " Peter the Sinner did my name remain.
- " Little of mortal life was left to me 124  
 " When I was bidden to that hat whose state  
 " From bad to worse alone transferred can be.
- " Lean and unshod came Cephas and the great 127  
 " Vase of the Holy Spirit, and indeed  
 " Their food at any hostelry they ate;
- " But shepherds of to-day each side them need 130  
 " Support, so heavy are they, one who will  
 " Raise from behind and one in front to lead;
- " Their mantles cover o'er their palfreys, till 133  
 " Two beasts beneath one hide are seen to wend;  
 " O patience, patience that endureth still! "
- And at this voice I saw more flames descend 136  
 From step to step and whirling circles made,  
 And every whirl more loveliness did lend.

CANTO XXI

153

About this one they gathered close and stayed, 139  
And raised a shout of such a mighty sound,  
That any likeness here must fail and fade;

Nor understood I, in its thunder drowned. 142

## CANTO XXII

BEATRICE soothes and reassures Dante in his terror, and tells him of the divine vengeance, invoked in the cry he has heard. She bids him look again upon the lights of Saturn; and the brightest amongst them then advances to him, encourages him to trust in the affection of the spirits that surround him, and answers his question without awaiting its utterance. He is Benedict, of Monte Cassino fame, and he is surrounded by other contemplative saints. Encouraged by his words to fling all restraint aside, Dante asks if he may see him in his undisguised form of glory; and he replies that this lofty desire shall be fulfilled in the Empyrean where all desires have their perfect fulfilment, because there is no temporal succession there but eternal fullness. Contemplation alone can lead to this timeless and spaceless life, whence the Jacob's ladder, that Dante's human eye cannot follow to its summit, is planted upon the star of abstinence and contemplation, and reaches to the heaven which Jacob saw it touch. But now none mounts this ladder, for all the monastic orders are degenerate. Yet God has ere now wrought greater wonders than the renewal of their spirit would be. Therefore there is yet hope. Hereon Benedict returns to his company, and they all are swept whirling back to the highest heaven, while Beatrice by her glance raises Dante instantaneously into his natal sign of Gemini, to the influences of which the poet now appeals for aid in his recording task. Beatrice bids him, as he draws near to the final glory, and ere he meets the triumphant hosts in this eighth sphere, to strengthen and rejoice his heart by gathering together his heavenly experiences up to this point and realising how far he has left earth behind. He looks down through all the seven spheres, sees the clear side of the moon and all the related movements

and positions of the heavenly bodies, sees the little earth for which we fight so fiercely stretched out before him so that he can trace the rivers right down from the watersheds to the seashore. Then he turns again to Beatrice's eyes.

O'ercome with terror to my guide I turned,  
As doth a little child who, when afraid,  
Turns where to set his trust he most hath learned,

And she, like to a mother swift to aid 4  
Her pale and panting son, to whom is given  
Peace by her voice wherewith his fears are stayed,

Said to me: " Know'st thou not thou art in Heaven?  
" And know'st not that in Heaven all is blest? 8  
" And all that comes from righteous zeal deriven?

" What change the song would have made manifest 10  
" In thee, or I, by smiling, since alone  
" The cry hath moved thee so, may well be guessed;

" The cry, wherein if thou their prayers hadst known,  
" To thee already were the vengeance clear, 14  
" Which thou shalt see or ere thy life be flown.

" For not in haste the sword o' the upper sphere 16  
" Cleaveth, nor yet delayed, save in his sight  
" Who waiteth it in longing or in fear.

" But turn to others now; with glory bright 19  
" Full many noble spirits thou shalt see,  
" If, as I speak, thou guide thy looks aright."

I turned mine eyes as pleased her presently, 22  
 And saw a hundred little spheres, whose rays,  
 Mingling, made all more beautiful to be.

I stood as one who in himself withstays 25  
 The sharp point of desire, yet still will shun  
 To ask, so much fear of excess down-weighs :

And then the greatest and most shining one 28  
 Of all these pearls came forward, to endow  
 My will with knowledge, whence content was won.

Thereat I heard within: " If, as I, thou 31  
 " Couldst see the love which midst us burneth fair,  
 " Thy thoughts had surely been expressed ere now;

" But lest by waiting thy ascending were 34  
 " Delayed from its high goal, I will reply  
 " To that thought only whereof thou hast care.

" That mountain on whose sloping side doth lie 37  
 " Cassino, once was on its summit filled  
 " With people all deceived, moved evilly.

" And I am he who the there first revealed 40  
 " The name of Him, Who unto earth conveyed  
 " The truth, which was for our uplifting willed;

" Such shining grace was round about me shed, 43  
 " That all the neighbouring townships ceased to live  
 " In the vile worship where the whole world strayed.



“ These other flames were men contemplative, 46  
“ All kindled by that warmth which from good ground  
“ To holy fruit and flowers birth can give.

“ Lo! Romoaldus and Maccarius, found 49  
“ My brothers here, whose feet abode below  
“ In cloisters, and whose heart was thus kept sound.

And I to him: “ The love which thou dost show, 52  
“ Speaking with me, and the good seeming whence  
“ I surely see each one of you doth glow,

“ Has opened now as wide my confidence 55  
“ As doth the sun the rose, when full and free  
“ It opens out in its magnificence,

“ Wherefore I pray thee, father, grant to me, 58  
“ If such a grace to me thou may'st assign,  
“ With unveiled image now to look on thee.”

“ Brother,” he said, “ that high desire of thine 61  
“ Shall be fulfilled in that last sphere, the goal  
“ Where are fulfilled other desires and mine.

“ There every longing perfect is and whole 64  
“ And ripe; and every part hath there its place,  
“ There where it ever was. That hath no pole,

“ For it abides not in the realms of space, 67  
“ And up to it our ladder riseth sheer,  
“ And therefore steals away before thy face.

- " Jacob the Patriarch saw it uprear 70  
 " Its higher part as far above, when it  
 " Laden with blessèd angels did appear.
- " But none takes now his feet from earth to set 73  
 " Them on it, and my rule abides indeed  
 " For wasting of the parchments and regret.
- " The walls once wont to shield an abbey's need, 76  
 " Now shelter dens of thieves, and every hood  
 " Has grown a meal sack filled by evil greed.
- " But grievous usury hath ne'er withstood 79  
 " God's pleasure so, as doth that fruit of wrong  
 " Which hearts of monks find such a maddening food.
- " For all the Church possesses should belong 82  
 " To all who in God's name entreat for dower,  
 " Not unto kinsmen or some fouler throng.
- " Lusts of the flesh have such o'ermastering power 85  
 " That to start well i' the world doth not suffice  
 " The oak, from birth unto the acorn hour.
- " Nor gold nor silver Peter gave as price 88  
 " To followers; I offered prayers and fast;  
 " Humility was Francis' fair device.
- " And when at each beginning once thou hast 91  
 " Looked, and then further seen where each has  
 strayed,  
 " Thou'lt see the white with dusky shade o'ercast.

“ But Jordan backward turned and the sea made 94  
“ To fly, by God’s great will, more wondrous were  
“ To see, than rescue here accomplishèd.”

So spake he to me, and returnèd there 97  
To his assembly, which around him drew;  
Then like a whirlwind swept up through the air.

My gentle lady urged me on anew 100  
Behind them up that ladder with a sign,  
So strong her power o’er my nature grew.

When we on earth mount or descend in fine 103  
By Nature’s law, was never such a speed  
As could compare unto this wing of mine.

Reader, as still I hope to find indeed 106  
Once more this holy triumph, whence full fain  
I am to beat my breast and humbly plead,

Thou hadst not from the fire thy finger ta’en 109  
If thou hadst touched it, sooner than I knew  
The Sign behind the Bull, and entered then.

O glorious stars! O light filled through and through  
With mighty worth, from which I recognise 113  
Whatever genius is mine! With you

Did he conceal himself, with you did rise, 115  
He who is sire of all humanity,  
When I first felt the air of Tuscan skies;

And then when this largesse was granted me, 118  
 To join the lofty wheel that sweeps you round,  
 Your place was chosen my abode to be.

To you devoutly breathes my soul, that crowned 121  
 With worth enough it be to enter now  
 The toilsome place whereto its feet are bound.

“ Keen and clear sighted ought thine eyes to grow,”  
 Said Beatrice, “ since thou art drawn so near 125  
 “ To th’ ultimate source from whence all good doth  
 flow.

“ Wherefore ere yet thou further persevere, 127  
 “ Look down, see what a universe revealed,  
 “ I have already ’neath thy feet laid clear,

“ So that thy heart, with utmost joy fulfilled, 130  
 “ May meet the throng triumphant, whose delight  
 “ Through this eternal sphere comes eager willed.”

Throughout the seven spheres I sent my sight 133  
 Until at last upon this globe it fell,  
 Such that I smiled to see its sorry plight.

Those counsels deem I best which ever tell 136  
 That it is least of note; and he whose thought  
 Is elsewhere turned, upright is called full well.

I saw the daughter of Latona fraught 139  
 With fire, without that shade from which I won  
 The thought that rare and dense her form was wrought.

## CANTO XXII

161

The aspect of thy child, Hyperion, 142  
I there sustained, and saw too Maia move  
And Dione about and near thy son.

Next came to me the tempering of Jove 145  
Betwixt his son and sire; the varying  
They make in their position I could prove.

And all the seven 'fore mine eyes did swing; 148  
Their greatness and their swiftness they revealed,  
And all the measure of their distancing.

The thrashing floor, which makes us so fierce-willed,  
From hill to river-mouth I then discerned, 152  
As with the Twins eternal round I wheeled;

Then on the lovely eyes mine eyes I turned. 154

## CANTO XXIII

BEATRICE turns towards Cancer, the region of the summer Solstice, eastward from Gemini where the poet and his guide are placed; and her intent look wakes the eagerness of expectancy in him. E'er long he sees heaven lighted by the approach of the triumphant hosts of Christ, the whole harvest of the heavenly husbandry; and outshining all is Christ, whose person pierces the swathings of his glory with blinding light; whereupon, as lightning dilating in the womb of a cloud bursts forth, having no space within, so Dante's mind bursts its own limits and loses itself. . . . Beatrice recalls him as from a forgotten dream, and his sight strengthened by the vision of Christ, is now able to endure her smile. What he then saw he needs must leave untold, albeit what he is forcing himself, line by line, to record proclaims that he yields to no shrinking desire to spare himself. At Beatrice's bidding he mans himself again to look upon the garden of Christ, the Virgin rose and the Apostolic lilies; but Christ himself, in tenderness to the pilgrim's powers, has withdrawn above and shines down upon his chosen ones, himself unseen. Gabriel descends and crowns the virgin who then rises through the *Primum Mobile* far out of sight, while the saints reach up tenderly after her with their flames. Oh, what wealth of glory is in these sainted souls who on earth chose and spread the true riches that wax not old. There Peter triumphs in the victory of Christ, with the ancient and the modern assembly for whom his key has unlocked heaven.

As 'mid the leaves she loves the bird, that fain,  
Of her sweet nestlings broodeth on her nest,  
Throughout the night which hideth things from men,

## CANTO XXIII

163

Then to behold those forms she loveth best, 4  
And to find food their hunger to allay,  
(A grievous toil, more dear to her than rest,)

Foreruns the time, upon the open spray, 7  
And with a glowing love awaits the sun,  
Straining to see the dawning of the day;

So stood my lady, such an eager one, 10  
Erect and turned toward the region, where  
The sun with least of speed appears to run;

Till in suspense and longing, seeing her, 13  
I grew like one who other than he has  
Desires, and payeth him with hoping fair.

But short the space 'twixt one and the other was, 16  
'Twixt growing intent that is and seeing how  
More brilliance in the Heaven came to pass,

And Beatrice said: " Behold the army now 19  
" Of Christ, His triumph, and the harvesting  
" Of all the fruit these circling spheres bestow."

It seemed her face became so bright a thing, 22  
And in her eyes was such a gladsomeness  
As into speech no power of mine can bring.

As Trivia in the full moon's peacefulness 25  
Smileth, of all the Nymphs eternal Queen,  
Nymphs who paint heaven to the last recess

I saw, above a thousand lampions' sheen,                    28  
 A sun which lit their glowings every one,  
 As our own sun lights all above us seen.

And through the living light the substance shone    31  
 So lucent on my vision and so clear,  
 Mine eyes endured of all its glory none.

O Beatrice, guide ever sweet and dear!                    34  
 She said to me: " That which o'ercomes thee so  
 " Is Worth, 'gainst which no strength can persevere;

" Therein the wisdom and the power know,                    37  
 " Which made a way from earth to Heaven, the deed  
 " Desired so fiercely from so long ago."

Even as from the cloud the fire is freed,                    40  
 Since it dilates more than the space can bind,  
 Till 'gainst its will down to the earth 'twill speed,

So then grown greater 'mid these feasts, my mind    43  
 Issued from out itself, and memory  
 Of what it then became no more can find.

" Open thine eyes and as I am see me:                    46  
 " Thou hast beheld things which have brought thee  
     might,  
 " So that my smile may be sustained by thee."

As one who from a vision of the night                    49  
 Has passed, and who thereafter strives in vain  
 To bring it back into his mind aright,



So was I at this grace, which made me fain 52  
Of gratitude, too great for banishment  
From out the book which tells the past again.

If all those tongues should sound in full content, 55  
Which Polyhymnia with her sisters made  
Most rich with milk, their sweetest, freely spent,

No thousandth part of truth for all their aid 58  
Would sound, that blest smile singing and the deep  
Of that blest vision which it clear displayed.

Therefore to figure Paradise must leap 61  
The sacred poem, as when one doth find  
His pathway hindered. But whoso will keep

The mighty theme e'er present to his mind, 64  
And what a mortal shoulder well can bear,  
Will, if it tremble, hold back blame unkind.

The furrow which my cleaving keel doth dare 67  
No voyage for a little bark can be,  
Nor for a helmsman bent himself to spare.

“ Why doth my face so deep enamour thee, 70  
“ That for the garden fair thou tak'st no thought,  
“ Its flowering 'neath the rays of Christ to see?

“ The rose wherein the Word Divine was wrought 73  
“ To flesh is there; there are the lilies too,  
“ Following whose scent the path of right was sought.”

- Thus Beatrice: and I, who eager grew 76  
E'er to her counsel, full surrender made,  
To battle with my feeble brows anew.
- As eyes of mine ere now, themselves in shade, 79  
Have seen a meadow full of flowers fair  
In sunlight pure, through broken clouds down-rayed,
- So saw I now a host of splendours there, 82  
Flashing in rays which from above down shower,  
Yet whence the glowing came was unaware.
- O Worth benign imprinting such a dower, 85  
Thou'dst lifted up Thyself to yield a place  
For eyes of mine which lacked the needful power.
- The name of that fair flower whose gentle grace 88  
Morning and evening I invoke, drew then  
My mind upon the greatest flame to gaze.
- And when to both mine eyes was pictured plain 91  
That living star in all its worth and might,  
(The victor there even as here 'mid men,)
- A torch formed circle-wise, a crown of light, 94  
From out the midst of that fair heav'n descended  
And girt her, wheeling round her in my sight.
- All melodies on earth most sweetly blended, 97  
Most apt the soul with longing to inspire,  
Would seem as thunder from a cloud fierce rended,

Compared unto the sound of that fair lyre, 100  
Whereby the lovely jewel was encrowned,  
The brightest heaven's one, supreme, sapphire.

" I am the love angelic, circling round 103  
" The joy which from that body doth distil  
" Where our Desire its hostelry once found;

" And I will circle, Heavenly Lady, till 106  
" Thou followest thy Son and enterest,  
" To make the sphere supreme diviner still."

E'en thus the circling melody impressed 109  
Its seal, and Mary's name in love and praise  
Sounded from all the other lights at rest.

The mantle which the King of Heaven lays 112  
Round all the swathings of the world, which more  
Than all burns, quickening in God's breath and ways,

So far above us had its inner shore, 115  
That where I was its seeming was a thing  
Not yet in clearness laid mine eyes before;

And so my vision lacked the power to spring 118  
Upward, behind the crowned flame as she pressed  
On high, her Son belovèd following.

And as the child, fed at the mother's breast, 121  
Toward her stretcheth out his arms, being moved  
By inward flame to gesture manifest;

So there each glowing plain to vision proved, 124  
Upstretching with its spire of flame, how deep  
By each and every one was Mary loved.

Then still within mine eyesight did they keep 127  
Singing "O Queen of Heaven," and bestowing  
Delight too sweet from memory e'er to slip.

How great the wealth which filled to overflowing 130  
These goodly chests, which were upon the earth  
Such worthy acres for the heavenly sowing!

Here from that treasure draw they life and mirth, 133  
Which tears in exile far in Babylon  
Once earned, that time when gold had little worth.

Here triumphs, subject to the mighty Son 136  
Of God and Mary, in his victory,  
And with the Councils old and new at one,

He who of such great glory holds the key. 139

## CANTO XXIV

BEATRICE appeals to the saints in the starry heaven to give Dante to drink from the heavenly table to which they have been summoned. The divine grace which gives him a foretaste of their feast is their warrant, his immeasurable longing is his claim, and their unbroken enjoyment of that knowledge which he desires makes it easy for them to give. The saints respond joyously to her appeal and in groups of circling lights reveal their varying measures of ecstasy. Peter comes out from the brightest group in answer to Beatrice's prayer. She addresses him as the representative of that Faith by which he himself once walked upon the sea, and to which heaven owes all its citizens; and urges him to test Dante as to Faith. Dante prepares himself, as for examination, and Peter questions him. Dante founds his confession upon the definition in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Faith is the substance or foundation upon which hope is reared, and the basis of the argument by which the reality of unseen things is established. His own faith is unquestioning. It is based on Scripture which is authenticated by miracle. And if one should question the miracles he must face the yet greater miracle of the spread of Christianity without miracle. Peter further demands to hear the positive content of Dante's faith and the specific warrant for it. Dante declares his faith in God, defined first in Aristotelian phrase as the unmoved mover whom the heaven loves and longs for, and then as three Persons in one Essence. For the first belief proofs are drawn from the *Physics* and *Metaphysics* as well as from Scripture, for the second from Scripture alone. All else is secondary. Peter signifies his delight in Dante's confession by circling him thrice,

“ O fellowship, to that great feast elected,  
 “ The supper of the blessed Lamb Who feedeth  
 “ You, till forever is your will perfected,

“ If to this man the grace of God concedeth 4  
 “ Foretaste of that your table letteth fall,  
 “ Ere death hath limited the life he leadeth,

“ Give heed to his desire immeasurable, 7  
 “ And in some wise bedew. Ye drink unstayed  
 “ The fount whereon are fixed his longings all.”

Thus Beatrice. Those joyous souls arrayed, 10  
 Flaming abroad like comets mightily,  
 As it were spheres upon fixed poles were made;

And e'en as wheels in clockwork harmony 13  
 So turn, that whoso notes it sees the first  
 As standing still, while the last seems to fly,

So did those carols move me till I durst 16  
 Their riches estimate, as fast or slow  
 Into their different dances they outburst.

From one, I deemed most beautiful, did flow 19  
 (I saw) a flame of such great blissfulness,  
 That none it left there could such brilliance show.

And thrice it circled around Beatrice, 22  
 With a fair song of such divinity  
 That all my fantasy repeats not this;

So leaps my pen, and 'tis not writ by me; 25  
Imagination, not our speech alone,  
Too fierce a colour for such folds must be.

“ O sainted sister mine, from whom hath flown 28  
“ Pray'rs so devout, thy burning love hath made  
“ Me loosened from this lovely sphere, mine own.”

The breath that thus had spoke, as I have said, 31  
Was tow'rd my lady turned within my sight,  
By that blest flame so soon as it had stayed;

And she began: “ O thou eternal light 34  
“ Of that great man to whom our high Lord gave  
“ The keys he brought of this wondrous delight,

“ Test now this man on points both light and grave 37  
“ As it may please thee, faith in him to prove  
“ Whereby thou once did'st walk upon the wave.

“ If well he hopes, believes, and well doth love, 40  
“ Is hidden not from thee who hast thy ken  
“ Where all things are depicted clear above.

“ But since this realm hath made each citizen 43  
“ By the true faith, the hap for him is well  
“ That from his speech the faith should glory gain.”

As arms himself the bachelor, but still 46  
Is silent till his master doth propound  
The question, to approve, not to fulfil,

So I the arms of every reason bound 49  
 About me, whilst she spake, to meet the test  
 Of such profession, such demands profound.

“ Good Christian speak and make thee manifest; 52  
 “ What thing is faith? ” I lifted up my brow  
 Toward the light from whence this question pressed,

Then turned to Beatrice, who quick did show 55  
 And eagerly, that from my inward spring  
 Now I should freely let the waters flow.

“ May grace, that grants that I confession bring 58  
 “ Unto the foremost Chieftain of our fight,  
 “ Make of my thoughts a fitly uttered thing.”

So I began, and then, “ As once did write 61  
 “ The true pen, father, in thy brother’s hand,  
 “ Who set with thee Rome on the path of light,

“ Faith is the substance of things hoped for and 64  
 “ The argument of things unseen, and this  
 “ It seems to me may for its essence stand.”

And then I heard: “ Right thy conception is, 67  
 “ If well thou seest, wherefore he gave it place  
 “ ’Mid arguments last, and first ’mid substances.”

And I thereon: “ The things profound which grace 70  
 “ Has granted me to see here, from the eyes  
 “ Of men below darkness doth so efface



" That even their existence only lies 73

" Within belief, whereon is built high hope;

" It holds intent of substance in this wise;

" Also from this belief, since sight can grope 76

" Its way no more, we syllogise; therefore

" Intent of argument is in its scope."

Then heard I; " If the whole doctrinal lore 79

" Acquired on earth were thus well understood,

" The sophist's wit would find a place no more."

Thus breathed that love enkindled; then renewed 82

Its speech and said, " This coin's alloy and weight

" Have been summed up in manner right and good;

" But tell me if 'tis in thy purse." Thereat 85

I said: " I have it safe, so bright and round,

" No shadow of a doubt can cling to it."

Then issued forth from out the light profound 88

Which there was shining: " This dear jewel then

" Where every virtue rests on stable ground

" Whence reached it thee?" and I: " The bounteous  
rain, 91

" Which from the Holy Ghost spreads clear to see

" Over the parchments old and new again,

" A syllogism is, that hath for me 94

" Brought to so sharp conclusion, that behold

" Near it, all demonstration blunt must be."

I heard: "That proposition new and old 97  
 "Which to such end thou findest surely bring,  
 "Why as God's word dost thou deem it enscrolled?"

And I: "The proof, its truth establishing, 100  
 "Is the works that followed, for which Nature ne'er  
 "Yet heated iron, nor made anvil ring."

'Twas answered: "Tell me, that these great works  
                 were, 103  
 "Who makes thee sure? The script that waits the test  
 "Itself, no other, doth as witness swear."

"If all the world the cause of Christ confessed 106  
 "Without a miracle," I said, "that one  
 "More than a hundredfold exceeds the rest;

"For poor and hungry, thou didst enter on 109  
 "The field of battle, that good plant to sow  
 "Which once was vine, but now to thorn hath grown."

This ended, through the spheres a cry did go, 112  
 As the high holy court sang "God be praised,"  
 In such a melody as above they know.

The Baron who by questioning had graced 115  
 Me, drawing as from branch to branch until  
 Nigh to the topmost leaves we were upraised,

Began again, "Through grace which doth fulfil 118  
 "Thy mind with love, thy mouth such words hath  
                 said

"As are well fitting, wherefore thus far still

- " Approval on thy speech I gladly shed; 121  
 " Now what it is thou dost believe must be  
 " By thee expressed, and whence belief was bred."
- " O holy Father, spirit who dost see 124  
 " That which inspired such faith, that all surpassed  
 " Were younger feet anigh the tomb by thee,"
- I said: " Thou will'st that I make manifest 127  
 " The form here of my eager faith, and the whole  
 " Cause of my faith thou'lt also have confessed,
- " I answer: ' I believe in one God, sole 130  
 " ' Eternal, Who, Himself unmoved, with love  
 " ' And with desire, all Heaven's wheel doth roll.
- " ' Physics and Metaphysics join to prove 133  
 " ' This my belief, and more is given too  
 " ' To me by truth which rains from here above
- " ' Through Moses, through the Psalms and Prophets,  
     through 136  
 " ' The Gospel, through the Writings written when  
 " ' Spirit of fire made ministers of you.
- " ' And I believe in Persons three, again 139  
 " ' Eternal in Their essence; Trine and One,  
 " ' So that to Them both " are " and " is " pertain;
- " ' And of that Estate profound, divine, whereon 142  
 " ' I dwell, the Evangelic teachings are  
 " ' The seal, whence oft my mind belief hath won.

“ ‘ This the beginning is, the spark as ’twere, 145

“ ‘ Which then into a living flame spreads wide

“ ‘ And glitters in me, as in heaven a star.’ ”

As doth a master who, well gratified 148

By what he hears, his servant will embrace

When he hath spoken, nor his joy will hide,

So with a song filled with all blessings’ grace, 151

The Apostolic light, when I had ceased,

(Who made me speak) three times round me did trace

A circle; showing how my words had pleased. 154

## CANTO XXV

It was the Faith that gained Dante the high privilege of the apostolic benediction. Therefore if his poem should ever melt the heart of the Florentines he will take the poet's crown at that same font whereat he was received into the Faith. St. James now joins St. Peter. When we read of the three chosen disciples to whom Jesus reveals more than to the others we are to take Peter as representing faith, James hope, and John love; and therefore Beatrice urges James to test Dante as to Hope. James questions him. Beatrice herself declares on his behalf that he possesses in fullest measure the virtue of hope, and that it is on that very ground that he has been allowed to anticipate death in his vision of divine things. As to the nature of Hope and its source he shall answer for himself. Dante defines hope with exclusive reference to the future life, and derives it from Scripture. James, whose own hope, which followed him even to death, is now swallowed up in victory, still loves the virtue he once practised, and demands to hear the content of Dante's hope, and its source. Dante declares that Isaiah and John tell him of the double garments of the blessed, and that this symbol indicates to him the resurrection of the body as well as the immortality of the soul as the substantive content of his hope. A light as bright as the sun now joins Peter and James, and is declared by Beatrice to be the Apostle John. Dante strains his sight to see John's body, but is blinded by the glory, and is told that his body is dust, and awaits the general resurrection; Jesus and Mary alone of human beings having arisen with their bodies to heaven. Then of a sudden the harmony is stilled, and the blinded Dante turns in vain to look upon Beatrice.

If e'er it chance that this my sacred rhyme,  
 To which both Heaven and earth so set their hand  
 That I grew lean through many years of time,

Vanquish the harshness whence to me is banned      4  
 The sheepfold fair, wherein a lamb at peace  
 I slept, a foe to wolves who waste that land;

Then with another voice and other fleece,      7  
 Poet, I shall return and so be crowned,  
 Where my baptismal font wakes memories;

For in that Faith, whereby men's souls are bound 10  
 To God, I entered there, and for its sake  
 Thus Peter afterward circled me round.

Then did a light its way toward us take,      13  
 Out of that sphere whence first-fruits issuèd  
 Of those whom Christ His vicars deigned to make.

Whereat my lady full of gladness, said,      16  
 "Look, look, behold the Baron, for whose love  
 "On earth are pilgrims to Galicia led."

As when near his companion comes a dove,      19  
 And one to the other his affection shows,  
 And murmuring doth in a circle move,

So saw I each by the other greeted, those      22  
 Great, glorious princes, praising each the food  
 Which feasts them there above within the Rose.

But when the greeting was fulfilled, each stood 25  
Silent and fixed before my face, a flame  
So kindled that my eyesight was subdued.

Smiling then Beatrice said: " O Life of fame, 28  
" By whom our temple's generosity  
" To its due record, through fair writing came,

" Let hope be sounded in this height by thee; 31  
" Thou know'st so many times thou figurest it  
" As Jesus gave more light unto the three."

" Lift up thy head, be fear behind thee set! 34  
" Whate'er comes hither from the world of men  
" Our rays must ripen for its benefit."

The second fire said this that I might gain 37  
Courage; whence I raised to the hills mine eyes,  
Whose weight was erst more than I could sustain.

" Since of His grace our Emperor doth devise, 40  
" That ere thy death, in His most secret hall,  
" Thou see His courts in all their companies,

" That when this court's truth on thy sight should fall  
" Thou shouldst in thee and others stronger make 44  
" The hope, whence folk on earth love good withal;

" Say what that hope is, how thy mind doth break 46  
" With it into a flower, and whence in might  
" It comes;" the second light thus further spake.

- That tender one, who to such lofty flight 49  
 The feathers of my wings had guided on,  
 Forestalled my answer thus to my delight:
- “ Church militant hath not a single son 52  
 “ With more of hope, as written ye may see  
 “ In Him Whose rays o’er all our host are thrown.
- “ Therefore ’twas granted unto him, that he 55  
 “ From Egypt to Jerusalem should go,  
 “ Ere he had served his time of soldiery.
- “ The other questions too (which not to know 58  
 “ Thou’st asked, but that he may bear back the word  
 “ Of how this virtue pleases thee, below)
- “ I leave to him; for they will not be hard 61  
 “ Nor theme for boasting; let him now reply,  
 “ And let God’s grace this grace to him afford.”
- As doth the pupil follow eagerly 64  
 And glad his teacher, where he’s confident  
 That so his excellence revealed may lie,
- “ Hope,” said I, “ is expectancy, intent 67  
 “ And sure, of future glory; it is wrought  
 “ From grace divine and merit precedent.
- “ From many stars this light to me is taught; 70  
 “ ’Tis the chief singer of the Chief supreme  
 “ Who first unto my heart the solace brought.



“ For in his praise of God he saith: ‘ Let them 73  
 “ ‘ Have hope in Thee, who know Thy name,’ and then  
 “ Who knows it not, who faith like mine can claim?”

“ Thou hast, in thine Epistle, dropped the rain 76  
 “ Upon me in like measure, till I rest  
 “ Full, and can pour your shower on other men.”

Whilst yet I spake, within that living breast 79  
 Of glowing flame there trembled, dense and swift,  
 A flash like lightning, there made manifest.

Then breathed: “ That love, which here doth still  
 uplift 82

“ My flame toward virtue which once followed me  
 “ To victory’s palm, till earthly strife I left,

“ Wills that on thee I breathe, who’rt known to be 85  
 “ So glad of her, and now ’twould please me well  
 “ To hear what ’tis that hope doth promise thee.”

And I: “ The new and ancient Scriptures tell 88  
 “ The symbol which doth make the message clear.  
 “ Of souls who as the friends of God may dwell,

“ Isaiah saith that every one shall wear 91  
 “ A double garment in his own dear land,  
 “ And this sweet life is that far land so dear.

“ And more, thy brother makes us understand 94  
 “ This revelation in a clearer way,  
 “ When of the white robes writes his eager hand.”

And first as these words ended, far away, 97  
" Let them have hope in Thee," above us pealed,  
And all the carols then took up the lay.

Then from their midmost was a light revealed, 100  
So bright that had the Crab such crystal prize,  
A month of one long day would Winter yield;

And as a joyous virgin doth arise 103  
And go and enter on the dance, that she  
May please the bride and not through vanities,

So the clear shining splendour did I see 106  
Come to the two, who swept in circles round,  
As ardent love did move them fittingly,

Then mingled with their words and their song's sound:  
And like a bride silent and all at rest, 110  
My lady kept her glance to them fast bound.

" Lo! this is he who lay upon the breast 112  
" Of Him, our Pelican. On him did fall,  
" E'en from the cross, the charge he loved the best."

Thus spake my lady; but no whit at all, 115  
After or ere her words, she moved her sight  
From that which for such deep intent could call.

As one who gazing strains to see aright 118  
The sun, eclipsèd for a little space,  
Till he, by looking, blinded grows to light,

## CANTO XXV

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So to this last flame did I set my face, 121  
Till it was said: "Why dost thou dazzle thee,  
"To see a thing which hath not here a place?"

"Earth is my body in earth, and shall be 124  
"With all the rest, until our numbering  
"Reaches the purpose fixed eternally.

"Round those two lights alone which rose, do cling  
"The two robes in the blessèd cloister, and 128  
"This, to your world returning, shalt thou bring."

The flaming circle at this voice did stand 130  
At rest, and with it the sweet mingling blended,  
From sound of breath threefold nearer at hand,

As, when that toil or danger may be ended, 133  
The oars, that smote anon the water's flow,  
Rest at the whistle's sound, all held suspended.

Ah! what emotion must my spirit know, 136  
When there I turned to look on Beatrice,  
And could not see her countenance, although

Near her I was, and in the world of bliss! 139

## CANTO XXVI

THE Apostle John reassures Dante as to his lost sight, which Beatrice will restore to him as Ananias restored his to Paul; and invites him to discourse meanwhile of Love; and first to tell him what is the supreme object on which his soul's affection is fixed. Dante, resignedly awaiting Beatrice's succour, declares that he is still burning in that same flame which she brought into his heart, and that God is the beginning and end of that and of all his other loves. Moved by the Apostle to declare more at large the justification of his love, Dante answers that, since good as good must be loved, to know God is of necessity to love him, and goes on to declare how Aristotle and the Scriptures have made this truth level to his capacity. When questioned as to other reasons for loving God, Dante perceives that he is expected to supplement his account of the supreme love of God, as good *in himself*, by a statement of the accessory gratitude to God as good *to us*, and enumerates the creation of the world, his own creation, the redemption and the hope of heaven. He adds that all creatures share his love in proportion as they share the good which is supreme in the creator. A hymn of praise is raised, and Dante's sight is restored to him; whereon he is bewildered by Beatrice's greater beauty and then by the presence of a fourth flame, wherein he learns the soul of Adam to abide. Overwhelmed at first, then moved to eagerness that will not brook delay, by finding himself face to face with the human being who has had such unique experience and who holds the answer to questions that have so long tantalised the world, Dante reads the answering affection of the first father in the swaying undulations of the light that clothes him and receives the answer to his unspoken questions, as to

chronology, the language of Eden, the length of the period of innocence and the nature of the sin that cost the world so dear.

Whilst for my quenched sight I grew afraid,  
A breath from that hot flame 'neath which 'twas spent,  
My senses heedful of its utterance made,

Saying: " Until to thee again is sent 4  
" The sense of sight thou hast destroyed through me,  
" Let compensation in discourse be lent.

" Wherefore begin and tell where presently 7  
" Thy mind is set, and surely understand  
" That lost, but not destroyed, is sight in thee;

" Because the lady who throughout this land 10  
" Divine now leads thee, from her eyes doth shed  
" The power that was in Ananias' hand."

" As pleaseth her or soon or late," I said, 13  
" Let help restore mine eyes, which were the gate  
" Where-through, with fires wherein I burn, she sped.

" The good, which makes this court's contented state,  
" Is Alpha and Omega of all things 17  
" Love reads to me, with more or less of weight."

That self-same voice, which had from my heart-springs  
Taken the fears of sudden dazzlement, 20  
Made me desirous of new reasonings,

- Saying: " In truth strain now thine argument 22  
 " Through closer sieves; befits thee now to tell  
 " Why was thy shaft at such a target sent? "
- And I: " By reasoning philosophical, 25  
 " And by authority sent down from here,  
 " Such love must needs be printed on me well;
- " For good, being good, makes love flame hot and clear,  
 " As it is understood, and makes it burn 29  
 " More when more worth there doth in it appear.
- " Therefore the mind of him who can discern 31  
 " The truth, whereon this proof's foundations stay,  
 " More than to anything, in love must turn
- " Unto that Essence, of such worth alway 34  
 " That all the good that outside It may move,  
 " Is but a glimmer of Its own pure ray.
- " And he who shows to me the primal love 37  
 " Of all eternal beings, he hath made  
 " My mind such that this truth it can approve.
- " The voice of that true author aids, who said 40  
 " To Moses, speaking of himself, ' Lo! I  
 " ' Will make all worth before thine eyes be spread.'
- " Thou aid'st me in the words that thrillingly 43  
 " Sound through that trumpet call, which drowns  
 below  
 " All other cries with Heaven's mystery."

I heard: " Thy chiefest love on God bestow,      46  
 " As thou'rt impelled by intellect of men,  
 " And masters who agreement with it show.

" But tell me yet, if other cords may strain      49  
 " Thee tow'rd Him, till the teeth be all descried  
 " Wherewith this love its hold on thee hath ta'en."

Christ's eagle thus in no way sought to hide      52  
 His sacred purpose, rather could I see  
 Whither he would my own profession guide.

So I again: " Those teeth whose hold on me,      55  
 " Gripping my heart, to God can make it turn;  
 " Co-workers on my love are seen to be.

" For life o' the world, life which in me I learn,      58  
 " The death He died that life my soul might bless,  
 " And that for which I and all faithful yearn,

" With all that self-same living consciousness,      61  
 " Have drawn me from the sea of evil love  
 " And helped my feet the true love's shore to press.

" The leaves wherewith grows leafy all the grove      64  
 " Of the eternal Gardener, find I dear  
 " In measure as His good in them I prove."

When I was silent, rang through Heaven clear      67  
 A most sweet song, and with the others cried  
 My lady, " Holy, holy, holy," there.

And as a keen light wakes from slumber-tide 70  
 A man, when runs the visual sprite toward  
 The glow, which sends through veil on veil its pride,

And he who wakes findeth his vision marred, 73  
 Since nought his sudden vigil can discern,  
 Until reflection aideth his regard,

So Beatrice from off mine eyes did spurn 76  
 All darkening motes, e'en with her own eyes' ray,  
 Which o'er a thousand miles might glowing burn;

Whence afterward I saw in better way; 79  
 And as one stupefied I sought to know  
 A fourth light I beheld beside us stay.

My lady then: " Within that radiance, lo! 82  
 " The first soul which the Primal Worth e'er made,  
 " Its love upon its Maker doth bestow."

Like to a leafy spray which bows its head 85  
 When the wind passes o'er, and then is raised  
 By its own power, wherewith on high 'tis stayed,

I did, whilst she was speaking, all amazed; 88  
 And then once more felt confidence abide,  
 Through the great wish to speak, wherewith I blazed.

" O fruit brought forth full ripe," thereat I cried, 91  
 " Alone of all, father of old, who hast  
 " Daughter and daughter-in-law in every bride,



“ Devout I pray thee that I may be blest            94  
 “ With speech of thee; my will thou seest all;  
 “ Sooner to hear I leave it unconfessed.”

If 'neath a covering an animal                            97  
 Moveth, its impulse often will be clear,  
 For what enwraps moves after it withal;

And so that primal Spirit made appear,                100  
 Through all its covering, how glad and free  
 It came unto my wish to minister.

Then breathed: “ Though proffered not by thee to me,  
 “ My mind more knowledge of thy longing has    104  
 “ Than thine of that which is most sure to thee;

“ Because I see it in the truthful glass,                106  
 “ Whereby reflected are all things soe'er,  
 “ While nothing that reflects it, is or was.

“ Thou'dst know how long it is since in that fair    109  
 “ Uplifted garden God my place decreed,  
 “ Whence she prepared thee for so long a stair;

“ How long mine eyes its book of joy might read;    112  
 “ What the true cause whence the great wrath begun;  
 “ What speech I used and made for my great need.

“ The cause of that great exile know, my son,        115  
 “ Was not in tasting of the tree, but earned  
 “ In the transgressing of the mark alone.

- " There, whence to serve thy lady Virgil turned, 118  
 " Four thousand and three hundred years and two  
 " I did abide, whilst for this host I yearned;  
  
 " And I beheld the sun his course renew 121  
 " Nine hundred times along his path of light,  
 " And thirty, whilst on earth my breath I drew.  
  
 " The tongue I spoke was lost in endless night, 124  
 " Long ere the race of Nimrod eager passed  
 " Unto the toil that baffled all their might;  
  
 " For ne'er can work of human reason last, 127  
 " Because of changing human preference,  
 " Moved by the spell the changing Heavens cast.  
  
 " The speech of man is Nature's work, but thence 130  
 " Nature allows that this or that be found,  
 " Even as shapeth your convenience.  
  
 " Ere in Hell's agony my soul was drowned, 133  
 " Jah on the earth was named the highest Good,  
 " Whence comes the gladness that enwraps me round;  
  
 " El was He after called. Man's custom should 136  
 " In this be as the leaves the boughs sustain,  
 " Where one will follow where the others stood.  
  
 " Upon the mount which rises from the main 139  
 " Most, in pure life I was and in disgrace,  
 " From the first hour to that which follows when  
 " The sixth hour doth complete the quadrant's space."

## CANTO XXVII

THE poet's ear and eye drink for a space of the glory of Paradise and afterwards, amid deep silence, first the light of Peter glows red with indignation as he denounces the doings of Pope Boniface VIII.; then all heaven is suffused with the same glow and Beatrice's cheek flushes as at a tale of shame, while Peter pursues his denunciation, including Clement the Gascon and John of Cahors in its sweep; and then promises redress and bids Dante bear the news to earth. The triumphant spirits, like flashes of flame, rain upwards into the higher heaven, and Beatrice bids Dante look down upon the earth. Dante is in Gemini and the Sun in Aries, with Taurus between, and therefore the half of the earth illuminated by the sun does not correspond with the half that the Seer commands. He sees the earth as we see the moon when she is past the full. The illuminated portion stretches from afar west of Gibraltar to the shore of the Levant; and the darkened portion stretches further east. Turning back with renewed longing to Beatrice, Dante sees her yet more beautiful and rises with her to the *Primum Mobile*. Beatrice expounds to him how time and space take their source and measure from this sphere, and have no relevancy to aught that lies beyond it. It is girt (how, God only understandeth) not by space but by the Divine light and love. Then, with deep yearning, Beatrice turns her thoughts back to the besotted world wherein faith and innocence find refuge only in the hearts and lives of infants, and where humanity blackens from its birth. And all this not because of any inherent degeneracy but because there is none to rule. But ere the hundredth of a day by which the Julian exceeds the Solar year shall by its accumulations have made January cease to be a Winter month! the course shall be reversed.

“ Glory to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! ”  
 All Paradise began, and at the word  
 Joy-drunken was I, in the sweet song lost.

As 'twere the universe's smile, so stirred 4  
 Me what I saw, so that my drunkenness  
 Came both from what was seen and what was heard.

O joy! O bliss that words can ne'er express! 7  
 O life, of love and peace the very core!  
 O wealth secure that knows no greediness!

Kindled before mine eyes the torches four 10  
 Were standing, and the one I first had known  
 Began to grow in life and shine yet more;

And soon to such a semblance he had grown 13  
 As Jove would have if birds were Mars and he,  
 And each took the other's plumage for his own.

The Providence which giveth suitably 16  
 Duty and office, had on every side  
 Made silence in the blessed choir to be.

When this I heard: “ Be not with wonder tried 19  
 “ That I change colour, for thou'lt see apace  
 “ Change, at my words, in all of these betide.

“ He who usurpeth on the earth my place, 22  
 “ My place, my place, which is in truth e'en now  
 “ Before the Son of God an empty space,

“ Hath made my burial ground a sewer’s flow, 25  
“ For all that blood and filth which doth delight  
“ The perverse one who fell from here below.”

Then all the heaven assumed before my sight 28  
That colour which, through the opposing sun,  
Painteth a cloud at morn or coming night ;

And as a lady pure, afraid of none 31  
For her own sake, yet if she only hear  
Another’s fault by timid thoughts is won,

So changed in semblance Beatrice did appear, 34  
And so I deem was heaven eclipsèd o’er  
When Might Supreme became a sufferer.

His words came then; his voice from that before 37  
Was changed so much that altered as he stood,  
Yet his appearance was not altered more.

“ Linus and I and Cletus shed our blood 40  
“ To rear the Bride of Christ, not that for gain  
“ Of gold she should forsooth be counted good.

“ But Sixtus, Pius, and Calixtus, fain 43  
“ That this glad life be won, with Urban gave  
“ Their lives, enduring gladly tears and pain.

“ We had no thought our followers should have 46  
“ One part of Christendom at their right hand,  
“ The other part upon their left hand leave,

- " Not that the keys, my trust, should ever stand 49  
 " For ensign on a banner that should wage  
 " War against men baptized, on Christian land,
- " Nor that for sold and lying privilege, 52  
 " I should as figure on the seal be shown,  
 " Whence oft I blush and sparkling show my rage.
- " Seen from on high lo! ravening wolves alone 55  
 " In guise of shepherds all the pastures share.  
 " Succour of God! why art thou overthrown?
- " Men of Cahors and Gascons now prepare 58  
 " To drink our blood. To what degraded end  
 " Must thou then fall, O thou beginning fair!
- " But lofty Providence which did defend 61  
 " World-fame with Scipio for the Roman state,  
 " Its succour shortly, I perceive, will lend.
- " And thou, my son, who for thy mortal weight 64  
 " Return'st to earth, hide not the things which I  
 " Hide not, but let thy tongue's clear speech relate."
- E'en as in flakes the frozen vapours fly 67  
 From our air down, when by the sun the horn  
 Of heaven's Goat is touched in passing by,
- So did I see the ether there adorn 70  
 Itself, and up each flake of vapour send  
 Triumphant, which with us had made sojourn.

My sight its course behind their forms would wend, 73  
And did, until the path of vision ceased,  
As growing distance brought its power to end.

Wherefore the lady, seeing me released 76  
From upward gaze, said: " Plunge thy glance below,  
" See how thine arc of wheeling hath increased."

Since first I looked, I saw my course had now 79  
Swept through the arc, which the first clime, complete,  
Betwixt its midmost and its end doth know;

So that beyond Cadiz my sight could greet 82  
The mad way of Ulysses, and here the shore  
Where once Europa was a burden sweet.

Further the site of this great threshing floor 85  
Would well have been unveiled, but 'neath me then  
The sun went first, advanced a Sign or more.

My mind enamoured, which was ever fain 88  
To seek my lady, more than ever burned  
To lead mine eyes back to her face again;

And if all foods that art or Nature learned 91  
To catch the eye by and possess the mind,  
In life or pictures e'er to be discerned,

Were all united, nothing would they find 94  
To match the heavenly bliss, which, when to see  
Her smiling face I turned, upon me shined.

And all the pow'r that flowed thence, presently 97  
 Tore me from out of Leda's lovely nest,  
 And to the swiftest heav'n compellèd me.

Its parts most full of hope, most high and best, 100  
 Are all so uniform I cannot tell  
 Where Beatrice directed now my quest;

But she who saw my great desire full well, 103  
 Began with such a smile of gladdest grace,  
 That in her look God's joy appeared to dwell:

" The nature of the universe which stays 106  
 " The centre, and moves all the rest around,  
 " From hence begins as from its starting place.

" This Heaven to no other ' where ' is bound, 109  
 " Except the Mind divine, wherein is lit  
 " The love which turns and worth which here is found.

" And light and love one ring about it fit, 112  
 " As it to the others doth, and this enringing  
 " He only understands Who maketh it.

" Its movement is not from another springing; 115  
 " But as by half and fifth is measured ten,  
 " So this the measure to the rest is bringing.

" And how in this same vessel do remain 118  
 " The roots of time, its leaves in all the rest,  
 " May now to thee be manifest and plain.



- “ O greed, which mortals so o’ermasterest            121  
“ Below thee, that no one of them hath power  
“ From ’neath thy waves to draw his eyes oppressed!
- “ ’Tis true the will in men yet comes to flower,        124  
“ But the true plums to mouldering growths are grown,  
“ Beneath the never-ending rainstorm’s shower:
- “ And innocence and faith are found alone            127  
“ In little children; both then fly away  
“ Before the cheeks are covered o’er with down.
- “ Many a child, still lisping, fasts to-day,            130  
“ Who soon will eat, when once his tongue is free,  
“ All food in any month and brook no stay;
- “ And many a lisping child may love, we see,        133  
“ And heed its mother now, who, when aright  
“ He speaks, will long that buried she may be.
- “ So groweth blackened even at first sight,            136  
“ The white skin of the daughter fair of him  
“ Who brings the morn and leaveth dusky night.
- “ And thou, lest this to thee should marvellous seem,  
“ Think that on earth none governs, therefore strayed  
“ Hath all the house of man from paths grown dim.
- “ But ere all January be unwinterèd,                142  
“ Through that one hundredth part on earth neglected,  
“ In these high spheres shall such a roar be made,

" That fortune's hour, so wearily expected, 145  
 " Shall turn the poops where now the prows are seen,  
 " Till on a straight course is the fleet directed,  
 " And true fruit follow where the flower hath been."

## CANTO XXVIII

AFTER Beatrice's discourse Dante, gazing upon her eyes, is suddenly aware of the reflection in them of a thing which was not in his sight or thought, and on turning to see what it may be he perceives a point of intensest light with nine concentric circles wheeling round it; swift and bright in proportion to their nearness to the point. Beatrice, quoting Aristotle's phrase concerning God, declares that Heaven and all Nature hang upon that point, and bids Dante note the burning love that quickens the movement of the inmost circle. Thereon Dante at once perceives that the nine circles represent the Intelligences of angelic orders connected with the nine revolving heavens, but cannot see why the outmost, swiftest, widest sweeping and most divine heaven should correspond with the inmost and smallest angelic circle. Beatrice explains that the divine substance of the heavens being uniform that heaven which is materially greatest has in it the most of excellence; but it is the excellence, not the size, that is essential. In like manner swiftness and brightness are the measure of the excellence of the angelic circles, and therefore the inmost of them which is swiftest and brightest represents those intelligences that love and know most; and the spiritual correspondence is complete between the two diverse spacial presentations. Thus the relativity of space-conceptions is suggested. God may be conceived as the spaceless centre of the universe just as well as the all-embracer. Dante, now enlightened, sees the circles shoot out countless sparks that follow them in their whirling; and hears them all sing Hosanna; while Beatrice further explains how the swift joy of the angels is proportioned to their sight, their sight to their merit, won by grace and by exercise of

will; whereas love is not the foundation but the inevitable consequence of knowledge. She has explained the three hierarchies and nine orders of the Angels, as Dionysius (enlightened by his own intense passion of contemplation, and instructed by Paul who had been rapt to heaven), and set them forth. Gregory, having departed from the scheme of Dionysius, smiled at his own error when he beheld this heaven.

When she, who in my soul makes Paradise,  
Revealed the truth so differently wrought  
To mortal life, compact of miseries;

As when in a glass a candle's flame is caught                    4  
Kindled behind a man, he sees it so  
Ere it be present or to sight or thought,

And then he turns to look if truth or no                         7  
The glass is speaking, and sees this accord  
With that, as to the tune the words will go;

So doth my memory the thought afford                         10  
That I did, gazing on the beauteous eyes,  
Whence love to tangle me had drawn its cord.

And when I turned and mine were met likewise             13  
By that which in such volume aye appears,  
Whene'er the sight its circling well espies,

A point I saw, which rayed forth light so fierce,           16  
That closed must be the vision where doth stream  
Its flames, so mighty in their power to pierce.

- And whatsoever star most small doth seem 19  
From earth, would show a moon by its side placed,  
As star alongside star doth shed its beam.
- Perchance as close as seems a light embraced. 22  
By the halo which it painteth, whensoever  
The vapour is most dense on which 'tis based,
- At such a distance, a fire circle there 25  
Swept round the point, so swift, it would confound  
The greatest speed which round the world doth fare;
- And this was by another girdled round, 28  
That by a third, a fourth the third beside,  
A fifth the fourth, a sixth the fifth one bound.
- Then followed on the seventh, all so wide 31  
In its extent, that Juno's messenger  
Completed, were too strait to hold its pride;
- And so the eighth and ninth; all of them there 34  
Slower or faster wheeled, as more or less  
From unity their numbers distant were;
- And that one glowed with clearest fieriness 37  
From which the pure spark was least distant, since  
Into the truth thereof it most doth press.
- My lady, seeing me in deep suspense 40  
Made anxious, said: "Lo! Nature all dependeth  
" From that one point and Heaven's circumference.

“ Look on that circle which therewith most blendeth,  
 “ And know its motion is so swift, through love 44  
 “ Which fiery shafts throughout its being sendeth.”

And I: “ If now the universe were wove 46  
 “ In order, such as in these wheels I see,  
 “ Content with what is offered then I'd prove;

“ But in the world of sense we find to be 49  
 “ Each circling more divine, the more it lies  
 “ Removèd from the centre verily.

“ Whence, ere my longing can attain its prize 52  
 “ In this angelic wondrous temple, where  
 “ Love and light only are the boundaries,

“ I must hear why the copy doth not share 55  
 “ The fashion of the pattern, because now  
 “ I gaze but find no understanding there.”

“ No marvel if unfit thy fingers show 58  
 “ For such a knot; for, never being tried,  
 “ Exceeding hard it hath become, I know.”

Thus spake my lady: “ Wouldst be satisfied,” 61  
 She added, “ Take the thing that I shall tell,  
 “ And round about it let thy wit be plied.

“ Ample or narrow, the corporeal 64  
 “ Circles are made through worth, which more or less  
 “ Spreadeth o'er all their parts, shaping them well.

- “ The greater weal from greater worthiness 67  
“ Will come, and fills a greater form likewise,  
“ If like perfection all its parts may bless.
- “ Therefore the one, which with it as it flies 70  
“ Sweeps all the universe, doth correspond  
“ To the circle where most love and knowledge rise.
- “ Wherefore if thou shouldst draw thy measure round  
“ The worth and not the seeming, which by thee 74  
“ As circles in these substances is found,
- “ A wondrous correspondence will there be 76  
“ Of small to less, and great to more, between  
“ Each heaven and its intelligence thou’lt see.”
- As doth become all splendid and serene 79  
The hemisphere of air, if Boreas blow  
From out the cheek which gentler aye hath been,
- So that the erst obscuring mist wreaths go 82  
To nought and vanish, and the whole of heaven  
Laughs with the loveliness it hath to show,
- So did I when my lady thus had given 85  
Provision to me of her clear reply,  
And truth was seen like to a star at even.
- After her words were stayed, immediately 88  
The circles sparkled, in the way indeed  
That from the molten iron sparks upfly,

And every spark behind its fire did speed; 91  
 Thousands there were beyond the numbering  
 To which the doubled chessboard squares will lead.

And choir I heard on choir "Hosanna" sing 94  
 To that fixed point that holds them and shall hold,  
 Where they have been for ever worshipping.

And she, who could the questioning thoughts behold  
 Hid in my mind, said: "These first circles see, 98  
 "Seraphs and Cherubs to thy sight unfold;

"Their bonds they follow swift and eagerly, 100  
 "To grow as like the point as they can bear,  
 "And to their height of vision this can be.

"Those loves that round them speed, are named the  
 fair 103

"Thrones of God's aspect, since by them fulfilled  
 "The first great ternary is, wherein they share.

"And thou shouldst know they with delight are  
 thrilled, 106

"In measure as their sight can penetrate  
 "More deep the truth wherein all minds are stilled.

"Hence may be known how that the blessed state 109  
 "Springs from the act which sees, not that which loves,  
 "Which follows after, therefore is less great.

"The measure of the sight the merit proves 112  
 "Which grace and righteous will beget, and so  
 "From rank to rank onward the progress moves.



- “ The second ternary, whose flowers blow 115  
“ In this eternal Spring, which Aries dread  
“ Can ne’er by night despoil and overthrow,
- “ ‘ Hosanna ’ sings as birds unwinterèd, 118  
“ Ever with threefold melodies, which sound  
“ In orders three of gladness, whence ’tis made.
- “ These three divinities therein are found; 121  
“ First Dominations, Virtues next, and then  
“ Powers, the third order to the others bound.
- “ And the two dancings, last save one, contain 124  
“ The Principalities and Archangels;  
“ And all the last Angelic sports make fain.
- “ With gaze strained upward every order dwells, 127  
“ And downward hath such might that all aspire  
“ Toward God, and each Godward the rest compels.
- “ And Dionysius with so great desire 130  
“ These orders strove to contemplate, he could  
“ Name them, distinguishing each separate fire.
- “ But Gregory another thought pursued 133  
“ Later, at which he smiled his fault to own,  
“ When in this heaven, seeing, he understood.
- “ And if by mortals on the earth were shown 136  
“ So great a secret truth, marvel no more,  
“ For ’twas by him, who saw it here, made known,  
“ With truth about these circles in great store.” 139

## CANTO XXIX

BEATRICE gazes for a moment upon that point of light wherein every *where* is here and every *when* is now, and therein reads the questions Dante would fain have her answer. It was not to acquire any good for himself, but that his reflected light might itself have the joy of conscious existence, that God, in his timeless eternity, uttered himself as love in created beings, themselves capable of loving. It is vain to ask what God was doing before the creation, for Time has no relevance except within the range of creation; nor was the first creation itself successive, or temporal at all; for pure form or act (the angels) pure matter or potentiality (the *materia prima*) and inseparably united act and potentiality (the material heavens) issued into simultaneous being. Jerome was wrong (as Scripture and reason testify) in thinking that the angels were created long before the heavens over which it is the office of certain of them to preside. Dante now knows where the angels were created (in God's eternity) and when (contemporaneously with Time and with the Heavens) and how (all loving); but has yet to learn how soon certain fell (ere one might count twenty) and why (because of Satan's pride), and how the less presumptuous ones recognised the source of their swift and wide range of understanding, and so received grace (the acceptance of which was itself a merit), and were confirmed. This instruction were enough, did not the prevalence of erroneous teaching (honest and dishonest) make it needful to add that the angels, ever rejoicing in the direct contemplation of God, see all things always, and therefore exercise no changing stress of attention, and therefore need no power of memory, since their thought never having lost immediate hold of aught needs not to recall aught. Beatrice

goes on to denounce the vain and flippant teaching by which the faithful are deluded, and especially the unauthorised pardonings; and finally, returning to the subject of the angels, explains that though in number they surpass the power of human language or conception, yet each has his own specific quality of insight and of resultant love. Such is the wonder of the divine love which breaks itself upon such countless mirrors, yet remains ever one.

When both the children of Latona claim  
 Together the horizon for a zone,  
 When that the Ram and Scales are over them,

As long as 'tis, till from that belt each one            4  
 Breaks free, while, as it changes hemisphere,  
 The balance which the zenith held is gone,

So long, with smiling eyes, did Beatrice there            7  
 Keep silence, while she turned her eager face  
 Toward the point my nature could not bear.

Then she began: " I give thee for a grace            10  
 " Unasked what thou wouldst hear, since it is plain  
 " To me where ' when ' and ' where ' meet in one place.

" Not that to Him (as cannot be) a gain            13  
 " Of good should come, but that His splendour might  
 " Declare ' I am ' in glory without stain,

" In His eternity beyond Time's flight,            16  
 " Eternal Love, beyond what mind can dream,  
 " As pleased Him showed Himself in new love's light.

- " Nor yet ere then as slumbering did He seem; 19  
 " For nor before nor after could there be,  
 " When o'er these waters did God's spirit stream.
- " Matter and form conjoined, in purity 22  
 " Issued in flawless life, as from a bow  
 " Three stringed might be unloosened arrows three.
- " As will in crystal, glass or amber, glow 25  
 " A ray, so that 'tis not a moment stayed  
 " Between its entrance and its conquest, so
- " Through its whole being all at once displayed, 28  
 " The threefold power of its Lord streamed through,  
 " And no distinct beginning there was made.
- " Co-woven, co-created, order grew 31  
 " With substances; those were the height in fine  
 " Of all the universe, pure act and true.
- " Pure power it was that held the lowest line, 34  
 " And in the midst power and act did twist  
 " Such withies as no force can e'er untwine.
- " Jerome wrote of long ages in the mist 37  
 " Of time, when angels were created, ere  
 " Aught else at all created form possessed;
- " But writers of the Holy Ghost declare 40  
 " Often this truth I tell and oft this thing  
 " If well thou'lt seek surely thou'lt find it there,

## CANTO XXIX

209

- “ And reason will to this conclusion bring 43  
“ Mankind, for 'twill not grant the movers should  
“ Abide so long without their perfecting.
- “ Now *where* and *when* by thee are understood 46  
“ And *how* these Loves were chosen, so thou may'st  
“ See now three flames quenched of thy longing mood.
- “ Nor would one counting come with greater haste 49  
“ To twenty, than the rebel angel's part  
“ The substrate of your elements defaced;
- “ The rest abode and so began this art 52  
“ Which thou beholdest, which such joy confers,  
“ That from their circling round they ne'er depart.
- “ The Fall's beginning was that pride, the curse 55  
“ Of him on whom, as thou hast seen, doth press  
“ The crushing weight of all the universe.
- “ Those who are here were humble to confess 58  
“ They owed their all unto that Worth which made  
“ Them swift to understand its graciousness.
- “ Wherefore their vision to such heights was led 61  
“ By grace illuming and by merit's dower,  
“ That full their will is and establishèd.
- “ And do not doubt, but be assured this hour, 64  
“ That in receiving grace a merit lies,  
“ By throwing wide th' affection to its power.

- " Now much there is of these consistories 67  
 " Which thou canst contemplate thyself, with nought  
 " To aid, if thou hast learned my words to prize.
- " But since on earth within your schools 'tis taught 70  
 " That angel nature ever doth endure  
 " With understanding, will and memory fraught,
- " I will yet speak, that thou shalt see it pure, 73  
 " The truth, which is on earth in part concealed,  
 " By such equivocation made unsure.
- " These substances, since first God's face fulfilled 76  
 " Their joyfulness, their sight have ever kept  
 " Turned toward it, where all things are revealed.
- " Wherefore no new thing comes to intercept 79  
 " The vision, and they need no memory e'er,  
 " To re-unite for them a cleft concept.
- " So that, though sleeping not, they dream down there,  
 " Thinking, and thinking not, that truth they speak;  
 " But greater guilt and shame one school must bear.
- " When ye philosophise on earth, ye seek 85  
 " More than one path; so far doth love of show  
 " And thought of it, transport your spirits weak.
- " Yet less of scorn within our courts will grow 88  
 " From this, than when the Holy Writ is thrust  
 " Back, or distorted by false men below.

“ They never think how much of blood it cost 91  
 “ To sow it in the world, and think no more  
 “ That humbly following it doth please the most.

“ Each one invents new things and straineth sore 94  
 “ His mind, to make a show; and preachers lean  
 “ To these vain thoughts, and pass the Gospel o'er.

“ One saith the moon was at Christ's passion seen 97  
 “ To draw her back, denying earth the use  
 “ Of the sun's rays, setting herself between;

“ Others, the light did of itself refuse 100  
 “ To shine; and thus to India and to Spain  
 “ The same eclipse replied as to the Jews.

“ Lo! fewer Lapos Florence doth contain 103  
 “ And Bindos, than the fables which each year  
 “ This side and that, the pulpit will maintain;

“ So that the silly sheep, thou well may'st fear, 106  
 “ Turn from their pastures back, with wind ill-fed;  
 “ But ignorance doth not excuse them here.

“ Christ to his first assembly never said, 109  
 “ ‘ Go, preach vain trifles to the world! ’ But right  
 “ And true foundation gave to them instead.

“ They sounded that alone with all their might, 112  
 “ So that to kindle faith, both lance and shield  
 “ Made they from out the Gospel for the fight.

- " Now with grimace and jest men go a-field 115  
 " To preach; and if loud laughter rise, the hood  
 " Swells out and nothing more men bid them yield.
- " But in the cowl-end such a bird doth brood, 118  
 " That if the crowd could see it they would know  
 " What pardon 'tis for which their faith is wooed.
- " Wherefore such folly so on earth doth grow, 121  
 " That they to any promise, without sign  
 " Of any proof, sway crowding to and fro.
- " By this St. Anthony feeds fat his swine, 124  
 " And others too, more swinish far than they,  
 " Who with base coin betray the things divine.
- " But since enough we've wandered, let us stay 127  
 " Our eyes henceforth upon the righteous road,  
 " Till with our time shortened may grow our way.
- " This nature, grade on grade hath so o'erflowed 130  
 " In number, that no speech of mortal men,  
 " Or thought, at that far point ever abode:
- " But if thou look at that which is made plain 133  
 " By Daniel, in his thousands thou shalt see  
 " Fixed numbers vanish, nor are known again.
- " The Primal Light which o'er it all streams free, 136  
 " Is by it in as many ways received,  
 " As are the glories which its mates may be.



- “ Wherefore since on the act which hath conceived,  
“ Affection followeth, hath love’s delight 140  
“ With more or less of warmth to each one cleaved.
- “ Behold now what a wondrous breadth and height 142  
“ Hath Worth eternal, which hath made this store  
“ Of mirrors, into which it breaks, despite
- “ Itself remaining one, e’en as before.” 145

## CANTO XXX

WHEN it is dawn with us and noon six thousand miles to the East of us, and the shadow of the earth cast by the sun is level with the plane of our horizon, the stars one by one disappear. And in like manner the angelic rings that seemed to enclose the all-enclosing divine point gradually disappeared; whereon Dante turned to Beatrice and saw her of such transcendent beauty that like every artist who has reached the extreme limit of his skill he must leave this excess unchronicled. Beatrice tells him that they have now issued forth from the heaven that compasses all space into the heaven of light, love, joy, which is not a thing of space, and where he shall behold the angels, and shall see the elect in the forms they will wear after the resurrection. A blinding flash of light enwraps the poet, and his sight then becomes such that naught can vanquish it; whereon he sees (first in symbolic form, as by the stream of Time; then in their true shapes, as gathering round the circle of Eternity) the things of heaven. The light of God, striking upon the *Primum Mobile*, is reflected up upon the ranks of the blest, to whom it gives power to look upon God himself. Dante, in this region, where far and near have no relevancy, gazes upon the saints, and Beatrice bids him rejoice in their number; and then directs his sight to one of the few places yet vacant. It is appointed for the emperor Henry who shall strive to set Italy straight, but shall be thwarted by the blinding greed of the Italians and the hypocrisy of Pope Clement, whose fearful fate Beatrice proclaims.

Perchance six thousand miles from us the day  
Glows at the sixth hour, the world's shadow now,  
Even as to a smooth bed, slopes away.

When heaven's height beginneth such to grow 4  
Deep o'er our heads, that here and there a star  
Loseth its power to shine so far below;

And as advanceth, of the Sun's great car, 7  
The brightest handmaid, so doth heaven erase  
Sight after sight, e'en those that fairest are.

Not otherwise the triumph, (which in grace 10  
Plays ever round the point which vanquished me,  
Which all, that seems to embrace it, doth embrace,)

Little by little grew too faint to see; 13  
Wherefore my love and lack of seeing bade  
Mine eyes on Beatrice directed be.

If all that yet of her has well been said 16  
Were in one act of praise together blended,  
Too little for this need thereby were made.

I saw a beauty which so far transcended 19  
Measure of ours, that I believe alone  
By Him Who made, its joy is comprehended.

And at this pass I yield me, overthrown 22  
Far more than ever by his theme's sharp might,  
Tragic or comic, any bard was known.

For as the sun to the most trembling sight, 25  
So her sweet smile in its remembering,  
Cuts itself off from memory outright.

- From the first day which to my life did bring 28  
Sight of her face, until this vision, ne'er  
Hath song of mine been stayed from following;
- But now perforce, behind her beauty fair 31  
My poesy pursuing fails, as will  
The artist tasked beyond his power to bear.
- Such, as I leave her to a herald still 34  
More worthy than my trumpet, which e'en now  
Its arduous task is seeking to fulfil,
- She spake, and voice and gestures both did show 37  
The leader; " From the greatest body move  
" We to this heaven, which as pure light doth glow,
- " Light of the mind, filled full of love, the love 40  
" Of true good, filled with gladness equally,  
" Gladness which sweeter than all else doth prove.
- " Here shall be seen the two-fold soldiery 43  
" Of Paradise, and one host, all arrayed  
" As at the final judgment, shalt thou see."
- As when a sudden lightning flash has made 46  
The visual spirits reel, until anon  
The pow'r to see the strongest things will fade;
- So round me then a living light outshone, 49  
And left me swathed in such a woven sheet,  
Wrought of its brightness, that all else was gone.

" The love which stilleth Heaven aye doth greet 52

" With salutation him who enters there,

" Thus for the flame to make the candle meet."

So soon as unto me these brief words were 55

Entered, at once I felt in me the might

To rise above all former pow'rs soe'er;

And kindled me with such a new-born sight, 58

That then mine eyes had easily withstood

The utmost purity there is of light.

And lo! I saw a river in full flood, 61

A tawny glow of fire, flowing between

Banks, which a wondrous Spring to colour wooed.

From out the river living sparks were seen 64

To shoot and fall, where thick the flowers lie,

Like rubies set within the gold's soft sheen.

Then, as joy-drunken with their spicery, 67

They sought again the eddying marvellous river,

And as one plunged, another sprang on high.

" The lofty wish which, burning, makes thee quiver 70

" To have more knowledge now for benison,

" The more it swells, the more doth please me ever.

" But from this river must a draught be won, 73

" Ere thy great thirst its satisfaction know."

So spake she, she who was mine eyesight's sun.

“ The stream, the topaz gems that to and fro 76

“ Fly fast, the smiling grass, are shadows pale

“ That but the preface of their truth can show.

“ Not that these things themselves are harsh; to fail

“ To know them is thine own fault, for to see 80

“ Such glories yet thine eyes cannot avail.”

No child doth ever haste more eagerly 82

With face turned toward the milk, if he awake

Perchance far later than his wont may be,

Than I did, better mirrors yet to make 85

Of both mine eyes, down-bending toward the stream

Which flows that we therefrom may virtue take.

And then as drank thereof the straining rim 88

Of both mine eyelids, lo! a change was known,

Its length transformed to roundness all did seem.

Then, (as when people wearing masks are shown 91

Other than what they were, if they divest

Them of the semblances which hid their own,)

So flowers and sparks before me changed, to rest 94

In images of greater gladness, till

I saw both courts of Heaven manifest.

Splendour of God, whereby grew visible 97

The mighty triumph of Truth's realm, may't please

Thee grant the power to show the vision still.

## CANTO XXX

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A light is there by which the creature sees 100  
E'en its Creator, and to set its eyes  
On Him alone can bring it to its peace:

And so far out it stretches circlewise, 103  
That its circumference a girdle were  
Too easy for the sun's great boundaries.

The rays that make it are reflected clear 106  
From summit of the Primum Mobile,  
Which life and potency deriveth there;

And as a hill, if quiet waters be 109  
Laid at its base, is in that mirror found,  
As though its wealth of grass and flowers to see;

So rising o'er the light, around, around, 112  
Mirrored in more than a thousand ranks, uprose  
All of us who with sure return are crowned.

If to the lowest step such glory flows 115  
Of radiance, conceive the space aright  
Within the utmost petal of this rose.

Mine eyes in all the wondrous breadth and height 118  
Wandered no whit, but grasped the range and sway  
Of all that ministry of fair delight.

There far or near adds nought, nor takes away; 121  
For where directly God is governing  
No law of Nature cometh into play.

- Within this rose eternal, widening, 124  
 Unfolding, showering perfume (praises free  
 Unto the Sun which maketh endless Spring,)
- Into its yellow glow Beatrice drew me, 127  
 As one speech-fain, yet silent, while she said,  
 " How great the white robed host, behold and see!
- " See the vast circuit by our city made; 130  
 " Behold our thrones so filled that now but few  
 " Are waited for, till all shall be arrayed.
- " On that high seat thou turn'st thine eyes to view,  
 " Because already shines the crown above, 134  
 " (Ere at this wedding feast shalt thou sup too,)
- " Shall sit the soul (on earth august 'twill prove) 136  
 " Of Henry, who your Italy perverse  
 " To straighten ere her time, shall nobly move.
- " That greed so blind, that haunts you like a curse,  
 " Hath made you like unto the child in fine 140  
 " Who dies of hunger while he spurns his nurse;
- " And he who shall control the court divine, 142  
 " Shall then be one who shall not tread one path  
 " With him, in covert or in plain design.
- " Short time will God endure him ere His wrath 145  
 " Thrust from the sacred office, and he will  
 " Have the desert which Simon Magus hath,
- " Forcing Anagna's victim lower still." 148



## CANTO XXXI

THE redeemed are seen, rank above rank, as the petals of the divine rose; and the angels flying between them and God minister peace and ardour to them, for passion is here peaceful and peace passionate. Nor does this angelic multitude intercept the piercing light of God nor the piercing sight of the redeemed. The realm, whose joy no longer needs the stimulus supplied by the fear of losing it or the effort to retain it, centres its look and love on the triune God. Oh! that he would look down on the storm-tossed earth; from the most evil quarter of which Dante coming to that region is smitten dumb by the contrast. Mutely gazing, as the pilgrim at the shrine of his pilgrimage, thinking to tell again what he has seen, Dante after a time turns to question Beatrice, but finds her gone. Bernard, the type of contemplation, or immediate vision, has come at Beatrice's request, to bring Dante to the goal of his desire, by directing his eyes to that actual vision of divine things in their true forms for which her patient instructions have prepared him. And he first directs his sight to Beatrice herself in her place of glory. To her he pours out his gratitude, while imploring her further protection and praying that he may live and die worthy of her love; whereon she smiles upon him and then turns to God in whom alone is true and abiding union of human souls. Dante now learns who his guide is and gazes with awe-struck wonder on the features of the saint who had seen God while yet on earth; then, at his prompting, he looks above and sees the glory of Mary like the glory of the dawn, flaming amongst countless angels—each one having his own specific beauty of light and gesture—and gladdening all the saints.

Fronting my gaze lay Heaven's soldiery,  
 Ranked like the petals of a fair white rose,  
 Won by the blood of Christ, His bride to be.

The other host, that singing as it goes, 4  
 Looks on His glory, Who inspires its love,  
 His worth from which its excellence outflows,

(Like eager swarms of bees that from above 7  
 Now plunge within the flowers, and now return  
 There where their toil will final sweetness prove,)

Anon descend within that flower where burn 10  
 So many petals, and anon they soar  
 Back where their love makes ever its sojourn.

And faces all of living flame they wore, 13  
 And wings of gold, and white was all the rest,  
 Such that by it the snow were white no more.

When in the flower from rank to rank they pressed, 16  
 The ardour and the peace to each they brought,  
 Won where their fanning wings their sides had blessed;

Nor in the flying army was there aught 19  
 To come between the rose and heights that shine,  
 And mar the vision and the splendour wrought.

For through the universe the light divine 22  
 In measure of its worth can penetrate,  
 So nought can stay it or its course confine.

## CANTO XXXI

223

This kingdom all secure, this happy state, 25  
Where men of old meet men of times that are,  
Its sight and love on one mark concentrate.

O threefold light, shining a single star, 28  
That sparkling to their view makes them content,  
Look down upon our storm from heights afar!

If the Barbarians who pitch their tent 31  
Beneath the sky where Helice wheels each night,  
Linked with the son on whom her love is spent,

Were filled with awe before the glorious sight 34  
Of Rome, and Rome's great works, in days past, when  
The world held nought to match the Lateran's might;

I, coming to realms divine, from haunts of men, 37  
From things of time to the eternal sphere,  
From Florence to a people just and sane,

Filled with amazement might indeed appear! 40  
In truth 'twixt that and joy I was as those  
Whose wish is to be dumb and nought to hear.

And as the pilgrim's heart with new life glows, 43  
Gazing upon the temple of his vow,  
And much he hopes to tell how great it rose,

So I, through living light, directed now 46  
Mine eyes o'er all the ranks arrayed for me,  
Both up and down and circling round, I trow.

Faces I saw, dear with love's mystery, 49  
 Shine in that light, I saw their smiling eyes,  
 And gestures fraught with every dignity.

Thus on my vision opened Paradise; 52  
 As yet nowhere my glance had rested still,  
 But all its scope I well could recognise;

I turned about with new enkindled will 55  
 To ask those questions of my gracious guide,  
 Whereat as yet suspense my mind must fill;

One thing I sought, another sight replied, 58  
 I saw not Beatrice, but an agèd one,  
 Clad like the folk in glory, by my side.

His eyes and face with gentle gladness shone, 61  
 Friendly and kind the gestures that he made,  
 E'en as a tender father doth alone.

And: "Where is she?" at once to him I said, 64  
 And he: "That so its goal thy longing find,  
 "Beatrice hath called me from my place to aid.

"Look! and her beauty thou again shalt find, 67  
 "In the third circle from the highest grace,  
 "Upon the throne her merit hath assigned."

Without a word mine eyes I did upraise, 70  
 And saw her make around her head a crown,  
 Reflecting from her the eternal rays.

Though in the deepest seas 'twere left to drown, 73  
No mortal eye could mark a space so wide  
From that high place whence rolls the thunder down,

As there my sight from Beatrice did divide; 76  
Yet cared I nothing, for the vision pure  
Came through no medium that its form could hide.

“ Lady, in whom alone my hopes endure, 79  
“ Whose feet did not disdain the floor of Hell,  
“ To make my pathway of salvation sure;

“ Of all the wonders memory can tell, 82  
“ I recognise the grace and majesty  
“ Through thee alone, thy power, and virtue's spell.

“ A slave I was, to freedom led by thee, 85  
“ By all the means whose power thou didst possess,  
“ And all the paths thou hast made straight for me;

“ Guard in me now thy gifts of graciousness, 88  
“ So that my soul by thee made sound, one day  
“ Loosed from my body, may not please thee less.”

So ran my prayer; and she from far away 91  
Seemed as she smiled, looked at me long, and then  
Turned to the fountain that endures for aye.

“ Resume thy path,” the elder said, “ again, 94  
“ And to accomplish what is meet to do,  
“ Since prayer and holy love my aid constrain,

“ Let thine eyes fly this heavenly garden through, 97  
 “ Thus looking will thy glance new forces learn,  
 “ And strength to meet the ray divine renew.

“ So Heaven’s Queen, for whom with love I burn 100  
 “ Through all my soul, will grant us grace at last;  
 “ Her faithful Bernard’s prayer she will not spurn.”

As one who from Croatia has passed, 103  
 And chances our Veronica to see,  
 Famed for so long, it holds his eyesight fast,

And while ’tis shown he sayeth inwardly, 106  
 “ O Jesu Christ, my Lord, Thou Godhead True,  
 “ Was this the semblance that was worn of Thee? ”

So at that eager love I gazed, that knew 109  
 The peace divine, by contemplation’s aid,  
 While yet on earth a mortal breath he drew.

“ O son of grace, this joyous world,” he said 112  
 “ In all its breadth and length thou canst not note,  
 “ If still thine eyes down at its base are stayed;

“ Look through its circles to the most remote, 115  
 “ Till, shining on her throne, thou seest the Queen,  
 “ To whom this world its worship doth devote.”

I raised mine eyes, and as at morn ’tis seen 118  
 How the horizon on its eastern side  
 Outshines the part where last the sun has been,

## CANTO XXXI

227

So at the boundary mine eyes descried, 121  
As when one leaves the vale and climbeth straight,  
A light that vanquished every light beside.

On earth that spot is brightest where we wait 124  
The chariot pole by Phaeton ill controlled,  
And on each side of it the rays abate;

So as that oriflamme of peace outrolled, 127  
Its midmost was the brightest, and its flame  
Tempered in equal wise each side did hold.

At that mid-point a thousand angels came, 130  
All making festival with wings outspread,  
Each one distinct in glory and in name;

And on their sports and songs I saw were shed 133  
Smiles, from a beauty so divine, that all  
The eyes of all the saints were comforted;

And even could my words so freely fall 136  
As mind conceives my thought, I should not dare  
The least of her enchantment to recall.

When Bernard saw my gaze was eager there, 139  
Fixed on the sun whence his own warmth is gained,  
His eyes looked on her with a love so rare

That mine new ardour for the quest obtained. 142

## CANTO XXXII

BEGINNING with Mary, Bernard indicates to Dante the great distinctions of heaven. Cleaving the rose downwards into two halves run the lines that part those who looked forward to Christ about to come from those who looked back upon him after he had come. Mary who had faith in Christ before he was conceived ranks as a Hebrew, and John Baptist who, when still in the womb, greeted him and afterwards proclaimed him as already come, ranks as a Christian. The two aspects of the faith embrace equal numbers of saints, the one tale being already full and the other near upon it. Midway across the cleaving lines runs the circle that divides the infants who died ere they had exercised free choice, and who were saved by the faith and the due observances of their parents, from those whose own acts of faith or merit have contributed to their salvation. The children are ranked in accordance with the abysmal but just and orderly judgments of God in the assignment of primal endowment. Dante then gazes in transport upon the face of Mary and sees the rejoicing Gabriel exult before her. He looks upon other great denizens of heaven, and is then bidden to turn again in prayer to Mary that after this so great preparation he may receive from her the final grace to enable him to lift his eyes right upon the Primal Love.

Bound to his joy, the Saint contemplative  
Free duty of a teacher took once more,  
And holy words began thereon to give.

“ The wound by Mary closed, anointed o’er,  
“ She who so lovely seems at Mary’s feet,  
“ Is she who opened it and pierced so sore.

4



- " Then in the order of the third fair seat 7  
 " Below her Rachel sits, and with her, lo!  
 " That Beatrice thy sight is fain to greet.
- " With Sarah, Judith, and Rebecca, know 10  
 " Her from whom third removed the singer came  
 " Who cried ' Have pity ' in his guilty woe.
- " From rank to rank behold them in their fame, 13  
 " Descending as I go throughout the rose  
 " Petal by petal, giving each a name.
- " And from the seventh downward, e'en as those 16  
 " Thereto, lo! Hebrew women are arrayed,  
 " Parting the locks wherewith the flower grows;
- " Because according to the sight that made 19  
 " The faith in Christ, these are the wall whereby  
 " The holy stairs' division is displayed.
- " On this side where the flower complete doth lie 22  
 " In all its petals, those are placed alone,  
 " Whose faith in Christ to come raised them on high;
- " On the other part, with empty seats bestrewn, 25  
 " In semi-circles see! the souls abide,  
 " Whose faith when Christ had come made them His  
 own.
- " And as the glorious throne upon this side 28  
 " Where sits the Queen of Heaven and the race  
 " Who sit below her, clear the ranks divide,

- " So on the other hath great John his place, 31  
 " Whose saintship desert and sharp death made clear,  
 " And Hell endured thereafter two years' space;
- " And for division lower there appear 34  
 " Francis, and Benedict, and Augustine;  
 " And circle after circle down to here.
- " Now marvel at deep Providence divine! 37  
 " Each aspect of the faith, in equal share  
 " Shall fill this garden to an equal line;
- " And downward from that rank that cleaveth there  
 " The two halves, midmost those are placed whose  
     throne 41  
 " Is won by no deserving whatsoever,
- " But under law, by merit not their own; 43  
 " For these are souls from living all set free  
 " Ere they could exercise true choice alone.
- " This by their faces well perceived may be, 46  
 " And also by their voices' childish sound,  
 " If eyes and ears rightly are used by thee.
- " Thou art in doubt, and doubting, silent found, 49  
 " But I will loose for thee the knot hard tied,  
 " Where by thy subtle thoughts I see thee bound.
- " Within the boundaries of this kingdom wide, 52  
 " No point of chance can find a sojourning,  
 " As hunger, thirst, or sadness cannot bide.

- “ Because eternal law is set as king 55  
“ O'er all thou view'st, and here must thou confess  
“ How to the finger doth conform the ring.
- “ Wherefore this people all so swift to press 58  
“ To the true life, not without cause are here,  
“ And excellence they have, some more, some less.
- “ The King through whom this kingdom resteth clear  
“ In love so great, and in so great delight, 62  
“ Beyond what any will dare hold for dear,
- “ All minds creating in His own glad sight, 64  
“ E'en at His pleasure gives them diverse grace;  
“ Let here the effect suffice to guide thee right!
- “ And this express and clearly finds a place 67  
“ In holy writ, when anger moved those twins  
“ While yet their mother's womb did them embrace.
- “ Then as each grace with diverse locks begins 70  
“ In colour, so in truth a diverse crown  
“ Righteously from the highest Light it wins.
- “ Wherefore without reward for ways their own, 73  
“ Only in primal keenness different,  
“ In different grades they're marshalled up and down.
- “ It was enough if they were innocent 76  
“ In times new-born, to make salvation sure,  
“ If that the parents' minds to faith were bent;

- " When the first ages might no more endure, 79  
 " Male children then by circumcision's aid  
 " Must win them virtue for their pinions pure.
- " But when the time of grace was fully made, 82  
 " Without the perfect baptism of Christ,  
 " Such innocence in realms below was stayed.
- " Now look upon the face that most like Christ 85  
 " Is fashioned, for the brightness there alone  
 " Hath power to make thee worthy to see Christ."
- Such gladness on that face I saw was thrown 88  
 Like rain, (borne on the sacred minds that rise  
 For flight created, through that lofty zone,)
- That nought that e'er before had met mine eyes 91  
 Held me so marvelling in deep suspense,  
 Nor showed God's semblance to me in such wise.
- That love that first swept down to her from hence 94  
 And " Ave Maria gratia plena " sang,  
 Before her spread his wings in reverence.
- Backward the hymn divine in answer rang, 97  
 Back from the blessed courts, from every side,  
 And joy serener to each visage sprang.
- " O holy Father who hast not denied 100  
 " This place below, forsaking now for me  
 " That throne so dear where God bids thee abide,

## CANTO XXXII

233

“ Who is that angel, who so joyously 103

“ Looks on our Queen, where her eyes glories are,

“ Enamoured so, a flame he seems to be? ”

So to his teaching I returned, who far 106

More beauty drew from Mary in my sight,

Than from the sunlight doth the morning star.

And he to me: “ Exultant, gay delight, 109

“ As much as angel or as soul can wear,

“ Is all in him, and so we deem it right;

“ For he it is was sent the palm to bear 112

“ To Mary, when the Son of God Most High

“ Willed that our burden's load Himself should share.

“ But where my word now travels, let thine eye 115

“ In this most just and pious empire rest,

“ Upon its great patricians' company.

“ Those who sit high above, on seats most blest 118

“ By being nearest to our Empress' side,

“ As two roots of our rose are manifest.

“ He who upon her left hand doth abide, 121

“ The father is, through whose defiant taste

“ The race of men by bitter taste is tried.

“ See on the right the ancient father placed 124

“ Of Holy Church, whose merit with the keys

“ Of this love-worthy flower, by Christ was graced;

- " And he, who all the times of little ease                    127  
 " Saw, ere he perished, of that bride so fair,  
 " Won by the lance and by the nails' decrees,  
  
 " Sits by him; while the other's seat doth share   130  
 " The leader under whom the manna fed  
 " That people thankless, fickle, slow to bear.  
  
 " Opposite Peter, Anna, 'stablishèd,                    133  
 " Gazes upon her daughter, nor does she  
 " Stir e'en to sing, such peace therefrom is shed.  
  
 " Facing the greatest of house-fathers, see                136  
 " Sits Lucy, she who moved thy lady's mind,  
 " When down to ruin stooped the brows of thee.  
  
 " But since the time flies on for thee designed,        139  
 " Here let us end, as the good tailor will  
 " Who makes the coat as he the cloth may find;  
  
 " And fix our eyes on Primal Love, until                142  
 " Gazing upon it thou may'st penetrate  
 " Far as thou canst, within its brilliance still.  
  
 " Truly (lest as thou mov'st thy wings, thy fate        145  
 " Be to fall back, when forward thou wouldst go),  
 " By prayer must grace be added to thy state;  
  
 " Grace from her who can highest aid bestow;            148  
 " And do thou follow me with love so wrought,  
 " That from my words thy heart no parting know."  
  
 Thereat in holy prayer he thus besought.                151

## CANTO XXXIII

THE final goal of divine Providence, the mysteries of the incarnation and the redemption, the contrast between earthly hope and heavenly fruition, the whole order of the spiritual universe epitomised in the poet's journey, the crowning grace still awaiting him, the need of yet further purging away of mortal dross if he is to receive it, the high obligation that will rest upon his life hereafter, the sustaining grace that will be needed to enable him to meet it by keeping his affections true to so great a vision, and the intense sympathy with which all the saints enter into his aspiration and plead for the fulfilment of the utmost grace to him as a part of their own bliss,—all this, with the praises of the Virgin, etherialised into the very perfume of devotion, rises in Bernard's prayer to Mary. Mary answers the prayer by looking into the light of God, thereby to gain Bernard's petition for Dante; and Dante, anticipating Bernard's permission, with the passion of his longing already assuaged by the peace of now assured fruition, looks right into the deep light. Memory cannot hold the experience that then was his, though it retains the sweetness that was born of it. But as he gropes for the recovery of some fragment of his vision, he feels in the throb of an ampler joy the assurance that he is touching on the truth as he records his belief that he saw the whole essence of the universe, all beings and all their attributes and all their relations, no longer as scattered and imperfect fragments, but as one perfect whole, and that whole naught else than one single flame of love. So keen is the light of that flame that it would shrivel up the sight if it should turn aside. But that may not be, since *good*, which is the object of all volition, is whole and perfect in it, and only fragmentary and im-

perfect away from it, so that a free will cannot by its nature turn away; and the sight is ever strengthened that turns right into it. As when we look upon a picture or a script, glorious but at first imperfectly mastered by us, and as our eyes slowly adjust themselves, the details rise and assert themselves and take their places, and all the while that the impression changes and deepens the thing that we look upon changes not nor even seems to change, but only we to see it clearer, so Dante's kindling vision reads deeper and deeper into the unchanging glory of the triune Deity, till his mind fastens itself upon the contemplation of the union (in the second Person) of the circle of Deity and the featured countenance of humanity—the unconditioned self-completeness of God that reverent thought asserts and the character and features which the heart demands and which its experience proclaims,—but his powers fail to grapple with the contradiction till the reconciliation is brought home to him in a flash of exalted insight. Then the vision passes away and may not be recalled, but already all jarring protest and opposition to the divine order has given way in the seer's heart to oneness of wish and will with God, who himself is love.

“ O Virgin Mother, daughter of thy Son,  
 “ Humblest and highest in Creation's space,  
 “ Goal fixed by plans eternal to be won;

“ Lo! thou art she in whom our human race                    4  
 “ Appeared so noble, He did not disdain,  
 “ Who made the whole, to make in it His place.

“ Within thy womb the love was lit again,                    7  
 “ Whose warmth in the eternal peace has made  
 “ This flower its full unfolding to attain,



- “ Here as a noonday torch art thou arrayed 10  
“ Of love to us, and among men who die,  
“ A living fount of hope thou art displayed.
- “ Lady, thou hast such worth, thou’rt raised so high,  
“ That who seeks grace and doth not turn to thee, 14  
“ His longing hath no wings, yet seeks to fly.
- “ Not only is thy loving-kindness free 16  
“ To whoso asketh, but ’tis often known  
“ Forestalling prayer in liberality.
- “ All tenderness and pity are thine own, 19  
“ And gracious giving, and in thee unite  
“ All ways of good, Creation e’er has shown.
- “ Now he who one by one within his sight 22  
“ Has held the spirit lives, e’en from the lake,  
“ The universe’s lowest, to this height,
- “ He prayeth thee, of grace, his worth to make 25  
“ Such, that with vision cleansed and clear, his eyes  
“ The higher flight to final bliss may take.
- “ And I who mine own vision ne’er did prize 28  
“ More than the thought of his, bring all my prayer  
“ To thee and pray thee that it may suffice;
- “ That thou wilt scatter what last cloud is there 31  
“ Of his mortality, with prayers of thine,  
“ Till of the joy supreme he grows aware.

“ Further I pray, O Queen, since at thy sign      34  
 “ Power equals will, keep his affections sane,  
 “ After a sight so great, and so divine.

“ His human moods thy gracious care restrain;      37  
 “ See Beatrice and saints how numberless,  
 “ Folding their hands help for my prayer to gain.”

Those eyes God loves and doth revere and bless,      40  
 Fixed upon him who prayed, showed well how great  
 Her joy in prayer of eager humbleness.

Then to the light eterne they speeded straight,      43  
 Wherein no creature's sight can e'er aspire  
 So steadfastly and clear to penetrate.

And I who to the goal of all desire      46  
 Was drawing near, rightly and fittingly  
 Quenched in my inmost soul my longing's fire.

Bernardo made a sign smiling to me      49  
 To look on high, but ere his thought I knew  
 I was myself what he would have me be.

Because my sight becoming cleared anew,      52  
 Was entering more and more within the ray  
 Of that deep light, which in itself is true.

Thenceforward vision held a greater sway      55  
 Than speech e'er could, that yields to such a sight,  
 As memory yields outraged and falls away.

## CANTO XXXIII

239

As one who sees in visions of the night, 58  
And when the dream is passed, the passion bides,  
Stamped on the mind, nought else returns aright;

E'en such am I, because my vision glides 61  
Almost away, yet still by my heart won,  
The sweetness stays whatever else betides.

So is the snow unsealed before the sun, 64  
So as the light leaves drifted down the wind,  
The wisdom of the Sybil was undone.

O highest light! relend unto my mind, 67  
Thou who o'er mortal concept so dost tower,  
A little of the worth I seemed to find,

And grant unto my tongue sufficient power 70  
To leave one spark of all thy glory's fire  
To future races of mankind, for dower;

For if my memory thou wouldst inspire, 73  
More of thy victory could men conceive,  
Hearing it sounded in my verses' choir.

I should have been o'erwhelmed, I well believe, 76  
By all the keenness of the living ray,  
If once mine eyes had sought its light to leave;

Therefore I was the bolder to essay, 79  
As I remember, to endure until  
With infinite Worth my glance should blend and stay.

O grace abounding, whence I drew the will 82  
To fix my gaze on the eternal light,  
Till sight consumed should there itself fulfil!

Within those depths I saw the leaves unite, 85  
By love within a single volume bound,  
Now scattered through the universe's height.

Substance and accident, together crowned, 88  
Were blended and as 'twere so close enwrought  
That in one single flame they both were found.

The universal form I saw methought, 91  
Of this one knot, since as I speak at last  
With greater joy I feel my being fraught.

A deeper sleep on me one moment cast, 94  
Than twenty centuries upon those days  
When Neptune stared as Argo's shadow passed.

Thus all suspended, fixed, my soul did gaze, 97  
Nor moved a whit, so eager and intent,  
Still by its looking kindled to a blaze:

For by that light is such a nature lent 100  
To man, that to another sight to bend  
It were impossible he'd e'er consent.

That good for which the will doth aye contend 103  
Is gathered there; and all without, at best  
Must fail, which there within finds perfect end.

Now shall my tongue fall short, to this addressed, 106  
 E'en of what memory holds for me, far more  
 Than any nurseling's at its mother's breast.

Not that the living light I gazed on wore 109  
 More than one single seeming, verily,  
 For ever is it what it was before;

But by the sight that stirred to strength in me, 112  
 The single vision, as I gazed, so wrought,  
 E'en as I changed from all I used to be.

Mine eyes in that deep light three circles caught, 115  
 Three in their colours, one in magnitude,  
 Out of the depths of its clear being brought;

One from the other as reflected stood 118  
 As Iris is by Iris, and with breath  
 From both the third appeared a fire renewed.

But ah! what poverty my speaking hath 121  
 Matched with my thought, and thought to what was  
 shown,  
 Is such, to name it small falls far beneath.

Eternal Light rapt in thyself alone, 124  
 Alone in knowledge dost thou smile and love,  
 Self understanding, to thyself all known!

That circling which I first believed to move 127  
 Within thee as a clear reflected light,  
 When now mine eyes its further depths might prove,

Within itself, with its own colour bright, 130  
Seemed painted in our image, fair and plain,  
So that therein was gathered all my sight.

As the geometer in thought will strain 133  
To measure out the circle, nor can tell  
The principle he lacks, so toils in vain,

Such was I at this new seen miracle; 136  
I longed to see how image and circle blend  
And how the image comes therein to dwell.

Here could I not on mine own wings depend, 139  
A flash of lightning smote the mind of me,  
Wherein its will was granted at the end;

Power failed unto the lofty fantasy, 142  
But now desire and will were borne afar,  
E'en as a wheel that rolleth fast and free,

By the love that moves the sun and every star. 145

## NOTES

### DANTE'S PARADISE

THE cosmography of the *Comedy* is much simpler and easier of comprehension than is usually supposed, but it is not within the scope of this work to enter into its details. The geographical side of it is sufficiently touched upon in the notes to Canto xxvii.; and the general principles of its astronomy are developed, with a lucidity that cannot be surpassed, by Dante himself in Chapters III. and IV. of Book ii. of the *Convivio*. An excellent popular exposition of the whole system will be found in Witte's *Essays on Dante*<sup>1</sup> (Essay iv. Dante's Cosmography); and the account of the *Ptolemaic System* in any book of astronomy or cyclopaedia will give an adequate general exposition of it.

The general principle by which we may pass from modern conceptions of astronomy to those which we find in the *Comedy* may be arrived at thus: We still speak of the heavenly bodies rising and setting, and revolving from East to West, although we believe that the appearances so described are really caused by the daily revolution of the earth round her axis from West to East. If we carry through the same principle of describing what we see, instead of what we believe, we shall substitute for all the other movements which we believe the earth to make, descriptions of movements in the heavenly bodies which would produce the same effect; and we shall then be speaking the language of Greek and medieval astronomy, which corresponds immediately with the actual appearances. Thus, for the annual motion of the earth round the sun from West to East we shall substitute an annual motion of the sun round the earth. We shall continue to speak of the planets revolving round the centre of the system from West to East, as we do now; but the apparent complications in their movements due to the fact that while they are perpetually changing their position *we* too are revolving round the centre and so perpetually changing our point of view, we shall account for by supposing that *they* engraft upon their primary movement round the centre a secondary backward and forward movement in a circle, which now delays and now accelerates their progress from West to East. This is what the ancient and medieval astronomers did. They supposed, therefore, that each planet (besides partaking the daily movement of the heavens) had two motions, one on a greater sphere, or cycle, revolving round the earth as its centre, and another on a smaller sphere, or epicycle, revolving round a point on the equator of the greater sphere. In the case of the exterior planets, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, the cycle corresponds to the planet's own movement round the sun, and the epicycle to ours. In the case of the inferior planets, Mercury and Venus, this must be reversed. Lastly, the slow top-like movement by which the direction of the earth's axis changes with respect to the fixed stars, causing what is known as the "precession of the equinoxes," will be described as a slow movement of all the fixed stars with respect to the pole of the daily revolution of the heavens. Thus it will be seen that the fundamental geometrical problems of ancient and modern astronomy are identical, and consist in resolving apparently complicated and irregular movements into a combination of simple and regular ones; and, accordingly, the solutions found by the ancient astronomers hold perfectly good, as far as they go, to the present day, and are incorporated in modern astronomy.

It is important thus to form a clear conception of the universe as it presented itself to Dante if we wish to enter into full imaginative sympathy with him, and to reach a point of view from which we can understand how the spiritual and material worlds stood related in his conception, and the associations with which the phenomena of nature blended in his mind, and also to appreciate the scientific value of his observations.

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Dante*. By Dr. Karl Witte, etc. Duckworth, 1898.

But for the direct appreciation of the *Paradise*, little is needed in the first instance beyond a clear conception of the succession of the several heavenly bodies through which Dante ascends, and the moral and spiritual associations which they carry.

If the reader will take any diagram of the solar system as conceived in our day, and simply exchange the places of the sun and the earth (placing the earth, with her satellite the moon, in the centre of the diagram, and placing the sun where he finds the earth marked), he will have the order in which Dante, travelling upwards from the earth, reaches 1 the Moon, 2 Mercury, 3 Venus, 4 the Sun, 5 Mars, 6 Jupiter, 7 Saturn, 8 the constellation of Gemini, 9 the invisible vault beyond the Stars, 10 the Essential Heaven of Light and Love.

The accompanying table will show the general scheme of the poem. Dante's number scheme is always based on *three* subdivided into *seven*, raised, by additions of a character differing from the rest, to *nine*, and by a last addition on an entirely different plane to *ten*.

In the infra-solar heavens, Dante meets souls whom some earthy weakness or stain has so far shorn of what once were their spiritual possibilities, that though the quality of their joy is entirely pure and unalloyed, it is of lesser intensity than it might have been had they been altogether true. Perhaps we may trace, specifically, want of unshaken *faith*, and the partial substitution of earthy for heavenly *hope* and of earthy for heavenly *love* in those three heavens. It was believed that the conical shadow cast through space by the earth, reached as far as the sphere of Venus. The symbolic significance of this does not need further insisting upon.

The sun, the great *luminary* is connected with *prudence*, the leader of the moral or cardinal virtues (see *Purg.* xxix. 130-132), taken in its widest sense, and the other cardinal virtues follow; indicating that the tone and colour of the spiritual fruition of the souls is influenced by the incidence of the moral warfare by which it was earned.

Subtle analogies and hints throughout suggest the astrological appropriateness of the several planets as the places of manifestation of the several groups of souls.

In the constellation of Gemini all the souls are gathered together and are once more manifested to the poet though he only holds converse with members of the one supreme group to which the Apostles and our First Father belong.

In like manner the Angels are manifested in the ninth heaven or *primum mobile*.

But none of these nine heavens is the true abode of any spirit. They are but the symbolically appropriate meeting places appointed for Dante and the several groups of spirits. God and all blessed spirits, whether men or angels, dwell where all space is *here* and all time is *now* in the Empyrean Heaven, which the poet's vision finally reaches and where it ends.

		Empyrean	10	Wherein dwell God His angels and His Redeemed	Heaven of Light and Love beyond space and time, wherein Spirits <i>abide</i>	
		ix. Primum mobile	9	Angels	} Heavens of space, wherein spirits are <i>manifested</i> to the poet on his pil- grimage	
		viii. Stellar Heaven	8	Souls		
The Seven Planetary Heavens	{	III. Supra- solar	7	vii. Saturn		Temperance
		II. Solar		vi. Jupiter		Justice
				v. Mars		Fortitude
		I. Infra- solar	iv. Sun	4		Prudence
			iii. Venus	3		Earthly love
	ii. Mercury	2	Ambition			
	i. Moon	1	Inconstancy			



## CANTO I

1-3. God, as the unmoved source of movement, is the central conception of the Aristotelian theology. Wallace, 39, 46.

God *penetrates* into the essential nature of a thing, and is *reflected* ("gloweth"), more or less, in its concrete being. *Epist. ad Can. Grand.*, § 23; *Conv.* iii. 14: 29-50.

13. Apollo=the Sun=God. *Conv.* iii. 12: 52-54, and *passim*.

16. *One peak*. Hitherto the inspiration of the Muses has sufficed (*cf. Inf.* ii. 7, *Purg.* i. 8), but now the diviner aid of "Apollo" must be invoked as well. It is not easy to trace the origin of Dante's (erroneous) belief that one peak of Parnassus was sacred to the Muses as distinct from Apollo.

19-21. Compare *Purg.* i. 7-12. The underlying motive seems to be an appeal to the deities to proclaim their glory through their willing instrument as zealously as they vindicated their honour against presumptuous rivals. Marsyas was flayed by Apollo for his presumption in challenging him to a contest in playing the pipe. Hence the allusion to the "sheath of his limbs."

32-33. Daphne, the daughter of Peneus, loved by Apollo, was changed into a laurel.

36. *Cirrho*. Apollo's peak of Parnassus.

37-39. The circles of the Equator, the Zodiac and the Equinoctial colure, make each a cross with the circle of the horizon. At the equinox, at sunrise, they all meet the horizon and make their crosses with it at the same spot.

43. "Had wrought," viz. when he rose. It was now noonday (44, 45).

49-54. The point of analogy appears to consist simply in the derivative character of Dante's act.

57. The Earthly Paradise or Garden of Eden (*Purg.* xxviii. 91-93).

61-63. Owing to their rapid approach to the sun. Compare also *Purg.* xxvii. 89, 90.

64. "Wheel" or wheels, here and throughout the *Paradiso* used for the revolving heavens.

68. Ovid tells the tale of the fisherman Glaucus tasting the grass that had revived the fish he had caught, and thereon being seized with yearning for the deep, into which he plunged and became a sea god.

73. Compare 2 *Corinthians* xii. 2. The Soul is enbreathed by God when the animal body is perfected (*Purg.* xxv. 67-75), and is therefore that part of a man which is to be regarded as a new creation by God, not generated by nature. Compare iii. 87, *note*, and Wallace, 56, *note* 3.

76. It is by inspiring the universe with love and longing (not by any physical means, for he is immaterial) that God, according to Aristotle, causes the never-ending cosmic movements. Wallace, 39.

79-81. Because they were passing through the "sphere of fire" which girt the "sphere of air" as with a second atmosphere.

82. The conception that the seven planetary heavens, like the seven strings of a lyre, uttered divine harmonies as they moved, is expressly rejected by Aristotle. This is one of the few instances in which Dante departs from his authority.

90. "Them," *i.e.* the *false conceits*, the fixed idea which prevented his comprehending what was before his eyes.

92. *Cf.* xxiii. 41-42.

99. "Air," which Aristotle regarded as relatively, and *fire* which he regarded as absolutely light.

106. "Exalted creatures" = angels [and men?].

107-114. God is the goal as well as the source of all. The orderly trend of all things to their true places is therefore their guide to God. But all things do not reach God in the same sense and in the same measure.

119. Cf. xxix, 24.

122-3. The Empyrean, which is not special at all, does not move and "hath not poles." It girds with light and love the *primum mobile*, the outmost and swiftest of the material heavens. Compare *Paradiso*, xxvii. 106-120, xxx. 38-42, 52, etc. Also *Conv.* ii. 4: 13-43.

127-135. "As the medium in which an artist works sometimes appears to resist the impulse and direction which he would give it, so beings endowed with free-will ('the creature that hath power . . . to swerve aside') may resist the impulse towards himself impressed upon them by God, if they allow themselves to be seduced by false delights."

## CANTO II

12. Contrast xxiv. 3.

37. Compare i. 73, sq.

43-45. See vi. 19-21, note.

51. "The common folk tell the tale how Cain may be seen in the moon, going with a bundle of thorns to sacrifice." Benvenuto. Compare *Inf.* xx. 126.

58-60. See *Conv.* ii. 14: 69-76, where this explanation, based on Averroes (but inverting him), is given.

64-72. "The heaven of the fixed stars reveals a diversity in the luminous substance of its many heavenly bodies. The heaven of the moon reveals a diversity in the luminous substance of its one heavenly body. The problem of the eighth and of the first heaven is therefore essentially identical, and we must seek a solution applicable to both the heavens. Your proposed solution, if applied to the fixed stars, would make their difference merely quantitative, whereas it is admitted to be qualitative<sup>†</sup> also, for the influences of the fixed stars differ one from another in kind."

79-81. "If we account for the dullness of some parts of the moon by saying that there her substance is rare right through, from side to side, that means that some of the sun's rays are not cast back at all but escape at the far side. Now if some of the sun's rays could pierce right through the moon when he is in front of her, they would do so when he is behind her (*i.e.* in a solar eclipse) which we know they do not."

† 85-105. "If, on the contrary, the sun's rays encounter a dense stratum before they pierce right through, they will be reflected back from that dense stratum within the moon just as they are from the dense surface of her other portions. You will then have the effect of several reflecting surfaces (*i.e.* mirrors), at various distances, throwing back the same light. Construct a model of this by placing two mirrors before you (representing bright parts of the moon) with a third mirror, between them, further back (representing the supposed dense stratum in the interior substance of the moon where the dark patches are), and have a light (representing the sun) set behind you. You will find that the middle reflection is indeed *smaller* than the other two but not *duller*, as by your hypothesis it should be."

Brightness is truly the ratio of the amount of light reaching the eye to the apparent size of the object, and since both of these diminish in proportion to the square of the distance, the brightness remains constant. But this statement neglects absorption by the medium; and, moreover, the moon is not a mirror, in which we see the sun, but is more like a piece of paper on which a lamp is

shining; and the brightness of such a surface is affected by its distance from the source of light, though not by its distance from the spectator.

106-111. "Your mind is now a blank. All your ideas on the subject are gone, and nothing is left but the potential receptacle of ideas (your mind); just as when the sun shines on the snow, all its qualities disappear and nothing is left except that (whatever it is) that underlies the qualities, and is potentially susceptible of having them impressed again upon it."

112-114. Compare i. 121-123, and *note*. The being of everything that exists is implicitly contained in the *primum mobile*.

116. "Diverse essences," according to the translation = the fixed stars. But the Italian may mean "distinct *from* it" (not "distinguished *by* it"), and may refer to the lower spheres and the planets.)

121-123. Compare *Epist. ad C.G.* 400-404 (§ 21).

124-144. A difficulty seems to be caused by Dante's habit of sometimes explicitly recognising, and sometimes practically ignoring, the distinction between the heavens or heavenly bodies and their guiding and influencing Angels. There is no confusion in his own mind; but the connection between the Angels and the heavens is so close that it is often unnecessary to dwell upon the distinction, which distinction, however, is always there. It has been ignored up to this point in the present Canto. Now we find the "differentiations" of the Divine Power recognised as divers angelic virtues which are respectively *connected* with the divers heavenly bodies, so that the moving heaven is an "alloy," or union of the heavenly substance and the angelic influence. Again, the "mingled virtue" itself that shines through the heavenly body is the personality of the Angel mingled with the creating and inspiring power of God. Cf. xxi. 82-87.

127-132. The hammer takes its direction, etc., from the mind of the smith, and stamps that mind upon the iron. So the heavens.

131. God, or the cherub that guides the stellar sphere.

### CANTO III

16-18. Narcissus took his own reflection for an actual being. Dante took the actual beings he now saw for reflections.

29. A *substance* is anything that exists in itself, e.g. a man, a tree, a sword. It is opposed to *accident*, that which exists only as an experience or an attribute of some "substance," e.g. love, greenness, brightness. Compare *Vita Nuova*, § 25.

41. "Thy name," and "your fate" (i.e. the lot thou sharest with thy companions).

49. Piccarda was the daughter of Simone Donati, and the sister of Dante's friend Forese (see *Purg.* xxiii. 40, *sqq.*) and of the celebrated Corso (compare Gardneri. 4, "Blacks and Whites," and Villani, vii. 114 etc., etc.). Dante's wife Gemma was the daughter of Manetto Donati, and she too had a brother Forese (Dante's brother-in-law therefore). This has often given rise to confusion.

51. Slowest in the daily revolution from East to West, because nearest to the centre of the Earth and of the whole celestial rotation; but swiftest in the sense that its *proper* motion (from West to East) has a shorter period than that of any other sphere.

54. Rejoice to have their *form*, or essential being, in conformity to the divine order, which is itself the *form* of the universe. Compare i. 104, and also vii. 133-141, *note*.

70-90. Compare vi. 112-126,

86. "*That it createth, out of nothing, as angels and rational souls, and that nature maketh, that is produceth by generating*" (Benvenuto). Cf. vii. 130, sqq.

97. Clara (1194-1253), the friend and disciple of Francis of Assisi.

101, 2. Note the qualification. Not all vows are accepted. See *Parad.* v. 64-84.

106. Her brother Corso, especially, who compelled her to marry Rossellino della Tosa, a man of violent and factious character with whom at the time he sought alliance.

118-120. Frederick Barbarossa, his son Henry VI. and his grandson Frederick II., are the three "blasts of Suabia." Constance was the heiress of the Norman house of Tancred which had conquered Sicily and Southern Italy from the Saracens in the eleventh century, and so of the crown of "the two Sicilies" (Naples and Sicily). See Villani, iv. 20 and v. 16, and *Introduction*, p. xxxii.

#### CANTO IV

13-15. Daniel divined the dream Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed as well as the interpretation of it (*Daniel* ii.). So Beatrice knew what problems were exercising Dante's mind as well as what were the solutions.

24. In the *Timaeus*, which was accessible to Dante in the Latin paraphrase of Chalcidius. Dante's direct knowledge of Plato was doubtless confined to this one dialogue. The doctrine ascribed to Plato, implicitly here and explicitly in *Conv.* ii. 14: 27, sqq.; iv. 21: 17, sqq. (compare *Eclogue* ii. 16, 17), goes somewhat beyond the warrant of the text either in the Greek or Latin.

27. Plato's doctrine (as understood by Dante) is poisonous because it ascribes to the admitted influences of the heavenly bodies such a pre-potency as would be fatal to the free-will, and therefore to morality. Cf. *Purg.* xvi. 58-81 and xviii. 61-72. *Epist.* viii. 38-41.

41-42. According to the psychology of Aristotle and the Schoolmen, the Intellect works upon images, etc., which are retained in the mind after the sense impressions that produced them have vanished. Thus the *imaginative* faculties receive from the faculties of *sense* the impressions which they then present to the *intellect* for it to work upon. Wallace, 53.

45. "And even the *literal* sense is not the figure itself, but the thing figured. For when Scripture names the arm of God, the *literal* sense is not that God hath any such corporeal member, but hath that which is signified by the said member, to wit operative power" (Thomas Aquinas).

48. Raphael. See *Tobit* xi. 2-17. Note that the Vulgate calls the father, as well as the son, Tobias.

51. The controversy still rages as to how far Plato is to be taken literally and how far Aristotle's matter-of-fact interpretation (and refutation) of his utterances is justified. Thomas Aquinas says: "Now certain say that those poets and philosophers, and especially Plato, did not mean what the superficial sound of their words implies, but chose to hide their wisdom under certain fables and enigmatical phrases, and that Aristotle was often wont to raise objections, not to their meaning, which was sound, but to their words; lest any should be led into error by this way of speaking; and so saith Simplicius in his comment. But Alexander would have it that Plato and the other ancient philosophers meant what their words seem externally to imply; and that Aristotle strove to argue not only against their words, but against their meaning. But we need not greatly concern ourselves as to which of these is true; for the study of philosophy is not directed to ascertaining what men have believed, but how the truth of things standeth." Simplicius (6th century) and Alexander of Aphrodisias (2nd and 3rd centuries) are the two greatest of the Greek commentators on Aristotle.

It is interesting to note that even Beatrice hesitates between the two schools of interpretation.

54. The soul is the *form*, or essential and constituent principle, of man.

61-63. This passage is important as throwing light on Dante's constant assumption that the heathen deities, though in one sense "false and lying" (*Inf.* i. 72) yet stand for some truly divine reality. We see here that idolatry springs from a misconception of the divine influences of which the heavenly bodies are the instruments. Its essential content therefore is real and divine, its form is false and impious. Compare viii. 1-9 and *Conv.* ii. 5: 34-51, 6: 113-126.

64-69. A difficult and much controverted passage. It is taken in the translation to mean: "The apparent return of the souls to the stars might easily betray you unawares into heresy; but the apparent injustice of heaven, however it may exercise your faith, will not lead you into any positive error. You will simply be left in suspense till I explain." "Argument of faith" would then mean "the subject matter on which faith exercises itself." No explanation is quite satisfactory.

73-114. The whole psychology of free and enforced action is Aristotelian. The definition of enforced action in *vv.* 73, 74, is taken direct from a passage in the *Ethics*. Wallace, 63.

83, 84. Lawrence (†A.D. 258) and Mucius Scaevola were alike tried by fire. Note the parallel between sacred and profane history habitual with Dante.

94-96. *Cf.* iii. 31-33.

97. *Cf.* iii. 117.

103-104. Eriphyle, bribed by the celebrated necklace of Harmonia, persuaded her husband Amphiaräus to join the expedition of the Seven against Thebes, in which he knew he would perish. He commanded their son Alcmaeon to avenge him. Compare *Inf.* xx. 31-36; *Purg.* xii. 49-51.

109-114. Compare *Purg.* xxi. 61-66.

131. "Doubt" in the sense of a *question* or a *difficulty*. "Nature" is taken here in a concrete sense, "a natural impulse."

## CANTO V

23-4. Angels and men.

26-7. Compare iii. 101-2.

32, 33. "To apply to some *other* good purpose what has been vowed, would only be like giving the proceeds of oppression or plunder in charity."

34. See *vv.* 13-15.

51. Regulations as to substitution or "redemption" are found in *Exodus* xiii. 13, xxxiv. 20, and *Numbers* xviii. 15-18. But the subject is most fully treated in the last chapter of *Leviticus*.

57. In popular estimate, "the silver key of knowledge and the golden key of authority." But Aquinas says more accurately: "for either of these [*i.e.*, to decide that the penitent is fit to be absolved, and actually to absolve him] a certain power or authority is needed; and so we distinguish between two keys, one pertaining to the judgment as to the fitness of him to be absolved, the other pertaining to the absolution itself." Compare *Purg.* ix. 118-126.

66-72. Both Jephthah (*Judges* xi.) and Agamemnon sacrificed their daughters.

79-84. "If ignorant and unauthorised 'pardoners' and others tempt you to light-hearted vows and offer you easy terms of remission, do not be so senseless as to be misled by them. The blessing of the Christian dispensation is turned into a curse by such as do the like, and the very Jews have a right to make a mock of them." Compare xxix. 118-126.

87. The Equator is the swiftest part of the heaven (*Conv.* ii. 4: 52-62). The equinoctial point is the germinal point of the Universe (*Parad.* x. 1-21). The sun is the source of all mortal life (*Parad.* xxii. 116). Dante's words may apply to any of the three; but since, at the date of the Vision, the sun is at the equinoctial point, they all coincide.

105. Cf. *Purg.* xv. 55-57, 71, *sqq.*

115. Compare viii. 34-39, *note*; and ix. 61, *note*.

117. The church on earth is *militant*; only in heaven *triumphant*.

124-126. The last reference to the features of a blessed spirit, as discerned by Dante, in any of the revolving spheres.

129. Mercury is so near the sun as to be seldom visible.

### CANTO VI

1-9. Constantine reigned A.D. 306-337. Justinian A.D. 527-565. Constantinople is relatively near to the site of ancient Troy.

10. His personality remains. His office is his no longer. Compare *Purg.* xix. 127-138.

13-18. The Monophysites accepted the divine nature of Christ only, not the human. The Empress Theodora persistently favoured them, and Justinian tolerated them till Agapetus, who was pope A.D. 535-6, when on an embassy at Constantinople, induced him to depose Anthimus, Bishop of Constantinople, on the ground of his being a Monophysite, whereon the other heads of the sect were likewise excommunicated.

19-21. Compare ii. 40-45. It is a cardinal point of Dante's belief that in the perfect state all *effort* both of will and intellect shall cease, while their *activity* reaches its highest point. Even truths that now seem paradoxical shall be seen as axioms, and the facts that now seem perplexing or distressing shall be felt as axiomatically right and beautiful. But unfathomed depths of the Divine Nature and Will shall ever remain, adored but uncomprehended. Compare *Parad.* xix. 40-57, xxi. 82-102, etc.

Both in this passage and in ii. 40-45 the union of the divine and human natures in Christ is the point which Dante declares will be as clear to souls in bliss as "the initial truth which man believeth," or is as clear to Justinian as that "every contradiction is both false and true." Now "the initial truth which man believeth" is not a generic term for axiomatic truth, but a specific reference to the "law of contradictories" on which the whole system of Aristotelian logic is built up. It asserts that the propositions: *This is so* and *this is not so* cannot both be true in the same sense and at the same time. Compare Wallace, § 30. And it follows immediately from this fundamental axiom, that of the two propositions "all A's are B's" and "some A's are not B's," or of the two propositions "no A's are B's" and "some A's are B's," one must be true and the other false. They cannot both be true or both false in the same sense at the same time. For example, if the proposition "some A's are not B's" be true, the proposition "all A's are B's" is false; for if not, take one of the A's that is not a B; now since all A's are B's, that particular A is a B; therefore that particular A both is and is not a B, which is impossible, *therefore*, etc. Propositions so related are called contradictories, and therefore every "contradiction" or "pair of contradictories" is "both false and true" axiomatically.

25. Belisarius (c. 505-565), by his campaigns against the Ostrogoths, went far towards restoring the authority of the Empire in Italy. He subsequently fell into disfavour, and an exaggerated tradition represents him in beggary as the type of fallen greatness.

28. The question implied in *Parad.* v. 127.

31-96. Compare with this passage *Conv.* iv. 4, 5, and the whole of Book ii. of the *De Monarchia*. Compare also Virgil *Georgics*, ii. 167-172, and *Aeneid*, vi. 756-854; and perhaps we should add the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, chap. xi. For Dante's attitude towards Guelphism and Ghibellinism generally, see Gardner i. 4, and Villani *Introduction*, § 6.

*N.B.* In the following summary the italicised words directly connect the narrative with the text of the canto.

Virgil, by a gracious fiction, represents the Trojan Aeneas when he landed, fate-driven, on the shores of Italy, and was involved in war with Turnus, king of the Latins, as seeking and gaining the alliance of the Greek Evander, who had established a kingdom on the seven hills, afterwards to be the site of Rome. Evander's only son and heir, *Pallas*, led the band of volunteers and was slain by Turnus, but avenged by Aeneas. The kingdom of the latter was founded, however, not on the seven hills, but at Lavinium, whence it was transferred by his son Ascanius to *Alba Longa* where it remained for *more than 300 years*, till, in the reign of Tullus Hostilius (B.C. 670-638), Alba fell under Rome, on the defeat of the *three* Alban champions, the Curatii, by the survivor of the *three* Roman champions, the Horatii; for meanwhile the Alban outcast, Romulus, had founded a camp of refuge on the Palatine (one of the seven hills), and had provided the desperadoes, who gathered there, with wives, by seizing the *Sabine women* who had come to attend the public games. Under *him and his six successors* Rome gradually extended her power, till the outrage offered to *Lucretia* by Sextus, the son of the last king, so roused the indignation of the people that the monarchy was swept away (B.C. 510).

The long period of the Republic, up to the beginning of Caesar's campaigns in Gaul (B.C. 58) is passed over rapidly by Dante, without notice of constitutional and social struggles; but the main aspects of the outward history are dealt with by rapid and effective strokes. During this period Rome established her supremacy over the other Latin tribes, repelled invasions of Italy, both by civilised and barbarous peoples, and extended her dominion by counter invasions. Lucius *Quintius* Cincinnatus (from *cincinnus* = a curl), called from the plough to the dictatorship, conquered the Aequians (B.C. 458); against *Brennus* (B.C. 390, etc.) and his Gauls, one of the *Fabii*, and Titus Manlius *Torquatus* (as well as others, notably *Camillus*) distinguished themselves. The *Decii*,—father, son, and grandson,—died self-devoted deaths in serving against the Latins (B.C. 340), the Samnites (B.C. 295) and the Greek invader Pyrrhus (B.C. 280); while the greatest of all the *Fabii*, *Quintus Fabius Maximus* (Cunctator), saved Rome from *Hannibal* who *crossed the Alps* and victoriously invaded Italy in B.C. 218, in which same year *Scipio Africanus* (the Elder), a boy of *seventeen*, won military fame by saving his father's life at the defeat of Ticinus. It was he who subsequently organised the counter invasion of Africa which compelled Hannibal to withdraw from Italy. Cf. xxvii. 61 seq. [Note the anachronism by which Dante calls the northern Africans *Arabs*.]

By a great leap Dante now brings us to the achievements of *Pompey*, the great conqueror of the eastern kings and queller of the faction of Marius. He celebrated a triumph *when not yet twenty-five* (B.C. 81). After a passing reference to the mythical exploits of the great Romans in reducing Fiesole *which overhangs Florence*, and which was the refuge of Catiline (Villani i. 31-37), we find ourselves following the career of *Caesar* preparatory to the founding of the Roman Empire. Verses 58-60 refer to the campaigns in *Gaul* (B.C. 58-50); vv. 61-63 to Caesar's crossing the *Rubicon* (B.C. 49) between Ravenna and Rimini, thereby leaving his province, without orders from the Senate, and so formally beginning the civil war. In the same year he overcame formidable opposition in *Spain*, and next year unsuccessfully besieged Pompey in *Dyracchium*, and then utterly defeated him at *Pharsalia* in Thessaly. Pompey escaped to *Egypt*, where he was treacherously slain by Ptolemy (vv. 64-66). Caesar crossed the Helles-

pont and, says Lucan, visited the Troad (*cf.* v. 6). He took Egypt from Ptolemy and gave it to Cleopatra, subdued Juba king of Numidia who had protected his opponents after Pharsalia and then returned to Spain (B.C. 45) where Pompey's sons had raised an army (*vv.* 67-72). After the murder of Caesar his nephew Augustus defeated Marc Antony at Modena (B.C. 43); then, with Antony as his ally, defeated his uncle's assassins, Brutus and Cassius (*cf. Inf.* xxiv.) at Philippi (B.C. 42), and afterwards Antony's brother Lucius at Perugia (B.C. 41). In B.C. 31 at Actium he finally defeated his rival Marc Antony, who soon afterwards committed suicide, and his example was followed by his paramour Cleopatra, who died by the tooth of a viper (*vv.* 76-78). This made Augustus, master of the whole Roman Empire to the remotest ends of Egypt, and the temple of Janus, the gates of which were always open in war-time, was, for the third time only in the history of Rome, closed in sign of universal peace. Heaven "had brought the world to its own serene mood" (v. 56), and all was ready for the birth of Christ (*vv.* 79-81), who was crucified under Tiberius, the successor of Augustus, whereby the sin of human nature at the fall was avenged (*vv.* 82-90). Jerusalem fell, under Titus, whereby the sin of slaying Christ was avenged on the Jews (*vv.* 91-93).

The epilogue of the defence of the Church by Charlemagne against the Lombard king Desiderius, whom he dethroned in A.D. 774 produces a disjointed effect upon the modern reader, but would seem natural enough to Dante and his contemporaries (see *Argument*).

88-90. Compare *De Monarchia*, ii. 13.

91-93. See next Canto.

97-99. Compare *vv.* 31-33.

100, 101. The Guelfs oppose the French arms and influence to the Empire. The Ghibellines take the name of the Empire in vain for factious purposes.

106-108. Carlo Zoppo (= Charles the Lame), of Anjou, titular King of Jerusalem (see xix. 127), and actual King of Naples and head of the Guelfs of Italy. Dante is never weary of expressing his contempt for him. There seems to be no specific reference in v. 108. Many a mightier lion than Cripple Charles had had his fell torn off his back by the Imperial Eagle.

109-111. A forecast perhaps of some miseries that actually fell on the descendants of Charles, and of others which Dante vainly anticipated. Compare ix. 1-6.

127-142. See Villani, vi. 90.

Raymond Berengar IV. of Provence (reigned 1209-1245), to be distinguished from his contemporary and opponent Raymond VII. of Toulouse (reigned 1222-1249), was notorious for his liberality and his patronage of poets and other men of genius. His daughter, Margaret, married Louis IX. of France (St. Louis). Eleanor married Henry III. of England. Sancha married Henry's brother, Richard of Cornwall; and Beatrice, his youngest daughter, whom he made his heiress, married Charles of Anjou after her father's death. Raymond's able and upright chamberlain, Romeo of Villeneuve (1170-1250), is also an historical character; but his name, Romeo, is the current term for one who has made a pilgrimage to Rome, or a pilgrim generally (see *Vita Nuova*, xli. 34-52). Hence arose the romantic legend recorded by Villani, and here followed by Dante. "There came to his [Raymond Berengar's] court a certain Romeo, who was returning from S. James', and hearing the goodness of Count Raymond abode in his court, and was so wise and valorous, and came so much into favour with the Count, that he made him master and steward of all that he had. . . . Four daughters had the Count and no male child. By prudence and care the good Romeo first married the eldest for him to the good King Louis of France by giving money with her, saying to the Count, 'Leave it to me, and do not grudge the cost, for it thou marriest the first well thou wilt marry all the others the better for the sake of her kinship and at less cost.' And so it came to pass; for



straightway the King of England, to be of kin to the King of France, took the second with little money; afterwards his carnal brother, being the king elect of the Romans, after the same manner took the third; the fourth being still to marry the good Romeo said, 'For this one I desire that thou should'st have a brave man for thy son, who may be thine heir,'—and so he did. Finding Charles, Count of Anjou, brother of King Louis of France, he said, 'Give her to him for he is like to be the best man in the world,' prophesying of him: and this was done. And it came to pass afterwards through envy, which destroys all good, that the barons of Provence accused the good Romeo that he had managed the Count's treasure ill, and they called upon him to give an account. The worthy Romeo said, 'Count, I have served thee long while, and raised thy estate from small to great, and for this, through the false counsel of thy people, thou art little grateful: I came to thy court a poor pilgrim, and I have lived virtuously here; give me back my mule, my staff, and my scrip, as I came here, and I renounce thy service.' The Count would not that he should depart; but, for nought that he could do would he remain; and, as he came so he departed, and no one knew whence he came or whither he went. But many held that he was a sainted soul."

## CANTO VII

5, 6. Justinian, on whom the glory of Lawgiver and the glory of Emperor combine their lights, each one making the other its twin.

14. He is awed by anything that is so much as a fragment of Beatrice's name.

15. Compare iii. 6.

19-21. See vi. 91-93.

25. Compare xxvi. 115-117, *note*.

30-33. Note the reference to the Three Persons of the Trinity in "Word," "Maker," "Love." The like references abound throughout the poem. Further compare v. 31 with xxxiii. 4-9.

40-42. Compare *De Monarchia*, ii. 13. This doctrine of Dante's that human nature, in its totality, was *judicially executed* on the Cross seems to be peculiar to himself.

64-66. The connection is close, though not obvious. Beatrice goes back to the creation in order to explain the state from which man fell; and begins by declaring that the Divine Goodness was moved to utter itself in creation by an impulse of love, and had no jealous reserve in communicating its own august attributes. Compare xxix. 13-18, *note*.

67. For the distinction between mediate and immediate creation, see lines 130-144 of this canto.

71. True freedom consists in being subject only to the eternal truth of things, not to the dominion of changing appearances. Compare *Purg.* xvi. 79-81. But there is a difficulty here, for amongst the primal group of direct creations are the material heavens and the *prima materia*, or undifferentiated material potentiality, which is the possibility of everything but the actuality of nothing. Compare xxix. 22-36. The heavens can only be called free in the sense that they follow out their nature unimpeded, not in the higher sense of having free choice. Compare v. 19-24. And the *prima materia* can scarcely claim freedom in any sense, nor exemption from the dominion of changing things. Still less has it any special conformity of nature to the Divine (v. 73). No solution of this difficulty suggests itself. It would appear as though Dante had not the full range of "direct creations" under his view at the moment, and was thinking only of angels and men, and possibly the material heavens.

79-120. It is in this section of the discourse that the influence (direct or indirect) of Anselm's *Cur Deus homo* is most conspicuous. Anselm teaches that

actually (though not in intention) Adam's disobedience was an injury to himself, not at all to God (*cf. v. 80* of this canto), and that what was demanded, therefore, was not a propitiation or a ransom, but a restoration (*cf. 82*); which must be brought about by man giving what he did not owe in measure equal to that in which he had seized what he did not own (compare 83, 84), which is impossible, since he owes everything and owns nothing (compare 97, 98). Hence the being who alone owns that which he does not owe must become the being who alone stands in need of making such an unowed offering, *i.e.* God must become man (compare 115-117). See the *Cur Deus homo passim*, and (to avoid misconception) especially Book i. cap. 15.

115-120. It will appear from a comparison of the *De Monarchia*, ii. 13, that Beatrice means "God determined to be merciful, but did better than remit the fault, for he made man capable of redeeming it. And he determined to be just, and therefore he assumed the whole of human nature into one person (his own) in order that it might collectively pay the penalty of its sin."

124-129. See *vv. 67-69*. "Why, then, do these creations of God (the elements and things compounded of them) perish?"

132. Not only in their essential or ideal quality, but in their whole concrete being, just as they are. Compare i. 2, *note*.

133-141. The *prima materia* is *informed* (*i.e.* so combined with a "form" or ideal and essential principle as to pass from the possibility of being *anything* to the actuality of being *something*) not direct by God, but by created powers, *i.e.* angels or heavenly influences. The transforming and vivifying power of the sun (and in lesser degree the moon) was supposed to have its analogies in equally real but less obvious influences of the other heavenly bodies, especially the planets. It is these heavenly influences collectively that draw the "soul" or *life* of plant (nutritive and reproductive) or animal (sensitive and locomotive) from the stage of potentiality in the germinal material into that of actuality in the living thing itself.

142-144. Compare *Purg. xxv.*, especially *vv. 61-75*. In *Conv. iii. 6: 45-57*, another and less orthodox doctrine seems to be taught.

145. "Hence," *i.e.* "from the distinctions now drawn"; for the bodies both of Adam and Eve were made immediately by God, and when the work of redemption is finally consummated (after the last judgment) man's body will be restored to the dignity which it lost only by sin. The argument is Anselm's. He meets the obvious objection that it does not cover the case of the "resurrection unto wrath," by urging that if the saved rejoice both in body and soul, it is but fitting that the lost should suffer in both.

## CANTO VIII

1-9. See *iv. 61-63* and *note*; and also "Dante's Paradise."

22, 23. Visible and invisible blasts = lightning and wind. "And it also appears that lightnings are winds kindled or enflamed by the swiftness of their motion." And again "Because a hot exhalation, when it mounts up, strikes a cold and moist region, and it comes to pass that it is cast earthwards and chilled with a certain coldness, and a downward direction is given to it" (Averroes).

34-39. When Dante wrote the ode here referred to (see *Conv. ii., Canzone*) he believed, with Brunetto Latini, that the angels who presided over the Heaven of Venus belonged to the order of *Thrones*. See *Conv. ii. 6: 109*. He afterwards followed "Dionysius" in assigning them to the order of *Principalities*. See *xxviii. 125*. The word "princes" in *v. 34* may be equivalent to "Principalities" and so contain a tacit correction, but since it is a generic term this need not be so. In *ix. 61*, still in the planet Venus, there is a reference to *Thrones* so specific that one would take it to indicate Dante's continued belief in the special

connection between *Thrones* and the planet Venus, were it not that in *v.* 115, in the planet Mercury, there is a similar specific reference to *Thrones*. The apparent confusion is not easy to remove. For a suggested solution see xxviii. 103-5, *note*.

49-84. On Charles Martel, see ix. 1-6, *note*.

52-54. The illustration of a silk-worm in its cocoon corresponds closely to representations, in early Italian art, of souls surrounded by a yellow glory.

63. From this, together with *Purg.* iii. 131, it has been inferred that the R. Garigliano was formerly known as the Verde.

85-90. The distinction is subtle but real. "I rejoice that you see it (which you do, in God), and I rejoice that it is in God (and not otherwise) that you see it."

97-99. Compare ii. 112 *sqg. note*.

103-105. Compare i. 119 and xxix. 24.

120. Aristotle. See Wallace, 68-70.

124, 5. Lawgiver, soldier, priest. Melchizedek is the priest *par excellence*, because he offered "bread and wine." See *Gen.* xiv. 18.

126. Daedalus, the typical mechanician, *Inf.* xvii. 109.

127. The heavens.

## CANTO IX

1-6. Charles of Anjou, brother of St. Louis, conquered Naples and Sicily from Manfred, son of Frederick II., and became Charles I. Towards the end of his life his misgovernment of Sicily caused the massacre known as the "Sicilian Vespers" (A.D. 1282) and the loss of Sicily (viii. 73-75) Villani, vii. 61. His son Charles II. (see vi. 106-108 and *note*. Dante nowhere else allows him the generosity ascribed to him in viii. 82) was the father of a numerous family, including Dante's friend, Charles Martel, who died before his father (1295); and Robert. Charles married Clemence, daughter of the Emperor Rudolph; hence the allusion in viii. 72. He visited Florence in the last year of his life, and it was probably then that Dante formed his acquaintance. On his death his son, Caroberto, became heir to the throne of Naples; but his uncle Robert (known as Robert the Wise), supported by Charles II.'s will, ousted him from the succession. This was in 1309. At the date of the vision, therefore, Robert could not yet have been abusing his powers as king; but according to Charles (viii. 76), he was already preparing to do so by cultivating the Spanish friendships he had formed when a hostage in Spain, and so laying the train for oppression of the much enduring Apulia by the instrumentality of Spanish favourites. As to the Clemence of *v.* 1 there has been much discussion. It would be natural to suppose that she is Charles's wife. It was her son Caroberto that Robert of Naples had excluded from the succession to Naples and Provence; and to her and her son, therefore, the "your wrongs" of *v.* 6 would naturally apply. But the date of her death is given in recent commentaries as 1301, long before the time at which these words were written; and evidence has now been produced to show that she really died in 1295, as indeed several of the early commentators declare; and in that case she had been dead some years before the assumed date of the vision, 1300. This would make the direct address to her in *v.* 1 difficult, and the implied communication in *vv.* 2-6 well nigh impossible. And yet the only alternative seems still more difficult to accept, namely, that the Clemence addressed was Charles's daughter who married Louis X., *le Hutin* (*cf.* Villani, ix. 66), and was living in 1328. This Clemence was in no special way wronged by the proceedings of Robert, nor is it easily conceivable that Dante in speaking of a father to a daughter would call him "thy Charles." The reader must take his choice between these two impossibilities. As to the woes that are said to be approaching, we note that since no conspicuous disaster had overtaken Robert Dante has to fall back upon general forebodings of evil.

20, 21. By answering before I ask.

29, 30. The hideous tyrant Ezzelino da Romano (compare *Inf.* xii. 109, 110); whose mother dreamed she gave birth to a firebrand that consumed the whole district.

33-36. Her amours with Sordello were specially notorious. In 1265 (when she was about 67 years old) she executed a deed of manumission, conferring formal freedom on a number of slaves (who probably had already secured the reality) in the house of Dante's friends the Cavalcanti. It is therefore possible that Dante was in possession of private sources of information as to penitence in closing years, an edifying end, grateful dependents who prayed for the departed soul, etc. No such knowledge, however, except that she had a certain reputation for humanity, has reached the world at large, and the scandalised protest which Dante anticipated and defied has not failed to make itself heard!

46-48. A much discussed passage, which probably refers to the defeats inflicted on the Paduans at Vicenza by Can Grande of Verona (see Villani, ix. 63) in and about 1314. "Paduan blood shall dye the Bacchiglione red because of Paduan resistance to the Empire."

49-51. Riccardo da Cammino, Lord of Treviso. He was murdered in 1312. He was the son of the "Good Gherard" (*Purg.* xvi. 124-140, *Conv.* iv. 14: 111-130), and the husband of Judge Nino's daughter Giovanna (*Purg.* viii. 71).

53. Alessandro Novello, Bishop of Feltre, 1298-1320. In 1314 he surrendered certain Ghibelline refugees from Ferrara to Pino della Tosa, King Robert's vicar there, who executed them.

54. A papal prison on lake Bolsena, or perhaps in Viterbo.

61. Compare viii. 34-39, xxviii. 103-105, notes. "For they are called *Thrones* by whom God doth exercise his judgments" (Gregory, quoted by Aquinas).

66. Compare viii. 25-27.

76-78. Compare viii. 25-27, *Argument*. Compare *Isaiah* vi. 2.

85-93. At Gibraltar, where the Mediterranean flows out of the ocean, the sun (according to Dante's geography) is on the horizon when it is noon-day on the Levant. Thus the stretch of the sea makes zenith at its end of what is horizon at its beginning; *i.e.* it extends over a quadrant.

93. When Caesar's fleet won a victory over the Pompeians in B.C. 49. Cf. *Purg.* xviii. 102.

94. Folco of Marseilles was a Troubadour (fl. 1180-1195), and afterwards a Cistercian monk. As bishop of Toulouse (1205-1231) he took a leading part in the infamous Albigensian Crusades.

97. Dido, whose love for Aeneas wronged the memory of her husband Sichæus and of his wife Crêusa.

100, 101. Phyllis, (beloved of Demophoön the son of Theseus and Phedra,) who was the daughter of the Thracian king Sithon. According to Ovid, Demophoön ultimately returned to keep his pledged faith, but Phyllis had already slain herself in despair at his protracted absence.

102. Iöle was the last love of Hercules (Alcides). On hearing of this attachment, Dejanira, the wife of Hercules, sent him the fatal shirt of Nessus, thus causing his death. Nessus the Centaur had offered an insult to Dejanira as he was bearing her across a stream, and Hercules shot him. As he expired he told Dejanira that the garment, steeped in his blood, would have the power of winning back the affections of Hercules if ever they wandered from her. It is this vengeance of the Centaur which is referred to by Dante in *Inf.* xii. 67-69.

126. Rebukes the slackness of the Pope in face of the capture of Acre by the Saracens in 1291, after which the Christians had no foothold in the Holy Land. Cf. *Villani* vii. 145.

134-5. Compare *Parad.* xii. 83. There was money to be got out of studying Ecclesiastical Law. Compare *Conv.* i. 9: 18-25, etc.

## CANTO X

1-3. Note the special frequency of references to the Trinity in this and the next following cantos. Also the emphasis laid, in *v.* 2, on the procession of the Holy Ghost *from the Son* as well as from the Father. The *filioque* controversy was one of the chief sources of the alienation between the East and West, which, after widening for centuries, resulted at last in the great schism of 1054 by which the Greek and Latin Churches were severed.

7-9. At the first point of Aries and at the first point of Libra the Equator and the Zodiac cross on the heavenly sphere. The daily movement of the Sun (and all other heavenly bodies) is parallel to the Equator, and his annual movement is along the Zodiac ("the oblique circle that beareth the planets"), so that the daily and the annual movements smite one upon the other at these two points.

31-33. From mid-winter to mid-summer the Sun rises every day a little earlier and a little further North than the day before, and from mid-summer to mid-winter a little later and a little further South. Thus he always travels on a spiral, up or down. It is in the middle of his up-spiral that he encounters the Spring equinoctial point. This passage then indicates the *Spring equinox* with perfect precision.

97-99. Albertus Magnus (1193-1280) and Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274) "christianised Aristotle," i.e. made Aristotle's works the philosophical basis of Christian doctrine, as well as the store-house of profane learning, thus putting an end to the dislike of the Aristotelian learning which the elder theologians had felt when it was introduced in the twelfth century. From Thomas Aquinas (Doctor Angelicus), and especially his *Summa*, Dante drew much of his theological learning. Albertus Magnus (Doctor Universalis) taught in Cologne and Paris, and Thomas was his beloved pupil.

104. Gratian (fl. c. 1150) brought ecclesiastical and civil law into relation with each other. His *Decretum* was the first systematic treatise on Canon Law.

106-108. Peter Lombard (c. 1100-1160) collected and discussed the pronouncements of the Christian Fathers in his four books of *Sentences*, dealing respectively with God, the Creation, the Redemption, and the Sacraments and Last Things. In the preface he compares himself to the poor widow of *Luke* xxi. 1-4. His work became the text-book of theological teaching, and Bonaventura, Aquinas, and others wrote commentaries on it.

109-114. Solomon. 1 *Kings* iii. 12. "There is a dispute amongst certain holy men and theologians whether he [Solomon] be damned or saved" (Petrus Alighieri).

133. As sure as Scripture.

115-117. Dionysius the Areopagite. See *Acts* xvii. 34. Compare xxviii. 130, etc. The works on the *Celestial Hierarchy*, etc., that went under his name are now supposed to date from the fifth or sixth century.

118-120. Probably Paulus Orosius (early fifth century), whose *Historia adversus Paganos* was an apologetic treatise written in connection with Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* to disarm the Pagan contention that Christianity had ruined the Roman Empire.

124-129. Boethius (c. 475-525), whose penetrating influence on Dante is to be traced everywhere. Cf. *Conv.* ii. 13: 14-16, and many other passages. When

in prison, in Pavia, condemned to death by Theodoric, he wrote the *Consolation of Philosophy*, a book of noble pagan morality and religion, maintaining that even in this world, and as judged by human reason, the life of the virtuous man is to be preferred before that of the vicious, and the ways of God to man may be justified. Thus he supplemented the exclusive reliance of Christian writers on the compensations of a future life, and on revealed, as distinct from philosophical truth. The medieval consciousness, uncritical as usual, but with a correct enough instinct, laid hold of this welcome supplement without perceiving its essentially pagan presentation, and so found room for Boethius amongst the Christian teachers. The process was facilitated by the fact that Boethius had been executed by the Arian Theodoric on suspicion of intrigues with the orthodox Justin. It seemed easy, therefore, to regard him as a martyr for the true orthodox faith; and in due time a current tract on the Trinity (possibly, as has been conjectured, written by a certain namesake of his, but quite possibly anonymous) was assigned to him as its author.

Special prominence is given in the last book of the *Consolation of Philosophy* to the problem of the reconciliation of God's fore-knowledge with man's freewill. Boethius treats it very fully and with great beauty. In substance the answer is that God's knowledge of the future no more determines it than does his knowledge of the past, and that indeed the distinction between fore-knowledge and after-knowledge does not apply to God at all, since he is not subject to the conditions of time. The distinction between *divine* and *human* knowledge absorbs the lesser distinction between *fore-* and *after-*knowledge, and if we are to inquire into the relations in question at all, it must be by trying to form some conception of the higher plane of the divine knowledge in general, not by tormenting ourselves as to the specific implications of God's *fore-*knowledge. It is in this connection that Boethius gives the definition of eternity that became classical: "Whatsoever, therefore, comprehendeth and possesseth the whole plenitude of unlimited life at once, to which nought of the future is wanting, and from which nought of the past hath flowed away, this may rightly be deemed eternal." Cf. xxii. 61-69, *Argument* and *note*, together with the other passages there referred to.

127. Cieldauro (Golden Ceiling) is a name of St. Peter's church in Pavia.

131. Isidore of Seville (c. 560-636), the author of a great Cyclopaedia. Bede, the Venerable (c. 673-735). Richard of St. Victor († 1173) wrote a treatise entitled *De Contemplatione*. Compare *Epist. ad Can. Grand.*, 552-554 (§ 28). See further xii. 133, *note*.

136-138. Sigier of Brabant († probably about 1283), a professor in the University of Paris, where the *Rue du Fouarre* ran "close to the river, in the region which is still known as the *Quartier Latin*, and was the centre of the Arts Schools at Paris" (Toynbee). He took a leading part in the disputes between the mendicant orders and the University, and it is noteworthy that Thomas Aquinas himself was one of his chief opponents. He met his death (apparently by an assassin's dagger) at the Papal court at Orvieto, but exactly when does not appear.

140. "God's spouse" = the Church.

## CANTO XI

4. "Medicine." The word is Aphorisms, the name of a celebrated work of Hippocrates (B.C. 460-357). Hence equivalent to *medicine*.

25, 26. See x. 96, 114.

27. Compare xiii. 115-116. To "distinguish" is a technical term of logic. It consists in showing that the inference is not correct though the premises are true, because there is a difference between the sense in which a word is used in

the true premise and the sense in which alone it would justify the false conclusion. If an argument is refuted by denying one of the premises the process is called *interemption*—"destruction." Compare *De Monarchia*, iii. 4: 39-44.

37-39. The Seraphs, in popular estimate, are symbolical of love, and the Cherubs of knowledge. Hence Francis (1182-1226), known as the Seraphic Father, and Dominic (1170-1221) are respectively akin to them. But see xxviii. 109-111, and *note*.

43. The Chiascio.

44. Ubaldo (bishop of Gubbio, † 1160) selected this hill for his hermitage, but (according to Scartazzini) was never able to carry out his intention of retiring to it. Hence the term "chose."

47. "Porta Sole," the Eastern gate of Perugia.

48. They were under the Angevin dynasty so hated by Dante. Compare vi. 106, *note*, etc., etc. But others (with less probability) interpret "yoke severe" as referring to the barren eastern slope of Monte Subasio.

53. *Ascesi*, an old form of Assisi, may be translated "I have ascended." A play upon the word, in connection with *Oriente*, is found by some commentators. The comparison of Francis to the rising Sun is ancient and wide spread. "Glowing as the light-bearer and as the morning star, yea, even as the rising Sun, illuminating, cleansing, and fertilising the world like some new luminary, was Francis seen to arise," says the Prologue of one of the earliest Lives.

58. He was about twenty-four when he began to woo Poverty.

58-117. In the early biographies of Francis (including the *Fioretti* or popular stories of him) with which every reader of Dante should be familiar, we are told how he fell in love with Poverty; how his father indignantly sought to reclaim him; how he appealed to the Bishop, stripped himself naked before him, giving to his earthly father Pietro Bernadone that which was his, and dedicating himself to his Heavenly Father, and thus publicly espousing Poverty; how Bernard, the nobleman of Assisi, was converted by overhearing his devotions; how Egidius whose thoughts were already turning from the world flung himself at the feet of Francis and implored him to receive him as a companion; how Sylvester, the priest, tried to cheat him over some stones he had from him with which to repair a Church and was overcome by his unworldly generosity; how he rejoiced in all suffering and humiliation; how he loved and rejoiced in all God's creatures; how two successive Popes sanctioned his Order (1210 (?) and 1223); how he preached to the Soldan in Egypt; and finally, how he received the stigmata or impress of the nails and the lance as a testimony to his oneness of spirit with Christ (b. 1182, d. 1226).

66. Jesus Christ.

68. Lucan tells how Caesar found the fisherman, Amyclas, lying on a bed of seaweed, undismayed when he roused him to demand his services, and unmoved by the revolutions of the times, secure in his poverty.

71. Nearly all the MSS. read *pianse* (wept) for *salse* (rose) and the best modern editions for the most part follow them. Dr. Moore, however (rightly as we think) adheres to the reading we have adopted. It is supported not only by internal evidence, but by some of the old commentators and by the analogy of the ancient prayer for Poverty ascribed to St. Francis, in which are the words "when thy very mother, *because the cross was so high* . . . could not come at thee, Lady Poverty embraced thee more closely," etc.

87. The rope girdle worn by the Franciscans.

93, 98, 106. Note the "first," "second," "final."

96. An enigmatical phrase, since it is in heaven that the song of praise is being sung. Compare xii. 81.

107. Alvernia.

117. "And when he had blessed the brothers he had them take off his tunic, and place him naked on the ground" (Old Biography).

118-132. St. Thomas now passes to his own founder, Dominic, and rebukes the degenerate Dominicans. Compare xii. 106-126, *note*.

## CANTO XII

3. The horizontal sweep of a mill-stone is contrasted with the vertical motion of a wheel in *Conv.* iii. 5: 176. The Apostles are frequently represented in art as working the Divine mill, and it may be under the influence of this association, as well as the direct fascination of the sight of a mill at work, that Dante compares the circling of these lights of the Church to the sweep of a mill-stone.

7-9. The reference is general. "Every song and every note produced in the throat or in the tubes of musical instruments is but a faint reflection of the heavenly music."

10-18. This passage is often cited to illustrate Dante's love of packing one simile within another. The two circles of lights were like a double rainbow (Juno's handmaid=Iris=Rainbow), and one rainbow is like the echo of another, and the nymph Echo was consumed by love as vapours are consumed by the Sun. Note the characteristic combination of Pagan mythology and Hebrew legend. Compare *Gen.* ix. 8-17.<sup>1</sup>

21. The Italian presents a difficulty; *ultima*=the "last" (counting from outside inwards), being used for *intima*=the "inmost."

28-30. The speaker is Bonaventura (1221-1274), known as the Seraphic Doctor. He became General of the Franciscans in 1256.

33. Compare *vv.* 106-126 of this canto, *note*.

46-51. Calahorra, in Spain, not far from the Gulf of Gascony.

53, 54. The royal arms of Castile bear a castle in the first and third quarters, and a lion in the second and fourth. Thus on one side of the shield the lion is subdued by the castle, and on the other subdues it.

57. Of Dominic (1170-1221) comparatively little is known, but it presents a striking parallel and contrast to Francis. Dominic was a man of learning, and Francis was unlettered. Dominic's concern was for soundness of the faith, and Francis was given to deeds of love. Dominic's most characteristic work was the attempted conversion of the Albigensian heretics, and the stimulating of theological study at the universities, that of Francis tending the lepers of Italy. Dominic embraced poverty as a pledge of Apostolic zeal, and Francis for pure love of her; that is to say, from a sense that the more we *have* the less we can *be*, and a passionate joy in coming into naked contact with God and nature.

For the rest Dominic did *not* found the Inquisition; he did *not* take any considerable part in the persecution of the Albigenses (though he was united in close friendship with Folco, who did. Compare ix. 94, *note*); he did *not* introduce the use of the Rosary, and he did *not* utter the well-known rebuke of the pomp and luxury of the Papal legates, but listened to it as his superior Didacus delivered it. Very little of his biography, as usually told, is left after this; but that little shows him as a man of boundless love and compassion. When a student, he sold his books in a season of famine to give to the poor; he once offered to sell himself to redeem a captive; and his "frequent and special prayer" to God was for the gift of true charity.

60. "His mother when pregnant dreamed that she had in her womb a dog-whelp, with a torch in his mouth, whereby to set the world aflame when he should come into light" (*Brev. Rom.*).



§ 61-63. "For the lady who held him at his baptism dreamed that Dominic himself had a most bright star on his brow, which illuminated all the world" (Benvenuto).

68. *Dominicus* (the possessive adjective of *Dominus*)="pertaining to the Lord."

75. The counsel of poverty (*Matt.* xix. 21, whence the phrase "counsels of perfection"). Thomas Aquinas, while distinguishing between the *precepts* and the *counsels* of Christ, says that the latter may all be reduced to three—Poverty, Contenance, and Obedience. The "first" counsel, then, is Poverty.

79. *Felice*=favoured by fortune.

80. *Giovanna* is translated by Jerome "grace of the Lord." It is curious that Bonaventura in heaven is still dependent on Jerome for his Hebrew (compare xi. 96, but also iv. 51, *note*).

83. Henry of Susa, who became Cardinal Bishop of Ostia in 1261, was a commentator on the Decretals. Compare ix. 134, *note*. Thaddeus was a celebrated writer on medical subjects, who died in 1303. He was the author of the Italian translation of Aristotle's *Ethics*, which Dante cites as a warning (*Conv.* i. 10: 68-71). The meaning is, of course, that Dominic studied not to qualify for a lucrative profession, but to come at the truth. Compare xi. 4.

88-90. A marked case of severing the ideal Papacy from the actual Popes. The Papacy *in itself* is as benign to the poor as ever; but the degenerate Pope (Boniface VIII.) makes it manifest itself in other fashion.

91-93. His application was not for leave to plunder on condition of paying a third or a half of the plunder to pious purposes, nor a petition for the first rat appointment that should fall vacant, or for leave to apply the tithes to his own purposes. The "erring world"—the heretics, notably the Albigenses, against whom Dominic's efforts were mainly directed.

98. He obtained the sanction of his order from Honorius III. in 1216.

106-126. The panegyric on Francis is pronounced by a Dominican, and that on Dominic by a Franciscan (whereas the denunciation of the unworthy Dominicans and Franciscans is in each case pronounced by one of themselves). Thus Dante foreshadowed what afterwards became a general usage, viz., for a Dominican to read mass in a Franciscan convent on their founder's day (Oct. 4), and a Franciscan to do the like for a Dominican convent on their founder's day (Aug. 4).

124-126. From the moment of the death of Francis disputes as to the lax or strict observance of the rule devastated the Order. They have left their trace on all the earliest biographies. In Dante's time Ubertino of Cassale (1259-1338) was one of the leaders of the "Spirituals," or party of the strict observance. Matteo d'Aquasparta, who was elected General of the Order in 1287, and who was sent to Florence in 1300 and again in 1301 by Boniface VIII. (see Gardner, i. 4, "the Jubilee," etc., and Villani, viii. § 40, 43, 49) as pacificator, introduced relaxations into the discipline of the Order. Dante here makes Bonaventura (who was General from 1256 to 1274, and who, as a matter of fact, pursued a conciliatory policy) plead for the *via media*, against both extremes. In Dante's own time there had been an elaborate appeal to Clement V. to settle the affairs of the Order, which resulted in the issuing of the Bull *Exivi de Paradiso*.

129. "Left-hand care"—temporal affairs. There is a story of Bonaventura, on a certain visitation, spending hours with a young Franciscan, answering his questions and removing his difficulties. His companions urged him to leave him and continue his journey. "Shall I disobey my master?" he answered. He took his title of *minister* seriously.

130. Illuminato (who accompanied Francis to the Holy Land) and Augustine joined the Order in 1210. Possibly placed here to vindicate the significance of a

man's life as teaching; though they were not (as Benvenuto says) unlettered men.

133. St. Victor was an abbey in Paris, which became the centre of the old-fashioned and conservative learning as distinguished from the Aristotelian and scholastic learning. Hugo (c. 1097-1141) was one of its greatest lights. He was the teacher of Richard, and of Peter Lombard. Compare x. 131, 132, and 107, 108.

133. Peter Mangiador, "the devourer" of books (†1179) was the author of the *Historia Scolastica*, a paraphrase of the Scriptures, a French translation of which was very widely known in the Middle Ages. He became Chancellor of the University of Paris in 1164. Petrus Hispanus, afterwards Pope John XXI., was the author of a little cram book of logic, which retained its popularity deep into the Renaissance period. It is from it that the well-known *Memoria Technica* verses, *Barbara Celarent*, etc., are derived; though whether he invented them or not is a matter of dispute.

136, 138. John Chrysostom, or Golden Mouth (c. 344-407), Archbishop of Constantinople, renowned for his fearless eloquence, denounced the vices of the court, and was persecuted and exiled by the Empress Eudoxia in consequence. No doubt his collocation with Nathan, who denounced David's sin (2 *Sam.* xii.), is designed. Anselm (1033-1109), Archbishop of Canterbury, is known as the second father of scholasticism, Scotus Erigena (ninth century) being the first. Both alike endeavoured to show that the contents of natural reason and of revealed truth coincide. Donatus (fl. middle of fourth century) was the author of the grammar in current use, though the far more elaborate work of Priscian (fl. 500) was always recognised as the typical grammar. Priscian is mentioned in *Inf.* xv. 109.

139. Rabanus Maurus (c. 766-856), Bishop of Mayence. He compiled, amongst other works, a cyclopaedia *De universo* in twenty-two books. In the unsettled state of theology at the time, and in his zeal for orthodoxy, he came nigh himself to falling unawares into heresies concerning Predestination.

140. Joachin (c. 1130-1202) was the reputed author of many prophecies. He was also the first preacher of the doctrine that the dispensation of the Father (Old Testament) and of the Son (New Testament, and the Church as an institution) would be followed by the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, the period of perfection and freedom, without the necessity of disciplinary institutions. This was the "Everlasting Gospel"—a dispensation, not a book. Joachin was a Cistercian, not a Franciscan; but the Franciscan "Spirituals" were much influenced by him, and one of them, Gerardus by name, wrote a book entitled *Introduction to the Everlasting Gospel*. "Joachism" henceforth became a feature of the extreme Spiritual movement among the Franciscans, and as such was opposed by Bonaventura. Compare x. 136, *note*.

## CANTO XIII

1-15. The seven bright stars of the Great Bear (which in our latitude never sets), the two brightest of the Little Bear (to which constellation the pole-star belongs), and fifteen others, not specified, make up the twenty-four required; and the reader is to imagine them all arranged in a double Ariadne's crown.

23. The Chiana in Dante's time made its sluggish way southward to the Tiber through pestiferous swamps. It is taken as the type of the slowest motion, as the whirling of the *primum mobile* is of the swiftest.

34-36. Compare x. 94-96, 112-114; xi. 25.

53-66. Dante is careful in his use of *splendour* ("glowing") to signify *reflected* light (see i. 2, *note*). All created things then, are reflections of the Word, or Idea,

of God. *Reflection and refraction* are not clearly differentiated; and in vv. 58, 59, created things are spoken of as the points on which the rays of God are focussed, though the conception of the mirror is still retained. The "nine existences" (v. 59) we take to be the nine heavens, which, as immediate creations of God, are not subject to change. But as the divine light descends upon and vivifies the remoter and duller potentialities of the *materia prima*, successively realising their possibilities (v. 62), the result is contingent and short-lived. Compare with the whole passage, i. 103-142; ii. 112-148; vii. 64-72, 124-148; xxix. 13-36; and note that in the present passage and the lines that follow, the veiled dualism, which may constantly be traced in Dante's conception of the universe, becomes particularly prominent. The *prima materia*, though explicitly declared in xxix. 22, 34; vii. 136, to be the direct creation of God, is here and elsewhere treated as something external, on which his power acts and which answers only imperfectly to it. Compare *De Monarchia*, ii. 2: 20-38. *Conv.* iii. 12: 62-81. With v. 66 compare *Purg.* xxviii. 103-120.

55-57. The Son emanating from the Father without separation from him or from the Holy Ghost.

68, 69. "The better disposed the material the more completely it lets the ideal shine through it, when under the impress of the seal."

79-81. The original is ambiguous. The translation (which is grammatically somewhat hazardous) takes it to mean that if both the wax is prepared and the stamp impressed immediately by the Deity, a perfect result will ensue.

82. The clay out of which Adam was made.

97-102. No disrespect is intended to the branches of study here referred to. Solomon asked for practical, not philosophical or scientific, wisdom. The explanation, however, apart from its subtlety, is unsatisfactory; since the supreme position of Solomon amongst the sages and doctors of the Church hardly lends itself to it. On v. 97 cf. *Conv.* ii. 6: 126-151. The problem of 98, 99 may be stated thus: It is a general principle that no limitation that occurs in either of the premises can be escaped in the conclusion. Thus, if either of the premises is negative you cannot get a positive conclusion; if either of them is particular you cannot get a general conclusion; if either is contingent you cannot get a necessary conclusion. For instance, from "The man on whom the lot falls *must* be sacrificed," and "The lot *may* fall on you," you can infer: "therefore you *may* be sacrificed," but not "therefore you *must* be sacrificed." Ingenious attempts to get a necessary conclusion out of a necessary and a contingent premise are exposed by the logicians, e.g., "Any one who may run from the foe *must* be a coward; some of these troops may run from the foe, therefore some of them *must* be cowards." The fallacy lies in the ambiguous use of "may run from the foe." In the first instance it means, "is, as a matter of fact, capable of running away;" in the second, "may, for anything I know, run away." So that the two propositions do not hang together, and the conclusion is invalid.

100. Compare i. 1, *note*, and xxiv. 131, 132, *note*.

101, 102. See Euclid iii. 31. Euclid's *Elements* were in Dante's time, as in our own, the accepted text-book of geometry. Compare *De Monarchia*, i. 1: 10-21

109, 116. Compare xi. 27, *note*.

125. *De Monarchia*, iii. 4: 30-33. They were known to Dante only through Aristotle's refutations.

127. Sabellius († c. 265) confounded the persons of the Father and the Son; Arius († 336) divided their substance.

128, 129. Some take the allusion to be to the distorted reflections from the blade of a sword, others to hacking by sword-strokes.

139. For "Martin," as equivalent to "such an one," compare *Conv.* i. 8: 94, and iii. 11: 67. And for "Bertha," *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, ii. 6: 34.

## CANTO XIV

34. Solomon. Compare x. 109.

45. Compare *Inf.* vi. 103-111. Aquinas says: "The soul without the body hath not the perfection of its nature."

46-51. Compare xxviii. 106-111.

64-66. Bernard writes on the resurrection of the body in his treatise *On loving God*. It is his consistent doctrine that the blessedness of heaven is found in the complete absorption of the soul in God, self-consciousness being, as it were, replaced not by unconsciousness but by God-consciousness. "But if, as is not denied, they [the disembodied spirits of the blessed] would fain have received their bodies again, or at any rate desire and hope to receive them, it is clear beyond question that they are not yet utterly transmuted from themselves, since it is admitted that there is still somewhat proper to themselves toward which, though it be but a little, their thought is deflected. Therefore, until death be swallowed up in victory, and the perennial light so invade the boundaries of darkness and take possession of them on every side that the celestial glory shine forth even in the very bodies, the souls cannot utterly empty themselves and pass over into God, since they are even yet bound to their bodies, if not by life and sense, yet by natural affection, because of which they have neither the will nor the power to be consummated without them. And so, before the restoration of the bodies there cannot be that lapse of the souls [into God] which is their perfect and supreme state. Nor is it any marvel if the body, now of glory, seem to confer somewhat upon the spirit, since even in its infirmity and mortality it of a surety was of no small avail to it. Oh how true did he speak who said that all things work together for the good of them that love God! To the soul that loveth God, its body availeth in its infirmity, availeth in its death, availeth in its resurrection; first for the fruit of penitence, second for repose, third for consummation. And rightly doth the soul not will to be made perfect without that which it feeleth hath in every state served it in good things."

67-78. Verse 76 makes it clear that this third circle specially represents the Holy Spirit, and so completes the symbol of the Trinity. Compare xxxiii. 115.

In its dimness at first and brightness afterwards, there may be a reference to the difficulty that has always been experienced in finding an adequate *philosophical* basis for the doctrine of the Third Person of the Trinity corresponding to the clearness of the distinction between the conceptions of God in his essence (Father) and God as manifested (Son); whereas to the more strictly *theological* speculation, or rather to the religious experience, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit (God regarded not as the Creator or the Redeemer, but as the Inspirer) has always had a special vividness. Compare xii. 140, *note*.

99. Compare *Conv.* ii. 15: 44-86, a passage interesting on many grounds.

## CANTO XV

62. God.

73-81. God who is the "supreme equality," *i.e.*, in whom all things realise their absolute proportion and perfection (*cf.* xxxiii. 103-105), fills the blessed spirits with love and insight in equal measure, so that their utterance is the perfect expression of their emotion, but we mortals find our wills out-flying our power of utterance.

92. Dante has fallen into a slight error. There is documentary evidence that this Alighieri was living in 1201.

98. An allusion to the Badia, from the belfry of which the canonical hours were sounded. Tierce was at nine o'clock, none at twelve. *Conv.* iii. 6: 12-32.

105. The bride's age too little, her dowry too much.

106. The families being decayed, or in exile.
107. Sardanapálus, king of Nineveh, is taken as the general type of luxury.
109. Montemalo, or Montemario, was the first point at which the traveller on the road from Viterbo came in sight of Rome, and the Uccellatojo is the first place at which the traveller along the *old* road from Bologna comes in sight of Florence.
112. Bellincion Berti was the father of the "good Gualdrada" (*Inf.* xvi. 37). See Villani, v. 37.
- 118-120. None was in fear lest she should die in exile. The reference to France is obscure; perhaps it alludes to the frequency of travel in France, in Dante's time, for business or other purposes.
126. Compare the early chapters of Villani.
127. Cianghella della Tosa, a notorious shrew, married an Imolose. Benvenuto da Imola, declares he could tell us many tales of her. Lapo Salterello, took an active part in the patriotic task of resisting the encroachments of Boniface (see Gardner, i. 4, "the Jubilee," etc.), but appears to have been a worthless person. He was one of Dante's fellow exiles. *Cf.* xvii. 61-63.
133. The Virgin Mary was invoked by women in labour, as the virgin goddess Diana had been in Pagan times. *Cf. Purg.* xx. 19-21.
136. The name Eliseo may be taken as an indication, but not as a proof, of the connection of the Alighieri with the noble family of the Elisei, asserted by Boccaccio. Compare xvi. 40-42: and Gardner, i. 2.
139. Conrad III. (reigned 1137-1152) joined Bernard's crusade in 1147.
143. "Law" here as elsewhere="Religion." See *Conv.* ii. 9: 69-72.

## CANTO XVI

- 1-9. Dante deals with the subject of nobility in the *De Monarchia*, ii. 3: especially *vv.* 12-20; and in *Conv.* iv. *passim*: but especially 14: 111-130.
- 10-12. The legend ran that when Caesar united in himself all the high offices of state, he was addressed as a plurality of individuals, "ye;" but as a matter of fact in Dante's time the Romans adhered to the old-fashioned *thou*. "Nay, they would not address either Pope or Emperor save as *thou*" (Benvenuto).
- 13-15. "At these words which the queen spake to him [Lancelot] it came to pass that the lady of Malehaut coughed, of a set purpose, and uplifted her head which she had bowed down" (Romance of Lancelot). See Toynbee under *Galeotto*.
25. Florence, the patron saint of which was St. John Baptist.
33. Does not imply that Cacciaguida spoke throughout in Latin as he had begun (xv. 28-30), but that he spoke in the ancient Florentine dialect of his day. Dante was well aware of the rapidity with which spoken dialects, not yet fixed by a standard literature, vary. See *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, i. 9: 60-77.
- 34-39. Some MSS. and editions read *three* for *thirty*; and the question is also raised whether the period of Mars is to be calculated at the rough approximation of two years (compare *Conv.* ii. 15: 145, where the half revolution is given at "about a year"), or at the nearer approximation of 687 days, which was known in Dante's age. Two of the four combinations which might thus arise are excluded by the date of Conrad's crusade, 1147. Compare xv. 139. Two years multiplied by 553 would give A.D. 1106 as the year of Cacciaguida's birth, and 687 days multiplied by 580 would give the year 1091. The former date would make Cacciaguida forty-one when he went on crusade, which seems more appropriate than fifty-six; but the reading that gives the latter has the better authority.

38. "His own lion." Apparently the kinship between Leo and Mars is to be found in the attribute of courage, not in any specific astrological belief of the time.

40-42. The annual race was run along the *Corso*, and the Sesto of St. Peter was the last that the racers entered. Just as you come to it you pass the house of the Elisei on your right. Compare xv. 136, *note*. It is a place of ancient families. On the Quarters and Sesti of Ancient Florence, see Villani, iii. 2.

43-45. The reader may make what he can of this ambiguous utterance. The commentators throw no fresh light on it.

47. The baptistery lay at the north of the ancient Florence, and the statue of Mars (at the head of the Ponte Vecchio on the north side) was practically its southern boundary. On this statue of Mars compare *Inf.* xiii. 143-150. Further see Villani, i. 42: 60; iii. 1; v. 38. The associations with this torso of Mars are so vivid and pervading that every student of Dante should make himself thoroughly acquainted with them. See further *vv.* 145-7, *note*.

53. "Neighbours," not fellow-citizens.

56. Baldo d'Aguglione and Fazio de' Mori Ubaldini da Signa, both of them lawyers, and both of them deserters from the White to the Black faction in 1302. Baldo was a prior in 1298 and in 1311, in which last year he drew up the decree recalling many of the exiles, but expressly excluding Dante. Gardner, i. 6, "Letters and Fresh Sentence." In 1299 he had been convicted of cutting an inconvenient entry out of the public records of the courts of justice. Compare *Purg.* xii. 105. Fazio held several high offices from 1310 onwards. He was a bitter opponent of the Whites and also of Henry VII.

58-63. Simifonti was a fortress in Valdelsa, captured in 1202. See Villani, v. 30. The specific allusion is obscure. Does it refer to a descendant of the traitor mentioned by Villani? or to some event more closely connected with papal intrigues and aggressions? *Verses* 58-60, a clear reference to the Roman priesthood, point to the latter interpretation. Compare *Purg.* xvi. 103-120.

64. *Montemurlo*, between Prato and Pistoja, was sold by the Conti Guidi to the Florentines in 1254, as they themselves felt unequal to the task of defending it against the Pistoians. Its acquisition, therefore, marks a step in the aggressive expansion of Florence.

65. *Acone* was probably in the Val di Sieve. Well if the Cerchi (leaders of the Whites) had stayed there! Compare *vv.* 94-96.

66. This is the climax. The implication is that in that case all the intestine conflicts of Florence would have been averted. Compare *vv.* 133-147, *note*.

73. *Luni* or *Luna*, "now destroyed," Villani, i. 50. It was on the Macra, the northern boundary of Tuscany, and was celebrated in legendary lore.

*Urbisaglia*, a decayed city of the March of Ancona.

74. *Chiusi*, the ancient Clusium, was in the pestilent Val di Chiana (compare xiii. 23, *note*). Hence probably its decline. Like Sinigalia (on the seashore, north of Ancona) it has escaped the complete desolation which Dante anticipated for it.

88-135. Information concerning many of these families will be found up and down the pages of Villani, especially iv. 10-13.

94-99. The gate of St. Peter, the abode in Dante's time of the Cerchi. Compare v. 65. Gardner, i. 4, "Blacks and Whites." Further, compare xv. 112, *note*.

102. Insignia of knighthood.

103. The Pighi whose arms are barred with vair (= ermine).

105. The Chiarmontesi, a Guef family who dwelt in the quarter of St. Peter, but the site of whose houses has not been further identified. One of the family, in Dante's time, had falsified the measure by which in his public capacity he issued salt to the Florentines. Compare *Purg.* xii. 105.

106, 107. The Donati, of whom the Calfucci were a branch.

109, 110. The Uberti, once the dominating family in Florence. See Villani, v. 9, and many other passages. Their characteristic pride survived in the great Farinata. Compare *Inf.* x., especially 31-36. The *golden balls* were the device of the Lamberti, of whom was Mosca. *Inf.* xxviii. 106.

112-114. The Visdomini, who, with the Della Tosa, "were patrons and defenders of the bishopric" (Villani, iv. 10). Hence Dante's taunt that they fed fat on the sequestered revenues when the See was vacant.

115-117. The Ademari, between whom and Dante there was an implacable hostility.

118-120. Ubertino Donati had married a daughter of Bellincion Berti, and, says Cacciaguada, objected to another of Bellincion's daughters being given in marriage to one of the Ademari. Compare Gardner, i. 3; last paragraph.

124-126. "Who would believe that the della Pera were an ancient family? But I say to thee that they are so ancient that a gate of the first circle of the city was called after them" (Ottimo Comento).

127-130. Hugh of Brandenburg, Imperial Vicar of Tuscany, died on St. Thomas' Day, 1006, "and whilst the said Hugh was living, he made in Florence many knights of the family of the Giandonati, of the Pulci, of the Nerli, of the Counts of Gangalandi, and of the family Della Bella, which all, for love of him, retained and bore his arms, barry, white and red, with divers charges" (Villani, iv. 2; where the whole story of Hugh is given). To these families the Ciuffagni are added in iv. 13.

131, 132. Giano della Bella, the great democratic leader, the prime mover of the "Ordinances of Justice." Compare Gardner, i. 4; Villani, *Introduction*, § 5, especially pages xxxix. *sqq.*; and book viii. § 1, 8, etc. The della Bella had a border of gold on their coat of arms.

133-135. The reference is to the Buondelmonti, whose houses will be seen to neighbour those of the Gualterotti and the Importuni.

136-138. The Amidei. See *note* on 145-147.

139. "Those that with it wed," the Ucellini and Gherardini. In the democratic legislation against the Magnates (who systematically defied the civic law and recognised no authority save that of the Family Council), members of a family who had ceased to act with it were regarded as no longer belonging to it, and members of another family who had joined its Tower-club, that is to say, its association for the maintenance of a tower for military purposes, were regarded as its "consorts," or associates, forming one *consorteria* with it, and therefore legally identified with it.

145-7. Buondelmonte was betrothed to a maiden of the Amidei; but a lady of the Donati, introducing him to her beautiful daughter, persuaded him to break faith with his bride. Her friends and relatives held a council of war and debated whether to slay him or be content with some lesser chastisement. Then "Mosca de' Lamberti said the evil word: 'Thing done hath an end;' to wit, that he should be slain; and so it was done." He was slain at the foot of the statue of Mars. Villani, v. 38.

153. By the triumphant foe.

154. The old standard of Florence bore white lilies on a red field. It was maintained by the Ghibellines. In 1251 the Guefs adopted a red lily on a white field. See Villani, vi. 43.

## CANTO XVII

13. Phaëton. The fatal consequences of his father giving him leave to drive the chariot of the Sun still act as a warning to fathers. "The rumours" were that he was not really Apollo's son.

13-18. Compare vi. 19-21, ii. 43-45; also xxix. 12.

22-24. Compare *Inf.* x. 79-81; 121-123; xv. 61-78, 88-99; xxiv. 142-151; and *Purg.* xi. 140, 141: and more vaguely *Purg.* viii. 133-139; xxiv. 43-48.

40-42. See x. 124-129, *note*.

43. "Thence" = from the "eternal aspect" of v. 39.

47. Phaedra accused Hippolytus of the sin of which she herself was really guilty. So Florence.

49-51. Gardner, i. 4, "The Jubilee," etc.

65, 66. Apparently implying that Dante had broken with the Whites before the "affair of Lastra." Gardner, i. 5, "Benedict xi.," and Villani, viii. 72.

70-72. Bartolomeo della Scala, Lord of Verona, brother of Can Grande. Gardner, i. 5; "Verona," etc. His arms were an Eagle on a ladder (*scala*).

76-81. Can Grande. Compare *Inf.* i. 100-111.

82-84. Clement V. encouraged Henry VII.'s expedition to Italy, but he was not loyal to him. See xxx. 142-144, and *note*. Also Gardner, i. 6.

## CANTO XVIII

46. William of Orange, like Rinoardo and Orlando, is a hero of romance, whereas Godfrey de Bouillon († 1100), conqueror of Jerusalem, and Robert Guiscard († 1085) of the house of Tancred (compare iii. 118, *note*), are entirely historical.

61, 62. Because they had ascended higher.

68. Jupiter is temperate or equable, between cold Saturn and hot Mars. Compare xxii. 145, 146.

82. Pegasus, the winged horse, struck out the fountain Hippocrênê from the earth with his hoof, which fountain was sacred to the Muses. Hence the Muse is "goddess of the spring of Pegasus."

91-93. *Wisdom of Solomon*, i. 1 (see *Argument*).

94-114. Note that M is the central letter of the Latin and Italian alphabet, which has no W. An M of the old fashion may with a little ingenuity be transformed into the body and wings of a bird, the head gathering above the centre.

102. The method being to ask, "How many lambs, florins, or what not, shall I get?" then strike a brand and count the sparks for answer.

109-111. Dante is describing the work of God, whom no one can instruct (*Isaiah* xl. 13, 14; *Job* xxxviii. 4 *sqq.*), and from whom all knowledge comes into every mind. But why *nests*? Are the nests the heavens, nestling one within another? Or is the instinct of birds selected as the symbol of all intelligence save the divine?

112. The spirits that had formed neither the limbs of the M nor the head, but had twined round the former, now moulded themselves into the eagle's body and wings.

120-123. The papal court. Cf. *Purg.* xvi. 58-120: and *De Mon.*, Book i.

130. The cancelling of excommunication being a source of revenue.



## CANTO XIX

25-33. The same problem (see *vv.* 70 *sqq.*) is referred to in the *De Monarchia*, ii. 8: 23-45, as one which the human reason cannot solve unaided, but to the solution of which it can rise by the aid of faith. There is no indication in the *De Monarchia* of the mental anguish which throbs through [the appeal in this present passage.

48. Both Lucifer and Adam and Eve sinned not by desiring knowledge that was to be permanently withheld, but by desiring it before the appointed time. "He therefore [the devil] desired something which he had not, and which he ought not to have desired at that time: just as Eve desired to be like the deities before God desired that she should" (Anselm).

52. "Our." Compare *xx.* 134-138 and *xxi.* 91-93. Another reading is *your* (*vostra*), which seems more germane to the immediate object of the appeal. Compare *vv.* 58-63. But *our* effects the transition from "the summit of all creation" to the mind of earthly man, and beautifully associates the spirits in heaven with those on earth in dependence upon God.

65, 66. "Darkness," "shadow" of ignorance, "poison" of vice.

88, 89. The context and the comparison of *De Monarchia*, ii. 2, especially *vv.* 50-61, sufficiently explain this passage. Conformity with the will of God is the ultimate test of justice.

112. "Persians," representing all non-Christians, like the "Ethiopian" of *v.* 109.

115-118. This indiscriminate condemnation of contemporary monarchs is far from being justified in all its details by history. Compare with this passage the parallel in *Purg.* vii. 91-136.

115-117. The translation personifies Albert's invasion of Bohemia in 1304, but the Italian may equally well be translated: "set the pen (*viz.* of the Recording Angel) in motion." On Albert, compare *Purg.* vi. 97-117.

119-120. Philip the Fair. Compare *Purg.* vii. 109-111: *xx.* 85-96, and numerous references to his relations with Clement in the *Comedy* and in the *Epistles*. He debased the coinage to one third of its value, in order to meet the expenses of his Flemish campaigns in 1302. This is one of several passages in which we see the horror of tampering with the coinage entertained by Dante, the citizen of the greatest commercial city of Europe. As the symbol of greed the *Florin* was the "accursed flower" of *ix.* 130, but as the foundation of all commercial relations it was worthy of such reverence that he who tampered with it was to be ranked with him who falsified the very personality of human beings, the ultimate basis of human intercourse. See *Inf.* xxix. Compare the story told in Villani, vi. 53.

127-129. Compare *ix.* 1-6, *note.* One good quality to a thousand bad ones.

130-132. Anchises died at Drepanum in Sicily (the Isle of fire, because of Mt. Etna). On Frederick, compare *Purg.* iii. 116, and *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, i. 12: 35-42. There was a tradition in Boccaccio's time that Dante had originally intended to dedicate the *Purgatorio* to him, but modern scholars treat it with contempt. If Dante ever really entertained such a purpose, his changed estimate of Frederick was probably caused by the latter's slackness in espousing the imperial cause in opposition to his hereditary foe, Robert of Naples, the head of the Italian Guelphs.

134, 135. The space allotted to the record of so paltry a man being limited, contracted letters must be used if room is to be found for all his bad qualities and deeds.

136, 137. James of the Balearic Isles and James of Aragon.

140, 141. Orosius of Rascia issued counterfeit Venetian coins,

142. In 1300 Andrew was king of Hungary. He was succeeded by Caroberto (1310-1342), the son of Dante's friend Carlo Martello whom his uncle Robert had ousted from the Neapolitan succession. Compare ix. i, *note*. Hungary had suffered from the evils of a disputed succession and of terrible wars. Happy if she had now seen the end of them!

143-148. Navarre was the separate kingdom of Joanna, wife of Philip the Fair. Happy if she maintained the barrier of the Pyrenees between herself and her great neighbour! The fate of Cyprus under the French dynasty of Lusignan may warn her of her fate should she fall under France.

## CANTO XX

6. It was the general belief that the light of all the stars was reflected from the Sun.

13-15. A much disputed passage. It is taken in the translation to mean, "As the flute is played on by the breath of the musician, so these spirits were played upon by their own holy thoughts, wherein that same divine love which clad them with the smiling brightness of joy, breathed upon them."

41. Contains by implication Dante's doctrine of inspiration. The human instrument of the Divine Spirit has a genuine part to play.

43-45. Compare *Purg.* x. 73-93.

51. 2 *Kings* xx. 1-11.

55-60. The donation of Constantine, called by Bryce "the most stupendous of all medieval forgeries," set forth how Constantine, when cured of his leprosy by Pope Sylvester, resolved to transfer his capital to Constantinople ("made himself a Greek") in order to leave to the Pope and his successors the sovereignty over Italy. Dante, while accepting the supposed fact, regarded it as one of the most disastrous events of history. Compare *Inf.* xix. 115-117; *Purg.* xxxii. 124-129. He warmly maintained that the donation was invalid, since the Emperor could not alienate, nor the Pope receive temporal power. *De Monarchia*, iii. 10, etc. Compare Gardner, iii. 1, under Book iii.

61-66. William the Good (1166-1189) was the last king of the house of Tancred who reigned over the "Two Sicilies." See iii. 118-120, ix. 1-6, *notes*. The kingdom of Naples, under Charles II., and the kingdom of Sicily, under Frederick bewail him.

68. *Ripheus*. Virgil calls him "the one man amongst the Trojans most just and observant of the right" (*Aeneid*, ii. 426 sq.).

76-78. The imprint of his eternal pleasure probably means *justice*. By longing for God everything becomes its true self.

92. *Quidity*—the "what-ness" of a thing, as *quality* is the "what-like-ness" of it. "You know the name of a thing, but know not what the thing is."

103-105. Ripheus had faith in the crucified feet that were to be, Trajan in the crucified feet that had been.

106-108. Repentance or change of will, in hell, was so inconceivable, that even when the divine prerogative overrode the decree, it was thought of as acting not to change the will in hell, but to bring back the soul to the body, that the will might be changed on earth.

109-111. Thomas Aquinas repeatedly refers to the story of Gregory and Trajan. He says: "Damascenus († before 754) . . . tells how Gregory, when pouring out prayer for Trajan, heard a voice borne to him from heaven: *I have heard thy voice and I grant pardon to Trajan*; to which fact, . . . the whole East and West is witness." In discussing prayer and predestination, he declares that prayer cannot alter the divine will, but may be the appointed instrument for its accomplishment; and declares that "though Trajan was in the place of

the reprobate, yet he was not reprobate himself in the absolute sense, since he was predestined to be saved by Gregory's prayers." Gregory himself [Pope, 590-606] is emphatic on the futility of prayer for the damned. "The saints pray not for the unbelieving and impious defunct, because they shrink from the merit of their prayers, for those whom they already know to be damned to eternal punishment, being annulled before that countenance of the righteous Judge."

118-123. The principle implied in this passage opens the door through which Cato enters heaven. Compare *Purg.* i. 31-75, and the obvious symbolism of 37-39. There is a remarkable passage in which Aquinas says: "A man may prepare himself by what is contained in natural reason for receiving faith. Wherefore it is said that if any one born in barbarous nations do what lieth in him, God will reveal to him that which is necessary for salvation, either by inspiration or by sending a teacher." Perhaps Dante's own mind dwelt increasingly on this conception. The tradition which told how Paul wept over Virgil's tomb at Naples may have been taken as specific evidence that Virgil was not one of the heathen thus saved.

127. Faith, and Charity. See *Purg.* xxix. 121-129.

## CANTO XXI

23. The joy of contemplation against that of obedience.

26-27. Saturn reigned in the age of gold, which is identified by the classical poets with the age of absolute simplicity and temperance.

43. This is the spirit of Peter Damiani († 1072). The poverty of his parents induced them to expose him as an infant; but he was rescued, and after much hardship was educated by his brother Damian, in gratitude to whom he took the surname of "Damian's Peter." He was made Cardinal Bishop of Ostia in 1058. He is best known for his unsparing castigation of the corrupt morals of the monks of his day.

84. "The light in the centre of which I dwell."

87. God.

89, 90. Compare xiv. 40, 41.

106-111. The monastery of Fonte Avellana upon the Apennines.

115. Lenten fare, cooked with olive oil, not lard or butter.

121-123. A vexed passage. The reading of *v.* 122 is doubtful. If we read *fui* = "I was," the two Peters are to be identified. If we read *fu* = "he was," they are to be distinguished. Reading *fu*, we must identify Peter the Sinner with Peter degli Onesti who founded the church of Santa Maria del Porto, near Ravenna, in accomplishment of a vow, about A.D. 1096. He lived in a little house adjoining the church till his death in 1119. His tomb may still be seen in the church, and he is described upon it as *Petrus Peccans*. The meaning would then be: "I, Damian's Peter, was in Fonte Avellana, whereas Petrus Peccans dwelt by Santa Maria del Porto, and is another man." In this case Dante intended the lines expressly to guard against the confusion between the two Peters. But the passage so read seems somewhat frigid.

Now Peter Damiani also was in the constant habit of calling himself *Petrus Peccator*. It seems extremely improbable that Dante was ignorant of this; and if he knew it, he certainly would not have used this designation expressly to distinguish Peter Damiani from another Peter. The best editors, then, are probably right in reading *fui*, and identifying the Pietro Damiano of *v.* 121 and the Pietro Peccator of *v.* 122. But this does not end the difficulty. Did Dante confound the Pietro degli Onesti, buried in [Santa] Maria del Porto, with Peter Damiani, and did he mean to say: "I went by the name of Peter Damiani in Fonte Avellana, but by the name of Petrus Peccator in the hermitage of Santa Maria del Porto?" This seems extremely improbable. Dante can

hardly have confounded the two Peters. Moreover, Peter Damiani used the signature *Petrus Peccator* when he was in Fonte Avellana as well as elsewhere, and we may be sure that Dante would not have gone out of his way to make so precise a statement about the different appellations for the same man in different places when he could not have ascertained it to be true. There is a third hypothesis suggested by a passage in the *Breviarium Romanum*, which, after recording Peter Damiani's reception into Fonte Avellana, says that not long afterwards "he was sent by his abbot on a mission to the monastery of Pomposa. and afterwards to the convent of St. Vincent of Petra Pertusa," both of which he reformed. Now this monastery of Pomposa, "which is situated on a small island at the mouth of the Po, near Commachio" (Toynbee), was a convent of Santa Maria, and is so described by Peter Damiani himself. Moreover, it has recently been shown that Peter Damiani spent two years there. Probably, therefore, the reference in vv. 122, 123 is to this monastery rather than to the hermitage of Santa Maria del Porto. But even then there remains a great difficulty of translation. One of the suggestions made is grammatically admissible, but poetically worse than impossible. "I dwelt there, Peter Damiani, also known as Petrus Peccator. I once visited the monastery of Pomposa." On the other hand, the translation offered in the text supposes so awkward a construction that it may well be open to doubt. Fortunately (if we accept the reading *fui* and take the monastery to be Pomposa) the sense, if not the construing, is clear.

125-126. The cardinal's hat.

127, 128. Peter (*John* i. 42) and Paul (*Acts* ix. 15).

## CANTO XXII

28. Benedict (480-543), the founder of the Benedictines, is frequently represented in paintings as the type of monastic discipline.

33. "You would not have held back, timidly repressing your questions."

37-39. Monte Cassino "is situated on the spur of Monte Cairo, a few miles from Aquino, in the N. of Campania, almost exactly half-way between Rome and Naples." It was "crowned by a temple of Apollo, and a grove sacred to Venus" (Toynbee).

49. Probably Macarius the Egyptian (301-391), one of the monks of the Saitic desert, a disciple of Anthony.

*Romualdus* "saw in a vision a ladder stretching from earth to heaven after the similitude of the patriarch Jacob; whereon men in white vesture ascended and descended; whereby he perceived that the monks of Camaldoli, of whose institution he was the author, were wondrously set forth. Finally, when he had lived 120 years, and during 100 of them had served God in the utmost austerity of life, he took his way to him in the year of salvation 1027" (*Breviarium Romanum*). He was of the Ravennese family of Onesti. Camaldoli is in the Casentino district, and is the hermitage referred to in *Purg.* v. 96.

61-69. *i.e.* "Therein is no temporal succession, but eternal co-existence, and therefore completeness." Compare xxix. 10-12; xxx. 61-99, *Argument*.

74, 75. My "Rule" serves no purpose except to spoil the parchments on which it is written.

79-84. "Interest" is regarded as the "increase" of the capital. Hence Dante speaks of it by implication as "fruit," and says that the illicit increase or gain of usury is not so hateful to God as those illicit gains in frenzied greed for which the monks rob the poor, whose guardians they are, and enrich their relatives, or even their paramours.

115-117. This fixes Dante's birthday as somewhere between the 18th May and the 17th June (both inclusive), the time during which the sun was in Gemini.

139-141. Compare ii. 60. Dante conceived that the other side of the moon, which is always turned away from us and toward the higher heavens, had no dark patches.

142. Apollo = the sun.

144. *Maia* and *Dione*, somewhat strangely put for the son of *Maia* (Mercury) and the daughter of *Dione* (Venus).

145. The temperate Jove between the hot Mars and the chill Saturn. Compare xviii. 68.

147. The nature of their orbits.

151. A thrashing-floor was a round flat area. Hence the comparison.

152. Not to be understood as implying that the whole inhabited area of the earth was visible to him. Compare xxvii. 76-87, *Argument, note*.

## CANTO XXIII

19-21. Dante has seen in the seven planetary spheres the different classes and grades of blessedness representing the "many mansions." Now in the heaven of the stars he sees in varied groups the whole fruit of creation and history gathered together, as typifying the "one home." The "circling of these spheres" signifies the whole cosmic evolution, and the working of the spirit of God upon man. Cf. xiii. 52-66, *note*.

30. See xx. 6, *note*.

108. The Emyrean.

112-114. The *primum mobile*.

134, 135. The Babylonian exile is a favourite symbol of the life upon Earth, wherein we are "strangers and pilgrims." Compare *Purg.* xiii. 94-96.

## CANTO XXIV

3. Contrast ii. 12.

16. "Carol," in old English as in Italian, signifies a group of dancers.

27. Giotto's vivid colouring went with a love of large surfaces, whence his treatment of drapery, "cumbrous, from the exceeding simplicity of the terminal lines"; whereas the Byzantines, both in the earlier period of pale colouring and in the "solemn and deep" system of the later 12th and 13th centuries, used to "break up their draperies by a large number of minute folds." (After Ruskin.) Dante regards human speech and even human imagination as too aggressive and indiscriminating for the delicate folds of the pictures he fain would paint.

46-48. Graduation is a religious experience analogous to confirmation. Note the place of the authors of school text-books amongst the great religious teachers in xii. 134, 137. Verses 47 and 48 have been much discussed. The translation takes them as meaning that by propounding the question the master sanctions the discussion without determining the conclusion.

62. St. Paul; for the anonymous *Epistle to the Hebrews*, from which the definition is taken (xi. 1), was attributed to him. The Catholic Church has always maintained that faith is an *intellectual* virtue; hence the rationalistic colouring of this canto, from which the Protestant reader will miss much that comes under his conception of faith (based on the really Pauline Epistles to the *Galatians* and *Romans*), and which he will find elsewhere in the *Comedy*, but not here.

66. "Essence" = *Quidity*, see xx. 92, *note*.

69. The usual meaning of *substance* in the scholastic philosophy is something which exists in itself. (See iii. 29, *note*.) Hence an objection to the definition in *Hebrews* noticed by Aquinas: "No quality is a substance; but faith is a

quality . . . therefore it is not a substance." Dante meets the difficulty by taking *substance* in its other sense, as that which "stands under."

75. "Intent" (intention). A difficult word because of the variety of its technical uses. Compare *Purg.* xviii. 23. Here it is nearly equivalent to "meaning." Faith includes "what is meant by *substance*," and also "what is meant by *argument*."

97. "Proposition," as applied to the O.T. and N.T., carries on the logical terminology of v. 94.

125, 126. See *John* xx. 3-6. Dante has fallen into a confusion between "first entering" and "first approaching" the sepulchre.

131-134. Compare i. 1, 76, notes. See Wallace, § 39, 46.

144. The schoolmen found the scriptural references to the Trinity chiefly in the O. T., in the plural form of the Hebrew word for "God," in the use of the plural in *Gen.* i. 26; in the threefold cry in *Isaiah* vi. 3, etc., etc. The chief passages from the N.T. are the formula of baptism in *Matt.* xxviii. 19; the text of the three "heavenly witnesses" in *1 John* v. 7 (Vulgate and A.V.); and the threefold formula in *Romans* xi. 36, after citing which, with some others, Petrus Lombardus adds: "but since almost every syllable of the New Testament agrees in suggesting this truth of the ineffable Unity and Trinity, let us dispense with gathering testimonies on this matter."

## CANTO XXV

1-9. Compare *Ecloga*, i. 42-44, and the *Ecloga responsiva* of Johannes del Giglio, 44-46, and Gardner, iii. 5.

7. "Fleece;" keeping up the metaphor of the lamb and the sheepfold.

14, 15. Peter.

18. James, of the "Peter, James, and John," referred to in the Gospels, is James son of Zebedee, and is identified with the James said, by tradition, to have preached the Gospel in Spain, whose most celebrated shrine was at Compostella in Galicia. Compare *Vita Nuova*, xli. 46-50. But the James associated with Peter and John as a "pillar" of the Church in *Gal.* ii. 9 is "James the Lord's brother" (*Gal.* i. 19) mentioned in *Acts* xv. 13 and elsewhere. It is to him, and not to the son of Zebedee that the *Epistle of James* has usually been assigned. But Dante forgets or ignores the distinction.

29, 30. *James* i. 5.

33. *i.e.* admitted Peter, James, and John to more intimate knowledge and familiarity than was extended to the other disciples. Compare *Conv.* ii. 1: 42-51. The occasions specially referred to are the Transfiguration, the raising of the daughter of Jairus, and the agony at Gethsemane.

55-57. The Exodus from Egypt had a manifold significance. Amongst other things it was the symbol of the liberation of the soul from the bondage of the flesh; as the entry into the Promised Land and the City of God was the symbol of the heavenly life. Compare *Purg.* ii. 46. *Epist. ad Can. Grand.* 133-161 (§ 7), especially 152-155, and the cruder statement in *Conv.* ii. 1: 14-65.

58-60. *Cf.* xvii. 10-12, xxiv. 40-42.

67-69. It is to be noted that the theological virtue of *Hope*, as understood by the Catholic Church, is not a general hopefulness of disposition, but the specific hope of the bliss of heaven. Dante's definition is closely copied from Peter Lombard's "Hope is the certain expectation of future bliss, coming from the grace of God and from preceding merits."

73. *Psalm* ix. 10. In the Vulgate, ix. 11, where the reading is *sperent*—"let them hope."

76, 77. *James* i. 12.

84. Martyrdom and death.

88-96. "*Isaiah* (lxi. 7, 10), in describing the gathering of the redeemed, declares that they shall possess double things, to wit robes, as your brother-apostle John, in describing the same scene (*Revelation* vii. 9), makes yet clearer. Scripture tells us, then, in symbolical language, that we shall have two robes, and this symbol, in its turn assures me that we shall have joy of body as well as joy of soul. The content of my hope, then, is the unbroken immortality of the soul and the resurrection to immortality of the body." Compare xiv. 61-66, *note*. The fanciful and indirect character of this scriptural support for the belief in the resurrection of the body is the more remarkable when we consider that *I Cor.* xv. would have furnished Dante with a perfectly explicit statement. Thomas Aquinas, as one would expect, makes frequent use of this chapter.

100-102. "The light was as bright as the sun, so that if it had been in the Crab during the month of mid-winter (parts of December and January) when the sun is in the opposite sign of Capricorn, one or the other always being above the horizon, there would be no night."

105. Not performing with any self-conscious desire for admiration, but simply throwing herself into the festivities in honour of the bride.

112-114. The pelican, supposed to feed her young with her own blood, is a frequent symbol of Christ. Further, see *John* xiii. 23; xix. 25-27.

118-126. Compare *John* xxi. 22, 23.

127-129. Christ and the Virgin (compare xxiii. 85-87: 106-126) alone ascended to heaven with the two robes (*i.e.* in the body as well as the spirit). Note that, according to the conception prevalent in the Middle Ages, Enoch and Elijah, who were also taken up bodily from the earth, were not in heaven, but in the Earthly Paradise. Perhaps the present passage may be taken as indirect evidence that Dante too accepted the tradition.

## CANTO XXVI

12. *Acts* ix. 10-18.

28-30. Compare xxviii. 106-111, as well as xiv. 40 *sqq.*, and other passages, and see *note* on 37-39.

34-36. "Whosoever perceives that God is the supreme good (the truth on which rests the proof that he is the supreme object of love) cannot fail to love him supremely."

37-39. This is clearly *Aristotle*, who teaches that God is the supreme object towards whom the heavens yearn (*Wallace*, 39 and 46, as above). The extension of this idea from the heavens to the Angels or Deities is not remote from Aristotle's spirit, and is entirely germane to Dante's conception of it. Compare *Conv.* ii. 5; and also *Parad.* ii. 139-144, *note*. The principle of *vv.* 28-30 underlies all Aristotle's philosophy; but perhaps Dante had specially in mind the passage in the *Metaphysics* where Aristotle says that what moves other things, though itself unmoved, is "the object of longing" or "the object of intellectual apprehension;" and adds that "the principles of these two are identical." Albertus (with whom Thomas substantially agrees) interprets them as meaning *appetibile bonum* and *intelligibile bonum*, "that which asserts itself as good to our desire" and "that which asserts itself as good to our intellect." He goes on to explain that the former may be delusive and may be resisted, but the latter "provoketh our longing without let and without intermediary; because there is no need that it should first announce itself as good through the sense in order to stir the appetite; nor is there any clog to it on the part of the receiving intellect, since the thing loved is good in itself and . . . winneth the undivided longing of him upon whom it is poured."

42. *Exodus xxxiii.* 19. The Vulgate reads, "*ego ostendam omne bonum tibi.*"

43-45. Probably the reference is to *Rev.* i. 8. Others understand *1 John iv.* 16; but it seems impossible to take these three lines as anything but an express description of the Apocalypse.

52. "Christ's eagle." Compare *Rev.* iv. 7. See also *Purg.* xxix. 88-105.

72. The various coats of the eye.

106-108. Both the construing and the interpretation of this passage have given rise to much dispute. The translation here given takes it to mean that everything is perfectly reflected in God, and therefore he who looks on God sees everything perfectly. But no single thing and no single truth (nor even the sum of them all, compare *xix.* 40-45) is a complete and perfect reflection of God. Therefore he who sees anything, or everything, apart from God, cannot see it in its completeness. Hence he who looks on God sees the most secret and complex thing more perfectly than he can grasp even the most axiomatic truth in detachment. Compare *xxxiii.* 100-105; also *ii.* 43-45; *vi.* 19-21.

110, 111. The Earthly Paradise or Garden of Eden, where Beatrice met Dante.

115-117. Speculations were frequent as to whether the eating of the fruit was to be taken literally, or whether it was a mere veil under which some more heinous offence was really indicated. These lines are intended to brush aside such speculations, and to explain that no breach of a direct command of God can be regarded as trivial. Compare Anselm: "Wert thou to find thyself in the presence of God, and were one to say to thee, *Look this way*, and God counterwise, *I would by no means have thee look that way*, search thou in thy heart what there is amongst all things that are, for which thou shouldst cast that glance, counter to the will of God." Anselm's interlocutor declares that he would not do it to save the whole creation, no, nor to save many creations, did such exist.

118. Limbo. Compare *Inf.* ii. and iv. 43-63, especially 55.

124-126. Contrast *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, i. 6: 38-61.

128, 129. *i.e.* Human pleasure, choice, or preference, varies under the changing influence of the heavenly bodies.

134. Compare *Psalm lxxviii.* 4. (*Psalm lxxvii.* 5, in the Vulgate, which reads *Dominus nomen illi.* But Jerome had noted the Hebrew reading here and elsewhere, and had passed the name *Jah* into the current of Christian tradition.) There are many proper names and some other words compounded with the divine name in this form, such as *Hallelujah*.

136. *El*, signifying "the Mighty," is, according to Hebrew lexicographers "the most ancient and general name" for Deity. It frequently occurs in various books of the Bible. But the more common designation is *Elohim*, probably not to be connected etymologically with *El*.

139-142. The life in Paradise, therefore, only endured six hours, or something over.

## CANTO XXVII

13-15. Changed from white to red.

22-24. The charge of usurpation and the declaration that the Papacy is vacant doubtless bear a specific reference to the measures which Boniface took to force his predecessor Celestine V. (compare *Inf.* iii. 58-60) to resign. See Villani, viii. 5. But Dante does not consistently regard Boniface as a no-pope. Compare *Purg.* xx. 85-90.

40-45. A selection of the Popes of the first three centuries.

46-48. Refers to the Papal hostility to the adherents of the Empire.

49-51. Perhaps a specific reference to the struggle of Boniface with the Colonna family. Compare *Inf.* xxvii. 85-90. Villani, viii. 23.



58. Clement V. (1305-1314) was a Gascon, and John XXII. (1316-1334) a native of Cahors.

61. Cf. note to vi. 53, and *Conv.* iv. 5: 164-171.

69. The Sun is in Capricorn in parts of December and January.

74, 75. Contrast xxx. 121-123: xxxi. 78.

79-81. Compare xxii. 124-154. The "climata" are latitudinal divisions which may be applied equally to the heavens and the earth. There is some difference of usage amongst the medieval geographers, but it seems probable that Dante regarded the Twins, in which he was situated, as lying on the upper confines of the first clima. The passage, therefore, seems to mean simply, "I had revolved, with the first clima, through a whole quadrant."

83, 84. It was now sunset on the coast of Phoenicia, where Jupiter, in the form of a bull, took Europa on his shoulders. From this we must calculate back to the position indicated at the close of Canto xxii. It should be borne in mind that according to Dante's geography Jerusalem was the centre of the inhabited globe; the mouths of the Ganges were the extreme to the east, 90° distant from Jerusalem; and Gibraltar the extreme to the west, also 90° from Jerusalem; Rome being midway between Jerusalem and Gibraltar.

98. The twins, Castor and Pollux, children of Leda, whom Jupiter wooed in the form of a swan.

106-108. "The natural property in virtue of which," etc. Compare iv. 131, note.

136-138. A difficult and disputed passage. Verse 138 can only mean "the Sun"; and since he is the "father of each mortal life" (xxii. 116), and since man is "begotten by man and by the sun" (compare *De Monarchia*, i. 9: 6, 7), we are perhaps right in taking his "fair daughter" to be *Humanity*.

142, 143. The Julian calendar (which we rectified in 1752) makes the year 11 m. 14 sec. (very roughly one hundredth of a day) too long. In Dante's time, therefore, January began, by calendar, a little later in the real year every season; and thus, in the course of ages, it would begin so late that winter would really be over before we came to New Year's Day by calendar. The substitution of an immense period for a short one is parallel to our "not a thousand miles hence."

## CANTO XXVIII

13-15. "Mine," sc. "eyes." "The heavens declare the glory of God," *Psalms* xix. 1; and whoso looketh at them aright perceives that glory.

16. "And it has been shown that this Being [the Divine Being] hath not magnitude, but is without parts and indivisible" (Aristotle).

22-24. Compare x. 67-69.

32. *Iris* = the rainbow. Compare xii. 10-12.

39. "Thereof," i.e. of the pure spark.

41, 42. "Now from such a principle heaven and earth depend" (Aristotle). Wallace, 39, note 1.

54. "Is not contained in space." Compare xxx. 38, 39.

72. The Seraphs, who "see more of the First Cause than any other angelic nature" (*Conv.* ii. 6: 79-81) and therefore must needs love more. Compare xxvi. 28-30 and *vv.* 109-111 of this canto.

73-75. "If thou consider the intensive quantity and not the extensive. For extensive quantity is corporeal and apparent, whereas intensive quantity is spiritual and unapparent" (Benvenuto).

80-81. N.E. the sky-clearing wind, as opposed to N.W. the sky-clouding wind. The usage of the Latin writers (*e.g.* Boethius and Virgil) leaves no room to doubt that this is the meaning.

93. If one grain of corn were reckoned for the first square of a chess-board, two for the second, four for the third, etc., it may be seen by a calculation which a logarithmic table will make extremely easy, that the total will be about 18½ million million million.

95, 96. A variant on *vv.* 41, 42. \*

104, 105. By what logic are they called Thrones *because* they close the first ternary? Apparently because *Seraphs* with their wings, and *Cherubs* with their eyes, emphasise the up-going to God and insight into his being; and a complete reflection of the relations between the first hierarchy and the Deity would not be given in the nomenclature unless the *Thrones* were added to signify the superincumbent power of God manifesting itself through and in the Angels, as well as his glory drawing them to himself. Perhaps this may explain why Dante treats utterances of gladness in God as directly connected with the *Seraphim* (compare *viii.* 27: *ix.* 76-78) and confidence in the manifestations of God's power as connected with the *Thrones* (*v.* 115: *ix.* 61), without reference to the sphere in which the words are spoken.

109-111. The conception here formulated pervades the whole poem. Compare *xiv.* 40-42: *xxix.* 139, 140; the *note* on *v.* 72 of this canto, etc. It is interesting to compare with this view the following passage from Aquinas: "Knowledge existeth in measure as the things known are in him who knoweth, but love in measure as the lover is united to the loved. Now the higher abide after a more noble fashion in themselves than in those below them; but the lower in a more noble fashion in those above them than in themselves. And therefore the knowledge of what is beneath us excelleth the love thereof; but the love of what is above us, and especially of God, excelleth the knowledge of the same." Observe, however, that there is no inconsistency between this doctrine and the teaching of Dante; for Dante maintains that knowledge is the condition of love, rather than love the condition of knowledge, not that knowledge is itself intrinsically superior to love, an idea which he was evidently far from holding. See the final vision in Canto xxxiii.

117. From the Autumn Equinox all through the Winter till the Spring Equinox the sign of Aries is visible in the sky at nightfall. The line therefore means "where there is no Autumn nor Winter."

118. In the Troubadour poetry the birds are said to "unwinter" themselves, that is to say, to put off winter in their spring songs, and so to "unwinter Hosanna" is used for "to sing Hosanna in the eternal spring of heaven."

133. Gregory (pope, 590-604) has an arrangement that differs from that of Dionysius only in the interchange of Virtues and Principalities. Probably he was unacquainted with the works attributed to Dionysius, since they first gained currency in the West through the translations of Scotus Erigena in the ninth century. The arrangement which Dante had followed in *Conv.* ii. 6: 43-55 is identical with that of Brunetto Latini, and closely resembles one of the several arrangements given by Rabanus Maurus (ninth century).

138. St. Paul. Compare *Acts xvii.* 34, and *2 Cor.* xii. 2-4.

## CANTO XXIX

1-6. The Moon (Diana), when at the full, rises just as the Sun (Apollo) sets, or sets as he rises.

13-18. Dante is careful in the use of "splendour" for reflected, not direct light. *Epist. ad Can. Grand.*, 349-437 [§ 20-23], and *Conv.* iii. 14: 29-50. Therefore we must not understand this passage as declaring the manifestation

of his own glory to be God's motive in creation, but rather the conferring of conscious being, the sense of existence, upon his creatures. "In order that his creatures (*i.e.*, his reflected glory, his splendour) might be able to say: *I am.*" This is in conformity with what Aquinas and others say as to love as God's motive in creation. Compare vii. 64-66, *note*.

20. If we might read, with some MSS., *procedette* for *procedette* the meaning would be much easier: "Since there is no *before* nor *after* save with reference to creation (because Time itself is a creation), the question is equivalent to: *What was God doing before there was any before.*" But the authority for *procedette* (proceeded) is too strong to be neglected. The translation and argument explain the sense in which it is taken.

22. "Conjoined" in the material heavens; and in their several *purity* in the Angels and the *Materia Prima*.

25-37. It was a received point in the Aristotelian physics that light occupies no time in diffusing itself through a translucent medium or substance. Beatrice, then, declares that the creation of the Angels, of the *Prima Materia*, of the physical heavens [and also time and space] was instantaneous. The successional creation recorded in *Genesis* was a subsequent process of evolution which took place in time, and through the instrumentality of the Angels.

32, 33. The Angels. *Act* or *actuality* is opposed to *potentiality*. Man's intellect is "possible" of "potential," that is to say, we know potentially much that we do not know actually, and (in another but allied sense) are potentially thinking and feeling many things that we are not actually thinking and feeling; whereas the whole potentialities of an Angel's existence are continuously actualised. Compare *De Monarchia*, i. 3: 55-62, and *vo*, 70-81 of this canto.

34. The *Materia Prima*.

35, 36. The material heavens; not humanity. Compare vii. 130.

40. Perhaps *Ecclesiasticus* xviii. 1, where the Vulgate reads, "He who liveth eternally created all things at once (*simul*)." It was also argued from *Gen.* i. 1, "*in the beginning*" that there had been no long-previous creation.

45. "Without their perfecting," *i.e.* as organs without a function, not being able to perform that for which they were created. On the relation of those Angels who specially presided over the revolving heavens and the other Angels in the Orders to which they respectively pertained, see *Conv.* ii. 5: 11-98.

49-51. Here Dante avoids the vexed question as to whether some Angels fell from each of the Orders. In *Conv.* ii. 6: 95-99, he had expressly declared that some, perhaps a tenth, of each Order fell. "The substrate of your elements" is usually (and perhaps rightly) taken to mean "that one of your elements that underlies the rest," *i.e.* Earth. Compare *Inf.* xxxiv. 121-126. But if we take this passage on its own merits it seems better to understand the *substrate* of the elements to mean the *prima materia* (compare li. 106-108: vii. 133-136, and lines 22-24 of this canto); the elaboration of the elements being the subsequent work of the Angels and the heavens.

56, 57. *Inf.* xxxiv.

72. These are the precise powers which Dante believed the disembodied human soul actually to possess before assuming its provisional aerial body. See *Purg.* xxv. 83. As far as *intelligence* and *will* are concerned, the assertion is equally true of the Angels, but not so as to *memory*. (See below.)

118. Devils are called "birds" in *Inf.* xxii. 96; xxiv. 47, as here. Angels are called birds in the *Purgatorio* (ii. 38: viii. 104), but not in the *Paradiso*.

124-126. The pigs which infested Florence and its neighbourhood, and which belonged to a neighbouring monastery or monasteries, were under the patronage of St. Anthony (251-356), whose symbol is a pig. It had been well had they been the worst things fed on the proceeds of the fraudulent gains of the religious!

130. "This nature," *i.e.* the Angels.

131-135. "Daniel vii. 10 is not intended to give the number of the Angels, but to express that they are more numerous than man can conceive."

## CANTO XXX

43. The redeemed and the Angels. The former as though reclad with the body.

79-81. Compare xxxiii. 109-114, and *Argument*. "Harsh," literally unmel-  
lowed, and therefore "repellent to the senses"; here, "repellent to the mind;"  
not to be assimilated by it without jar.

97. Bearing in mind Dante's careful use of the word "splendour" (compare  
xxix. 13-15, *note*), and following the descriptions of this canto closely, we may  
conclude that the perpetual reflection of the light of God cast back from the  
*primum mobile* upon the eyes of the saints, ministers to their perpetual power of  
looking direct into the light itself. See *vv.* 100, 101. Nearly the same phrase  
is used in xiv. 48 for internal light, or power of vision.

114. All the redeemed that had regained their native heaven.

121-123. It had been maintained by Democritus, but was denied by Aristotle,  
that were it not for the medium, even the smallest things could be seen at any  
distance whatsoever. This is one of the many instances in which Dante gives  
a spiritual turn to the physical speculations of the Greeks.

137. See Gardner, i. 6, and the account of Henry's expedition in Villani.

143, 144. The translation should be taken as meaning that Clement, while  
outwardly favouring Henry, would secretly oppose him; which agrees with  
xvii. 82, and is a not inaccurate description of Clement's conduct. Compare  
*Epist.* v. 165-170 (§ 10). But the Italian, like the translation, will also bear the  
meaning "who will work against him (Henry) openly and covertly," and this  
interpretation is preferred by many scholars, perhaps as bringing a more con-  
crete charge against Clement, and so leading up better to the "thereafter" of  
line 145.

145. Henry died in August 1313, Clement in April 1314.

146-148. Compare *Inf.* xix. 52 and 77.

## CANTO XXXI

17. "Peace and ardour." The collocation is significant. (See *Argument*.)

25. "Secure and happy." (See *Argument*, and compare xxvii. 9.)

31-33. Helicē was turned into a bear by Juno's jealousy, and then transferred  
by Jupiter to the heavens, as the constellation of the Great Bear; her son  
(Orcas) being changed into Boötes.

33. The brightest star in Boötes is Arcturūs, to which the bow of the bear's tail  
points. If we are to take Dante as describing the region over which Arcturūs  
never sets, we should have to go as far north as 70° latitude, but his notions of  
northern geography may have been vague; he means to indicate barbarians  
coming from the far north.

35, 36. Obviously the Lateran stands for Rome—the part for the whole, but  
many commentators seek for a special significance in the selection of this parti-  
cular palace to represent the whole city. The ambiguity of the phrase "tran-  
scended mortal things," and the natural association of the Lateran (which in  
Dante's time was the Papal palace) with the Church, have led some scholars to  
explain the passage as a reference to pilgrims from the far north coming to Rome  
in the days when the Church minded spiritual things. But this is obviously a  
mistake. The Lateran was (and is) currently believed to have been an imperial

palace from the days of Nero until Constantine presented it to Pope Sylvester; and the passage doubtless refers to the amazement felt by the rude barbarians at the stupendous edifices of Rome, at the period "when the imperial seat surpassed in magnificence all the works of man."

64-93. "Blessed is he who loves thee and his friend in thee, and his enemy for thy sake; for he alone never loses any dear one to whom all are dear in him who is never lost" (Augustine). True union consists not in an exclusively appropriating possession of the dear one, but in the divine fruition of the union. Compare xxxiii. 100-105; also *Purg.* xix. 136-138. For the rest, note how Beatrice's human personality drops its allegorical veil and shines in its simple purity in this closing scene.

78. Compare xxx. 121-123.

102. Bernard's devotion to the Virgin Mary is expressed in his four homilies, *De laudibus Virginis matris*, and his nine sermons for the feasts of her Purification, Assumption, Nativity, etc., as well as incidentally in other works. It is noteworthy that he opposed the celebration of her Immaculate Conception. His contemporary, Peter Cellensis, says of him: "He was the most intimate fosterling of Our Lady, to whom he dedicated not only one monastery, but the monasteries of the whole Cistercian order."

103-105. St. Veronica lent her kerchief to Christ to wipe his brow as he was bearing the cross, and when he returned it, it bore the impress of his features. It was exhibited at Rome annually at the New Year and at Easter. Compare *Vita Nuova*, xli.

109-111. St. Bernard was the type of contemplation, and the question was even raised whether he had not seen God "essentially" (*per essentiam*) while yet living.

124-125. The point at which the sun is about to rise.

127. The Oriflame (*aurea flamma*) was the standard given by the Angel Gabriel to the ancient kings of France, representing a flame on a golden ground. No one who fought under it could be conquered. The golden glow of heaven is the invincible ensign not of war but peace.

132. According to medieval angelology, each angel constituted in itself a distinct species. Compare xxix. 136-141.

## CANTO XXXII

1-60. Compare the diagram in illustration of the Rose of Paradise in Gardner.

10-13. See *Ruth* iv. 21, 22. "Boaz [the husband of Ruth] begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David." Compare, further *Psalms* li. (Vulgate l.) and its inscription.

33. The two years that elapsed between his martyrdom and the descent of Christ to Limbo. Compare *Inf.* iv. 52-63.

57. "Ring and finger" = the thing fitting and the thing to be fitted; here the grace that is given and the grace that would be appropriate.

66. Compare *Purg.* iii. 37.

67-69. See *Genesis* xxv. 22, 23; and compare *Parad.* viii. 130, 131.

70. "The colour of the locks" seems to mean nothing more than the complexion, tone, or quality of grace.

72. "Keeness" of vision, *i.e.* power to see God.

84. It is noteworthy that Bernard himself, in a treatise addressed to Hugo of St. Victor, shrinks from this appalling conclusion. "We must suppose that the ancient sacraments were efficacious as long as it can be shown that they were not notoriously prohibited. And after that? It is in God's hands. Not mine be it to set the limit!"

127-129. John the Evangelist. The allusion is not to his long life, but to the vision recorded in the Apocalypse, regarded as a prophecy of the future sufferings of the Church.

137, 138. See *Inf.* ii.

## CANTO XXXIII

6. The Son, when he became man, was *made* in the Virgin's womb, and so by human nature.

20. Compare xxxi. 88, *note*.

44, 45. Compare iv. 30.

49-51. This furnishes one of several consistent indications that in Paradise one can see that at which he is not looking. This is one of the subtle ways in which Dante indicates that all spacial and temporal terms in Paradise are merely symbolical.

65, 66. The Cumæan Sybil wrote her oracles on leaves, which the wind then scattered in confusion. *Aeneid*, iii. 441 *sqq.*: vi. 74 *sqq.*

88. Compare iii. 29, *note*.

92. This "knot" or *complex*=the universe.

95-96. When the vision broke, a single moment plunged the actual thing he saw into a deeper oblivion than five and twenty centuries had wrought over the voyage of the Argonauts. The memory of an intent gaze, of deepening vision, of absorbed volition, of a final flash of insight—the assured possession of a will and affections laid to rest by the sweetness of what came to him—the uncertain impression of the images and symbols amid which it came—all these remain: but the vision itself is utterly past recall. *Cf.* i. 4-9.

The Argo was the first ship,—a new thing to Neptune.

118-120. Compare x. 2: xii. 10-15.

133-135. The problem loosely described as "squaring the circle" is stated by Dante with his usual accuracy. The radius and circumference of a circle being incommensurable, it is impossible to express the circumference in terms of the radius—as impossible as it is to express Deity in terms of humanity. The radius being the unit, then, the circle cannot be exactly *measured*. There is no difficulty in constructing (by means of a cycloid) a square equal in area to a given circle. But compare *Conv.* ii. 14: 218.

142-145. "The whole work was undertaken, not for a speculative but for a practical end." And again: "the purpose of the whole [the *Comedy*] and of this portion [the *Paradiso*] is to remove those who are living in this life from the state of wretchedness, and to lead them to the state of blessedness." *Epist. ad Can. Grand.* 273-275 and 267-270 (§§ 16 and 15).

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