

Pg
450
178d



A
A
0
0
0
4
3
5
2
1
3
4



ALIBRY / HARVARD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

The 'DXV' Prophecy in
The Divina Commedia

By
Edward Moore



THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

Manufactured by
GAYLORD BROS., Inc.
Syracuse, N. Y.
Stockton, Calif.

THE "DXV" PROPHECY
in
The Divine Commedia

With the Author's Comments

THE 'DXV' PROPHECY

IN

THE DIVINA COMMEDIA

(PURG. xxxiii. 37-45)

BY

EDWARD MOORE, D.D.

OXFORD: 1901

61



Presented By *Luigi Ricci*

PQ
4450
N786

TO THE MEMBERS
OF THE
OXFORD DANTE SOCIETY
1876—1901

*L'Adolescenza è in venticinque anni, che procede
montando alla Gioventute.*

CONVITO.

493384
Italian

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

THE 'DXV' PROPHECY

(*PURGATORIO*, XXXIII. 37-45)

IN the Apocalyptic Vision of Cantos xxix, xxx, and xxxii of the *Purgatorio* Dante has displayed in a series of scenes or tableaux, first, the constitution of the Christian Church as 'built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets' (Cantos xxix, xxx), and then the vicissitudes of its history from its establishment at Rome to the removal of the Papal seat to Avignon (Canto xxxii). In this concluding Canto (xxxiii) he ventures upon prophecy. That is to say, he embodies in the form of prediction his own confident hopes and aspirations for the future. We can only form conjectures as to the time and manner in which Dante believed that the coming deliverance would be effected, for unhappily his hopes were never realized, so that we have no longer historical facts to guide us in our interpretation. We cannot say of his prophecy, as he so confidently affirmed elsewhere, 'l' effetto nol nasconde' (*Purg.* vi. 138). Consider how hopelessly for him, quite apart from his own private calamities, 'the times were out of joint.' Rome was 'deserted of both her kings,' the Pope and the Emperor. Dante regarded it as 'formal' or essential in God's providential design, that the seat of both should be established at Rome. Hence, though he would regard both of these divine institutions as equally imperishable, yet both were now in abeyance, both were in a state of suspended animation; humanity was left without a guide either in things spiritual or in things temporal¹. Dante himself solemnly pronounces both Papacy and Empire vacant.

¹ See *De Mon.* III. xvi. 75 *seqq.*

At the time at which he is supposed to be writing (1300) he held that there was no Pope and no Emperor. As to the Pope, though, as Dante knew to his cost, Boniface was ruling at Rome and at the summit of his power, he declares by the mouth of S. Peter in *Par.* xxvii. 22-24 that the throne of the Pope is vacant in the sight of the Son of God :

‘il loco mio (thrice repeated) che vaca
Nella presenza del Figliuol di Dio¹’

He says the same of the Empire in *Conv.* IV. iii. 39, where Frederic II is declared to be the last Emperor, though Rudolph and Adolph and Albert had been elected after him ; for none of them had visited Italy or been crowned at Rome². Albert was indeed nominally Emperor in 1300, and we all remember how passionately Dante appeals to him in *Purg.* vi. 97 to come and deliver Italy, though he somewhat bitterly addresses him as ‘Alberto Tedesco.’

For all that, Dante never for one moment gave way to despair. Faith and hope never deserted him. Both in the Canto now before us and in *Inf.* i and elsewhere, he expresses his confident faith in a coming Deliverer, and one too that was close at hand. ‘E ciò sarà presto,’ in the well-known words of Savonarola. As to his hopefulness, surely it was no idle boast, when he makes S. James declare (in *Par.* xxv. 53) that no son of the Church militant has more hopefulness than he, ‘hoping indeed (as we may well say) against hope.’ This key-note of hope is struck at once at the beginning of this Canto where Beatrice, her face burning with fiery indignation³, declares, borrowing the words of Christ, ‘A little while and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and ye shall see me.’ In these words is foreshadowed no doubt Dante’s belief in a speedy restoration of the Papacy to Rome. Beatrice then walks ten paces forward preceded by the seven Maidens⁴, and followed

¹ Chiefly and technically no doubt in consequence of the invalidity of the ‘rifuto’ of Celestine which altogether vitiated the election of his nominal successor.

² Other passages in the same sense are *Par.* iii. 120; *Purg.* vi. 89; *Ep.* vi. ll. 11 *seqq.*

³ Like that of S. Peter in *Par.* xxvii.

⁴ See xxix. 121-132; xxxi. 103-111.

by Dante, Matelda and Statius. She then turns to Dante, and comforts him by 'showing him things that must shortly come to pass.' True, the car representing the Visible Church sorely injured by the dragon (see xxxii. 130) and finally carried away out of sight (xxxii. 157-160) has now been destroyed (fu, e non è) 'it was, and is not'¹ (l. 35). But God is able to raise it up again; and he who has the blame for this will soon discover that God's vengeance is not to be averted by any idle ceremonies or superstitions (l. 36). Then follows what is perhaps the most obscure and enigmatical passage in the whole of the *Divina Commedia*, ll. 37 *seqq.* A coming deliverer is foretold, he is close at hand, he is sent forth from God, and both the Empire and the Church will find in him a Saviour. The vacant Empire will not remain without an heir. The harlot and the giant² will both be slain, and so the Church as well as the Empire will find deliverance. But while thus much is clear, the declaration that the number 515 in some mysterious way represents the coming deliverer is so obscure that no satisfactory solution of the riddle has been hitherto suggested. As the construction is a little involved I will translate the lines, *Purg.* xxxiii. 37-45:

'Non sarà tutto tempo senza ereda
 L' aquila che lasciò le penne al carro,
 Per che divenne mostro e poscia preda;
 Ch' io veggio certamente, e però il narro,
 A darne tempo già stelle propinque,
 Sicure d' ogni intoppo e d' ogni sbarro;
 Nel quale un cinquecento diece e cinque,
 Messo da Dio, anciderà la fuia
 Con quel gigante che con lei delinque.'

'Not for all time shall be without an heir the Eagle that left his plumage in the Car³, whereby it became a monster and afterwards a prey⁴. For I see with certainty, and therefore I tell it, stars already near at hand, free from every obstacle and from every hindrance, to give us a time in which a 515,

¹ Again we recognize the language of the Apocalypse xvii. 8.

² See xxxii. 148-156.

³ xxxii. 125, 126; 136-141.

⁴ xxxii. 142-160.

sent forth from God, shall slay the harlot with that giant who is joined with her in guilt': i. e. Clement V and Philip IV; or possibly further, the prostituted Papal power and the over-mastering French Monarchy of which these were at the time the representatives—the Papacy having been removed to Avignon in 1305.

I wish now to establish the three following points:—

I. That the Deliverer here foretold can be none other than the Emperor Henry VII.

II. That his name, by a process familiar in the Middle Ages, will actually give the number 515.

III. That there is abundant reason for believing that that process was known to Dante.

But, first of all, there are two commonly received, but, as I think, erroneous views respecting this passage which I wish to remove out of the way before proceeding further.

1. It seems to be generally accepted as a sufficient explanation of the number 515, that as this would be represented in Roman numerals by the letters DXV, which may be transposed into DVX¹, so Dante merely foretells 'a Leader.' I cannot possibly believe this to be the whole solution, though I am far from denying that it may be a *part* of it, as will be seen later. Can any one suppose that this peculiarly solemn and elaborate prophecy amounts to no more than this, that 'a Leader shall arise'? If so, we may well exclaim with the Chorus to Cassandra in the *Agamemnon*,

‘*προφήτας δ' οὐτως μαστεύομεν,*’

'We need no prophets to tell us only this.' Least of all, is such vagueness in the manner of Dante, especially in such a moment of lofty enthusiasm. Who can suppose his intense and eager hopes to rest on such an unsubstantial basis, on such a vague commonplace as this—'a Leader shall arise'? I feel sure that his hopes, like the anticipations of a Hebrew

¹ As to the transposition of the Latin numerals to make a significant or at least a pronounceable name, we may note that the same process was applied by Victorinus early in the fourth century to the number 666 or DCLXVI, and the meaningless name DICLVX thus formed was treated as the name of the Beast. (*Speaker's Commentary*, p. 698.)

prophet, were always centred on something much more definite than that, not only on a Leader, but on some one who should be that Leader. He may have had to transfer them (as we know) from one ideal to another, for with him (in the language of Pope),

‘Hope builds as fast as knowledge can destroy.’

But whether we can identify the name or not (and I believe we can), I feel confident that when Dante used such language as this, some definite person is designated among those on whom at some period or another his supreme hopes were fixed.

2. The second point is this. It has sometimes been thought that Dante is here referring to events happening in 1314, and that consequently the date of the composition of this part of the *Purgatorio* is indicated as being somewhat later, and perhaps c. 1315. No doubt 1314 was for Dante an eventful year. It witnessed the deaths both of the first Avignon Pope, Clement V, and of his patron Philip the Fair, the harlot and the giant of this vision (see xxxiii. ll. 44, 45). Thus the two chief obstacles to the restoration of the Papal See to Rome seemed to be removed as it were together. In the same year a new Emperor was elected, Lewis of Bavaria, the imperial throne having been vacant for fourteen months since the death of the ill-fated Henry VII, in whose grave all Dante's hopes seemed to have been buried. In Lewis the cause of the Empire appeared to revive, and it did experience a short-lived resurrection.

But assuming this to be a ‘retrospective prophecy,’ it is surely inconceivable that it should bear so little correspondence to its supposed fulfilment. For (1) the deaths of Clement V and Philip IV were in no sense attributable to the hand of any such deliverer, ‘messo da Dio’ (see ll. 43-45). The death of Clement on April 20 occurred in the ordinary course of nature. That of Philip, on November 29, was the result of an accident when hunting, and this is referred to by Dante himself in *Par.* xix. 120:

‘Quei che morrà di colpo di cotenna.’

If Dante when he wrote the passage before us was aware of these facts, I do not think he could possibly have used this language. Nor, if we give a wider range to the prediction, can it be said

that any great blow was dealt in that year to the powers or causes of which Clement and Philip were the embodiment. I should rather gather from it that the date of composition must have been earlier, as indeed on other grounds I believe it to have been¹. But (2) further, there was no great or conspicuous leader in 1314, for whom any such heroic career could be anticipated, unless it were possibly Lewis of Bavaria. But he at any rate had nothing to do with the deaths of Clement and Philip, and he was not in fact elected Emperor till Oct. 20, six months after the death of Clement. Nor is he even alluded to in the works of Dante in any way.

As then the events of 1314 cannot be thought to satisfy the terms of this passage regarded as an *ex post facto* prophecy, I can only conclude that we have here to deal with a genuine prediction. In other words that the passage was written when coming events seemed to cast such very definite shadows before them that Dante, enthusiast as he was, felt secure and confident in predicting the issue². Now we know that there was one period in his life when Dante did feel such confidence, and that the centre of his hopes was the newly elected Emperor Henry of Luxemburg, commonly known as Henry VII, who became Emperor in November, 1308. Thus the Imperial throne, having been vacant (in Dante's opinion) since the death of Frederick II in 1250, had at last once more an occupant.

I. Having thus cleared away these two erroneous interpretations or inferences (as I believe them to be), I will now endeavour to establish the first of my three points, by giving several reasons for believing that Henry, and none other, must be the subject of this celebrated prophecy.

1. I do not think that Dante would have been likely to

¹ It has indeed sometimes been argued that the warning addressed to Philip in ll. 35, 36 seems to imply that he was still living. But this does not follow, since it has reference to the *assumed* date of 1300. The warning to be conveyed to Fra Dolcino in *Inf.* xxviii. 55 is very similar, and it was probably *written* after his actual death in June, 1307.

² Just as Savonarola prophesied, with better success and to the astonishment of Comines, the expedition of Charles VIII to Italy. Gregorovius, *Rome in the Middle Ages*, vii. p. 433.

attribute to any one in a less exalted position than that of Emperor the overthrow of the giant and the harlot of his vision, Philip and Clement, or of the French domination and the degraded and subservient, though still very powerful, Papacy. If it be an Emperor, the choice can only lie between Henry and Lewis. But, as I have said, Lewis is nowhere else mentioned or even alluded to by Dante. If he were honoured by such a very remarkable prophecy as this, and if he ever held such an exalted place in Dante's hopes, it is scarcely possible that there should be no further trace of it in his writings. It is true that some other distinguished Ghibelline leaders have been suggested of less than imperial dignity, such as Can Grande, or Ugucione della Faggiuola. Also in favour of Can Grande (the name most commonly advocated) there might be urged the probable allusion to his name in the mysterious Veltro in *Inf.* i, and also the brilliant future prophesied for him in *Par.* xvii. 76. But what we read there is far less definite than this, and does not necessarily amount to more than a panegyric of gratitude prompted by Dante's personal obligations to him. It seems to me to form a closer parallel to the eulogy of the Malaspina family (on similar grounds) in *Purg.* viii. 121-139 than to the language here employed. Then again the Veltro prophecy in *Inf.* i. (supposing that to refer to Can Grande) has a much more limited range. He is to be the saviour of prostrate Italy, and will purge her cities in succession of the presence of the wolf, whatever be its meaning or different meanings in that Canto. I believe therefore an Emperor to be designated, and *if* an Emperor, *then* certainly Henry VII.

2. But secondly there is a still stronger reason. This passage, looked at closely, seems distinctly to imply that the coming Deliverer would be an Emperor. Observe the close connexion in 'Che' in l. 40 with the statement of the previous *terzina*. It will of course be remembered, as I have already explained, that in Dante's opinion the Empire was now vacant.

We have seen that he did not recognize Rudolph and Adolph and Albert as Emperors at all, since they had not

visited Italy, nor been crowned at Rome. Now Henry was actually on his way thither in 1310 and 1311. Hence Dante might confidently declare that the Imperial Eagle should not long be without a successor (see l. 37), *because* (l. 40) the stars foretell the speedy advent of one sent forth from God who should work deliverance, &c. Surely this 'because' distinctly implies that the Deliverer would himself be the heir of the Eagle, or, in other words, an Emperor.

But (3) next consider side by side with this prophecy the extravagantly enthusiastic language which Dante applies to Henry VII in *Epistles* v, vi, and vii. He is the 'Lord's Anointed'; 'He that was to come'¹; 'a second son of Jesse'²; in one place even, 'The Lamb of God'³. He regards him as another Messiah by whom all the woes of the distracted world were to be cured⁴. He says that we may refer to him in a secondary degree 'post Christum' the prophecy of Isaiah in liii. 4, 'He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.' Also two of these *Epistles*, vi. and vii, are dated 'in the first year of the advent of Henry ('divi Henrici') to Italy,' as though it were a sort of new Anno Domini⁵. But besides this, and much more of the same kind, there are at least two passages bearing a striking resemblance to the language of the prophecy before us, ll. 45, 46. In *Epist.* v. 2, ll. 32 *seqq.* we read in reference to Henry that 'percutiens malignantes, *in ore*

¹ *Ep.* vii. 2, l. 31.

² *Ep.* vii. 8, l. 176 (reading *altera*).

³ In this surprising passage, *Ep.* vii. 2, l. 45, Dante declares that when he prostrated himself at Henry's feet (probably on the occasion of his coronation at Milan on Jan. 6. 1311) his spirit rejoiced in him ('*exultavit in te spiritus meus,*' evidently borrowing the language of the *Magnificat*), and he said silently within himself, '*Ecce Agnus Dei, ecce qui abstulit peccata mundi.*'

⁴ It is remarkable that even Clement V at first favoured the expedition of the Emperor Henry to Italy. Dante refers to his 'benediction' in *Epist.* v. § 10 *ad fin.* The Pope (as Gregorovius says, *op. cit.*, vol. vi. p. 27) announced him as a kind of Messiah: '*Exultent . . . sibi subditae nationes . . . quoniam ecce Rex ipsorum pacificus eis veniet mansuetus, ut in eo suo sedens solio maiestatis solo nutu dissipet omne malum, cogitet pacis cogitationes pro subditis.*' The date of this was Sept. 1, 1310, just after Henry had announced his intended journey to Italy. Shortly after his coronation at Rome, June 29, 1312, Clement's tone was much changed (Gregor. vi. p. 67). Within another year he was threatening excommunication (p. 85).

⁵ Compare too the language of *Ep.* vii. 1, ll. 21-24.

gladii perdet eos, et vineam suam aliis locabit agricolis, &c. (again, be it observed, transferring to him words of Divine application). And again in *Epist.* vii. 8, l. 178, Henry is exhorted to bestir himself and with his sling and stone to overthrow Goliath, i. e. (as generally explained) Philip IV, the very giant whose imminent death at the hands of the deliverer is here confidently prophesied¹.

4. It is hardly necessary to point out that in regard to no one else does Dante ever use language at all like this.

5. At no time in Dante's life did any person, or any position of events, offer such a near prospect of the realization of his hopes and ideals as came into view (or at any rate into *his* view) on the descent of Henry VII into Italy in the Autumn of 1310, on his way to be crowned at Rome.

6. I may add that I have some time since come to the conclusion on grounds entirely independent of this passage, and from internal evidence elsewhere, that certain parts of the *Purgatorio* were written about 1309 or 1310 or 1311, and that, so far as we can speak of the *Cantica* generally as bearing a certain date, that is the period to which most of the evidence points. If I am right in my interpretation of *this* prophecy, that date would receive further strong confirmatory evidence. At any rate it will be observed that if on these or any other grounds it be admitted that Henry VII is the Deliverer here referred to, the date 1314-15 as that of composition is at once and obviously excluded, since Henry VII died in August, 1313.

7. If the ten paces of xxxiii. 16, 17 represent, as is generally supposed, ten years, the *terminus a quo* is most likely to date from 1300, the assumed date of the Vision and of the utterance of this prophecy by Beatrice, and that again would bring us to the date of 1310. Others who think 1314 to be the period referred to, reckon the ten years from the date of the Avignon captivity, 1305.

¹ I must not lay too much stress on this passage, since I cannot regard the words '*this* Goliath' as necessarily referring to Philip IV. The allusion may perhaps be to Robert of Naples or some other power more actively opposing Henry at that moment.

Everything, therefore, in the way of general considerations of probability seems to me to point very strongly to Henry VII being the Saviour whose coming is here foretold.

II. I now proceed to the second main division of my subject. I am sanguine enough to believe that I have discovered a probable solution of the mysterious number 515, and that by this also is designated the name of the same Emperor. I had arrived at the conclusion already expounded, viz. that Henry VII is certainly the person referred to, without any reference to this enigma, and without any thought of attempting a solution of it. I felt confident, however, that it must represent in some way or other *a definite name*, because it is so evidently suggested by the riddle of the number of the Beast in Rev. xiii. 18. This is stated to be 666, and there is added, as a sort of hint to the solution of the problem, to which ὁ ἔχων τὸν νοῦν is invited¹, ‘ἀριθμὸς γὰρ ἀνθρώπου ἐστὶ’—Vulgate: ‘Numerus enim hominis est².’ ‘It is the number of a man.’ It seemed therefore to me almost certain that Dante meant this mysterious number similarly to designate *the name of a man*. Besides, the language of his prediction implies the same—‘I see . . . a time in which a 515, sent from God, shall slay,’ &c.

In reference to the problem in the Apocalypse I found that various commentators had attempted the solution by

¹ The word ψηφισάτω (as Bengel observes) implies making a calculation, or computation.

² It ought to be said that in spite of these words the number has been explained by many as giving a chronological date. This line has also sometimes been adopted in reference to the number 515 in Dante. Thus Mr. Butler makes the ingenious, though I think very improbable, suggestion that we are to take the year 799, that of the restoration of the Western Empire in the person of Charles the Great, and add to it 515, and that will give the date 1314 as that in which this glorious regeneration was to take place. As to the words ἀριθμὸς γὰρ ἀνθρώπου ἐστὶ, I can hardly imagine these having any meaning than that implied in the text. Yet some maintain the meaning to be ‘according to the way men count.’ But surely this is superfluous, for how else could any beings count? Alford thinks that this meaning is established by c. xxi. 17, where the *cubit* by which the city was measured is said to be ‘μέτρον ἀνθρώπου.’ But numbers, unlike cubits, do not depend on human convention. We believe that the Multiplication Table persists in Heaven and throughout the Universe. We have no reason to feel so sure about the Tables of Weights and Measures.

the help of numerical values assigned to the letters of the Latin, Greek, or Hebrew alphabets. In fact this seems to be the generally accepted method from the earliest times. I tried all of these upon various names that have been suggested in the present passage, such as Enrico, Ludovico, Can Grande, &c., both in their Latin and their Italian forms. I confess I thought that Dante was not likely to be acquainted with the numerical values of the Greek and still less of the Hebrew alphabets (though as regards Hebrew I now think very differently), but, whether or no, I could not arrive at any approach to the number by any of these devices. I then found through the kind help of my friend Mr. Cowley, Sub-Librarian of the Bodleian, that there is a very large amount of mediæval Kabbalistic literature in which this method of interpretation by the numerical value assigned to the *Hebrew* letters is practised. Further, that some of the writers of this class, and certainly the mystical system of interpretation itself, can hardly fail to have been well known to Dante. Of this more in detail presently.

Let us survey the position we have now reached.

Supposing now these several points to be admitted:—

- (1) That the coming Deliverer was an Emperor.
- (2) That, if so, he could only be Henry VII.
- (3) That the riddle is quite obviously formed on the model of that containing the number of the Beast in the Apocalypse.
- (4) That that riddle was always interpreted as giving the name of some individual man.
- (5) That it was thought to do so by the application of numerical values to the letters of his name.

Granting these points (I say) it seems to me to follow almost *necessarily* that the number 515 *must* somehow be made out of the letters of some form of the name of Henry.

Still, however, I could arrive at no satisfactory result by Greek, Latin, or Hebrew letters, till the idea occurred to me that the Emperor Henry is commonly designated by Dante's contemporaries (e.g. G. Villani, Ricordano Malespini, &c.), not as *Enrico* but as *Arrigo*. This is so in the great majority of MSS. examined by me since publishing the *Oxford*

Dante, at any rate in the former of the two passages of the *Divina Commedia* where the Emperor's name occurs¹, though I was unfortunately misled by Witte's text into printing it 'Enrico.' Applying the recognized values of the Hebrew letters to the name *Arrigo*, or *Arrico* as it might also be written, and as it would originally be written, the number 515 presented itself at once, granting only one small assumption as to the value given to the letter *o*. But let me explain this in detail.

Starting with the word *Arrigo* (or rather in its more primitive form *Arrico*) let us try to imagine the process by which *Dante* would be likely to work out the construction of an enigma of this kind.

As to the spelling of the name, we cannot be quite sure whether he would write the last syllable as *-co* or *-go*. We are all familiar with this interchange in the termination of similar names, e.g. *Federico* (*-go*), *Alberico* (*-go*), *Roderico* (*-go*), besides common nouns or verbs such as *preco*, *figo*, *luogo*, *amico*, *segreto*, &c., &c. (where *c* and *g* are found indifferently); and so even at the beginnings of words, such as *Gostanza*, *Gaeta*, *Gaia*, and the well-known family of *Gaetani* or *Cajetani*². In *Dante's* time, when Italian was in process of forming itself, the influence of the original Latin forms would be still strongly felt in orthography. Indeed the prevalence of such forms in MSS. of the *Divina Commedia* is one recognized indication of their antiquity. *Dante* was therefore most likely to have used the forms ending in *-co*, for this was clearly the original and natural form of the name. The occasional change into 'go' in names of this kind is a corruption found in Italian only of all the European languages. The termination of this and similar names is the Teutonic *-reich* or *-rikkh*. The name *Henricus* or *Harricus* came into Latin from the Teutonic 'Hcimirich'³, i.e. 'Home-Ruler' (of course in quite a harmless

¹ *Par.* xvii. 82; xxx. 137.

² As a further illustration of this tendency in Italian we may take *ingombro* from late Latin *cumbrus* (= *cumulus*), whence 'encumber.'

³ See Miss C. Yonge, *History of Christian Names*, 1863.

sense), and the 'k,' or tenuis sound, is preserved in all other languages, e. g. Provençal, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, German, Polish, Danish, Swedish, &c.

Next as to the transliteration of the word, and of this guttural sound in particular.

I do not for a moment suppose that Dante transliterated or wrote out the whole word into Hebrew characters. There is no evidence that he could either read or write them, and for the purpose now in view there is no need to suppose it. He would probably take a table of the Hebrew alphabet, with the approximately equivalent Roman letters and the numerical values corresponding to the several Hebrew letters. exactly as one may find these values set down opposite to them, almost as a matter of course. in any Hebrew grammar that one may take up¹, so thoroughly well-known and recognized are these numerical equivalents. Indeed in Hebrew there never was, nor is there even now, any other way of expressing figures or numbers but by the help of the numerical values conventionally assigned to the letters of the alphabet. Hence it is as fundamentally necessary to be acquainted with these values as with the phonetic power of the letters. Greek and Latin are equally devoid of figures, though Latin differs from Greek and Hebrew in utilizing only a few letters for this purpose, not the whole alphabet systematically.

I assume then that Dante would take each of the letters of his word, one by one, and set down the value which he found opposite to it in a list which a Jew friend may have given him, or perhaps, more probably, as he might obtain them, just for the letters he required, orally from a Jew, of which race, as we shall see, there was a considerable and very cultivated body in Italy at that time.

He would thus have five letters to deal with : *a*, *r*, *i*, hard *c*, (i. e. *k*), and *o*.

As regards the first three there could be no doubt or difficulty. It was quite recognized that *a* = Aleph = 1, *r* = Resh = 200, and *i* = Yod = 10. And any one who knew as

¹ e. g. Gesenius, Nordheimer, Sarchi, Ball, Fitzgerald, merely to notice a few taken from a library shelf at random.

much as that Resh = *r* would be equally likely to know that it represented 200, in whatever way either piece of information were obtained.

Next as regards the guttural sound of *k* or hard *c*, the case is almost equally clear. I am informed by Hebrew scholars that beyond all doubt Koph would be its recognized equivalent, though I find in some grammars both Caph and Koph inaccurately transliterated by *k*. Also the value of Koph was certainly 100.

Thus far his total would come to 511, and up to this point everything has gone on perfectly recognized lines. But as regards *o*, a difficulty would present itself. It has no definitely recognized equivalent in the Hebrew alphabet. Let me here interpose an explanation. I am obliged to use the words 'equivalent' and 'corresponding' when comparing Roman and Hebrew letters. This is not of course strictly accurate, and especially as regards the supposed equivalents of the vowels, which do not, properly speaking, exist at all in the Hebrew alphabet. But they are commonly set down as in some general sense 'corresponding' to, or at least having an affinity with, certain Hebrew letters, as any one may see in ordinary Hebrew grammars.

But in the tables, in several grammars that I have consulted, 'o' does not appear at all, though the other four vowels *a*, *e*, *i* (or *y*), and *u* (or *v*), are set down as equivalents to the Hebrew letters Aleph, Ain, Yod, and Vau respectively. If then Dante had a list like any of these, or if he asked a Jew friend what Hebrew letter corresponded to 'o' and what was its value, 'the oracle would be dumb.' The only answer would be, there is no corresponding letter recognized in the Hebrew alphabet. Consequently on this information Dante would be unable to assign a numerical value to 'o.' The probability or reasonableness of this supposition being of vital importance to the interpretation which I am about to suggest, I would ask special attention to the following considerations.

1. There seems no reason whatever to suppose that any table of values that may have been furnished to Dante, or any Jew whom he may have consulted, would have gone

beyond the information at the disposal of the much later writers of Hebrew grammars in the nineteenth century. I could instance the omission of 'o,' though the other vowels are included, in several such grammars, among which I may specially mention the standard work of Gesenius. Let us remember this also, that Dante was not undertaking a serious study of Hebrew (of which there is no reason to suppose that he had any knowledge), but only making such superficial inquiries about a few letters as might enable him to carry out the purpose he had in hand.

2. I am not aware of any evidence up to Dante's time of the application of this Kabbalistic method of interpretation to languages *outside* Hebrew, as, for instance, to either Greek or Latin names. A distinguished Hebrew scholar, who has made a special study of the subject, tells me that he cannot find any evidence of it. If indeed the science of 'Gematria' (as it was called) had been so applied, no doubt it would have necessitated the providing of 'o' with some numerical value, or quasi-phonetic equivalent. But then 'o' would not be the only letter that would need to be thus dealt with. *Inter alia* we might mention θ , ϕ , ξ , and still more the long and short vowels η and ϵ , ω and \circ : since their distinction could not be overlooked without confusing words totally distinct. A variety of Greek names suggest themselves at once which could not be treated on this method with Hebrew letters, e. g. Πάφος, Φθίη, Θέτις, Ξεροφῶν, &c., &c. For though no doubt the *sounds* required could be approximately given in Hebrew by the help of aspirates and vowel points, yet in applying this method we have to deal only with the plain unpointed twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The Greek alphabet could of course be easily numerically so applied to Greek words, and I find it stated by Dean Farrar¹ that they were sometimes thus treated, and that two words of which the numerical value thus calculated was the same were called 'isopsephic.' E. g. Demagoras and Λουμός are described in the Anthology as thus corresponding. Both are in fact equivalent to 420. But the attempt to equate the *Hebrew* letters and their values to the

¹ *The Early Days of Christianity*, p. 468 n.

separate letters of either *Greek* or *Latin* alphabets would be beset with so many other difficulties besides that which would apply to 'o,' that we cannot imagine it to have been ever systematically practised, apart from the negative evidence already cited. Dante was therefore, I imagine, conducting a more or less original experiment.

3. It might perhaps be thought that the solution of the Apocalyptic riddle would have called for such an application of the Hebrew letters. This, however, does not appear to be the case. For, if one may trust the note on the passage in the *Speaker's Commentary*, the application of the *Hebrew* letters to its solution appears to date only from the seventeenth century¹. At any rate there is no trace of this in any writers upon the subject accessible to Dante. Further, as to the particular solution Nero(n) Caesar, which is arrived at by the help of Hebrew letters, I find five or six writers of the *nineteenth century*, each claiming to have been the *first* to suggest it². Hence, as far as *this* problem is concerned, the need for the evaluation of 'o' would not go far back.

4. Observe particularly that I am not for one moment denying that 'o' was sometimes regarded as sharing with 'u' or 'v' the Hebrew 'Vau' as its quasi-equivalent, and by consequence as bearing the value '6.' This is assumed, and I doubt not quite rightly, by those who trace in Nero(n) Caesar the number 666 by the help of Hebrew equivalents. I am only asserting that this equivalence in the case of 'o' is not so obvious or so generally recognized as in that of the other vowels, and that even down to the grammars of the nineteenth century 'o' is actually treated as having no regular corresponding letter in the Hebrew alphabet. All that is necessary for my purpose is that it be admitted that, even as I failed by ordinary means to ascertain this value, so it is not impossible, or even improbable, that Dante may have done so.

Since the above was written, one of the distinguished Hebrew scholars referred to writes to me: 'I think it *very probable* that Dante would find a difficulty with "o"'. . . 'It

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 688.

² *Ibidem.*

is quite possible that he may not have found any letter corresponding to "o," and that he may have gone to work in his own way to assign a numerical value to it.'

Such an admission, on such authority, is all that I want. Nothing more than this is required to justify the suggestion I have now to make.

If, then, Dante were unable to find either that any recognized value existed for 'o,' or that it definitely 'corresponded' with any one of those twenty-two Hebrew letters which had such values assigned to them, it is surely not unreasonable to suppose that he would fall back on his own resources, if he were to complete his riddle. What more natural then (as it appears to me) than that he should give to 'o' the value 4, as being the fourth vowel? If this be admitted, and this (be it observed) is the *only* assumption throughout, we obtain the precise number 515:—

$$\begin{array}{r}
 a = 1 \\
 r = 200 \\
 r = 200 \\
 i = 10 \\
 c \text{ or } k = 100 \\
 o = \underline{4} \\
 \hline
 515 \\
 \hline
 \hline
 \end{array}$$

The process of thus giving a numerical value to names and words was a thoroughly familiar one in the time of Dante and long before. The chances *against* any given name (especially that of one whom every consideration of probability points to as being almost certainly the person indicated in the context) corresponding thus precisely with a large number like this are simply enormous. Let any one try with any other name. The process is perfectly easy. For instance, Dante would be represented by 525. He thus comes curiously near the fateful number himself! 'Can Grande' would give 479, Veltro (if 'o' be assumed as 4) would be 610, Enrico (on the same supposition) 434, and so on. Scartazzini endeavours, in a most preposterous fashion, to make the number 515 indicate 'Can Grande,' by the help

of a descriptive title containing a mixture of Latin and Italian words, and by then selecting out of it most arbitrarily certain letters and neglecting others. Thus:—*Kan Grande de* (*not della*) *Scala, Signore de* (*not di*) *Verona*, the letters in italics being the only ones taken into account! *Inter alia*, why should the poor prepositions (!) be alone honoured by being counted in full? But even this is not enough. He has still to invent—or rather to follow Picci (*Nuovi Studi*, p. 158) in inventing—a purely arbitrary and imaginary system of numerical values for the letters of the alphabet, not Latin, nor Greek, nor Hebrew! This is dignified by the title of ‘l’alfabeto italiano dantesco,’ though there is simply not a particle of evidence for it!

I think it is very probable that Dante, with the true Kabbalistic instinct, may have been attracted by the significant coincidence that the same number 515 could be spelt out from the name ‘Arrico’ with the Hebrew alphabet, and from the word ‘Dux’ with the Latin alphabet, a name which so aptly described his position and office. A Rabbinical writer would have regarded this as a distinct argument in favour of his high mission¹. There would be nothing in this half so far-fetched as Dante’s curious juggling in *V. N.* § 29 with the calendars of Arabia, Syria, and Italy in order to secure the presence of the number 9 in the *day*, and in the *month* as well as in the *year* of Beatrice’s death, which seems to have occurred (as I believe I was the first to suggest) on the inconvenient date of June 8, 1290.

But, whether or no, let it be emphatically observed once more that I am not supposing Dante to have taken *any liberty whatever*, either for the sake of rhyme, or for the sake of obtaining the significant word DVX, or for any other purpose, with the recognized numerical value of any letter. I am only suggesting that when he came upon a letter which he could not discover to have an equivalent in the Hebrew alphabet, he himself assigned a value to it, and that not arbitrarily, but on quite a rational and intelligible ground.

Finally, it should not be forgotten that we are not dealing

¹ See precisely similar arguments given *infra*, 22 n, and pp. 23, 24.

with a Scriptural prophecy, but rather with an ornament of poetry. Dante is deliberately constructing for himself a poetical prophecy, upon a well-known prophetic model in Scripture. Further, while on the one hand there is no prudential reason (as was probably the case in the Apocalypse) for disguising the name indicated, so on the other it is of no serious consequence to the writer whether the riddle itself be solved by his readers or not, for there could not be much doubt in the mind of any one regarding the passage with attention, that Henry VII was the Deliverer indicated by it, even if the process of indication could not be discovered¹.

III. It remains to show that this method of interpretation was likely to be familiar to Dante. As to this there cannot, I think, be any possible doubt.

(1) It must surely be admitted that Dante had in his mind the Apocalyptic enigma of the number of the Beast (Rev. xiii. 18), and that he proposed to himself to construct another upon that model.

(2) It follows almost necessarily that he must have been aware of the accepted and traditional method by which its solution was attempted. Indeed how else could he work out the construction of a similar riddle, or expect any of his readers to follow him?

(3) This method of interpretation of 666 by assigning numerical values to the individual letters of names is found in Irenaeus² and his pupil Hippolytus³. There we find three names, Euanthas, Lateinos, and Teitan (of which Irenaeus prefers the last), all arrived at by this very method from the values assigned to the letters of the Greek alphabet⁴. Again,

¹ Since writing the above I find a very similar remark by Dean Farrar in reference to the problem of 'the Beast.' They (the Fathers) must have known what was *meant* [viz. Nero], even if the exact equinumeration of any words which they could hit upon did not entirely satisfy them. The solution 'Lateinos,' 'Teitan,' and even perhaps 'Euanthas,' might well be thought to point to Nero. (*Early Days of Christianity*, p. 470.)

² *Adv. Her.* v. 30.

³ *De Christo et Antichristo*, § 50 (Ed. Grabe, 1702).

⁴ We find Irenaeus in another place (I. xii. recognizing that the name 'Ἰησοῦς,' similarly treated, will yield the number 888, though denouncing the absurd theories based upon this by the Gnostics. Still more fancifully the author

S. Thomas Aquinas in his *Expositio Aurea* of the Book of Revelation repeats the solution Teitan; and adds two others, viz. Antemos (*sic*) = 'contrarius,' and Arnoyme (*sic*) = 'nego,' both of which give the same result. These two are also found in Bede (*Expos. in Apoc. : l. c.*), from whom S. Thomas may probably have derived them. Further, another writer commended by Dante (see *Epist.* x. 28 and *Par.* x. 131), Richard of St. Victor, commenting on Rev. xiii. 18, treats this as the recognized method of interpretation—'computet numerum qui ex significatione literarum constituitur quibus nomen eius scribitur.' Further, he likewise gives the curious word 'Antemos,' quod "contrarius" significatur,' as a solution. He adds 'Sunt et alia eius nomina quorum huiusmodi interpretatio hunc eundem numerum reddit.' (Ed. Rothom, 1648, pp. 649*b* and 650*a*.)

Thus it is clear that this *method* and *principle* of interpretation was perfectly well known, and in fact it seems to be the *only* one generally recognized, though the Greek and not the Hebrew alphabet was the one to which it was applied.

Some later Commentators have used the *Latin* letters, regarding only those letters in a name which have a value among Roman numerals. One curious result is that *Ludovicus* has been suggested as a solution of the number of the Beast, since, omitting *o* and *s*, the other letters total up to 666! I do not know which of the numerous historical personages bearing that name is imagined to have the honour of being thus 'foreseen' by S. John! This affords an obvious answer to the objection which a friend has suggested, why should not Dante use the Latin numerals in dealing with a Latin or Italian name? There are only seven letters in the Latin alphabet that have numerical values. In the case

of the Epistle of Barnabas (c. 9) argues that Abraham, in spirit foreseeing Jesus, took and circumcised of his household 318 men (he gets this by combining Gen. xiv. 14 and xvii. 27). He argues that this total is made up of I=10, H=8, and T=300. The first two letters are the initial letters of Ἰησους, and T is a symbol of the Cross! Another curious use of the number 318 is mentioned by Dean Farrar. This was the number (Gen. xiv. 4) of the armed servants with whom Abraham pursued the five kings. But the name of his steward Eliezer gives 318 numerically. It is therefore argued that he alone was equal to all the rest, in fact 'a host in himself'!

of the name before us, the only letters that would count in 'Arrico' would be I and C, and in the form 'Arrigo' only the I. If Dante went beyond Latin he probably would find it much easier (as we shall see later) to get information about Hebrew than about Greek. Besides, this process or 'science' had its origin in Hebrew, and was, certainly in Dante's day, specially associated with Hebrew.

(4) Next, then, as to the use of the Hebrew letters.

Though these do not seem to have been applied until much later (viz. 17th century), as we have already seen, by the actual problem in the Apocalypse, their employment in exegesis generally in this precise manner was very familiar, and indeed of unknown antiquity. From it no doubt arose the application of the method, in the early Christian writers, to the Greek and Latin alphabets, and probably also it may have suggested the construction of the enigma of the number of the Beast itself.

This process or 'science' was known in the Middle Ages as 'Gematria,' which is variously explained as a corruption of *γεωμετρία* or *γραμματεία*, more probably the former. There was a vast amount of Kabbalistic literature, some of which Dante would probably have known, in which Gematria was much used. It formed indeed a prominent feature of the Kabbalistic system, and it is as old as the very beginning of the Kabbala¹. Dr. Ginsburg says that the following was one of the commonest of the Kabbalistic rules of exegesis²:— 'Every letter of a word is reduced to its numerical value; and the word is explained by another of the *same quantity*.' The most important inferences were thought to follow from such a coincidence in the way of interpretation, moral, mystical, or anagogical³. Thus a visionary claiming a divine mission would call attention to the coincidence of the numerical value of his own name with that of some Hebrew prophet⁴. Or, again, it was argued that, because the Hebrew

¹ *Speaker's Commentary*, vol. iv, p. 687. Ginsburg on the *Kabbala*, pp. 49, 50.

² On *Coheloth*, p. 31.

³ The fourfold interpretation of Scripture so familiar to Dante (*Conv.* ii. 1, &c.) was itself of Rabbinical origin. Ginsburg, *Kabbala*, p. 48 n. *Coheloth*, p. 30.

⁴ e. g. Ginsburg, *Kabbala*, p. 114.

letters of the word Messiah and of the word for Serpent (Nachash) both amounted to 358, therefore the Messiah was designated by 'the seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head¹.' Again, since the letters of 'Ha Satan' ('The Accuser') total up to 364, it was argued that on one day in the year his operations were suspended, and his mouth closed, and that day was held to be the Great Day of Atonement².

This method could scarcely have been unfamiliar to one so much interested in Biblical exegesis as Dante. Indeed his own processes of interpretation have much in common with Kabbalistic methods, though the direct application of 'Gematria' is not found in his writings.

But there are more definite grounds than this general supposition.

(5) There appeared, just in the prime of Dante's life, the celebrated book *Sohar*, one of the most important and epoch-making works on the Kabbalistic interpretation of Scripture³. It professed to be a revelation vouchsafed by God to a great Rabbi⁴ who flourished 70-110 A. D. In point of fact it was the work of one Moses of Leon, a contemporary of Dante, who, when reproached by his wife for palming it off as the work of another age and author, naively replied that if he were known to be the author no one would buy it, but under the other name it brought him in a large revenue⁵! From this we may infer that it had a considerable circulation in the

¹ From Dean Farrar, who in the *Expositor* for May, 1877 (pp. 362-378) gives an interesting account of Gematria. So, again, in the *Early Days of Christianity*, by the same Author, pp. 468 *seqq.* In the former Essay, the method of interpretation described in the text is happily described as 'an expansion of Scripture interpretation into the number of positive integral solutions of an indeterminate equation' (p. 370). The Christian writers were not slow to learn this absurd lesson. Thus the name ADaM was held to imply that the Messiah should come from Adam through David. Also a Greek writer infers the universal fatherhood of Adam from the fact that the four letters of his name are the initials of East, West, North and South, i. e. ἀνατολή, δύσις, ἄρκτος, and μεσημβρία (!).

² Farrar, *Early Days of Christianity*, p. 238.

³ Ginsburg (*Cohélet*), p. 59 says that it has been aptly called 'the Talmud of the Kabbala.'

⁴ viz. Shimeon ben Yoḥai.

⁵ Ginsburg, *Kabbala*, p. 90.

author's lifetime¹. This Moses died in 1305, when Dante was in his fortieth year. One feature of this work is the prominence given in it to the science or method of Gematria².

(6) There were several other writers contemporary with Dante, the works of some of whom might be known to him, in which the methods of Gematria were employed and exemplified. Thus, passing over several who wrote in Spain, and limiting our notice to those in Italy, there was (a) Abulafia, who published a prophecy at Urbino in 1279³; (b) Joseph Gikatilla ben Abraham, a disciple of Abulafia⁴. 'The characteristic feature of this School (says Dr. Ginsburg, *Kabbala*, p. 117) is the stress which is laid on the extensive use of the exegetical rules called Gematria⁵.'

(7) But there was one very celebrated contemporary Jewish writer in particular with whom there is strong reason to believe (on grounds quite independent of the question now before us) that Dante had acquaintance and even friendship. This was Emanuel ben Salomon, who was born at Rome probably in the very year 1265, which was the year of Dante's birth⁶. He is often known as Emanuele da Roma. He lived at Rome during the greater part of his life, and was the recognized head of a considerable literary circle or school of Italian Jews (many of them poets), which flourished in Rome and other cities of Middle Italy, c. 1300. They were a numerous and wealthy body, devoted to learning and culture of all kinds, and especially to science and to poetry. For some reason not clearly explained—but probably in connexion with his

¹ This, however, is not a matter of mere inference, as Mr. Cowley informs me that it was certainly the case.

² Ginsburg, *Kabbala*, pp. 78 *seqq.*

³ *Ib.* p. 114.

⁴ *Ib.* p. 116.

⁵ To these Hebrew writers may be added the celebrated Raymond Lully (1234-1315)—'Doctor Illuminatus.' Dr. Ginsburg (*Kabbala*, p. 118) says of him, 'there is very little doubt that the Kabbalistic method of palming their notions on the text of Scripture by means of Gematria, &c., suggested to him the invention of the *Ars Magna*.'

⁶ I am indebted for this information and much that follows to an Article in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, vol. iv., Oct. 1891, by Dr. J. Chotzner. Also to De Rossi, *Dizionario degli Autori Ebrei*, and to a Monograph by Theodor Paur, *Immanuel und Dante*, in the third volume of the *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Dante-Gesellschaft*.

unorthodox liberalism and audacious freedom of speech on religious matters—he was banished somewhere about his 50th year and passed the rest of his life (like Dante) in poverty and exile. Having been settled for many years at Fermo in the district of Ancona he died there about 1330. His teachers were Leone Romano, Hebrew instructor to King Robert of Sicily, and Judah Siciliano. (I mention these names to show the prevalence of combined Italian and Hebrew culture at that time.) Emanuel was a physician by profession, and a most prolific writer on a great variety of subjects, such as Hebrew Grammar, Exegesis, and especially Kabbala. His Commentaries (many still only in MS.) extend over nearly all the books of the O. T.¹, in which we cannot doubt that, as in the case of all contemporary exegetes, the methods of Gematria were freely employed. He wrote a large amount of Hebrew rhymed prose² and poetry formed on the model of Guittone d'Arezzo³. He composed besides a large number of Hebrew novelettes on Italian models⁴, by which great light is thrown on the moral and social condition of the Italian Jews in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries⁵. Further he composed in Hebrew verse an imitation of one of the encyclopaedic Italian *Tesori*, of which we have an example in that of Brunetto Latini⁶. He also wrote Italian Sonnets and Canzoni, especially on subjects connected with love. His fame as a poet

¹ Rossi, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-114.

² Also Italian; and of this a curious sample is given by Pelaez, *Rime Antiche Italiane*, in the *Collezione di Opere inedite e rare*, ed. Carducci, vol. iv., pp. 354-358.

³ See *Purg.* xxiv. 56; xxvi. 124, &c.; *Jewish Q. R.*, Oct. 1891, p. 73.

⁴ One of the jokes of the medico-novelist in one of these tales may be worth preserving. A patient had been ordered by his doctor to take a certain physic, and to remain perfectly quiet in his bed until the doctor came the next morning. The patient, however, got up in the night and wrote a quantity of poetry, which he exhibited with pride to the doctor in the morning, at the same time declaring that his physic had done him no good. 'I am not sure of that,' said the doctor, 'as it seems to have caused the removal from your brain of a good deal of rubbish.'

⁵ *Jewish Q. R.*, p. 71.

⁶ *Jewish Q. R.* for July 1895 (by Dr. Gustavo Sacerdote), p. 711. *Ib.* p. 718, the writer thinks the original was probably the *Trésor* of Peire (or Pietro) de Corbiac, c. 1225, which is sometimes believed to have inspired the *Tesoretto* of B. Latini.

spread to France and Spain. His works are humorous in tone, full of jests, both in and out of place, often amounting to βωμολοχία in their inappropriateness and coarseness. His sarcasm is keen and bitter, and he has not inaptly been described as 'the medieval Heine.' But the work of his which is of special interest for us is his Vision of Hell and Paradise, for, as a Jew, he would naturally not recognize Purgatory. This was published shortly before his death, c. 1328, in which, besides the similarity of subject, Paur finds numerous and unmistakable traces of acquaintance with the *Divina Commedia*¹. I will only mention one sample. On the Gate of Hell he sees the inscription, 'Here is only an entrance and no exit.' The composition of his 'vision' came about thus. At the age of sixty he became anxious about his future, and he invoked the prophet Daniel, who undertook to show him his own future place in the spirit world, which he is assured will be in Paradise². But he begs to be allowed to visit Hell first, when he sees the inscription above quoted. Arrived in Heaven, he saw two thrones being prepared side by side, one for himself, and one for a great friend whom he had in life, called *Daniel*, who had shown him the paths of truth and righteousness, whose mind is still spoken of on earth with great esteem and admiration. His name and his fame will always be held in great honour by posterity. 'You (says his guide) are as far inferior to him as Joshua was to Moses, but you have both striven after truth, you have both been united in friendly activity, so no power shall separate your souls for ever.' (Then he describes at length the splendour of Daniel's throne.) His guide proceeds, 'You see, my son, the work that he has created in the world, full of fame and renown. Equally great and glorious shall be the throne he is to occupy in the world of spirits.' It can hardly be doubted, I think, that Dante is here referred to under the disguise of the name Daniel, as a sort of Hebrew echo of his name. Of whom else in Emanuel's acquaintance could such language be used?

¹ Dr. Gustavo Sacerdote in the *Jewish Q. R.*, July 1895, p. 712, goes so far as to say that it closely follows the original.

² *Jewish Q. R.*, pp. 81 *seqq.*

way from our subject. But I venture to think these proofs of a probable friendship in Dante's life are sufficiently interesting to justify it, apart from the immediate object for which they were introduced. This was to show that Dante had intimate relations with one from whom he could easily have obtained, and probably did obtain, such information as to Hebrew words and letters as perhaps this, as well as certain other well-known passages in the *Divina Commedia*, show to have been somehow in his possession. Certainly, then, I say here is one *definite* source, to say nothing of many others, from which Dante may well have been acquainted with the rudiments and principles of the science of Gematria in its application to *Hebrew* letters. A similar process applied to the *Greek* alphabet would certainly be familiar from writers whose works were undoubtedly known to Dante, in connexion with the Apocalyptic enigma.

I conclude with a striking illustration from the writings of Emanuel himself. He actually employs this method in making the announcement of his own name at the end of one of his works¹:

'My name is 70 and 40, and a Nun joined to a Vau, and the ending of my name is "EL."²

Thus he spells out his name 'Emanuel,' but instead of saying that the first two letters are Ain and Mem, he says 'gematrically' that they are 70 and 40.

I wish to submit this suggestion, which is at any rate, I believe, new, to the consideration of students of Dante. Without pretending to have finally settled a problem of such great difficulty, I venture to think that the solution now proposed, while it does not repudiate the commonly received explanation, adds considerable point and definiteness to it. The two taken together in fact mutually explain and illustrate one another, though I should myself regard the name of Henry as the primary interpretation, and 'DVX' as at most a subordinate one.

¹ From the *Jewish Q. R.*, vol. vii., July 1895, p. 714.

² The name is completely spelt out, as the 'a' would not in this case be represented by a distinct letter in Hebrew.





RARE BOOKS

PRINTS

AND

ORIGINAL DRAWINGS

HAMMILL & BARKER

107 NORTH MICHIGAN AVENUE

CHICAGO

THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below

RECEIVED

MAY 11 1988

ILLU

RECEIVED

RECEIVED SERVICE

LD URL MAY 26 1965

JUN 14 1988

RECEIVED
 MAIN LOAN DESK
 MAY 5 1985

AM 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 P.M.

MAR 14 1994

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



AA 000 435 213 4

