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The Divine Comedy of Dante by H. W. Longfellow

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THE DIVINE COMEDY

OF DANTE ALIGHIERI
(1265-1321)

TRANSLATED BY
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW
(1807-1882)

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Dennis McCarthy, July 1997
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Incipit Comoedia Dantis Alagherii,
Florentini natione, non moribus.

The Divine Comedy
translated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
(e-text courtesy ILT's Digital Dante Project)

1 INFERNO

5 Inferno: Canto I

8 Midway upon the journey of our life
9 I found myself within a forest dark,
10 For the straightforward pathway had been lost.

12 Ah me! how hard a thing it is to say
13 What was this forest savage, rough, and stern,
14 Which in the very thought renews the fear.

16 So bitter is it, death is little more;
17 But of the good to treat, which there I found,
18 Speak will I of the other things I saw there.

20 I cannot well repeat how there I entered,
21 So full was I of slumber at the moment
22 In which I had abandoned the true way.

24 But after I had reached a mountain's foot,
25 At that point where the valley terminated,
26 Which had with consternation pierced my heart,

28 Upward I looked, and I beheld its shoulders,
29 Vested already with that planet's rays
30 Which leadeth others right by every road.

32 Then was the fear a little quieted
33 That in my heart's lake had endured throughout
34 The night, which I had passed so piteously.

36 And even as he, who, with distressful breath,
37 Forth issued from the sea upon the shore,
38 Turns to the water perilous and gazes;

40 So did my soul, that still was fleeing onward,
41 Turn itself back to re-behold the pass
42 Which never yet a living person left.

44 After my weary body I had rested,
45 The way resumed I on the desert slope,
46 So that the firm foot ever was the lower.

48 And lo! almost where the ascent began,
49 A panther light and swift exceedingly,
50 Which with a spotted skin was covered o'er!

52 And never moved she from before my face,
53 Nay, rather did impede so much my way,
54 That many times I to return had turned.

56 The time was the beginning of the morning,
57 And up the sun was mounting with those stars

58 That with him were, what time the Love Divine
 59
 60 At first in motion set those beauteous things;
 61 So were to me occasion of good hope,
 62 The variegated skin of that wild beast,
 63
 64 The hour of time, and the delicious season;
 65 But not so much, that did not give me fear
 66 A lion's aspect which appeared to me.
 67
 68 He seemed as if against me he were coming
 69 With head uplifted, and with ravenous hunger,
 70 So that it seemed the air was afraid of him;
 71
 72 And a she-wolf, that with all hungerings
 73 Seemed to be laden in her meagreness,
 74 And many folk has caused to live forlorn!
 75
 76 She brought upon me so much heaviness,
 77 With the affright that from her aspect came,
 78 That I the hope relinquished of the height.
 79
 80 And as he is who willingly acquires,
 81 And the time comes that causes him to lose,
 82 Who weeps in all his thoughts and is despondent,
 83
 84 E'en such made me that beast withouten peace,
 85 Which, coming on against me by degrees
 86 Thrust me back thither where the sun is silent.
 87
 88 While I was rushing downward to the lowland,
 89 Before mine eyes did one present himself,
 90 Who seemed from long-continued silence hoarse.
 91
 92 When I beheld him in the desert vast,
 93 "Have pity on me," unto him I cried,
 94 "Whiche'er thou art, or shade or real man!"
 95
 96 He answered me: "Not man; man once I was,
 97 And both my parents were of Lombardy,
 98 And Mantuans by country both of them.
 99
 100 'Sub Julio' was I born, though it was late,
 101 And lived at Rome under the good Augustus,
 102 During the time of false and lying gods.
 103
 104 A poet was I, and I sang that just
 105 Son of Anchises, who came forth from Troy,
 106 After that Ilion the superb was burned.
 107
 108 But thou, why goest thou back to such annoyance?
 109 Why climb'st thou not the Mount Delectable,
 110 Which is the source and cause of every joy?"
 111
 112 "Now, art thou that Virgilius and that fountain
 113 Which spreads abroad so wide a river of speech?"
 114 I made response to him with bashful forehead.

115
116 "O, of the other poets honour and light,
117 Avail me the long study and great love
118 That have impelled me to explore thy volume!
119
120 Thou art my master, and my author thou,
121 Thou art alone the one from whom I took
122 The beautiful style that has done honour to me.
123
124 Behold the beast, for which I have turned back;
125 Do thou protect me from her, famous Sage,
126 For she doth make my veins and pulses tremble."
127
128 "Thee it behoves to take another road,"
129 Responded he, when he beheld me weeping,
130 "If from this savage place thou wouldst escape;
131
132 Because this beast, at which thou criest out,
133 Suffers not any one to pass her way,
134 But so doth harass him, that she destroys him;
135
136 And has a nature so malign and ruthless,
137 That never doth she glut her greedy will,
138 And after food is hungrier than before.
139
140 Many the animals with whom she weds,
141 And more they shall be still, until the Greyhound
142 Comes, who shall make her perish in her pain.
143
144 He shall not feed on either earth or pelf,
145 But upon wisdom, and on love and virtue;
146 'Twixt Feltro and Feltro shall his nation be;
147
148 Of that low Italy shall he be the saviour,
149 On whose account the maid Camilla died,
150 Euryalus, Turnus, Nisus, of their wounds;
151
152 Through every city shall he hunt her down,
153 Until he shall have driven her back to Hell,
154 There from whence envy first did let her loose.
155
156 Therefore I think and judge it for thy best
157 Thou follow me, and I will be thy guide,
158 And lead thee hence through the eternal place,
159
160 Where thou shalt hear the desperate lamentations,
161 Shalt see the ancient spirits disconsolate,
162 Who cry out each one for the second death;
163
164 And thou shalt see those who contented are
165 Within the fire, because they hope to come,
166 Whene'er it may be, to the blessed people;
167
168 To whom, then, if thou wishest to ascend,
169 A soul shall be for that than I more worthy;
170 With her at my departure I will leave thee;
171

172 Because that Emperor, who reigns above,
173 In that I was rebellious to his law,
174 Wills that through me none come into his city.
175
176 He governs everywhere, and there he reigns;
177 There is his city and his lofty throne;
178 O happy he whom thereto he elects!"
179
180 And I to him: "Poet, I thee entreat,
181 By that same God whom thou didst never know,
182 So that I may escape this woe and worse,
183
184 Thou wouldst conduct me there where thou hast said,
185 That I may see the portal of Saint Peter,
186 And those thou makest so disconsolate."
187
188 Then he moved on, and I behind him followed.
189
190
191
192 Inferno: Canto II
193
194
195 Day was departing, and the embrowned air
196 Released the animals that are on earth
197 From their fatigues; and I the only one
198
199 Made myself ready to sustain the war,
200 Both of the way and likewise of the woe,
201 Which memory that errs not shall retrace.
202
203 O Muses, O high genius, now assist me!
204 O memory, that didst write down what I saw,
205 Here thy nobility shall be manifest!
206
207 And I began: "Poet, who guidest me,
208 Regard my manhood, if it be sufficient,
209 Ere to the arduous pass thou dost confide me.
210
211 Thou sayest, that of Silvius the parent,
212 While yet corruptible, unto the world
213 Immortal went, and was there bodily.
214
215 But if the adversary of all evil
216 Was courteous, thinking of the high effect
217 That issue would from him, and who, and what,
218
219 To men of intellect unmeet it seems not;
220 For he was of great Rome, and of her empire
221 In the empyreal heaven as father chosen;
222
223 The which and what, wishing to speak the truth,
224 Were stablished as the holy place, wherein
225 Sits the successor of the greatest Peter.
226
227 Upon this journey, whence thou givest him vaunt,
228 Things did he hear, which the occasion were

229 Both of his victory and the papal mantle.
230
231 Thither went afterwards the Chosen Vessel,
232 To bring back comfort thence unto that Faith,
233 Which of salvation's way is the beginning.
234
235 But I, why thither come, or who concedes it?
236 I not Aeneas am, I am not Paul,
237 Nor I, nor others, think me worthy of it.
238
239 Therefore, if I resign myself to come,
240 I fear the coming may be ill-advised;
241 Thou'rt wise, and knowest better than I speak."
242
243 And as he is, who unwill's what he willed,
244 And by new thoughts doth his intention change,
245 So that from his design he quite withdraws,
246
247 Such I became, upon that dark hillside,
248 Because, in thinking, I consumed the emprise,
249 Which was so very prompt in the beginning.
250
251 "If I have well thy language understood,"
252 Replied that shade of the Magnanimous,
253 "Thy soul attainted is with cowardice,
254
255 Which many times a man encumbers so,
256 It turns him back from honoured enterprise,
257 As false sight doth a beast, when he is shy.
258
259 That thou mayst free thee from this apprehension,
260 I'll tell thee why I came, and what I heard
261 At the first moment when I grieved for thee.
262
263 Among those was I who are in suspense,
264 And a fair, saintly Lady called to me
265 In such wise, I besought her to command me.
266
267 Her eyes were shining brighter than the Star;
268 And she began to say, gentle and low,
269 With voice angelical, in her own language:
270
271 'O spirit courteous of Mantua,
272 Of whom the fame still in the world endures,
273 And shall endure, long-lasting as the world;
274
275 A friend of mine, and not the friend of fortune,
276 Upon the desert slope is so impeded
277 Upon his way, that he has turned through terror,
278
279 And may, I fear, already be so lost,
280 That I too late have risen to his succour,
281 From that which I have heard of him in Heaven.
282
283 Bestir thee now, and with thy speech ornate,
284 And with what needful is for his release,
285 Assist him so, that I may be consoled.

286
 287 Beatrice am I, who do bid thee go;
 288 I come from there, where I would fain return;
 289 Love moved me, which compelleth me to speak.
 290
 291 When I shall be in presence of my Lord,
 292 Full often will I praise thee unto him.'
 293 Then paused she, and thereafter I began:
 294
 295 'O Lady of virtue, thou alone through whom
 296 The human race exceedeth all contained
 297 Within the heaven that has the lesser circles,
 298
 299 So grateful unto me is thy commandment,
 300 To obey, if 'twere already done, were late;
 301 No farther need'st thou ope to me thy wish.
 302
 303 But the cause tell me why thou dost not shun
 304 The here descending down into this centre,
 305 From the vast place thou burnest to return to.'
 306
 307 'Since thou wouldst fain so inwardly discern,
 308 Briefly will I relate,' she answered me,
 309 'Why I am not afraid to enter here.
 310
 311 Of those things only should one be afraid
 312 Which have the power of doing others harm;
 313 Of the rest, no; because they are not fearful.
 314
 315 God in his mercy such created me
 316 That misery of yours attains me not,
 317 Nor any flame assails me of this burning.
 318
 319 A gentle Lady is in Heaven, who grieves
 320 At this impediment, to which I send thee,
 321 So that stern judgment there above is broken.
 322
 323 In her entreaty she besought Lucia,
 324 And said, "Thy faithful one now stands in need
 325 Of thee, and unto thee I recommend him."
 326
 327 Lucia, foe of all that cruel is,
 328 Hastened away, and came unto the place
 329 Where I was sitting with the ancient Rachel.
 330
 331 "Beatrice" said she, "the true praise of God,
 332 Why succourest thou not him, who loved thee so,
 333 For thee he issued from the vulgar herd?
 334
 335 Dost thou not hear the pity of his plaint?
 336 Dost thou not see the death that combats him
 337 Beside that flood, where ocean has no vaunt?"
 338
 339 Never were persons in the world so swift
 340 To work their weal and to escape their woe,
 341 As I, after such words as these were uttered,
 342

343 Came hither downward from my blessed seat,
 344 Confiding in thy dignified discourse,
 345 Which honours thee, and those who've listened to it.'
 346
 347 After she thus had spoken unto me,
 348 Weeping, her shining eyes she turned away;
 349 Whereby she made me swifter in my coming;
 350
 351 And unto thee I came, as she desired;
 352 I have delivered thee from that wild beast,
 353 Which barred the beautiful mountain's short ascent.
 354
 355 What is it, then? Why, why dost thou delay?
 356 Why is such baseness bedded in thy heart?
 357 Daring and hardihood why hast thou not,
 358
 359 Seeing that three such Ladies benedight
 360 Are caring for thee in the court of Heaven,
 361 And so much good my speech doth promise thee?"
 362
 363 Even as the flowerets, by nocturnal chill,
 364 Bowed down and closed, when the sun whitens them,
 365 Uplift themselves all open on their stems;
 366
 367 Such I became with my exhausted strength,
 368 And such good courage to my heart there coursed,
 369 That I began, like an intrepid person:
 370
 371 "O she compassionate, who succoured me,
 372 And courteous thou, who hast obeyed so soon
 373 The words of truth which she addressed to thee!
 374
 375 Thou hast my heart so with desire disposed
 376 To the adventure, with these words of thine,
 377 That to my first intent I have returned.
 378
 379 Now go, for one sole will is in us both,
 380 Thou Leader, and thou Lord, and Master thou."
 381 Thus said I to him; and when he had moved,
 382
 383 I entered on the deep and savage way.
 384
 385
 386
 387 Inferno: Canto III
 388
 389
 390 "Through me the way is to the city dolent;
 391 Through me the way is to eternal dole;
 392 Through me the way among the people lost.
 393
 394 Justice incited my sublime Creator;
 395 Created me divine Omnipotence,
 396 The highest Wisdom and the primal Love.
 397
 398 Before me there were no created things,
 399 Only eterne, and I eternal last.

400 All hope abandon, ye who enter in!"
401
402 These words in sombre colour I beheld
403 Written upon the summit of a gate;
404 Whence I: "Their sense is, Master, hard to me!"
405
406 And he to me, as one experienced:
407 "Here all suspicion needs must be abandoned,
408 All cowardice must needs be here extinct.
409
410 We to the place have come, where I have told thee
411 Thou shalt behold the people dolorous
412 Who have foregone the good of intellect."
413
414 And after he had laid his hand on mine
415 With joyful mien, whence I was comforted,
416 He led me in among the secret things.
417
418 There sighs, complaints, and ululations loud
419 Resounded through the air without a star,
420 Whence I, at the beginning, wept thereat.
421
422 Languages diverse, horrible dialects,
423 Accents of anger, words of agony,
424 And voices high and hoarse, with sound of hands,
425
426 Made up a tumult that goes whirling on
427 For ever in that air for ever black,
428 Even as the sand doth, when the whirlwind breathes.
429
430 And I, who had my head with horror bound,
431 Said: "Master, what is this which now I hear?
432 What folk is this, which seems by pain so vanquished?"
433
434 And he to me: "This miserable mode
435 Maintain the melancholy souls of those
436 Who lived withouten infamy or praise.
437
438 Commingled are they with that caitiff choir
439 Of Angels, who have not rebellious been,
440 Nor faithful were to God, but were for self.
441
442 The heavens expelled them, not to be less fair;
443 Nor them the nethermore abyss receives,
444 For glory none the damned would have from them."
445
446 And I: "O Master, what so grievous is
447 To these, that maketh them lament so sore?"
448 He answered: "I will tell thee very briefly.
449
450 These have no longer any hope of death;
451 And this blind life of theirs is so debased,
452 They envious are of every other fate.
453
454 No fame of them the world permits to be;
455 Misericord and Justice both disdain them.
456 Let us not speak of them, but look, and pass."

457
458 And I, who looked again, beheld a banner,
459 Which, whirling round, ran on so rapidly,
460 That of all pause it seemed to me indignant;
461
462 And after it there came so long a train
463 Of people, that I ne'er would have believed
464 That ever Death so many had undone.
465
466 When some among them I had recognised,
467 I looked, and I beheld the shade of him
468 Who made through cowardice the great refusal.
469
470 Forthwith I comprehended, and was certain,
471 That this the sect was of the caitiff wretches
472 Hateful to God and to his enemies.
473
474 These miscreants, who never were alive,
475 Were naked, and were stung exceedingly
476 By gadflies and by hornets that were there.
477
478 These did their faces irrigate with blood,
479 Which, with their tears commingled, at their feet
480 By the disgusting worms was gathered up.
481
482 And when to gazing farther I betook me.
483 People I saw on a great river's bank;
484 Whence said I: "Master, now vouchsafe to me,
485
486 That I may know who these are, and what law
487 Makes them appear so ready to pass over,
488 As I discern athwart the dusky light."
489
490 And he to me: "These things shall all be known
491 To thee, as soon as we our footsteps stay
492 Upon the dismal shore of Acheron."
493
494 Then with mine eyes ashamed and downward cast,
495 Fearing my words might irksome be to him,
496 From speech refrained I till we reached the river.
497
498 And lo! towards us coming in a boat
499 An old man, hoary with the hair of eld,
500 Crying: "Woe unto you, ye souls depraved!
501
502 Hope nevermore to look upon the heavens;
503 I come to lead you to the other shore,
504 To the eternal shades in heat and frost.
505
506 And thou, that yonder standest, living soul,
507 Withdraw thee from these people, who are dead!"
508 But when he saw that I did not withdraw,
509
510 He said: "By other ways, by other ports
511 Thou to the shore shalt come, not here, for passage;
512 A lighter vessel needs must carry thee."
513

514 And unto him the Guide: "Vex thee not, Charon;
515 It is so willed there where is power to do
516 That which is willed; and farther question not."
517
518 Thereat were quieted the fleecy cheeks
519 Of him the ferryman of the livid fen,
520 Who round about his eyes had wheels of flame.
521
522 But all those souls who weary were and naked
523 Their colour changed and gnashed their teeth together,
524 As soon as they had heard those cruel words.
525
526 God they blasphemed and their progenitors,
527 The human race, the place, the time, the seed
528 Of their engendering and of their birth!
529
530 Thereafter all together they drew back,
531 Bitterly weeping, to the accursed shore,
532 Which waiteth every man who fears not God.
533
534 Charon the demon, with the eyes of glede,
535 Beckoning to them, collects them all together,
536 Beats with his oar whoever lags behind.
537
538 As in the autumn-time the leaves fall off,
539 First one and then another, till the branch
540 Unto the earth surrenders all its spoils;
541
542 In similar wise the evil seed of Adam
543 Throw themselves from that margin one by one,
544 At signals, as a bird unto its lure.
545
546 So they depart across the dusky wave,
547 And ere upon the other side they land,
548 Again on this side a new troop assembles.
549
550 "My son," the courteous Master said to me,
551 "All those who perish in the wrath of God
552 Here meet together out of every land;
553
554 And ready are they to pass o'er the river,
555 Because celestial Justice spurs them on,
556 So that their fear is turned into desire.
557
558 This way there never passes a good soul;
559 And hence if Charon doth complain of thee,
560 Well mayst thou know now what his speech imports."
561
562 This being finished, all the dusk champaign
563 Trembled so violently, that of that terror
564 The recollection bathes me still with sweat.
565
566 The land of tears gave forth a blast of wind,
567 And fulminated a vermilion light,
568 Which overmastered in me every sense,
569
570 And as a man whom sleep hath seized I fell.

571
572
573
574 Inferno: Canto IV
575
576
577 Broke the deep lethargy within my head
578 A heavy thunder, so that I upstarted,
579 Like to a person who by force is wakened;
580
581 And round about I moved my rested eyes,
582 Uprisen erect, and steadfastly I gazed,
583 To recognise the place wherein I was.
584
585 True is it, that upon the verge I found me
586 Of the abysmal valley dolorous,
587 That gathers thunder of infinite ululations.
588
589 Obscure, profound it was, and nebulous,
590 So that by fixing on its depths my sight
591 Nothing whatever I discerned therein.
592
593 "Let us descend now into the blind world,"
594 Began the Poet, pallid utterly;
595 "I will be first, and thou shalt second be."
596
597 And I, who of his colour was aware,
598 Said: "How shall I come, if thou art afraid,
599 Who'rt wont to be a comfort to my fears?"
600
601 And he to me: "The anguish of the people
602 Who are below here in my face depicts
603 That pity which for terror thou hast taken.
604
605 Let us go on, for the long way impels us."
606 Thus he went in, and thus he made me enter
607 The foremost circle that surrounds the abyss.
608
609 There, as it seemed to me from listening,
610 Were lamentations none, but only sighs,
611 That tremble made the everlasting air.
612
613 And this arose from sorrow without torment,
614 Which the crowds had, that many were and great,
615 Of infants and of women and of men.
616
617 To me the Master good: "Thou dost not ask
618 What spirits these, which thou beholdest, are?
619 Now will I have thee know, ere thou go farther,
620
621 That they sinned not; and if they merit had,
622 'Tis not enough, because they had not baptism
623 Which is the portal of the Faith thou holdest;
624
625 And if they were before Christianity,
626 In the right manner they adored not God;
627 And among such as these am I myself.

628
629 For such defects, and not for other guilt,
630 Lost are we and are only so far punished,
631 That without hope we live on in desire."
632
633 Great grief seized on my heart when this I heard,
634 Because some people of much worthiness
635 I knew, who in that Limbo were suspended.
636
637 "Tell me, my Master, tell me, thou my Lord,"
638 Began I, with desire of being certain
639 Of that Faith which o'ercometh every error,
640
641 "Came any one by his own merit hence,
642 Or by another's, who was blessed thereafter?"
643 And he, who understood my covert speech,
644
645 Replied: "I was a novice in this state,
646 When I saw hither come a Mighty One,
647 With sign of victory incoronate.
648
649 Hence he drew forth the shade of the First Parent,
650 And that of his son Abel, and of Noah,
651 Of Moses the lawgiver, and the obedient
652
653 Abraham, patriarch, and David, king,
654 Israel with his father and his children,
655 And Rachel, for whose sake he did so much,
656
657 And others many, and he made them blessed;
658 And thou must know, that earlier than these
659 Never were any human spirits saved."
660
661 We ceased not to advance because he spake,
662 But still were passing onward through the forest,
663 The forest, say I, of thick-crowded ghosts.
664
665 Not very far as yet our way had gone
666 This side the summit, when I saw a fire
667 That overcame a hemisphere of darkness.
668
669 We were a little distant from it still,
670 But not so far that I in part discerned not
671 That honourable people held that place.
672
673 "O thou who honourest every art and science,
674 Who may these be, which such great honour have,
675 That from the fashion of the rest it parts them?"
676
677 And he to me: "The honourable name,
678 That sounds of them above there in thy life,
679 Wins grace in Heaven, that so advances them."
680
681 In the mean time a voice was heard by me:
682 "All honour be to the pre-eminent Poet;
683 His shade returns again, that was departed."
684

685 After the voice had ceased and quiet was,
 686 Four mighty shades I saw approaching us;
 687 Semblance had they nor sorrowful nor glad.
 688
 689 To say to me began my gracious Master:
 690 "Him with that falchion in his hand behold,
 691 Who comes before the three, even as their lord.
 692
 693 That one is Homer, Poet sovereign;
 694 He who comes next is Horace, the satirist;
 695 The third is Ovid, and the last is Lucan.
 696
 697 Because to each of these with me applies
 698 The name that solitary voice proclaimed,
 699 They do me honour, and in that do well."
 700
 701 Thus I beheld assemble the fair school
 702 Of that lord of the song pre-eminent,
 703 Who o'er the others like an eagle soars.
 704
 705 When they together had discoursed somewhat,
 706 They turned to me with signs of salutation,
 707 And on beholding this, my Master smiled;
 708
 709 And more of honour still, much more, they did me,
 710 In that they made me one of their own band;
 711 So that the sixth was I, 'mid so much wit.
 712
 713 Thus we went on as far as to the light,
 714 Things saying 'tis becoming to keep silent,
 715 As was the saying of them where I was.
 716
 717 We came unto a noble castle's foot,
 718 Seven times encompassed with lofty walls,
 719 Defended round by a fair rivulet;
 720
 721 This we passed over even as firm ground;
 722 Through portals seven I entered with these Sages;
 723 We came into a meadow of fresh verdure.
 724
 725 People were there with solemn eyes and slow,
 726 Of great authority in their countenance;
 727 They spake but seldom, and with gentle voices.
 728
 729 Thus we withdrew ourselves upon one side
 730 Into an opening luminous and lofty,
 731 So that they all of them were visible.
 732
 733 There opposite, upon the green enamel,
 734 Were pointed out to me the mighty spirits,
 735 Whom to have seen I feel myself exalted.
 736
 737 I saw Electra with companions many,
 738 'Mongst whom I knew both Hector and Aeneas,
 739 Caesar in armour with gerfalcon eyes;
 740
 741 I saw Camilla and Penthesilea

742 On the other side, and saw the King Latinus,
 743 Who with Lavinia his daughter sat;
 744
 745 I saw that Brutus who drove Tarquin forth,
 746 Lucretia, Julia, Marcia, and Cornelia,
 747 And saw alone, apart, the Saladin.
 748
 749 When I had lifted up my brows a little,
 750 The Master I beheld of those who know,
 751 Sit with his philosophic family.
 752
 753 All gaze upon him, and all do him honour.
 754 There I beheld both Socrates and Plato,
 755 Who nearer him before the others stand;
 756
 757 Democritus, who puts the world on chance,
 758 Diogenes, Anaxagoras, and Thales,
 759 Zeno, Empedocles, and Heraclitus;
 760
 761 Of qualities I saw the good collector,
 762 Hight Dioscorides; and Orpheus saw I,
 763 Tully and Livy, and moral Seneca,
 764
 765 Euclid, geometrician, and Ptolemy,
 766 Galen, Hippocrates, and Avicenna,
 767 Averroes, who the great Comment made.
 768
 769 I cannot all of them pourtray in full,
 770 Because so drives me onward the long theme,
 771 That many times the word comes short of fact.
 772
 773 The sixfold company in two divides;
 774 Another way my sapient Guide conducts me
 775 Forth from the quiet to the air that trembles;
 776
 777 And to a place I come where nothing shines.
 778
 779
 780
 781 Inferno: Canto V
 782
 783
 784 Thus I descended out of the first circle
 785 Down to the second, that less space begirds,
 786 And so much greater dole, that goads to wailing.
 787
 788 There standeth Minos horribly, and snarls;
 789 Examines the transgressions at the entrance;
 790 Judges, and sends according as he girds him.
 791
 792 I say, that when the spirit evil-born
 793 Cometh before him, wholly it confesses;
 794 And this discriminator of transgressions
 795
 796 Seeth what place in Hell is meet for it;
 797 Girds himself with his tail as many times
 798 As grades he wishes it should be thrust down.

799
800 Always before him many of them stand;
801 They go by turns each one unto the judgment;
802 They speak, and hear, and then are downward hurled.
803
804 "O thou, that to this dolorous hostelry
805 Comest," said Minos to me, when he saw me,
806 Leaving the practice of so great an office,
807
808 "Look how thou enterest, and in whom thou trustest;
809 Let not the portal's amplitude deceive thee."
810 And unto him my Guide: "Why criest thou too?
811
812 Do not impede his journey fate-ordained;
813 It is so willed there where is power to do
814 That which is willed; and ask no further question."
815
816 And now begin the dolesome notes to grow
817 Audible unto me; now am I come
818 There where much lamentation strikes upon me.
819
820 I came into a place mute of all light,
821 Which bellows as the sea does in a tempest,
822 If by opposing winds 't is combated.
823
824 The infernal hurricane that never rests
825 Hurtles the spirits onward in its rapine;
826 Whirling them round, and smiting, it molests them.
827
828 When they arrive before the precipice,
829 There are the shrieks, the complaints, and the laments,
830 There they blaspheme the puissance divine.
831
832 I understood that unto such a torment
833 The carnal malefactors were condemned,
834 Who reason subjugate to appetite.
835
836 And as the wings of starlings bear them on
837 In the cold season in large band and full,
838 So doth that blast the spirits maledict;
839
840 It hither, thither, downward, upward, drives them;
841 No hope doth comfort them for evermore,
842 Not of repose, but even of lesser pain.
843
844 And as the cranes go chanting forth their lays,
845 Making in air a long line of themselves,
846 So saw I coming, uttering lamentations,
847
848 Shadows borne onward by the aforesaid stress.
849 Whereupon said I: "Master, who are those
850 People, whom the black air so castigates?"
851
852 "The first of those, of whom intelligence
853 Thou fain wouldst have," then said he unto me,
854 "The empress was of many languages.
855

856 To sensual vices she was so abandoned,
857 That lustful she made licit in her law,
858 To remove the blame to which she had been led.
859
860 She is Semiramis, of whom we read
861 That she succeeded Ninus, and was his spouse;
862 She held the land which now the Sultan rules.
863
864 The next is she who killed herself for love,
865 And broke faith with the ashes of Sichaeus;
866 Then Cleopatra the voluptuous."
867
868 Helen I saw, for whom so many ruthless
869 Seasons revolved; and saw the great Achilles,
870 Who at the last hour combated with Love.
871
872 Paris I saw, Tristan; and more than a thousand
873 Shades did he name and point out with his finger,
874 Whom Love had separated from our life.
875
876 After that I had listened to my Teacher,
877 Naming the dames of eld and cavaliers,
878 Pity prevailed, and I was nigh bewildered.
879
880 And I began: "O Poet, willingly
881 Speak would I to those two, who go together,
882 And seem upon the wind to be so light."
883
884 And, he to me: "Thou'lt mark, when they shall be
885 Nearer to us; and then do thou implore them
886 By love which leadeth them, and they will come."
887
888 Soon as the wind in our direction sways them,
889 My voice uplift I: "O ye weary souls!
890 Come speak to us, if no one interdicts it."
891
892 As turtle-doves, called onward by desire,
893 With open and steady wings to the sweet nest
894 Fly through the air by their volition borne,
895
896 So came they from the band where Dido is,
897 Approaching us athwart the air malign,
898 So strong was the affectionate appeal.
899
900 "O living creature gracious and benignant,
901 Who visiting goest through the purple air
902 Us, who have stained the world incarnadine,
903
904 If were the King of the Universe our friend,
905 We would pray unto him to give thee peace,
906 Since thou hast pity on our woe perverse.
907
908 Of what it pleases thee to hear and speak,
909 That will we hear, and we will speak to you,
910 While silent is the wind, as it is now.
911
912 Sitteth the city, wherein I was born,

913 Upon the sea-shore where the Po descends
 914 To rest in peace with all his retinue.
 915
 916 Love, that on gentle heart doth swiftly seize,
 917 Seized this man for the person beautiful
 918 That was ta'en from me, and still the mode offends me.
 919
 920 Love, that exempts no one beloved from loving,
 921 Seized me with pleasure of this man so strongly,
 922 That, as thou seest, it doth not yet desert me;
 923
 924 Love has conducted us unto one death;
 925 Caina waiteth him who quenched our life!"
 926 These words were borne along from them to us.
 927
 928 As soon as I had heard those souls tormented,
 929 I bowed my face, and so long held it down
 930 Until the Poet said to me: "What thinkest?"
 931
 932 When I made answer, I began: "Alas!
 933 How many pleasant thoughts, how much desire,
 934 Conducted these unto the dolorous pass!"
 935
 936 Then unto them I turned me, and I spake,
 937 And I began: "Thine agonies, Francesca,
 938 Sad and compassionate to weeping make me.
 939
 940 But tell me, at the time of those sweet sighs,
 941 By what and in what manner Love conceded,
 942 That you should know your dubious desires?"
 943
 944 And she to me: "There is no greater sorrow
 945 Than to be mindful of the happy time
 946 In misery, and that thy Teacher knows.
 947
 948 But, if to recognise the earliest root
 949 Of love in us thou hast so great desire,
 950 I will do even as he who weeps and speaks.
 951
 952 One day we reading were for our delight
 953 Of Launcelot, how Love did him enthrall.
 954 Alone we were and without any fear.
 955
 956 Full many a time our eyes together drew
 957 That reading, and drove the colour from our faces;
 958 But one point only was it that o'ercame us.
 959
 960 When as we read of the much-longed-for smile
 961 Being by such a noble lover kissed,
 962 This one, who ne'er from me shall be divided,
 963
 964 Kissed me upon the mouth all palpitating.
 965 Galeotto was the book and he who wrote it.
 966 That day no farther did we read therein."
 967
 968 And all the while one spirit uttered this,
 969 The other one did weep so, that, for pity,

970 I swooned away as if I had been dying,
 971
 972 And fell, even as a dead body falls.
 973
 974
 975
 976 Inferno: Canto VI
 977
 978
 979 At the return of consciousness, that closed
 980 Before the pity of those two relations,
 981 Which utterly with sadness had confused me,
 982
 983 New torments I behold, and new tormented
 984 Around me, whichsoever way I move,
 985 And whichsoever way I turn, and gaze.
 986
 987 In the third circle am I of the rain
 988 Eternal, maledict, and cold, and heavy;
 989 Its law and quality are never new.
 990
 991 Huge hail, and water sombre-hued, and snow,
 992 Athwart the tenebrous air pour down amain;
 993 Noisome the earth is, that receiveth this.
 994
 995 Cerberus, monster cruel and uncouth,
 996 With his three gullets like a dog is barking
 997 Over the people that are there submerged.
 998
 999 Red eyes he has, and unctuous beard and black,
 1000 And belly large, and armed with claws his hands;
 1001 He rends the spirits, flays, and quarters them.
 1002
 1003 Howl the rain maketh them like unto dogs;
 1004 One side they make a shelter for the other;
 1005 Oft turn themselves the wretched reprobates.
 1006
 1007 When Cerberus perceived us, the great worm!
 1008 His mouths he opened, and displayed his tusks;
 1009 Not a limb had he that was motionless.
 1010
 1011 And my Conductor, with his spans extended,
 1012 Took of the earth, and with his fists well filled,
 1013 He threw it into those rapacious gullets.
 1014
 1015 Such as that dog is, who by barking craves,
 1016 And quiet grows soon as his food he gnaws,
 1017 For to devour it he but thinks and struggles,
 1018
 1019 The like became those muzzles filth-begrimed
 1020 Of Cerberus the demon, who so thunders
 1021 Over the souls that they would fain be deaf.
 1022
 1023 We passed across the shadows, which subdues
 1024 The heavy rain-storm, and we placed our feet
 1025 Upon their vanity that person seems.
 1026

1027 They all were lying prone upon the earth,
1028 Excepting one, who sat upright as soon
1029 As he beheld us passing on before him.
1030
1031 "O thou that art conducted through this Hell,"
1032 He said to me, "recall me, if thou canst;
1033 Thyself wast made before I was unmade."
1034
1035 And I to him: "The anguish which thou hast
1036 Perhaps doth draw thee out of my remembrance,
1037 So that it seems not I have ever seen thee.
1038
1039 But tell me who thou art, that in so doleful
1040 A place art put, and in such punishment,
1041 If some are greater, none is so displeasing."
1042
1043 And he to me: "Thy city, which is full
1044 Of envy so that now the sack runs over,
1045 Held me within it in the life serene.
1046
1047 You citizens were wont to call me Ciacco;
1048 For the pernicious sin of gluttony
1049 I, as thou seest, am battered by this rain.
1050
1051 And I, sad soul, am not the only one,
1052 For all these suffer the like penalty
1053 For the like sin;" and word no more spake he.
1054
1055 I answered him: "Ciacco, thy wretchedness
1056 Weighs on me so that it to weep invites me;
1057 But tell me, if thou knowest, to what shall come
1058
1059 The citizens of the divided city;
1060 If any there be just; and the occasion
1061 Tell me why so much discord has assailed it."
1062
1063 And he to me: "They, after long contention,
1064 Will come to bloodshed; and the rustic party
1065 Will drive the other out with much offence.
1066
1067 Then afterwards behoves it this one fall
1068 Within three suns, and rise again the other
1069 By force of him who now is on the coast.
1070
1071 High will it hold its forehead a long while,
1072 Keeping the other under heavy burdens,
1073 Howe'er it weeps thereat and is indignant.
1074
1075 The just are two, and are not understood there;
1076 Envy and Arrogance and Avarice
1077 Are the three sparks that have all hearts enkindled."
1078
1079 Here ended he his tearful utterance;
1080 And I to him: "I wish thee still to teach me,
1081 And make a gift to me of further speech.
1082
1083 Farinata and Tegghiaio, once so worthy,

1084 Jacopo Rusticucci, Arrigo, and Mosca,
 1085 And others who on good deeds set their thoughts,
 1086
 1087 Say where they are, and cause that I may know them;
 1088 For great desire constraineth me to learn
 1089 If Heaven doth sweeten them, or Hell envenom."
 1090
 1091 And he: "They are among the blacker souls;
 1092 A different sin downweighs them to the bottom;
 1093 If thou so far descendest, thou canst see them.
 1094
 1095 But when thou art again in the sweet world,
 1096 I pray thee to the mind of others bring me;
 1097 No more I tell thee and no more I answer."
 1098
 1099 Then his straightforward eyes he turned askance,
 1100 Eyed me a little, and then bowed his head;
 1101 He fell therewith prone like the other blind.
 1102
 1103 And the Guide said to me: "He wakes no more
 1104 This side the sound of the angelic trumpet;
 1105 When shall approach the hostile Potentate,
 1106
 1107 Each one shall find again his dismal tomb,
 1108 Shall reassume his flesh and his own figure,
 1109 Shall hear what through eternity re-echoes."
 1110
 1111 So we passed onward o'er the filthy mixture
 1112 Of shadows and of rain with footsteps slow,
 1113 Touching a little on the future life.
 1114
 1115 Wherefore I said: "Master, these torments here,
 1116 Will they increase after the mighty sentence,
 1117 Or lesser be, or will they be as burning?"
 1118
 1119 And he to me: "Return unto thy science,
 1120 Which wills, that as the thing more perfect is,
 1121 The more it feels of pleasure and of pain.
 1122
 1123 Albeit that this people maledict
 1124 To true perfection never can attain,
 1125 Hereafter more than now they look to be."
 1126
 1127 Round in a circle by that road we went,
 1128 Speaking much more, which I do not repeat;
 1129 We came unto the point where the descent is;
 1130
 1131 There we found Plutus the great enemy.
 1132
 1133
 1134
 1135 Inferno: Canto VII
 1136
 1137
 1138 "Pape Satan, Pape Satan, Aleppe!"
 1139 Thus Plutus with his clucking voice began;
 1140 And that benignant Sage, who all things knew,

1141
1142 Said, to encourage me: "Let not thy fear
1143 Harm thee; for any power that he may have
1144 Shall not prevent thy going down this crag."
1145
1146 Then he turned round unto that bloated lip,
1147 And said: "Be silent, thou accursed wolf;
1148 Consume within thyself with thine own rage.
1149
1150 Not causeless is this journey to the abyss;
1151 Thus is it willed on high, where Michael wrought
1152 Vengeance upon the proud adultery."
1153
1154 Even as the sails inflated by the wind
1155 Involved together fall when snaps the mast,
1156 So fell the cruel monster to the earth.
1157
1158 Thus we descended into the fourth chasm,
1159 Gaining still farther on the dolesome shore
1160 Which all the woe of the universe insacks.
1161
1162 Justice of God, ah! who heaps up so many
1163 New toils and sufferings as I beheld?
1164 And why doth our transgression waste us so?
1165
1166 As doth the billow there upon Charybdis,
1167 That breaks itself on that which it encounters,
1168 So here the folk must dance their roundelay.
1169
1170 Here saw I people, more than elsewhere, many,
1171 On one side and the other, with great howls,
1172 Rolling weights forward by main force of chest.
1173
1174 They clashed together, and then at that point
1175 Each one turned backward, rolling retrograde,
1176 Crying, "Why keepest?" and, "Why squanderest thou?"
1177
1178 Thus they returned along the lurid circle
1179 On either hand unto the opposite point,
1180 Shouting their shameful metre evermore.
1181
1182 Then each, when he arrived there, wheeled about
1183 Through his half-circle to another joust;
1184 And I, who had my heart pierced as it were,
1185
1186 Exclaimed: "My Master, now declare to me
1187 What people these are, and if all were clerks,
1188 These shaven crowns upon the left of us."
1189
1190 And he to me: "All of them were asquint
1191 In intellect in the first life, so much
1192 That there with measure they no spending made.
1193
1194 Clearly enough their voices bark it forth,
1195 Whene'er they reach the two points of the circle,
1196 Where sunders them the opposite defect.
1197

1198 Clerks those were who no hairy covering
1199 Have on the head, and Popes and Cardinals,
1200 In whom doth Avarice practise its excess."
1201
1202 And I: "My Master, among such as these
1203 I ought forsooth to recognise some few,
1204 Who were infected with these maladies."
1205
1206 And he to me: "Vain thought thou entertainest;
1207 The undiscerning life which made them sordid
1208 Now makes them unto all discernment dim.
1209
1210 Forever shall they come to these two buttings;
1211 These from the sepulchre shall rise again
1212 With the fist closed, and these with tresses shorn.
1213
1214 Ill giving and ill keeping the fair world
1215 Have ta'en from them, and placed them in this scuffle;
1216 Whate'er it be, no words adorn I for it.
1217
1218 Now canst thou, Son, behold the transient farce
1219 Of goods that are committed unto Fortune,
1220 For which the human race each other buffet;
1221
1222 For all the gold that is beneath the moon,
1223 Or ever has been, of these weary souls
1224 Could never make a single one repose."
1225
1226 "Master," I said to him, "now tell me also
1227 What is this Fortune which thou speakest of,
1228 That has the world's goods so within its clutches?"
1229
1230 And he to me: "O creatures imbecile,
1231 What ignorance is this which doth beset you?
1232 Now will I have thee learn my judgment of her.
1233
1234 He whose omniscience everything transcends
1235 The heavens created, and gave who should guide them,
1236 That every part to every part may shine,
1237
1238 Distributing the light in equal measure;
1239 He in like manner to the mundane splendours
1240 Ordained a general mistress and guide,
1241
1242 That she might change at times the empty treasures
1243 From race to race, from one blood to another,
1244 Beyond resistance of all human wisdom.
1245
1246 Therefore one people triumphs, and another
1247 Languishes, in pursuance of her judgment,
1248 Which hidden is, as in the grass a serpent.
1249
1250 Your knowledge has no counterstand against her;
1251 She makes provision, judges, and pursues
1252 Her governance, as theirs the other gods.
1253
1254 Her permutations have not any truce;

1255 Necessity makes her precipitate,
1256 So often cometh who his turn obtains.
1257
1258 And this is she who is so crucified
1259 Even by those who ought to give her praise,
1260 Giving her blame amiss, and bad repute.
1261
1262 But she is blissful, and she hears it not;
1263 Among the other primal creatures gladsome
1264 She turns her sphere, and blissful she rejoices.
1265
1266 Let us descend now unto greater woe;
1267 Already sinks each star that was ascending
1268 When I set out, and loitering is forbidden."
1269
1270 We crossed the circle to the other bank,
1271 Near to a fount that boils, and pours itself
1272 Along a gully that runs out of it.
1273
1274 The water was more sombre far than perse;
1275 And we, in company with the dusky waves,
1276 Made entrance downward by a path uncouth.
1277
1278 A marsh it makes, which has the name of Styx,
1279 This tristful brooklet, when it has descended
1280 Down to the foot of the malign gray shores.
1281
1282 And I, who stood intent upon beholding,
1283 Saw people mud-besprent in that lagoon,
1284 All of them naked and with angry look.
1285
1286 They smote each other not alone with hands,
1287 But with the head and with the breast and feet,
1288 Tearing each other piecemeal with their teeth.
1289
1290 Said the good Master: "Son, thou now beholdest
1291 The souls of those whom anger overcame;
1292 And likewise I would have thee know for certain
1293
1294 Beneath the water people are who sigh
1295 And make this water bubble at the surface,
1296 As the eye tells thee wheresoe'er it turns.
1297
1298 Fixed in the mire they say, 'We sullen were
1299 In the sweet air, which by the sun is gladdened,
1300 Bearing within ourselves the sluggish reek;
1301
1302 Now we are sullen in this sable mire.'
1303 This hymn do they keep gurgling in their throats,
1304 For with unbroken words they cannot say it."
1305
1306 Thus we went circling round the filthy fen
1307 A great arc 'twixt the dry bank and the swamp,
1308 With eyes turned unto those who gorge the mire;
1309
1310 Unto the foot of a tower we came at last.
1311

1312
1313
1314 Inferno: Canto VIII
1315
1316
1317 I say, continuing, that long before
1318 We to the foot of that high tower had come,
1319 Our eyes went upward to the summit of it,
1320
1321 By reason of two flamelets we saw placed there,
1322 And from afar another answer them,
1323 So far, that hardly could the eye attain it.
1324
1325 And, to the sea of all discernment turned,
1326 I said: "What sayeth this, and what respondeth
1327 That other fire? and who are they that made it?"
1328
1329 And he to me: "Across the turbid waves
1330 What is expected thou canst now discern,
1331 If reek of the morass conceal it not."
1332
1333 Cord never shot an arrow from itself
1334 That sped away athwart the air so swift,
1335 As I beheld a very little boat
1336
1337 Come o'er the water tow'rds us at that moment,
1338 Under the guidance of a single pilot,
1339 Who shouted, "Now art thou arrived, fell soul?"
1340
1341 "Phlegyas, Phlegyas, thou criest out in vain
1342 For this once," said my Lord; "thou shalt not have us
1343 Longer than in the passing of the slough."
1344
1345 As he who listens to some great deceit
1346 That has been done to him, and then resents it,
1347 Such became Phlegyas, in his gathered wrath.
1348
1349 My Guide descended down into the boat,
1350 And then he made me enter after him,
1351 And only when I entered seemed it laden.
1352
1353 Soon as the Guide and I were in the boat,
1354 The antique prow goes on its way, dividing
1355 More of the water than 'tis wont with others.
1356
1357 While we were running through the dead canal,
1358 Uprose in front of me one full of mire,
1359 And said, "Who 'rt thou that comest ere the hour?"
1360
1361 And I to him: "Although I come, I stay not;
1362 But who art thou that hast become so squalid?"
1363 "Thou seest that I am one who weeps," he answered.
1364
1365 And I to him: "With weeping and with wailing,
1366 Thou spirit maledict, do thou remain;
1367 For thee I know, though thou art all defiled."
1368

1369 Then stretched he both his hands unto the boat;
1370 Whereat my wary Master thrust him back,
1371 Saying, "Away there with the other dogs!"
1372
1373 Thereafter with his arms he clasped my neck;
1374 He kissed my face, and said: "Disdainful soul,
1375 Blessed be she who bore thee in her bosom.
1376
1377 That was an arrogant person in the world;
1378 Goodness is none, that decks his memory;
1379 So likewise here his shade is furious.
1380
1381 How many are esteemed great kings up there,
1382 Who here shall be like unto swine in mire,
1383 Leaving behind them horrible dispraises!"
1384
1385 And I: "My Master, much should I be pleased,
1386 If I could see him soused into this broth,
1387 Before we issue forth out of the lake."
1388
1389 And he to me: "Ere unto thee the shore
1390 Reveal itself, thou shalt be satisfied;
1391 Such a desire 'tis meet thou shouldst enjoy."
1392
1393 A little after that, I saw such havoc
1394 Made of him by the people of the mire,
1395 That still I praise and thank my God for it.
1396
1397 They all were shouting, "At Philipppo Argenti!"
1398 And that exasperate spirit Florentine
1399 Turned round upon himself with his own teeth.
1400
1401 We left him there, and more of him I tell not;
1402 But on mine ears there smote a lamentation,
1403 Whence forward I intent unbar mine eyes.
1404
1405 And the good Master said: "Even now, my Son,
1406 The city draweth near whose name is Dis,
1407 With the grave citizens, with the great throng."
1408
1409 And I: "Its mosques already, Master, clearly
1410 Within there in the valley I discern
1411 Vermilion, as if issuing from the fire
1412
1413 They were." And he to me: "The fire eternal
1414 That kindles them within makes them look red,
1415 As thou beholdest in this nether Hell."
1416
1417 Then we arrived within the moats profound,
1418 That circumvallate that disconsolate city;
1419 The walls appeared to me to be of iron.
1420
1421 Not without making first a circuit wide,
1422 We came unto a place where loud the pilot
1423 Cried out to us, "Debark, here is the entrance."
1424
1425 More than a thousand at the gates I saw

1426 Out of the Heavens rained down, who angrily
1427 Were saying, "Who is this that without death
1428
1429 Goes through the kingdom of the people dead?"
1430 And my sagacious Master made a sign
1431 Of wishing secretly to speak with them.
1432
1433 A little then they quelled their great disdain,
1434 And said: "Come thou alone, and he begone
1435 Who has so boldly entered these dominions.
1436
1437 Let him return alone by his mad road;
1438 Try, if he can; for thou shalt here remain,
1439 Who hast escorted him through such dark regions."
1440
1441 Think, Reader, if I was discomfited
1442 At utterance of the accursed words;
1443 For never to return here I believed.
1444
1445 "O my dear Guide, who more than seven times
1446 Hast rendered me security, and drawn me
1447 From imminent peril that before me stood,
1448
1449 Do not desert me," said I, "thus undone;
1450 And if the going farther be denied us,
1451 Let us retrace our steps together swiftly."
1452
1453 And that Lord, who had led me thitherward,
1454 Said unto me: "Fear not; because our passage
1455 None can take from us, it by Such is given.
1456
1457 But here await me, and thy weary spirit
1458 Comfort and nourish with a better hope;
1459 For in this nether world I will not leave thee."
1460
1461 So onward goes and there abandons me
1462 My Father sweet, and I remain in doubt,
1463 For No and Yes within my head contend.
1464
1465 I could not hear what he proposed to them;
1466 But with them there he did not linger long,
1467 Ere each within in rivalry ran back.
1468
1469 They closed the portals, those our adversaries,
1470 On my Lord's breast, who had remained without
1471 And turned to me with footsteps far between.
1472
1473 His eyes cast down, his forehead shorn had he
1474 Of all its boldness, and he said, with sighs,
1475 "Who has denied to me the dolesome houses?"
1476
1477 And unto me: "Thou, because I am angry,
1478 Fear not, for I will conquer in the trial,
1479 Whatever for defence within be planned.
1480
1481 This arrogance of theirs is nothing new;
1482 For once they used it at less secret gate,

1483 Which finds itself without a fastening still.
 1484
 1485 O'er it didst thou behold the dead inscription;
 1486 And now this side of it descends the steep,
 1487 Passing across the circles without escort,
 1488
 1489 One by whose means the city shall be opened."
 1490
 1491
 1492
 1493 Inferno: Canto IX
 1494
 1495
 1496 That hue which cowardice brought out on me,
 1497 Beholding my Conductor backward turn,
 1498 Sooner repressed within him his new colour.
 1499
 1500 He stopped attentive, like a man who listens,
 1501 Because the eye could not conduct him far
 1502 Through the black air, and through the heavy fog.
 1503
 1504 "Still it behoveth us to win the fight,"
 1505 Began he; "Else. . .Such offered us herself. . .
 1506 O how I long that some one here arrive!"
 1507
 1508 Well I perceived, as soon as the beginning
 1509 He covered up with what came afterward,
 1510 That they were words quite different from the first;
 1511
 1512 But none the less his saying gave me fear,
 1513 Because I carried out the broken phrase,
 1514 Perhaps to a worse meaning than he had.
 1515
 1516 "Into this bottom of the doleful conch
 1517 Doth any e'er descend from the first grade,
 1518 Which for its pain has only hope cut off?"
 1519
 1520 This question put I; and he answered me:
 1521 "Seldom it comes to pass that one of us
 1522 Maketh the journey upon which I go.
 1523
 1524 True is it, once before I here below
 1525 Was conjured by that pitiless Erictho,
 1526 Who summoned back the shades unto their bodies.
 1527
 1528 Naked of me short while the flesh had been,
 1529 Before within that wall she made me enter,
 1530 To bring a spirit from the circle of Judas;
 1531
 1532 That is the lowest region and the darkest,
 1533 And farthest from the heaven which circles all.
 1534 Well know I the way; therefore be reassured.
 1535
 1536 This fen, which a prodigious stench exhales,
 1537 Encompasses about the city dolent,
 1538 Where now we cannot enter without anger."
 1539

1540 And more he said, but not in mind I have it;
1541 Because mine eye had altogether drawn me
1542 Tow'rds the high tower with the red-flaming summit,
1543
1544 Where in a moment saw I swift uprisen
1545 The three infernal Furies stained with blood,
1546 Who had the limbs of women and their mien,
1547
1548 And with the greenest hydras were begirt;
1549 Small serpents and cerastes were their tresses,
1550 Wherewith their horrid temples were entwined.
1551
1552 And he who well the handmaids of the Queen
1553 Of everlasting lamentation knew,
1554 Said unto me: "Behold the fierce Erinnyes.
1555
1556 This is Megaera, on the left-hand side;
1557 She who is weeping on the right, Alecto;
1558 Tisiphone is between;" and then was silent.
1559
1560 Each one her breast was rending with her nails;
1561 They beat them with their palms, and cried so loud,
1562 That I for dread pressed close unto the Poet.
1563
1564 "Medusa come, so we to stone will change him!"
1565 All shouted looking down; "in evil hour
1566 Avenged we not on Theseus his assault!"
1567
1568 "Turn thyself round, and keep thine eyes close shut,
1569 For if the Gorgon appear, and thou shouldst see it,
1570 No more returning upward would there be."
1571
1572 Thus said the Master; and he turned me round
1573 Himself, and trusted not unto my hands
1574 So far as not to blind me with his own.
1575
1576 O ye who have undistempered intellects,
1577 Observe the doctrine that conceals itself
1578 Beneath the veil of the mysterious verses!
1579
1580 And now there came across the turbid waves
1581 The clangour of a sound with terror fraught,
1582 Because of which both of the margins trembled;
1583
1584 Not otherwise it was than of a wind
1585 Impetuous on account of adverse heats,
1586 That smites the forest, and, without restraint,
1587
1588 The branches rends, beats down, and bears away;
1589 Right onward, laden with dust, it goes superb,
1590 And puts to flight the wild beasts and the shepherds.
1591
1592 Mine eyes he loosed, and said: "Direct the nerve
1593 Of vision now along that ancient foam,
1594 There yonder where that smoke is most intense."
1595
1596 Even as the frogs before the hostile serpent

1597 Across the water scatter all abroad,
1598 Until each one is huddled in the earth.
1599
1600 More than a thousand ruined souls I saw,
1601 Thus fleeing from before one who on foot
1602 Was passing o'er the Styx with soles unwet.
1603
1604 From off his face he fanned that unctuous air,
1605 Waving his left hand oft in front of him,
1606 And only with that anguish seemed he weary.
1607
1608 Well I perceived one sent from Heaven was he,
1609 And to the Master turned; and he made sign
1610 That I should quiet stand, and bow before him.
1611
1612 Ah! how disdainful he appeared to me!
1613 He reached the gate, and with a little rod
1614 He opened it, for there was no resistance.
1615
1616 "O banished out of Heaven, people despised!"
1617 Thus he began upon the horrid threshold;
1618 "Whence is this arrogance within you couched?
1619
1620 Wherefore recalcitrate against that will,
1621 From which the end can never be cut off,
1622 And which has many times increased your pain?
1623
1624 What helpeth it to butt against the fates?
1625 Your Cerberus, if you remember well,
1626 For that still bears his chin and gullet peeled."
1627
1628 Then he returned along the miry road,
1629 And spake no word to us, but had the look
1630 Of one whom other care constrains and goads
1631
1632 Than that of him who in his presence is;
1633 And we our feet directed tow'rds the city,
1634 After those holy words all confident.
1635
1636 Within we entered without any contest;
1637 And I, who inclination had to see
1638 What the condition such a fortress holds,
1639
1640 Soon as I was within, cast round mine eye,
1641 And see on every hand an ample plain,
1642 Full of distress and torment terrible.
1643
1644 Even as at Arles, where stagnant grows the Rhone,
1645 Even as at Pola near to the Quarnaro,
1646 That shuts in Italy and bathes its borders,
1647
1648 The sepulchres make all the place uneven;
1649 So likewise did they there on every side,
1650 Saving that there the manner was more bitter;
1651
1652 For flames between the sepulchres were scattered,
1653 By which they so intensely heated were,

1654 That iron more so asks not any art.
 1655
 1656 All of their coverings uplifted were,
 1657 And from them issued forth such dire laments,
 1658 Sooth seemed they of the wretched and tormented.
 1659
 1660 And I: "My Master, what are all those people
 1661 Who, having sepulture within those tombs,
 1662 Make themselves audible by doleful sighs?"
 1663
 1664 And he to me: "Here are the Heresiarchs,
 1665 With their disciples of all sects, and much
 1666 More than thou thinkest laden are the tombs.
 1667
 1668 Here like together with its like is buried;
 1669 And more and less the monuments are heated."
 1670 And when he to the right had turned, we passed
 1671
 1672 Between the torments and high parapets.
 1673
 1674
 1675
 1676 Inferno: Canto X
 1677
 1678
 1679 Now onward goes, along a narrow path
 1680 Between the torments and the city wall,
 1681 My Master, and I follow at his back.
 1682
 1683 "O power supreme, that through these impious circles
 1684 Turnest me," I began, "as pleases thee,
 1685 Speak to me, and my longings satisfy;
 1686
 1687 The people who are lying in these tombs,
 1688 Might they be seen? already are uplifted
 1689 The covers all, and no one keepeth guard."
 1690
 1691 And he to me: "They all will be closed up
 1692 When from Jehoshaphat they shall return
 1693 Here with the bodies they have left above.
 1694
 1695 Their cemetery have upon this side
 1696 With Epicurus all his followers,
 1697 Who with the body mortal make the soul;
 1698
 1699 But in the question thou dost put to me,
 1700 Within here shalt thou soon be satisfied,
 1701 And likewise in the wish thou keepest silent."
 1702
 1703 And I: "Good Leader, I but keep concealed
 1704 From thee my heart, that I may speak the less,
 1705 Nor only now hast thou thereto disposed me."
 1706
 1707 "O Tuscan, thou who through the city of fire
 1708 Goest alive, thus speaking modestly,
 1709 Be pleased to stay thy footsteps in this place.
 1710

1711 Thy mode of speaking makes thee manifest
1712 A native of that noble fatherland,
1713 To which perhaps I too molestful was."
1714
1715 Upon a sudden issued forth this sound
1716 From out one of the tombs; wherefore I pressed,
1717 Fearing, a little nearer to my Leader.
1718
1719 And unto me he said: "Turn thee; what dost thou?
1720 Behold there Farinata who has risen;
1721 From the waist upwards wholly shalt thou see him."
1722
1723 I had already fixed mine eyes on his,
1724 And he uprose erect with breast and front
1725 E'en as if Hell he had in great despite.
1726
1727 And with courageous hands and prompt my Leader
1728 Thrust me between the sepulchres towards him,
1729 Exclaiming, "Let thy words explicit be."
1730
1731 As soon as I was at the foot of his tomb
1732 Somewhat he eyed me, and, as if disdainful,
1733 Then asked of me, "Who were thine ancestors?"
1734
1735 I, who desirous of obeying was,
1736 Concealed it not, but all revealed to him;
1737 Whereat he raised his brows a little upward.
1738
1739 Then said he: "Fiercely adverse have they been
1740 To me, and to my fathers, and my party;
1741 So that two several times I scattered them."
1742
1743 "If they were banished, they returned on all sides,"
1744 I answered him, "the first time and the second;
1745 But yours have not acquired that art aright."
1746
1747 Then there uprose upon the sight, uncovered
1748 Down to the chin, a shadow at his side;
1749 I think that he had risen on his knees.
1750
1751 Round me he gazed, as if solicitude
1752 He had to see if some one else were with me,
1753 But after his suspicion was all spent,
1754
1755 Weeping, he said to me: "If through this blind
1756 Prison thou goest by loftiness of genius,
1757 Where is my son? and why is he not with thee?"
1758
1759 And I to him: "I come not of myself;
1760 He who is waiting yonder leads me here,
1761 Whom in disdain perhaps your Guido had."
1762
1763 His language and the mode of punishment
1764 Already unto me had read his name;
1765 On that account my answer was so full.
1766
1767 Up starting suddenly, he cried out: "How

1768 Saidst thou,--he had? Is he not still alive?
1769 Does not the sweet light strike upon his eyes?"
1770
1771 When he became aware of some delay,
1772 Which I before my answer made, supine
1773 He fell again, and forth appeared no more.
1774
1775 But the other, magnanimous, at whose desire
1776 I had remained, did not his aspect change,
1777 Neither his neck he moved, nor bent his side.
1778
1779 "And if," continuing his first discourse,
1780 "They have that art," he said, "not learned aright,
1781 That more tormenteth me, than doth this bed.
1782
1783 But fifty times shall not rekindled be
1784 The countenance of the Lady who reigns here,
1785 Ere thou shalt know how heavy is that art;
1786
1787 And as thou wouldst to the sweet world return,
1788 Say why that people is so pitiless
1789 Against my race in each one of its laws?"
1790
1791 Whence I to him: "The slaughter and great carnage
1792 Which have with crimson stained the Arbia, cause
1793 Such orisons in our temple to be made."
1794
1795 After his head he with a sigh had shaken,
1796 "There I was not alone," he said, "nor surely
1797 Without a cause had with the others moved.
1798
1799 But there I was alone, where every one
1800 Consented to the laying waste of Florence,
1801 He who defended her with open face."
1802
1803 "Ah! so hereafter may your seed repose,"
1804 I him entreated, "solve for me that knot,
1805 Which has entangled my conceptions here.
1806
1807 It seems that you can see, if I hear rightly,
1808 Beforehand whatsoe'er time brings with it,
1809 And in the present have another mode."
1810
1811 "We see, like those who have imperfect sight,
1812 The things," he said, "that distant are from us;
1813 So much still shines on us the Sovereign Ruler.
1814
1815 When they draw near, or are, is wholly vain
1816 Our intellect, and if none brings it to us,
1817 Not anything know we of your human state.
1818
1819 Hence thou canst understand, that wholly dead
1820 Will be our knowledge from the moment when
1821 The portal of the future shall be closed."
1822
1823 Then I, as if compunctious for my fault,
1824 Said: "Now, then, you will tell that fallen one,

1825 That still his son is with the living joined.
 1826
 1827 And if just now, in answering, I was dumb,
 1828 Tell him I did it because I was thinking
 1829 Already of the error you have solved me."
 1830
 1831 And now my Master was recalling me,
 1832 Wherefore more eagerly I prayed the spirit
 1833 That he would tell me who was with him there.
 1834
 1835 He said: "With more than a thousand here I lie;
 1836 Within here is the second Frederick,
 1837 And the Cardinal, and of the rest I speak not."
 1838
 1839 Thereon he hid himself; and I towards
 1840 The ancient poet turned my steps, reflecting
 1841 Upon that saying, which seemed hostile to me.
 1842
 1843 He moved along; and afterward thus going,
 1844 He said to me, "Why art thou so bewildered?"
 1845 And I in his inquiry satisfied him.
 1846
 1847 "Let memory preserve what thou hast heard
 1848 Against thyself," that Sage commanded me,
 1849 "And now attend here;" and he raised his finger.
 1850
 1851 "When thou shalt be before the radiance sweet
 1852 Of her whose beauteous eyes all things behold,
 1853 From her thou'lt know the journey of thy life."
 1854
 1855 Unto the left hand then he turned his feet;
 1856 We left the wall, and went towards the middle,
 1857 Along a path that strikes into a valley,
 1858
 1859 Which even up there unpleasant made its stench.
 1860
 1861
 1862
 1863 Inferno: Canto XI
 1864
 1865
 1866 Upon the margin of a lofty bank
 1867 Which great rocks broken in a circle made,
 1868 We came upon a still more cruel throng;
 1869
 1870 And there, by reason of the horrible
 1871 Excess of stench the deep abyss throws out,
 1872 We drew ourselves aside behind the cover
 1873
 1874 Of a great tomb, whereon I saw a writing,
 1875 Which said: "Pope Anastasius I hold,
 1876 Whom out of the right way Photinus drew."
 1877
 1878 "Slow it behoveth our descent to be,
 1879 So that the sense be first a little used
 1880 To the sad blast, and then we shall not heed it."
 1881

1882 The Master thus; and unto him I said,
1883 "Some compensation find, that the time pass not
1884 Idly;" and he: "Thou seest I think of that.
1885
1886 My son, upon the inside of these rocks,"
1887 Began he then to say, "are three small circles,
1888 From grade to grade, like those which thou art leaving.
1889
1890 They all are full of spirits maledict;
1891 But that hereafter sight alone suffice thee,
1892 Hear how and wherefore they are in constraint.
1893
1894 Of every malice that wins hate in Heaven,
1895 Injury is the end; and all such end
1896 Either by force or fraud afflicteth others.
1897
1898 But because fraud is man's peculiar vice,
1899 More it displeases God; and so stand lowest
1900 The fraudulent, and greater dole assails them.
1901
1902 All the first circle of the Violent is;
1903 But since force may be used against three persons,
1904 In three rounds 'tis divided and constructed.
1905
1906 To God, to ourselves, and to our neighbour can we
1907 Use force; I say on them and on their things,
1908 As thou shalt hear with reason manifest.
1909
1910 A death by violence, and painful wounds,
1911 Are to our neighbour given; and in his substance
1912 Ruin, and arson, and injurious levies;
1913
1914 Whence homicides, and he who smites unjustly,
1915 Marauders, and freebooters, the first round
1916 Tormenteth all in companies diverse.
1917
1918 Man may lay violent hands upon himself
1919 And his own goods; and therefore in the second
1920 Round must perforce without avail repent
1921
1922 Whoever of your world deprives himself,
1923 Who games, and dissipates his property,
1924 And weepeth there, where he should jocund be.
1925
1926 Violence can be done the Deity,
1927 In heart denying and blaspheming Him,
1928 And by disdaining Nature and her bounty.
1929
1930 And for this reason doth the smallest round
1931 Seal with its signet Sodom and Cahors,
1932 And who, disdaining God, speaks from the heart.
1933
1934 Fraud, wherewithal is every conscience stung,
1935 A man may practise upon him who trusts,
1936 And him who doth no confidence imburse.
1937
1938 This latter mode, it would appear, dissevers

1939 Only the bond of love which Nature makes;
1940 Wherefore within the second circle nestle
1941
1942 Hypocrisy, flattery, and who deals in magic,
1943 Falsification, theft, and simony,
1944 Pandors, and barrators, and the like filth.
1945
1946 By the other mode, forgotten is that love
1947 Which Nature makes, and what is after added,
1948 From which there is a special faith engendered.
1949
1950 Hence in the smallest circle, where the point is
1951 Of the Universe, upon which Dis is seated,
1952 Whoe'er betrays for ever is consumed."
1953
1954 And I: "My Master, clear enough proceeds
1955 Thy reasoning, and full well distinguishes
1956 This cavern and the people who possess it.
1957
1958 But tell me, those within the fat lagoon,
1959 Whom the wind drives, and whom the rain doth beat,
1960 And who encounter with such bitter tongues,
1961
1962 Wherefore are they inside of the red city
1963 Not punished, if God has them in his wrath,
1964 And if he has not, wherefore in such fashion?"
1965
1966 And unto me he said: "Why wanders so
1967 Thine intellect from that which it is wont?
1968 Or, sooth, thy mind where is it elsewhere looking?
1969
1970 Hast thou no recollection of those words
1971 With which thine Ethics thoroughly discusses
1972 The dispositions three, that Heaven abides not,--
1973
1974 Incontinence, and Malice, and insane
1975 Bestiality? and how Incontinence
1976 Less God offendeth, and less blame attracts?
1977
1978 If thou regardest this conclusion well,
1979 And to thy mind recallest who they are
1980 That up outside are undergoing penance,
1981
1982 Clearly wilt thou perceive why from these felons
1983 They separated are, and why less wroth
1984 Justice divine doth smite them with its hammer."
1985
1986 "O Sun, that healest all distempered vision,
1987 Thou dost content me so, when thou resolvest,
1988 That doubting pleases me no less than knowing!
1989
1990 Once more a little backward turn thee," said I,
1991 "There where thou sayest that usury offends
1992 Goodness divine, and disengage the knot."
1993
1994 "Philosophy," he said, "to him who heeds it,
1995 Noteth, not only in one place alone,

1996 After what manner Nature takes her course
 1997
 1998 From Intellect Divine, and from its art;
 1999 And if thy Physics carefully thou notest,
 2000 After not many pages shalt thou find,
 2001
 2002 That this your art as far as possible
 2003 Follows, as the disciple doth the master;
 2004 So that your art is, as it were, God's grandchild.
 2005
 2006 From these two, if thou bringest to thy mind
 2007 Genesis at the beginning, it behoves
 2008 Mankind to gain their life and to advance;
 2009
 2010 And since the usurer takes another way,
 2011 Nature herself and in her follower
 2012 Disdains he, for elsewhere he puts his hope.
 2013
 2014 But follow, now, as I would fain go on,
 2015 For quivering are the Fishes on the horizon,
 2016 And the Wain wholly over Caurus lies,
 2017
 2018 And far beyond there we descend the crag."
 2019
 2020
 2021
 2022 Inferno: Canto XII
 2023
 2024
 2025 The place where to descend the bank we came
 2026 Was alpine, and from what was there, moreover,
 2027 Of such a kind that every eye would shun it.
 2028
 2029 Such as that ruin is which in the flank
 2030 Smote, on this side of Trent, the Adige,
 2031 Either by earthquake or by failing stay,
 2032
 2033 For from the mountain's top, from which it moved,
 2034 Unto the plain the cliff is shattered so,
 2035 Some path 'twould give to him who was above;
 2036
 2037 Even such was the descent of that ravine,
 2038 And on the border of the broken chasm
 2039 The infamy of Crete was stretched along,
 2040
 2041 Who was conceived in the fictitious cow;
 2042 And when he us beheld, he bit himself,
 2043 Even as one whom anger racks within.
 2044
 2045 My Sage towards him shouted: "Peradventure
 2046 Thou think'st that here may be the Duke of Athens,
 2047 Who in the world above brought death to thee?
 2048
 2049 Get thee gone, beast, for this one cometh not
 2050 Instructed by thy sister, but he comes
 2051 In order to behold your punishments."
 2052

2053 As is that bull who breaks loose at the moment
2054 In which he has received the mortal blow,
2055 Who cannot walk, but staggers here and there,
2056
2057 The Minotaur beheld I do the like;
2058 And he, the wary, cried: "Run to the passage;
2059 While he wroth, 'tis well thou shouldst descend."
2060
2061 Thus down we took our way o'er that discharge
2062 Of stones, which oftentimes did move themselves
2063 Beneath my feet, from the unwonted burden.
2064
2065 Thoughtful I went; and he said: "Thou art thinking
2066 Perhaps upon this ruin, which is guarded
2067 By that brute anger which just now I quenched.
2068
2069 Now will I have thee know, the other time
2070 I here descended to the nether Hell,
2071 This precipice had not yet fallen down.
2072
2073 But truly, if I well discern, a little
2074 Before His coming who the mighty spoil
2075 Bore off from Dis, in the supernal circle,
2076
2077 Upon all sides the deep and loathsome valley
2078 Trembled so, that I thought the Universe
2079 Was thrilled with love, by which there are who think
2080
2081 The world oftentimes converted into chaos;
2082 And at that moment this primeval crag
2083 Both here and elsewhere made such overthrow.
2084
2085 But fix thine eyes below; for draweth near
2086 The river of blood, within which boiling is
2087 Whoe'er by violence doth injure others."
2088
2089 O blind cupidity, O wrath insane,
2090 That spurs us onward so in our short life,
2091 And in the eternal then so badly steeps us!
2092
2093 I saw an ample moat bent like a bow,
2094 As one which all the plain encompasses,
2095 Conformable to what my Guide had said.
2096
2097 And between this and the embankment's foot
2098 Centaurs in file were running, armed with arrows,
2099 As in the world they used the chase to follow.
2100
2101 Beholding us descend, each one stood still,
2102 And from the squadron three detached themselves,
2103 With bows and arrows in advance selected;
2104
2105 And from afar one cried: "Unto what torment
2106 Come ye, who down the hillside are descending?
2107 Tell us from there; if not, I draw the bow."
2108
2109 My Master said: "Our answer will we make

2110 To Chiron, near you there; in evil hour,
2111 That will of thine was evermore so hasty."
2112
2113 Then touched he me, and said: "This one is Nessus,
2114 Who perished for the lovely Dejanira,
2115 And for himself, himself did vengeance take.
2116
2117 And he in the midst, who at his breast is gazing,
2118 Is the great Chiron, who brought up Achilles;
2119 That other Pholus is, who was so wrathful.
2120
2121 Thousands and thousands go about the moat
2122 Shooting with shafts whatever soul emerges
2123 Out of the blood, more than his crime allots."
2124
2125 Near we approached unto those monsters fleet;
2126 Chiron an arrow took, and with the notch
2127 Backward upon his jaws he put his beard.
2128
2129 After he had uncovered his great mouth,
2130 He said to his companions: "Are you ware
2131 That he behind moveth whate'er he touches?
2132
2133 Thus are not wont to do the feet of dead men."
2134 And my good Guide, who now was at his breast,
2135 Where the two natures are together joined,
2136
2137 Replied: "Indeed he lives, and thus alone
2138 Me it behoves to show him the dark valley;
2139 Necessity, and not delight, impels us.
2140
2141 Some one withdrew from singing Halleluja,
2142 Who unto me committed this new office;
2143 No thief is he, nor I a thievish spirit.
2144
2145 But by that virtue through which I am moving
2146 My steps along this savage thoroughfare,
2147 Give us some one of thine, to be with us,
2148
2149 And who may show us where to pass the ford,
2150 And who may carry this one on his back;
2151 For 'tis no spirit that can walk the air."
2152
2153 Upon his right breast Chiron wheeled about,
2154 And said to Nessus: "Turn and do thou guide them,
2155 And warn aside, if other band may meet you."
2156
2157 We with our faithful escort onward moved
2158 Along the brink of the vermilion boiling,
2159 Wherein the boiled were uttering loud laments.
2160
2161 People I saw within up to the eyebrows,
2162 And the great Centaur said: "Tyrants are these,
2163 Who dealt in bloodshed and in pillaging.
2164
2165 Here they lament their pitiless mischiefs; here
2166 Is Alexander, and fierce Dionysius

2167 Who upon Sicily brought dolorous years.
 2168
 2169 That forehead there which has the hair so black
 2170 Is Azzolin; and the other who is blond,
 2171 Obizzo is of Esti, who, in truth,
 2172
 2173 Up in the world was by his stepson slain."
 2174 Then turned I to the Poet; and he said,
 2175 "Now he be first to thee, and second I."
 2176
 2177 A little farther on the Centaur stopped
 2178 Above a folk, who far down as the throat
 2179 Seemed from that boiling stream to issue forth.
 2180
 2181 A shade he showed us on one side alone,
 2182 Saying: "He cleft asunder in God's bosom
 2183 The heart that still upon the Thames is honoured."
 2184
 2185 Then people saw I, who from out the river
 2186 Lifted their heads and also all the chest;
 2187 And many among these I recognised.
 2188
 2189 Thus ever more and more grew shallower
 2190 That blood, so that the feet alone it covered;
 2191 And there across the moat our passage was.
 2192
 2193 "Even as thou here upon this side beholdest
 2194 The boiling stream, that aye diminishes,"
 2195 The Centaur said, "I wish thee to believe
 2196
 2197 That on this other more and more declines
 2198 Its bed, until it reunites itself
 2199 Where it behoveth tyranny to groan.
 2200
 2201 Justice divine, upon this side, is goading
 2202 That Attila, who was a scourge on earth,
 2203 And Pyrrhus, and Sextus; and for ever milks
 2204
 2205 The tears which with the boiling it unseals
 2206 In Rinier da Corneto and Rinier Pazzo,
 2207 Who made upon the highways so much war."
 2208
 2209 Then back he turned, and passed again the ford.
 2210
 2211
 2212
 2213 Inferno: Canto XIII
 2214
 2215
 2216 Not yet had Nessus reached the other side,
 2217 When we had put ourselves within a wood,
 2218 That was not marked by any path whatever.
 2219
 2220 Not foliage green, but of a dusky colour,
 2221 Not branches smooth, but gnarled and intertangled,
 2222 Not apple-trees were there, but thorns with poison.
 2223

2224 Such tangled thickets have not, nor so dense,
2225 Those savage wild beasts, that in hatred hold
2226 'Twixt Cecina and Corneto the tilled places.
2227
2228 There do the hideous Harpies make their nests,
2229 Who chased the Trojans from the Strophades,
2230 With sad announcement of impending doom;
2231
2232 Broad wings have they, and necks and faces human,
2233 And feet with claws, and their great bellies fledged;
2234 They make laments upon the wondrous trees.
2235
2236 And the good Master: "Ere thou enter farther,
2237 Know that thou art within the second round,"
2238 Thus he began to say, "and shalt be, till
2239
2240 Thou comest out upon the horrible sand;
2241 Therefore look well around, and thou shalt see
2242 Things that will credence give unto my speech."
2243
2244 I heard on all sides lamentations uttered,
2245 And person none beheld I who might make them,
2246 Whence, utterly bewildered, I stood still.
2247
2248 I think he thought that I perhaps might think
2249 So many voices issued through those trunks
2250 From people who concealed themselves from us;
2251
2252 Therefore the Master said: "If thou break off
2253 Some little spray from any of these trees,
2254 The thoughts thou hast will wholly be made vain."
2255
2256 Then stretched I forth my hand a little forward,
2257 And plucked a branchlet off from a great thorn;
2258 And the trunk cried, "Why dost thou mangle me?"
2259
2260 After it had become embrowned with blood,
2261 It recommenced its cry: "Why dost thou rend me?
2262 Hast thou no spirit of pity whatsoever?
2263
2264 Men once we were, and now are changed to trees;
2265 Indeed, thy hand should be more pitiful,
2266 Even if the souls of serpents we had been."
2267
2268 As out of a green brand, that is on fire
2269 At one of the ends, and from the other drips
2270 And hisses with the wind that is escaping;
2271
2272 So from that splinter issued forth together
2273 Both words and blood; whereat I let the tip
2274 Fall, and stood like a man who is afraid.
2275
2276 "Had he been able sooner to believe,"
2277 My Sage made answer, "O thou wounded soul,
2278 What only in my verses he has seen,
2279
2280 Not upon thee had he stretched forth his hand;

2281 Whereas the thing incredible has caused me
2282 To put him to an act which grieveth me.
2283
2284 But tell him who thou wast, so that by way
2285 Of some amends thy fame he may refresh
2286 Up in the world, to which he can return."
2287
2288 And the trunk said: "So thy sweet words allure me,
2289 I cannot silent be; and you be vexed not,
2290 That I a little to discourse am tempted.
2291
2292 I am the one who both keys had in keeping
2293 Of Frederick's heart, and turned them to and fro
2294 So softly in unlocking and in locking,
2295
2296 That from his secrets most men I withheld;
2297 Fidelity I bore the glorious office
2298 So great, I lost thereby my sleep and pulses.
2299
2300 The courtesan who never from the dwelling
2301 Of Caesar turned aside her strumpet eyes,
2302 Death universal and the vice of courts,
2303
2304 Inflamed against me all the other minds,
2305 And they, inflamed, did so inflame Augustus,
2306 That my glad honours turned to dismal mournings.
2307
2308 My spirit, in disdainful exultation,
2309 Thinking by dying to escape disdain,
2310 Made me unjust against myself, the just.
2311
2312 I, by the roots unwonted of this wood,
2313 Do swear to you that never broke I faith
2314 Unto my lord, who was so worthy of honour;
2315
2316 And to the world if one of you return,
2317 Let him my memory comfort, which is lying
2318 Still prostrate from the blow that envy dealt it."
2319
2320 Waited awhile, and then: "Since he is silent,"
2321 The Poet said to me, "lose not the time,
2322 But speak, and question him, if more may please thee."
2323
2324 Whence I to him: "Do thou again inquire
2325 Concerning what thou thinks't will satisfy me;
2326 For I cannot, such pity is in my heart."
2327
2328 Therefore he recommenced: "So may the man
2329 Do for thee freely what thy speech implores,
2330 Spirit incarcerate, again be pleased
2331
2332 To tell us in what way the soul is bound
2333 Within these knots; and tell us, if thou canst,
2334 If any from such members e'er is freed."
2335
2336 Then blew the trunk amain, and afterward
2337 The wind was into such a voice converted:

2338 "With brevity shall be replied to you.
2339
2340 When the exasperated soul abandons
2341 The body whence it rent itself away,
2342 Minos consigns it to the seventh abyss.
2343
2344 It falls into the forest, and no part
2345 Is chosen for it; but where Fortune hurls it,
2346 There like a grain of spelt it germinates.
2347
2348 It springs a sapling, and a forest tree;
2349 The Harpies, feeding then upon its leaves,
2350 Do pain create, and for the pain an outlet.
2351
2352 Like others for our spoils shall we return;
2353 But not that any one may them revest,
2354 For 'tis not just to have what one casts off.
2355
2356 Here we shall drag them, and along the dismal
2357 Forest our bodies shall suspended be,
2358 Each to the thorn of his molested shade."
2359
2360 We were attentive still unto the trunk,
2361 Thinking that more it yet might wish to tell us,
2362 When by a tumult we were overtaken,
2363
2364 In the same way as he is who perceives
2365 The boar and chase approaching to his stand,
2366 Who hears the crashing of the beasts and branches;
2367
2368 And two behold! upon our left-hand side,
2369 Naked and scratched, fleeing so furiously,
2370 That of the forest, every fan they broke.
2371
2372 He who was in advance: "Now help, Death, help!"
2373 And the other one, who seemed to lag too much,
2374 Was shouting: "Lano, were not so alert
2375
2376 Those legs of thine at joustings of the Toppo!"
2377 And then, perchance because his breath was failing,
2378 He grouped himself together with a bush.
2379
2380 Behind them was the forest full of black
2381 She-mastiffs, ravenous, and swift of foot
2382 As greyhounds, who are issuing from the chain.
2383
2384 On him who had crouched down they set their teeth,
2385 And him they lacerated piece by piece,
2386 Thereafter bore away those aching members.
2387
2388 Thereat my Escort took me by the hand,
2389 And led me to the bush, that all in vain
2390 Was weeping from its bloody lacerations.
2391
2392 "O Jacopo," it said, "of Sant' Andrea,
2393 What helped it thee of me to make a screen?
2394 What blame have I in thy nefarious life?"

2395
2396 When near him had the Master stayed his steps,
2397 He said: "Who wast thou, that through wounds so many
2398 Art blowing out with blood thy dolorous speech?"
2399
2400 And he to us: "O souls, that hither come
2401 To look upon the shameful massacre
2402 That has so rent away from me my leaves,
2403
2404 Gather them up beneath the dismal bush;
2405 I of that city was which to the Baptist
2406 Changed its first patron, wherefore he for this
2407
2408 Forever with his art will make it sad.
2409 And were it not that on the pass of Arno
2410 Some glimpses of him are remaining still,
2411
2412 Those citizens, who afterwards rebuilt it
2413 Upon the ashes left by Attila,
2414 In vain had caused their labour to be done.
2415
2416 Of my own house I made myself a gibbet."
2417
2418
2419
2420 Inferno: Canto XIV
2421
2422
2423 Because the charity of my native place
2424 Constrained me, gathered I the scattered leaves,
2425 And gave them back to him, who now was hoarse.
2426
2427 Then came we to the confine, where disparted
2428 The second round is from the third, and where
2429 A horrible form of Justice is beheld.
2430
2431 Clearly to manifest these novel things,
2432 I say that we arrived upon a plain,
2433 Which from its bed rejecteth every plant;
2434
2435 The dolorous forest is a garland to it
2436 All round about, as the sad moat to that;
2437 There close upon the edge we stayed our feet.
2438
2439 The soil was of an arid and thick sand,
2440 Not of another fashion made than that
2441 Which by the feet of Cato once was pressed.
2442
2443 Vengeance of God, O how much oughtest thou
2444 By each one to be dreaded, who doth read
2445 That which was manifest unto mine eyes!
2446
2447 Of naked souls beheld I many herds,
2448 Who all were weeping very miserably,
2449 And over them seemed set a law diverse.
2450
2451 Supine upon the ground some folk were lying;

2452 And some were sitting all drawn up together,
2453 And others went about continually.
2454
2455 Those who were going round were far the more,
2456 And those were less who lay down to their torment,
2457 But had their tongues more loosed to lamentation.
2458
2459 O'er all the sand-waste, with a gradual fall,
2460 Were raining down dilated flakes of fire,
2461 As of the snow on Alp without a wind.
2462
2463 As Alexander, in those torrid parts
2464 Of India, beheld upon his host
2465 Flames fall unbroken till they reached the ground.
2466
2467 Whence he provided with his phalanxes
2468 To trample down the soil, because the vapour
2469 Better extinguished was while it was single;
2470
2471 Thus was descending the eternal heat,
2472 Whereby the sand was set on fire, like tinder
2473 Beneath the steel, for doubling of the dole.
2474
2475 Without repose forever was the dance
2476 Of miserable hands, now there, now here,
2477 Shaking away from off them the fresh gleeds.
2478
2479 "Master," began I, "thou who overcomest
2480 All things except the demons dire, that issued
2481 Against us at the entrance of the gate,
2482
2483 Who is that mighty one who seems to heed not
2484 The fire, and lieth lowering and disdainful,
2485 So that the rain seems not to ripen him?"
2486
2487 And he himself, who had become aware
2488 That I was questioning my Guide about him,
2489 Cried: "Such as I was living, am I, dead.
2490
2491 If Jove should weary out his smith, from whom
2492 He seized in anger the sharp thunderbolt,
2493 Wherewith upon the last day I was smitten,
2494
2495 And if he wearied out by turns the others
2496 In Mongibello at the swarthy forge,
2497 Vociferating, 'Help, good Vulcan, help!'
2498
2499 Even as he did there at the fight of Phlegra,
2500 And shot his bolts at me with all his might,
2501 He would not have thereby a joyous vengeance."
2502
2503 Then did my Leader speak with such great force,
2504 That I had never heard him speak so loud:
2505 "O Capaneus, in that is not extinguished
2506
2507 Thine arrogance, thou punished art the more;
2508 Not any torment, saving thine own rage,

2509 Would be unto thy fury pain complete."
2510
2511 Then he turned round to me with better lip,
2512 Saying: "One of the Seven Kings was he
2513 Who Thebes besieged, and held, and seems to hold
2514
2515 God in disdain, and little seems to prize him;
2516 But, as I said to him, his own despites
2517 Are for his breast the fittest ornaments.
2518
2519 Now follow me, and mind thou do not place
2520 As yet thy feet upon the burning sand,
2521 But always keep them close unto the wood."
2522
2523 Speaking no word, we came to where there gushes
2524 Forth from the wood a little rivulet,
2525 Whose redness makes my hair still stand on end.
2526
2527 As from the Bulicame springs the brooklet,
2528 The sinful women later share among them,
2529 So downward through the sand it went its way.
2530
2531 The bottom of it, and both sloping banks,
2532 Were made of stone, and the margins at the side;
2533 Whence I perceived that there the passage was.
2534
2535 "In all the rest which I have shown to thee
2536 Since we have entered in within the gate
2537 Whose threshold unto no one is denied,
2538
2539 Nothing has been discovered by thine eyes
2540 So notable as is the present river,
2541 Which all the little flames above it quenches."
2542
2543 These words were of my Leader; whence I prayed him
2544 That he would give me largess of the food,
2545 For which he had given me largess of desire.
2546
2547 "In the mid-sea there sits a wasted land,"
2548 Said he thereafterward, "whose name is Crete,
2549 Under whose king the world of old was chaste.
2550
2551 There is a mountain there, that once was glad
2552 With waters and with leaves, which was called Ida;
2553 Now 'tis deserted, as a thing worn out.
2554
2555 Rhea once chose it for the faithful cradle
2556 Of her own son; and to conceal him better,
2557 Whene'er he cried, she there had clamours made.
2558
2559 A grand old man stands in the mount erect,
2560 Who holds his shoulders turned tow'rds Damietta,
2561 And looks at Rome as if it were his mirror.
2562
2563 His head is fashioned of refined gold,
2564 And of pure silver are the arms and breast;
2565 Then he is brass as far down as the fork.

2566
 2567 From that point downward all is chosen iron,
 2568 Save that the right foot is of kiln-baked clay,
 2569 And more he stands on that than on the other.
 2570
 2571 Each part, except the gold, is by a fissure
 2572 Asunder cleft, that dripping is with tears,
 2573 Which gathered together perforate that cavern.
 2574
 2575 From rock to rock they fall into this valley;
 2576 Acheron, Styx, and Phlegethon they form;
 2577 Then downward go along this narrow sluice
 2578
 2579 Unto that point where is no more descending.
 2580 They form Cocytus; what that pool may be
 2581 Thou shalt behold, so here 'tis not narrated."
 2582
 2583 And I to him: "If so the present runnel
 2584 Doth take its rise in this way from our world,
 2585 Why only on this verge appears it to us?"
 2586
 2587 And he to me: "Thou knowest the place is round,
 2588 And notwithstanding thou hast journeyed far,
 2589 Still to the left descending to the bottom,
 2590
 2591 Thou hast not yet through all the circle turned.
 2592 Therefore if something new appear to us,
 2593 It should not bring amazement to thy face."
 2594
 2595 And I again: "Master, where shall be found
 2596 Lethe and Phlegethon, for of one thou'rt silent,
 2597 And sayest the other of this rain is made?"
 2598
 2599 "In all thy questions truly thou dost please me,"
 2600 Replied he; "but the boiling of the red
 2601 Water might well solve one of them thou makest.
 2602
 2603 Thou shalt see Lethe, but outside this moat,
 2604 There where the souls repair to lave themselves,
 2605 When sin repented of has been removed."
 2606
 2607 Then said he: "It is time now to abandon
 2608 The wood; take heed that thou come after me;
 2609 A way the margins make that are not burning,
 2610
 2611 And over them all vapours are extinguished."
 2612
 2613
 2614
 2615 Inferno: Canto XV
 2616
 2617
 2618 Now bears us onward one of the hard margins,
 2619 And so the brooklet's mist o'ershadows it,
 2620 From fire it saves the water and the dikes.
 2621
 2622 Even as the Flemings, 'twixt Cadsand and Bruges,

2623 Fearing the flood that tow'rds them hurls itself,
 2624 Their bulwarks build to put the sea to flight;
 2625
 2626 And as the Paduans along the Brenta,
 2627 To guard their villas and their villages,
 2628 Or ever Chiarentana feel the heat;
 2629
 2630 In such similitude had those been made,
 2631 Albeit not so lofty nor so thick,
 2632 Whoever he might be, the master made them.
 2633
 2634 Now were we from the forest so remote,
 2635 I could not have discovered where it was,
 2636 Even if backward I had turned myself,
 2637
 2638 When we a company of souls encountered,
 2639 Who came beside the dike, and every one
 2640 Gazed at us, as at evening we are wont
 2641
 2642 To eye each other under a new moon,
 2643 And so towards us sharpened they their brows
 2644 As an old tailor at the needle's eye.
 2645
 2646 Thus scrutinised by such a family,
 2647 By some one I was recognised, who seized
 2648 My garment's hem, and cried out, "What a marvel!"
 2649
 2650 And I, when he stretched forth his arm to me,
 2651 On his baked aspect fastened so mine eyes,
 2652 That the scorched countenance prevented not
 2653
 2654 His recognition by my intellect;
 2655 And bowing down my face unto his own,
 2656 I made reply, "Are you here, Ser Brunetto?"
 2657
 2658 And he: "May't not displease thee, O my son,
 2659 If a brief space with thee Brunetto Latini
 2660 Backward return and let the trail go on."
 2661
 2662 I said to him: "With all my power I ask it;
 2663 And if you wish me to sit down with you,
 2664 I will, if he please, for I go with him."
 2665
 2666 "O son," he said, "whoever of this herd
 2667 A moment stops, lies then a hundred years,
 2668 Nor fans himself when smiteth him the fire.
 2669
 2670 Therefore go on; I at thy skirts will come,
 2671 And afterward will I rejoin my band,
 2672 Which goes lamenting its eternal doom."
 2673
 2674 I did not dare to go down from the road
 2675 Level to walk with him; but my head bowed
 2676 I held as one who goeth reverently.
 2677
 2678 And he began: "What fortune or what fate
 2679 Before the last day leadeth thee down here?

2680 And who is this that showeth thee the way?"
2681
2682 "Up there above us in the life serene,"
2683 I answered him, "I lost me in a valley,
2684 Or ever yet my age had been completed.
2685
2686 But yestermorn I turned my back upon it;
2687 This one appeared to me, returning thither,
2688 And homeward leadeth me along this road."
2689
2690 And he to me: "If thou thy star do follow,
2691 Thou canst not fail thee of a glorious port,
2692 If well I judged in the life beautiful.
2693
2694 And if I had not died so prematurely,
2695 Seeing Heaven thus benignant unto thee,
2696 I would have given thee comfort in the work.
2697
2698 But that ungrateful and malignant people,
2699 Which of old time from Fesole descended,
2700 And smacks still of the mountain and the granite,
2701
2702 Will make itself, for thy good deeds, thy foe;
2703 And it is right; for among crabbed sorbs
2704 It ill befits the sweet fig to bear fruit.
2705
2706 Old rumour in the world proclaims them blind;
2707 A people avaricious, envious, proud;
2708 Take heed that of their customs thou do cleanse thee.
2709
2710 Thy fortune so much honour doth reserve thee,
2711 One party and the other shall be hungry
2712 For thee; but far from goat shall be the grass.
2713
2714 Their litter let the beasts of Fesole
2715 Make of themselves, nor let them touch the plant,
2716 If any still upon their dunghill rise,
2717
2718 In which may yet revive the consecrated
2719 Seed of those Romans, who remained there when
2720 The nest of such great malice it became."
2721
2722 "If my entreaty wholly were fulfilled,"
2723 Replied I to him, "not yet would you be
2724 In banishment from human nature placed;
2725
2726 For in my mind is fixed, and touches now
2727 My heart the dear and good paternal image
2728 Of you, when in the world from hour to hour
2729
2730 You taught me how a man becomes eternal;
2731 And how much I am grateful, while I live
2732 Behoves that in my language be discerned.
2733
2734 What you narrate of my career I write,
2735 And keep it to be glossed with other text
2736 By a Lady who can do it, if I reach her.

2737
2738 This much will I have manifest to you;
2739 Provided that my conscience do not chide me,
2740 For whatsoever Fortune I am ready.
2741
2742 Such handsel is not new unto mine ears;
2743 Therefore let Fortune turn her wheel around
2744 As it may please her, and the churl his mattock."
2745
2746 My Master thereupon on his right cheek
2747 Did backward turn himself, and looked at me;
2748 Then said: "He listeneth well who noteth it."
2749
2750 Nor speaking less on that account, I go
2751 With Ser Brunetto, and I ask who are
2752 His most known and most eminent companions.
2753
2754 And he to me: "To know of some is well;
2755 Of others it were laudable to be silent,
2756 For short would be the time for so much speech.
2757
2758 Know them in sum, that all of them were clerks,
2759 And men of letters great and of great fame,
2760 In the world tainted with the selfsame sin.
2761
2762 Priscian goes yonder with that wretched crowd,
2763 And Francis of Accorso; and thou hadst seen there
2764 If thou hadst had a hankering for such scurf,
2765
2766 That one, who by the Servant of the Servants
2767 From Arno was transferred to Bacchiglione,
2768 Where he has left his sin-excited nerves.
2769
2770 More would I say, but coming and discoursing
2771 Can be no longer; for that I behold
2772 New smoke uprising yonder from the sand.
2773
2774 A people comes with whom I may not be;
2775 Commended unto thee be my Tesoro,
2776 In which I still live, and no more I ask."
2777
2778 Then he turned round, and seemed to be of those
2779 Who at Verona run for the Green Mantle
2780 Across the plain; and seemed to be among them
2781
2782 The one who wins, and not the one who loses.
2783
2784
2785
2786 Inferno: Canto XVI
2787
2788
2789 Now was I where was heard the reverberation
2790 Of water falling into the next round,
2791 Like to that humming which the beehives make,
2792
2793 When shadows three together started forth,

2794 Running, from out a company that passed
2795 Beneath the rain of the sharp martyrdom.
2796
2797 Towards us came they, and each one cried out:
2798 "Stop, thou; for by thy garb to us thou seemest
2799 To be some one of our depraved city."
2800
2801 Ah me! what wounds I saw upon their limbs,
2802 Recent and ancient by the flames burnt in!
2803 It pains me still but to remember it.
2804
2805 Unto their cries my Teacher paused attentive;
2806 He turned his face towards me, and "Now wait,"
2807 He said; "to these we should be courteous.
2808
2809 And if it were not for the fire that darts
2810 The nature of this region, I should say
2811 That haste were more becoming thee than them."
2812
2813 As soon as we stood still, they recommenced
2814 The old refrain, and when they overtook us,
2815 Formed of themselves a wheel, all three of them.
2816
2817 As champions stripped and oiled are wont to do,
2818 Watching for their advantage and their hold,
2819 Before they come to blows and thrusts between them,
2820
2821 Thus, wheeling round, did every one his visage
2822 Direct to me, so that in opposite wise
2823 His neck and feet continual journey made.
2824
2825 And, "If the misery of this soft place
2826 Bring in disdain ourselves and our entreaties,"
2827 Began one, "and our aspect black and blistered,
2828
2829 Let the renown of us thy mind incline
2830 To tell us who thou art, who thus securely
2831 Thy living feet dost move along through Hell.
2832
2833 He in whose footprints thou dost see me treading,
2834 Naked and skinless though he now may go,
2835 Was of a greater rank than thou dost think;
2836
2837 He was the grandson of the good Gualdrada;
2838 His name was Guidoguerra, and in life
2839 Much did he with his wisdom and his sword.
2840
2841 The other, who close by me treads the sand,
2842 Tegghiaio Aldobrandi is, whose fame
2843 Above there in the world should welcome be.
2844
2845 And I, who with them on the cross am placed,
2846 Jacopo Rusticucci was; and truly
2847 My savage wife, more than aught else, doth harm me."
2848
2849 Could I have been protected from the fire,
2850 Below I should have thrown myself among them,

2851 And think the Teacher would have suffered it;
2852
2853 But as I should have burned and baked myself,
2854 My terror overmastered my good will,
2855 Which made me greedy of embracing them.
2856
2857 Then I began: "Sorrow and not disdain
2858 Did your condition fix within me so,
2859 That tardily it wholly is stripped off,
2860
2861 As soon as this my Lord said unto me
2862 Words, on account of which I thought within me
2863 That people such as you are were approaching.
2864
2865 I of your city am; and evermore
2866 Your labours and your honourable names
2867 I with affection have retraced and heard.
2868
2869 I leave the gall, and go for the sweet fruits
2870 Promised to me by the veracious Leader;
2871 But to the centre first I needs must plunge."
2872
2873 "So may the soul for a long while conduct
2874 Those limbs of thine," did he make answer then,
2875 "And so may thy renown shine after thee,
2876
2877 Valour and courtesy, say if they dwell
2878 Within our city, as they used to do,
2879 Or if they wholly have gone out of it;
2880
2881 For Guglielmo Borsier, who is in torment
2882 With us of late, and goes there with his comrades,
2883 Doth greatly mortify us with his words."
2884
2885 "The new inhabitants and the sudden gains,
2886 Pride and extravagance have in thee engendered,
2887 Florence, so that thou weep'st thereat already!"
2888
2889 In this wise I exclaimed with face uplifted;
2890 And the three, taking that for my reply,
2891 Looked at each other, as one looks at truth.
2892
2893 "If other times so little it doth cost thee,"
2894 Replied they all, "to satisfy another,
2895 Happy art thou, thus speaking at thy will!
2896
2897 Therefore, if thou escape from these dark places,
2898 And come to behold the beauteous stars,
2899 When it shall pleasure thee to say, 'I was,'
2900
2901 See that thou speak of us unto the people."
2902 Then they broke up the wheel, and in their flight
2903 It seemed as if their agile legs were wings.
2904
2905 Not an Amen could possibly be said
2906 So rapidly as they had disappeared;
2907 Wherefore the Master deemed best to depart.

2908
2909 I followed him, and little had we gone,
2910 Before the sound of water was so near us,
2911 That speaking we should hardly have been heard.
2912
2913 Even as that stream which holdeth its own course
2914 The first from Monte Veso tow'rds the East,
2915 Upon the left-hand slope of Apennine,
2916
2917 Which is above called Acquacheta, ere
2918 It down descendeth into its low bed,
2919 And at Forli is vacant of that name,
2920
2921 Reverberates there above San Benedetto
2922 From Alps, by falling at a single leap,
2923 Where for a thousand there were room enough;
2924
2925 Thus downward from a bank precipitate,
2926 We found resounding that dark-tinted water,
2927 So that it soon the ear would have offended.
2928
2929 I had a cord around about me girt,
2930 And therewithal I whilom had designed
2931 To take the panther with the painted skin.
2932
2933 After I this had all from me unloosed,
2934 As my Conductor had commanded me,
2935 I reached it to him, gathered up and coiled,
2936
2937 Whereat he turned himself to the right side,
2938 And at a little distance from the verge,
2939 He cast it down into that deep abyss.
2940
2941 "It must needs be some novelty respond,"
2942 I said within myself, "to the new signal
2943 The Master with his eye is following so."
2944
2945 Ah me! how very cautious men should be
2946 With those who not alone behold the act,
2947 But with their wisdom look into the thoughts!
2948
2949 He said to me: "Soon there will upward come
2950 What I await; and what thy thought is dreaming
2951 Must soon reveal itself unto thy sight."
2952
2953 Aye to that truth which has the face of falsehood,
2954 A man should close his lips as far as may be,
2955 Because without his fault it causes shame;
2956
2957 But here I cannot; and, Reader, by the notes
2958 Of this my Comedy to thee I swear,
2959 So may they not be void of lasting favour,
2960
2961 Athwart that dense and darksome atmosphere
2962 I saw a figure swimming upward come,
2963 Marvellous unto every steadfast heart,
2964

2965 Even as he returns who goeth down
 2966 Sometimes to clear an anchor, which has grappled
 2967 Reef, or aught else that in the sea is hidden,
 2968
 2969 Who upward stretches, and draws in his feet.
 2970
 2971
 2972
 2973 Inferno: Canto XVII
 2974
 2975
 2976 "Behold the monster with the pointed tail,
 2977 Who cleaves the hills, and breaketh walls and weapons,
 2978 Behold him who infecteth all the world."
 2979
 2980 Thus unto me my Guide began to say,
 2981 And beckoned him that he should come to shore,
 2982 Near to the confine of the trodden marble;
 2983
 2984 And that uncleanly image of deceit
 2985 Came up and thrust ashore its head and bust,
 2986 But on the border did not drag its tail.
 2987
 2988 The face was as the face of a just man,
 2989 Its semblance outwardly was so benign,
 2990 And of a serpent all the trunk beside.
 2991
 2992 Two paws it had, hairy unto the armpits;
 2993 The back, and breast, and both the sides it had
 2994 Depicted o'er with nooses and with shields.
 2995
 2996 With colours more, groundwork or broidery
 2997 Never in cloth did Tartars make nor Turks,
 2998 Nor were such tissues by Arachne laid.
 2999
 3000 As sometimes wherries lie upon the shore,
 3001 That part are in the water, part on land;
 3002 And as among the guzzling Germans there,
 3003
 3004 The beaver plants himself to wage his war;
 3005 So that vile monster lay upon the border,
 3006 Which is of stone, and shutteth in the sand.
 3007
 3008 His tail was wholly quivering in the void,
 3009 Contorting upwards the envenomed fork,
 3010 That in the guise of scorpion armed its point.
 3011
 3012 The Guide said: "Now perforce must turn aside
 3013 Our way a little, even to that beast
 3014 Malevolent, that yonder coucheth him."
 3015
 3016 We therefore on the right side descended,
 3017 And made ten steps upon the outer verge,
 3018 Completely to avoid the sand and flame;
 3019
 3020 And after we are come to him, I see
 3021 A little farther off upon the sand

3022 A people sitting near the hollow place.
3023
3024 Then said to me the Master: "So that full
3025 Experience of this round thou bear away,
3026 Now go and see what their condition is.
3027
3028 There let thy conversation be concise;
3029 Till thou returnest I will speak with him,
3030 That he concede to us his stalwart shoulders."
3031
3032 Thus farther still upon the outermost
3033 Head of that seventh circle all alone
3034 I went, where sat the melancholy folk.
3035
3036 Out of their eyes was gushing forth their woe;
3037 This way, that way, they helped them with their hands
3038 Now from the flames and now from the hot soil.
3039
3040 Not otherwise in summer do the dogs,
3041 Now with the foot, now with the muzzle, when
3042 By fleas, or flies, or gadflies, they are bitten.
3043
3044 When I had turned mine eyes upon the faces
3045 Of some, on whom the dolorous fire is falling,
3046 Not one of them I knew; but I perceived
3047
3048 That from the neck of each there hung a pouch,
3049 Which certain colour had, and certain blazon;
3050 And thereupon it seems their eyes are feeding.
3051
3052 And as I gazing round me come among them,
3053 Upon a yellow pouch I azure saw
3054 That had the face and posture of a lion.
3055
3056 Proceeding then the current of my sight,
3057 Another of them saw I, red as blood,
3058 Display a goose more white than butter is.
3059
3060 And one, who with an azure sow and gravid
3061 Emblazoned had his little pouch of white,
3062 Said unto me: "What dost thou in this moat?
3063
3064 Now get thee gone; and since thou'rt still alive,
3065 Know that a neighbour of mine, Vitaliano,
3066 Will have his seat here on my left-hand side.
3067
3068 A Paduan am I with these Florentines;
3069 Full many a time they thunder in mine ears,
3070 Exclaiming, 'Come the sovereign cavalier,
3071
3072 He who shall bring the satchel with three goats;'"
3073 Then twisted he his mouth, and forth he thrust
3074 His tongue, like to an ox that licks its nose.
3075
3076 And fearing lest my longer stay might vex
3077 Him who had warned me not to tarry long,
3078 Backward I turned me from those weary souls.

3079
3080 I found my Guide, who had already mounted
3081 Upon the back of that wild animal,
3082 And said to me: "Now be both strong and bold.
3083
3084 Now we descend by stairways such as these;
3085 Mount thou in front, for I will be midway,
3086 So that the tail may have no power to harm thee."
3087
3088 Such as he is who has so near the ague
3089 Of quartan that his nails are blue already,
3090 And trembles all, but looking at the shade;
3091
3092 Even such became I at those proffered words;
3093 But shame in me his menaces produced,
3094 Which maketh servant strong before good master.
3095
3096 I seated me upon those monstrous shoulders;
3097 I wished to say, and yet the voice came not
3098 As I believed, "Take heed that thou embrace me."
3099
3100 But he, who other times had rescued me
3101 In other peril, soon as I had mounted,
3102 Within his arms encircled and sustained me,
3103
3104 And said: "Now, Geryon, bestir thyself;
3105 The circles large, and the descent be little;
3106 Think of the novel burden which thou hast."
3107
3108 Even as the little vessel shoves from shore,
3109 Backward, still backward, so he thence withdrew;
3110 And when he wholly felt himself afloat,
3111
3112 There where his breast had been he turned his tail,
3113 And that extended like an eel he moved,
3114 And with his paws drew to himself the air.
3115
3116 A greater fear I do not think there was
3117 What time abandoned Phaeton the reins,
3118 Whereby the heavens, as still appears, were scorched;
3119
3120 Nor when the wretched Icarus his flanks
3121 Felt stripped of feathers by the melting wax,
3122 His father crying, "An ill way thou takest!"
3123
3124 Than was my own, when I perceived myself
3125 On all sides in the air, and saw extinguished
3126 The sight of everything but of the monster.
3127
3128 Onward he goeth, swimming slowly, slowly;
3129 Wheels and descends, but I perceive it only
3130 By wind upon my face and from below.
3131
3132 I heard already on the right the whirlpool
3133 Making a horrible crashing under us;
3134 Whence I thrust out my head with eyes cast downward.
3135

3136 Then was I still more fearful of the abyss;
3137 Because I fires beheld, and heard laments,
3138 Whereat I, trembling, all the closer cling.
3139
3140 I saw then, for before I had not seen it,
3141 The turning and descending, by great horrors
3142 That were approaching upon divers sides.
3143
3144 As falcon who has long been on the wing,
3145 Who, without seeing either lure or bird,
3146 Maketh the falconer say, "Ah me, thou stoopest,"
3147
3148 Descendeth weary, whence he started swiftly,
3149 Thorough a hundred circles, and alights
3150 Far from his master, sullen and disdainful;
3151
3152 Even thus did Geryon place us on the bottom,
3153 Close to the bases of the rough-hewn rock,
3154 And being disencumbered of our persons,
3155
3156 He sped away as arrow from the string.
3157
3158
3159
3160 Inferno: Canto XVIII
3161
3162
3163 There is a place in Hell called Malebolge,
3164 Wholly of stone and of an iron colour,
3165 As is the circle that around it turns.
3166
3167 Right in the middle of the field malign
3168 There yawns a well exceeding wide and deep,
3169 Of which its place the structure will recount.
3170
3171 Round, then, is that enclosure which remains
3172 Between the well and foot of the high, hard bank,
3173 And has distinct in valleys ten its bottom.
3174
3175 As where for the protection of the walls
3176 Many and many moats surround the castles,
3177 The part in which they are a figure forms,
3178
3179 Just such an image those presented there;
3180 And as about such strongholds from their gates
3181 Unto the outer bank are little bridges,
3182
3183 So from the precipice's base did crags
3184 Project, which intersected dikes and moats,
3185 Unto the well that truncates and collects them.
3186
3187 Within this place, down shaken from the back
3188 Of Geryon, we found us; and the Poet
3189 Held to the left, and I moved on behind.
3190
3191 Upon my right hand I beheld new anguish,
3192 New torments, and new wielders of the lash,

3193 Wherewith the foremost Bolgia was replete.
3194
3195 Down at the bottom were the sinners naked;
3196 This side the middle came they facing us,
3197 Beyond it, with us, but with greater steps;
3198
3199 Even as the Romans, for the mighty host,
3200 The year of Jubilee, upon the bridge,
3201 Have chosen a mode to pass the people over;
3202
3203 For all upon one side towards the Castle
3204 Their faces have, and go unto St. Peter's;
3205 On the other side they go towards the Mountain.
3206
3207 This side and that, along the livid stone
3208 Beheld I horned demons with great scourges,
3209 Who cruelly were beating them behind.
3210
3211 Ah me! how they did make them lift their legs
3212 At the first blows! and sooth not any one
3213 The second waited for, nor for the third.
3214
3215 While I was going on, mine eyes by one
3216 Encountered were; and straight I said: "Already
3217 With sight of this one I am not unfed."
3218
3219 Therefore I stayed my feet to make him out,
3220 And with me the sweet Guide came to a stand,
3221 And to my going somewhat back assented;
3222
3223 And he, the scourged one, thought to hide himself,
3224 Lowering his face, but little it availed him;
3225 For said I: "Thou that castest down thine eyes,
3226
3227 If false are not the features which thou bearest,
3228 Thou art Venedico Caccianimico;
3229 But what doth bring thee to such pungent sauces?"
3230
3231 And he to me: "Unwillingly I tell it;
3232 But forces me thine utterance distinct,
3233 Which makes me recollect the ancient world.
3234
3235 I was the one who the fair Ghisola
3236 Induced to grant the wishes of the Marquis,
3237 Howe'er the shameless story may be told.
3238
3239 Not the sole Bolognese am I who weeps here;
3240 Nay, rather is this place so full of them,
3241 That not so many tongues to-day are taught
3242
3243 'Twixt Reno and Savena to say 'sipa';
3244 And if thereof thou wishest pledge or proof,
3245 Bring to thy mind our avaricious heart."
3246
3247 While speaking in this manner, with his scourge
3248 A demon smote him, and said: "Get thee gone
3249 Pander, there are no women here for coin."

3250
3251 I joined myself again unto mine Escort;
3252 Thereafterward with footsteps few we came
3253 To where a crag projected from the bank.
3254
3255 This very easily did we ascend,
3256 And turning to the right along its ridge,
3257 From those eternal circles we departed.
3258
3259 When we were there, where it is hollowed out
3260 Beneath, to give a passage to the scourged,
3261 The Guide said: "Wait, and see that on thee strike
3262
3263 The vision of those others evil-born,
3264 Of whom thou hast not yet beheld the faces,
3265 Because together with us they have gone."
3266
3267 From the old bridge we looked upon the train
3268 Which tow'rds us came upon the other border,
3269 And which the scourges in like manner smite.
3270
3271 And the good Master, without my inquiring,
3272 Said to me: "See that tall one who is coming,
3273 And for his pain seems not to shed a tear;
3274
3275 Still what a royal aspect he retains!
3276 That Jason is, who by his heart and cunning
3277 The Colchians of the Ram made destitute.
3278
3279 He by the isle of Lemnos passed along
3280 After the daring women pitiless
3281 Had unto death devoted all their males.
3282
3283 There with his tokens and with ornate words
3284 Did he deceive Hypsipyle, the maiden
3285 Who first, herself, had all the rest deceived.
3286
3287 There did he leave her pregnant and forlorn;
3288 Such sin unto such punishment condemns him,
3289 And also for Medea is vengeance done.
3290
3291 With him go those who in such wise deceive;
3292 And this sufficient be of the first valley
3293 To know, and those that in its jaws it holds."
3294
3295 We were already where the narrow path
3296 Crosses athwart the second dike, and forms
3297 Of that a buttress for another arch.
3298
3299 Thence we heard people, who are making moan
3300 In the next Bolgia, snorting with their muzzles,
3301 And with their palms beating upon themselves
3302
3303 The margins were incrustated with a mould
3304 By exhalation from below, that sticks there,
3305 And with the eyes and nostrils wages war.
3306

3307 The bottom is so deep, no place suffices
 3308 To give us sight of it, without ascending
 3309 The arch's back, where most the crag impends.
 3310
 3311 Thither we came, and thence down in the moat
 3312 I saw a people smothered in a filth
 3313 That out of human privies seemed to flow;
 3314
 3315 And whilst below there with mine eye I search,
 3316 I saw one with his head so foul with ordure,
 3317 It was not clear if he were clerk or layman.
 3318
 3319 He screamed to me: "Wherefore art thou so eager
 3320 To look at me more than the other foul ones?"
 3321 And I to him: "Because, if I remember,
 3322
 3323 I have already seen thee with dry hair,
 3324 And thou'rt Alessio Interminei of Lucca;
 3325 Therefore I eye thee more than all the others."
 3326
 3327 And he thereon, belabouring his pumpkin:
 3328 "The flatteries have submerged me here below,
 3329 Wherewith my tongue was never surfeited."
 3330
 3331 Then said to me the Guide: "See that thou thrust
 3332 Thy visage somewhat farther in advance,
 3333 That with thine eyes thou well the face attain
 3334
 3335 Of that uncleanly and dishevelled drab,
 3336 Who there doth scratch herself with filthy nails,
 3337 And crouches now, and now on foot is standing.
 3338
 3339 Thais the harlot is it, who replied
 3340 Unto her paramour, when he said, 'Have I
 3341 Great gratitude from thee?'--'Nay, marvellous;'
 3342
 3343 And herewith let our sight be satisfied."
 3344
 3345
 3346
 3347 Inferno: Canto XIX
 3348
 3349
 3350 O Simon Magus, O forlorn disciples,
 3351 Ye who the things of God, which ought to be
 3352 The brides of holiness, rapaciously
 3353
 3354 For silver and for gold do prostitute,
 3355 Now it behoves for you the trumpet sound,
 3356 Because in this third Bolgia ye abide.
 3357
 3358 We had already on the following tomb
 3359 Ascended to that portion of the crag
 3360 Which o'er the middle of the moat hangs plumb.
 3361
 3362 Wisdom supreme, O how great art thou showest
 3363 In heaven, in earth, and in the evil world,

3364 And with what justice doth thy power distribute!
3365
3366 I saw upon the sides and on the bottom
3367 The livid stone with perforations filled,
3368 All of one size, and every one was round.
3369
3370 To me less ample seemed they not, nor greater
3371 Than those that in my beautiful Saint John
3372 Are fashioned for the place of the baptisers,
3373
3374 And one of which, not many years ago,
3375 I broke for some one, who was drowning in it;
3376 Be this a seal all men to undeceive.
3377
3378 Out of the mouth of each one there protruded
3379 The feet of a transgressor, and the legs
3380 Up to the calf, the rest within remained.
3381
3382 In all of them the soles were both on fire;
3383 Wherefore the joints so violently quivered,
3384 They would have snapped asunder withes and bands.
3385
3386 Even as the flame of unctuous things is wont
3387 To move upon the outer surface only,
3388 So likewise was it there from heel to point.
3389
3390 "Master, who is that one who writhes himself,
3391 More than his other comrades quivering,"
3392 I said, "and whom a redder flame is sucking?"
3393
3394 And he to me: "If thou wilt have me bear thee
3395 Down there along that bank which lowest lies,
3396 From him thou'lt know his errors and himself."
3397
3398 And I: "What pleases thee, to me is pleasing;
3399 Thou art my Lord, and knowest that I depart not
3400 From thy desire, and knowest what is not spoken."
3401
3402 Straightway upon the fourth dike we arrived;
3403 We turned, and on the left-hand side descended
3404 Down to the bottom full of holes and narrow.
3405
3406 And the good Master yet from off his haunch
3407 Deposed me not, till to the hole he brought me
3408 Of him who so lamented with his shanks.
3409
3410 "Whoe'er thou art, that standest upside down,
3411 O doleful soul, implanted like a stake,"
3412 To say began I, "if thou canst, speak out."
3413
3414 I stood even as the friar who is confessing
3415 The false assassin, who, when he is fixed,
3416 Recalls him, so that death may be delayed.
3417
3418 And he cried out: "Dost thou stand there already,
3419 Dost thou stand there already, Boniface?
3420 By many years the record lied to me.

3421
3422 Art thou so early satiate with that wealth,
3423 For which thou didst not fear to take by fraud
3424 The beautiful Lady, and then work her woe?"
3425
3426 Such I became, as people are who stand,
3427 Not comprehending what is answered them,
3428 As if bemocked, and know not how to answer.
3429
3430 Then said Virgilius: "Say to him straightway,
3431 'I am not he, I am not he thou thinkest.'"
3432 And I replied as was imposed on me.
3433
3434 Whereat the spirit writhed with both his feet,
3435 Then, sighing, with a voice of lamentation
3436 Said to me: "Then what wantest thou of me?
3437
3438 If who I am thou carest so much to know,
3439 That thou on that account hast crossed the bank,
3440 Know that I vested was with the great mantle;
3441
3442 And truly was I son of the She-bear,
3443 So eager to advance the cubs, that wealth
3444 Above, and here myself, I pocketed.
3445
3446 Beneath my head the others are dragged down
3447 Who have preceded me in simony,
3448 Flattened along the fissure of the rock.
3449
3450 Below there I shall likewise fall, whenever
3451 That one shall come who I believed thou wast,
3452 What time the sudden question I proposed.
3453
3454 But longer I my feet already toast,
3455 And here have been in this way upside down,
3456 Than he will planted stay with reddened feet;
3457
3458 For after him shall come of fouler deed
3459 From tow'rds the west a Pastor without law,
3460 Such as befits to cover him and me.
3461
3462 New Jason will he be, of whom we read
3463 In Maccabees; and as his king was pliant,
3464 So he who governs France shall be to this one."
3465
3466 I do not know if I were here too bold,
3467 That him I answered only in this metre:
3468 "I pray thee tell me now how great a treasure
3469
3470 Our Lord demanded of Saint Peter first,
3471 Before he put the keys into his keeping?
3472 Truly he nothing asked but 'Follow me.'
3473
3474 Nor Peter nor the rest asked of Matthias
3475 Silver or gold, when he by lot was chosen
3476 Unto the place the guilty soul had lost.
3477

3478 Therefore stay here, for thou art justly punished,
 3479 And keep safe guard o'er the ill-gotten money,
 3480 Which caused thee to be valiant against Charles.
 3481
 3482 And were it not that still forbids it me
 3483 The reverence for the keys superlative
 3484 Thou hadst in keeping in the gladsome life,
 3485
 3486 I would make use of words more grievous still;
 3487 Because your avarice afflicts the world,
 3488 Trampling the good and lifting the depraved.
 3489
 3490 The Evangelist you Pastors had in mind,
 3491 When she who sitteth upon many waters
 3492 To fornicate with kings by him was seen;
 3493
 3494 The same who with the seven heads was born,
 3495 And power and strength from the ten horns received,
 3496 So long as virtue to her spouse was pleasing.
 3497
 3498 Ye have made yourselves a god of gold and silver;
 3499 And from the idolater how differ ye,
 3500 Save that he one, and ye a hundred worship?
 3501
 3502 Ah, Constantine! of how much ill was mother,
 3503 Not thy conversion, but that marriage dower
 3504 Which the first wealthy Father took from thee!"
 3505
 3506 And while I sang to him such notes as these,
 3507 Either that anger or that conscience stung him,
 3508 He struggled violently with both his feet.
 3509
 3510 I think in sooth that it my Leader pleased,
 3511 With such contented lip he listened ever
 3512 Unto the sound of the true words expressed.
 3513
 3514 Therefore with both his arms he took me up,
 3515 And when he had me all upon his breast,
 3516 Remounted by the way where he descended.
 3517
 3518 Nor did he tire to have me clasped to him;
 3519 But bore me to the summit of the arch
 3520 Which from the fourth dike to the fifth is passage.
 3521
 3522 There tenderly he laid his burden down,
 3523 Tenderly on the crag uneven and steep,
 3524 That would have been hard passage for the goats:
 3525
 3526 Thence was unveiled to me another valley.
 3527
 3528
 3529
 3530 Inferno: Canto XX
 3531
 3532
 3533 Of a new pain behoves me to make verses
 3534 And give material to the twentieth canto

3535 Of the first song, which is of the submerged.
3536
3537 I was already thoroughly disposed
3538 To peer down into the uncovered depth,
3539 Which bathed itself with tears of agony;
3540
3541 And people saw I through the circular valley,
3542 Silent and weeping, coming at the pace
3543 Which in this world the Litanies assume.
3544
3545 As lower down my sight descended on them,
3546 Wondrously each one seemed to be distorted
3547 From chin to the beginning of the chest;
3548
3549 For tow'rds the reins the countenance was turned,
3550 And backward it behoved them to advance,
3551 As to look forward had been taken from them.
3552
3553 Perchance indeed by violence of palsy
3554 Some one has been thus wholly turned awry;
3555 But I ne'er saw it, nor believe it can be.
3556
3557 As God may let thee, Reader, gather fruit
3558 From this thy reading, think now for thyself
3559 How I could ever keep my face unmoistened,
3560
3561 When our own image near me I beheld
3562 Distorted so, the weeping of the eyes
3563 Along the fissure bathed the hinder parts.
3564
3565 Truly I wept, leaning upon a peak
3566 Of the hard crag, so that my Escort said
3567 To me: "Art thou, too, of the other fools?
3568
3569 Here pity lives when it is wholly dead;
3570 Who is a greater reprobate than he
3571 Who feels compassion at the doom divine?
3572
3573 Lift up, lift up thy head, and see for whom
3574 Opened the earth before the Thebans' eyes;
3575 Wherefore they all cried: 'Whither rushest thou,
3576
3577 Amphiaraus? Why dost leave the war?'
3578 And downward ceased he not to fall amain
3579 As far as Minos, who lays hold on all.
3580
3581 See, he has made a bosom of his shoulders!
3582 Because he wished to see too far before him
3583 Behind he looks, and backward goes his way:
3584
3585 Behold Tiresias, who his semblance changed,
3586 When from a male a female he became,
3587 His members being all of them transformed;
3588
3589 And afterwards was forced to strike once more
3590 The two entangled serpents with his rod,
3591 Ere he could have again his manly plumes.

3592
3593 That Aruns is, who backs the other's belly,
3594 Who in the hills of Luni, there where grubs
3595 The Carrarese who houses underneath,
3596
3597 Among the marbles white a cavern had
3598 For his abode; whence to behold the stars
3599 And sea, the view was not cut off from him.
3600
3601 And she there, who is covering up her breasts,
3602 Which thou beholdest not, with loosened tresses,
3603 And on that side has all the hairy skin,
3604
3605 Was Manto, who made quest through many lands,
3606 Afterwards tarried there where I was born;
3607 Whereof I would thou list to me a little.
3608
3609 After her father had from life departed,
3610 And the city of Bacchus had become enslaved,
3611 She a long season wandered through the world.
3612
3613 Above in beauteous Italy lies a lake
3614 At the Alp's foot that shuts in Germany
3615 Over Tyrol, and has the name Benaco.
3616
3617 By a thousand springs, I think, and more, is bathed,
3618 'Twixt Garda and Val Camonica, Pennino,
3619 With water that grows stagnant in that lake.
3620
3621 Midway a place is where the Trentine Pastor,
3622 And he of Brescia, and the Veronese
3623 Might give his blessing, if he passed that way.
3624
3625 Sitteth Peschiera, fortress fair and strong,
3626 To front the Brescians and the Bergamasks,
3627 Where round about the bank descendeth lowest.
3628
3629 There of necessity must fall whatever
3630 In bosom of Benaco cannot stay,
3631 And grows a river down through verdant pastures.
3632
3633 Soon as the water doth begin to run,
3634 No more Benaco is it called, but Mincio,
3635 Far as Governo, where it falls in Po.
3636
3637 Not far it runs before it finds a plain
3638 In which it spreads itself, and makes it marshy,
3639 And oft 'tis wont in summer to be sickly.
3640
3641 Passing that way the virgin pitiless
3642 Land in the middle of the fen descried,
3643 Untilled and naked of inhabitants;
3644
3645 There to escape all human intercourse,
3646 She with her servants stayed, her arts to practise
3647 And lived, and left her empty body there.
3648

3649 The men, thereafter, who were scattered round,
3650 Collected in that place, which was made strong
3651 By the lagoon it had on every side;
3652
3653 They built their city over those dead bones,
3654 And, after her who first the place selected,
3655 Mantua named it, without other omen.
3656
3657 Its people once within more crowded were,
3658 Ere the stupidity of Casalodi
3659 From Pinamonte had received deceit.
3660
3661 Therefore I caution thee, if e'er thou hearest
3662 Originate my city otherwise,
3663 No falsehood may the verity defraud."
3664
3665 And I: "My Master, thy discourses are
3666 To me so certain, and so take my faith,
3667 That unto me the rest would be spent coals.
3668
3669 But tell me of the people who are passing,
3670 If any one note-worthy thou beholdest,
3671 For only unto that my mind reverts."
3672
3673 Then said he to me: "He who from the cheek
3674 Thrusts out his beard upon his swarthy shoulders
3675 Was, at the time when Greece was void of males,
3676
3677 So that there scarce remained one in the cradle,
3678 An augur, and with Calchas gave the moment,
3679 In Aulis, when to sever the first cable.
3680
3681 Eryphylus his name was, and so sings
3682 My lofty Tragedy in some part or other;
3683 That knowest thou well, who knowest the whole of it.
3684
3685 The next, who is so slender in the flanks,
3686 Was Michael Scott, who of a verity
3687 Of magical illusions knew the game.
3688
3689 Behold Guido Bonatti, behold Asdente,
3690 Who now unto his leather and his thread
3691 Would fain have stuck, but he too late repents.
3692
3693 Behold the wretched ones, who left the needle,
3694 The spool and rock, and made them fortune-tellers;
3695 They wrought their magic spells with herb and image.
3696
3697 But come now, for already holds the confines
3698 Of both the hemispheres, and under Seville
3699 Touches the ocean-wave, Cain and the thorns,
3700
3701 And yesternight the moon was round already;
3702 Thou shouldst remember well it did not harm thee
3703 From time to time within the forest deep."
3704
3705 Thus spake he to me, and we walked the while.

3706
3707
3708
3709 Inferno: Canto XXI
3710
3711
3712 From bridge to bridge thus, speaking other things
3713 Of which my Comedy cares not to sing,
3714 We came along, and held the summit, when
3715
3716 We halted to behold another fissure
3717 Of Malebolge and other vain laments;
3718 And I beheld it marvellously dark.
3719
3720 As in the Arsenal of the Venetians
3721 Boils in the winter the tenacious pitch
3722 To smear their unsound vessels o'er again,
3723
3724 For sail they cannot; and instead thereof
3725 One makes his vessel new, and one recaulks
3726 The ribs of that which many a voyage has made;
3727
3728 One hammers at the prow, one at the stern,
3729 This one makes oars, and that one cordage twists,
3730 Another mends the mainsail and the mizzen;
3731
3732 Thus, not by fire, but by the art divine,
3733 Was boiling down below there a dense pitch
3734 Which upon every side the bank belimed.
3735
3736 I saw it, but I did not see within it
3737 Aught but the bubbles that the boiling raised,
3738 And all swell up and resubside compressed.
3739
3740 The while below there fixedly I gazed,
3741 My Leader, crying out: "Beware, beware!"
3742 Drew me unto himself from where I stood.
3743
3744 Then I turned round, as one who is impatient
3745 To see what it behoves him to escape,
3746 And whom a sudden terror doth unman,
3747
3748 Who, while he looks, delays not his departure;
3749 And I beheld behind us a black devil,
3750 Running along upon the crag, approach.
3751
3752 Ah, how ferocious was he in his aspect!
3753 And how he seemed to me in action ruthless,
3754 With open wings and light upon his feet!
3755
3756 His shoulders, which sharp-pointed were and high,
3757 A sinner did encumber with both haunches,
3758 And he held clutched the sinews of the feet.
3759
3760 From off our bridge, he said: "O Malebranche,
3761 Behold one of the elders of Saint Zita;
3762 Plunge him beneath, for I return for others

3763
3764 Unto that town, which is well furnished with them.
3765 All there are barrators, except Bonturo;
3766 No into Yes for money there is changed."
3767
3768 He hurled him down, and over the hard crag
3769 Turned round, and never was a mastiff loosened
3770 In so much hurry to pursue a thief.
3771
3772 The other sank, and rose again face downward;
3773 But the demons, under cover of the bridge,
3774 Cried: "Here the Santo Volto has no place!
3775
3776 Here swims one otherwise than in the Serchio;
3777 Therefore, if for our gaffs thou wishest not,
3778 Do not uplift thyself above the pitch."
3779
3780 They seized him then with more than a hundred rakes;
3781 They said: "It here behoves thee to dance covered,
3782 That, if thou canst, thou secretly mayest pilfer."
3783
3784 Not otherwise the cooks their scullions make
3785 Immerse into the middle of the caldron
3786 The meat with hooks, so that it may not float.
3787
3788 Said the good Master to me: "That it be not
3789 Apparent thou art here, crouch thyself down
3790 Behind a jag, that thou mayest have some screen;
3791
3792 And for no outrage that is done to me
3793 Be thou afraid, because these things I know,
3794 For once before was I in such a scuffle."
3795
3796 Then he passed on beyond the bridge's head,
3797 And as upon the sixth bank he arrived,
3798 Need was for him to have a steadfast front.
3799
3800 With the same fury, and the same uproar,
3801 As dogs leap out upon a mendicant,
3802 Who on a sudden begs, where'er he stops,
3803
3804 They issued from beneath the little bridge,
3805 And turned against him all their grappling-irons;
3806 But he cried out: "Be none of you malignant!
3807
3808 Before those hooks of yours lay hold of me,
3809 Let one of you step forward, who may hear me,
3810 And then take counsel as to grappling me."
3811
3812 They all cried out: "Let Malacoda go;"
3813 Whereat one started, and the rest stood still,
3814 And he came to him, saying: "What avails it?"
3815
3816 "Thinkest thou, Malacoda, to behold me
3817 Advanced into this place," my Master said,
3818 "Safe hitherto from all your skill of fence,
3819

3820 Without the will divine, and fate auspicious?
3821 Let me go on, for it in Heaven is willed
3822 That I another show this savage road."
3823
3824 Then was his arrogance so humbled in him,
3825 That he let fall his grapnel at his feet,
3826 And to the others said: "Now strike him not."
3827
3828 And unto me my Guide: "O thou, who sittest
3829 Among the splinters of the bridge crouched down,
3830 Securely now return to me again."
3831
3832 Wherefore I started and came swiftly to him;
3833 And all the devils forward thrust themselves,
3834 So that I feared they would not keep their compact.
3835
3836 And thus beheld I once afraid the soldiers
3837 Who issued under safeguard from Caprona,
3838 Seeing themselves among so many foes.
3839
3840 Close did I press myself with all my person
3841 Beside my Leader, and turned not mine eyes
3842 From off their countenance, which was not good.
3843
3844 They lowered their rakes, and "Wilt thou have me hit him,"
3845 They said to one another, "on the rump?"
3846 And answered: "Yes; see that thou nick him with it."
3847
3848 But the same demon who was holding parley
3849 With my Conductor turned him very quickly,
3850 And said: "Be quiet, be quiet, Scarmiglione;"
3851
3852 Then said to us: "You can no farther go
3853 Forward upon this crag, because is lying
3854 All shattered, at the bottom, the sixth arch.
3855
3856 And if it still doth please you to go onward,
3857 Pursue your way along upon this rock;
3858 Near is another crag that yields a path.
3859
3860 Yesterday, five hours later than this hour,
3861 One thousand and two hundred sixty-six
3862 Years were complete, that here the way was broken.
3863
3864 I send in that direction some of mine
3865 To see if any one doth air himself;
3866 Go ye with them; for they will not be vicious.
3867
3868 Step forward, Alichino and Calcabrina,"
3869 Began he to cry out, "and thou, Cagnazzo;
3870 And Barbariccia, do thou guide the ten.
3871
3872 Come forward, Libicocco and Draghignazzo,
3873 And tusked Ciriatto and Graffiacane,
3874 And Farfarello and mad Rubicante;
3875
3876 Search ye all round about the boiling pitch;

3877 Let these be safe as far as the next crag,
 3878 That all unbroken passes o'er the dens."
 3879
 3880 "O me! what is it, Master, that I see?
 3881 Pray let us go," I said, "without an escort,
 3882 If thou knowest how, since for myself I ask none.
 3883
 3884 If thou art as observant as thy wont is,
 3885 Dost thou not see that they do gnash their teeth,
 3886 And with their brows are threatening woe to us?"
 3887
 3888 And he to me: "I will not have thee fear;
 3889 Let them gnash on, according to their fancy,
 3890 Because they do it for those boiling wretches."
 3891
 3892 Along the left-hand dike they wheeled about;
 3893 But first had each one thrust his tongue between
 3894 His teeth towards their leader for a signal;
 3895
 3896 And he had made a trumpet of his rump.
 3897
 3898
 3899
 3900 Inferno: Canto XXII
 3901
 3902
 3903 I have erewhile seen horsemen moving camp,
 3904 Begin the storming, and their muster make,
 3905 And sometimes starting off for their escape;
 3906
 3907 Vaunt-couriers have I seen upon your land,
 3908 O Aretines, and foragers go forth,
 3909 Tournaments stricken, and the joustings run,
 3910
 3911 Sometimes with trumpets and sometimes with bells,
 3912 With kettle-drums, and signals of the castles,
 3913 And with our own, and with outlandish things,
 3914
 3915 But never yet with bagpipe so uncouth
 3916 Did I see horsemen move, nor infantry,
 3917 Nor ship by any sign of land or star.
 3918
 3919 We went upon our way with the ten demons;
 3920 Ah, savage company! but in the church
 3921 With saints, and in the tavern with the gluttons!
 3922
 3923 Ever upon the pitch was my intent,
 3924 To see the whole condition of that Bolgia,
 3925 And of the people who therein were burned.
 3926
 3927 Even as the dolphins, when they make a sign
 3928 To mariners by arching of the back,
 3929 That they should counsel take to save their vessel,
 3930
 3931 Thus sometimes, to alleviate his pain,
 3932 One of the sinners would display his back,
 3933 And in less time conceal it than it lightens.

3934
3935 As on the brink of water in a ditch
3936 The frogs stand only with their muzzles out,
3937 So that they hide their feet and other bulk,
3938
3939 So upon every side the sinners stood;
3940 But ever as Barbariccia near them came,
3941 Thus underneath the boiling they withdrew.
3942
3943 I saw, and still my heart doth shudder at it,
3944 One waiting thus, even as it comes to pass
3945 One frog remains, and down another dives;
3946
3947 And Graffiacan, who most confronted him,
3948 Grappled him by his tresses smeared with pitch,
3949 And drew him up, so that he seemed an otter.
3950
3951 I knew, before, the names of all of them,
3952 So had I noted them when they were chosen,
3953 And when they called each other, listened how.
3954
3955 "O Rubicante, see that thou do lay
3956 Thy claws upon him, so that thou mayst flay him,"
3957 Cried all together the accursed ones.
3958
3959 And I: "My Master, see to it, if thou canst,
3960 That thou mayst know who is the luckless wight,
3961 Thus come into his adversaries' hands."
3962
3963 Near to the side of him my Leader drew,
3964 Asked of him whence he was; and he replied:
3965 "I in the kingdom of Navarre was born;
3966
3967 My mother placed me servant to a lord,
3968 For she had borne me to a ribald knave,
3969 Destroyer of himself and of his things.
3970
3971 Then I domestic was of good King Thibault;
3972 I set me there to practise barratry,
3973 For which I pay the reckoning in this heat."
3974
3975 And Ciriatto, from whose mouth projected,
3976 On either side, a tusk, as in a boar,
3977 Caused him to feel how one of them could rip.
3978
3979 Among malicious cats the mouse had come;
3980 But Barbariccia clasped him in his arms,
3981 And said: "Stand ye aside, while I enfork him."
3982
3983 And to my Master he turned round his head;
3984 "Ask him again," he said, "if more thou wish
3985 To know from him, before some one destroy him."
3986
3987 The Guide: "Now tell then of the other culprits;
3988 Knowest thou any one who is a Latian,
3989 Under the pitch?" And he: "I separated
3990

3991 Lately from one who was a neighbour to it;
3992 Would that I still were covered up with him,
3993 For I should fear not either claw nor hook!"
3994
3995 And Libicocco: "We have borne too much;"
3996 And with his grapnel seized him by the arm,
3997 So that, by rending, he tore off a tendon.
3998
3999 Eke Draghignazzo wished to pounce upon him
4000 Down at the legs; whence their Decurion
4001 Turned round and round about with evil look.
4002
4003 When they again somewhat were pacified,
4004 Of him, who still was looking at his wound,
4005 Demanded my Conductor without stay:
4006
4007 "Who was that one, from whom a luckless parting
4008 Thou sayest thou hast made, to come ashore?"
4009 And he replied: "It was the Friar Gomita,
4010
4011 He of Gallura, vessel of all fraud,
4012 Who had the enemies of his Lord in hand,
4013 And dealt so with them each exults thereat;
4014
4015 Money he took, and let them smoothly off,
4016 As he says; and in other offices
4017 A barrator was he, not mean but sovereign.
4018
4019 Foregathers with him one Don Michael Zanche
4020 Of Logodoro; and of Sardinia
4021 To gossip never do their tongues feel tired.
4022
4023 O me! see that one, how he grinds his teeth;
4024 Still farther would I speak, but am afraid
4025 Lest he to scratch my itch be making ready."
4026
4027 And the grand Provost, turned to Farfarello,
4028 Who rolled his eyes about as if to strike,
4029 Said: "Stand aside there, thou malicious bird."
4030
4031 "If you desire either to see or hear,"
4032 The terror-stricken recommenced thereon,
4033 "Tuscan or Lombards, I will make them come.
4034
4035 But let the Malebranche cease a little,
4036 So that these may not their revenges fear,
4037 And I, down sitting in this very place,
4038
4039 For one that I am will make seven come,
4040 When I shall whistle, as our custom is
4041 To do whenever one of us comes out."
4042
4043 Cagnazzo at these words his muzzle lifted,
4044 Shaking his head, and said: "Just hear the trick
4045 Which he has thought of, down to throw himself!"
4046
4047 Whence he, who snares in great abundance had,

4048 Responded: "I by far too cunning am,
4049 When I procure for mine a greater sadness."
4050
4051 Alichin held not in, but running counter
4052 Unto the rest, said to him: "If thou dive,
4053 I will not follow thee upon the gallop,
4054
4055 But I will beat my wings above the pitch;
4056 The height be left, and be the bank a shield
4057 To see if thou alone dost countervail us."
4058
4059 O thou who readest, thou shalt hear new sport!
4060 Each to the other side his eyes averted;
4061 He first, who most reluctant was to do it.
4062
4063 The Navarrese selected well his time;
4064 Planted his feet on land, and in a moment
4065 Leaped, and released himself from their design.
4066
4067 Whereat each one was suddenly stung with shame,
4068 But he most who was cause of the defeat;
4069 Therefore he moved, and cried: "Thou art o'ertakern."
4070
4071 But little it availed, for wings could not
4072 Outstrip the fear; the other one went under,
4073 And, flying, upward he his breast directed;
4074
4075 Not otherwise the duck upon a sudden
4076 Dives under, when the falcon is approaching,
4077 And upward he returneth cross and weary.
4078
4079 Infuriate at the mockery, Calcabrina
4080 Flying behind him followed close, desirous
4081 The other should escape, to have a quarrel.
4082
4083 And when the barrator had disappeared,
4084 He turned his talons upon his companion,
4085 And grappled with him right above the moat.
4086
4087 But sooth the other was a doughty sparrowhawk
4088 To clapperclaw him well; and both of them
4089 Fell in the middle of the boiling pond.
4090
4091 A sudden intercessor was the heat;
4092 But ne'ertheless of rising there was naught,
4093 To such degree they had their wings belimed.
4094
4095 Lamenting with the others, Barbariccia
4096 Made four of them fly to the other side
4097 With all their gaffs, and very speedily
4098
4099 This side and that they to their posts descended;
4100 They stretched their hooks towards the pitch-ensnared,
4101 Who were already baked within the crust,
4102
4103 And in this manner busied did we leave them.
4104

4105
 4106
 4107 Inferno: Canto XXIII
 4108
 4109
 4110 Silent, alone, and without company
 4111 We went, the one in front, the other after,
 4112 As go the Minor Friars along their way.
 4113
 4114 Upon the fable of Aesop was directed
 4115 My thought, by reason of the present quarrel,
 4116 Where he has spoken of the frog and mouse;
 4117
 4118 For 'mo' and 'issa' are not more alike
 4119 Than this one is to that, if well we couple
 4120 End and beginning with a steadfast mind.
 4121
 4122 And even as one thought from another springs,
 4123 So afterward from that was born another,
 4124 Which the first fear within me double made.
 4125
 4126 Thus did I ponder: "These on our account
 4127 Are laughed to scorn, with injury and scoff
 4128 So great, that much I think it must annoy them.
 4129
 4130 If anger be engrafted on ill-will,
 4131 They will come after us more merciless
 4132 Than dog upon the leveret which he seizes,"
 4133
 4134 I felt my hair stand all on end already
 4135 With terror, and stood backwardly intent,
 4136 When said I: "Master, if thou hidest not
 4137
 4138 Thyself and me forthwith, of Malebranche
 4139 I am in dread; we have them now behind us;
 4140 I so imagine them, I already feel them."
 4141
 4142 And he: "If I were made of leaded glass,
 4143 Thine outward image I should not attract
 4144 Sooner to me than I imprint the inner.
 4145
 4146 Just now thy thoughts came in among my own,
 4147 With similar attitude and similar face,
 4148 So that of both one counsel sole I made.
 4149
 4150 If peradventure the right bank so slope
 4151 That we to the next Bolgia can descend,
 4152 We shall escape from the imagined chase."
 4153
 4154 Not yet he finished rendering such opinion,
 4155 When I beheld them come with outstretched wings,
 4156 Not far remote, with will to seize upon us.
 4157
 4158 My Leader on a sudden seized me up,
 4159 Even as a mother who by noise is wakened,
 4160 And close beside her sees the enkindled flames,
 4161

4162 Who takes her son, and flies, and does not stop,
4163 Having more care of him than of herself,
4164 So that she clothes her only with a shift;
4165
4166 And downward from the top of the hard bank
4167 Supine he gave him to the pendent rock,
4168 That one side of the other Bolgia walls.
4169
4170 Ne'er ran so swiftly water through a sluice
4171 To turn the wheel of any land-built mill,
4172 When nearest to the paddles it approaches,
4173
4174 As did my Master down along that border,
4175 Bearing me with him on his breast away,
4176 As his own son, and not as a companion.
4177
4178 Hardly the bed of the ravine below
4179 His feet had reached, ere they had reached the hill
4180 Right over us; but he was not afraid;
4181
4182 For the high Providence, which had ordained
4183 To place them ministers of the fifth moat,
4184 The power of thence departing took from all.
4185
4186 A painted people there below we found,
4187 Who went about with footsteps very slow,
4188 Weeping and in their semblance tired and vanquished.
4189
4190 They had on mantles with the hoods low down
4191 Before their eyes, and fashioned of the cut
4192 That in Cologne they for the monks are made.
4193
4194 Without, they gilded are so that it dazzles;
4195 But inwardly all leaden and so heavy
4196 That Frederick used to put them on of straw.
4197
4198 O everlastingly fatiguing mantle!
4199 Again we turned us, still to the left hand
4200 Along with them, intent on their sad plaint;
4201
4202 But owing to the weight, that weary folk
4203 Came on so tardily, that we were new
4204 In company at each motion of the haunch.
4205
4206 Whence I unto my Leader: "See thou find
4207 Some one who may by deed or name be known,
4208 And thus in going move thine eye about."
4209
4210 And one, who understood the Tuscan speech,
4211 Cried to us from behind: "Stay ye your feet,
4212 Ye, who so run athwart the dusky air!
4213
4214 Perhaps thou'lt have from me what thou demandest."
4215 Whereat the Leader turned him, and said: "Wait,
4216 And then according to his pace proceed."
4217
4218 I stopped, and two beheld I show great haste

4219 Of spirit, in their faces, to be with me;
4220 But the burden and the narrow way delayed them.
4221
4222 When they came up, long with an eye askance
4223 They scanned me without uttering a word.
4224 Then to each other turned, and said together:
4225
4226 "He by the action of his throat seems living;
4227 And if they dead are, by what privilege
4228 Go they uncovered by the heavy stole?"
4229
4230 Then said to me: "Tuscan, who to the college
4231 Of miserable hypocrites art come,
4232 Do not disdain to tell us who thou art."
4233
4234 And I to them: "Born was I, and grew up
4235 In the great town on the fair river of Arno,
4236 And with the body am I've always had.
4237
4238 But who are ye, in whom there trickles down
4239 Along your cheeks such grief as I behold?
4240 And what pain is upon you, that so sparkles?"
4241
4242 And one replied to me: "These orange cloaks
4243 Are made of lead so heavy, that the weights
4244 Cause in this way their balances to creak.
4245
4246 Frati Gaudenti were we, and Bolognese;
4247 I Catalano, and he Loderingo
4248 Named, and together taken by thy city,
4249
4250 As the wont is to take one man alone,
4251 For maintenance of its peace; and we were such
4252 That still it is apparent round Gardingo."
4253
4254 "O Friars," began I, "your iniquitous. . ."
4255 But said no more; for to mine eyes there rushed
4256 One crucified with three stakes on the ground.
4257
4258 When me he saw, he writhed himself all over,
4259 Blowing into his beard with suspirations;
4260 And the Friar Catalan, who noticed this,
4261
4262 Said to me: "This transfixed one, whom thou seest,
4263 Counsell'd the Pharisees that it was meet
4264 To put one man to torture for the people.
4265
4266 Crosswise and naked is he on the path,
4267 As thou perceivest; and he needs must feel,
4268 Whoever passes, first how much he weighs;
4269
4270 And in like mode his father-in-law is punished
4271 Within this moat, and the others of the council,
4272 Which for the Jews was a malignant seed."
4273
4274 And thereupon I saw Virgilius marvel
4275 O'er him who was extended on the cross

4276 So vilely in eternal banishment.
 4277
 4278 Then he directed to the Friar this voice:
 4279 "Be not displeased, if granted thee, to tell us
 4280 If to the right hand any pass slope down
 4281
 4282 By which we two may issue forth from here,
 4283 Without constraining some of the black angels
 4284 To come and extricate us from this deep."
 4285
 4286 Then he made answer: "Nearer than thou hopest
 4287 There is a rock, that forth from the great circle
 4288 Proceeds, and crosses all the cruel valleys,
 4289
 4290 Save that at this 'tis broken, and does not bridge it;
 4291 You will be able to mount up the ruin,
 4292 That sidelong slopes and at the bottom rises."
 4293
 4294 The Leader stood awhile with head bowed down;
 4295 Then said: "The business badly he recounted
 4296 Who grapples with his hook the sinners yonder."
 4297
 4298 And the Friar: "Many of the Devil's vices
 4299 Once heard I at Bologna, and among them,
 4300 That he's a liar and the father of lies."
 4301
 4302 Thereat my Leader with great strides went on,
 4303 Somewhat disturbed with anger in his looks;
 4304 Whence from the heavy-laden I departed
 4305
 4306 After the prints of his beloved feet.
 4307
 4308
 4309
 4310 Inferno: Canto XXIV
 4311
 4312
 4313 In that part of the youthful year wherein
 4314 The Sun his locks beneath Aquarius tempers,
 4315 And now the nights draw near to half the day,
 4316
 4317 What time the hoar-frost copies on the ground
 4318 The outward semblance of her sister white,
 4319 But little lasts the temper of her pen,
 4320
 4321 The husbandman, whose forage faileth him,
 4322 Rises, and looks, and seeth the champaign
 4323 All gleaming white, whereat he beats his flank,
 4324
 4325 Returns in doors, and up and down laments,
 4326 Like a poor wretch, who knows not what to do;
 4327 Then he returns and hope revives again,
 4328
 4329 Seeing the world has changed its countenance
 4330 In little time, and takes his shepherd's crook,
 4331 And forth the little lambs to pasture drives.
 4332

4333 Thus did the Master fill me with alarm,
4334 When I beheld his forehead so disturbed,
4335 And to the ailment came as soon the plaster.
4336
4337 For as we came unto the ruined bridge,
4338 The Leader turned to me with that sweet look
4339 Which at the mountain's foot I first beheld.
4340
4341 His arms he opened, after some advisement
4342 Within himself elected, looking first
4343 Well at the ruin, and laid hold of me.
4344
4345 And even as he who acts and meditates,
4346 For aye it seems that he provides beforehand,
4347 So upward lifting me towards the summit
4348
4349 Of a huge rock, he scanned another crag,
4350 Saying: "To that one grapple afterwards,
4351 But try first if 'tis such that it will hold thee."
4352
4353 This was no way for one clothed with a cloak;
4354 For hardly we, he light, and I pushed upward,
4355 Were able to ascend from jag to jag.
4356
4357 And had it not been, that upon that precinct
4358 Shorter was the ascent than on the other,
4359 He I know not, but I had been dead beat.
4360
4361 But because Malebolge tow'rds the mouth
4362 Of the profoundest well is all inclining,
4363 The structure of each valley doth import
4364
4365 That one bank rises and the other sinks.
4366 Still we arrived at length upon the point
4367 Wherefrom the last stone breaks itself asunder.
4368
4369 The breath was from my lungs so milked away,
4370 When I was up, that I could go no farther,
4371 Nay, I sat down upon my first arrival.
4372
4373 "Now it behoves thee thus to put off sloth,"
4374 My Master said; "for sitting upon down,
4375 Or under quilt, one cometh not to fame,
4376
4377 Withouten which whoso his life consumes
4378 Such vestige leaveth of himself on earth,
4379 As smoke in air or in the water foam.
4380
4381 And therefore raise thee up, o'ercome the anguish
4382 With spirit that o'ercometh every battle,
4383 If with its heavy body it sink not.
4384
4385 A longer stairway it behoves thee mount;
4386 'Tis not enough from these to have departed;
4387 Let it avail thee, if thou understand me."
4388
4389 Then I uprose, showing myself provided

4390 Better with breath than I did feel myself,
4391 And said: "Go on, for I am strong and bold."
4392
4393 Upward we took our way along the crag,
4394 Which jagged was, and narrow, and difficult,
4395 And more precipitous far than that before.
4396
4397 Speaking I went, not to appear exhausted;
4398 Whereat a voice from the next moat came forth,
4399 Not well adapted to articulate words.
4400
4401 I know not what it said, though o'er the back
4402 I now was of the arch that passes there;
4403 But he seemed moved to anger who was speaking.
4404
4405 I was bent downward, but my living eyes
4406 Could not attain the bottom, for the dark;
4407 Wherefore I: "Master, see that thou arrive
4408
4409 At the next round, and let us descend the wall;
4410 For as from hence I hear and understand not,
4411 So I look down and nothing I distinguish."
4412
4413 "Other response," he said, "I make thee not,
4414 Except the doing; for the modest asking
4415 Ought to be followed by the deed in silence."
4416
4417 We from the bridge descended at its head,
4418 Where it connects itself with the eighth bank,
4419 And then was manifest to me the Bolgia;
4420
4421 And I beheld therein a terrible throng
4422 Of serpents, and of such a monstrous kind,
4423 That the remembrance still congeals my blood
4424
4425 Let Libya boast no longer with her sand;
4426 For if Chelydri, Jaculi, and Phareae
4427 She breeds, with Cenchri and with Amphisbaena,
4428
4429 Neither so many plagues nor so malignant
4430 E'er showed she with all Ethiopia,
4431 Nor with whatever on the Red Sea is!
4432
4433 Among this cruel and most dismal throng
4434 People were running naked and affrighted.
4435 Without the hope of hole or heliotrope.
4436
4437 They had their hands with serpents bound behind them;
4438 These riveted upon their reins the tail
4439 And head, and were in front of them entwined.
4440
4441 And lo! at one who was upon our side
4442 There darted forth a serpent, which transfixed him
4443 There where the neck is knotted to the shoulders.
4444
4445 Nor 'O' so quickly e'er, nor 'I' was written,
4446 As he took fire, and burned; and ashes wholly

4447 Behoved it that in falling he became.
4448
4449 And when he on the ground was thus destroyed,
4450 The ashes drew together, and of themselves
4451 Into himself they instantly returned.
4452
4453 Even thus by the great sages 'tis confessed
4454 The phoenix dies, and then is born again,
4455 When it approaches its five-hundredth year;
4456
4457 On herb or grain it feeds not in its life,
4458 But only on tears of incense and amomum,
4459 And nard and myrrh are its last winding-sheet.
4460
4461 And as he is who falls, and knows not how,
4462 By force of demons who to earth down drag him,
4463 Or other oppilation that binds man,
4464
4465 When he arises and around him looks,
4466 Wholly bewildered by the mighty anguish
4467 Which he has suffered, and in looking sighs;
4468
4469 Such was that sinner after he had risen.
4470 Justice of God! O how severe it is,
4471 That blows like these in vengeance poureth down!
4472
4473 The Guide thereafter asked him who he was;
4474 Whence he replied: "I rained from Tuscany
4475 A short time since into this cruel gorge.
4476
4477 A bestial life, and not a human, pleased me,
4478 Even as the mule I was; I'm Vanni Fucci,
4479 Beast, and Pistoia was my worthy den."
4480
4481 And I unto the Guide: "Tell him to stir not,
4482 And ask what crime has thrust him here below,
4483 For once a man of blood and wrath I saw him."
4484
4485 And the sinner, who had heard, dissembled not,
4486 But unto me directed mind and face,
4487 And with a melancholy shame was painted.
4488
4489 Then said: "It pains me more that thou hast caught me
4490 Amid this misery where thou seest me,
4491 Than when I from the other life was taken.
4492
4493 What thou demandest I cannot deny;
4494 So low am I put down because I robbed
4495 The sacristy of the fair ornaments,
4496
4497 And falsely once 'twas laid upon another;
4498 But that thou mayst not such a sight enjoy,
4499 If thou shalt e'er be out of the dark places,
4500
4501 Thine ears to my announcement ope and hear:
4502 Pistoia first of Neri groweth meagre;
4503 Then Florence doth renew her men and manners;

4504
 4505 Mars draws a vapour up from Val di Magra,
 4506 Which is with turbid clouds enveloped round,
 4507 And with impetuous and bitter tempest
 4508
 4509 Over Campo Picen shall be the battle;
 4510 When it shall suddenly rend the mist asunder,
 4511 So that each Bianco shall thereby be smitten.
 4512
 4513 And this I've said that it may give thee pain."
 4514
 4515
 4516
 4517 Inferno: Canto XXV
 4518
 4519
 4520 At the conclusion of his words, the thief
 4521 Lifted his hands aloft with both the figs,
 4522 Crying: "Take that, God, for at thee I aim them."
 4523
 4524 From that time forth the serpents were my friends;
 4525 For one entwined itself about his neck
 4526 As if it said: "I will not thou speak more;"
 4527
 4528 And round his arms another, and rebound him,
 4529 Clinching itself together so in front,
 4530 That with them he could not a motion make.
 4531
 4532 Pistoia, ah, Pistoia! why resolve not
 4533 To burn thyself to ashes and so perish,
 4534 Since in ill-doing thou thy seed excellest?
 4535
 4536 Through all the sombre circles of this Hell,
 4537 Spirit I saw not against God so proud,
 4538 Not he who fell at Thebes down from the walls!
 4539
 4540 He fled away, and spake no further word;
 4541 And I beheld a Centaur full of rage
 4542 Come crying out: "Where is, where is the scoffer?"
 4543
 4544 I do not think Maremma has so many
 4545 Serpents as he had all along his back,
 4546 As far as where our countenance begins.
 4547
 4548 Upon the shoulders, just behind the nape,
 4549 With wings wide open was a dragon lying,
 4550 And he sets fire to all that he encounters.
 4551
 4552 My Master said: "That one is Cacus, who
 4553 Beneath the rock upon Mount Aventine
 4554 Created oftentimes a lake of blood.
 4555
 4556 He goes not on the same road with his brothers,
 4557 By reason of the fraudulent theft he made
 4558 Of the great herd, which he had near to him;
 4559
 4560 Whereat his tortuous actions ceased beneath

4561 The mace of Hercules, who peradventure
4562 Gave him a hundred, and he felt not ten."
4563
4564 While he was speaking thus, he had passed by,
4565 And spirits three had underneath us come,
4566 Of which nor I aware was, nor my Leader,
4567
4568 Until what time they shouted: "Who are you?"
4569 On which account our story made a halt,
4570 And then we were intent on them alone.
4571
4572 I did not know them; but it came to pass,
4573 As it is wont to happen by some chance,
4574 That one to name the other was compelled,
4575
4576 Exclaiming: "Where can Cianfa have remained?"
4577 Whence I, so that the Leader might attend,
4578 Upward from chin to nose my finger laid.
4579
4580 If thou art, Reader, slow now to believe
4581 What I shall say, it will no marvel be,
4582 For I who saw it hardly can admit it.
4583
4584 As I was holding raised on them my brows,
4585 Behold! a serpent with six feet darts forth
4586 In front of one, and fastens wholly on him.
4587
4588 With middle feet it bound him round the paunch,
4589 And with the forward ones his arms it seized;
4590 Then thrust its teeth through one cheek and the other;
4591
4592 The hindermost it stretched upon his thighs,
4593 And put its tail through in between the two,
4594 And up behind along the reins outspread it.
4595
4596 Ivy was never fastened by its barbs
4597 Unto a tree so, as this horrible reptile
4598 Upon the other's limbs entwined its own.
4599
4600 Then they stuck close, as if of heated wax
4601 They had been made, and intermixed their colour;
4602 Nor one nor other seemed now what he was;
4603
4604 E'en as proceedeth on before the flame
4605 Upward along the paper a brown colour,
4606 Which is not black as yet, and the white dies.
4607
4608 The other two looked on, and each of them
4609 Cried out: "O me, Agnello, how thou changest!
4610 Behold, thou now art neither two nor one."
4611
4612 Already the two heads had one become,
4613 When there appeared to us two figures mingled
4614 Into one face, wherein the two were lost.
4615
4616 Of the four lists were fashioned the two arms,
4617 The thighs and legs, the belly and the chest

4618 Members became that never yet were seen.
4619
4620 Every original aspect there was cancelled;
4621 Two and yet none did the perverted image
4622 Appear, and such departed with slow pace.
4623
4624 Even as a lizard, under the great scourge
4625 Of days canicular, exchanging hedge,
4626 Lightning appeareth if the road it cross;
4627
4628 Thus did appear, coming towards the bellies
4629 Of the two others, a small fiery serpent,
4630 Livid and black as is a peppercorn.
4631
4632 And in that part whereat is first received
4633 Our aliment, it one of them transfixed;
4634 Then downward fell in front of him extended.
4635
4636 The one transfixed looked at it, but said naught;
4637 Nay, rather with feet motionless he yawned,
4638 Just as if sleep or fever had assailed him.
4639
4640 He at the serpent gazed, and it at him;
4641 One through the wound, the other through the mouth
4642 Smoked violently, and the smoke commingled.
4643
4644 Henceforth be silent Lucan, where he mentions
4645 Wretched Sabellus and Nassidius,
4646 And wait to hear what now shall be shot forth.
4647
4648 Be silent Ovid, of Cadmus and Arethusa;
4649 For if him to a snake, her to fountain,
4650 Converts he fabling, that I grudge him not;
4651
4652 Because two natures never front to front
4653 Has he transmuted, so that both the forms
4654 To interchange their matter ready were.
4655
4656 Together they responded in such wise,
4657 That to a fork the serpent cleft his tail,
4658 And eke the wounded drew his feet together.
4659
4660 The legs together with the thighs themselves
4661 Adhered so, that in little time the juncture
4662 No sign whatever made that was apparent.
4663
4664 He with the cloven tail assumed the figure
4665 The other one was losing, and his skin
4666 Became elastic, and the other's hard.
4667
4668 I saw the arms draw inward at the armpits,
4669 And both feet of the reptile, that were short,
4670 Lengthen as much as those contracted were.
4671
4672 Thereafter the hind feet, together twisted,
4673 Became the member that a man conceals,
4674 And of his own the wretch had two created.

4675
 4676 While both of them the exhalation veils
 4677 With a new colour, and engenders hair
 4678 On one of them and depilates the other,
 4679
 4680 The one uprose and down the other fell,
 4681 Though turning not away their impious lamps,
 4682 Underneath which each one his muzzle changed.
 4683
 4684 He who was standing drew it tow'rds the temples,
 4685 And from excess of matter, which came thither,
 4686 Issued the ears from out the hollow cheeks;
 4687
 4688 What did not backward run and was retained
 4689 Of that excess made to the face a nose,
 4690 And the lips thickened far as was befitting.
 4691
 4692 He who lay prostrate thrusts his muzzle forward,
 4693 And backward draws the ears into his head,
 4694 In the same manner as the snail its horns;
 4695
 4696 And so the tongue, which was entire and apt
 4697 For speech before, is cleft, and the bi-forked
 4698 In the other closes up, and the smoke ceases.
 4699
 4700 The soul, which to a reptile had been changed,
 4701 Along the valley hissing takes to flight,
 4702 And after him the other speaking sputters.
 4703
 4704 Then did he turn upon him his new shoulders,
 4705 And said to the other: "I'll have Buoso run,
 4706 Crawling as I have done, along this road."
 4707
 4708 In this way I beheld the seventh ballast
 4709 Shift and reshift, and here be my excuse
 4710 The novelty, if aught my pen transgress.
 4711
 4712 And notwithstanding that mine eyes might be
 4713 Somewhat bewildered, and my mind dismayed,
 4714 They could not flee away so secretly
 4715
 4716 But that I plainly saw Puccio Sciancato;
 4717 And he it was who sole of three companions,
 4718 Which came in the beginning, was not changed;
 4719
 4720 The other was he whom thou, Gaville, weepst.
 4721
 4722
 4723
 4724 Inferno: Canto XXVI
 4725
 4726
 4727 Rejoice, O Florence, since thou art so great,
 4728 That over sea and land thou beatest thy wings,
 4729 And throughout Hell thy name is spread abroad!
 4730
 4731 Among the thieves five citizens of thine

4732 Like these I found, whence shame comes unto me,
4733 And thou thereby to no great honour risest.
4734
4735 But if when morn is near our dreams are true,
4736 Feel shalt thou in a little time from now
4737 What Prato, if none other, craves for thee.
4738
4739 And if it now were, it were not too soon;
4740 Would that it were, seeing it needs must be,
4741 For 'twill aggrieve me more the more I age.
4742
4743 We went our way, and up along the stairs
4744 The bourns had made us to descend before,
4745 Remounted my Conductor and drew me.
4746
4747 And following the solitary path
4748 Among the rocks and ridges of the crag,
4749 The foot without the hand sped not at all.
4750
4751 Then sorrowed I, and sorrow now again,
4752 When I direct my mind to what I saw,
4753 And more my genius curb than I am wont,
4754
4755 That it may run not unless virtue guide it;
4756 So that if some good star, or better thing,
4757 Have given me good, I may myself not grudge it.
4758
4759 As many as the hind (who on the hill
4760 Rests at the time when he who lights the world
4761 His countenance keeps least concealed from us,
4762
4763 While as the fly gives place unto the gnat)
4764 Seeth the glow-worms down along the valley,
4765 Perchance there where he ploughs and makes his vintage;
4766
4767 With flames as manifold resplendent all
4768 Was the eighth Bolgia, as I grew aware
4769 As soon as I was where the depth appeared.
4770
4771 And such as he who with the bears avenged him
4772 Beheld Elijah's chariot at departing,
4773 What time the steeds to heaven erect uprose,
4774
4775 For with his eye he could not follow it
4776 So as to see aught else than flame alone,
4777 Even as a little cloud ascending upward,
4778
4779 Thus each along the gorge of the intrenchment
4780 Was moving; for not one reveals the theft,
4781 And every flame a sinner steals away.
4782
4783 I stood upon the bridge uprisen to see,
4784 So that, if I had seized not on a rock,
4785 Down had I fallen without being pushed.
4786
4787 And the Leader, who beheld me so attent,
4788 Exclaimed: "Within the fires the spirits are;

4789 Each swathes himself with that wherewith he burns."
4790
4791 "My Master," I replied, "by hearing thee
4792 I am more sure; but I surmised already
4793 It might be so, and already wished to ask thee
4794
4795 Who is within that fire, which comes so cleft
4796 At top, it seems uprising from the pyre
4797 Where was Eteocles with his brother placed."
4798
4799 He answered me: "Within there are tormented
4800 Ulysses and Diomed, and thus together
4801 They unto vengeance run as unto wrath.
4802
4803 And there within their flame do they lament
4804 The ambush of the horse, which made the door
4805 Whence issued forth the Romans' gentle seed;
4806
4807 Therein is wept the craft, for which being dead
4808 Deidamia still deplores Achilles,
4809 And pain for the Palladium there is borne."
4810
4811 "If they within those sparks possess the power
4812 To speak," I said, "thee, Master, much I pray,
4813 And re-pray, that the prayer be worth a thousand,
4814
4815 That thou make no denial of awaiting
4816 Until the horned flame shall hither come;
4817 Thou seest that with desire I lean towards it."
4818
4819 And he to me: "Worthy is thy entreaty
4820 Of much applause, and therefore I accept it;
4821 But take heed that thy tongue restrain itself.
4822
4823 Leave me to speak, because I have conceived
4824 That which thou wishest; for they might disdain
4825 Perchance, since they were Greeks, discourse of thine."
4826
4827 When now the flame had come unto that point,
4828 Where to my Leader it seemed time and place,
4829 After this fashion did I hear him speak:
4830
4831 "O ye, who are twofold within one fire,
4832 If I deserved of you, while I was living,
4833 If I deserved of you or much or little
4834
4835 When in the world I wrote the lofty verses,
4836 Do not move on, but one of you declare
4837 Whither, being lost, he went away to die."
4838
4839 Then of the antique flame the greater horn,
4840 Murmuring, began to wave itself about
4841 Even as a flame doth which the wind fatigues.
4842
4843 Thereafterward, the summit to and fro
4844 Moving as if it were the tongue that spake,
4845 It uttered forth a voice, and said: "When I

4846
4847 From Circe had departed, who concealed me
4848 More than a year there near unto Gaeta,
4849 Or ever yet Aeneas named it so,
4850
4851 Nor fondness for my son, nor reverence
4852 For my old father, nor the due affection
4853 Which joyous should have made Penelope,
4854
4855 Could overcome within me the desire
4856 I had to be experienced of the world,
4857 And of the vice and virtue of mankind;
4858
4859 But I put forth on the high open sea
4860 With one sole ship, and that small company
4861 By which I never had deserted been.
4862
4863 Both of the shores I saw as far as Spain,
4864 Far as Morocco, and the isle of Sardes,
4865 And the others which that sea bathes round about.
4866
4867 I and my company were old and slow
4868 When at that narrow passage we arrived
4869 Where Hercules his landmarks set as signals,
4870
4871 That man no farther onward should adventure.
4872 On the right hand behind me left I Seville,
4873 And on the other already had left Ceuta.
4874
4875 'O brothers, who amid a hundred thousand
4876 Perils,' I said, 'have come unto the West,
4877 To this so inconsiderable vigil
4878
4879 Which is remaining of your senses still
4880 Be ye unwilling to deny the knowledge,
4881 Following the sun, of the unpeopled world.
4882
4883 Consider ye the seed from which ye sprang;
4884 Ye were not made to live like unto brutes,
4885 But for pursuit of virtue and of knowledge.'
4886
4887 So eager did I render my companions,
4888 With this brief exhortation, for the voyage,
4889 That then I hardly could have held them back.
4890
4891 And having turned our stern unto the morning,
4892 We of the oars made wings for our mad flight,
4893 Evermore gaining on the larboard side.
4894
4895 Already all the stars of the other pole
4896 The night beheld, and ours so very low
4897 It did not rise above the ocean floor.
4898
4899 Five times rekindled and as many quenched
4900 Had been the splendour underneath the moon,
4901 Since we had entered into the deep pass,
4902

4903 When there appeared to us a mountain, dim
 4904 From distance, and it seemed to me so high
 4905 As I had never any one beheld.
 4906
 4907 Joyful were we, and soon it turned to weeping;
 4908 For out of the new land a whirlwind rose,
 4909 And smote upon the fore part of the ship.
 4910
 4911 Three times it made her whirl with all the waters,
 4912 At the fourth time it made the stern uplift,
 4913 And the prow downward go, as pleased Another,
 4914
 4915 Until the sea above us closed again."
 4916
 4917
 4918
 4919 Inferno: Canto XXVII
 4920
 4921
 4922 Already was the flame erect and quiet,
 4923 To speak no more, and now departed from us
 4924 With the permission of the gentle Poet;
 4925
 4926 When yet another, which behind it came,
 4927 Caused us to turn our eyes upon its top
 4928 By a confused sound that issued from it.
 4929
 4930 As the Sicilian bull (that bellowed first
 4931 With the lament of him, and that was right,
 4932 Who with his file had modulated it)
 4933
 4934 Bellowed so with the voice of the afflicted,
 4935 That, notwithstanding it was made of brass,
 4936 Still it appeared with agony transfixed;
 4937
 4938 Thus, by not having any way or issue
 4939 At first from out the fire, to its own language
 4940 Converted were the melancholy words.
 4941
 4942 But afterwards, when they had gathered way
 4943 Up through the point, giving it that vibration
 4944 The tongue had given them in their passage out,
 4945
 4946 We heard it said: "O thou, at whom I aim
 4947 My voice, and who but now wast speaking Lombard,
 4948 Saying, 'Now go thy way, no more I urge thee,'
 4949
 4950 Because I come perchance a little late,
 4951 To stay and speak with me let it not irk thee;
 4952 Thou seest it irks not me, and I am burning.
 4953
 4954 If thou but lately into this blind world
 4955 Hast fallen down from that sweet Latian land,
 4956 Wherefrom I bring the whole of my transgression,
 4957
 4958 Say, if the Romagnuols have peace or war,
 4959 For I was from the mountains there between

4960 Urbino and the yoke whence Tiber bursts."
 4961
 4962 I still was downward bent and listening,
 4963 When my Conductor touched me on the side,
 4964 Saying: "Speak thou: this one a Latian is."
 4965
 4966 And I, who had beforehand my reply
 4967 In readiness, forthwith began to speak:
 4968 "O soul, that down below there art concealed,
 4969
 4970 Romagna thine is not and never has been
 4971 Without war in the bosom of its tyrants;
 4972 But open war I none have left there now.
 4973
 4974 Ravenna stands as it long years has stood;
 4975 The Eagle of Polenta there is brooding,
 4976 So that she covers Cervia with her vans.
 4977
 4978 The city which once made the long resistance,
 4979 And of the French a sanguinary heap,
 4980 Beneath the Green Paws finds itself again;
 4981
 4982 Verrucchio's ancient Mastiff and the new,
 4983 Who made such bad disposal of Montagna,
 4984 Where they are wont make wimbles of their teeth.
 4985
 4986 The cities of Lamone and Santerno
 4987 Governs the Lioncel of the white lair,
 4988 Who changes sides 'twixt summer-time and winter;
 4989
 4990 And that of which the Savio bathes the flank,
 4991 Even as it lies between the plain and mountain,
 4992 Lives between tyranny and a free state.
 4993
 4994 Now I entreat thee tell us who thou art;
 4995 Be not more stubborn than the rest have been,
 4996 So may thy name hold front there in the world."
 4997
 4998 After the fire a little more had roared
 4999 In its own fashion, the sharp point it moved
 5000 This way and that, and then gave forth such breath:
 5001
 5002 "If I believed that my reply were made
 5003 To one who to the world would e'er return,
 5004 This flame without more flickering would stand still;
 5005
 5006 But inasmuch as never from this depth
 5007 Did any one return, if I hear true,
 5008 Without the fear of infamy I answer,
 5009
 5010 I was a man of arms, then Cordelier,
 5011 Believing thus begirt to make amends;
 5012 And truly my belief had been fulfilled
 5013
 5014 But for the High Priest, whom may ill betide,
 5015 Who put me back into my former sins;
 5016 And how and wherefore I will have thee hear.

5017
5018 While I was still the form of bone and pulp
5019 My mother gave to me, the deeds I did
5020 Were not those of a lion, but a fox.
5021
5022 The machinations and the covert ways
5023 I knew them all, and practised so their craft,
5024 That to the ends of earth the sound went forth.
5025
5026 When now unto that portion of mine age
5027 I saw myself arrived, when each one ought
5028 To lower the sails, and coil away the ropes,
5029
5030 That which before had pleased me then displeased me;
5031 And penitent and confessing I surrendered,
5032 Ah woe is me! and it would have bestead me;
5033
5034 The Leader of the modern Pharisees
5035 Having a war near unto Lateran,
5036 And not with Saracens nor with the Jews,
5037
5038 For each one of his enemies was Christian,
5039 And none of them had been to conquer Acre,
5040 Nor merchandising in the Sultan's land,
5041
5042 Nor the high office, nor the sacred orders,
5043 In him regarded, nor in me that cord
5044 Which used to make those girt with it more meagre;
5045
5046 But even as Constantine sought out Sylvester
5047 To cure his leprosy, within Soracte,
5048 So this one sought me out as an adept
5049
5050 To cure him of the fever of his pride.
5051 Counsel he asked of me, and I was silent,
5052 Because his words appeared inebriate.
5053
5054 And then he said: 'Be not thy heart afraid;
5055 Henceforth I thee absolve; and thou instruct me
5056 How to raze Palestrina to the ground.
5057
5058 Heaven have I power to lock and to unlock,
5059 As thou dost know; therefore the keys are two,
5060 The which my predecessor held not dear.'
5061
5062 Then urged me on his weighty arguments
5063 There, where my silence was the worst advice;
5064 And said I: 'Father, since thou wastest me
5065
5066 Of that sin into which I now must fall,
5067 The promise long with the fulfilment short
5068 Will make thee triumph in thy lofty seat.'
5069
5070 Francis came afterward, when I was dead,
5071 For me; but one of the black Cherubim
5072 Said to him: 'Take him not; do me no wrong;
5073

5074 He must come down among my servitors,
 5075 Because he gave the fraudulent advice
 5076 From which time forth I have been at his hair;
 5077
 5078 For who repents not cannot be absolved,
 5079 Nor can one both repent and will at once,
 5080 Because of the contradiction which consents not.'
 5081
 5082 O miserable me! how I did shudder
 5083 When he seized on me, saying: 'Peradventure
 5084 Thou didst not think that I was a logician!'
 5085
 5086 He bore me unto Minos, who entwined
 5087 Eight times his tail about his stubborn back,
 5088 And after he had bitten it in great rage,
 5089
 5090 Said: 'Of the thievish fire a culprit this;'
 5091 Wherefore, here where thou seest, am I lost,
 5092 And vested thus in going I bemoan me."
 5093
 5094 When it had thus completed its recital,
 5095 The flame departed uttering lamentations,
 5096 Writhing and flapping its sharp-pointed horn.
 5097
 5098 Onward we passed, both I and my Conductor,
 5099 Up o'er the crag above another arch,
 5100 Which the moat covers, where is paid the fee
 5101
 5102 By those who, sowing discord, win their burden.
 5103
 5104
 5105
 5106 Inferno: Canto XXVIII
 5107
 5108
 5109 Who ever could, e'en with untrammelled words,
 5110 Tell of the blood and of the wounds in full
 5111 Which now I saw, by many times narrating?
 5112
 5113 Each tongue would for a certainty fall short
 5114 By reason of our speech and memory,
 5115 That have small room to comprehend so much.
 5116
 5117 If were again assembled all the people
 5118 Which formerly upon the fateful land
 5119 Of Puglia were lamenting for their blood
 5120
 5121 Shed by the Romans and the lingering war
 5122 That of the rings made such illustrious spoils,
 5123 As Livy has recorded, who errs not,
 5124
 5125 With those who felt the agony of blows
 5126 By making counterstand to Robert Guiscard,
 5127 And all the rest, whose bones are gathered still
 5128
 5129 At Ceperano, where a renegade
 5130 Was each Apulian, and at Tagliacozzo,

5131 Where without arms the old Alardo conquered,
 5132
 5133 And one his limb transpierced, and one lopped off,
 5134 Should show, it would be nothing to compare
 5135 With the disgusting mode of the ninth Bolgia.
 5136
 5137 A cask by losing centre-piece or cant
 5138 Was never shattered so, as I saw one
 5139 Rent from the chin to where one breaketh wind.
 5140
 5141 Between his legs were hanging down his entrails;
 5142 His heart was visible, and the dismal sack
 5143 That maketh excrement of what is eaten.
 5144
 5145 While I was all absorbed in seeing him,
 5146 He looked at me, and opened with his hands
 5147 His bosom, saying: "See now how I rend me;
 5148
 5149 How mutilated, see, is Mahomet;
 5150 In front of me doth Ali weeping go,
 5151 Cleft in the face from forelock unto chin;
 5152
 5153 And all the others whom thou here beholdest,
 5154 Disseminators of scandal and of schism
 5155 While living were, and therefore are cleft thus.
 5156
 5157 A devil is behind here, who doth cleave us
 5158 Thus cruelly, unto the falchion's edge
 5159 Putting again each one of all this ream,
 5160
 5161 When we have gone around the doleful road;
 5162 By reason that our wounds are closed again
 5163 Ere any one in front of him repass.
 5164
 5165 But who art thou, that musest on the crag,
 5166 Perchance to postpone going to the pain
 5167 That is adjudged upon thine accusations?"
 5168
 5169 "Nor death hath reached him yet, nor guilt doth bring him,"
 5170 My Master made reply, "to be tormented;
 5171 But to procure him full experience,
 5172
 5173 Me, who am dead, behoves it to conduct him
 5174 Down here through Hell, from circle unto circle;
 5175 And this is true as that I speak to thee."
 5176
 5177 More than a hundred were there when they heard him,
 5178 Who in the moat stood still to look at me,
 5179 Through wonderment oblivious of their torture.
 5180
 5181 "Now say to Fra Dolcino, then, to arm him,
 5182 Thou, who perhaps wilt shortly see the sun,
 5183 If soon he wish not here to follow me,
 5184
 5185 So with provisions, that no stress of snow
 5186 May give the victory to the Novarese,
 5187 Which otherwise to gain would not be easy."

5188
5189 After one foot to go away he lifted,
5190 This word did Mahomet say unto me,
5191 Then to depart upon the ground he stretched it.
5192
5193 Another one, who had his throat pierced through,
5194 And nose cut off close underneath the brows,
5195 And had no longer but a single ear,
5196
5197 Staying to look in wonder with the others,
5198 Before the others did his gullet open,
5199 Which outwardly was red in every part,
5200
5201 And said: "O thou, whom guilt doth not condemn,
5202 And whom I once saw up in Latian land,
5203 Unless too great similitude deceive me,
5204
5205 Call to remembrance Pier da Medicina,
5206 If e'er thou see again the lovely plain
5207 That from Vercelli slopes to Marcabo,
5208
5209 And make it known to the best two of Fano,
5210 To Messer Guido and Angiolello likewise,
5211 That if foreseeing here be not in vain,
5212
5213 Cast over from their vessel shall they be,
5214 And drowned near unto the Cattolica,
5215 By the betrayal of a tyrant fell.
5216
5217 Between the isles of Cyprus and Majorca
5218 Neptune ne'er yet beheld so great a crime,
5219 Neither of pirates nor Argolic people.
5220
5221 That traitor, who sees only with one eye,
5222 And holds the land, which some one here with me
5223 Would fain be fasting from the vision of,
5224
5225 Will make them come unto a parley with him;
5226 Then will do so, that to Focara's wind
5227 They will not stand in need of vow or prayer."
5228
5229 And I to him: "Show to me and declare,
5230 If thou wouldst have me bear up news of thee,
5231 Who is this person of the bitter vision."
5232
5233 Then did he lay his hand upon the jaw
5234 Of one of his companions, and his mouth
5235 Oped, crying: "This is he, and he speaks not.
5236
5237 This one, being banished, every doubt submerged
5238 In Caesar by affirming the forearmed
5239 Always with detriment allowed delay."
5240
5241 O how bewildered unto me appeared,
5242 With tongue asunder in his windpipe slit,
5243 Curio, who in speaking was so bold!
5244

5245 And one, who both his hands dissevered had,
 5246 The stumps uplifting through the murky air,
 5247 So that the blood made horrible his face,
 5248
 5249 Cried out: "Thou shalt remember Mosca also,
 5250 Who said, alas! 'A thing done has an end!'
 5251 Which was an ill seed for the Tuscan people."
 5252
 5253 "And death unto thy race," thereto I added;
 5254 Whence he, accumulating woe on woe,
 5255 Departed, like a person sad and crazed.
 5256
 5257 But I remained to look upon the crowd;
 5258 And saw a thing which I should be afraid,
 5259 Without some further proof, even to recount,
 5260
 5261 If it were not that conscience reassures me,
 5262 That good companion which emboldens man
 5263 Beneath the hauberk of its feeling pure.
 5264
 5265 I truly saw, and still I seem to see it,
 5266 A trunk without a head walk in like manner
 5267 As walked the others of the mournful herd.
 5268
 5269 And by the hair it held the head dissevered,
 5270 Hung from the hand in fashion of a lantern,
 5271 And that upon us gazed and said: "O me!"
 5272
 5273 It of itself made to itself a lamp,
 5274 And they were two in one, and one in two;
 5275 How that can be, He knows who so ordains it.
 5276
 5277 When it was come close to the bridge's foot,
 5278 It lifted high its arm with all the head,
 5279 To bring more closely unto us its words,
 5280
 5281 Which were: "Behold now the sore penalty,
 5282 Thou, who dost breathing go the dead beholding;
 5283 Behold if any be as great as this.
 5284
 5285 And so that thou may carry news of me,
 5286 Know that Bertram de Born am I, the same
 5287 Who gave to the Young King the evil comfort.
 5288
 5289 I made the father and the son rebellious;
 5290 Achitophel not more with Absalom
 5291 And David did with his accursed goadings.
 5292
 5293 Because I parted persons so united,
 5294 Parted do I now bear my brain, alas!
 5295 From its beginning, which is in this trunk.
 5296
 5297 Thus is observed in me the counterpoise."
 5298
 5299
 5300
 5301 Inferno: Canto XXIX

5302
5303
5304 The many people and the divers wounds
5305 These eyes of mine had so inebriated,
5306 That they were wishful to stand still and weep;
5307
5308 But said Virgilius: "What dost thou still gaze at?
5309 Why is thy sight still riveted down there
5310 Among the mournful, mutilated shades?
5311
5312 Thou hast not done so at the other Bolge;
5313 Consider, if to count them thou believest,
5314 That two-and-twenty miles the valley winds,
5315
5316 And now the moon is underneath our feet;
5317 Henceforth the time allotted us is brief,
5318 And more is to be seen than what thou seest."
5319
5320 "If thou hadst," I made answer thereupon,
5321 "Attended to the cause for which I looked,
5322 Perhaps a longer stay thou wouldst have pardoned."
5323
5324 Meanwhile my Guide departed, and behind him
5325 I went, already making my reply,
5326 And superadding: "In that cavern where
5327
5328 I held mine eyes with such attention fixed,
5329 I think a spirit of my blood laments
5330 The sin which down below there costs so much."
5331
5332 Then said the Master: "Be no longer broken
5333 Thy thought from this time forward upon him;
5334 Attend elsewhere, and there let him remain;
5335
5336 For him I saw below the little bridge,
5337 Pointing at thee, and threatening with his finger
5338 Fiercely, and heard him called Geri del Bello.
5339
5340 So wholly at that time wast thou impeded
5341 By him who formerly held Altaforte,
5342 Thou didst not look that way; so he departed."
5343
5344 "O my Conductor, his own violent death,
5345 Which is not yet avenged for him," I said,
5346 "By any who is sharer in the shame,
5347
5348 Made him disdainful; whence he went away,
5349 As I imagine, without speaking to me,
5350 And thereby made me pity him the more."
5351
5352 Thus did we speak as far as the first place
5353 Upon the crag, which the next valley shows
5354 Down to the bottom, if there were more light.
5355
5356 When we were now right over the last cloister
5357 Of Malebolge, so that its lay-brothers
5358 Could manifest themselves unto our sight,

5359
5360 Divers lamentings pierced me through and through,
5361 Which with compassion had their arrows barbed,
5362 Whereat mine ears I covered with my hands.
5363
5364 What pain would be, if from the hospitals
5365 Of Valdichiana, 'twixt July and September,
5366 And of Maremma and Sardinia
5367
5368 All the diseases in one moat were gathered,
5369 Such was it here, and such a stench came from it
5370 As from putrescent limbs is wont to issue.
5371
5372 We had descended on the furthest bank
5373 From the long crag, upon the left hand still,
5374 And then more vivid was my power of sight
5375
5376 Down tow'rds the bottom, where the ministress
5377 Of the high Lord, Justice infallible,
5378 Punishes forgers, which she here records.
5379
5380 I do not think a sadder sight to see
5381 Was in Aegina the whole people sick,
5382 (When was the air so full of pestilence,
5383
5384 The animals, down to the little worm,
5385 All fell, and afterwards the ancient people,
5386 According as the poets have affirmed,
5387
5388 Were from the seed of ants restored again,)
5389 Than was it to behold through that dark valley
5390 The spirits languishing in divers heaps.
5391
5392 This on the belly, that upon the back
5393 One of the other lay, and others crawling
5394 Shifted themselves along the dismal road.
5395
5396 We step by step went onward without speech,
5397 Gazing upon and listening to the sick
5398 Who had not strength enough to lift their bodies.
5399
5400 I saw two sitting leaned against each other,
5401 As leans in heating platter against platter,
5402 From head to foot bespotted o'er with scabs;
5403
5404 And never saw I plied a currycomb
5405 By stable-boy for whom his master waits,
5406 Or him who keeps awake unwillingly,
5407
5408 As every one was plying fast the bite
5409 Of nails upon himself, for the great rage
5410 Of itching which no other succour had.
5411
5412 And the nails downward with them dragged the scab,
5413 In fashion as a knife the scales of bream,
5414 Or any other fish that has them largest.
5415

5416 "O thou, that with thy fingers dost dismail thee,"
 5417 Began my Leader unto one of them,
 5418 "And makest of them pincers now and then,
 5419
 5420 Tell me if any Latian is with those
 5421 Who are herein; so may thy nails suffice thee
 5422 To all eternity unto this work."
 5423
 5424 "Latians are we, whom thou so wasted seest,
 5425 Both of us here," one weeping made reply;
 5426 "But who art thou, that questionest about us?"
 5427
 5428 And said the Guide: "One am I who descends
 5429 Down with this living man from cliff to cliff,
 5430 And I intend to show Hell unto him."
 5431
 5432 Then broken was their mutual support,
 5433 And trembling each one turned himself to me,
 5434 With others who had heard him by rebound.
 5435
 5436 Wholly to me did the good Master gather,
 5437 Saying: "Say unto them whate'er thou wishest."
 5438 And I began, since he would have it so:
 5439
 5440 "So may your memory not steal away
 5441 In the first world from out the minds of men,
 5442 But so may it survive 'neath many suns,
 5443
 5444 Say to me who ye are, and of what people;
 5445 Let not your foul and loathsome punishment
 5446 Make you afraid to show yourselves to me."
 5447
 5448 "I of Arezzo was," one made reply,
 5449 "And Albert of Siena had me burned;
 5450 But what I died for does not bring me here.
 5451
 5452 'Tis true I said to him, speaking in jest,
 5453 That I could rise by flight into the air,
 5454 And he who had conceit, but little wit,
 5455
 5456 Would have me show to him the art; and only
 5457 Because no Daedalus I made him, made me
 5458 Be burned by one who held him as his son.
 5459
 5460 But unto the last Bolgia of the ten,
 5461 For alchemy, which in the world I practised,
 5462 Minos, who cannot err, has me condemned."
 5463
 5464 And to the Poet said I: "Now was ever
 5465 So vain a people as the Sienese?
 5466 Not for a certainty the French by far."
 5467
 5468 Whereat the other leper, who had heard me,
 5469 Replied unto my speech: "Taking out Stricca,
 5470 Who knew the art of moderate expenses,
 5471
 5472 And Niccolo, who the luxurious use

5473 Of cloves discovered earliest of all
 5474 Within that garden where such seed takes root;
 5475
 5476 And taking out the band, among whom squandered
 5477 Caccia d'Ascian his vineyards and vast woods,
 5478 And where his wit the Abbagliato proffered!
 5479
 5480 But, that thou know who thus doth second thee
 5481 Against the Sienese, make sharp thine eye
 5482 Tow'rds me, so that my face well answer thee,
 5483
 5484 And thou shalt see I am Capocchio's shade,
 5485 Who metals falsified by alchemy;
 5486 Thou must remember, if I well descry thee,
 5487
 5488 How I a skilful ape of nature was."
 5489
 5490
 5491
 5492 Inferno: Canto XXX
 5493
 5494
 5495 'Twas at the time when Juno was enraged,
 5496 For Semele, against the Theban blood,
 5497 As she already more than once had shown,
 5498
 5499 So reft of reason Athamas became,
 5500 That, seeing his own wife with children twain
 5501 Walking encumbered upon either hand,
 5502
 5503 He cried: "Spread out the nets, that I may take
 5504 The lioness and her whelps upon the passage;"
 5505 And then extended his un pitying claws,
 5506
 5507 Seizing the first, who had the name Learchus,
 5508 And whirled him round, and dashed him on a rock;
 5509 And she, with the other burthen, drowned herself;--
 5510
 5511 And at the time when fortune downward hurled
 5512 The Trojan's arrogance, that all things dared,
 5513 So that the king was with his kingdom crushed,
 5514
 5515 Hecuba sad, disconsolate, and captive,
 5516 When lifeless she beheld Polyxena,
 5517 And of her Polydorus on the shore
 5518
 5519 Of ocean was the dolorous one aware,
 5520 Out of her senses like a dog she barked,
 5521 So much the anguish had her mind distorted;
 5522
 5523 But not of Thebes the furies nor the Trojan
 5524 Were ever seen in any one so cruel
 5525 In goading beasts, and much more human members,
 5526
 5527 As I beheld two shadows pale and naked,
 5528 Who, biting, in the manner ran along
 5529 That a boar does, when from the sty turned loose.

5530
5531 One to Capocchio came, and by the nape
5532 Seized with its teeth his neck, so that in dragging
5533 It made his belly grate the solid bottom.
5534
5535 And the Aretine, who trembling had remained,
5536 Said to me: "That mad sprite is Gianni Schicchi,
5537 And raving goes thus harrying other people."
5538
5539 "O," said I to him, "so may not the other
5540 Set teeth on thee, let it not weary thee
5541 To tell us who it is, ere it dart hence."
5542
5543 And he to me: "That is the ancient ghost
5544 Of the nefarious Myrrha, who became
5545 Beyond all rightful love her father's lover.
5546
5547 She came to sin with him after this manner,
5548 By counterfeiting of another's form;
5549 As he who goeth yonder undertook,
5550
5551 That he might gain the lady of the herd,
5552 To counterfeit in himself Buoso Donati,
5553 Making a will and giving it due form."
5554
5555 And after the two maniacs had passed
5556 On whom I held mine eye, I turned it back
5557 To look upon the other evil-born.
5558
5559 I saw one made in fashion of a lute,
5560 If he had only had the groin cut off
5561 Just at the point at which a man is forked.
5562
5563 The heavy dropsy, that so disproportions
5564 The limbs with humours, which it ill concocts,
5565 That the face corresponds not to the belly,
5566
5567 Compelled him so to hold his lips apart
5568 As does the hectic, who because of thirst
5569 One tow'rds the chin, the other upward turns.
5570
5571 "O ye, who without any torment are,
5572 And why I know not, in the world of woe,"
5573 He said to us, "behold, and be attentive
5574
5575 Unto the misery of Master Adam;
5576 I had while living much of what I wished,
5577 And now, alas! a drop of water crave.
5578
5579 The rivulets, that from the verdant hills
5580 Of Cassentin descend down into Arno,
5581 Making their channels to be cold and moist,
5582
5583 Ever before me stand, and not in vain;
5584 For far more doth their image dry me up
5585 Than the disease which strips my face of flesh.
5586

5587 The rigid justice that chastises me
5588 Draweth occasion from the place in which
5589 I sinned, to put the more my sighs in flight.
5590
5591 There is Romena, where I counterfeited
5592 The currency imprinted with the Baptist,
5593 For which I left my body burned above.
5594
5595 But if I here could see the tristful soul
5596 Of Guido, or Alessandro, or their brother,
5597 For Branda's fount I would not give the sight.
5598
5599 One is within already, if the raving
5600 Shades that are going round about speak truth;
5601 But what avails it me, whose limbs are tied?
5602
5603 If I were only still so light, that in
5604 A hundred years I could advance one inch,
5605 I had already started on the way,
5606
5607 Seeking him out among this squalid folk,
5608 Although the circuit be eleven miles,
5609 And be not less than half a mile across.
5610
5611 For them am I in such a family;
5612 They did induce me into coining florins,
5613 Which had three carats of impurity."
5614
5615 And I to him: "Who are the two poor wretches
5616 That smoke like unto a wet hand in winter,
5617 Lying there close upon thy right-hand confines?"
5618
5619 "I found them here," replied he, "when I rained
5620 Into this chasm, and since they have not turned,
5621 Nor do I think they will for evermore.
5622
5623 One the false woman is who accused Joseph,
5624 The other the false Sinon, Greek of Troy;
5625 From acute fever they send forth such reek."
5626
5627 And one of them, who felt himself annoyed
5628 At being, peradventure, named so darkly,
5629 Smote with the fist upon his hardened paunch.
5630
5631 It gave a sound, as if it were a drum;
5632 And Master Adam smote him in the face,
5633 With arm that did not seem to be less hard,
5634
5635 Saying to him: "Although be taken from me
5636 All motion, for my limbs that heavy are,
5637 I have an arm unfettered for such need."
5638
5639 Whereat he answer made: "When thou didst go
5640 Unto the fire, thou hadst it not so ready:
5641 But hadst it so and more when thou wast coining."
5642
5643 The dropsical: "Thou sayest true in that;

5644 But thou wast not so true a witness there,
 5645 Where thou wast questioned of the truth at Troy."
 5646
 5647 "If I spake false, thou falsifiedst the coin,"
 5648 Said Sinon; "and for one fault I am here,
 5649 And thou for more than any other demon."
 5650
 5651 "Remember, perjurer, about the horse,"
 5652 He made reply who had the swollen belly,
 5653 "And rueful be it thee the whole world knows it."
 5654
 5655 "Rueful to thee the thirst be wherewith cracks
 5656 Thy tongue," the Greek said, "and the putrid water
 5657 That hedges so thy paunch before thine eyes."
 5658
 5659 Then the false-coiner: "So is gaping wide
 5660 Thy mouth for speaking evil, as 'tis wont;
 5661 Because if I have thirst, and humour stuff me
 5662
 5663 Thou hast the burning and the head that aches,
 5664 And to lick up the mirror of Narcissus
 5665 Thou wouldst not want words many to invite thee."
 5666
 5667 In listening to them was I wholly fixed,
 5668 When said the Master to me: "Now just look,
 5669 For little wants it that I quarrel with thee."
 5670
 5671 When him I heard in anger speak to me,
 5672 I turned me round towards him with such shame
 5673 That still it eddies through my memory.
 5674
 5675 And as he is who dreams of his own harm,
 5676 Who dreaming wishes it may be a dream,
 5677 So that he craves what is, as if it were not;
 5678
 5679 Such I became, not having power to speak,
 5680 For to excuse myself I wished, and still
 5681 Excused myself, and did not think I did it.
 5682
 5683 "Less shame doth wash away a greater fault,"
 5684 The Master said, "than this of thine has been;
 5685 Therefore thyself disburden of all sadness,
 5686
 5687 And make account that I am aye beside thee,
 5688 If e'er it come to pass that fortune bring thee
 5689 Where there are people in a like dispute;
 5690
 5691 For a base wish it is to wish to hear it."
 5692
 5693
 5694
 5695 Inferno: Canto XXXI
 5696
 5697
 5698 One and the selfsame tongue first wounded me,
 5699 So that it tinged the one cheek and the other,
 5700 And then held out to me the medicine;

5701
5702 Thus do I hear that once Achilles' spear,
5703 His and his father's, used to be the cause
5704 First of a sad and then a gracious boon.
5705
5706 We turned our backs upon the wretched valley,
5707 Upon the bank that girds it round about,
5708 Going across it without any speech.
5709
5710 There it was less than night, and less than day,
5711 So that my sight went little in advance;
5712 But I could hear the blare of a loud horn,
5713
5714 So loud it would have made each thunder faint,
5715 Which, counter to it following its way,
5716 Mine eyes directed wholly to one place.
5717
5718 After the dolorous discomfiture
5719 When Charlemagne the holy emprise lost,
5720 So terribly Orlando sounded not.
5721
5722 Short while my head turned thitherward I held
5723 When many lofty towers I seemed to see,
5724 Whereat I: "Master, say, what town is this?"
5725
5726 And he to me: "Because thou peerest forth
5727 Athwart the darkness at too great a distance,
5728 It happens that thou errest in thy fancy.
5729
5730 Well shalt thou see, if thou arrivest there,
5731 How much the sense deceives itself by distance;
5732 Therefore a little faster spur thee on."
5733
5734 Then tenderly he took me by the hand,
5735 And said: "Before we farther have advanced,
5736 That the reality may seem to thee
5737
5738 Less strange, know that these are not towers, but giants,
5739 And they are in the well, around the bank,
5740 From navel downward, one and all of them."
5741
5742 As, when the fog is vanishing away,
5743 Little by little doth the sight refigure
5744 Whate'er the mist that crowds the air conceals,
5745
5746 So, piercing through the dense and darksome air,
5747 More and more near approaching tow'rd the verge,
5748 My error fled, and fear came over me;
5749
5750 Because as on its circular parapets
5751 Montereccione crowns itself with towers,
5752 E'en thus the margin which surrounds the well
5753
5754 With one half of their bodies turreted
5755 The horrible giants, whom Jove menaces
5756 E'en now from out the heavens when he thunders.
5757

5758 And I of one already saw the face,
5759 Shoulders, and breast, and great part of the belly,
5760 And down along his sides both of the arms.
5761
5762 Certainly Nature, when she left the making
5763 Of animals like these, did well indeed,
5764 By taking such executors from Mars;
5765
5766 And if of elephants and whales she doth not
5767 Repent her, whosoever looketh subtly
5768 More just and more discreet will hold her for it;
5769
5770 For where the argument of intellect
5771 Is added unto evil will and power,
5772 No rampart can the people make against it.
5773
5774 His face appeared to me as long and large
5775 As is at Rome the pine-cone of Saint Peter's,
5776 And in proportion were the other bones;
5777
5778 So that the margin, which an apron was
5779 Down from the middle, showed so much of him
5780 Above it, that to reach up to his hair
5781
5782 Three Frieslanders in vain had vaunted them;
5783 For I beheld thirty great palms of him
5784 Down from the place where man his mantle buckles.
5785
5786 "Raphael mai amech izabi almi,"
5787 Began to clamour the ferocious mouth,
5788 To which were not befitting sweeter psalms.
5789
5790 And unto him my Guide: "Soul idiotic,
5791 Keep to thy horn, and vent thyself with that,
5792 When wrath or other passion touches thee.
5793
5794 Search round thy neck, and thou wilt find the belt
5795 Which keeps it fastened, O bewildered soul,
5796 And see it, where it bars thy mighty breast."
5797
5798 Then said to me: "He doth himself accuse;
5799 This one is Nimrod, by whose evil thought
5800 One language in the world is not still used.
5801
5802 Here let us leave him and not speak in vain;
5803 For even such to him is every language
5804 As his to others, which to none is known."
5805
5806 Therefore a longer journey did we make,
5807 Turned to the left, and a crossbow-shot oft
5808 We found another far more fierce and large.
5809
5810 In binding him, who might the master be
5811 I cannot say; but he had pinioned close
5812 Behind the right arm, and in front the other,
5813
5814 With chains, that held him so begirt about

5815 From the neck down, that on the part uncovered
 5816 It wound itself as far as the fifth gyre.
 5817
 5818 "This proud one wished to make experiment
 5819 Of his own power against the Supreme Jove,"
 5820 My Leader said, "whence he has such a guerdon.
 5821
 5822 Ephialtes is his name; he showed great prowess.
 5823 What time the giants terrified the gods;
 5824 The arms he wielded never more he moves."
 5825
 5826 And I to him: "If possible, I should wish
 5827 That of the measureless Briareus
 5828 These eyes of mine might have experience."
 5829
 5830 Whence he replied: "Thou shalt behold Antaeus
 5831 Close by here, who can speak and is unbound,
 5832 Who at the bottom of all crime shall place us.
 5833
 5834 Much farther yon is he whom thou wouldst see,
 5835 And he is bound, and fashioned like to this one,
 5836 Save that he seems in aspect more ferocious."
 5837
 5838 There never was an earthquake of such might
 5839 That it could shake a tower so violently,
 5840 As Ephialtes suddenly shook himself.
 5841
 5842 Then was I more afraid of death than ever,
 5843 For nothing more was needful than the fear,
 5844 If I had not beheld the manacles.
 5845
 5846 Then we proceeded farther in advance,
 5847 And to Antaeus came, who, full five ells
 5848 Without the head, forth issued from the cavern.
 5849
 5850 "O thou, who in the valley fortunate,
 5851 Which Scipio the heir of glory made,
 5852 When Hannibal turned back with all his hosts,
 5853
 5854 Once brought'st a thousand lions for thy prey,
 5855 And who, hadst thou been at the mighty war
 5856 Among thy brothers, some it seems still think
 5857
 5858 The sons of Earth the victory would have gained:
 5859 Place us below, nor be disdainful of it,
 5860 There where the cold doth lock Cocytus up.
 5861
 5862 Make us not go to Tityus nor Typhoeus;
 5863 This one can give of that which here is longed for;
 5864 Therefore stoop down, and do not curl thy lip.
 5865
 5866 Still in the world can he restore thy fame;
 5867 Because he lives, and still expects long life,
 5868 If to itself Grace call him not untimely."
 5869
 5870 So said the Master; and in haste the other
 5871 His hands extended and took up my Guide,--

5872 Hands whose great pressure Hercules once felt.
 5873
 5874 Virgilius, when he felt himself embraced,
 5875 Said unto me: "Draw nigh, that I may take thee;"
 5876 Then of himself and me one bundle made.
 5877
 5878 As seems the Carisenda, to behold
 5879 Beneath the leaning side, when goes a cloud
 5880 Above it so that opposite it hangs;
 5881
 5882 Such did Antaeus seem to me, who stood
 5883 Watching to see him stoop, and then it was
 5884 I could have wished to go some other way.
 5885
 5886 But lightly in the abyss, which swallows up
 5887 Judas with Lucifer, he put us down;
 5888 Nor thus bowed downward made he there delay,
 5889
 5890 But, as a mast does in a ship, uprose.
 5891
 5892
 5893
 5894 Inferno: Canto XXXII
 5895
 5896
 5897 If I had rhymes both rough and stridulous,
 5898 As were appropriate to the dismal hole
 5899 Down upon which thrust all the other rocks,
 5900
 5901 I would press out the juice of my conception
 5902 More fully; but because I have them not,
 5903 Not without fear I bring myself to speak;
 5904
 5905 For 'tis no enterprise to take in jest,
 5906 To sketch the bottom of all the universe,
 5907 Nor for a tongue that cries Mamma and Babbo.
 5908
 5909 But may those Ladies help this verse of mine,
 5910 Who helped Amphion in enclosing Thebes,
 5911 That from the fact the word be not diverse.
 5912
 5913 O rabble ill-begotten above all,
 5914 Who're in the place to speak of which is hard,
 5915 'Twere better ye had here been sheep or goats!
 5916
 5917 When we were down within the darksome well,
 5918 Beneath the giant's feet, but lower far,
 5919 And I was scanning still the lofty wall,
 5920
 5921 I heard it said to me: "Look how thou steppest!
 5922 Take heed thou do not trample with thy feet
 5923 The heads of the tired, miserable brothers!"
 5924
 5925 Whereat I turned me round, and saw before me
 5926 And underfoot a lake, that from the frost
 5927 The semblance had of glass, and not of water.
 5928

5929 So thick a veil ne'er made upon its current
 5930 In winter-time Danube in Austria,
 5931 Nor there beneath the frigid sky the Don,
 5932
 5933 As there was here; so that if Tambernich
 5934 Had fallen upon it, or Pietrapana,
 5935 E'en at the edge 'twould not have given a creak.
 5936
 5937 And as to croak the frog doth place himself
 5938 With muzzle out of water,--when is dreaming
 5939 Of gleaning oftentimes the peasant-girl,--
 5940
 5941 Livid, as far down as where shame appears,
 5942 Were the disconsolate shades within the ice,
 5943 Setting their teeth unto the note of storks.
 5944
 5945 Each one his countenance held downward bent;
 5946 From mouth the cold, from eyes the doleful heart
 5947 Among them witness of itself procures.
 5948
 5949 When round about me somewhat I had looked,
 5950 I downward turned me, and saw two so close,
 5951 The hair upon their heads together mingled.
 5952
 5953 "Ye who so strain your breasts together, tell me,"
 5954 I said, "who are you;" and they bent their necks,
 5955 And when to me their faces they had lifted,
 5956
 5957 Their eyes, which first were only moist within,
 5958 Gushed o'er the eyelids, and the frost congealed
 5959 The tears between, and locked them up again.
 5960
 5961 Clamp never bound together wood with wood
 5962 So strongly; whereat they, like two he-goats,
 5963 Butted together, so much wrath o'ercame them.
 5964
 5965 And one, who had by reason of the cold
 5966 Lost both his ears, still with his visage downward,
 5967 Said: "Why dost thou so mirror thyself in us?
 5968
 5969 If thou desire to know who these two are,
 5970 The valley whence Bisenzio descends
 5971 Belonged to them and to their father Albert.
 5972
 5973 They from one body came, and all Caina
 5974 Thou shalt search through, and shalt not find a shade
 5975 More worthy to be fixed in gelatine;
 5976
 5977 Not he in whom were broken breast and shadow
 5978 At one and the same blow by Arthur's hand;
 5979 Focaccia not; not he who me encumbers
 5980
 5981 So with his head I see no farther forward,
 5982 And bore the name of Sassol Mascheroni;
 5983 Well knowest thou who he was, if thou art Tuscan.
 5984
 5985 And that thou put me not to further speech,

5986 Know that I Camicion de' Pazzi was,
5987 And wait Carlino to exonerate me."
5988
5989 Then I beheld a thousand faces, made
5990 Purple with cold; whence o'er me comes a shudder,
5991 And evermore will come, at frozen ponds.
5992
5993 And while we were advancing tow'rds the middle,
5994 Where everything of weight unites together,
5995 And I was shivering in the eternal shade,
5996
5997 Whether 'twere will, or destiny, or chance,
5998 I know not; but in walking 'mong the heads
5999 I struck my foot hard in the face of one.
6000
6001 Weeping he growled: "Why dost thou trample me?
6002 Unless thou comest to increase the vengeance
6003 of Montaperti, why dost thou molest me?"
6004
6005 And I: "My Master, now wait here for me,
6006 That I through him may issue from a doubt;
6007 Then thou mayst hurry me, as thou shalt wish."
6008
6009 The Leader stopped; and to that one I said
6010 Who was blaspheming vehemently still:
6011 "Who art thou, that thus reprehendest others?"
6012
6013 "Now who art thou, that goest through Antenora
6014 Smiting," replied he, "other people's cheeks,
6015 So that, if thou wert living, 'twere too much?"
6016
6017 "Living I am, and dear to thee it may be,"
6018 Was my response, "if thou demandest fame,
6019 That 'mid the other notes thy name I place."
6020
6021 And he to me: "For the reverse I long;
6022 Take thyself hence, and give me no more trouble;
6023 For ill thou knowest to flatter in this hollow."
6024
6025 Then by the scalp behind I seized upon him,
6026 And said: "It must needs be thou name thyself,
6027 Or not a hair remain upon thee here."
6028
6029 Whence he to me: "Though thou strip off my hair,
6030 I will not tell thee who I am, nor show thee,
6031 If on my head a thousand times thou fall."
6032
6033 I had his hair in hand already twisted,
6034 And more than one shock of it had pulled out,
6035 He barking, with his eyes held firmly down,
6036
6037 When cried another: "What doth ail thee, Bocca?
6038 Is't not enough to clatter with thy jaws,
6039 But thou must bark? what devil touches thee?"
6040
6041 "Now," said I, "I care not to have thee speak,
6042 Accursed traitor; for unto thy shame

6043 I will report of thee veracious news."
 6044
 6045 "Begone," replied he, "and tell what thou wilt,
 6046 But be not silent, if thou issue hence,
 6047 Of him who had just now his tongue so prompt;
 6048
 6049 He weepeth here the silver of the French;
 6050 'I saw,' thus canst thou phrase it, 'him of Duera
 6051 There where the sinners stand out in the cold.'
 6052
 6053 If thou shouldst questioned be who else was there,
 6054 Thou hast beside thee him of Beccaria,
 6055 Of whom the gorget Florence slit asunder;
 6056
 6057 Gianni del Soldanier, I think, may be
 6058 Yonder with Ganellon, and Tebaldello
 6059 Who oped Faenza when the people slep."
 6060
 6061 Already we had gone away from him,
 6062 When I beheld two frozen in one hole,
 6063 So that one head a hood was to the other;
 6064
 6065 And even as bread through hunger is devoured,
 6066 The uppermost on the other set his teeth,
 6067 There where the brain is to the nape united.
 6068
 6069 Not in another fashion Tydeus gnawed
 6070 The temples of Menalippus in disdain,
 6071 Than that one did the skull and the other things.
 6072
 6073 "O thou, who showest by such bestial sign
 6074 Thy hatred against him whom thou art eating,
 6075 Tell me the wherefore," said I, "with this compact,
 6076
 6077 That if thou rightfully of him complain,
 6078 In knowing who ye are, and his transgression,
 6079 I in the world above repay thee for it,
 6080
 6081 If that wherewith I speak be not dried up."
 6082
 6083
 6084
 6085 Inferno: Canto XXXIII
 6086
 6087
 6088 His mouth uplifted from his grim repast,
 6089 That sinner, wiping it upon the hair
 6090 Of the same head that he behind had wasted.
 6091
 6092 Then he began: "Thou wilt that I renew
 6093 The desperate grief, which wrings my heart already
 6094 To think of only, ere I speak of it;
 6095
 6096 But if my words be seed that may bear fruit
 6097 Of infamy to the traitor whom I gnaw,
 6098 Speaking and weeping shalt thou see together.
 6099

6100 I know not who thou art, nor by what mode
6101 Thou hast come down here; but a Florentine
6102 Thou seemest to me truly, when I hear thee.
6103
6104 Thou hast to know I was Count Ugolino,
6105 And this one was Ruggieri the Archbishop;
6106 Now I will tell thee why I am such a neighbour.
6107
6108 That, by effect of his malicious thoughts,
6109 Trusting in him I was made prisoner,
6110 And after put to death, I need not say;
6111
6112 But ne'ertheless what thou canst not have heard,
6113 That is to say, how cruel was my death,
6114 Hear shalt thou, and shalt know if he has wronged me.
6115
6116 A narrow perforation in the mew,
6117 Which bears because of me the title of Famine,
6118 And in which others still must be locked up,
6119
6120 Had shown me through its opening many moons
6121 Already, when I dreamed the evil dream
6122 Which of the future rent for me the veil.
6123
6124 This one appeared to me as lord and master,
6125 Hunting the wolf and whelps upon the mountain
6126 For which the Pisans cannot Lucca see.
6127
6128 With sleuth-hounds gaunt, and eager, and well trained,
6129 Gualandi with Sismondi and Lanfianchi
6130 He had sent out before him to the front.
6131
6132 After brief course seemed unto me forespent
6133 The father and the sons, and with sharp tushes
6134 It seemed to me I saw their flanks ripped open.
6135
6136 When I before the morrow was awake,
6137 Moaning amid their sleep I heard my sons
6138 Who with me were, and asking after bread.
6139
6140 Cruel indeed art thou, if yet thou grieve not,
6141 Thinking of what my heart foreboded me,
6142 And weep'st thou not, what art thou wont to weep at?
6143
6144 They were awake now, and the hour drew nigh
6145 At which our food used to be brought to us,
6146 And through his dream was each one apprehensive;
6147
6148 And I heard locking up the under door
6149 Of the horrible tower; whereat without a word
6150 I gazed into the faces of my sons.
6151
6152 I wept not, I within so turned to stone;
6153 They wept; and darling little Anselm mine
6154 Said: 'Thou dost gaze so, father, what doth ail thee?'
6155
6156 Still not a tear I shed, nor answer made

6157 All of that day, nor yet the night thereafter,
6158 Until another sun rose on the world.
6159
6160 As now a little glimmer made its way
6161 Into the dolorous prison, and I saw
6162 Upon four faces my own very aspect,
6163
6164 Both of my hands in agony I bit;
6165 And, thinking that I did it from desire
6166 Of eating, on a sudden they uprose,
6167
6168 And said they: 'Father, much less pain 'twill give us
6169 If thou do eat of us; thyself didst clothe us
6170 With this poor flesh, and do thou strip it off.'
6171
6172 I calmed me then, not to make them more sad.
6173 That day we all were silent, and the next.
6174 Ah! obdurate earth, wherefore didst thou not open?
6175
6176 When we had come unto the fourth day, Gaddo
6177 Threw himself down outstretched before my feet,
6178 Saying, 'My father, why dost thou not help me?'
6179
6180 And there he died; and, as thou seest me,
6181 I saw the three fall, one by one, between
6182 The fifth day and the sixth; whence I betook me,
6183
6184 Already blind, to groping over each,
6185 And three days called them after they were dead;
6186 Then hunger did what sorrow could not do."
6187
6188 When he had said this, with his eyes distorted,
6189 The wretched skull resumed he with his teeth,
6190 Which, as a dog's, upon the bone were strong.
6191
6192 Ah! Pisa, thou opprobrium of the people
6193 Of the fair land there where the 'Si' doth sound,
6194 Since slow to punish thee thy neighbours are,
6195
6196 Let the Capraia and Gorgona move,
6197 And make a hedge across the mouth of Arno
6198 That every person in thee it may drown!
6199
6200 For if Count Ugolino had the fame
6201 Of having in thy castles thee betrayed,
6202 Thou shouldst not on such cross have put his sons.
6203
6204 Guiltless of any crime, thou modern Thebes!
6205 Their youth made Uguccione and Brigata,
6206 And the other two my song doth name above!
6207
6208 We passed still farther onward, where the ice
6209 Another people ruggedly enswathes,
6210 Not downward turned, but all of them reversed.
6211
6212 Weeping itself there does not let them weep,
6213 And grief that finds a barrier in the eyes

6214 Turns itself inward to increase the anguish;
6215
6216 Because the earliest tears a cluster form,
6217 And, in the manner of a crystal visor,
6218 Fill all the cup beneath the eyebrow full.
6219
6220 And notwithstanding that, as in a callus,
6221 Because of cold all sensibility
6222 Its station had abandoned in my face,
6223
6224 Still it appeared to me I felt some wind;
6225 Whence I: "My Master, who sets this in motion?
6226 Is not below here every vapour quenched?"
6227
6228 Whence he to me: "Full soon shalt thou be where
6229 Thine eye shall answer make to thee of this,
6230 Seeing the cause which raineth down the blast."
6231
6232 And one of the wretches of the frozen crust
6233 Cried out to us: "O souls so merciless
6234 That the last post is given unto you,
6235
6236 Lift from mine eyes the rigid veils, that I
6237 May vent the sorrow which impregns my heart
6238 A little, e'er the weeping recongeal."
6239
6240 Whence I to him: "If thou wouldst have me help thee
6241 Say who thou wast; and if I free thee not,
6242 May I go to the bottom of the ice."
6243
6244 Then he replied: "I am Friar Alberigo;
6245 He am I of the fruit of the bad garden,
6246 Who here a date am getting for my fig."
6247
6248 "O," said I to him, "now art thou, too, dead?"
6249 And he to me: "How may my body fare
6250 Up in the world, no knowledge I possess.
6251
6252 Such an advantage has this Ptolomaea,
6253 That oftentimes the soul descendeth here
6254 Sooner than Atropos in motion sets it.
6255
6256 And, that thou mayest more willingly remove
6257 From off my countenance these glassy tears,
6258 Know that as soon as any soul betrays
6259
6260 As I have done, his body by a demon
6261 Is taken from him, who thereafter rules it,
6262 Until his time has wholly been revolved.
6263
6264 Itself down rushes into such a cistern;
6265 And still perchance above appears the body
6266 Of yonder shade, that winters here behind me.
6267
6268 This thou shouldst know, if thou hast just come down;
6269 It is Ser Branca d' Oria, and many years
6270 Have passed away since he was thus locked up."

6271
6272 "I think," said I to him, "thou dost deceive me;
6273 For Branca d' Oria is not dead as yet,
6274 And eats, and drinks, and sleeps, and puts on clothes."
6275
6276 "In moat above," said he, "of Malebranche,
6277 There where is boiling the tenacious pitch,
6278 As yet had Michel Zanche not arrived,
6279
6280 When this one left a devil in his stead
6281 In his own body and one near of kin,
6282 Who made together with him the betrayal.
6283
6284 But hitherward stretch out thy hand forthwith,
6285 Open mine eyes;"--and open them I did not,
6286 And to be rude to him was courtesy.
6287
6288 Ah, Genoese! ye men at variance
6289 With every virtue, full of every vice
6290 Wherefore are ye not scattered from the world?
6291
6292 For with the vilest spirit of Romagna
6293 I found of you one such, who for his deeds
6294 In soul already in Cocytus bathes,
6295
6296 And still above in body seems alive!
6297
6298
6299
6300 Inferno: Canto XXXIV
6301
6302
6303 "'Vexilla Regis prodeunt Inferni'
6304 Towards us; therefore look in front of thee,"
6305 My Master said, "if thou discernest him."
6306
6307 As, when there breathes a heavy fog, or when
6308 Our hemisphere is darkening into night,
6309 Appears far off a mill the wind is turning,
6310
6311 Methought that such a building then I saw;
6312 And, for the wind, I drew myself behind
6313 My Guide, because there was no other shelter.
6314
6315 Now was I, and with fear in verse I put it,
6316 There where the shades were wholly covered up,
6317 And glimmered through like unto straws in glass.
6318
6319 Some prone are lying, others stand erect,
6320 This with the head, and that one with the soles;
6321 Another, bow-like, face to feet inverts.
6322
6323 When in advance so far we had proceeded,
6324 That it my Master pleased to show to me
6325 The creature who once had the beauteous semblance,
6326
6327 He from before me moved and made me stop,

6328 Saying: "Behold Dis, and behold the place
6329 Where thou with fortitude must arm thyself."
6330
6331 How frozen I became and powerless then,
6332 Ask it not, Reader, for I write it not,
6333 Because all language would be insufficient.
6334
6335 I did not die, and I alive remained not;
6336 Think for thyself now, hast thou aught of wit,
6337 What I became, being of both deprived.
6338
6339 The Emperor of the kingdom dolorous
6340 From his mid-breast forth issued from the ice;
6341 And better with a giant I compare
6342
6343 Than do the giants with those arms of his;
6344 Consider now how great must be that whole,
6345 Which unto such a part conforms itself.
6346
6347 Were he as fair once, as he now is foul,
6348 And lifted up his brow against his Maker,
6349 Well may proceed from him all tribulation.
6350
6351 O, what a marvel it appeared to me,
6352 When I beheld three faces on his head!
6353 The one in front, and that vermilion was;
6354
6355 Two were the others, that were joined with this
6356 Above the middle part of either shoulder,
6357 And they were joined together at the crest;
6358
6359 And the right-hand one seemed 'twixt white and yellow;
6360 The left was such to look upon as those
6361 Who come from where the Nile falls valley-ward.
6362
6363 Underneath each came forth two mighty wings,
6364 Such as befitting were so great a bird;
6365 Sails of the sea I never saw so large.
6366
6367 No feathers had they, but as of a bat
6368 Their fashion was; and he was waving them,
6369 So that three winds proceeded forth therefrom.
6370
6371 Thereby Cocytus wholly was congealed.
6372 With six eyes did he weep, and down three chins
6373 Trickled the tear-drops and the bloody drivel.
6374
6375 At every mouth he with his teeth was crunching
6376 A sinner, in the manner of a brake,
6377 So that he three of them tormented thus.
6378
6379 To him in front the biting was as naught
6380 Unto the clawing, for sometimes the spine
6381 Utterly stripped of all the skin remained.
6382
6383 "That soul up there which has the greatest pain,"
6384 The Master said, "is Judas Iscariot;

6385 With head inside, he plies his legs without.
6386
6387 Of the two others, who head downward are,
6388 The one who hangs from the black jowl is Brutus;
6389 See how he writhes himself, and speaks no word.
6390
6391 And the other, who so stalwart seems, is Cassius.
6392 But night is reascending, and 'tis time
6393 That we depart, for we have seen the whole."
6394
6395 As seemed him good, I clasped him round the neck,
6396 And he the vantage seized of time and place,
6397 And when the wings were opened wide apart,
6398
6399 He laid fast hold upon the shaggy sides;
6400 From fell to fell descended downward then
6401 Between the thick hair and the frozen crust.
6402
6403 When we were come to where the thigh revolves
6404 Exactly on the thickness of the haunch,
6405 The Guide, with labour and with hard-drawn breath,
6406
6407 Turned round his head where he had had his legs,
6408 And grappled to the hair, as one who mounts,
6409 So that to Hell I thought we were returning.
6410
6411 "Keep fast thy hold, for by such stairs as these,"
6412 The Master said, panting as one fatigued,
6413 "Must we perforce depart from so much evil."
6414
6415 Then through the opening of a rock he issued,
6416 And down upon the margin seated me;
6417 Then tow'rds me he outstretched his wary step.
6418
6419 I lifted up mine eyes and thought to see
6420 Lucifer in the same way I had left him;
6421 And I beheld him upward hold his legs.
6422
6423 And if I then became disquieted,
6424 Let stolid people think who do not see
6425 What the point is beyond which I had passed.
6426
6427 "Rise up," the Master said, "upon thy feet;
6428 The way is long, and difficult the road,
6429 And now the sun to middle-tierce returns."
6430
6431 It was not any palace corridor
6432 There where we were, but dungeon natural,
6433 With floor uneven and unease of light.
6434
6435 "Ere from the abyss I tear myself away,
6436 My Master," said I when I had arisen,
6437 "To draw me from an error speak a little;
6438
6439 Where is the ice? and how is this one fixed
6440 Thus upside down? and how in such short time
6441 From eve to morn has the sun made his transit?"

6442
6443 And he to me: "Thou still imaginest
6444 Thou art beyond the centre, where I grasped
6445 The hair of the fell worm, who mines the world.
6446
6447 That side thou wast, so long as I descended;
6448 When round I turned me, thou didst pass the point
6449 To which things heavy draw from every side,
6450
6451 And now beneath the hemisphere art come
6452 Opposite that which overhangs the vast
6453 Dry-land, and 'neath whose cope was put to death
6454
6455 The Man who without sin was born and lived.
6456 Thou hast thy feet upon the little sphere
6457 Which makes the other face of the Judecca.
6458
6459 Here it is morn when it is evening there;
6460 And he who with his hair a stairway made us
6461 Still fixed remaineth as he was before.
6462
6463 Upon this side he fell down out of heaven;
6464 And all the land, that whilom here emerged,
6465 For fear of him made of the sea a veil,
6466
6467 And came to our hemisphere; and peradventure
6468 To flee from him, what on this side appears
6469 Left the place vacant here, and back recoiled."
6470
6471 A place there is below, from Beelzebub
6472 As far receding as the tomb extends,
6473 Which not by sight is known, but by the sound
6474
6475 Of a small rivulet, that there descendeth
6476 Through chasm within the stone, which it has gnawed
6477 With course that winds about and slightly falls.
6478
6479 The Guide and I into that hidden road
6480 Now entered, to return to the bright world;
6481 And without care of having any rest
6482
6483 We mounted up, he first and I the second,
6484 Till I beheld through a round aperture
6485 Some of the beauteous things that Heaven doth bear;
6486
6487 Thence we came forth to rebehold the stars.
6488
6489
6490
6491
6492 The Divine Comedy
6493 translated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
6494 (e-text courtesy ILT's Digital Dante Project)
6495
6496 PURGATORIO
6497
6498

6499
6500 Purgatorio: Canto I
6501
6502
6503 To run o'er better waters hoists its sail
6504 The little vessel of my genius now,
6505 That leaves behind itself a sea so cruel;
6506
6507 And of that second kingdom will I sing
6508 Wherein the human spirit doth purge itself,
6509 And to ascend to heaven becometh worthy.
6510
6511 But let dead Poesy here rise again,
6512 O holy Muses, since that I am yours,
6513 And here Calliope somewhat ascend,
6514
6515 My song accompanying with that sound,
6516 Of which the miserable magpies felt
6517 The blow so great, that they despaired of pardon.
6518
6519 Sweet colour of the oriental sapphire,
6520 That was upgathered in the cloudless aspect
6521 Of the pure air, as far as the first circle,
6522
6523 Unto mine eyes did recommence delight
6524 Soon as I issued forth from the dead air,
6525 Which had with sadness filled mine eyes and breast.
6526
6527 The beauteous planet, that to love incites,
6528 Was making all the orient to laugh,
6529 Veiling the Fishes that were in her escort.
6530
6531 To the right hand I turned, and fixed my mind
6532 Upon the other pole, and saw four stars
6533 Ne'er seen before save by the primal people.
6534
6535 Rejoicing in their flamelets seemed the heaven.
6536 O thou septentrional and widowed site,
6537 Because thou art deprived of seeing these!
6538
6539 When from regarding them I had withdrawn,
6540 Turning a little to the other pole,
6541 There where the Wain had disappeared already,
6542
6543 I saw beside me an old man alone,
6544 Worthy of so much reverence in his look,
6545 That more owes not to father any son.
6546
6547 A long beard and with white hair intermingled
6548 He wore, in semblance like unto the tresses,
6549 Of which a double list fell on his breast.
6550
6551 The rays of the four consecrated stars
6552 Did so adorn his countenance with light,
6553 That him I saw as were the sun before him.
6554
6555 "Who are you? ye who, counter the blind river,

6556 Have fled away from the eternal prison?"
6557 Moving those venerable plumes, he said:
6558
6559 "Who guided you? or who has been your lamp
6560 In issuing forth out of the night profound,
6561 That ever black makes the infernal valley?
6562
6563 The laws of the abyss, are they thus broken?
6564 Or is there changed in heaven some council new,
6565 That being damned ye come unto my crags?"
6566
6567 Then did my Leader lay his grasp upon me,
6568 And with his words, and with his hands and signs,
6569 Reverent he made in me my knees and brow;
6570
6571 Then answered him: "I came not of myself;
6572 A Lady from Heaven descended, at whose prayers
6573 I aided this one with my company.
6574
6575 But since it is thy will more be unfolded
6576 Of our condition, how it truly is,
6577 Mine cannot be that this should be denied thee.
6578
6579 This one has never his last evening seen,
6580 But by his folly was so near to it
6581 That very little time was there to turn.
6582
6583 As I have said, I unto him was sent
6584 To rescue him, and other way was none
6585 Than this to which I have myself betaken.
6586
6587 I've shown him all the people of perdition,
6588 And now those spirits I intend to show
6589 Who purge themselves beneath thy guardianship.
6590
6591 How I have brought him would be long to tell thee.
6592 Virtue descendeth from on high that aids me
6593 To lead him to behold thee and to hear thee.
6594
6595 Now may it please thee to vouchsafe his coming;
6596 He seeketh Liberty, which is so dear,
6597 As knoweth he who life for her refuses.
6598
6599 Thou know'st it; since, for her, to thee not bitter
6600 Was death in Utica, where thou didst leave
6601 The vesture, that will shine so, the great day.
6602
6603 By us the eternal edicts are not broken;
6604 Since this one lives, and Minos binds not me;
6605 But of that circle I, where are the chaste
6606
6607 Eyes of thy Marcia, who in looks still prays thee,
6608 O holy breast, to hold her as thine own;
6609 For her love, then, incline thyself to us.
6610
6611 Permit us through thy sevenfold realm to go;
6612 I will take back this grace from thee to her,

6613 If to be mentioned there below thou deignest."
6614
6615 "Marcia so pleasing was unto mine eyes
6616 While I was on the other side," then said he,
6617 "That every grace she wished of me I granted;
6618
6619 Now that she dwells beyond the evil river,
6620 She can no longer move me, by that law
6621 Which, when I issued forth from there, was made.
6622
6623 But if a Lady of Heaven do move and rule thee,
6624 As thou dost say, no flattery is needful;
6625 Let it suffice thee that for her thou ask me.
6626
6627 Go, then, and see thou gird this one about
6628 With a smooth rush, and that thou wash his face,
6629 So that thou cleanse away all stain therefrom,
6630
6631 For 'twere not fitting that the eye o'ercast
6632 By any mist should go before the first
6633 Angel, who is of those of Paradise.
6634
6635 This little island round about its base
6636 Below there, yonder, where the billow beats it,
6637 Doth rushes bear upon its washy ooze;
6638
6639 No other plant that putteth forth the leaf,
6640 Or that doth indurate, can there have life,
6641 Because it yieldeth not unto the shocks.
6642
6643 Thereafter be not this way your return;
6644 The sun, which now is rising, will direct you
6645 To take the mount by easier ascent."
6646
6647 With this he vanished; and I raised me up
6648 Without a word, and wholly drew myself
6649 Unto my Guide, and turned mine eyes to him.
6650
6651 And he began: "Son, follow thou my steps;
6652 Let us turn back, for on this side declines
6653 The plain unto its lower boundaries."
6654
6655 The dawn was vanquishing the matin hour
6656 Which fled before it, so that from afar
6657 I recognised the trembling of the sea.
6658
6659 Along the solitary plain we went
6660 As one who unto the lost road returns,
6661 And till he finds it seems to go in vain.
6662
6663 As soon as we were come to where the dew
6664 Fights with the sun, and, being in a part
6665 Where shadow falls, little evaporates,
6666
6667 Both of his hands upon the grass outspread
6668 In gentle manner did my Master place;
6669 Whence I, who of his action was aware,

6670
6671 Extended unto him my tearful cheeks;
6672 There did he make in me uncovered wholly
6673 That hue which Hell had covered up in me.
6674
6675 Then came we down upon the desert shore
6676 Which never yet saw navigate its waters
6677 Any that afterward had known return.
6678
6679 There he begirt me as the other pleased;
6680 O marvellous! for even as he culled
6681 The humble plant, such it sprang up again
6682
6683 Suddenly there where he uprooted it.
6684
6685
6686
6687 Purgatorio: Canto II
6688
6689
6690 Already had the sun the horizon reached
6691 Whose circle of meridian covers o'er
6692 Jerusalem with its most lofty point,
6693
6694 And night that opposite to him revolves
6695 Was issuing forth from Ganges with the Scales
6696 That fall from out her hand when she exceedeth;
6697
6698 So that the white and the vermilion cheeks
6699 Of beautiful Aurora, where I was,
6700 By too great age were changing into orange.
6701
6702 We still were on the border of the sea,
6703 Like people who are thinking of their road,
6704 Who go in heart and with the body stay;
6705
6706 And lo! as when, upon the approach of morning,
6707 Through the gross vapours Mars grows fiery red
6708 Down in the West upon the ocean floor,
6709
6710 Appeared to me--may I again behold it!--
6711 A light along the sea so swiftly coming,
6712 Its motion by no flight of wing is equalled;
6713
6714 From which when I a little had withdrawn
6715 Mine eyes, that I might question my Conductor,
6716 Again I saw it brighter grown and larger.
6717
6718 Then on each side of it appeared to me
6719 I knew not what of white, and underneath it
6720 Little by little there came forth another.
6721
6722 My Master yet had uttered not a word
6723 While the first whiteness into wings unfolded;
6724 But when he clearly recognised the pilot,
6725
6726 He cried: "Make haste, make haste to bow the knee!

6727 Behold the Angel of God! fold thou thy hands!
6728 Henceforward shalt thou see such officers!
6729
6730 See how he scorneth human arguments,
6731 So that nor oar he wants, nor other sail
6732 Than his own wings, between so distant shores.
6733
6734 See how he holds them pointed up to heaven,
6735 Fanning the air with the eternal pinions,
6736 That do not moult themselves like mortal hair!"
6737
6738 Then as still nearer and more near us came
6739 The Bird Divine, more radiant he appeared,
6740 So that near by the eye could not endure him,
6741
6742 But down I cast it; and he came to shore
6743 With a small vessel, very swift and light,
6744 So that the water swallowed naught thereof.
6745
6746 Upon the stern stood the Celestial Pilot;
6747 Beatitude seemed written in his face,
6748 And more than a hundred spirits sat within.
6749
6750 "In exitu Israel de Aegypto!"
6751 They chanted all together in one voice,
6752 With whatso in that psalm is after written.
6753
6754 Then made he sign of holy rood upon them,
6755 Whereat all cast themselves upon the shore,
6756 And he departed swiftly as he came.
6757
6758 The throng which still remained there unfamiliar
6759 Seemed with the place, all round about them gazing,
6760 As one who in new matters makes essay.
6761
6762 On every side was darting forth the day.
6763 The sun, who had with his resplendent shafts
6764 From the mid-heaven chased forth the Capricorn,
6765
6766 When the new people lifted up their faces
6767 Towards us, saying to us: "If ye know,
6768 Show us the way to go unto the mountain."
6769
6770 And answer made Virgilius: "Ye believe
6771 Perchance that we have knowledge of this place,
6772 But we are strangers even as yourselves.
6773
6774 Just now we came, a little while before you,
6775 Another way, which was so rough and steep,
6776 That mounting will henceforth seem sport to us."
6777
6778 The souls who had, from seeing me draw breath,
6779 Become aware that I was still alive,
6780 Pallid in their astonishment became;
6781
6782 And as to messenger who bears the olive
6783 The people throng to listen to the news,

6784 And no one shows himself afraid of crowding,
6785
6786 So at the sight of me stood motionless
6787 Those fortunate spirits, all of them, as if
6788 Oblivious to go and make them fair.
6789
6790 One from among them saw I coming forward,
6791 As to embrace me, with such great affection,
6792 That it incited me to do the like.
6793
6794 O empty shadows, save in aspect only!
6795 Three times behind it did I clasp my hands,
6796 As oft returned with them to my own breast!
6797
6798 I think with wonder I depicted me;
6799 Whereat the shadow smiled and backward drew;
6800 And I, pursuing it, pressed farther forward.
6801
6802 Gently it said that I should stay my steps;
6803 Then knew I who it was, and I entreated
6804 That it would stop awhile to speak with me.
6805
6806 It made reply to me: "Even as I loved thee
6807 In mortal body, so I love thee free;
6808 Therefore I stop; but wherefore goest thou?"
6809
6810 "My own Casella! to return once more
6811 There where I am, I make this journey," said I;
6812 "But how from thee has so much time be taken?"
6813
6814 And he to me: "No outrage has been done me,
6815 If he who takes both when and whom he pleases
6816 Has many times denied to me this passage,
6817
6818 For of a righteous will his own is made.
6819 He, sooth to say, for three months past has taken
6820 Whoever wished to enter with all peace;
6821
6822 Whence I, who now had turned unto that shore
6823 Where salt the waters of the Tiber grow,
6824 Benignantly by him have been received.
6825
6826 Unto that outlet now his wing is pointed,
6827 Because for evermore assemble there
6828 Those who tow'rds Acheron do not descend."
6829
6830 And I: "If some new law take not from thee
6831 Memory or practice of the song of love,
6832 Which used to quiet in me all my longings,
6833
6834 Thee may it please to comfort therewithal
6835 Somewhat this soul of mine, that with its body
6836 Hitherward coming is so much distressed."
6837
6838 "Love, that within my mind discourses with me,"
6839 Forthwith began he so melodiously,
6840 The melody within me still is sounding.

6841
6842 My Master, and myself, and all that people
6843 Which with him were, appeared as satisfied
6844 As if naught else might touch the mind of any.
6845
6846 We all of us were moveless and attentive
6847 Unto his notes; and lo! the grave old man,
6848 Exclaiming: "What is this, ye laggard spirits?
6849
6850 What negligence, what standing still is this?
6851 Run to the mountain to strip off the slough,
6852 That lets not God be manifest to you."
6853
6854 Even as when, collecting grain or tares,
6855 The doves, together at their pasture met,
6856 Quiet, nor showing their accustomed pride,
6857
6858 If aught appear of which they are afraid,
6859 Upon a sudden leave their food alone,
6860 Because they are assailed by greater care;
6861
6862 So that fresh company did I behold
6863 The song relinquish, and go tow'rds the hill,
6864 As one who goes, and knows not whitherward;
6865
6866 Nor was our own departure less in haste.
6867
6868
6869
6870 Purgatorio: Canto III
6871
6872
6873 Inasmuch as the instantaneous flight
6874 Had scattered them asunder o'er the plain,
6875 Turned to the mountain whither reason spurs us,
6876
6877 I pressed me close unto my faithful comrade,
6878 And how without him had I kept my course?
6879 Who would have led me up along the mountain?
6880
6881 He seemed to me within himself remorseful;
6882 O noble conscience, and without a stain,
6883 How sharp a sting is trivial fault to thee!
6884
6885 After his feet had laid aside the haste
6886 Which mars the dignity of every act,
6887 My mind, that hitherto had been restrained,
6888
6889 Let loose its faculties as if delighted,
6890 And I my sight directed to the hill
6891 That highest tow'rds the heaven uplifts itself.
6892
6893 The sun, that in our rear was flaming red,
6894 Was broken in front of me into the figure
6895 Which had in me the stoppage of its rays;
6896
6897 Unto one side I turned me, with the fear

6898 Of being left alone, when I beheld
6899 Only in front of me the ground obscured.
6900
6901 "Why dost thou still mistrust?" my Comforter
6902 Began to say to me turned wholly round;
6903 "Dost thou not think me with thee, and that I guide thee?
6904
6905 'Tis evening there already where is buried
6906 The body within which I cast a shadow;
6907 'Tis from Brundusium ta'en, and Naples has it.
6908
6909 Now if in front of me no shadow fall,
6910 Marvel not at it more than at the heavens,
6911 Because one ray impedeth not another
6912
6913 To suffer torments, both of cold and heat,
6914 Bodies like this that Power provides, which wills
6915 That how it works be not unveiled to us.
6916
6917 Insane is he who hopeth that our reason
6918 Can traverse the illimitable way,
6919 Which the one Substance in three Persons follows!
6920
6921 Mortals, remain contented at the 'Quia;'
6922 For if ye had been able to see all,
6923 No need there were for Mary to give birth;
6924
6925 And ye have seen desiring without fruit,
6926 Those whose desire would have been quieted,
6927 Which evermore is given them for a grief.
6928
6929 I speak of Aristotle and of Plato,
6930 And many others; "--and here bowed his head,
6931 And more he said not, and remained disturbed.
6932
6933 We came meanwhile unto the mountain's foot;
6934 There so precipitate we found the rock,
6935 That nimble legs would there have been in vain.
6936
6937 'Twixt Lerici and Turbia, the most desert,
6938 The most secluded pathway is a stair
6939 Easy and open, if compared with that.
6940
6941 "Who knoweth now upon which hand the hill
6942 Slopes down," my Master said, his footsteps staying,
6943 "So that who goeth without wings may mount?"
6944
6945 And while he held his eyes upon the ground
6946 Examining the nature of the path,
6947 And I was looking up around the rock,
6948
6949 On the left hand appeared to me a throng
6950 Of souls, that moved their feet in our direction,
6951 And did not seem to move, they came so slowly.
6952
6953 "Lift up thine eyes," I to the Master said;
6954 "Behold, on this side, who will give us counsel,

6955 If thou of thine own self can have it not."
6956
6957 Then he looked at me, and with frank expression
6958 Replied: "Let us go there, for they come slowly,
6959 And thou be steadfast in thy hope, sweet son."
6960
6961 Still was that people as far off from us,
6962 After a thousand steps of ours I say,
6963 As a good thrower with his hand would reach,
6964
6965 When they all crowded unto the hard masses
6966 Of the high bank, and motionless stood and close,
6967 As he stands still to look who goes in doubt.
6968
6969 "O happy dead! O spirits elect already!"
6970 Virgilius made beginning, "by that peace
6971 Which I believe is waiting for you all,
6972
6973 Tell us upon what side the mountain slopes,
6974 So that the going up be possible,
6975 For to lose time irks him most who most knows."
6976
6977 As sheep come issuing forth from out the fold
6978 By ones and twos and threes, and the others stand
6979 Timidly, holding down their eyes and nostrils,
6980
6981 And what the foremost does the others do,
6982 Huddling themselves against her, if she stop,
6983 Simple and quiet and the wherefore know not;
6984
6985 So moving to approach us thereupon
6986 I saw the leader of that fortunate flock,
6987 Modest in face and dignified in gait.
6988
6989 As soon as those in the advance saw broken
6990 The light upon the ground at my right side,
6991 So that from me the shadow reached the rock,
6992
6993 They stopped, and backward drew themselves somewhat;
6994 And all the others, who came after them,
6995 Not knowing why nor wherefore, did the same.
6996
6997 "Without your asking, I confess to you
6998 This is a human body which you see,
6999 Whereby the sunshine on the ground is cleft.
7000
7001 Marvel ye not thereat, but be persuaded
7002 That not without a power which comes from Heaven
7003 Doth he endeavour to surmount this wall."
7004
7005 The Master thus; and said those worthy people:
7006 "Return ye then, and enter in before us,"
7007 Making a signal with the back o' the hand
7008
7009 And one of them began: "Whoe'er thou art,
7010 Thus going turn thine eyes, consider well
7011 If e'er thou saw me in the other world."

7012
7013 I turned me tow'rds him, and looked at him closely;
7014 Blond was he, beautiful, and of noble aspect,
7015 But one of his eyebrows had a blow divided.
7016
7017 When with humility I had disclaimed
7018 E'er having seen him, "Now behold!" he said,
7019 And showed me high upon his breast a wound.
7020
7021 Then said he with a smile: "I am Manfredi,
7022 The grandson of the Empress Costanza;
7023 Therefore, when thou returnest, I beseech thee
7024
7025 Go to my daughter beautiful, the mother
7026 Of Sicily's honour and of Aragon's,
7027 And the truth tell her, if aught else be told.
7028
7029 After I had my body lacerated
7030 By these two mortal stabs, I gave myself
7031 Weeping to Him, who willingly doth pardon.
7032
7033 Horrible my iniquities had been;
7034 But Infinite Goodness hath such ample arms,
7035 That it receives whatever turns to it.
7036
7037 Had but Cosenza's pastor, who in chase
7038 Of me was sent by Clement at that time,
7039 In God read understandingly this page,
7040
7041 The bones of my dead body still would be
7042 At the bridge-head, near unto Benevento,
7043 Under the safeguard of the heavy cairn.
7044
7045 Now the rain bathes and moveth them the wind,
7046 Beyond the realm, almost beside the Verde,
7047 Where he transported them with tapers quenched.
7048
7049 By malison of theirs is not so lost
7050 Eternal Love, that it cannot return,
7051 So long as hope has anything of green.
7052
7053 True is it, who in contumacy dies
7054 Of Holy Church, though penitent at last,
7055 Must wait upon the outside this bank
7056
7057 Thirty times told the time that he has been
7058 In his presumption, unless such decree
7059 Shorter by means of righteous prayers become.
7060
7061 See now if thou hast power to make me happy,
7062 By making known unto my good Costanza
7063 How thou hast seen me, and this ban beside,
7064
7065 For those on earth can much advance us here."
7066
7067
7068

7069 Purgatorio: Canto IV

7070

7071

7072 Whenever by delight or else by pain,

7073 That seizes any faculty of ours,

7074 Wholly to that the soul collects itself,

7075

7076 It seemeth that no other power it heeds;

7077 And this against that error is which thinks

7078 One soul above another kindles in us.

7079

7080 And hence, whenever aught is heard or seen

7081 Which keeps the soul intently bent upon it,

7082 Time passes on, and we perceive it not,

7083

7084 Because one faculty is that which listens,

7085 And other that which the soul keeps entire;

7086 This is as if in bonds, and that is free.

7087

7088 Of this I had experience positive

7089 In hearing and in gazing at that spirit;

7090 For fifty full degrees uprisen was

7091

7092 The sun, and I had not perceived it, when

7093 We came to where those souls with one accord

7094 Cried out unto us: "Here is what you ask."

7095

7096 A greater opening ofttimes hedges up

7097 With but a little forkful of his thorns

7098 The villager, what time the grape imbrown,

7099

7100 Than was the passage-way through which ascended

7101 Only my Leader and myself behind him,

7102 After that company departed from us.

7103

7104 One climbs Sanleo and descends in Noli,

7105 And mounts the summit of Bismantova,

7106 With feet alone; but here one needs must fly;

7107

7108 With the swift pinions and the plumes I say

7109 Of great desire, conducted after him

7110 Who gave me hope, and made a light for me.

7111

7112 We mounted upward through the rifted rock,

7113 And on each side the border pressed upon us,

7114 And feet and hands the ground beneath required.

7115

7116 When we were come upon the upper rim

7117 Of the high bank, out on the open slope,

7118 "My Master," said I, "what way shall we take?"

7119

7120 And he to me: "No step of thine descend;

7121 Still up the mount behind me win thy way,

7122 Till some sage escort shall appear to us."

7123

7124 The summit was so high it vanquished sight,

7125 And the hillside precipitous far more

7126 Than line from middle quadrant to the centre.
7127
7128 Spent with fatigue was I, when I began:
7129 "O my sweet Father! turn thee and behold
7130 How I remain alone, unless thou stay!"
7131
7132 "O son," he said, "up yonder drag thyself,"
7133 Pointing me to a terrace somewhat higher,
7134 Which on that side encircles all the hill.
7135
7136 These words of his so spurred me on, that I
7137 Strained every nerve, behind him scrambling up,
7138 Until the circle was beneath my feet.
7139
7140 Thereon ourselves we seated both of us
7141 Turned to the East, from which we had ascended,
7142 For all men are delighted to look back.
7143
7144 To the low shores mine eyes I first directed,
7145 Then to the sun uplifted them, and wondered
7146 That on the left hand we were smitten by it.
7147
7148 The Poet well perceived that I was wholly
7149 Bewildered at the chariot of the light,
7150 Where 'twixt us and the Aquilon it entered.
7151
7152 Whereon he said to me: "If Castor and Pollux
7153 Were in the company of yonder mirror,
7154 That up and down conducteth with its light,
7155
7156 Thou wouldst behold the zodiac's jagged wheel
7157 Revolving still more near unto the Bears,
7158 Unless it swerved aside from its old track.
7159
7160 How that may be wouldst thou have power to think,
7161 Collected in thyself, imagine Zion
7162 Together with this mount on earth to stand,
7163
7164 So that they both one sole horizon have,
7165 And hemispheres diverse; whereby the road
7166 Which Phaeton, alas! knew not to drive,
7167
7168 Thou'lt see how of necessity must pass
7169 This on one side, when that upon the other,
7170 If thine intelligence right clearly heed."
7171
7172 "Truly, my Master," said I, "never yet
7173 Saw I so clearly as I now discern,
7174 There where my wit appeared incompetent,
7175
7176 That the mid-circle of supernal motion,
7177 Which in some art is the Equator called,
7178 And aye remains between the Sun and Winter,
7179
7180 For reason which thou sayest, departeth hence
7181 Tow'rds the Septentrion, what time the Hebrews
7182 Beheld it tow'rds the region of the heat.

7183
7184 But, if it pleaseth thee, I fain would learn
7185 How far we have to go; for the hill rises
7186 Higher than eyes of mine have power to rise."
7187
7188 And he to me: "This mount is such, that ever
7189 At the beginning down below 'tis tiresome,
7190 And aye the more one climbs, the less it hurts.
7191
7192 Therefore, when it shall seem so pleasant to thee,
7193 That going up shall be to thee as easy
7194 As going down the current in a boat,
7195
7196 Then at this pathway's ending thou wilt be;
7197 There to repose thy panting breath expect;
7198 No more I answer; and this I know for true."
7199
7200 And as he finished uttering these words,
7201 A voice close by us sounded: "Peradventure
7202 Thou wilt have need of sitting down ere that."
7203
7204 At sound thereof each one of us turned round,
7205 And saw upon the left hand a great rock,
7206 Which neither I nor he before had noticed.
7207
7208 Thither we drew; and there were persons there
7209 Who in the shadow stood behind the rock,
7210 As one through indolence is wont to stand.
7211
7212 And one of them, who seemed to me fatigued,
7213 Was sitting down, and both his knees embraced,
7214 Holding his face low down between them bowed.
7215
7216 "O my sweet Lord," I said, "do turn thine eye
7217 On him who shows himself more negligent
7218 Then even Sloth herself his sister were."
7219
7220 Then he turned round to us, and he gave heed,
7221 Just lifting up his eyes above his thigh,
7222 And said: "Now go thou up, for thou art valiant."
7223
7224 Then knew I who he was; and the distress,
7225 That still a little did my breathing quicken,
7226 My going to him hindered not; and after
7227
7228 I came to him he hardly raised his head,
7229 Saying: "Hast thou seen clearly how the sun
7230 O'er thy left shoulder drives his chariot?"
7231
7232 His sluggish attitude and his curt words
7233 A little unto laughter moved my lips;
7234 Then I began: "Belacqua, I grieve not
7235
7236 For thee henceforth; but tell me, wherefore seated
7237 In this place art thou? Waitest thou an escort?
7238 Or has thy usual habit seized upon thee?"
7239

7240 And he: "O brother, what's the use of climbing?
 7241 Since to my torment would not let me go
 7242 The Angel of God, who sitteth at the gate.
 7243
 7244 First heaven must needs so long revolve me round
 7245 Outside thereof, as in my life it did,
 7246 Since the good sighs I to the end postponed,
 7247
 7248 Unless, e'er that, some prayer may bring me aid
 7249 Which rises from a heart that lives in grace;
 7250 What profit others that in heaven are heard not?"
 7251
 7252 Meanwhile the Poet was before me mounting,
 7253 And saying: "Come now; see the sun has touched
 7254 Meridian, and from the shore the night
 7255
 7256 Covers already with her foot Morocco."
 7257
 7258
 7259
 7260 Purgatorio: Canto V
 7261
 7262
 7263 I had already from those shades departed,
 7264 And followed in the footsteps of my Guide,
 7265 When from behind, pointing his finger at me,
 7266
 7267 One shouted: "See, it seems as if shone not
 7268 The sunshine on the left of him below,
 7269 And like one living seems he to conduct him."
 7270
 7271 Mine eyes I turned at utterance of these words,
 7272 And saw them watching with astonishment
 7273 But me, but me, and the light which was broken!
 7274
 7275 "Why doth thy mind so occupy itself,"
 7276 The Master said, "that thou thy pace dost slacken?
 7277 What matters it to thee what here is whispered?"
 7278
 7279 Come after me, and let the people talk;
 7280 Stand like a steadfast tower, that never wags
 7281 Its top for all the blowing of the winds;
 7282
 7283 For evermore the man in whom is springing
 7284 Thought upon thought, removes from him the mark,
 7285 Because the force of one the other weakens."
 7286
 7287 What could I say in answer but "I come"?
 7288 I said it somewhat with that colour tinged
 7289 Which makes a man of pardon sometimes worthy.
 7290
 7291 Meanwhile along the mountain-side across
 7292 Came people in advance of us a little,
 7293 Singing the Miserere verse by verse.
 7294
 7295 When they became aware I gave no place
 7296 For passage of the sunshine through my body,

7297 They changed their song into a long, hoarse "Oh!"
7298
7299 And two of them, in form of messengers,
7300 Ran forth to meet us, and demanded of us,
7301 "Of your condition make us cognisant."
7302
7303 And said my Master: "Ye can go your way
7304 And carry back again to those who sent you,
7305 That this one's body is of very flesh.
7306
7307 If they stood still because they saw his shadow,
7308 As I suppose, enough is answered them;
7309 Him let them honour, it may profit them."
7310
7311 Vapours enkindled saw I ne'er so swiftly
7312 At early nightfall cleave the air serene,
7313 Nor, at the set of sun, the clouds of August,
7314
7315 But upward they returned in briefer time,
7316 And, on arriving, with the others wheeled
7317 Tow'rds us, like troops that run without a rein.
7318
7319 "This folk that presses unto us is great,
7320 And cometh to implore thee," said the Poet;
7321 "So still go onward, and in going listen."
7322
7323 "O soul that goest to beatitude
7324 With the same members wherewith thou wast born,"
7325 Shouting they came, "a little stay thy steps,
7326
7327 Look, if thou e'er hast any of us seen,
7328 So that o'er yonder thou bear news of him;
7329 Ah, why dost thou go on? Ah, why not stay?
7330
7331 Long since we all were slain by violence,
7332 And sinners even to the latest hour;
7333 Then did a light from heaven admonish us,
7334
7335 So that, both penitent and pardoning, forth
7336 From life we issued reconciled to God,
7337 Who with desire to see Him stirs our hearts."
7338
7339 And I: "Although I gaze into your faces,
7340 No one I recognize; but if may please you
7341 Aught I have power to do, ye well-born spirits,
7342
7343 Speak ye, and I will do it, by that peace
7344 Which, following the feet of such a Guide,
7345 From world to world makes itself sought by me."
7346
7347 And one began: "Each one has confidence
7348 In thy good offices without an oath,
7349 Unless the I cannot cut off the I will;
7350
7351 Whence I, who speak alone before the others,
7352 Pray thee, if ever thou dost see the land
7353 That 'twixt Romagna lies and that of Charles,

7354
7355 Thou be so courteous to me of thy prayers
7356 In Fano, that they pray for me devoutly,
7357 That I may purge away my grave offences.
7358
7359 From thence was I; but the deep wounds, through which
7360 Issued the blood wherein I had my seat,
7361 Were dealt me in bosom of the Antenori,
7362
7363 There where I thought to be the most secure;
7364 'Twas he of Este had it done, who held me
7365 In hatred far beyond what justice willed.
7366
7367 But if towards the Mira I had fled,
7368 When I was overtaken at Oriaco,
7369 I still should be o'er yonder where men breathe.
7370
7371 I ran to the lagoon, and reeds and mire
7372 Did so entangle me I fell, and saw there
7373 A lake made from my veins upon the ground."
7374
7375 Then said another: "Ah, be that desire
7376 Fulfilled that draws thee to the lofty mountain,
7377 As thou with pious pity aidest mine.
7378
7379 I was of Montefeltro, and am Buonconte;
7380 Giovanna, nor none other cares for me;
7381 Hence among these I go with downcast front."
7382
7383 And I to him: "What violence or what chance
7384 Led thee astray so far from Campaldino,
7385 That never has thy sepulture been known?"
7386
7387 "Oh," he replied, "at Casentino's foot
7388 A river crosses named Archiano, born
7389 Above the Hermitage in Apennine.
7390
7391 There where the name thereof becometh void
7392 Did I arrive, pierced through and through the throat,
7393 Fleeing on foot, and bloodying the plain;
7394
7395 There my sight lost I, and my utterance
7396 Ceased in the name of Mary, and thereat
7397 I fell, and tenantless my flesh remained.
7398
7399 Truth will I speak, repeat it to the living;
7400 God's Angel took me up, and he of hell
7401 Shouted: 'O thou from heaven, why dost thou rob me?
7402
7403 Thou bearest away the eternal part of him,
7404 For one poor little tear, that takes him from me;
7405 But with the rest I'll deal in other fashion!'
7406
7407 Well knowest thou how in the air is gathered
7408 That humid vapour which to water turns,
7409 Soon as it rises where the cold doth grasp it.
7410

7411 He joined that evil will, which aye seeks evil,
 7412 To intellect, and moved the mist and wind
 7413 By means of power, which his own nature gave;
 7414
 7415 Thereafter, when the day was spent, the valley
 7416 From Pratomagno to the great yoke covered
 7417 With fog, and made the heaven above intent,
 7418
 7419 So that the pregnant air to water changed;
 7420 Down fell the rain, and to the gullies came
 7421 Whate'er of it earth tolerated not;
 7422
 7423 And as it mingled with the mighty torrents,
 7424 Towards the royal river with such speed
 7425 It headlong rushed, that nothing held it back.
 7426
 7427 My frozen body near unto its outlet
 7428 The robust Archian found, and into Arno
 7429 Thrust it, and loosened from my breast the cross
 7430
 7431 I made of me, when agony o'ercame me;
 7432 It rolled me on the banks and on the bottom,
 7433 Then with its booty covered and begirt me."
 7434
 7435 "Ah, when thou hast returned unto the world,
 7436 And rested thee from thy long journeying,"
 7437 After the second followed the third spirit,
 7438
 7439 "Do thou remember me who am the Pia;
 7440 Siena made me, unmade me Maremma;
 7441 He knoweth it, who had encircled first,
 7442
 7443 Espousing me, my finger with his gem."
 7444
 7445
 7446
 7447 Purgatorio: Canto VI
 7448
 7449
 7450 Whene'er is broken up the game of Zara,
 7451 He who has lost remains behind despondent,
 7452 The throws repeating, and in sadness learns;
 7453
 7454 The people with the other all depart;
 7455 One goes in front, and one behind doth pluck him,
 7456 And at his side one brings himself to mind;
 7457
 7458 He pauses not, and this and that one hears;
 7459 They crowd no more to whom his hand he stretches,
 7460 And from the throng he thus defends himself.
 7461
 7462 Even such was I in that dense multitude,
 7463 Turning to them this way and that my face,
 7464 And, promising, I freed myself therefrom.
 7465
 7466 There was the Aretine, who from the arms
 7467 Untamed of Ghin di Tacco had his death,

7468 And he who fleeing from pursuit was drowned.
 7469
 7470 There was imploring with his hands outstretched
 7471 Frederick Novello, and that one of Pisa
 7472 Who made the good Marzucco seem so strong.
 7473
 7474 I saw Count Orso; and the soul divided
 7475 By hatred and by envy from its body,
 7476 As it declared, and not for crime committed,
 7477
 7478 Pierre de la Brosse I say; and here provide
 7479 While still on earth the Lady of Brabant,
 7480 So that for this she be of no worse flock!
 7481
 7482 As soon as I was free from all those shades
 7483 Who only prayed that some one else may pray,
 7484 So as to hasten their becoming holy,
 7485
 7486 Began I: "It appears that thou deniest,
 7487 O light of mine, expressly in some text,
 7488 That orison can bend decree of Heaven;
 7489
 7490 And ne'ertheless these people pray for this.
 7491 Might then their expectation bootless be?
 7492 Or is to me thy saying not quite clear?"
 7493
 7494 And he to me: "My writing is explicit,
 7495 And not fallacious is the hope of these,
 7496 If with sane intellect 'tis well regarded;
 7497
 7498 For top of judgment doth not veil itself,
 7499 Because the fire of love fulfils at once
 7500 What he must satisfy who here installs him.
 7501
 7502 And there, where I affirmed that proposition,
 7503 Defect was not amended by a prayer,
 7504 Because the prayer from God was separate.
 7505
 7506 Verily, in so deep a questioning
 7507 Do not decide, unless she tell it thee,
 7508 Who light 'twixt truth and intellect shall be.
 7509
 7510 I know not if thou understand; I speak
 7511 Of Beatrice; her shalt thou see above,
 7512 Smiling and happy, on this mountain's top."
 7513
 7514 And I: "Good Leader, let us make more haste,
 7515 For I no longer tire me as before;
 7516 And see, e'en now the hill a shadow casts."
 7517
 7518 "We will go forward with this day" he answered,
 7519 "As far as now is possible for us;
 7520 But otherwise the fact is than thou thinkest.
 7521
 7522 Ere thou art up there, thou shalt see return
 7523 Him, who now hides himself behind the hill,
 7524 So that thou dost not interrupt his rays.

7525
7526 But yonder there behold! a soul that stationed
7527 All, all alone is looking hitherward;
7528 It will point out to us the quickest way."
7529
7530 We came up unto it; O Lombard soul,
7531 How lofty and disdainful thou didst bear thee,
7532 And grand and slow in moving of thine eyes!
7533
7534 Nothing whatever did it say to us,
7535 But let us go our way, eying us only
7536 After the manner of a couchant lion;
7537
7538 Still near to it Virgilius drew, entreating
7539 That it would point us out the best ascent;
7540 And it replied not unto his demand,
7541
7542 But of our native land and of our life
7543 It questioned us; and the sweet Guide began:
7544 "Mantua,"--and the shade, all in itself recluse,
7545
7546 Rose tow'ards him from the place where first it was,
7547 Saying: "O Mantuan, I am Sordello
7548 Of thine own land!" and one embraced the other.
7549
7550 Ah! servile Italy, grief's hostelry!
7551 A ship without a pilot in great tempest!
7552 No Lady thou of Provinces, but brothel!
7553
7554 That noble soul was so impatient, only
7555 At the sweet sound of his own native land,
7556 To make its citizen glad welcome there;
7557
7558 And now within thee are not without war
7559 Thy living ones, and one doth gnaw the other
7560 Of those whom one wall and one fosse shut in!
7561
7562 Search, wretched one, all round about the shores
7563 Thy seaboard, and then look within thy bosom,
7564 If any part of thee enjoyeth peace!
7565
7566 What boots it, that for thee Justinian
7567 The bridle mend, if empty be the saddle?
7568 Withouten this the shame would be the less.
7569
7570 Ah! people, thou that oughtest to be devout,
7571 And to let Caesar sit upon the saddle,
7572 If well thou hearest what God teacheth thee,
7573
7574 Behold how fell this wild beast has become,
7575 Being no longer by the spur corrected,
7576 Since thou hast laid thy hand upon the bridle.
7577
7578 O German Albert! who abandonest
7579 Her that has grown recalcitrant and savage,
7580 And oughtest to bestride her saddle-bow,
7581

7582 May a just judgment from the stars down fall
7583 Upon thy blood, and be it new and open,
7584 That thy successor may have fear thereof;
7585
7586 Because thy father and thyself have suffered,
7587 By greed of those transalpine lands distrained,
7588 The garden of the empire to be waste.
7589
7590 Come and behold Montecchi and Cappelletti,
7591 Monaldi and Fillippeschi, careless man!
7592 Those sad already, and these doubt-depressed!
7593
7594 Come, cruel one! come and behold the oppression
7595 Of thy nobility, and cure their wounds,
7596 And thou shalt see how safe is Santafigiore!
7597
7598 Come and behold thy Rome, that is lamenting,
7599 Widowed, alone, and day and night exclaims,
7600 "My Caesar, why hast thou forsaken me?"
7601
7602 Come and behold how loving are the people;
7603 And if for us no pity moveth thee,
7604 Come and be made ashamed of thy renown!
7605
7606 And if it lawful be, O Jove Supreme!
7607 Who upon earth for us wast crucified,
7608 Are thy just eyes averted elsewhere?
7609
7610 Or preparation is 't, that, in the abyss
7611 Of thine own counsel, for some good thou makest
7612 From our perception utterly cut off?
7613
7614 For all the towns of Italy are full
7615 Of tyrants, and becometh a Marcellus
7616 Each peasant churl who plays the partisan!
7617
7618 My Florence! well mayst thou contented be
7619 With this digression, which concerns thee not,
7620 Thanks to thy people who such forethought take!
7621
7622 Many at heart have justice, but shoot slowly,
7623 That unadvised they come not to the bow,
7624 But on their very lips thy people have it!
7625
7626 Many refuse to bear the common burden;
7627 But thy solicitous people answereth
7628 Without being asked, and crieth: "I submit."
7629
7630 Now be thou joyful, for thou hast good reason;
7631 Thou affluent, thou in peace, thou full of wisdom!
7632 If I speak true, the event conceals it not.
7633
7634 Athens and Lacedaemon, they who made
7635 The ancient laws, and were so civilized,
7636 Made towards living well a little sign
7637
7638 Compared with thee, who makest such fine-spun

7639 Provisions, that to middle of November
 7640 Reaches not what thou in October spinnest.
 7641
 7642 How oft, within the time of thy remembrance,
 7643 Laws, money, offices, and usages
 7644 Hast thou remodelled, and renewed thy members?
 7645
 7646 And if thou mind thee well, and see the light,
 7647 Thou shalt behold thyself like a sick woman,
 7648 Who cannot find repose upon her down,
 7649
 7650 But by her tossing wardeth off her pain.
 7651
 7652
 7653
 7654 Purgatorio: Canto VII
 7655
 7656
 7657 After the gracious and glad salutations
 7658 Had three and four times been reiterated,
 7659 Sordello backward drew and said, "Who are you?"
 7660
 7661 "Or ever to this mountain were directed
 7662 The souls deserving to ascend to God,
 7663 My bones were buried by Octavian.
 7664
 7665 I am Virgilius; and for no crime else
 7666 Did I lose heaven, than for not having faith;"
 7667 In this wise then my Leader made reply.
 7668
 7669 As one who suddenly before him sees
 7670 Something whereat he marvels, who believes
 7671 And yet does not, saying, "It is! it is not!"
 7672
 7673 So he appeared; and then bowed down his brow,
 7674 And with humility returned towards him,
 7675 And, where inferiors embrace, embraced him.
 7676
 7677 "O glory of the Latians, thou," he said,
 7678 "Through whom our language showed what it could do
 7679 O pride eternal of the place I came from,
 7680
 7681 What merit or what grace to me reveals thee?
 7682 If I to hear thy words be worthy, tell me
 7683 If thou dost come from Hell, and from what cloister."
 7684
 7685 "Through all the circles of the doleful realm,"
 7686 Responded he, "have I come hitherward;
 7687 Heaven's power impelled me, and with that I come.
 7688
 7689 I by not doing, not by doing, lost
 7690 The sight of that high sun which thou desirest,
 7691 And which too late by me was recognized.
 7692
 7693 A place there is below not sad with torments,
 7694 But darkness only, where the lamentations
 7695 Have not the sound of wailing, but are sighs.

7696
7697 There dwell I with the little innocents
7698 Snatched by the teeth of Death, or ever they
7699 Were from our human sinfulness exempt.
7700
7701 There dwell I among those who the three saintly
7702 Virtues did not put on, and without vice
7703 The others knew and followed all of them.
7704
7705 But if thou know and can, some indication
7706 Give us by which we may the sooner come
7707 Where Purgatory has its right beginning."
7708
7709 He answered: "No fixed place has been assigned us;
7710 'Tis lawful for me to go up and round;
7711 So far as I can go, as guide I join thee.
7712
7713 But see already how the day declines,
7714 And to go up by night we are not able;
7715 Therefore 'tis well to think of some fair sojourn.
7716
7717 Souls are there on the right hand here withdrawn;
7718 If thou permit me I will lead thee to them,
7719 And thou shalt know them not without delight."
7720
7721 "How is this?" was the answer; "should one wish
7722 To mount by night would he prevented be
7723 By others? or mayhap would not have power?"
7724
7725 And on the ground the good Sordello drew
7726 His finger, saying, "See, this line alone
7727 Thou couldst not pass after the sun is gone;
7728
7729 Not that aught else would hindrance give, however,
7730 To going up, save the nocturnal darkness;
7731 This with the want of power the will perplexes.
7732
7733 We might indeed therewith return below,
7734 And, wandering, walk the hill-side round about,
7735 While the horizon holds the day imprisoned."
7736
7737 Thereon my Lord, as if in wonder, said:
7738 "Do thou conduct us thither, where thou sayest
7739 That we can take delight in tarrying."
7740
7741 Little had we withdrawn us from that place,
7742 When I perceived the mount was hollowed out
7743 In fashion as the valleys here are hollowed.
7744
7745 "Thitherward," said that shade, "will we repair,
7746 Where of itself the hill-side makes a lap,
7747 And there for the new day will we await."
7748
7749 'Twixt hill and plain there was a winding path
7750 Which led us to the margin of that dell,
7751 Where dies the border more than half away.
7752

7753 Gold and fine silver, and scarlet and pearl-white,
7754 The Indian wood resplendent and serene,
7755 Fresh emerald the moment it is broken,
7756
7757 By herbage and by flowers within that hollow
7758 Planted, each one in colour would be vanquished,
7759 As by its greater vanquished is the less.
7760
7761 Nor in that place had nature painted only,
7762 But of the sweetness of a thousand odours
7763 Made there a mingled fragrance and unknown.
7764
7765 "Salve Regina," on the green and flowers
7766 There seated, singing, spirits I beheld,
7767 Which were not visible outside the valley.
7768
7769 "Before the scanty sun now seeks his nest,"
7770 Began the Mantuan who had led us thither,
7771 "Among them do not wish me to conduct you.
7772
7773 Better from off this ledge the acts and faces
7774 Of all of them will you discriminate,
7775 Than in the plain below received among them.
7776
7777 He who sits highest, and the semblance bears
7778 Of having what he should have done neglected,
7779 And to the others' song moves not his lips,
7780
7781 Rudolph the Emperor was, who had the power
7782 To heal the wounds that Italy have slain,
7783 So that through others slowly she revives.
7784
7785 The other, who in look doth comfort him,
7786 Governed the region where the water springs,
7787 The Moldau bears the Elbe, and Elbe the sea.
7788
7789 His name was Ottocar; and in swaddling-clothes
7790 Far better he than bearded Wincellaus
7791 His son, who feeds in luxury and ease.
7792
7793 And the small-nosed, who close in council seems
7794 With him that has an aspect so benign,
7795 Died fleeing and disflowering the lily;
7796
7797 Look there, how he is beating at his breast!
7798 Behold the other one, who for his cheek
7799 Sighing has made of his own palm a bed;
7800
7801 Father and father-in-law of France's Pest
7802 Are they, and know his vicious life and lewd,
7803 And hence proceeds the grief that so doth pierce them.
7804
7805 He who appears so stalwart, and chimes in,
7806 Singing, with that one of the manly nose,
7807 The cord of every valour wore begirt;
7808
7809 And if as King had after him remained

7810 The stripling who in rear of him is sitting,
 7811 Well had the valour passed from vase to vase,
 7812
 7813 Which cannot of the other heirs be said.
 7814 Frederick and Jacomo possess the realms,
 7815 But none the better heritage possesses.
 7816
 7817 Not oftentimes upriseth through the branches
 7818 The probity of man; and this He wills
 7819 Who gives it, so that we may ask of Him.
 7820
 7821 Eke to the large-nosed reach my words, no less
 7822 Than to the other, Pier, who with him sings;
 7823 Whence Provence and Apulia grieve already
 7824
 7825 The plant is as inferior to its seed,
 7826 As more than Beatrice and Margaret
 7827 Costanza boasteth of her husband still.
 7828
 7829 Behold the monarch of the simple life,
 7830 Harry of England, sitting there alone;
 7831 He in his branches has a better issue.
 7832
 7833 He who the lowest on the ground among them
 7834 Sits looking upward, is the Marquis William,
 7835 For whose sake Alessandria and her war
 7836
 7837 Make Monferrat and Canavese weep."
 7838
 7839
 7840
 7841 Purgatorio: Canto VIII
 7842
 7843
 7844 'Twas now the hour that turneth back desire
 7845 In those who sail the sea, and melts the heart,
 7846 The day they've said to their sweet friends farewell,
 7847
 7848 And the new pilgrim penetrates with love,
 7849 If he doth hear from far away a bell
 7850 That seemeth to deplore the dying day,
 7851
 7852 When I began to make of no avail
 7853 My hearing, and to watch one of the souls
 7854 Uprisen, that begged attention with its hand.
 7855
 7856 It joined and lifted upward both its palms,
 7857 Fixing its eyes upon the orient,
 7858 As if it said to God, "Naught else I care for."
 7859
 7860 "Te lucis ante" so devoutly issued
 7861 Forth from its mouth, and with such dulcet notes,
 7862 It made me issue forth from my own mind.
 7863
 7864 And then the others, sweetly and devoutly,
 7865 Accompanied it through all the hymn entire,
 7866 Having their eyes on the supernal wheels.

7867
7868 Here, Reader, fix thine eyes well on the truth,
7869 For now indeed so subtile is the veil,
7870 Surely to penetrate within is easy.
7871
7872 I saw that army of the gentle-born
7873 Thereafterward in silence upward gaze,
7874 As if in expectation, pale and humble;
7875
7876 And from on high come forth and down descend,
7877 I saw two Angels with two flaming swords,
7878 Truncated and deprived of their points.
7879
7880 Green as the little leaflets just now born
7881 Their garments were, which, by their verdant pinions
7882 Beaten and blown abroad, they trailed behind.
7883
7884 One just above us came to take his station,
7885 And one descended to the opposite bank,
7886 So that the people were contained between them.
7887
7888 Clearly in them discerned I the blond head;
7889 But in their faces was the eye bewildered,
7890 As faculty confounded by excess.
7891
7892 "From Mary's bosom both of them have come,"
7893 Sordello said, "as guardians of the valley
7894 Against the serpent, that will come anon."
7895
7896 Whereupon I, who knew not by what road,
7897 Turned round about, and closely drew myself,
7898 Utterly frozen, to the faithful shoulders.
7899
7900 And once again Sordello: "Now descend we
7901 'Mid the grand shades, and we will speak to them;
7902 Right pleasant will it be for them to see you."
7903
7904 Only three steps I think that I descended,
7905 And was below, and saw one who was looking
7906 Only at me, as if he fain would know me.
7907
7908 Already now the air was growing dark,
7909 But not so that between his eyes and mine
7910 It did not show what it before locked up.
7911
7912 Tow'rds me he moved, and I tow'rds him did move;
7913 Noble Judge Nino! how it me delighted,
7914 When I beheld thee not among the damned!
7915
7916 No greeting fair was left unsaid between us;
7917 Then asked he: "How long is it since thou camest
7918 O'er the far waters to the mountain's foot?"
7919
7920 "Oh!" said I to him, "through the dismal places
7921 I came this morn; and am in the first life,
7922 Albeit the other, going thus, I gain."
7923

7924 And on the instant my reply was heard,
7925 He and Sordello both shrank back from me,
7926 Like people who are suddenly bewildered.
7927
7928 One to Virgilius, and the other turned
7929 To one who sat there, crying, "Up, Currado!
7930 Come and behold what God in grace has willed!"
7931
7932 Then, turned to me: "By that especial grace
7933 Thou owest unto Him, who so conceals
7934 His own first wherefore, that it has no ford,
7935
7936 When thou shalt be beyond the waters wide,
7937 Tell my Giovanna that she pray for me,
7938 Where answer to the innocent is made.
7939
7940 I do not think her mother loves me more,
7941 Since she has laid aside her wimple white,
7942 Which she, unhappy, needs must wish again.
7943
7944 Through her full easily is comprehended
7945 How long in woman lasts the fire of love,
7946 If eye or touch do not relight it often.
7947
7948 So fair a hatchment will not make for her
7949 The Viper marshalling the Milanese
7950 A-field, as would have made Gallura's Cock."
7951
7952 In this wise spake he, with the stamp impressed
7953 Upon his aspect of that righteous zeal
7954 Which measurably burneth in the heart.
7955
7956 My greedy eyes still wandered up to heaven,
7957 Still to that point where slowest are the stars,
7958 Even as a wheel the nearest to its axle.
7959
7960 And my Conductor: "Son, what dost thou gaze at
7961 Up there?" And I to him: "At those three torches
7962 With which this hither pole is all on fire."
7963
7964 And he to me: "The four resplendent stars
7965 Thou sawest this morning are down yonder low,
7966 And these have mounted up to where those were."
7967
7968 As he was speaking, to himself Sordello
7969 Drew him, and said, "Lo there our Adversary!"
7970 And pointed with his finger to look thither.
7971
7972 Upon the side on which the little valley
7973 No barrier hath, a serpent was; perchance
7974 The same which gave to Eve the bitter food.
7975
7976 'Twixt grass and flowers came on the evil streak,
7977 Turning at times its head about, and licking
7978 Its back like to a beast that smoothes itself.
7979
7980 I did not see, and therefore cannot say

7981 How the celestial falcons 'gan to move,
 7982 But well I saw that they were both in motion.
 7983
 7984 Hearing the air cleft by their verdant wings,
 7985 The serpent fled, and round the Angels wheeled,
 7986 Up to their stations flying back alike.
 7987
 7988 The shade that to the Judge had near approached
 7989 When he had called, throughout that whole assault
 7990 Had not a moment loosed its gaze on me.
 7991
 7992 "So may the light that leadeth thee on high
 7993 Find in thine own free-will as much of wax
 7994 As needful is up to the highest azure,"
 7995
 7996 Began it, "if some true intelligence
 7997 Of Valdimagra or its neighbourhood
 7998 Thou knowest, tell it me, who once was great there.
 7999
 8000 Currado Malaspina was I called;
 8001 I'm not the elder, but from him descended;
 8002 To mine I bore the love which here refineth."
 8003
 8004 "O," said I unto him, "through your domains
 8005 I never passed, but where is there a dwelling
 8006 Throughout all Europe, where they are not known?
 8007
 8008 That fame, which doeth honour to your house,
 8009 Proclaims its Signors and proclaims its land,
 8010 So that he knows of them who ne'er was there.
 8011
 8012 And, as I hope for heaven, I swear to you
 8013 Your honoured family in naught abates
 8014 The glory of the purse and of the sword.
 8015
 8016 It is so privileged by use and nature,
 8017 That though a guilty head misguide the world,
 8018 Sole it goes right, and scorns the evil way."
 8019
 8020 And he: "Now go; for the sun shall not lie
 8021 Seven times upon the pillow which the Ram
 8022 With all his four feet covers and bestrides,
 8023
 8024 Before that such a courteous opinion
 8025 Shall in the middle of thy head be nailed
 8026 With greater nails than of another's speech,
 8027
 8028 Unless the course of justice standeth still."
 8029
 8030
 8031
 8032 Purgatorio: Canto IX
 8033
 8034
 8035 The concubine of old Tithonus now
 8036 Gleamed white upon the eastern balcony,
 8037 Forth from the arms of her sweet paramour;

8038
8039 With gems her forehead all reluctant was,
8040 Set in the shape of that cold animal
8041 Which with its tail doth smite amain the nations,
8042
8043 And of the steps, with which she mounts, the Night
8044 Had taken two in that place where we were,
8045 And now the third was bending down its wings;
8046
8047 When I, who something had of Adam in me,
8048 Vanquished by sleep, upon the grass reclined,
8049 There were all five of us already sat.
8050
8051 Just at the hour when her sad lay begins
8052 The little swallow, near unto the morning,
8053 Perchance in memory of her former woes,
8054
8055 And when the mind of man, a wanderer
8056 More from the flesh, and less by thought imprisoned,
8057 Almost prophetic in its visions is,
8058
8059 In dreams it seemed to me I saw suspended
8060 An eagle in the sky, with plumes of gold,
8061 With wings wide open, and intent to stoop,
8062
8063 And this, it seemed to me, was where had been
8064 By Ganymede his kith and kin abandoned,
8065 When to the high consistory he was rapt.
8066
8067 I thought within myself, perchance he strikes
8068 From habit only here, and from elsewhere
8069 Disdains to bear up any in his feet.
8070
8071 Then wheeling somewhat more, it seemed to me,
8072 Terrible as the lightning he descended,
8073 And snatched me upward even to the fire.
8074
8075 Therein it seemed that he and I were burning,
8076 And the imagined fire did scorch me so,
8077 That of necessity my sleep was broken.
8078
8079 Not otherwise Achilles started up,
8080 Around him turning his awakened eyes,
8081 And knowing not the place in which he was,
8082
8083 What time from Chiron stealthily his mother
8084 Carried him sleeping in her arms to Scyros,
8085 Wherefrom the Greeks withdrew him afterwards,
8086
8087 Than I upstarted, when from off my face
8088 Sleep fled away; and pallid I became,
8089 As doth the man who freezes with affright.
8090
8091 Only my Comforter was at my side,
8092 And now the sun was more than two hours high,
8093 And turned towards the sea-shore was my face.
8094

8095 "Be not intimidated," said my Lord,
8096 "Be reassured, for all is well with us;
8097 Do not restrain, but put forth all thy strength.
8098
8099 Thou hast at length arrived at Purgatory;
8100 See there the cliff that closes it around;
8101 See there the entrance, where it seems disjoined.
8102
8103 Whilom at dawn, which doth precede the day,
8104 When inwardly thy spirit was asleep
8105 Upon the flowers that deck the land below,
8106
8107 There came a Lady and said: 'I am Lucia;
8108 Let me take this one up, who is asleep;
8109 So will I make his journey easier for him.'
8110
8111 Sordello and the other noble shapes
8112 Remained; she took thee, and, as day grew bright,
8113 Upward she came, and I upon her footsteps.
8114
8115 She laid thee here; and first her beauteous eyes
8116 That open entrance pointed out to me;
8117 Then she and sleep together went away."
8118
8119 In guise of one whose doubts are reassured,
8120 And who to confidence his fear doth change,
8121 After the truth has been discovered to him,
8122
8123 So did I change; and when without disquiet
8124 My Leader saw me, up along the cliff
8125 He moved, and I behind him, tow'rd the height.
8126
8127 Reader, thou seest well how I exalt
8128 My theme, and therefore if with greater art
8129 I fortify it, marvel not thereat.
8130
8131 Nearer approached we, and were in such place,
8132 That there, where first appeared to me a rift
8133 Like to a crevice that disparts a wall,
8134
8135 I saw a portal, and three stairs beneath,
8136 Diverse in colour, to go up to it,
8137 And a gate-keeper, who yet spake no word.
8138
8139 And as I opened more and more mine eyes,
8140 I saw him seated on the highest stair,
8141 Such in the face that I endured it not.
8142
8143 And in his hand he had a naked sword,
8144 Which so reflected back the sunbeams tow'rd us,
8145 That oft in vain I lifted up mine eyes.
8146
8147 "Tell it from where you are, what is't you wish?"
8148 Began he to exclaim; "where is the escort?
8149 Take heed your coming hither harm you not!"
8150
8151 "A Lady of Heaven, with these things conversant,"

8152 My Master answered him, "but even now
8153 Said to us, 'Thither go; there is the portal.'"
8154
8155 "And may she speed your footsteps in all good,"
8156 Again began the courteous janitor;
8157 "Come forward then unto these stairs of ours."
8158
8159 Thither did we approach; and the first stair
8160 Was marble white, so polished and so smooth,
8161 I mirrored myself therein as I appear.
8162
8163 The second, tinct of deeper hue than perse,
8164 Was of a calcined and uneven stone,
8165 Cracked all asunder lengthwise and across.
8166
8167 The third, that uppermost rests massively,
8168 Porphyry seemed to me, as flaming red
8169 As blood that from a vein is spirting forth.
8170
8171 Both of his feet was holding upon this
8172 The Angel of God, upon the threshold seated,
8173 Which seemed to me a stone of diamond.
8174
8175 Along the three stairs upward with good will
8176 Did my Conductor draw me, saying: "Ask
8177 Humbly that he the fastening may undo."
8178
8179 Devoutly at the holy feet I cast me,
8180 For mercy's sake besought that he would open,
8181 But first upon my breast three times I smote.
8182
8183 Seven P's upon my forehead he described
8184 With the sword's point, and, "Take heed that thou wash
8185 These wounds, when thou shalt be within," he said.
8186
8187 Ashes, or earth that dry is excavated,
8188 Of the same colour were with his attire,
8189 And from beneath it he drew forth two keys.
8190
8191 One was of gold, and the other was of silver;
8192 First with the white, and after with the yellow,
8193 Plied he the door, so that I was content.
8194
8195 "Whenever faileth either of these keys
8196 So that it turn not rightly in the lock,"
8197 He said to us, "this entrance doth not open.
8198
8199 More precious one is, but the other needs
8200 More art and intellect ere it unlock,
8201 For it is that which doth the knot unloose.
8202
8203 From Peter I have them; and he bade me err
8204 Rather in opening than in keeping shut,
8205 If people but fall down before my feet."
8206
8207 Then pushed the portals of the sacred door,
8208 Exclaiming: "Enter; but I give you warning

8209 That forth returns whoever looks behind."
 8210
 8211 And when upon their hinges were turned round
 8212 The swivels of that consecrated gate,
 8213 Which are of metal, massive and sonorous,
 8214
 8215 Roared not so loud, nor so discordant seemed
 8216 Tarpeia, when was ta'en from it the good
 8217 Metellus, wherefore meagre it remained.
 8218
 8219 At the first thunder-peal I turned attentive,
 8220 And "Te Deum laudamus" seemed to hear
 8221 In voices mingled with sweet melody.
 8222
 8223 Exactly such an image rendered me
 8224 That which I heard, as we are wont to catch,
 8225 When people singing with the organ stand;
 8226
 8227 For now we hear, and now hear not, the words.
 8228
 8229
 8230
 8231 Purgatorio: Canto X
 8232
 8233
 8234 When we had crossed the threshold of the door
 8235 Which the perverted love of souls disuses,
 8236 Because it makes the crooked way seem straight,
 8237
 8238 Re-echoing I heard it closed again;
 8239 And if I had turned back mine eyes upon it,
 8240 What for my failing had been fit excuse?
 8241
 8242 We mounted upward through a rifted rock,
 8243 Which undulated to this side and that,
 8244 Even as a wave receding and advancing.
 8245
 8246 "Here it behoves us use a little art,"
 8247 Began my Leader, "to adapt ourselves
 8248 Now here, now there, to the receding side."
 8249
 8250 And this our footsteps so infrequent made,
 8251 That sooner had the moon's decreasing disk
 8252 Regained its bed to sink again to rest,
 8253
 8254 Than we were forth from out that needle's eye;
 8255 But when we free and in the open were,
 8256 There where the mountain backward piles itself,
 8257
 8258 I wearied out, and both of us uncertain
 8259 About our way, we stopped upon a plain
 8260 More desolate than roads across the deserts.
 8261
 8262 From where its margin borders on the void,
 8263 To foot of the high bank that ever rises,
 8264 A human body three times told would measure;
 8265

8266 And far as eye of mine could wing its flight,
8267 Now on the left, and on the right flank now,
8268 The same this cornice did appear to me.
8269
8270 Thereon our feet had not been moved as yet,
8271 When I perceived the embankment round about,
8272 Which all right of ascent had interdicted,
8273
8274 To be of marble white, and so adorned
8275 With sculptures, that not only Polycletus,
8276 But Nature's self, had there been put to shame.
8277
8278 The Angel, who came down to earth with tidings
8279 Of peace, that had been wept for many a year,
8280 And opened Heaven from its long interdict,
8281
8282 In front of us appeared so truthfully
8283 There sculptured in a gracious attitude,
8284 He did not seem an image that is silent.
8285
8286 One would have sworn that he was saying, "Ave;"
8287 For she was there in effigy portrayed
8288 Who turned the key to ope the exalted love,
8289
8290 And in her mien this language had impressed,
8291 "Ecce ancilla Dei," as distinctly
8292 As any figure stamps itself in wax.
8293
8294 "Keep not thy mind upon one place alone,"
8295 The gentle Master said, who had me standing
8296 Upon that side where people have their hearts;
8297
8298 Whereat I moved mine eyes, and I beheld
8299 In rear of Mary, and upon that side
8300 Where he was standing who conducted me,
8301
8302 Another story on the rock imposed;
8303 Wherefore I passed Virgilius and drew near,
8304 So that before mine eyes it might be set.
8305
8306 There sculptured in the self-same marble were
8307 The cart and oxen, drawing the holy ark,
8308 Wherefore one dreads an office not appointed.
8309
8310 People appeared in front, and all of them
8311 In seven choirs divided, of two senses
8312 Made one say "No," the other, "Yes, they sing."
8313
8314 Likewise unto the smoke of the frankincense,
8315 Which there was imaged forth, the eyes and nose
8316 Were in the yes and no discordant made.
8317
8318 Preceded there the vessel benedight,
8319 Dancing with girded loins, the humble Psalmist,
8320 And more and less than King was he in this.
8321
8322 Opposite, represented at the window

8323 Of a great palace, Michal looked upon him,
8324 Even as a woman scornful and afflicted.
8325
8326 I moved my feet from where I had been standing,
8327 To examine near at hand another story,
8328 Which after Michal glimmered white upon me.
8329
8330 There the high glory of the Roman Prince
8331 Was chronicled, whose great beneficence
8332 Moved Gregory to his great victory;
8333
8334 'Tis of the Emperor Trajan I am speaking;
8335 And a poor widow at his bridle stood,
8336 In attitude of weeping and of grief.
8337
8338 Around about him seemed it thronged and full
8339 Of cavaliers, and the eagles in the gold
8340 Above them visibly in the wind were moving.
8341
8342 The wretched woman in the midst of these
8343 Seemed to be saying: "Give me vengeance, Lord,
8344 For my dead son, for whom my heart is breaking."
8345
8346 And he to answer her: "Now wait until
8347 I shall return." And she: "My Lord," like one
8348 In whom grief is impatient, "shouldst thou not
8349
8350 Return?" And he: "Who shall be where I am
8351 Will give it thee." And she: "Good deed of others
8352 What boots it thee, if thou neglect thine own?"
8353
8354 Whence he: "Now comfort thee, for it behoves me
8355 That I discharge my duty ere I move;
8356 Justice so wills, and pity doth retain me."
8357
8358 He who on no new thing has ever looked
8359 Was the creator of this visible language,
8360 Novel to us, for here it is not found.
8361
8362 While I delighted me in contemplating
8363 The images of such humility,
8364 And dear to look on for their Maker's sake,
8365
8366 "Behold, upon this side, but rare they make
8367 Their steps," the Poet murmured, "many people;
8368 These will direct us to the lofty stairs."
8369
8370 Mine eyes, that in beholding were intent
8371 To see new things, of which they curious are,
8372 In turning round towards him were not slow.
8373
8374 But still I wish not, Reader, thou shouldst swerve
8375 From thy good purposes, because thou hearest
8376 How God ordaineth that the debt be paid;
8377
8378 Attend not to the fashion of the torment,
8379 Think of what follows; think that at the worst

8380 It cannot reach beyond the mighty sentence.
 8381
 8382 "Master," began I, "that which I behold
 8383 Moving towards us seems to me not persons,
 8384 And what I know not, so in sight I waver."
 8385
 8386 And he to me: "The grievous quality
 8387 Of this their torment bows them so to earth,
 8388 That my own eyes at first contended with it;
 8389
 8390 But look there fixedly, and disentangle
 8391 By sight what cometh underneath those stones;
 8392 Already canst thou see how each is stricken."
 8393
 8394 O ye proud Christians! wretched, weary ones!
 8395 Who, in the vision of the mind infirm
 8396 Confidence have in your backsliding steps,
 8397
 8398 Do ye not comprehend that we are worms,
 8399 Born to bring forth the angelic butterfly
 8400 That flieth unto judgment without screen?
 8401
 8402 Why floats aloft your spirit high in air?
 8403 Like are ye unto insects undeveloped,
 8404 Even as the worm in whom formation fails!
 8405
 8406 As to sustain a ceiling or a roof,
 8407 In place of corbel, oftentimes a figure
 8408 Is seen to join its knees unto its breast,
 8409
 8410 Which makes of the unreal real anguish
 8411 Arise in him who sees it, fashioned thus
 8412 Beheld I those, when I had ta'en good heed.
 8413
 8414 True is it, they were more or less bent down,
 8415 According as they more or less were laden;
 8416 And he who had most patience in his looks
 8417
 8418 Weeping did seem to say, "I can no more!"
 8419
 8420
 8421
 8422 Purgatorio: Canto XI
 8423
 8424
 8425 "Our Father, thou who dwellest in the heavens,
 8426 Not circumscribed, but from the greater love
 8427 Thou bearest to the first effects on high,
 8428
 8429 Praised be thy name and thine omnipotence
 8430 By every creature, as befitting is
 8431 To render thanks to thy sweet effluence.
 8432
 8433 Come unto us the peace of thy dominion,
 8434 For unto it we cannot of ourselves,
 8435 If it come not, with all our intellect.
 8436

8437 Even as thine own Angels of their will
8438 Make sacrifice to thee, Hosanna singing,
8439 So may all men make sacrifice of theirs.
8440
8441 Give unto us this day our daily manna,
8442 Withouten which in this rough wilderness
8443 Backward goes he who toils most to advance.
8444
8445 And even as we the trespass we have suffered
8446 Pardon in one another, pardon thou
8447 Benignly, and regard not our desert.
8448
8449 Our virtue, which is easily o'ercome,
8450 Put not to proof with the old Adversary,
8451 But thou from him who spurs it so, deliver.
8452
8453 This last petition verily, dear Lord,
8454 Not for ourselves is made, who need it not,
8455 But for their sake who have remained behind us."
8456
8457 Thus for themselves and us good furtherance
8458 Those shades imploring, went beneath a weight
8459 Like unto that of which we sometimes dream,
8460
8461 Unequally in anguish round and round
8462 And weary all, upon that foremost cornice,
8463 Purging away the smoke-stains of the world.
8464
8465 If there good words are always said for us,
8466 What may not here be said and done for them,
8467 By those who have a good root to their will?
8468
8469 Well may we help them wash away the marks
8470 That hence they carried, so that clean and light
8471 They may ascend unto the starry wheels!
8472
8473 "Ah! so may pity and justice you disburden
8474 Soon, that ye may have power to move the wing,
8475 That shall uplift you after your desire,
8476
8477 Show us on which hand tow'rd the stairs the way
8478 Is shortest, and if more than one the passes,
8479 Point us out that which least abruptly falls;
8480
8481 For he who cometh with me, through the burden
8482 Of Adam's flesh wherewith he is invested,
8483 Against his will is chary of his climbing."
8484
8485 The words of theirs which they returned to those
8486 That he whom I was following had spoken,
8487 It was not manifest from whom they came,
8488
8489 But it was said: "To the right hand come with us
8490 Along the bank, and ye shall find a pass
8491 Possible for living person to ascend.
8492
8493 And were I not impeded by the stone,

8494 Which this proud neck of mine doth subjugate,
 8495 Whence I am forced to hold my visage down,
 8496
 8497 Him, who still lives and does not name himself,
 8498 Would I regard, to see if I may know him
 8499 And make him piteous unto this burden.
 8500
 8501 A Latian was I, and born of a great Tuscan;
 8502 Guglielmo Aldobrandeschi was my father;
 8503 I know not if his name were ever with you.
 8504
 8505 The ancient blood and deeds of gallantry
 8506 Of my progenitors so arrogant made me
 8507 That, thinking not upon the common mother,
 8508
 8509 All men I held in scorn to such extent
 8510 I died therefor, as know the Sienese,
 8511 And every child in Campagnatico.
 8512
 8513 I am Omberto; and not to me alone
 8514 Has pride done harm, but all my kith and kin
 8515 Has with it dragged into adversity.
 8516
 8517 And here must I this burden bear for it
 8518 Till God be satisfied, since I did not
 8519 Among the living, here among the dead."
 8520
 8521 Listening I downward bent my countenance;
 8522 And one of them, not this one who was speaking,
 8523 Twisted himself beneath the weight that cramps him,
 8524
 8525 And looked at me, and knew me, and called out,
 8526 Keeping his eyes laboriously fixed
 8527 On me, who all bowed down was going with them.
 8528
 8529 "O," asked I him, "art thou not Oderisi,
 8530 Agobbio's honour, and honour of that art
 8531 Which is in Paris called illuminating?"
 8532
 8533 "Brother," said he, "more laughing are the leaves
 8534 Touched by the brush of Franco Bolognese;
 8535 All his the honour now, and mine in part.
 8536
 8537 In sooth I had not been so courteous
 8538 While I was living, for the great desire
 8539 Of excellence, on which my heart was bent.
 8540
 8541 Here of such pride is paid the forfeiture;
 8542 And yet I should not be here, were it not
 8543 That, having power to sin, I turned to God.
 8544
 8545 O thou vain glory of the human powers,
 8546 How little green upon thy summit lingers,
 8547 If't be not followed by an age of grossness!
 8548
 8549 In painting Cimabue thought that he
 8550 Should hold the field, now Giotto has the cry,

8551 So that the other's fame is growing dim.
 8552
 8553 So has one Guido from the other taken
 8554 The glory of our tongue, and he perchance
 8555 Is born, who from the nest shall chase them both.
 8556
 8557 Naught is this mundane rumour but a breath
 8558 Of wind, that comes now this way and now that,
 8559 And changes name, because it changes side.
 8560
 8561 What fame shalt thou have more, if old peel off
 8562 From thee thy flesh, than if thou hadst been dead
 8563 Before thou left the 'pappo' and the 'dindi,'
 8564
 8565 Ere pass a thousand years? which is a shorter
 8566 Space to the eterne, than twinkling of an eye
 8567 Unto the circle that in heaven wheels slowest.
 8568
 8569 With him, who takes so little of the road
 8570 In front of me, all Tuscany resounded;
 8571 And now he scarce is lisped of in Siena,
 8572
 8573 Where he was lord, what time was overthrown
 8574 The Florentine delirium, that superb
 8575 Was at that day as now 'tis prostitute.
 8576
 8577 Your reputation is the colour of grass
 8578 Which comes and goes, and that discolours it
 8579 By which it issues green from out the earth."
 8580
 8581 And I: "Thy true speech fills my heart with good
 8582 Humility, and great tumour thou assuagest;
 8583 But who is he, of whom just now thou spakest?"
 8584
 8585 "That," he replied, "is Provenzan Salvani,
 8586 And he is here because he had presumed
 8587 To bring Siena all into his hands.
 8588
 8589 He has gone thus, and goeth without rest
 8590 E'er since he died; such money renders back
 8591 In payment he who is on earth too daring."
 8592
 8593 And I: "If every spirit who awaits
 8594 The verge of life before that he repent,
 8595 Remains below there and ascends not hither,
 8596
 8597 (Unless good orison shall him bestead,)
 8598 Until as much time as he lived be passed,
 8599 How was the coming granted him in largess?"
 8600
 8601 "When he in greatest splendour lived," said he,
 8602 "Freely upon the Campo of Siena,
 8603 All shame being laid aside, he placed himself;
 8604
 8605 And there to draw his friend from the duress
 8606 Which in the prison-house of Charles he suffered,
 8607 He brought himself to tremble in each vein.

8608
 8609 I say no more, and know that I speak darkly;
 8610 Yet little time shall pass before thy neighbours
 8611 Will so demean themselves that thou canst gloss it.
 8612
 8613 This action has released him from those confines."
 8614
 8615
 8616
 8617 Purgatorio: Canto XII
 8618
 8619
 8620 Abreast, like oxen going in a yoke,
 8621 I with that heavy-laden soul went on,
 8622 As long as the sweet pedagogue permitted;
 8623
 8624 But when he said, "Leave him, and onward pass,
 8625 For here 'tis good that with the sail and oars,
 8626 As much as may be, each push on his barque;"
 8627
 8628 Upright, as walking wills it, I redressed
 8629 My person, notwithstanding that my thoughts
 8630 Remained within me downcast and abashed.
 8631
 8632 I had moved on, and followed willingly
 8633 The footsteps of my Master, and we both
 8634 Already showed how light of foot we were,
 8635
 8636 When unto me he said: "Cast down thine eyes;
 8637 'Twere well for thee, to alleviate the way,
 8638 To look upon the bed beneath thy feet."
 8639
 8640 As, that some memory may exist of them,
 8641 Above the buried dead their tombs in earth
 8642 Bear sculptured on them what they were before;
 8643
 8644 Whence often there we weep for them afresh,
 8645 From pricking of remembrance, which alone
 8646 To the compassionate doth set its spur;
 8647
 8648 So saw I there, but of a better semblance
 8649 In point of artifice, with figures covered
 8650 Whate'er as pathway from the mount projects.
 8651
 8652 I saw that one who was created noble
 8653 More than all other creatures, down from heaven
 8654 Flaming with lightnings fall upon one side.
 8655
 8656 I saw Briareus smitten by the dart
 8657 Celestial, lying on the other side,
 8658 Heavy upon the earth by mortal frost.
 8659
 8660 I saw Thymbraeus, Pallas saw, and Mars,
 8661 Still clad in armour round about their father,
 8662 Gaze at the scattered members of the giants.
 8663
 8664 I saw, at foot of his great labour, Nimrod,

8665 As if bewildered, looking at the people
 8666 Who had been proud with him in Sennaar.
 8667
 8668 O Niobe! with what afflicted eyes
 8669 Thee I beheld upon the pathway traced,
 8670 Between thy seven and seven children slain!
 8671
 8672 O Saul! how fallen upon thy proper sword
 8673 Didst thou appear there lifeless in Gilboa,
 8674 That felt thereafter neither rain nor dew!
 8675
 8676 O mad Arachne! so I thee beheld
 8677 E'en then half spider, sad upon the shreds
 8678 Of fabric wrought in evil hour for thee!
 8679
 8680 O Rehoboam! no more seems to threaten
 8681 Thine image there; but full of consternation
 8682 A chariot bears it off, when none pursues!
 8683
 8684 Displayed moreo'er the adamantine pavement
 8685 How unto his own mother made Alcmaeon
 8686 Costly appear the luckless ornament;
 8687
 8688 Displayed how his own sons did throw themselves
 8689 Upon Sennacherib within the temple,
 8690 And how, he being dead, they left him there;
 8691
 8692 Displayed the ruin and the cruel carnage
 8693 That Tomyris wrought, when she to Cyrus said,
 8694 "Blood didst thou thirst for, and with blood I glut thee!"
 8695
 8696 Displayed how routed fled the Assyrians
 8697 After that Holofernes had been slain,
 8698 And likewise the remainder of that slaughter.
 8699
 8700 I saw there Troy in ashes and in caverns;
 8701 O Ilion! thee, how abject and debased,
 8702 Displayed the image that is there discerned!
 8703
 8704 Whoe'er of pencil master was or stile,
 8705 That could portray the shades and traits which there
 8706 Would cause each subtile genius to admire?
 8707
 8708 Dead seemed the dead, the living seemed alive;
 8709 Better than I saw not who saw the truth,
 8710 All that I trod upon while bowed I went.
 8711
 8712 Now wax ye proud, and on with looks uplifted,
 8713 Ye sons of Eve, and bow not down your faces
 8714 So that ye may behold your evil ways!
 8715
 8716 More of the mount by us was now encompassed,
 8717 And far more spent the circuit of the sun,
 8718 Than had the mind preoccupied imagined,
 8719
 8720 When he, who ever watchful in advance
 8721 Was going on, began: "Lift up thy head,

8722 'Tis no more time to go thus meditating.
8723
8724 Lo there an Angel who is making haste
8725 To come towards us; lo, returning is
8726 From service of the day the sixth handmaiden.
8727
8728 With reverence thine acts and looks adorn,
8729 So that he may delight to speed us upward;
8730 Think that this day will never dawn again."
8731
8732 I was familiar with his admonition
8733 Ever to lose no time; so on this theme
8734 He could not unto me speak covertly.
8735
8736 Towards us came the being beautiful
8737 Vested in white, and in his countenance
8738 Such as appears the tremulous morning star.
8739
8740 His arms he opened, and opened then his wings;
8741 "Come," said he, "near at hand here are the steps,
8742 And easy from henceforth is the ascent."
8743
8744 At this announcement few are they who come!
8745 O human creatures, born to soar aloft,
8746 Why fall ye thus before a little wind?
8747
8748 He led us on to where the rock was cleft;
8749 There smote upon my forehead with his wings,
8750 Then a safe passage promised unto me.
8751
8752 As on the right hand, to ascend the mount
8753 Where seated is the church that lordeth it
8754 O'er the well-guided, above Rubaconte,
8755
8756 The bold abruptness of the ascent is broken
8757 By stairways that were made there in the age
8758 When still were safe the ledger and the stave,
8759
8760 E'en thus attempered is the bank which falls
8761 Sheer downward from the second circle there;
8762 But on this, side and that the high rock graze.
8763
8764 As we were turning thitherward our persons,
8765 "Beati pauperes spiritu," voices
8766 Sang in such wise that speech could tell it not.
8767
8768 Ah me! how different are these entrances
8769 From the Infernal! for with anthems here
8770 One enters, and below with wild laments.
8771
8772 We now were hunting up the sacred stairs,
8773 And it appeared to me by far more easy
8774 Than on the plain it had appeared before.
8775
8776 Whence I: "My Master, say, what heavy thing
8777 Has been uplifted from me, so that hardly
8778 Aught of fatigue is felt by me in walking?"

8779
 8780 He answered: "When the P's which have remained
 8781 Still on thy face almost obliterate
 8782 Shall wholly, as the first is, be erased,
 8783
 8784 Thy feet will be so vanquished by good will,
 8785 That not alone they shall not feel fatigue,
 8786 But urging up will be to them delight."
 8787
 8788 Then did I even as they do who are going
 8789 With something on the head to them unknown,
 8790 Unless the signs of others make them doubt,
 8791
 8792 Wherefore the hand to ascertain is helpful,
 8793 And seeks and finds, and doth fulfill the office
 8794 Which cannot be accomplished by the sight;
 8795
 8796 And with the fingers of the right hand spread
 8797 I found but six the letters, that had carved
 8798 Upon my temples he who bore the keys;
 8799
 8800 Upon beholding which my Leader smiled.
 8801
 8802
 8803
 8804 Purgatorio: Canto XIII
 8805
 8806
 8807 We were upon the summit of the stairs,
 8808 Where for the second time is cut away
 8809 The mountain, which ascending shriveth all.
 8810
 8811 There in like manner doth a cornice bind
 8812 The hill all round about, as does the first,
 8813 Save that its arc more suddenly is curved.
 8814
 8815 Shade is there none, nor sculpture that appears;
 8816 So seems the bank, and so the road seems smooth,
 8817 With but the livid colour of the stone.
 8818
 8819 "If to inquire we wait for people here,"
 8820 The Poet said, "I fear that peradventure
 8821 Too much delay will our election have."
 8822
 8823 Then steadfast on the sun his eyes he fixed,
 8824 Made his right side the centre of his motion,
 8825 And turned the left part of himself about.
 8826
 8827 "O thou sweet light! with trust in whom I enter
 8828 Upon this novel journey, do thou lead us,"
 8829 Said he, "as one within here should be led.
 8830
 8831 Thou warmest the world, thou shinest over it;
 8832 If other reason prompt not otherwise,
 8833 Thy rays should evermore our leaders be!"
 8834
 8835 As much as here is counted for a mile,

8836 So much already there had we advanced
8837 In little time, by dint of ready will;
8838
8839 And tow'rds us there were heard to fly, albeit
8840 They were not visible, spirits uttering
8841 Unto Love's table courteous invitations,
8842
8843 The first voice that passed onward in its flight,
8844 "Vinum non habent," said in accents loud,
8845 And went reiterating it behind us.
8846
8847 And ere it wholly grew inaudible
8848 Because of distance, passed another, crying,
8849 "I am Orestes!" and it also stayed not.
8850
8851 "O," said I, "Father, these, what voices are they?"
8852 And even as I asked, behold the third,
8853 Saying: "Love those from whom ye have had evil!"
8854
8855 And the good Master said: "This circle scourges
8856 The sin of envy, and on that account
8857 Are drawn from love the lashes of the scourge.
8858
8859 The bridle of another sound shall be;
8860 I think that thou wilt hear it, as I judge,
8861 Before thou comest to the Pass of Pardon.
8862
8863 But fix thine eyes athwart the air right steadfast,
8864 And people thou wilt see before us sitting,
8865 And each one close against the cliff is seated."
8866
8867 Then wider than at first mine eyes I opened;
8868 I looked before me, and saw shades with mantles
8869 Not from the colour of the stone diverse.
8870
8871 And when we were a little farther onward,
8872 I heard a cry of, "Mary, pray for us!"
8873 A cry of, "Michael, Peter, and all Saints!"
8874
8875 I do not think there walketh still on earth
8876 A man so hard, that he would not be pierced
8877 With pity at what afterward I saw.
8878
8879 For when I had approached so near to them
8880 That manifest to me their acts became,
8881 Drained was I at the eyes by heavy grief.
8882
8883 Covered with sackcloth vile they seemed to me,
8884 And one sustained the other with his shoulder,
8885 And all of them were by the bank sustained.
8886
8887 Thus do the blind, in want of livelihood,
8888 Stand at the doors of churches asking alms,
8889 And one upon another leans his head,
8890
8891 So that in others pity soon may rise,
8892 Not only at the accent of their words,

8893 But at their aspect, which no less implores.
8894
8895 And as unto the blind the sun comes not,
8896 So to the shades, of whom just now I spake,
8897 Heaven's light will not be bounteous of itself;
8898
8899 For all their lids an iron wire transpierces,
8900 And sews them up, as to a sparrowhawk wild
8901 Is done, because it will not quiet stay.
8902
8903 To me it seemed, in passing, to do outrage,
8904 Seeing the others without being seen;
8905 Wherefore I turned me to my counsel sage.
8906
8907 Well knew he what the mute one wished to say,
8908 And therefore waited not for my demand,
8909 But said: "Speak, and be brief, and to the point."
8910
8911 I had Virgilius upon that side
8912 Of the embankment from which one may fall,
8913 Since by no border 'tis engarlanded;
8914
8915 Upon the other side of me I had
8916 The shades devout, who through the horrible seam
8917 Pressed out the tears so that they bathed their cheeks.
8918
8919 To them I turned me, and, "O people, certain,"
8920 Began I, "of beholding the high light,
8921 Which your desire has solely in its care,
8922
8923 So may grace speedily dissolve the scum
8924 Upon your consciences, that limpidly
8925 Through them descend the river of the mind,
8926
8927 Tell me, for dear 'twill be to me and gracious,
8928 If any soul among you here is Latian,
8929 And 'twill perchance be good for him I learn it."
8930
8931 "O brother mine, each one is citizen
8932 Of one true city; but thy meaning is,
8933 Who may have lived in Italy a pilgrim."
8934
8935 By way of answer this I seemed to hear
8936 A little farther on than where I stood,
8937 Whereat I made myself still nearer heard.
8938
8939 Among the rest I saw a shade that waited
8940 In aspect, and should any one ask how,
8941 Its chin it lifted upward like a blind man.
8942
8943 "Spirit," I said, "who stoopest to ascend,
8944 If thou art he who did reply to me,
8945 Make thyself known to me by place or name."
8946
8947 "Sienese was I," it replied, "and with
8948 The others here recleanse my guilty life,
8949 Weeping to Him to lend himself to us.

8950
8951 Sapient I was not, although I Sapia
8952 Was called, and I was at another's harm
8953 More happy far than at my own good fortune.
8954
8955 And that thou mayst not think that I deceive thee,
8956 Hear if I was as foolish as I tell thee.
8957 The arc already of my years descending,
8958
8959 My fellow-citizens near unto Colle
8960 Were joined in battle with their adversaries,
8961 And I was praying God for what he willed.
8962
8963 Routed were they, and turned into the bitter
8964 Passes of flight; and I, the chase beholding,
8965 A joy received unequalled by all others;
8966
8967 So that I lifted upward my bold face
8968 Crying to God, 'Henceforth I fear thee not,'
8969 As did the blackbird at the little sunshine.
8970
8971 Peace I desired with God at the extreme
8972 Of my existence, and as yet would not
8973 My debt have been by penitence discharged,
8974
8975 Had it not been that in remembrance held me
8976 Pier Pettignano in his holy prayers,
8977 Who out of charity was grieved for me.
8978
8979 But who art thou, that into our conditions
8980 Questioning goest, and hast thine eyes unbound
8981 As I believe, and breathing dost discourse?"
8982
8983 "Mine eyes," I said, "will yet be here ta'en from me,
8984 But for short space; for small is the offence
8985 Committed by their being turned with envy.
8986
8987 Far greater is the fear, wherein suspended
8988 My soul is, of the torment underneath,
8989 For even now the load down there weighs on me."
8990
8991 And she to me: "Who led thee, then, among us
8992 Up here, if to return below thou thinkest?"
8993 And I: "He who is with me, and speaks not;
8994
8995 And living am I; therefore ask of me,
8996 Spirit elect, if thou wouldst have me move
8997 O'er yonder yet my mortal feet for thee."
8998
8999 "O, this is such a novel thing to hear,"
9000 She answered, "that great sign it is God loves thee;
9001 Therefore with prayer of thine sometimes assist me.
9002
9003 And I implore, by what thou most desirest,
9004 If e'er thou treadest the soil of Tuscany,
9005 Well with my kindred reinstate my fame.
9006

9007 Them wilt thou see among that people vain
 9008 Who hope in Talamone, and will lose there
 9009 More hope than in discovering the Diana;
 9010
 9011 But there still more the admirals will lose."
 9012
 9013
 9014
 9015 Purgatorio: Canto XIV
 9016
 9017
 9018 "Who is this one that goes about our mountain,
 9019 Or ever Death has given him power of flight,
 9020 And opes his eyes and shuts them at his will?"
 9021
 9022 "I know not who, but know he's not alone;
 9023 Ask him thyself, for thou art nearer to him,
 9024 And gently, so that he may speak, accost him."
 9025
 9026 Thus did two spirits, leaning tow'rds each other,
 9027 Discourse about me there on the right hand;
 9028 Then held supine their faces to address me.
 9029
 9030 And said the one: "O soul, that, fastened still
 9031 Within the body, tow'rds the heaven art going,
 9032 For charity console us, and declare
 9033
 9034 Whence comest and who art thou; for thou mak'st us
 9035 As much to marvel at this grace of thine
 9036 As must a thing that never yet has been."
 9037
 9038 And I: "Through midst of Tuscany there wanders
 9039 A streamlet that is born in Falterona,
 9040 And not a hundred miles of course suffice it;
 9041
 9042 From thereupon do I this body bring.
 9043 To tell you who I am were speech in vain,
 9044 Because my name as yet makes no great noise."
 9045
 9046 "If well thy meaning I can penetrate
 9047 With intellect of mine," then answered me
 9048 He who first spake, "thou speakest of the Arno."
 9049
 9050 And said the other to him: "Why concealed
 9051 This one the appellation of that river,
 9052 Even as a man doth of things horrible?"
 9053
 9054 And thus the shade that questioned was of this
 9055 Himself acquitted: "I know not; but truly
 9056 ' Tis fit the name of such a valley perish;
 9057
 9058 For from its fountain-head (where is so pregnant
 9059 The Alpine mountain whence is cleft Peloro
 9060 That in few places it that mark surpasses)
 9061
 9062 To where it yields itself in restoration
 9063 Of what the heaven doth of the sea dry up,

9064 Whence have the rivers that which goes with them,
9065
9066 Virtue is like an enemy avoided
9067 By all, as is a serpent, through misfortune
9068 Of place, or through bad habit that impels them;
9069
9070 On which account have so transformed their nature
9071 The dwellers in that miserable valley,
9072 It seems that Circe had them in her pasture.
9073
9074 'Mid ugly swine, of acorns worthier
9075 Than other food for human use created,
9076 It first directeth its impoverished way.
9077
9078 Curs findeth it thereafter, coming downward,
9079 More snarling than their puissance demands,
9080 And turns from them disdainfully its muzzle.
9081
9082 It goes on falling, and the more it grows,
9083 The more it finds the dogs becoming wolves,
9084 This maledict and misadventurous ditch.
9085
9086 Descended then through many a hollow gulf,
9087 It finds the foxes so replete with fraud,
9088 They fear no cunning that may master them.
9089
9090 Nor will I cease because another hears me;
9091 And well 'twill be for him, if still he mind him
9092 Of what a truthful spirit to me unravels.
9093
9094 Thy grandson I behold, who doth become
9095 A hunter of those wolves upon the bank
9096 Of the wild stream, and terrifies them all.
9097
9098 He sells their flesh, it being yet alive;
9099 Thereafter slaughters them like ancient bees;
9100 Many of life, himself of praise, deprives.
9101
9102 Blood-stained he issues from the dismal forest;
9103 He leaves it such, a thousand years from now
9104 In its primeval state 'tis not re-wooded."
9105
9106 As at the announcement of impending ills
9107 The face of him who listens is disturbed,
9108 From whate'er side the peril seize upon him;
9109
9110 So I beheld that other soul, which stood
9111 Turned round to listen, grow disturbed and sad,
9112 When it had gathered to itself the word.
9113
9114 The speech of one and aspect of the other
9115 Had me desirous made to know their names,
9116 And question mixed with prayers I made thereof,
9117
9118 Whereat the spirit which first spake to me
9119 Began again: "Thou wishest I should bring me
9120 To do for thee what thou'lt not do for me;

9121
 9122 But since God willeth that in thee shine forth
 9123 Such grace of his, I'll not be chary with thee;
 9124 Know, then, that I Guido del Duca am.
 9125
 9126 My blood was so with envy set on fire,
 9127 That if I had beheld a man make merry,
 9128 Thou wouldst have seen me sprinkled o'er with pallor.
 9129
 9130 From my own sowing such the straw I reap!
 9131 O human race! why dost thou set thy heart
 9132 Where interdict of partnership must be?
 9133
 9134 This is Renier; this is the boast and honour
 9135 Of the house of Calboli, where no one since
 9136 Has made himself the heir of his desert.
 9137
 9138 And not alone his blood is made devoid,
 9139 'Twixt Po and mount, and sea-shore and the Reno,
 9140 Of good required for truth and for diversion;
 9141
 9142 For all within these boundaries is full
 9143 Of venomous roots, so that too tardily
 9144 By cultivation now would they diminish.
 9145
 9146 Where is good Lizio, and Arrigo Manardi,
 9147 Pier Traversaro, and Guido di Carpigna,
 9148 O Romagnuoli into bastards turned?
 9149
 9150 When in Bologna will a Fabbro rise?
 9151 When in Faenza a Bernardin di Fosco,
 9152 The noble scion of ignoble seed?
 9153
 9154 Be not astonished, Tuscan, if I weep,
 9155 When I remember, with Guido da Prata,
 9156 Ugolin d' Azzo, who was living with us,
 9157
 9158 Frederick Tignoso and his company,
 9159 The house of Traversara, and th' Anastagi,
 9160 And one race and the other is extinct;
 9161
 9162 The dames and cavaliers, the toils and ease
 9163 That filled our souls with love and courtesy,
 9164 There where the hearts have so malicious grown!
 9165
 9166 O Brettinoro! why dost thou not flee,
 9167 Seeing that all thy family is gone,
 9168 And many people, not to be corrupted?
 9169
 9170 Bagnacaval does well in not begetting
 9171 And ill does Castrocaro, and Conio worse,
 9172 In taking trouble to beget such Counts.
 9173
 9174 Will do well the Pagani, when their Devil
 9175 Shall have departed; but not therefore pure
 9176 Will testimony of them e'er remain.
 9177

9178 O Ugolin de' Fantoli, secure
9179 Thy name is, since no longer is awaited
9180 One who, degenerating, can obscure it!
9181
9182 But go now, Tuscan, for it now delights me
9183 To weep far better than it does to speak,
9184 So much has our discourse my mind distressed."
9185
9186 We were aware that those beloved souls
9187 Heard us depart; therefore, by keeping silent,
9188 They made us of our pathway confident.
9189
9190 When we became alone by going onward,
9191 Thunder, when it doth cleave the air, appeared
9192 A voice, that counter to us came, exclaiming:
9193
9194 "Shall slay me whosoever findeth me!"
9195 And fled as the reverberation dies
9196 If suddenly the cloud asunder bursts.
9197
9198 As soon as hearing had a truce from this,
9199 Behold another, with so great a crash,
9200 That it resembled thunderings following fast:
9201
9202 "I am Aglaurus, who became a stone!"
9203 And then, to press myself close to the Poet,
9204 I backward, and not forward, took a step.
9205
9206 Already on all sides the air was quiet;
9207 And said he to me: "That was the hard curb
9208 That ought to hold a man within his bounds;
9209
9210 But you take in the bait so that the hook
9211 Of the old Adversary draws you to him,
9212 And hence availeth little curb or call.
9213
9214 The heavens are calling you, and wheel around you,
9215 Displaying to you their eternal beauties,
9216 And still your eye is looking on the ground;
9217
9218 Whence He, who all discerns, chastises you."
9219
9220
9221
9222 Purgatorio: Canto XV
9223
9224
9225 As much as 'twixt the close of the third hour
9226 And dawn of day appeareth of that sphere
9227 Which aye in fashion of a child is playing,
9228
9229 So much it now appeared, towards the night,
9230 Was of his course remaining to the sun;
9231 There it was evening, and 'twas midnight here;
9232
9233 And the rays smote the middle of our faces,
9234 Because by us the mount was so encircled,

9235 That straight towards the west we now were going
9236
9237 When I perceived my forehead overpowered
9238 Beneath the splendour far more than at first,
9239 And stupor were to me the things unknown,
9240
9241 Whereat towards the summit of my brow
9242 I raised my hands, and made myself the visor
9243 Which the excessive glare diminishes.
9244
9245 As when from off the water, or a mirror,
9246 The sunbeam leaps unto the opposite side,
9247 Ascending upward in the selfsame measure
9248
9249 That it descends, and deviates as far
9250 From falling of a stone in line direct,
9251 (As demonstrate experiment and art,)
9252
9253 So it appeared to me that by a light
9254 Refracted there before me I was smitten;
9255 On which account my sight was swift to flee.
9256
9257 "What is that, Father sweet, from which I cannot
9258 So fully screen my sight that it avail me,"
9259 Said I, "and seems towards us to be moving?"
9260
9261 "Marvel thou not, if dazzle thee as yet
9262 The family of heaven," he answered me;
9263 "An angel 'tis, who comes to invite us upward.
9264
9265 Soon will it be, that to behold these things
9266 Shall not be grievous, but delightful to thee
9267 As much as nature fashioned thee to feel."
9268
9269 When we had reached the Angel benedight,
9270 With joyful voice he said: "Here enter in
9271 To stairway far less steep than are the others."
9272
9273 We mounting were, already thence departed,
9274 And "Beati misericordes" was
9275 Behind us sung, "Rejoice, thou that o'ercomest!"
9276
9277 My Master and myself, we two alone
9278 Were going upward, and I thought, in going,
9279 Some profit to acquire from words of his;
9280
9281 And I to him directed me, thus asking:
9282 "What did the spirit of Romagna mean,
9283 Mentioning interdict and partnership?"
9284
9285 Whence he to me: "Of his own greatest failing
9286 He knows the harm; and therefore wonder not
9287 If he reprove us, that we less may rue it.
9288
9289 Because are thither pointed your desires
9290 Where by companionship each share is lessened,
9291 Envy doth ply the bellows to your sighs.

9292
9293 But if the love of the supernal sphere
9294 Should upwardly direct your aspiration,
9295 There would not be that fear within your breast;
9296
9297 For there, as much the more as one says 'Our,'
9298 So much the more of good each one possesses,
9299 And more of charity in that cloister burns."
9300
9301 "I am more hungering to be satisfied,"
9302 I said, "than if I had before been silent,
9303 And more of doubt within my mind I gather.
9304
9305 How can it be, that boon distributed
9306 The more possessors can more wealthy make
9307 Therein, than if by few it be possessed?"
9308
9309 And he to me: "Because thou fixest still
9310 Thy mind entirely upon earthly things,
9311 Thou pluckest darkness from the very light.
9312
9313 That goodness infinite and ineffable
9314 Which is above there, runneth unto love,
9315 As to a lucid body comes the sunbeam.
9316
9317 So much it gives itself as it finds ardour,
9318 So that as far as charity extends,
9319 O'er it increases the eternal valour.
9320
9321 And the more people thitherward aspire,
9322 More are there to love well, and more they love there,
9323 And, as a mirror, one reflects the other.
9324
9325 And if my reasoning appease thee not,
9326 Thou shalt see Beatrice; and she will fully
9327 Take from thee this and every other longing.
9328
9329 Endeavour, then, that soon may be extinct,
9330 As are the two already, the five wounds
9331 That close themselves again by being painful."
9332
9333 Even as I wished to say, "Thou dost appease me,"
9334 I saw that I had reached another circle,
9335 So that my eager eyes made me keep silence.
9336
9337 There it appeared to me that in a vision
9338 Ecstatic on a sudden I was rapt,
9339 And in a temple many persons saw;
9340
9341 And at the door a woman, with the sweet
9342 Behaviour of a mother, saying: "Son,
9343 Why in this manner hast thou dealt with us?
9344
9345 Lo, sorrowing, thy father and myself
9346 Were seeking for thee;"--and as here she ceased,
9347 That which appeared at first had disappeared.
9348

9349 Then I beheld another with those waters
 9350 Adown her cheeks which grief distils whenever
 9351 From great disdain of others it is born,
 9352
 9353 And saying: "If of that city thou art lord,
 9354 For whose name was such strife among the gods,
 9355 And whence doth every science scintillate,
 9356
 9357 Avenge thyself on those audacious arms
 9358 That clasped our daughter, O Pisistratus;"
 9359 And the lord seemed to me benign and mild
 9360
 9361 To answer her with aspect temperate:
 9362 "What shall we do to those who wish us ill,
 9363 If he who loves us be by us condemned?"
 9364
 9365 Then saw I people hot in fire of wrath,
 9366 With stones a young man slaying, clamorously
 9367 Still crying to each other, "Kill him! kill him!"
 9368
 9369 And him I saw bow down, because of death
 9370 That weighed already on him, to the earth,
 9371 But of his eyes made ever gates to heaven,
 9372
 9373 Imploring the high Lord, in so great strife,
 9374 That he would pardon those his persecutors,
 9375 With such an aspect as unlocks compassion.
 9376
 9377 Soon as my soul had outwardly returned
 9378 To things external to it which are true,
 9379 Did I my not false errors recognize.
 9380
 9381 My Leader, who could see me bear myself
 9382 Like to a man that rouses him from sleep,
 9383 Exclaimed: "What ails thee, that thou canst not stand?
 9384
 9385 But hast been coming more than half a league
 9386 Veiling thine eyes, and with thy legs entangled,
 9387 In guise of one whom wine or sleep subdues?"
 9388
 9389 "O my sweet Father, if thou listen to me,
 9390 I'll tell thee," said I, "what appeared to me,
 9391 When thus from me my legs were ta'en away."
 9392
 9393 And he: "If thou shouldst have a hundred masks
 9394 Upon thy face, from me would not be shut
 9395 Thy cogitations, howsoever small.
 9396
 9397 What thou hast seen was that thou mayst not fail
 9398 To ope thy heart unto the waters of peace,
 9399 Which from the eternal fountain are diffused.
 9400
 9401 I did not ask, 'What ails thee?' as he does
 9402 Who only looketh with the eyes that see not
 9403 When of the soul bereft the body lies,
 9404
 9405 But asked it to give vigour to thy feet;

9406 Thus must we needs urge on the sluggards, slow
 9407 To use their wakefulness when it returns."
 9408
 9409 We passed along, athwart the twilight peering
 9410 Forward as far as ever eye could stretch
 9411 Against the sunbeams serotine and lucent;
 9412
 9413 And lo! by slow degrees a smoke approached
 9414 In our direction, sombre as the night,
 9415 Nor was there place to hide one's self therefrom.
 9416
 9417 This of our eyes and the pure air bereft us.
 9418
 9419
 9420
 9421 Purgatorio: Canto XVI
 9422
 9423
 9424 Darkness of hell, and of a night deprived
 9425 Of every planet under a poor sky,
 9426 As much as may be tenebrous with cloud,
 9427
 9428 Ne'er made unto my sight so thick a veil,
 9429 As did that smoke which there enveloped us,
 9430 Nor to the feeling of so rough a texture;
 9431
 9432 For not an eye it suffered to stay open;
 9433 Whereat mine escort, faithful and sagacious,
 9434 Drew near to me and offered me his shoulder.
 9435
 9436 E'en as a blind man goes behind his guide,
 9437 Lest he should wander, or should strike against
 9438 Aught that may harm or peradventure kill him,
 9439
 9440 So went I through the bitter and foul air,
 9441 Listening unto my Leader, who said only,
 9442 "Look that from me thou be not separated."
 9443
 9444 Voices I heard, and every one appeared
 9445 To supplicate for peace and misericord
 9446 The Lamb of God who takes away our sins.
 9447
 9448 Still "Agnus Dei" their exordium was;
 9449 One word there was in all, and metre one,
 9450 So that all harmony appeared among them.
 9451
 9452 "Master," I said, "are spirits those I hear?"
 9453 And he to me: "Thou apprehendest truly,
 9454 And they the knot of anger go unloosing."
 9455
 9456 "Now who art thou, that cleavest through our smoke
 9457 And art discoursing of us even as though
 9458 Thou didst by calends still divide the time?"
 9459
 9460 After this manner by a voice was spoken;
 9461 Whereon my Master said: "Do thou reply,
 9462 And ask if on this side the way go upward."

9463
9464 And I: "O creature that dost cleanse thyself
9465 To return beautiful to Him who made thee,
9466 Thou shalt hear marvels if thou follow me."
9467
9468 "Thee will I follow far as is allowed me,"
9469 He answered; "and if smoke prevent our seeing,
9470 Hearing shall keep us joined instead thereof."
9471
9472 Thereon began I: "With that swathing band
9473 Which death unwindeth am I going upward,
9474 And hither came I through the infernal anguish.
9475
9476 And if God in his grace has me infolded,
9477 So that he wills that I behold his court
9478 By method wholly out of modern usage,
9479
9480 Conceal not from me who ere death thou wast,
9481 But tell it me, and tell me if I go
9482 Right for the pass, and be thy words our escort."
9483
9484 "Lombard was I, and I was Marco called;
9485 The world I knew, and loved that excellence,
9486 At which has each one now unbent his bow.
9487
9488 For mounting upward, thou art going right."
9489 Thus he made answer, and subjoined: "I pray thee
9490 To pray for me when thou shalt be above."
9491
9492 And I to him: "My faith I pledge to thee
9493 To do what thou dost ask me; but am bursting
9494 Inly with doubt, unless I rid me of it.
9495
9496 First it was simple, and is now made double
9497 By thy opinion, which makes certain to me,
9498 Here and elsewhere, that which I couple with it.
9499
9500 The world forsooth is utterly deserted
9501 By every virtue, as thou tellest me,
9502 And with iniquity is big and covered;
9503
9504 But I beseech thee point me out the cause,
9505 That I may see it, and to others show it;
9506 For one in the heavens, and here below one puts it."
9507
9508 A sigh profound, that grief forced into Ai!
9509 He first sent forth, and then began he: "Brother,
9510 The world is blind, and sooth thou comest from it!
9511
9512 Ye who are living every cause refer
9513 Still upward to the heavens, as if all things
9514 They of necessity moved with themselves.
9515
9516 If this were so, in you would be destroyed
9517 Free will, nor any justice would there be
9518 In having joy for good, or grief for evil.
9519

9520 The heavens your movements do initiate,
9521 I say not all; but granting that I say it,
9522 Light has been given you for good and evil,
9523
9524 And free volition; which, if some fatigue
9525 In the first battles with the heavens it suffers,
9526 Afterwards conquers all, if well 'tis nurtured.
9527
9528 To greater force and to a better nature,
9529 Though free, ye subject are, and that creates
9530 The mind in you the heavens have not in charge.
9531
9532 Hence, if the present world doth go astray,
9533 In you the cause is, be it sought in you;
9534 And I therein will now be thy true spy.
9535
9536 Forth from the hand of Him, who fondles it
9537 Before it is, like to a little girl
9538 Weeping and laughing in her childish sport,
9539
9540 Issues the simple soul, that nothing knows,
9541 Save that, proceeding from a joyous Maker,
9542 Gladly it turns to that which gives it pleasure.
9543
9544 Of trivial good at first it tastes the savour;
9545 Is cheated by it, and runs after it,
9546 If guide or rein turn not aside its love.
9547
9548 Hence it behoved laws for a rein to place,
9549 Behoved a king to have, who at the least
9550 Of the true city should discern the tower.
9551
9552 The laws exist, but who sets hand to them?
9553 No one; because the shepherd who precedes
9554 Can ruminates, but cleaveth not the hoof;
9555
9556 Wherefore the people that perceives its guide
9557 Strike only at the good for which it hankers,
9558 Feeds upon that, and farther seeketh not.
9559
9560 Clearly canst thou perceive that evil guidance
9561 The cause is that has made the world depraved,
9562 And not that nature is corrupt in you.
9563
9564 Rome, that reformed the world, accustomed was
9565 Two suns to have, which one road and the other,
9566 Of God and of the world, made manifest.
9567
9568 One has the other quenched, and to the crosier
9569 The sword is joined, and ill beseemeth it
9570 That by main force one with the other go,
9571
9572 Because, being joined, one feareth not the other;
9573 If thou believe not, think upon the grain,
9574 For by its seed each herb is recognized.
9575
9576 In the land laved by Po and Adige,

9577 Valour and courtesy used to be found,
 9578 Before that Frederick had his controversy;
 9579
 9580 Now in security can pass that way
 9581 Whoever will abstain, through sense of shame,
 9582 From speaking with the good, or drawing near them.
 9583
 9584 True, three old men are left, in whom upbraids
 9585 The ancient age the new, and late they deem it
 9586 That God restore them to the better life:
 9587
 9588 Currado da Palazzo, and good Gherardo,
 9589 And Guido da Castel, who better named is,
 9590 In fashion of the French, the simple Lombard:
 9591
 9592 Say thou henceforward that the Church of Rome,
 9593 Confounding in itself two governments,
 9594 Falls in the mire, and soils itself and burden."
 9595
 9596 "O Marco mine," I said, "thou reasonest well;
 9597 And now discern I why the sons of Levi
 9598 Have been excluded from the heritage.
 9599
 9600 But what Gherardo is it, who, as sample
 9601 Of a lost race, thou sayest has remained
 9602 In reprobation of the barbarous age?"
 9603
 9604 "Either thy speech deceives me, or it tempts me,"
 9605 He answered me; "for speaking Tuscan to me,
 9606 It seems of good Gherardo naught thou knowest.
 9607
 9608 By other surname do I know him not,
 9609 Unless I take it from his daughter Gaia.
 9610 May God be with you, for I come no farther.
 9611
 9612 Behold the dawn, that through the smoke rays out,
 9613 Already whitening; and I must depart--
 9614 Yonder the Angel is--ere he appear."
 9615
 9616 Thus did he speak, and would no farther hear me.
 9617
 9618
 9619
 9620 Purgatorio: Canto XVII
 9621
 9622
 9623 Remember, Reader, if e'er in the Alps
 9624 A mist o'ertook thee, through which thou couldst see
 9625 Not otherwise than through its membrane mole,
 9626
 9627 How, when the vapours humid and condensed
 9628 Begin to dissipate themselves, the sphere
 9629 Of the sun feebly enters in among them,
 9630
 9631 And thy imagination will be swift
 9632 In coming to perceive how I re-saw
 9633 The sun at first, that was already setting.

9634
9635 Thus, to the faithful footsteps of my Master
9636 Mating mine own, I issued from that cloud
9637 To rays already dead on the low shores.
9638
9639 O thou, Imagination, that dost steal us
9640 So from without sometimes, that man perceives not,
9641 Although around may sound a thousand trumpets,
9642
9643 Who moveth thee, if sense impel thee not?
9644 Moves thee a light, which in the heaven takes form,
9645 By self, or by a will that downward guides it.
9646
9647 Of her impiety, who changed her form
9648 Into the bird that most delights in singing,
9649 In my imagining appeared the trace;
9650
9651 And hereupon my mind was so withdrawn
9652 Within itself, that from without there came
9653 Nothing that then might be received by it.
9654
9655 Then reigned within my lofty fantasy
9656 One crucified, disdainful and ferocious
9657 In countenance, and even thus was dying.
9658
9659 Around him were the great Ahasuerus,
9660 Esther his wife, and the just Mordecai,
9661 Who was in word and action so entire.
9662
9663 And even as this image burst asunder
9664 Of its own self, in fashion of a bubble
9665 In which the water it was made of fails,
9666
9667 There rose up in my vision a young maiden
9668 Bitterly weeping, and she said: "O queen,
9669 Why hast thou wished in anger to be naught?
9670
9671 Thou'st slain thyself, Lavinia not to lose;
9672 Now hast thou lost me; I am she who mourns,
9673 Mother, at thine ere at another's ruin."
9674
9675 As sleep is broken, when upon a sudden
9676 New light strikes in upon the eyelids closed,
9677 And broken quivers ere it dieth wholly,
9678
9679 So this imagining of mine fell down
9680 As soon as the effulgence smote my face,
9681 Greater by far than what is in our wont.
9682
9683 I turned me round to see where I might be,
9684 When said a voice, "Here is the passage up;"
9685 Which from all other purposes removed me,
9686
9687 And made my wish so full of eagerness
9688 To look and see who was it that was speaking,
9689 It never rests till meeting face to face;
9690

9691 But as before the sun, which quells the sight,
9692 And in its own excess its figure veils,
9693 Even so my power was insufficient here.
9694
9695 "This is a spirit divine, who in the way
9696 Of going up directs us without asking,
9697 And who with his own light himself conceals.
9698
9699 He does with us as man doth with himself;
9700 For he who sees the need, and waits the asking,
9701 Maligly leans already tow'rds denial.
9702
9703 Accord we now our feet to such inviting,
9704 Let us make haste to mount ere it grow dark;
9705 For then we could not till the day return."
9706
9707 Thus my Conductor said; and I and he
9708 Together turned our footsteps to a stairway;
9709 And I, as soon as the first step I reached,
9710
9711 Near me perceived a motion as of wings,
9712 And fanning in the face, and saying, "'Beati
9713 Pacifici,' who are without ill anger."
9714
9715 Already over us were so uplifted
9716 The latest sunbeams, which the night pursues,
9717 That upon many sides the stars appeared.
9718
9719 "O manhood mine, why dost thou vanish so?"
9720 I said within myself; for I perceived
9721 The vigour of my legs was put in truce.
9722
9723 We at the point were where no more ascends
9724 The stairway upward, and were motionless,
9725 Even as a ship, which at the shore arrives;
9726
9727 And I gave heed a little, if I might hear
9728 Aught whatsoever in the circle new;
9729 Then to my Master turned me round and said:
9730
9731 "Say, my sweet Father, what delinquency
9732 Is purged here in the circle where we are?
9733 Although our feet may pause, pause not thy speech."
9734
9735 And he to me: "The love of good, remiss
9736 In what it should have done, is here restored;
9737 Here plied again the ill-belated oar;
9738
9739 But still more openly to understand,
9740 Turn unto me thy mind, and thou shalt gather
9741 Some profitable fruit from our delay.
9742
9743 Neither Creator nor a creature ever,
9744 Son," he began, "was destitute of love
9745 Natural or spiritual; and thou knowest it.
9746
9747 The natural was ever without error;

9748 But err the other may by evil object,
9749 Or by too much, or by too little vigour.
9750
9751 While in the first it well directed is,
9752 And in the second moderates itself,
9753 It cannot be the cause of sinful pleasure;
9754
9755 But when to ill it turns, and, with more care
9756 Or lesser than it ought, runs after good,
9757 'Gainst the Creator works his own creation.
9758
9759 Hence thou mayst comprehend that love must be
9760 The seed within yourselves of every virtue,
9761 And every act that merits punishment.
9762
9763 Now inasmuch as never from the welfare
9764 Of its own subject can love turn its sight,
9765 From their own hatred all things are secure;
9766
9767 And since we cannot think of any being
9768 Standing alone, nor from the First divided,
9769 Of hating Him is all desire cut off.
9770
9771 Hence if, discriminating, I judge well,
9772 The evil that one loves is of one's neighbour,
9773 And this is born in three modes in your clay.
9774
9775 There are, who, by abasement of their neighbour,
9776 Hope to excel, and therefore only long
9777 That from his greatness he may be cast down;
9778
9779 There are, who power, grace, honour, and renown
9780 Fear they may lose because another rises,
9781 Thence are so sad that the reverse they love;
9782
9783 And there are those whom injury seems to chafe,
9784 So that it makes them greedy for revenge,
9785 And such must needs shape out another's harm.
9786
9787 This threefold love is wept for down below;
9788 Now of the other will I have thee hear,
9789 That runneth after good with measure faulty.
9790
9791 Each one confusedly a good conceives
9792 Wherein the mind may rest, and longeth for it;
9793 Therefore to overtake it each one strives.
9794
9795 If languid love to look on this attract you,
9796 Or in attaining unto it, this cornice,
9797 After just penitence, torments you for it.
9798
9799 There's other good that does not make man happy;
9800 'Tis not felicity, 'tis not the good
9801 Essence, of every good the fruit and root.
9802
9803 The love that yields itself too much to this
9804 Above us is lamented in three circles;

9805 But how tripartite it may be described,
 9806
 9807 I say not, that thou seek it for thyself."
 9808
 9809
 9810
 9811 Purgatorio: Canto XVIII
 9812
 9813
 9814 An end had put unto his reasoning
 9815 The lofty Teacher, and attent was looking
 9816 Into my face, if I appeared content;
 9817
 9818 And I, whom a new thirst still goaded on,
 9819 Without was mute, and said within: "Perchance
 9820 The too much questioning I make annoys him."
 9821
 9822 But that true Father, who had comprehended
 9823 The timid wish, that opened not itself,
 9824 By speaking gave me hardihood to speak.
 9825
 9826 Whence I: "My sight is, Master, vivified
 9827 So in thy light, that clearly I discern
 9828 Whate'er thy speech importeth or describes.
 9829
 9830 Therefore I thee entreat, sweet Father dear,
 9831 To teach me love, to which thou dost refer
 9832 Every good action and its contrary."
 9833
 9834 "Direct," he said, "towards me the keen eyes
 9835 Of intellect, and clear will be to thee
 9836 The error of the blind, who would be leaders.
 9837
 9838 The soul, which is created apt to love,
 9839 Is mobile unto everything that pleases,
 9840 Soon as by pleasure she is waked to action.
 9841
 9842 Your apprehension from some real thing
 9843 An image draws, and in yourselves displays it
 9844 So that it makes the soul turn unto it.
 9845
 9846 And if, when turned, towards it she incline,
 9847 Love is that inclination; it is nature,
 9848 Which is by pleasure bound in you anew
 9849
 9850 Then even as the fire doth upward move
 9851 By its own form, which to ascend is born,
 9852 Where longest in its matter it endures,
 9853
 9854 So comes the captive soul into desire,
 9855 Which is a motion spiritual, and ne'er rests
 9856 Until she doth enjoy the thing beloved.
 9857
 9858 Now may apparent be to thee how hidden
 9859 The truth is from those people, who aver
 9860 All love is in itself a laudable thing;
 9861

9862 Because its matter may perchance appear
9863 Aye to be good; but yet not each impression
9864 Is good, albeit good may be the wax."
9865
9866 "Thy words, and my sequacious intellect,"
9867 I answered him, "have love revealed to me;
9868 But that has made me more impregn'd with doubt;
9869
9870 For if love from without be offer'd us,
9871 And with another foot the soul go not,
9872 If right or wrong she go, 'tis not her merit."
9873
9874 And he to me: "What reason seeth here,
9875 Myself can tell thee; beyond that await
9876 For Beatrice, since 'tis a work of faith.
9877
9878 Every substantial form, that segregate
9879 From matter is, and with it is united,
9880 Specific power has in itself collected,
9881
9882 Which without act is not perceptible,
9883 Nor shows itself except by its effect,
9884 As life does in a plant by the green leaves.
9885
9886 But still, whence cometh the intelligence
9887 Of the first notions, man is ignorant,
9888 And the affection for the first allurements,
9889
9890 Which are in you as instinct in the bee
9891 To make its honey; and this first desire
9892 Merit of praise or blame containeth not.
9893
9894 Now, that to this all others may be gathered,
9895 Innate within you is the power that counsels,
9896 And it should keep the threshold of assent.
9897
9898 This is the principle, from which is taken
9899 Occasion of desert in you, according
9900 As good and guilty loves it takes and winnows.
9901
9902 Those who, in reasoning, to the bottom went,
9903 Were of this innate liberty aware,
9904 Therefore bequeath'd they Ethics to the world.
9905
9906 Supposing, then, that from necessity
9907 Springs every love that is within you kindled,
9908 Within yourselves the power is to restrain it.
9909
9910 The noble virtue Beatrice understands
9911 By the free will; and therefore see that thou
9912 Bear it in mind, if she should speak of it."
9913
9914 The moon, belated almost unto midnight,
9915 Now made the stars appear to us more rare,
9916 Formed like a bucket, that is all ablaze,
9917
9918 And counter to the heavens ran through those paths

9919 Which the sun sets aflame, when he of Rome
9920 Sees it 'twixt Sardes and Corsicans go down;
9921
9922 And that patrician shade, for whom is named
9923 Pietola more than any Mantuan town,
9924 Had laid aside the burden of my lading;
9925
9926 Whence I, who reason manifest and plain
9927 In answer to my questions had received,
9928 Stood like a man in drowsy reverie.
9929
9930 But taken from me was this drowsiness
9931 Suddenly by a people, that behind
9932 Our backs already had come round to us.
9933
9934 And as, of old, Ismenus and Asopus
9935 Beside them saw at night the rush and throng,
9936 If but the Thebans were in need of Bacchus,
9937
9938 So they along that circle curve their step,
9939 From what I saw of those approaching us,
9940 Who by good-will and righteous love are ridden.
9941
9942 Full soon they were upon us, because running
9943 Moved onward all that mighty multitude,
9944 And two in the advance cried out, lamenting,
9945
9946 "Mary in haste unto the mountain ran,
9947 And Caesar, that he might subdue Ilerda,
9948 Thrust at Marseilles, and then ran into Spain."
9949
9950 "Quick! quick! so that the time may not be lost
9951 By little love!" forthwith the others cried,
9952 "For ardour in well-doing freshens grace!"
9953
9954 "O folk, in whom an eager fervour now
9955 Supplies perhaps delay and negligence,
9956 Put by you in well-doing, through lukewarmness,
9957
9958 This one who lives, and truly I lie not,
9959 Would fain go up, if but the sun relight us;
9960 So tell us where the passage nearest is."
9961
9962 These were the words of him who was my Guide;
9963 And some one of those spirits said: "Come on
9964 Behind us, and the opening shalt thou find;
9965
9966 So full of longing are we to move onward,
9967 That stay we cannot; therefore pardon us,
9968 If thou for churlishness our justice take.
9969
9970 I was San Zeno's Abbot at Verona,
9971 Under the empire of good Barbarossa,
9972 Of whom still sorrowing Milan holds discourse;
9973
9974 And he has one foot in the grave already,
9975 Who shall ere long lament that monastery,

9976 And sorry be of having there had power,
 9977
 9978 Because his son, in his whole body sick,
 9979 And worse in mind, and who was evil-born,
 9980 He put into the place of its true pastor."
 9981
 9982 If more he said, or silent was, I know not,
 9983 He had already passed so far beyond us;
 9984 But this I heard, and to retain it pleased me.
 9985
 9986 And he who was in every need my succour
 9987 Said: "Turn thee hitherward; see two of them
 9988 Come fastening upon slothfulness their teeth."
 9989
 9990 In rear of all they shouted: "Sooner were
 9991 The people dead to whom the sea was opened,
 9992 Than their inheritors the Jordan saw;
 9993
 9994 And those who the fatigue did not endure
 9995 Unto the issue, with Anchises' son,
 9996 Themselves to life withouten glory offered."
 9997
 9998 Then when from us so separated were
 9999 Those shades, that they no longer could be seen,
 10000 Within me a new thought did entrance find,
 10001
 10002 Whence others many and diverse were born;
 10003 And so I lapsed from one into another,
 10004 That in a reverie mine eyes I closed,
 10005
 10006 And meditation into dream transmuted.
 10007
 10008
 10009
 10010 Purgatorio: Canto XIX
 10011
 10012
 10013 It was the hour when the diurnal heat
 10014 No more can warm the coldness of the moon,
 10015 Vanquished by earth, or peradventure Saturn,
 10016
 10017 When geomancers their Fortuna Major
 10018 See in the orient before the dawn
 10019 Rise by a path that long remains not dim,
 10020
 10021 There came to me in dreams a stammering woman,
 10022 Squint in her eyes, and in her feet distorted,
 10023 With hands dissevered and of sallow hue.
 10024
 10025 I looked at her; and as the sun restores
 10026 The frigid members which the night benumbs,
 10027 Even thus my gaze did render voluble
 10028
 10029 Her tongue, and made her all erect thereafter
 10030 In little while, and the lost countenance
 10031 As love desires it so in her did colour.
 10032

10033 When in this wise she had her speech unloosed,
10034 She 'gan to sing so, that with difficulty
10035 Could I have turned my thoughts away from her.
10036
10037 "I am," she sang, "I am the Siren sweet
10038 Who mariners amid the main unman,
10039 So full am I of pleasantness to hear.
10040
10041 I drew Ulysses from his wandering way
10042 Unto my song, and he who dwells with me
10043 Seldom departs so wholly I content him."
10044
10045 Her mouth was not yet closed again, before
10046 Appeared a Lady saintly and alert
10047 Close at my side to put her to confusion.
10048
10049 "Virgilius, O Virgilius! who is this?"
10050 Sternly she said; and he was drawing near
10051 With eyes still fixed upon that modest one.
10052
10053 She seized the other and in front laid open,
10054 Rending her garments, and her belly showed me;
10055 This waked me with the stench that issued from it.
10056
10057 I turned mine eyes, and good Virgilius said:
10058 "At least thrice have I called thee; rise and come;
10059 Find we the opening by which thou mayst enter."
10060
10061 I rose; and full already of high day
10062 Were all the circles of the Sacred Mountain,
10063 And with the new sun at our back we went.
10064
10065 Following behind him, I my forehead bore
10066 Like unto one who has it laden with thought,
10067 Who makes himself the half arch of a bridge,
10068
10069 When I heard say, "Come, here the passage is,"
10070 Spoken in a manner gentle and benign,
10071 Such as we hear not in this mortal region.
10072
10073 With open wings, which of a swan appeared,
10074 Upward he turned us who thus spake to us,
10075 Between the two walls of the solid granite.
10076
10077 He moved his pinions afterwards and fanned us,
10078 Affirming those 'qui lugent' to be blessed,
10079 For they shall have their souls with comfort filled.
10080
10081 "What aileth thee, that aye to earth thou gazest?"
10082 To me my Guide began to say, we both
10083 Somewhat beyond the Angel having mounted.
10084
10085 And I: "With such misgiving makes me go
10086 A vision new, which bends me to itself,
10087 So that I cannot from the thought withdraw me."
10088
10089 "Didst thou behold," he said, "that old enchantress,

10090 Who sole above us henceforth is lamented?
 10091 Didst thou behold how man is freed from her?
 10092
 10093 Suffice it thee, and smite earth with thy heels,
 10094 Thine eyes lift upward to the lure, that whirls
 10095 The Eternal King with revolutions vast."
 10096
 10097 Even as the hawk, that first his feet surveys,
 10098 Then turns him to the call and stretches forward,
 10099 Through the desire of food that draws him thither,
 10100
 10101 Such I became, and such, as far as cleaves
 10102 The rock to give a way to him who mounts,
 10103 Went on to where the circling doth begin.
 10104
 10105 On the fifth circle when I had come forth,
 10106 People I saw upon it who were weeping,
 10107 Stretched prone upon the ground, all downward turned.
 10108
 10109 "Adhaesit pavimento anima mea,"
 10110 I heard them say with sighings so profound,
 10111 That hardly could the words be understood.
 10112
 10113 "O ye elect of God, whose sufferings
 10114 Justice and Hope both render less severe,
 10115 Direct ye us towards the high ascents."
 10116
 10117 "If ye are come secure from this prostration,
 10118 And wish to find the way most speedily,
 10119 Let your right hands be evermore outside."
 10120
 10121 Thus did the Poet ask, and thus was answered
 10122 By them somewhat in front of us; whence I
 10123 In what was spoken divined the rest concealed,
 10124
 10125 And unto my Lord's eyes mine eyes I turned;
 10126 Whence he assented with a cheerful sign
 10127 To what the sight of my desire implored.
 10128
 10129 When of myself I could dispose at will,
 10130 Above that creature did I draw myself,
 10131 Whose words before had caused me to take note,
 10132
 10133 Saying: "O Spirit, in whom weeping ripens
 10134 That without which to God we cannot turn,
 10135 Suspend awhile for me thy greater care.
 10136
 10137 Who wast thou, and why are your backs turned upwards,
 10138 Tell me, and if thou wouldst that I procure thee
 10139 Anything there whence living I departed."
 10140
 10141 And he to me: "Wherefore our backs the heaven
 10142 Turns to itself, know shalt thou; but beforehand
 10143 'Scias quod ego fui successor Petri.'
 10144
 10145 Between Siestri and Chiaveri descends
 10146 A river beautiful, and of its name

10147 The title of my blood its summit makes.
10148
10149 A month and little more essayed I how
10150 Weighs the great cloak on him from mire who keeps it,
10151 For all the other burdens seem a feather.
10152
10153 Tardy, ah woe is me! was my conversion;
10154 But when the Roman Shepherd I was made,
10155 Then I discovered life to be a lie.
10156
10157 I saw that there the heart was not at rest,
10158 Nor farther in that life could one ascend;
10159 Whereby the love of this was kindled in me.
10160
10161 Until that time a wretched soul and parted
10162 From God was I, and wholly avaricious;
10163 Now, as thou seest, I here am punished for it.
10164
10165 What avarice does is here made manifest
10166 In the purgation of these souls converted,
10167 And no more bitter pain the Mountain has.
10168
10169 Even as our eye did not uplift itself
10170 Aloft, being fastened upon earthly things,
10171 So justice here has merged it in the earth.
10172
10173 As avarice had extinguished our affection
10174 For every good, whereby was action lost,
10175 So justice here doth hold us in restraint,
10176
10177 Bound and imprisoned by the feet and hands;
10178 And so long as it pleases the just Lord
10179 Shall we remain immovable and prostrate."
10180
10181 I on my knees had fallen, and wished to speak;
10182 But even as I began, and he was 'ware,
10183 Only by listening, of my reverence,
10184
10185 "What cause," he said, "has downward bent thee thus?"
10186 And I to him: "For your own dignity,
10187 Standing, my conscience stung me with remorse."
10188
10189 "Straighten thy legs, and upward raise thee, brother,"
10190 He answered: "Err not, fellow-servant am I
10191 With thee and with the others to one power.
10192
10193 If e'er that holy, evangelic sound,
10194 Which sayeth 'neque nubent,' thou hast heard,
10195 Well canst thou see why in this wise I speak.
10196
10197 Now go; no longer will I have thee linger,
10198 Because thy stay doth incommode my weeping,
10199 With which I ripen that which thou hast said.
10200
10201 On earth I have a grandchild named Alagia,
10202 Good in herself, unless indeed our house
10203 Malevolent may make her by example,

10204
 10205 And she alone remains to me on earth."
 10206
 10207
 10208
 10209 Purgatorio: Canto XX
 10210
 10211
 10212 Ill strives the will against a better will;
 10213 Therefore, to pleasure him, against my pleasure
 10214 I drew the sponge not saturate from the water.
 10215
 10216 Onward I moved, and onward moved my Leader,
 10217 Through vacant places, skirting still the rock,
 10218 As on a wall close to the battlements;
 10219
 10220 For they that through their eyes pour drop by drop
 10221 The malady which all the world pervades,
 10222 On the other side too near the verge approach.
 10223
 10224 Accursed mayst thou be, thou old she-wolf,
 10225 That more than all the other beasts hast prey,
 10226 Because of hunger infinitely hollow!
 10227
 10228 O heaven, in whose gyrations some appear
 10229 To think conditions here below are changed,
 10230 When will he come through whom she shall depart?
 10231
 10232 Onward we went with footsteps slow and scarce,
 10233 And I attentive to the shades I heard
 10234 Piteously weeping and bemoaning them;
 10235
 10236 And I by peradventure heard "Sweet Mary!"
 10237 Uttered in front of us amid the weeping
 10238 Even as a woman does who is in child-birth;
 10239
 10240 And in continuance: "How poor thou wast
 10241 Is manifested by that hostelry
 10242 Where thou didst lay thy sacred burden down."
 10243
 10244 Thereafterward I heard: "O good Fabricius,
 10245 Virtue with poverty didst thou prefer
 10246 To the possession of great wealth with vice."
 10247
 10248 So pleasurable were these words to me
 10249 That I drew farther onward to have knowledge
 10250 Touching that spirit whence they seemed to come.
 10251
 10252 He furthermore was speaking of the largess
 10253 Which Nicholas unto the maidens gave,
 10254 In order to conduct their youth to honour.
 10255
 10256 "O soul that dost so excellently speak,
 10257 Tell me who wast thou," said I, "and why only
 10258 Thou dost renew these praises well deserved?
 10259
 10260 Not without recompense shall be thy word,

10261 If I return to finish the short journey
10262 Of that life which is flying to its end."
10263
10264 And he: "I'll tell thee, not for any comfort
10265 I may expect from earth, but that so much
10266 Grace shines in thee or ever thou art dead.
10267
10268 I was the root of that malignant plant
10269 Which overshadows all the Christian world,
10270 So that good fruit is seldom gathered from it;
10271
10272 But if Douay and Ghent, and Lille and Bruges
10273 Had Power, soon vengeance would be taken on it;
10274 And this I pray of Him who judges all.
10275
10276 Hugh Capet was I called upon the earth;
10277 From me were born the Louises and Philips,
10278 By whom in later days has France been governed.
10279
10280 I was the son of a Parisian butcher,
10281 What time the ancient kings had perished all,
10282 Excepting one, contrite in cloth of gray.
10283
10284 I found me grasping in my hands the rein
10285 Of the realm's government, and so great power
10286 Of new acqurest, and so with friends abounding,
10287
10288 That to the widowed diadem promoted
10289 The head of mine own offspring was, from whom
10290 The consecrated bones of these began.
10291
10292 So long as the great dowry of Provence
10293 Out of my blood took not the sense of shame,
10294 'Twas little worth, but still it did no harm.
10295
10296 Then it began with falsehood and with force
10297 Its rapine; and thereafter, for amends,
10298 Took Ponthieu, Normandy, and Gascony.
10299
10300 Charles came to Italy, and for amends
10301 A victim made of Conradin, and then
10302 Thrust Thomas back to heaven, for amends.
10303
10304 A time I see, not very distant now,
10305 Which draweth forth another Charles from France,
10306 The better to make known both him and his.
10307
10308 Unarmed he goes, and only with the lance
10309 That Judas jousted with; and that he thrusts
10310 So that he makes the paunch of Florence burst.
10311
10312 He thence not land, but sin and infamy,
10313 Shall gain, so much more grievous to himself
10314 As the more light such damage he accounts.
10315
10316 The other, now gone forth, ta'en in his ship,
10317 See I his daughter sell, and chaffer for her

10318 As corsairs do with other female slaves.
 10319
 10320 What more, O Avarice, canst thou do to us,
 10321 Since thou my blood so to thyself hast drawn,
 10322 It careth not for its own proper flesh?
 10323
 10324 That less may seem the future ill and past,
 10325 I see the flower-de-luce Alagna enter,
 10326 And Christ in his own Vicar captive made.
 10327
 10328 I see him yet another time derided;
 10329 I see renewed the vinegar and gall,
 10330 And between living thieves I see him slain.
 10331
 10332 I see the modern Pilate so relentless,
 10333 This does not sate him, but without decretal
 10334 He to the temple bears his sordid sails!
 10335
 10336 When, O my Lord! shall I be joyful made
 10337 By looking on the vengeance which, concealed,
 10338 Makes sweet thine anger in thy secrecy?
 10339
 10340 What I was saying of that only bride
 10341 Of the Holy Ghost, and which occasioned thee
 10342 To turn towards me for some commentary,
 10343
 10344 So long has been ordained to all our prayers
 10345 As the day lasts; but when the night comes on,
 10346 Contrary sound we take instead thereof.
 10347
 10348 At that time we repeat Pygmalion,
 10349 Of whom a traitor, thief, and parricide
 10350 Made his insatiable desire of gold;
 10351
 10352 And the misery of avaricious Midas,
 10353 That followed his inordinate demand,
 10354 At which forevermore one needs but laugh.
 10355
 10356 The foolish Achan each one then records,
 10357 And how he stole the spoils; so that the wrath
 10358 Of Joshua still appears to sting him here.
 10359
 10360 Then we accuse Sapphira with her husband,
 10361 We laud the hoof-beats Heliodorus had,
 10362 And the whole mount in infamy encircles
 10363
 10364 Polymnestor who murdered Polydorus.
 10365 Here finally is cried: 'O Crassus, tell us,
 10366 For thou dost know, what is the taste of gold?'
 10367
 10368 Sometimes we speak, one loud, another low,
 10369 According to desire of speech, that spurs us
 10370 To greater now and now to lesser pace.
 10371
 10372 But in the good that here by day is talked of,
 10373 Erewhile alone I was not; yet near by
 10374 No other person lifted up his voice."

10375
10376 From him already we departed were,
10377 And made endeavour to o'ercome the road
10378 As much as was permitted to our power,
10379
10380 When I perceived, like something that is falling,
10381 The mountain tremble, whence a chill seized on me,
10382 As seizes him who to his death is going.
10383
10384 Certes so violently shook not Delos,
10385 Before Latona made her nest therein
10386 To give birth to the two eyes of the heaven.
10387
10388 Then upon all sides there began a cry,
10389 Such that the Master drew himself towards me,
10390 Saying, "Fear not, while I am guiding thee."
10391
10392 "Gloria in excelsis Deo," all
10393 Were saying, from what near I comprehended,
10394 Where it was possible to hear the cry.
10395
10396 We paused immovable and in suspense,
10397 Even as the shepherds who first heard that song,
10398 Until the trembling ceased, and it was finished.
10399
10400 Then we resumed again our holy path,
10401 Watching the shades that lay upon the ground,
10402 Already turned to their accustomed plaint.
10403
10404 No ignorance ever with so great a strife
10405 Had rendered me importunate to know,
10406 If erreth not in this my memory,
10407
10408 As meditating then I seemed to have;
10409 Nor out of haste to question did I dare,
10410 Nor of myself I there could aught perceive;
10411
10412 So I went onward timorous and thoughtful.
10413
10414
10415
10416 Purgatorio: Canto XXI
10417
10418
10419 The natural thirst, that ne'er is satisfied
10420 Excepting with the water for whose grace
10421 The woman of Samaria besought,
10422
10423 Put me in travail, and haste goaded me
10424 Along the encumbered path behind my Leader
10425 And I was pitying that righteous vengeance;
10426
10427 And lo! in the same manner as Luke writeth
10428 That Christ appeared to two upon the way
10429 From the sepulchral cave already risen,
10430
10431 A shade appeared to us, and came behind us,

10432 Down gazing on the prostrate multitude,
10433 Nor were we ware of it, until it spake,
10434
10435 Saying, "My brothers, may God give you peace!"
10436 We turned us suddenly, and Virgilius rendered
10437 To him the countersign thereto conforming.
10438
10439 Thereon began he: "In the blessed council,
10440 Thee may the court veracious place in peace,
10441 That me doth banish in eternal exile!"
10442
10443 "How," said he, and the while we went with speed,
10444 "If ye are shades whom God deigns not on high,
10445 Who up his stairs so far has guided you?"
10446
10447 And said my Teacher: "If thou note the marks
10448 Which this one bears, and which the Angel traces
10449 Well shalt thou see he with the good must reign.
10450
10451 But because she who spinneth day and night
10452 For him had not yet drawn the distaff off,
10453 Which Clotho lays for each one and compacts,
10454
10455 His soul, which is thy sister and my own,
10456 In coming upwards could not come alone,
10457 By reason that it sees not in our fashion.
10458
10459 Whence I was drawn from out the ample throat
10460 Of Hell to be his guide, and I shall guide him
10461 As far on as my school has power to lead.
10462
10463 But tell us, if thou knowest, why such a shudder
10464 Erewhile the mountain gave, and why together
10465 All seemed to cry, as far as its moist feet?"
10466
10467 In asking he so hit the very eye
10468 Of my desire, that merely with the hope
10469 My thirst became the less unsatisfied.
10470
10471 "Naught is there," he began, "that without order
10472 May the religion of the mountain feel,
10473 Nor aught that may be foreign to its custom.
10474
10475 Free is it here from every permutation;
10476 What from itself heaven in itself receiveth
10477 Can be of this the cause, and naught beside;
10478
10479 Because that neither rain, nor hail, nor snow,
10480 Nor dew, nor hoar-frost any higher falls
10481 Than the short, little stairway of three steps.
10482
10483 Dense clouds do not appear, nor rarefied,
10484 Nor coruscation, nor the daughter of Thaumás,
10485 That often upon earth her region shifts;
10486
10487 No arid vapour any farther rises
10488 Than to the top of the three steps I spake of,

10489 Whereon the Vicar of Peter has his feet.
10490
10491 Lower down perchance it trembles less or more,
10492 But, for the wind that in the earth is hidden
10493 I know not how, up here it never trembled.
10494
10495 It trembles here, whenever any soul
10496 Feels itself pure, so that it soars, or moves
10497 To mount aloft, and such a cry attends it.
10498
10499 Of purity the will alone gives proof,
10500 Which, being wholly free to change its convent,
10501 Takes by surprise the soul, and helps it fly.
10502
10503 First it wills well; but the desire permits not,
10504 Which divine justice with the self-same will
10505 There was to sin, upon the torment sets.
10506
10507 And I, who have been lying in this pain
10508 Five hundred years and more, but just now felt
10509 A free volition for a better seat.
10510
10511 Therefore thou heardest the earthquake, and the pious
10512 Spirits along the mountain rendering praise
10513 Unto the Lord, that soon he speed them upwards."
10514
10515 So said he to him; and since we enjoy
10516 As much in drinking as the thirst is great,
10517 I could not say how much it did me good.
10518
10519 And the wise Leader: "Now I see the net
10520 That snares you here, and how ye are set free,
10521 Why the earth quakes, and wherefore ye rejoice.
10522
10523 Now who thou wast be pleased that I may know;
10524 And why so many centuries thou hast here
10525 Been lying, let me gather from thy words."
10526
10527 "In days when the good Titus, with the aid
10528 Of the supremest King, avenged the wounds
10529 Whence issued forth the blood by Judas sold,
10530
10531 Under the name that most endures and honours,
10532 Was I on earth," that spirit made reply,
10533 "Greatly renowned, but not with faith as yet.
10534
10535 My vocal spirit was so sweet, that Rome
10536 Me, a Thoulousian, drew unto herself,
10537 Where I deserved to deck my brows with myrtle.
10538
10539 Statius the people name me still on earth;
10540 I sang of Thebes, and then of great Achilles;
10541 But on the way fell with my second burden.
10542
10543 The seeds unto my ardour were the sparks
10544 Of that celestial flame which heated me,
10545 Whereby more than a thousand have been fired;

10546
10547 Of the Aeneid speak I, which to me
10548 A mother was, and was my nurse in song;
10549 Without this weighed I not a drachma's weight.
10550
10551 And to have lived upon the earth what time
10552 Virgilius lived, I would accept one sun
10553 More than I must ere issuing from my ban."
10554
10555 These words towards me made Virgilius turn
10556 With looks that in their silence said, "Be silent!"
10557 But yet the power that wills cannot do all things;
10558
10559 For tears and laughter are such pursuivants
10560 Unto the passion from which each springs forth,
10561 In the most truthful least the will they follow.
10562
10563 I only smiled, as one who gives the wink;
10564 Whereat the shade was silent, and it gazed
10565 Into mine eyes, where most expression dwells;
10566
10567 And, "As thou well mayst consummate a labour
10568 So great," it said, "why did thy face just now
10569 Display to me the lightning of a smile?"
10570
10571 Now am I caught on this side and on that;
10572 One keeps me silent, one to speak conjures me,
10573 Wherefore I sigh, and I am understood.
10574
10575 "Speak," said my Master, "and be not afraid
10576 Of speaking, but speak out, and say to him
10577 What he demands with such solicitude."
10578
10579 Whence I: "Thou peradventure marvellest,
10580 O antique spirit, at the smile I gave;
10581 But I will have more wonder seize upon thee.
10582
10583 This one, who guides on high these eyes of mine,
10584 Is that Virgilius, from whom thou didst learn
10585 To sing aloud of men and of the Gods.
10586
10587 If other cause thou to my smile imputedst,
10588 Abandon it as false, and trust it was
10589 Those words which thou hast spoken concerning him."
10590
10591 Already he was stooping to embrace
10592 My Teacher's feet; but he said to him: "Brother,
10593 Do not; for shade thou art, and shade beholdest."
10594
10595 And he uprising: "Now canst thou the sum
10596 Of love which warms me to thee comprehend,
10597 When this our vanity I disremember,
10598
10599 Treating a shadow as substantial thing."
10600
10601
10602

10603 Purgatorio: Canto XXII
 10604
 10605
 10606 Already was the Angel left behind us,
 10607 The Angel who to the sixth round had turned us,
 10608 Having erased one mark from off my face;
 10609
 10610 And those who have in justice their desire
 10611 Had said to us, "Beati," in their voices,
 10612 With "sitio," and without more ended it.
 10613
 10614 And I, more light than through the other passes,
 10615 Went onward so, that without any labour
 10616 I followed upward the swift-footed spirits;
 10617
 10618 When thus Virgilius began: "The love
 10619 Kindled by virtue aye another kindles,
 10620 Provided outwardly its flame appear.
 10621
 10622 Hence from the hour that Juvenal descended
 10623 Among us into the infernal Limbo,
 10624 Who made apparent to me thy affection,
 10625
 10626 My kindness towards thee was as great
 10627 As ever bound one to an unseen person,
 10628 So that these stairs will now seem short to me.
 10629
 10630 But tell me, and forgive me as a friend,
 10631 If too great confidence let loose the rein,
 10632 And as a friend now hold discourse with me;
 10633
 10634 How was it possible within thy breast
 10635 For avarice to find place, 'mid so much wisdom
 10636 As thou wast filled with by thy diligence?"
 10637
 10638 These words excited Statius at first
 10639 Somewhat to laughter; afterward he answered:
 10640 "Each word of thine is love's dear sign to me.
 10641
 10642 Verily oftentimes do things appear
 10643 Which give fallacious matter to our doubts,
 10644 Instead of the true causes which are hidden!
 10645
 10646 Thy question shows me thy belief to be
 10647 That I was niggard in the other life,
 10648 It may be from the circle where I was;
 10649
 10650 Therefore know thou, that avarice was removed
 10651 Too far from me; and this extravagance
 10652 Thousands of lunar periods have punished.
 10653
 10654 And were it not that I my thoughts uplifted,
 10655 When I the passage heard where thou exclaimest,
 10656 As if indignant, unto human nature,
 10657
 10658 'To what impellest thou not, O cursed hunger
 10659 Of gold, the appetite of mortal men?'

10660 Revolving I should feel the dismal joustings.
10661
10662 Then I perceived the hands could spread too wide
10663 Their wings in spending, and repented me
10664 As well of that as of my other sins;
10665
10666 How many with shorn hair shall rise again
10667 Because of ignorance, which from this sin
10668 Cuts off repentance living and in death!
10669
10670 And know that the transgression which rebuts
10671 By direct opposition any sin
10672 Together with it here its verdure dries.
10673
10674 Therefore if I have been among that folk
10675 Which mourns its avarice, to purify me,
10676 For its opposite has this befallen me."
10677
10678 "Now when thou sangest the relentless weapons
10679 Of the twofold affliction of Jocasta,"
10680 The singer of the Songs Bucolic said,
10681
10682 "From that which Clio there with thee preludes,
10683 It does not seem that yet had made thee faithful
10684 That faith without which no good works suffice.
10685
10686 If this be so, what candles or what sun
10687 Scattered thy darkness so that thou didst trim
10688 Thy sails behind the Fisherman thereafter?"
10689
10690 And he to him: "Thou first directedst me
10691 Towards Parnassus, in its grotts to drink,
10692 And first concerning God didst me enlighten.
10693
10694 Thou didst as he who walketh in the night,
10695 Who bears his light behind, which helps him not,
10696 But wary makes the persons after him,
10697
10698 When thou didst say: 'The age renews itself,
10699 Justice returns, and man's primeval time,
10700 And a new progeny descends from heaven.'
10701
10702 Through thee I Poet was, through thee a Christian;
10703 But that thou better see what I design,
10704 To colour it will I extend my hand.
10705
10706 Already was the world in every part
10707 Pregnant with the true creed, disseminated
10708 By messengers of the eternal kingdom;
10709
10710 And thy assertion, spoken of above,
10711 With the new preachers was in unison;
10712 Whence I to visit them the custom took.
10713
10714 Then they became so holy in my sight,
10715 That, when Domitian persecuted them,
10716 Not without tears of mine were their laments;

10717
10718 And all the while that I on earth remained,
10719 Them I befriended, and their upright customs
10720 Made me disparage all the other sects.
10721
10722 And ere I led the Greeks unto the rivers
10723 Of Thebes, in poetry, I was baptized,
10724 But out of fear was covertly a Christian,
10725
10726 For a long time professing paganism;
10727 And this lukewarmness caused me the fourth circle
10728 To circuit round more than four centuries.
10729
10730 Thou, therefore, who hast raised the covering
10731 That hid from me whatever good I speak of,
10732 While in ascending we have time to spare,
10733
10734 Tell me, in what place is our friend Terentius,
10735 Caecilius, Plautus, Varro, if thou knowest;
10736 Tell me if they are damned, and in what alley."
10737
10738 "These, Persius and myself, and others many,"
10739 Replied my Leader, "with that Grecian are
10740 Whom more than all the rest the Muses suckled,
10741
10742 In the first circle of the prison blind;
10743 Ofttimes we of the mountain hold discourse
10744 Which has our nurses ever with itself.
10745
10746 Euripides is with us, Antiphon,
10747 Simonides, Agatho, and many other
10748 Greeks who of old their brows with laurel decked.
10749
10750 There some of thine own people may be seen,
10751 Antigone, Deiphile and Argia,
10752 And there Ismene mournful as of old.
10753
10754 There she is seen who pointed out Langia;
10755 There is Tiresias' daughter, and there Thetis,
10756 And there Deidamia with her sisters."
10757
10758 Silent already were the poets both,
10759 Attent once more in looking round about,
10760 From the ascent and from the walls released;
10761
10762 And four handmaidens of the day already
10763 Were left behind, and at the pole the fifth
10764 Was pointing upward still its burning horn,
10765
10766 What time my Guide: "I think that tow'rds the edge
10767 Our dexter shoulders it behoves us turn,
10768 Circling the mount as we are wont to do."
10769
10770 Thus in that region custom was our ensign;
10771 And we resumed our way with less suspicion
10772 For the assenting of that worthy soul
10773

10774 They in advance went on, and I alone
 10775 Behind them, and I listened to their speech,
 10776 Which gave me lessons in the art of song.
 10777
 10778 But soon their sweet discourses interrupted
 10779 A tree which midway in the road we found,
 10780 With apples sweet and grateful to the smell.
 10781
 10782 And even as a fir-tree tapers upward
 10783 From bough to bough, so downwardly did that;
 10784 I think in order that no one might climb it.
 10785
 10786 On that side where our pathway was enclosed
 10787 Fell from the lofty rock a limpid water,
 10788 And spread itself abroad upon the leaves.
 10789
 10790 The Poets twain unto the tree drew near,
 10791 And from among the foliage a voice
 10792 Cried: "Of this food ye shall have scarcity."
 10793
 10794 Then said: "More thoughtful Mary was of making
 10795 The marriage feast complete and honourable,
 10796 Than of her mouth which now for you responds;
 10797
 10798 And for their drink the ancient Roman women
 10799 With water were content; and Daniel
 10800 Disparaged food, and understanding won.
 10801
 10802 The primal age was beautiful as gold;
 10803 Acorns it made with hunger savourous,
 10804 And nectar every rivulet with thirst.
 10805
 10806 Honey and locusts were the aliments
 10807 That fed the Baptist in the wilderness;
 10808 Whence he is glorious, and so magnified
 10809
 10810 As by the Evangel is revealed to you."
 10811
 10812
 10813
 10814 Purgatorio: Canto XXIII
 10815
 10816
 10817 The while among the verdant leaves mine eyes
 10818 I riveted, as he is wont to do
 10819 Who wastes his life pursuing little birds,
 10820
 10821 My more than Father said unto me: "Son,
 10822 Come now; because the time that is ordained us
 10823 More usefully should be apportioned out."
 10824
 10825 I turned my face and no less soon my steps
 10826 Unto the Sages, who were speaking so
 10827 They made the going of no cost to me;
 10828
 10829 And lo! were heard a song and a lament,
 10830 "Labia mea, Domine," in fashion

10831 Such that delight and dolence it brought forth.
10832
10833 "O my sweet Father, what is this I hear?"
10834 Began I; and he answered: "Shades that go
10835 Perhaps the knot unloosing of their debt."
10836
10837 In the same way that thoughtful pilgrims do,
10838 Who, unknown people on the road o'ertaking,
10839 Turn themselves round to them, and do not stop,
10840
10841 Even thus, behind us with a swifter motion
10842 Coming and passing onward, gazed upon us
10843 A crowd of spirits silent and devout.
10844
10845 Each in his eyes was dark and cavernous,
10846 Pallid in face, and so emaciate
10847 That from the bones the skin did shape itself.
10848
10849 I do not think that so to merest rind
10850 Could Erisichthon have been withered up
10851 By famine, when most fear he had of it.
10852
10853 Thinking within myself I said: "Behold,
10854 This is the folk who lost Jerusalem,
10855 When Mary made a prey of her own son."
10856
10857 Their sockets were like rings without the gems;
10858 Whoever in the face of men reads 'omo'
10859 Might well in these have recognised the 'm.'
10860
10861 Who would believe the odour of an apple,
10862 Begetting longing, could consume them so,
10863 And that of water, without knowing how?
10864
10865 I still was wondering what so famished them,
10866 For the occasion not yet manifest
10867 Of their emaciation and sad squalor;
10868
10869 And lo! from out the hollow of his head
10870 His eyes a shade turned on me, and looked keenly;
10871 Then cried aloud: "What grace to me is this?"
10872
10873 Never should I have known him by his look;
10874 But in his voice was evident to me
10875 That which his aspect had suppressed within it.
10876
10877 This spark within me wholly re-enkindled
10878 My recognition of his altered face,
10879 And I recalled the features of Forese.
10880
10881 "Ah, do not look at this dry leprosy,"
10882 Entreated he, "which doth my skin discolour,
10883 Nor at default of flesh that I may have;
10884
10885 But tell me truth of thee, and who are those
10886 Two souls, that yonder make for thee an escort;
10887 Do not delay in speaking unto me."

10888
10889 "That face of thine, which dead I once bewept,
10890 Gives me for weeping now no lesser grief,"
10891 I answered him, "beholding it so changed!
10892
10893 But tell me, for God's sake, what thus denudes you?
10894 Make me not speak while I am marvelling,
10895 For ill speaks he who's full of other longings."
10896
10897 And he to me: "From the eternal council
10898 Falls power into the water and the tree
10899 Behind us left, whereby I grow so thin.
10900
10901 All of this people who lamenting sing,
10902 For following beyond measure appetite
10903 In hunger and thirst are here re-sanctified.
10904
10905 Desire to eat and drink enkindles in us
10906 The scent that issues from the apple-tree,
10907 And from the spray that sprinkles o'er the verdure;
10908
10909 And not a single time alone, this ground
10910 Encompassing, is refreshed our pain,--
10911 I say our pain, and ought to say our solace,--
10912
10913 For the same wish doth lead us to the tree
10914 Which led the Christ rejoicing to say 'Eli,'
10915 When with his veins he liberated us."
10916
10917 And I to him: "Forese, from that day
10918 When for a better life thou changedst worlds,
10919 Up to this time five years have not rolled round.
10920
10921 If sooner were the power exhausted in thee
10922 Of sinning more, than thee the hour surprised
10923 Of that good sorrow which to God reweds us,
10924
10925 How hast thou come up hitherward already?
10926 I thought to find thee down there underneath,
10927 Where time for time doth restitution make."
10928
10929 And he to me: "Thus speedily has led me
10930 To drink of the sweet wormwood of these torments,
10931 My Nella with her overflowing tears;
10932
10933 She with her prayers devout and with her sighs
10934 Has drawn me from the coast where one where one awaits,
10935 And from the other circles set me free.
10936
10937 So much more dear and pleasing is to God
10938 My little widow, whom so much I loved,
10939 As in good works she is the more alone;
10940
10941 For the Barbagia of Sardinia
10942 By far more modest in its women is
10943 Than the Barbagia I have left her in.
10944

10945 O brother sweet, what wilt thou have me say?
 10946 A future time is in my sight already,
 10947 To which this hour will not be very old,
 10948
 10949 When from the pulpit shall be interdicted
 10950 To the unblushing womankind of Florence
 10951 To go about displaying breast and paps.
 10952
 10953 What savages were e'er, what Saracens,
 10954 Who stood in need, to make them covered go,
 10955 Of spiritual or other discipline?
 10956
 10957 But if the shameless women were assured
 10958 Of what swift Heaven prepares for them, already
 10959 Wide open would they have their mouths to howl;
 10960
 10961 For if my foresight here deceive me not,
 10962 They shall be sad ere he has bearded cheeks
 10963 Who now is hushed to sleep with lullaby.
 10964
 10965 O brother, now no longer hide thee from me;
 10966 See that not only I, but all these people
 10967 Are gazing there, where thou dost veil the sun."
 10968
 10969 Whence I to him: "If thou bring back to mind
 10970 What thou with me hast been and I with thee,
 10971 The present memory will be grievous still.
 10972
 10973 Out of that life he turned me back who goes
 10974 In front of me, two days ago when round
 10975 The sister of him yonder showed herself,"
 10976
 10977 And to the sun I pointed. "Through the deep
 10978 Night of the truly dead has this one led me,
 10979 With this true flesh, that follows after him.
 10980
 10981 Thence his encouragements have led me up,
 10982 Ascending and still circling round the mount
 10983 That you doth straighten, whom the world made crooked.
 10984
 10985 He says that he will bear me company,
 10986 Till I shall be where Beatrice will be;
 10987 There it behoves me to remain without him.
 10988
 10989 This is Virgilius, who thus says to me,"
 10990 And him I pointed at; "the other is
 10991 That shade for whom just now shook every slope
 10992
 10993 Your realm, that from itself discharges him."
 10994
 10995
 10996
 10997 Purgatorio: Canto XXIV
 10998
 10999
 11000 Nor speech the going, nor the going that
 11001 Slackened; but talking we went bravely on,

11002 Even as a vessel urged by a good wind.
 11003
 11004 And shadows, that appeared things doubly dead,
 11005 From out the sepulchres of their eyes betrayed
 11006 Wonder at me, aware that I was living.
 11007
 11008 And I, continuing my colloquy,
 11009 Said: "Peradventure he goes up more slowly
 11010 Than he would do, for other people's sake.
 11011
 11012 But tell me, if thou knowest, where is Piccarda;
 11013 Tell me if any one of note I see
 11014 Among this folk that gazes at me so."
 11015
 11016 "My sister, who, 'twixt beautiful and good,
 11017 I know not which was more, triumphs rejoicing
 11018 Already in her crown on high Olympus."
 11019
 11020 So said he first, and then: "'Tis not forbidden
 11021 To name each other here, so milked away
 11022 Is our resemblance by our dieting.
 11023
 11024 This," pointing with his finger, "is Buonagiunta,
 11025 Buonagiunta, of Lucca; and that face
 11026 Beyond him there, more peaked than the others,
 11027
 11028 Has held the holy Church within his arms;
 11029 From Tours was he, and purges by his fasting
 11030 Bolsena's eels and the Vernaccia wine."
 11031
 11032 He named me many others one by one;
 11033 And all contented seemed at being named,
 11034 So that for this I saw not one dark look.
 11035
 11036 I saw for hunger bite the empty air
 11037 Ubaldin dalla Pila, and Boniface,
 11038 Who with his crook had pastured many people.
 11039
 11040 I saw Messer Marchese, who had leisure
 11041 Once at Forli for drinking with less dryness,
 11042 And he was one who ne'er felt satisfied.
 11043
 11044 But as he does who scans, and then doth prize
 11045 One more than others, did I him of Lucca,
 11046 Who seemed to take most cognizance of me.
 11047
 11048 He murmured, and I know not what Gentucca
 11049 From that place heard I, where he felt the wound
 11050 Of justice, that doth macerate them so.
 11051
 11052 "O soul," I said, "that seemest so desirous
 11053 To speak with me, do so that I may hear thee,
 11054 And with thy speech appease thyself and me."
 11055
 11056 "A maid is born, and wears not yet the veil,"
 11057 Began he, "who to thee shall pleasant make
 11058 My city, howsoever men may blame it.

11059
11060 Thou shalt go on thy way with this prevision;
11061 If by my murmuring thou hast been deceived,
11062 True things hereafter will declare it to thee.
11063
11064 But say if him I here behold, who forth
11065 Evoked the new-invented rhymes, beginning,
11066 'Ladies, that have intelligence of love?'"
11067
11068 And I to him: "One am I, who, whenever
11069 Love doth inspire me, note, and in that measure
11070 Which he within me dictates, singing go."
11071
11072 "O brother, now I see," he said, "the knot
11073 Which me, the Notary, and Guittone held
11074 Short of the sweet new style that now I hear.
11075
11076 I do perceive full clearly how your pens
11077 Go closely following after him who dictates,
11078 Which with our own forsooth came not to pass;
11079
11080 And he who sets himself to go beyond,
11081 No difference sees from one style to another;"
11082 And as if satisfied, he held his peace.
11083
11084 Even as the birds, that winter tow'rds the Nile,
11085 Sometimes into a phalanx form themselves,
11086 Then fly in greater haste, and go in file;
11087
11088 In such wise all the people who were there,
11089 Turning their faces, hurried on their steps,
11090 Both by their leanness and their wishes light.
11091
11092 And as a man, who weary is with trotting,
11093 Lets his companions onward go, and walks,
11094 Until he vents the panting of his chest;
11095
11096 So did Forese let the holy flock
11097 Pass by, and came with me behind it, saying,
11098 "When will it be that I again shall see thee?"
11099
11100 "How long," I answered, "I may live, I know not;
11101 Yet my return will not so speedy be,
11102 But I shall sooner in desire arrive;
11103
11104 Because the place where I was set to live
11105 From day to day of good is more depleted,
11106 And unto dismal ruin seems ordained."
11107
11108 "Now go," he said, "for him most guilty of it
11109 At a beast's tail behold I dragged along
11110 Towards the valley where is no repentance.
11111
11112 Faster at every step the beast is going,
11113 Increasing evermore until it smites him,
11114 And leaves the body vilely mutilated.
11115

11116 Not long those wheels shall turn," and he uplifted
11117 His eyes to heaven, "ere shall be clear to thee
11118 That which my speech no farther can declare.
11119
11120 Now stay behind; because the time so precious
11121 Is in this kingdom, that I lose too much
11122 By coming onward thus abreast with thee."
11123
11124 As sometimes issues forth upon a gallop
11125 A cavalier from out a troop that ride,
11126 And seeks the honour of the first encounter,
11127
11128 So he with greater strides departed from us;
11129 And on the road remained I with those two,
11130 Who were such mighty marshals of the world.
11131
11132 And when before us he had gone so far
11133 Mine eyes became to him such pursuivants
11134 As was my understanding to his words,
11135
11136 Appeared to me with laden and living boughs
11137 Another apple-tree, and not far distant,
11138 From having but just then turned thitherward.
11139
11140 People I saw beneath it lift their hands,
11141 And cry I know not what towards the leaves,
11142 Like little children eager and deluded,
11143
11144 Who pray, and he they pray to doth not answer,
11145 But, to make very keen their appetite,
11146 Holds their desire aloft, and hides it not.
11147
11148 Then they departed as if undeceived;
11149 And now we came unto the mighty tree
11150 Which prayers and tears so manifold refuses.
11151
11152 "Pass farther onward without drawing near;
11153 The tree of which Eve ate is higher up,
11154 And out of that one has this tree been raised."
11155
11156 Thus said I know not who among the branches;
11157 Whereat Virgilius, Statius, and myself
11158 Went crowding forward on the side that rises.
11159
11160 "Be mindful," said he, "of the accursed ones
11161 Formed of the cloud-rack, who inebriate
11162 Combated Theseus with their double breasts;
11163
11164 And of the Jews who showed them soft in drinking,
11165 Whence Gideon would not have them for companions
11166 When he tow'rds Midian the hills descended."
11167
11168 Thus, closely pressed to one of the two borders,
11169 On passed we, hearing sins of gluttony,
11170 Followed forsooth by miserable gains;
11171
11172 Then set at large upon the lonely road,

11173 A thousand steps and more we onward went,
 11174 In contemplation, each without a word.
 11175
 11176 "What go ye thinking thus, ye three alone?"
 11177 Said suddenly a voice, whereat I started
 11178 As terrified and timid beasts are wont.
 11179
 11180 I raised my head to see who this might be,
 11181 And never in a furnace was there seen
 11182 Metals or glass so lucent and so red
 11183
 11184 As one I saw who said: "If it may please you
 11185 To mount aloft, here it behoves you turn;
 11186 This way goes he who goeth after peace."
 11187
 11188 His aspect had bereft me of my sight,
 11189 So that I turned me back unto my Teachers,
 11190 Like one who goeth as his hearing guides him.
 11191
 11192 And as, the harbinger of early dawn,
 11193 The air of May doth move and breathe out fragrance,
 11194 Impregnate all with herbage and with flowers,
 11195
 11196 So did I feel a breeze strike in the midst
 11197 My front, and felt the moving of the plumes
 11198 That breathed around an odour of ambrosia;
 11199
 11200 And heard it said: "Blessed are they whom grace
 11201 So much illumines, that the love of taste
 11202 Excites not in their breasts too great desire,
 11203
 11204 Hungering at all times so far as is just."
 11205
 11206
 11207
 11208 Purgatorio: Canto XXV
 11209
 11210
 11211 Now was it the ascent no hindrance brooked,
 11212 Because the sun had his meridian circle
 11213 To Taurus left, and night to Scorpio;
 11214
 11215 Wherefore as doth a man who tarries not,
 11216 But goes his way, whate'er to him appear,
 11217 If of necessity the sting transfix him,
 11218
 11219 In this wise did we enter through the gap,
 11220 Taking the stairway, one before the other,
 11221 Which by its narrowness divides the climbers.
 11222
 11223 And as the little stork that lifts its wing
 11224 With a desire to fly, and does not venture
 11225 To leave the nest, and lets it downward droop,
 11226
 11227 Even such was I, with the desire of asking
 11228 Kindled and quenched, unto the motion coming
 11229 He makes who doth address himself to speak.

11230
11231 Not for our pace, though rapid it might be,
11232 My father sweet forbore, but said: "Let fly
11233 The bow of speech thou to the barb hast drawn."
11234
11235 With confidence I opened then my mouth,
11236 And I began: "How can one meagre grow
11237 There where the need of nutriment applies not?"
11238
11239 "If thou wouldst call to mind how Meleager
11240 Was wasted by the wasting of a brand,
11241 This would not," said he, "be to thee so sour;
11242
11243 And wouldst thou think how at each tremulous motion
11244 Trembles within a mirror your own image;
11245 That which seems hard would mellow seem to thee.
11246
11247 But that thou mayst content thee in thy wish
11248 Lo Statius here; and him I call and pray
11249 He now will be the healer of thy wounds."
11250
11251 "If I unfold to him the eternal vengeance,"
11252 Responded Statius, "where thou present art,
11253 Be my excuse that I can naught deny thee."
11254
11255 Then he began: "Son, if these words of mine
11256 Thy mind doth contemplate and doth receive,
11257 They'll be thy light unto the How thou sayest.
11258
11259 The perfect blood, which never is drunk up
11260 Into the thirsty veins, and which remaineth
11261 Like food that from the table thou removest,
11262
11263 Takes in the heart for all the human members
11264 Virtue informative, as being that
11265 Which to be changed to them goes through the veins
11266
11267 Again digest, descends it where 'tis better
11268 Silent to be than say; and then drops thence
11269 Upon another's blood in natural vase.
11270
11271 There one together with the other mingles,
11272 One to be passive meant, the other active
11273 By reason of the perfect place it springs from;
11274
11275 And being conjoined, begins to operate,
11276 Coagulating first, then vivifying
11277 What for its matter it had made consistent.
11278
11279 The active virtue, being made a soul
11280 As of a plant, (in so far different,
11281 This on the way is, that arrived already,)
11282
11283 Then works so much, that now it moves and feels
11284 Like a sea-fungus, and then undertakes
11285 To organize the powers whose seed it is.
11286

11287 Now, Son, dilates and now distends itself
11288 The virtue from the generator's heart,
11289 Where nature is intent on all the members.
11290
11291 But how from animal it man becomes
11292 Thou dost not see as yet; this is a point
11293 Which made a wiser man than thou once err
11294
11295 So far, that in his doctrine separate
11296 He made the soul from possible intellect,
11297 For he no organ saw by this assumed.
11298
11299 Open thy breast unto the truth that's coming,
11300 And know that, just as soon as in the foetus
11301 The articulation of the brain is perfect,
11302
11303 The primal Motor turns to it well pleased
11304 At so great art of nature, and inspires
11305 A spirit new with virtue all replete,
11306
11307 Which what it finds there active doth attract
11308 Into its substance, and becomes one soul,
11309 Which lives, and feels, and on itself revolves.
11310
11311 And that thou less may wonder at my word,
11312 Behold the sun's heat, which becometh wine,
11313 Joined to the juice that from the vine distils.
11314
11315 Whenever Lachesis has no more thread,
11316 It separates from the flesh, and virtually
11317 Bears with itself the human and divine;
11318
11319 The other faculties are voiceless all;
11320 The memory, the intelligence, and the will
11321 In action far more vigorous than before.
11322
11323 Without a pause it falleth of itself
11324 In marvellous way on one shore or the other;
11325 There of its roads it first is cognizant.
11326
11327 Soon as the place there circumscribeth it,
11328 The virtue informative rays round about,
11329 As, and as much as, in the living members.
11330
11331 And even as the air, when full of rain,
11332 By alien rays that are therein reflected,
11333 With divers colours shows itself adorned,
11334
11335 So there the neighbouring air doth shape itself
11336 Into that form which doth impress upon it
11337 Virtually the soul that has stood still.
11338
11339 And then in manner of the little flame,
11340 Which followeth the fire where'er it shifts,
11341 After the spirit followeth its new form.
11342
11343 Since afterwards it takes from this its semblance,

11344 It is called shade; and thence it organizes
 11345 Thereafter every sense, even to the sight.
 11346
 11347 Thence is it that we speak, and thence we laugh;
 11348 Thence is it that we form the tears and sighs,
 11349 That on the mountain thou mayhap hast heard.
 11350
 11351 According as impress us our desires
 11352 And other affections, so the shade is shaped,
 11353 And this is cause of what thou wonderest at."
 11354
 11355 And now unto the last of all the circles
 11356 Had we arrived, and to the right hand turned,
 11357 And were attentive to another care.
 11358
 11359 There the embankment shoots forth flames of fire,
 11360 And upward doth the cornice breathe a blast
 11361 That drives them back, and from itself sequesters.
 11362
 11363 Hence we must needs go on the open side,
 11364 And one by one; and I did fear the fire
 11365 On this side, and on that the falling down.
 11366
 11367 My Leader said: "Along this place one ought
 11368 To keep upon the eyes a tightened rein,
 11369 Seeing that one so easily might err."
 11370
 11371 "Summae Deus clementiae," in the bosom
 11372 Of the great burning chanted then I heard,
 11373 Which made me no less eager to turn round;
 11374
 11375 And spirits saw I walking through the flame;
 11376 Wherefore I looked, to my own steps and theirs
 11377 Apportioning my sight from time to time.
 11378
 11379 After the close which to that hymn is made,
 11380 Aloud they shouted, "Virum non cognosco;"
 11381 Then recommenced the hymn with voices low.
 11382
 11383 This also ended, cried they: "To the wood
 11384 Diana ran, and drove forth Helice
 11385 Therefrom, who had of Venus felt the poison."
 11386
 11387 Then to their song returned they; then the wives
 11388 They shouted, and the husbands who were chaste.
 11389 As virtue and the marriage vow imposes.
 11390
 11391 And I believe that them this mode suffices,
 11392 For all the time the fire is burning them;
 11393 With such care is it needful, and such food,
 11394
 11395 That the last wound of all should be closed up.
 11396
 11397
 11398
 11399 Purgatorio: Canto XXVI
 11400

11401
11402 While on the brink thus one before the other
11403 We went upon our way, oft the good Master
11404 Said: "Take thou heed! suffice it that I warn thee."
11405
11406 On the right shoulder smote me now the sun,
11407 That, raying out, already the whole west
11408 Changed from its azure aspect into white.
11409
11410 And with my shadow did I make the flame
11411 Appear more red; and even to such a sign
11412 Shades saw I many, as they went, give heed.
11413
11414 This was the cause that gave them a beginning
11415 To speak of me; and to themselves began they
11416 To say: "That seems not a factitious body!"
11417
11418 Then towards me, as far as they could come,
11419 Came certain of them, always with regard
11420 Not to step forth where they would not be burned.
11421
11422 "O thou who goest, not from being slower
11423 But reverent perhaps, behind the others,
11424 Answer me, who in thirst and fire am burning.
11425
11426 Nor to me only is thine answer needful;
11427 For all of these have greater thirst for it
11428 Than for cold water Ethiop or Indian.
11429
11430 Tell us how is it that thou makest thyself
11431 A wall unto the sun, as if thou hadst not
11432 Entered as yet into the net of death."
11433
11434 Thus one of them addressed me, and I straight
11435 Should have revealed myself, were I not bent
11436 On other novelty that then appeared.
11437
11438 For through the middle of the burning road
11439 There came a people face to face with these,
11440 Which held me in suspense with gazing at them.
11441
11442 There see I hastening upon either side
11443 Each of the shades, and kissing one another
11444 Without a pause, content with brief salute.
11445
11446 Thus in the middle of their brown battalions
11447 Muzzle to muzzle one ant meets another
11448 Perchance to spy their journey or their fortune.
11449
11450 No sooner is the friendly greeting ended,
11451 Or ever the first footstep passes onward,
11452 Each one endeavours to outcry the other;
11453
11454 The new-come people: "Sodom and Gomorrah!"
11455 The rest: "Into the cow Pasiphae enters,
11456 So that the bull unto her lust may run!"
11457

11458 Then as the cranes, that to Rhiphaean mountains
11459 Might fly in part, and part towards the sands,
11460 These of the frost, those of the sun avoidant,
11461
11462 One folk is going, and the other coming,
11463 And weeping they return to their first songs,
11464 And to the cry that most befitteth them;
11465
11466 And close to me approached, even as before,
11467 The very same who had entreated me,
11468 Attent to listen in their countenance.
11469
11470 I, who their inclination twice had seen,
11471 Began: "O souls secure in the possession,
11472 Whene'er it may be, of a state of peace,
11473
11474 Neither unripe nor ripened have remained
11475 My members upon earth, but here are with me
11476 With their own blood and their articulations.
11477
11478 I go up here to be no longer blind;
11479 A Lady is above, who wins this grace,
11480 Whereby the mortal through your world I bring.
11481
11482 But as your greatest longing satisfied
11483 May soon become, so that the Heaven may house you
11484 Which full of love is, and most amply spreads,
11485
11486 Tell me, that I again in books may write it,
11487 Who are you, and what is that multitude
11488 Which goes upon its way behind your backs?"
11489
11490 Not otherwise with wonder is bewildered
11491 The mountaineer, and staring round is dumb,
11492 When rough and rustic to the town he goes,
11493
11494 Than every shade became in its appearance;
11495 But when they of their stupor were disburdened,
11496 Which in high hearts is quickly quieted,
11497
11498 "Blessed be thou, who of our border-lands,"
11499 He recommenced who first had questioned us,
11500 "Experience freightest for a better life.
11501
11502 The folk that comes not with us have offended
11503 In that for which once Caesar, triumphing,
11504 Heard himself called in contumely, 'Queen.'
11505
11506 Therefore they separate, exclaiming, 'Sodom!'
11507 Themselves reproofing, even as thou hast heard,
11508 And add unto their burning by their shame.
11509
11510 Our own transgression was hermaphrodite;
11511 But because we observed not human law,
11512 Following like unto beasts our appetite,
11513
11514 In our opprobrium by us is read,

11515 When we part company, the name of her
11516 Who bestialized herself in bestial wood.
11517
11518 Now knowest thou our acts, and what our crime was;
11519 Wouldst thou perchance by name know who we are,
11520 There is not time to tell, nor could I do it.
11521
11522 Thy wish to know me shall in sooth be granted;
11523 I'm Guido Guinicelli, and now purge me,
11524 Having repented ere the hour extreme."
11525
11526 The same that in the sadness of Lycurgus
11527 Two sons became, their mother re-beholding,
11528 Such I became, but rise not to such height,
11529
11530 The moment I heard name himself the father
11531 Of me and of my betters, who had ever
11532 Practised the sweet and gracious rhymes of love;
11533
11534 And without speech and hearing thoughtfully
11535 For a long time I went, beholding him,
11536 Nor for the fire did I approach him nearer.
11537
11538 When I was fed with looking, utterly
11539 Myself I offered ready for his service,
11540 With affirmation that compels belief.
11541
11542 And he to me: "Thou leavest footprints such
11543 In me, from what I hear, and so distinct,
11544 Lethe cannot efface them, nor make dim.
11545
11546 But if thy words just now the truth have sworn,
11547 Tell me what is the cause why thou displayest
11548 In word and look that dear thou holdest me?"
11549
11550 And I to him: "Those dulcet lays of yours
11551 Which, long as shall endure our modern fashion,
11552 Shall make for ever dear their very ink!"
11553
11554 "O brother," said he, "he whom I point out,"
11555 And here he pointed at a spirit in front,
11556 "Was of the mother tongue a better smith.
11557
11558 Verses of love and proses of romance,
11559 He mastered all; and let the idiots talk,
11560 Who think the Lemosin surpasses him.
11561
11562 To clamour more than truth they turn their faces,
11563 And in this way establish their opinion,
11564 Ere art or reason has by them been heard.
11565
11566 Thus many ancients with Guittone did,
11567 From cry to cry still giving him applause,
11568 Until the truth has conquered with most persons.
11569
11570 Now, if thou hast such ample privilege
11571 ' Tis granted thee to go unto the cloister

11572 Wherein is Christ the abbot of the college,
 11573
 11574 To him repeat for me a Paternoster,
 11575 So far as needful to us of this world,
 11576 Where power of sinning is no longer ours."
 11577
 11578 Then, to give place perchance to one behind,
 11579 Whom he had near, he vanished in the fire
 11580 As fish in water going to the bottom.
 11581
 11582 I moved a little tow'rds him pointed out,
 11583 And said that to his name my own desire
 11584 An honourable place was making ready.
 11585
 11586 He of his own free will began to say:
 11587 'Tan m' abellis vostre cortes deman,
 11588 Que jeu nom' puesc ni vueill a vos cobrire;
 11589
 11590 Jeu sui Arnaut, que plor e vai chantan;
 11591 Consiros vei la passada folor,
 11592 E vei jauzen lo jorn qu' esper denan.
 11593
 11594 Ara vus prec per aquella valor,
 11595 Que vus condus al som de la scalina,
 11596 Sovenga vus a temprar ma dolor.'*
 11597
 11598 Then hid him in the fire that purifies them.
 11599
 11600
 11601 * So pleases me your courteous demand,
 11602 I cannot and I will not hide me from you.
 11603 I am Arnaut, who weep and singing go;
 11604 Contrite I see the folly of the past,
 11605 And joyous see the hoped-for day before me.
 11606 Therefore do I implore you, by that power
 11607 Which guides you to the summit of the stairs,
 11608 Be mindful to assuage my suffering!
 11609
 11610
 11611
 11612 Purgatorio: Canto XXVII
 11613
 11614
 11615 As when he vibrates forth his earliest rays,
 11616 In regions where his Maker shed his blood,
 11617 (The Ebro falling under lofty Libra,
 11618
 11619 And waters in the Ganges burnt with noon,)
 11620 So stood the Sun; hence was the day departing,
 11621 When the glad Angel of God appeared to us.
 11622
 11623 Outside the flame he stood upon the verge,
 11624 And chanted forth, "Beati mundo corde,"
 11625 In voice by far more living than our own.
 11626
 11627 Then: "No one farther goes, souls sanctified,
 11628 If first the fire bite not; within it enter,

11629 And be not deaf unto the song beyond."
11630
11631 When we were close beside him thus he said;
11632 Wherefore e'en such became I, when I heard him,
11633 As he is who is put into the grave.
11634
11635 Upon my clasped hands I straightened me,
11636 Scanning the fire, and vividly recalling
11637 The human bodies I had once seen burned.
11638
11639 Towards me turned themselves my good Conductors,
11640 And unto me Virgilius said: "My son,
11641 Here may indeed be torment, but not death.
11642
11643 Remember thee, remember! and if I
11644 On Geryon have safely guided thee,
11645 What shall I do now I am nearer God?
11646
11647 Believe for certain, shouldst thou stand a full
11648 Millennium in the bosom of this flame,
11649 It could not make thee bald a single hair.
11650
11651 And if perchance thou think that I deceive thee,
11652 Draw near to it, and put it to the proof
11653 With thine own hands upon thy garment's hem.
11654
11655 Now lay aside, now lay aside all fear,
11656 Turn hitherward, and onward come securely;"
11657 And I still motionless, and 'gainst my conscience!
11658
11659 Seeing me stand still motionless and stubborn,
11660 Somewhat disturbed he said: "Now look thou, Son,
11661 'Twixt Beatrice and thee there is this wall."
11662
11663 As at the name of Thisbe oped his lids
11664 The dying Pyramus, and gazed upon her,
11665 What time the mulberry became vermilion,
11666
11667 Even thus, my obduracy being softened,
11668 I turned to my wise Guide, hearing the name
11669 That in my memory evermore is welling.
11670
11671 Whereat he wagged his head, and said: "How now?
11672 Shall we stay on this side?" then smiled as one
11673 Does at a child who's vanquished by an apple.
11674
11675 Then into the fire in front of me he entered,
11676 Beseeching Statius to come after me,
11677 Who a long way before divided us.
11678
11679 When I was in it, into molten glass
11680 I would have cast me to refresh myself,
11681 So without measure was the burning there!
11682
11683 And my sweet Father, to encourage me,
11684 Discoursing still of Beatrice went on,
11685 Saying: "Her eyes I seem to see already!"

11686
11687 A voice, that on the other side was singing,
11688 Directed us, and we, attent alone
11689 On that, came forth where the ascent began.
11690
11691 "Venite, benedicti Patris mei,"
11692 Sounded within a splendour, which was there
11693 Such it o'ercame me, and I could not look.
11694
11695 "The sun departs," it added, "and night cometh;
11696 Tarry ye not, but onward urge your steps,
11697 So long as yet the west becomes not dark."
11698
11699 Straight forward through the rock the path ascended
11700 In such a way that I cut off the rays
11701 Before me of the sun, that now was low.
11702
11703 And of few stairs we yet had made assay,
11704 Ere by the vanished shadow the sun's setting
11705 Behind us we perceived, I and my Sages.
11706
11707 And ere in all its parts immeasurable
11708 The horizon of one aspect had become,
11709 And Night her boundless dispensation held,
11710
11711 Each of us of a stair had made his bed;
11712 Because the nature of the mount took from us
11713 The power of climbing, more than the delight.
11714
11715 Even as in ruminating passive grow
11716 The goats, who have been swift and venturesome
11717 Upon the mountain-tops ere they were fed,
11718
11719 Hushed in the shadow, while the sun is hot,
11720 Watched by the herdsman, who upon his staff
11721 Is leaning, and in leaning tendeth them;
11722
11723 And as the shepherd, lodging out of doors,
11724 Passes the night beside his quiet flock,
11725 Watching that no wild beast may scatter it,
11726
11727 Such at that hour were we, all three of us,
11728 I like the goat, and like the herdsmen they,
11729 Begirt on this side and on that by rocks.
11730
11731 Little could there be seen of things without;
11732 But through that little I beheld the stars
11733 More luminous and larger than their wont.
11734
11735 Thus ruminating, and beholding these,
11736 Sleep seized upon me,--sleep, that oftentimes
11737 Before a deed is done has tidings of it.
11738
11739 It was the hour, I think, when from the East
11740 First on the mountain Citherea beamed,
11741 Who with the fire of love seems always burning;
11742

11743 Youthful and beautiful in dreams methought
11744 I saw a lady walking in a meadow,
11745 Gathering flowers; and singing she was saying:
11746
11747 "Know whosoever may my name demand
11748 That I am Leah, and go moving round
11749 My beauteous hands to make myself a garland.
11750
11751 To please me at the mirror, here I deck me,
11752 But never does my sister Rachel leave
11753 Her looking-glass, and sitteth all day long.
11754
11755 To see her beauteous eyes as eager is she,
11756 As I am to adorn me with my hands;
11757 Her, seeing, and me, doing satisfies."
11758
11759 And now before the antelucan splendours
11760 That unto pilgrims the more grateful rise,
11761 As, home-returning, less remote they lodge,
11762
11763 The darkness fled away on every side,
11764 And slumber with it; whereupon I rose,
11765 Seeing already the great Masters risen.
11766
11767 "That apple sweet, which through so many branches
11768 The care of mortals goeth in pursuit of,
11769 To-day shall put in peace thy hungerings."
11770
11771 Speaking to me, Virgilius of such words
11772 As these made use; and never were there guerdons
11773 That could in pleasantness compare with these.
11774
11775 Such longing upon longing came upon me
11776 To be above, that at each step thereafter
11777 For flight I felt in me the pinions growing.
11778
11779 When underneath us was the stairway all
11780 Run o'er, and we were on the highest step,
11781 Virgilius fastened upon me his eyes,
11782
11783 And said: "The temporal fire and the eternal,
11784 Son, thou hast seen, and to a place art come
11785 Where of myself no farther I discern.
11786
11787 By intellect and art I here have brought thee;
11788 Take thine own pleasure for thy guide henceforth;
11789 Beyond the steep ways and the narrow art thou.
11790
11791 Behold the sun, that shines upon thy forehead;
11792 Behold the grass, the flowerets, and the shrubs
11793 Which of itself alone this land produces.
11794
11795 Until rejoicing come the beauteous eyes
11796 Which weeping caused me to come unto thee,
11797 Thou canst sit down, and thou canst walk among them.
11798
11799 Expect no more or word or sign from me;

11800 Free and upright and sound is thy free-will,
 11801 And error were it not to do its bidding;
 11802
 11803 Thee o'er thyself I therefore crown and mitre!"
 11804
 11805
 11806
 11807 Purgatorio: Canto XXVIII
 11808
 11809
 11810 Eager already to search in and round
 11811 The heavenly forest, dense and living-green,
 11812 Which tempered to the eyes the new-born day,
 11813
 11814 Withouten more delay I left the bank,
 11815 Taking the level country slowly, slowly
 11816 Over the soil that everywhere breathes fragrance.
 11817
 11818 A softly-breathing air, that no mutation
 11819 Had in itself, upon the forehead smote me
 11820 No heavier blow than of a gentle wind,
 11821
 11822 Whereat the branches, lightly tremulous,
 11823 Did all of them bow downward toward that side
 11824 Where its first shadow casts the Holy Mountain;
 11825
 11826 Yet not from their upright direction swayed,
 11827 So that the little birds upon their tops
 11828 Should leave the practice of each art of theirs;
 11829
 11830 But with full ravishment the hours of prime,
 11831 Singing, received they in the midst of leaves,
 11832 That ever bore a burden to their rhymes,
 11833
 11834 Such as from branch to branch goes gathering on
 11835 Through the pine forest on the shore of Chiassi,
 11836 When Eolus unlooses the Sirocco.
 11837
 11838 Already my slow steps had carried me
 11839 Into the ancient wood so far, that I
 11840 Could not perceive where I had entered it.
 11841
 11842 And lo! my further course a stream cut off,
 11843 Which tow'rd the left hand with its little waves
 11844 Bent down the grass that on its margin sprang.
 11845
 11846 All waters that on earth most limpid are
 11847 Would seem to have within themselves some mixture
 11848 Compared with that which nothing doth conceal,
 11849
 11850 Although it moves on with a brown, brown current
 11851 Under the shade perpetual, that never
 11852 Ray of the sun lets in, nor of the moon.
 11853
 11854 With feet I stayed, and with mine eyes I passed
 11855 Beyond the rivulet, to look upon
 11856 The great variety of the fresh may.

11857
11858 And there appeared to me (even as appears
11859 Suddenly something that doth turn aside
11860 Through very wonder every other thought)
11861
11862 A lady all alone, who went along
11863 Singing and culling floweret after floweret,
11864 With which her pathway was all painted over.
11865
11866 "Ah, beauteous lady, who in rays of love
11867 Dost warm thyself, if I may trust to looks,
11868 Which the heart's witnesses are wont to be,
11869
11870 May the desire come unto thee to draw
11871 Near to this river's bank," I said to her,
11872 "So much that I might hear what thou art singing.
11873
11874 Thou makest me remember where and what
11875 Proserpina that moment was when lost
11876 Her mother her, and she herself the Spring."
11877
11878 As turns herself, with feet together pressed
11879 And to the ground, a lady who is dancing,
11880 And hardly puts one foot before the other,
11881
11882 On the vermilion and the yellow flowerets
11883 She turned towards me, not in other wise
11884 Than maiden who her modest eyes casts down;
11885
11886 And my entreaties made to be content,
11887 So near approaching, that the dulcet sound
11888 Came unto me together with its meaning
11889
11890 As soon as she was where the grasses are.
11891 Bathed by the waters of the beauteous river,
11892 To lift her eyes she granted me the boon.
11893
11894 I do not think there shone so great a light
11895 Under the lids of Venus, when transfixed
11896 By her own son, beyond his usual custom!
11897
11898 Erect upon the other bank she smiled,
11899 Bearing full many colours in her hands,
11900 Which that high land produces without seed.
11901
11902 Apart three paces did the river make us;
11903 But Hellespont, where Xerxes passed across,
11904 (A curb still to all human arrogance,)
11905
11906 More hatred from Leander did not suffer
11907 For rolling between Sestos and Abydos,
11908 Than that from me, because it oped not then.
11909
11910 "Ye are new-comers; and because I smile,"
11911 Began she, "peradventure, in this place
11912 Elect to human nature for its nest,
11913

11914 Some apprehension keeps you marvelling;
 11915 But the psalm 'Delectasti' giveth light
 11916 Which has the power to uncloud your intellect.
 11917
 11918 And thou who foremost art, and didst entreat me,
 11919 Speak, if thou wouldst hear more; for I came ready
 11920 To all thy questionings, as far as needful."
 11921
 11922 "The water," said I, "and the forest's sound,
 11923 Are combating within me my new faith
 11924 In something which I heard opposed to this."
 11925
 11926 Whence she: "I will relate how from its cause
 11927 Proceedeth that which maketh thee to wonder,
 11928 And purge away the cloud that smites upon thee.
 11929
 11930 The Good Supreme, sole in itself delighting,
 11931 Created man good, and this goodly place
 11932 Gave him as hansom of eternal peace.
 11933
 11934 By his default short while he sojourned here;
 11935 By his default to weeping and to toil
 11936 He changed his innocent laughter and sweet play.
 11937
 11938 That the disturbance which below is made
 11939 By exhalations of the land and water,
 11940 (Which far as may be follow after heat,)
 11941
 11942 Might not upon mankind wage any war,
 11943 This mount ascended tow'rds the heaven so high,
 11944 And is exempt, from there where it is locked.
 11945
 11946 Now since the universal atmosphere
 11947 Turns in a circuit with the primal motion
 11948 Unless the circle is broken on some side,
 11949
 11950 Upon this height, that all is disengaged
 11951 In living ether, doth this motion strike
 11952 And make the forest sound, for it is dense;
 11953
 11954 And so much power the stricken plant possesses
 11955 That with its virtue it impregns the air,
 11956 And this, revolving, scatters it around;
 11957
 11958 And yonder earth, according as 'tis worthy
 11959 In self or in its clime, conceives and bears
 11960 Of divers qualities the divers trees;
 11961
 11962 It should not seem a marvel then on earth,
 11963 This being heard, whenever any plant
 11964 Without seed manifest there taketh root.
 11965
 11966 And thou must know, this holy table-land
 11967 In which thou art is full of every seed,
 11968 And fruit has in it never gathered there.
 11969
 11970 The water which thou seest springs not from vein

11971 Restored by vapour that the cold condenses,
11972 Like to a stream that gains or loses breath;
11973
11974 But issues from a fountain safe and certain,
11975 Which by the will of God as much regains
11976 As it discharges, open on two sides.
11977
11978 Upon this side with virtue it descends,
11979 Which takes away all memory of sin;
11980 On that, of every good deed done restores it.
11981
11982 Here Lethe, as upon the other side
11983 Eunoe, it is called; and worketh not
11984 If first on either side it be not tasted.
11985
11986 This every other savour doth transcend;
11987 And notwithstanding slaked so far may be
11988 Thy thirst, that I reveal to thee no more,
11989
11990 I'll give thee a corollary still in grace,
11991 Nor think my speech will be to thee less dear
11992 If it spread out beyond my promise to thee.
11993
11994 Those who in ancient times have feigned in song
11995 The Age of Gold and its felicity,
11996 Dreamed of this place perhaps upon Parnassus.
11997
11998 Here was the human race in innocence;
11999 Here evermore was Spring, and every fruit;
12000 This is the nectar of which each one speaks."
12001
12002 Then backward did I turn me wholly round
12003 Unto my Poets, and saw that with a smile
12004 They had been listening to these closing words;
12005
12006 Then to the beautiful lady turned mine eyes.
12007
12008
12009
12010 Purgatorio: Canto XXIX
12011
12012
12013 Singing like unto an enamoured lady
12014 She, with the ending of her words, continued:
12015 "Beati quorum tecta sunt peccata."
12016
12017 And even as Nymphs, that wandered all alone
12018 Among the sylvan shadows, sedulous
12019 One to avoid and one to see the sun,
12020
12021 She then against the stream moved onward, going
12022 Along the bank, and I abreast of her,
12023 Her little steps with little steps attending.
12024
12025 Between her steps and mine were not a hundred,
12026 When equally the margins gave a turn,
12027 In such a way, that to the East I faced.

12028
12029 Nor even thus our way continued far
12030 Before the lady wholly turned herself
12031 Unto me, saying, "Brother, look and listen!"
12032
12033 And lo! a sudden lustre ran across
12034 On every side athwart the spacious forest,
12035 Such that it made me doubt if it were lightning.
12036
12037 But since the lightning ceases as it comes,
12038 And that continuing brightened more and more,
12039 Within my thought I said, "What thing is this?"
12040
12041 And a delicious melody there ran
12042 Along the luminous air, whence holy zeal
12043 Made me rebuke the hardihood of Eve;
12044
12045 For there where earth and heaven obedient were,
12046 The woman only, and but just created,
12047 Could not endure to stay 'neath any veil;
12048
12049 Underneath which had she devoutly stayed,
12050 I sooner should have tasted those delights
12051 Ineffable, and for a longer time.
12052
12053 While 'mid such manifold first-fruits I walked
12054 Of the eternal pleasure all enrapt,
12055 And still solicitous of more delights,
12056
12057 In front of us like an enkindled fire
12058 Became the air beneath the verdant boughs,
12059 And the sweet sound as singing now was heard.
12060
12061 O Virgins sacrosanct! if ever hunger,
12062 Vigils, or cold for you I have endured,
12063 The occasion spurs me their reward to claim!
12064
12065 Now Helicon must needs pour forth for me,
12066 And with her choir Urania must assist me,
12067 To put in verse things difficult to think.
12068
12069 A little farther on, seven trees of gold
12070 In semblance the long space still intervening
12071 Between ourselves and them did counterfeit;
12072
12073 But when I had approached so near to them
12074 The common object, which the sense deceives,
12075 Lost not by distance any of its marks,
12076
12077 The faculty that lends discourse to reason
12078 Did apprehend that they were candlesticks,
12079 And in the voices of the song "Hosanna!"
12080
12081 Above them flamed the harness beautiful,
12082 Far brighter than the moon in the serene
12083 Of midnight, at the middle of her month.
12084

12085 I turned me round, with admiration filled,
12086 To good Virgilius, and he answered me
12087 With visage no less full of wonderment.
12088
12089 Then back I turned my face to those high things,
12090 Which moved themselves towards us so sedately,
12091 They had been distanced by new-wedded brides.
12092
12093 The lady chid me: "Why dost thou burn only
12094 So with affection for the living lights,
12095 And dost not look at what comes after them?"
12096
12097 Then saw I people, as behind their leaders,
12098 Coming behind them, garmented in white,
12099 And such a whiteness never was on earth.
12100
12101 The water on my left flank was resplendent,
12102 And back to me reflected my left side,
12103 E'en as a mirror, if I looked therein.
12104
12105 When I upon my margin had such post
12106 That nothing but the stream divided us,
12107 Better to see I gave my steps repose;
12108
12109 And I beheld the flamelets onward go,
12110 Leaving behind themselves the air depicted,
12111 And they of trailing pennons had the semblance,
12112
12113 So that it overhead remained distinct
12114 With sevenfold lists, all of them of the colours
12115 Whence the sun's bow is made, and Delia's girdle.
12116
12117 These standards to the rearward longer were
12118 Than was my sight; and, as it seemed to me,
12119 Ten paces were the outermost apart.
12120
12121 Under so fair a heaven as I describe
12122 The four and twenty Elders, two by two,
12123 Came on incoronate with flower-de-luce.
12124
12125 They all of them were singing: "Blessed thou
12126 Among the daughters of Adam art, and blessed
12127 For evermore shall be thy loveliness."
12128
12129 After the flowers and other tender grasses
12130 In front of me upon the other margin
12131 Were disencumbered of that race elect,
12132
12133 Even as in heaven star followeth after star,
12134 There came close after them four animals,
12135 Incoronate each one with verdant leaf.
12136
12137 Plumed with six wings was every one of them,
12138 The plumage full of eyes; the eyes of Argus
12139 If they were living would be such as these.
12140
12141 Reader! to trace their forms no more I waste

12142 My rhymes; for other spendings press me so,
12143 That I in this cannot be prodigal.
12144
12145 But read Ezekiel, who depicteth them
12146 As he beheld them from the region cold
12147 Coming with cloud, with whirlwind, and with fire;
12148
12149 And such as thou shalt find them in his pages,
12150 Such were they here; saving that in their plumage
12151 John is with me, and differeth from him.
12152
12153 The interval between these four contained
12154 A chariot triumphal on two wheels,
12155 Which by a Griffin's neck came drawn along;
12156
12157 And upward he extended both his wings
12158 Between the middle list and three and three,
12159 So that he injured none by cleaving it.
12160
12161 So high they rose that they were lost to sight;
12162 His limbs were gold, so far as he was bird,
12163 And white the others with vermillion mingled.
12164
12165 Not only Rome with no such splendid car
12166 E'er gladdened Africanus, or Augustus,
12167 But poor to it that of the Sun would be,--
12168
12169 That of the Sun, which swerving was burnt up
12170 At the importunate orison of Earth,
12171 When Jove was so mysteriously just.
12172
12173 Three maidens at the right wheel in a circle
12174 Came onward dancing; one so very red
12175 That in the fire she hardly had been noted.
12176
12177 The second was as if her flesh and bones
12178 Had all been fashioned out of emerald;
12179 The third appeared as snow but newly fallen.
12180
12181 And now they seemed conducted by the white,
12182 Now by the red, and from the song of her
12183 The others took their step, or slow or swift.
12184
12185 Upon the left hand four made holiday
12186 Vested in purple, following the measure
12187 Of one of them with three eyes m her head.
12188
12189 In rear of all the group here treated of
12190 Two old men I beheld, unlike in habit,
12191 But like in gait, each dignified and grave.
12192
12193 One showed himself as one of the disciples
12194 Of that supreme Hippocrates, whom nature
12195 Made for the animals she holds most dear;
12196
12197 Contrary care the other manifested,
12198 With sword so shining and so sharp, it caused

12199 Terror to me on this side of the river.
 12200
 12201 Thereafter four I saw of humble aspect,
 12202 And behind all an aged man alone
 12203 Walking in sleep with countenance acute.
 12204
 12205 And like the foremost company these seven
 12206 Were habited; yet of the flower-de-luce
 12207 No garland round about the head they wore,
 12208
 12209 But of the rose, and other flowers vermillion;
 12210 At little distance would the sight have sworn
 12211 That all were in a flame above their brows.
 12212
 12213 And when the car was opposite to me
 12214 Thunder was heard; and all that folk august
 12215 Seemed to have further progress interdicted,
 12216
 12217 There with the vanward ensigns standing still.
 12218
 12219
 12220
 12221 Purgatorio: Canto XXX
 12222
 12223
 12224 When the Septentrion of the highest heaven
 12225 (Which never either setting knew or rising,
 12226 Nor veil of other cloud than that of sin,
 12227
 12228 And which made every one therein aware
 12229 Of his own duty, as the lower makes
 12230 Whoever turns the helm to come to port)
 12231
 12232 Motionless halted, the veracious people,
 12233 That came at first between it and the Griffin,
 12234 Turned themselves to the car, as to their peace.
 12235
 12236 And one of them, as if by Heaven commissioned,
 12237 Singing, "Veni, sponsa, de Libano"
 12238 Shouted three times, and all the others after.
 12239
 12240 Even as the Blessed at the final summons
 12241 Shall rise up quickened each one from his cavern,
 12242 Uplifting light the reinvested flesh,
 12243
 12244 So upon that celestial chariot
 12245 A hundred rose 'ad vocem tanti senis,'
 12246 Ministers and messengers of life eternal.
 12247
 12248 They all were saying, "Benedictus qui venis,"
 12249 And, scattering flowers above and round about,
 12250 "Manibus o date lilia plenis."
 12251
 12252 Ere now have I beheld, as day began,
 12253 The eastern hemisphere all tinged with rose,
 12254 And the other heaven with fair serene adorned;
 12255

12256 And the sun's face, uprising, overshadowed
12257 So that by tempering influence of vapours
12258 For a long interval the eye sustained it;
12259
12260 Thus in the bosom of a cloud of flowers
12261 Which from those hands angelical ascended,
12262 And downward fell again inside and out,
12263
12264 Over her snow-white veil with olive cinct
12265 Appeared a lady under a green mantle,
12266 Vested in colour of the living flame.
12267
12268 And my own spirit, that already now
12269 So long a time had been, that in her presence
12270 Trembling with awe it had not stood abashed,
12271
12272 Without more knowledge having by mine eyes,
12273 Through occult virtue that from her proceeded
12274 Of ancient love the mighty influence felt.
12275
12276 As soon as on my vision smote the power
12277 Sublime, that had already pierced me through
12278 Ere from my boyhood I had yet come forth,
12279
12280 To the left hand I turned with that reliance
12281 With which the little child runs to his mother,
12282 When he has fear, or when he is afflicted,
12283
12284 To say unto Virgilius: "Not a drachm
12285 Of blood remains in me, that does not tremble;
12286 I know the traces of the ancient flame."
12287
12288 But us Virgilius of himself deprived
12289 Had left, Virgilius, sweetest of all fathers,
12290 Virgilius, to whom I for safety gave me:
12291
12292 Nor whatsoever lost the ancient mother
12293 Avail'd my cheeks now purified from dew,
12294 That weeping they should not again be darkened.
12295
12296 "Dante, because Virgilius has departed
12297 Do not weep yet, do not weep yet awhile;
12298 For by another sword thou need'st must weep."
12299
12300 E'en as an admiral, who on poop and prow
12301 Comes to behold the people that are working
12302 In other ships, and cheers them to well-doing,
12303
12304 Upon the left hand border of the car,
12305 When at the sound I turned of my own name,
12306 Which of necessity is here recorded,
12307
12308 I saw the Lady, who erewhile appeared
12309 Veiled underneath the angelic festival,
12310 Direct her eyes to me across the river.
12311
12312 Although the veil, that from her head descended,

12313 Encircled with the foliage of Minerva,
12314 Did not permit her to appear distinctly,
12315
12316 In attitude still royally majestic
12317 Continued she, like unto one who speaks,
12318 And keeps his warmest utterance in reserve:
12319
12320 "Look at me well; in sooth I'm Beatrice!
12321 How didst thou deign to come unto the Mountain?
12322 Didst thou not know that man is happy here?"
12323
12324 Mine eyes fell downward into the clear fountain,
12325 But, seeing myself therein, I sought the grass,
12326 So great a shame did weigh my forehead down.
12327
12328 As to the son the mother seems superb,
12329 So she appeared to me; for somewhat bitter
12330 Tasteth the savour of severe compassion.
12331
12332 Silent became she, and the Angels sang
12333 Suddenly, "In te, Domine, speravi:"
12334 But beyond 'pedes meos' did not pass.
12335
12336 Even as the snow among the living rafters
12337 Upon the back of Italy congeals,
12338 Blown on and drifted by Sclavonian winds,
12339
12340 And then, dissolving, trickles through itself
12341 Whene'er the land that loses shadow breathes,
12342 So that it seems a fire that melts a taper;
12343
12344 E'en thus was I without a tear or sigh,
12345 Before the song of those who sing for ever
12346 After the music of the eternal spheres.
12347
12348 But when I heard in their sweet melodies
12349 Compassion for me, more than had they said,
12350 "O wherefore, lady, dost thou thus upbraid him?"
12351
12352 The ice, that was about my heart congealed,
12353 To air and water changed, and in my anguish
12354 Through mouth and eyes came gushing from my breast.
12355
12356 She, on the right-hand border of the car
12357 Still firmly standing, to those holy beings
12358 Thus her discourse directed afterwards:
12359
12360 "Ye keep your watch in the eternal day,
12361 So that nor night nor sleep can steal from you
12362 One step the ages make upon their path;
12363
12364 Therefore my answer is with greater care,
12365 That he may hear me who is weeping yonder,
12366 So that the sin and dole be of one measure.
12367
12368 Not only by the work of those great wheels,
12369 That destine every seed unto some end,

12370 According as the stars are in conjunction,
12371
12372 But by the largess of celestial graces,
12373 Which have such lofty vapours for their rain
12374 That near to them our sight approaches not,
12375
12376 Such had this man become in his new life
12377 Potentially, that every righteous habit
12378 Would have made admirable proof in him;
12379
12380 But so much more malignant and more savage
12381 Becomes the land untilled and with bad seed,
12382 The more good earthly vigour it possesses.
12383
12384 Some time did I sustain him with my look;
12385 Revealing unto him my youthful eyes,
12386 I led him with me turned in the right way.
12387
12388 As soon as ever of my second age
12389 I was upon the threshold and changed life,
12390 Himself from me he took and gave to others.
12391
12392 When from the flesh to spirit I ascended,
12393 And beauty and virtue were in me increased,
12394 I was to him less dear and less delightful;
12395
12396 And into ways untrue he turned his steps,
12397 Pursuing the false images of good,
12398 That never any promises fulfil;
12399
12400 Nor prayer for inspiration me availed,
12401 By means of which in dreams and otherwise
12402 I called him back, so little did he heed them.
12403
12404 So low he fell, that all appliances
12405 For his salvation were already short,
12406 Save showing him the people of perdition.
12407
12408 For this I visited the gates of death,
12409 And unto him, who so far up has led him,
12410 My intercessions were with weeping borne.
12411
12412 God's lofty fiat would be violated,
12413 If Lethe should be passed, and if such viands
12414 Should tasted be, withouten any scot
12415
12416 Of penitence, that gushes forth in tears."
12417
12418
12419
12420 Purgatorio: Canto XXXI
12421
12422
12423 "O thou who art beyond the sacred river,"
12424 Turning to me the point of her discourse,
12425 That edgewise even had seemed to me so keen,
12426

12427 She recommenced, continuing without pause,
12428 "Say, say if this be true; to such a charge,
12429 Thy own confession needs must be conjoined."
12430
12431 My faculties were in so great confusion,
12432 That the voice moved, but sooner was extinct
12433 Than by its organs it was set at large.
12434
12435 Awhile she waited; then she said: "What thinkest?
12436 Answer me; for the mournful memories
12437 In thee not yet are by the waters injured."
12438
12439 Confusion and dismay together mingled
12440 Forced such a Yes! from out my mouth, that sight
12441 Was needful to the understanding of it.
12442
12443 Even as a cross-bow breaks, when 'tis discharged
12444 Too tensely drawn the bowstring and the bow,
12445 And with less force the arrow hits the mark,
12446
12447 So I gave way beneath that heavy burden,
12448 Outpouring in a torrent tears and sighs,
12449 And the voice flagged upon its passage forth.
12450
12451 Whence she to me: "In those desires of mine
12452 Which led thee to the loving of that good,
12453 Beyond which there is nothing to aspire to,
12454
12455 What trenches lying traverse or what chains
12456 Didst thou discover, that of passing onward
12457 Thou shouldst have thus despoiled thee of the hope?
12458
12459 And what allurements or what vantages
12460 Upon the forehead of the others showed,
12461 That thou shouldst turn thy footsteps unto them?"
12462
12463 After the heaving of a bitter sigh,
12464 Hardly had I the voice to make response,
12465 And with fatigue my lips did fashion it.
12466
12467 Weeping I said: "The things that present were
12468 With their false pleasure turned aside my steps,
12469 Soon as your countenance concealed itself."
12470
12471 And she: "Shouldst thou be silent, or deny
12472 What thou confessest, not less manifest
12473 Would be thy fault, by such a Judge 'tis known.
12474
12475 But when from one's own cheeks comes bursting forth
12476 The accusal of the sin, in our tribunal
12477 Against the edge the wheel doth turn itself.
12478
12479 But still, that thou mayst feel a greater shame
12480 For thy transgression, and another time
12481 Hearing the Sirens thou mayst be more strong,
12482
12483 Cast down the seed of weeping and attend;

12484 So shalt thou hear, how in an opposite way
12485 My buried flesh should have directed thee.
12486
12487 Never to thee presented art or nature
12488 Pleasure so great as the fair limbs wherein
12489 I was enclosed, which scattered are in earth.
12490
12491 And if the highest pleasure thus did fail thee
12492 By reason of my death, what mortal thing
12493 Should then have drawn thee into its desire?
12494
12495 Thou oughtest verily at the first shaft
12496 Of things fallacious to have risen up
12497 To follow me, who was no longer such.
12498
12499 Thou oughtest not to have stooped thy pinions downward
12500 To wait for further blows, or little girl,
12501 Or other vanity of such brief use.
12502
12503 The callow birdlet waits for two or three,
12504 But to the eyes of those already fledged,
12505 In vain the net is spread or shaft is shot."
12506
12507 Even as children silent in their shame
12508 Stand listening with their eyes upon the ground,
12509 And conscious of their fault, and penitent;
12510
12511 So was I standing; and she said: "If thou
12512 In hearing sufferest pain, lift up thy beard
12513 And thou shalt feel a greater pain in seeing."
12514
12515 With less resistance is a robust holm
12516 Uprooted, either by a native wind
12517 Or else by that from regions of Iarbas,
12518
12519 Than I upraised at her command my chin;
12520 And when she by the beard the face demanded,
12521 Well I perceived the venom of her meaning.
12522
12523 And as my countenance was lifted up,
12524 Mine eye perceived those creatures beautiful
12525 Had rested from the strewing of the flowers;
12526
12527 And, still but little reassured, mine eyes
12528 Saw Beatrice turned round towards the monster,
12529 That is one person only in two natures.
12530
12531 Beneath her veil, beyond the margent green,
12532 She seemed to me far more her ancient self
12533 To excel, than others here, when she was here.
12534
12535 So pricked me then the thorn of penitence,
12536 That of all other things the one which turned me
12537 Most to its love became the most my foe.
12538
12539 Such self-conviction stung me at the heart
12540 O'erpowered I fell, and what I then became

12541 She knoweth who had furnished me the cause.
12542
12543 Then, when the heart restored my outward sense,
12544 The lady I had found alone, above me
12545 I saw, and she was saying, "Hold me, hold me."
12546
12547 Up to my throat she in the stream had drawn me,
12548 And, dragging me behind her, she was moving
12549 Upon the water lightly as a shuttle.
12550
12551 When I was near unto the blessed shore,
12552 "Asperges me," I heard so sweetly sung,
12553 Remember it I cannot, much less write it.
12554
12555 The beautiful lady opened wide her arms,
12556 Embraced my head, and plunged me underneath,
12557 Where I was forced to swallow of the water.
12558
12559 Then forth she drew me, and all dripping brought
12560 Into the dance of the four beautiful,
12561 And each one with her arm did cover me.
12562
12563 'We here are Nymphs, and in the Heaven are stars;
12564 Ere Beatrice descended to the world,
12565 We as her handmaids were appointed her.
12566
12567 We'll lead thee to her eyes; but for the pleasant
12568 Light that within them is, shall sharpen thine
12569 The three beyond, who more profoundly look.'
12570
12571 Thus singing they began; and afterwards
12572 Unto the Griffin's breast they led me with them,
12573 Where Beatrice was standing, turned towards us.
12574
12575 "See that thou dost not spare thine eyes," they said;
12576 "Before the emeralds have we stationed thee,
12577 Whence Love aforetime drew for thee his weapons."
12578
12579 A thousand longings, hotter than the flame,
12580 Fastened mine eyes upon those eyes reluctant,
12581 That still upon the Griffin steadfast stayed.
12582
12583 As in a glass the sun, not otherwise
12584 Within them was the twofold monster shining,
12585 Now with the one, now with the other nature.
12586
12587 Think, Reader, if within myself I marvelled,
12588 When I beheld the thing itself stand still,
12589 And in its image it transformed itself.
12590
12591 While with amazement filled and jubilant,
12592 My soul was tasting of the food, that while
12593 It satisfies us makes us hunger for it,
12594
12595 Themselves revealing of the highest rank
12596 In bearing, did the other three advance,
12597 Singing to their angelic saraband.

12598
 12599 "Turn, Beatrice, O turn thy holy eyes,"
 12600 Such was their song, "unto thy faithful one,
 12601 Who has to see thee ta'en so many steps.
 12602
 12603 In grace do us the grace that thou unveil
 12604 Thy face to him, so that he may discern
 12605 The second beauty which thou dost conceal."
 12606
 12607 O splendour of the living light eternal!
 12608 Who underneath the shadow of Parnassus
 12609 Has grown so pale, or drunk so at its cistern,
 12610
 12611 He would not seem to have his mind encumbered
 12612 Striving to paint thee as thou didst appear,
 12613 Where the harmonious heaven o'ershadowed thee,
 12614
 12615 When in the open air thou didst unveil?
 12616
 12617
 12618
 12619 Purgatorio: Canto XXXII
 12620
 12621
 12622 So steadfast and attentive were mine eyes
 12623 In satisfying their decennial thirst,
 12624 That all my other senses were extinct,
 12625
 12626 And upon this side and on that they had
 12627 Walls of indifference, so the holy smile
 12628 Drew them unto itself with the old net
 12629
 12630 When forcibly my sight was turned away
 12631 Towards my left hand by those goddesses,
 12632 Because I heard from them a "Too intently!"
 12633
 12634 And that condition of the sight which is
 12635 In eyes but lately smitten by the sun
 12636 Bereft me of my vision some short while;
 12637
 12638 But to the less when sight re-shaped itself,
 12639 I say the less in reference to the greater
 12640 Splendour from which perforce I had withdrawn,
 12641
 12642 I saw upon its right wing wheeled about
 12643 The glorious host returning with the sun
 12644 And with the sevenfold flames upon their faces.
 12645
 12646 As underneath its shields, to save itself,
 12647 A squadron turns, and with its banner wheels,
 12648 Before the whole thereof can change its front,
 12649
 12650 That soldiery of the celestial kingdom
 12651 Which marched in the advance had wholly passed us
 12652 Before the chariot had turned its pole.
 12653
 12654 Then to the wheels the maidens turned themselves,

12655 And the Griffin moved his burden benedight,
12656 But so that not a feather of him fluttered.
12657
12658 The lady fair who drew me through the ford
12659 Followed with Statius and myself the wheel
12660 Which made its orbit with the lesser arc.
12661
12662 So passing through the lofty forest, vacant
12663 By fault of her who in the serpent trusted,
12664 Angelic music made our steps keep time.
12665
12666 Perchance as great a space had in three flights
12667 An arrow loosened from the string o'erpassed,
12668 As we had moved when Beatrice descended.
12669
12670 I heard them murmur altogether, "Adam!"
12671 Then circled they about a tree despoiled
12672 Of blooms and other leafage on each bough.
12673
12674 Its tresses, which so much the more dilate
12675 As higher they ascend, had been by Indians
12676 Among their forests marvelled at for height.
12677
12678 "Blessed art thou, O Griffin, who dost not
12679 Pluck with thy beak these branches sweet to taste,
12680 Since appetite by this was turned to evil."
12681
12682 After this fashion round the tree robust
12683 The others shouted; and the twofold creature:
12684 "Thus is preserved the seed of all the just."
12685
12686 And turning to the pole which he had dragged,
12687 He drew it close beneath the widowed bough,
12688 And what was of it unto it left bound.
12689
12690 In the same manner as our trees (when downward
12691 Falls the great light, with that together mingled
12692 Which after the celestial Lasca shines)
12693
12694 Begin to swell, and then renew themselves,
12695 Each one with its own colour, ere the Sun
12696 Harness his steeds beneath another star:
12697
12698 Less than of rose and more than violet
12699 A hue disclosing, was renewed the tree
12700 That had erewhile its boughs so desolate.
12701
12702 I never heard, nor here below is sung,
12703 The hymn which afterward that people sang,
12704 Nor did I bear the melody throughout.
12705
12706 Had I the power to paint how fell asleep
12707 Those eyes compassionless, of Syrinx hearing,
12708 Those eyes to which more watching cost so dear,
12709
12710 Even as a painter who from model paints
12711 I would portray how I was lulled asleep;

12712 He may, who well can picture drowsihood.
 12713
 12714 Therefore I pass to what time I awoke,
 12715 And say a splendour rent from me the veil
 12716 Of slumber, and a calling: "Rise, what dost thou?"
 12717
 12718 As to behold the apple-tree in blossom
 12719 Which makes the Angels greedy for its fruit,
 12720 And keeps perpetual bridals in the Heaven,
 12721
 12722 Peter and John and James conducted were,
 12723 And, overcome, recovered at the word
 12724 By which still greater slumbers have been broken,
 12725
 12726 And saw their school diminished by the loss
 12727 Not only of Elias, but of Moses,
 12728 And the apparel of their Master changed;
 12729
 12730 So I revived, and saw that piteous one
 12731 Above me standing, who had been conductress
 12732 Aforetime of my steps beside the river,
 12733
 12734 And all in doubt I said, "Where's Beatrice?"
 12735 And she: "Behold her seated underneath
 12736 The leafage new, upon the root of it."
 12737
 12738 Behold the company that circles her;
 12739 The rest behind the Griffin are ascending
 12740 With more melodious song, and more profound."
 12741
 12742 And if her speech were more diffuse I know not,
 12743 Because already in my sight was she
 12744 Who from the hearing of aught else had shut me.
 12745
 12746 Alone she sat upon the very earth,
 12747 Left there as guardian of the chariot
 12748 Which I had seen the biform monster fasten.
 12749
 12750 Encircling her, a cloister made themselves
 12751 The seven Nymphs, with those lights in their hands
 12752 Which are secure from Aquilon and Auster.
 12753
 12754 "Short while shalt thou be here a forester,
 12755 And thou shalt be with me for evermore
 12756 A citizen of that Rome where Christ is Roman.
 12757
 12758 Therefore, for that world's good which liveth ill,
 12759 Fix on the car thine eyes, and what thou seest,
 12760 Having returned to earth, take heed thou write."
 12761
 12762 Thus Beatrice; and I, who at the feet
 12763 Of her commandments all devoted was,
 12764 My mind and eyes directed where she willed.
 12765
 12766 Never descended with so swift a motion
 12767 Fire from a heavy cloud, when it is raining
 12768 From out the region which is most remote,

12769
12770 As I beheld the bird of Jove descend
12771 Down through the tree, rending away the bark,
12772 As well as blossoms and the foliage new,
12773
12774 And he with all his might the chariot smote,
12775 Whereat it reeled, like vessel in a tempest
12776 Tossed by the waves, now starboard and now larboard.
12777
12778 Thereafter saw I leap into the body
12779 Of the triumphal vehicle a Fox,
12780 That seemed unfed with any wholesome food.
12781
12782 But for his hideous sins upbraiding him,
12783 My Lady put him to as swift a flight
12784 As such a fleshless skeleton could bear.
12785
12786 Then by the way that it before had come,
12787 Into the chariot's chest I saw the Eagle
12788 Descend, and leave it feathered with his plumes.
12789
12790 And such as issues from a heart that mourns,
12791 A voice from Heaven there issued, and it said:
12792 "My little bark, how badly art thou freighted!"
12793
12794 Methought, then, that the earth did yawn between
12795 Both wheels, and I saw rise from it a Dragon,
12796 Who through the chariot upward fixed his tail,
12797
12798 And as a wasp that draweth back its sting,
12799 Drawing unto himself his tail malign,
12800 Drew out the floor, and went his way rejoicing.
12801
12802 That which remained behind, even as with grass
12803 A fertile region, with the feathers, offered
12804 Perhaps with pure intention and benign,
12805
12806 Reclothed itself, and with them were reclothed
12807 The pole and both the wheels so speedily,
12808 A sigh doth longer keep the lips apart.
12809
12810 Transfigured thus the holy edifice
12811 Thrust forward heads upon the parts of it,
12812 Three on the pole and one at either corner.
12813
12814 The first were horned like oxen; but the four
12815 Had but a single horn upon the forehead;
12816 A monster such had never yet been seen!
12817
12818 Firm as a rock upon a mountain high,
12819 Seated upon it, there appeared to me
12820 A shameless whore, with eyes swift glancing round,
12821
12822 And, as if not to have her taken from him,
12823 Upright beside her I beheld a giant;
12824 And ever and anon they kissed each other.
12825

12826 But because she her wanton, roving eye
 12827 Turned upon me, her angry paramour
 12828 Did scourge her from her head unto her feet.
 12829
 12830 Then full of jealousy, and fierce with wrath,
 12831 He loosed the monster, and across the forest
 12832 Dragged it so far, he made of that alone
 12833
 12834 A shield unto the whore and the strange beast.
 12835
 12836
 12837
 12838 Purgatorio: Canto XXXIII
 12839
 12840
 12841 "Deus venerunt gentes," alternating
 12842 Now three, now four, melodious psalmody
 12843 The maidens in the midst of tears began;
 12844
 12845 And Beatrice, compassionate and sighing,
 12846 Listened to them with such a countenance,
 12847 That scarce more changed was Mary at the cross.
 12848
 12849 But when the other virgins place had given
 12850 For her to speak, uprisen to her feet
 12851 With colour as of fire, she made response:
 12852
 12853 "'Modicum, et non videbitis me;
 12854 Et iterum,' my sisters predilect,
 12855 'Modicum, et vos videbitis me.'"
 12856
 12857 Then all the seven in front of her she placed;
 12858 And after her, by beckoning only, moved
 12859 Me and the lady and the sage who stayed.
 12860
 12861 So she moved onward; and I do not think
 12862 That her tenth step was placed upon the ground,
 12863 When with her eyes upon mine eyes she smote,
 12864
 12865 And with a tranquil aspect, "Come more quickly,"
 12866 To me she said, "that, if I speak with thee,
 12867 To listen to me thou mayst be well placed."
 12868
 12869 As soon as I was with her as I should be,
 12870 She said to me: "Why, brother, dost thou not
 12871 Venture to question now, in coming with me?"
 12872
 12873 As unto those who are too reverential,
 12874 Speaking in presence of superiors,
 12875 Who drag no living utterance to their teeth,
 12876
 12877 It me befell, that without perfect sound
 12878 Began I: "My necessity, Madonna,
 12879 You know, and that which thereunto is good."
 12880
 12881 And she to me: "Of fear and bashfulness
 12882 Henceforward I will have thee strip thyself,

12883 So that thou speak no more as one who dreams.
 12884
 12885 Know that the vessel which the serpent broke
 12886 Was, and is not; but let him who is guilty
 12887 Think that God's vengeance does not fear a sop.
 12888
 12889 Without an heir shall not for ever be
 12890 The Eagle that left his plumes upon the car,
 12891 Whence it became a monster, then a prey;
 12892
 12893 For verily I see, and hence narrate it,
 12894 The stars already near to bring the time,
 12895 From every hindrance safe, and every bar,
 12896
 12897 Within which a Five-hundred, Ten, and Five,
 12898 One sent from God, shall slay the thievish woman
 12899 And that same giant who is sinning with her.
 12900
 12901 And peradventure my dark utterance,
 12902 Like Themis and the Sphinx, may less persuade thee,
 12903 Since, in their mode, it clouds the intellect;
 12904
 12905 But soon the facts shall be the Naiades
 12906 Who shall this difficult enigma solve,
 12907 Without destruction of the flocks and harvests.
 12908
 12909 Note thou; and even as by me are uttered
 12910 These words, so teach them unto those who live
 12911 That life which is a running unto death;
 12912
 12913 And bear in mind, whene'er thou writest them,
 12914 Not to conceal what thou hast seen the plant,
 12915 That twice already has been pillaged here.
 12916
 12917 Whoever pillages or shatters it,
 12918 With blasphemy of deed offendeth God,
 12919 Who made it holy for his use alone.
 12920
 12921 For biting that, in pain and in desire
 12922 Five thousand years and more the first-born soul
 12923 Craved Him, who punished in himself the bite.
 12924
 12925 Thy genius slumbers, if it deem it not
 12926 For special reason so pre-eminent
 12927 In height, and so inverted in its summit.
 12928
 12929 And if thy vain imaginings had not been
 12930 Water of Elsa round about thy mind,
 12931 And Pyramus to the mulberry, their pleasure,
 12932
 12933 Thou by so many circumstances only
 12934 The justice of the interdict of God
 12935 Morally in the tree wouldst recognize.
 12936
 12937 But since I see thee in thine intellect
 12938 Converted into stone and stained with sin,
 12939 So that the light of my discourse doth daze thee,

12940
12941 I will too, if not written, at least painted,
12942 Thou bear it back within thee, for the reason
12943 That cinct with palm the pilgrim's staff is borne."
12944
12945 And I: "As by a signet is the wax
12946 Which does not change the figure stamped upon it,
12947 My brain is now imprinted by yourself.
12948
12949 But wherefore so beyond my power of sight
12950 Soars your desirable discourse, that aye
12951 The more I strive, so much the more I lose it?"
12952
12953 "That thou mayst recognize," she said, "the school
12954 Which thou hast followed, and mayst see how far
12955 Its doctrine follows after my discourse,
12956
12957 And mayst behold your path from the divine
12958 Distant as far as separated is
12959 From earth the heaven that highest hastens on."
12960
12961 Whence her I answered: "I do not remember
12962 That ever I estranged myself from you,
12963 Nor have I conscience of it that reproves me."
12964
12965 "And if thou art not able to remember,"
12966 Smiling she answered, "recollect thee now
12967 That thou this very day hast drunk of Lethe;
12968
12969 And if from smoke a fire may be inferred,
12970 Such an oblivion clearly demonstrates
12971 Some error in thy will elsewhere intent.
12972
12973 Truly from this time forward shall my words
12974 Be naked, so far as it is befitting
12975 To lay them open unto thy rude gaze."
12976
12977 And more coruscant and with slower steps
12978 The sun was holding the meridian circle,
12979 Which, with the point of view, shifts here and there
12980
12981 When halted (as he cometh to a halt,
12982 Who goes before a squadron as its escort,
12983 If something new he find upon his way)
12984
12985 The ladies seven at a dark shadow's edge,
12986 Such as, beneath green leaves and branches black,
12987 The Alp upon its frigid border wears.
12988
12989 In front of them the Tigris and Euphrates
12990 Methought I saw forth issue from one fountain,
12991 And slowly part, like friends, from one another.
12992
12993 "O light, O glory of the human race!
12994 What stream is this which here unfolds itself
12995 From out one source, and from itself withdraws?"
12996

12997 For such a prayer, 'twas said unto me, "Pray
 12998 Matilda that she tell thee;" and here answered,
 12999 As one does who doth free himself from blame,
 13000
 13001 The beautiful lady: "This and other things
 13002 Were told to him by me; and sure I am
 13003 The water of Lethe has not hid them from him."
 13004
 13005 And Beatrice: "Perhaps a greater care,
 13006 Which oftentimes our memory takes away,
 13007 Has made the vision of his mind obscure.
 13008
 13009 But Eunoe behold, that yonder rises;
 13010 Lead him to it, and, as thou art accustomed,
 13011 Revive again the half-dead virtue in him."
 13012
 13013 Like gentle soul, that maketh no excuse,
 13014 But makes its own will of another's will
 13015 As soon as by a sign it is disclosed,
 13016
 13017 Even so, when she had taken hold of me,
 13018 The beautiful lady moved, and unto Statius
 13019 Said, in her womanly manner, "Come with him."
 13020
 13021 If, Reader, I possessed a longer space
 13022 For writing it, I yet would sing in part
 13023 Of the sweet draught that ne'er would satiate me;
 13024
 13025 But inasmuch as full are all the leaves
 13026 Made ready for this second canticle,
 13027 The curb of art no farther lets me go.
 13028
 13029 From the most holy water I returned
 13030 Regenerate, in the manner of new trees
 13031 That are renewed with a new foliage,
 13032
 13033 Pure and disposed to mount unto the stars.
 13034
 13035
 13036
 13037
 13038 The Divine Comedy
 13039 translated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
 13040 (e-text courtesy ILT's Digital Dante Project)
 13041
 13042 PARADISO
 13043
 13044
 13045
 13046 Paradiso: Canto I
 13047
 13048
 13049 The glory of Him who moveth everything
 13050 Doth penetrate the universe, and shine
 13051 In one part more and in another less.
 13052
 13053 Within that heaven which most his light receives

13054 Was I, and things beheld which to repeat
13055 Nor knows, nor can, who from above descends;
13056
13057 Because in drawing near to its desire
13058 Our intellect ingulphs itself so far,
13059 That after it the memory cannot go.
13060
13061 Truly whatever of the holy realm
13062 I had the power to treasure in my mind
13063 Shall now become the subject of my song.
13064
13065 O good Apollo, for this last emprise
13066 Make of me such a vessel of thy power
13067 As giving the beloved laurel asks!
13068
13069 One summit of Parnassus hitherto
13070 Has been enough for me, but now with both
13071 I needs must enter the arena left.
13072
13073 Enter into my bosom, thou, and breathe
13074 As at the time when Marsyas thou didst draw
13075 Out of the scabbard of those limbs of his.
13076
13077 O power divine, lend'st thou thyself to me
13078 So that the shadow of the blessed realm
13079 Stamped in my brain I can make manifest,
13080
13081 Thou'lt see me come unto thy darling tree,
13082 And crown myself thereafter with those leaves
13083 Of which the theme and thou shall make me worthy.
13084
13085 So seldom, Father, do we gather them
13086 For triumph or of Caesar or of Poet,
13087 (The fault and shame of human inclinations,)
13088
13089 That the Peneian foliage should bring forth
13090 Joy to the joyous Delphic deity,
13091 When any one it makes to thirst for it.
13092
13093 A little spark is followed by great flame;
13094 Perchance with better voices after me
13095 Shall prayer be made that Cyrrha may respond!
13096
13097 To mortal men by passages diverse
13098 Uprises the world's lamp; but by that one
13099 Which circles four uniteth with three crosses,
13100
13101 With better course and with a better star
13102 Conjoined it issues, and the mundane wax
13103 Tempers and stamps more after its own fashion.
13104
13105 Almost that passage had made morning there
13106 And evening here, and there was wholly white
13107 That hemisphere, and black the other part,
13108
13109 When Beatrice towards the left-hand side
13110 I saw turned round, and gazing at the sun;

13111 Never did eagle fasten so upon it!
13112
13113 And even as a second ray is wont
13114 To issue from the first and reascend,
13115 Like to a pilgrim who would fain return,
13116
13117 Thus of her action, through the eyes infused
13118 In my imagination, mine I made,
13119 And sunward fixed mine eyes beyond our wont.
13120
13121 There much is lawful which is here unlawful
13122 Unto our powers, by virtue of the place
13123 Made for the human species as its own.
13124
13125 Not long I bore it, nor so little while
13126 But I beheld it sparkle round about
13127 Like iron that comes molten from the fire;
13128
13129 And suddenly it seemed that day to day
13130 Was added, as if He who has the power
13131 Had with another sun the heaven adorned.
13132
13133 With eyes upon the everlasting wheels
13134 Stood Beatrice all intent, and I, on her
13135 Fixing my vision from above removed,
13136
13137 Such at her aspect inwardly became
13138 As Glaucus, tasting of the herb that made him
13139 Peer of the other gods beneath the sea.
13140
13141 To represent transhumanise in words
13142 Impossible were; the example, then, suffice
13143 Him for whom Grace the experience reserves.
13144
13145 If I was merely what of me thou newly
13146 Createdst, Love who governest the heaven,
13147 Thou knowest, who didst lift me with thy light!
13148
13149 When now the wheel, which thou dost make eternal
13150 Desiring thee, made me attentive to it
13151 By harmony thou dost modulate and measure,
13152
13153 Then seemed to me so much of heaven enkindled
13154 By the sun's flame, that neither rain nor river
13155 E'er made a lake so widely spread abroad.
13156
13157 The newness of the sound and the great light
13158 Kindled in me a longing for their cause,
13159 Never before with such acuteness felt;
13160
13161 Whence she, who saw me as I saw myself,
13162 To quiet in me my perturbed mind,
13163 Opened her mouth, ere I did mine to ask,
13164
13165 And she began: "Thou makest thyself so dull
13166 With false imagining, that thou seest not
13167 What thou wouldst see if thou hadst shaken it off.

13168
13169 Thou art not upon earth, as thou believest;
13170 But lightning, fleeing its appropriate site,
13171 Ne'er ran as thou, who thitherward returnest."
13172
13173 If of my former doubt I was divested
13174 By these brief little words more smiled than spoken,
13175 I in a new one was the more ensnared;
13176
13177 And said: "Already did I rest content
13178 From great amazement; but am now amazed
13179 In what way I transcend these bodies light."
13180
13181 Whereupon she, after a pitying sigh,
13182 Her eyes directed tow'rds me with that look
13183 A mother casts on a delirious child;
13184
13185 And she began: "All things whate'er they be
13186 Have order among themselves, and this is form,
13187 That makes the universe resemble God.
13188
13189 Here do the higher creatures see the footprints
13190 Of the Eternal Power, which is the end
13191 Whereto is made the law already mentioned.
13192
13193 In the order that I speak of are inclined
13194 All natures, by their destinies diverse,
13195 More or less near unto their origin;
13196
13197 Hence they move onward unto ports diverse
13198 O'er the great sea of being; and each one
13199 With instinct given it which bears it on.
13200
13201 This bears away the fire towards the moon;
13202 This is in mortal hearts the motive power
13203 This binds together and unites the earth.
13204
13205 Nor only the created things that are
13206 Without intelligence this bow shoots forth,
13207 But those that have both intellect and love.
13208
13209 The Providence that regulates all this
13210 Makes with its light the heaven forever quiet,
13211 Wherein that turns which has the greatest haste.
13212
13213 And thither now, as to a site decreed,
13214 Bears us away the virtue of that cord
13215 Which aims its arrows at a joyous mark.
13216
13217 True is it, that as oftentimes the form
13218 Accords not with the intention of the art,
13219 Because in answering is matter deaf,
13220
13221 So likewise from this course doth deviate
13222 Sometimes the creature, who the power possesses,
13223 Though thus impelled, to swerve some other way,
13224

13225 (In the same wise as one may see the fire
 13226 Fall from a cloud,) if the first impetus
 13227 Earthward is wrested by some false delight.
 13228
 13229 Thou shouldst not wonder more, if well I judge,
 13230 At thine ascent, than at a rivulet
 13231 From some high mount descending to the lowland.
 13232
 13233 Marvel it would be in thee, if deprived
 13234 Of hindrance, thou wert seated down below,
 13235 As if on earth the living fire were quiet."
 13236
 13237 Thereat she heavenward turned again her face.
 13238
 13239
 13240
 13241 Paradiso: Canto II
 13242
 13243
 13244 O Ye, who in some pretty little boat,
 13245 Eager to listen, have been following
 13246 Behind my ship, that singing sails along,
 13247
 13248 Turn back to look again upon your shores;
 13249 Do not put out to sea, lest peradventure,
 13250 In losing me, you might yourselves be lost.
 13251
 13252 The sea I sail has never yet been passed;
 13253 Minerva breathes, and pilots me Apollo,
 13254 And Muses nine point out to me the Bears.
 13255
 13256 Ye other few who have the neck uplifted
 13257 Betimes to th' bread of Angels upon which
 13258 One liveth here and grows not sated by it,
 13259
 13260 Well may you launch upon the deep salt-sea
 13261 Your vessel, keeping still my wake before you
 13262 Upon the water that grows smooth again.
 13263
 13264 Those glorious ones who unto Colchos passed
 13265 Were not so wonder-struck as you shall be,
 13266 When Jason they beheld a ploughman made!
 13267
 13268 The con-created and perpetual thirst
 13269 For the realm deiform did bear us on,
 13270 As swift almost as ye the heavens behold.
 13271
 13272 Upward gazed Beatrice, and I at her;
 13273 And in such space perchance as strikes a bolt
 13274 And flies, and from the notch unlocks itself,
 13275
 13276 Arrived I saw me where a wondrous thing
 13277 Drew to itself my sight; and therefore she
 13278 From whom no care of mine could be concealed,
 13279
 13280 Towards me turning, blithe as beautiful,
 13281 Said unto me: "Fix gratefully thy mind

13282 On God, who unto the first star has brought us."
 13283
 13284 It seemed to me a cloud encompassed us,
 13285 Luminous, dense, consolidate and bright
 13286 As adamant on which the sun is striking.
 13287
 13288 Into itself did the eternal pearl
 13289 Receive us, even as water doth receive
 13290 A ray of light, remaining still unbroken.
 13291
 13292 If I was body, (and we here conceive not
 13293 How one dimension tolerates another,
 13294 Which needs must be if body enter body,)
 13295
 13296 More the desire should be enkindled in us
 13297 That essence to behold, wherein is seen
 13298 How God and our own nature were united.
 13299
 13300 There will be seen what we receive by faith,
 13301 Not demonstrated, but self-evident
 13302 In guise of the first truth that man believes.
 13303
 13304 I made reply: "Madonna, as devoutly
 13305 As most I can do I give thanks to Him
 13306 Who has removed me from the mortal world.
 13307
 13308 But tell me what the dusky spots may be
 13309 Upon this body, which below on earth
 13310 Make people tell that fabulous tale of Cain?"
 13311
 13312 Somewhat she smiled; and then, "If the opinion
 13313 Of mortals be erroneous," she said,
 13314 "Where'er the key of sense doth not unlock,
 13315
 13316 Certes, the shafts of wonder should not pierce thee
 13317 Now, forasmuch as, following the senses,
 13318 Thou seest that the reason has short wings.
 13319
 13320 But tell me what thou think'st of it thyself."
 13321 And I: "What seems to us up here diverse,
 13322 Is caused, I think, by bodies rare and dense."
 13323
 13324 And she: "Right truly shalt thou see immersed
 13325 In error thy belief, if well thou hearest
 13326 The argument that I shall make against it.
 13327
 13328 Lights many the eighth sphere displays to you
 13329 Which in their quality and quantity
 13330 May noted be of aspects different.
 13331
 13332 If this were caused by rare and dense alone,
 13333 One only virtue would there be in all
 13334 Or more or less diffused, or equally.
 13335
 13336 Virtues diverse must be perforce the fruits
 13337 Of formal principles; and these, save one,
 13338 Of course would by thy reasoning be destroyed.

13339
13340 Besides, if rarity were of this dimness
13341 The cause thou askest, either through and through
13342 This planet thus attenuate were of matter,
13343
13344 Or else, as in a body is apportioned
13345 The fat and lean, so in like manner this
13346 Would in its volume interchange the leaves.
13347
13348 Were it the former, in the sun's eclipse
13349 It would be manifest by the shining through
13350 Of light, as through aught tenuous interfused.
13351
13352 This is not so; hence we must scan the other,
13353 And if it chance the other I demolish,
13354 Then falsified will thy opinion be.
13355
13356 But if this rarity go not through and through,
13357 There needs must be a limit, beyond which
13358 Its contrary prevents the further passing,
13359
13360 And thence the foreign radiance is reflected,
13361 Even as a colour cometh back from glass,
13362 The which behind itself concealeth lead.
13363
13364 Now thou wilt say the sunbeam shows itself
13365 More dimly there than in the other parts,
13366 By being there reflected farther back.
13367
13368 From this reply experiment will free thee
13369 If e'er thou try it, which is wont to be
13370 The fountain to the rivers of your arts.
13371
13372 Three mirrors shalt thou take, and two remove
13373 Alike from thee, the other more remote
13374 Between the former two shall meet thine eyes.
13375
13376 Turned towards these, cause that behind thy back
13377 Be placed a light, illuming the three mirrors
13378 And coming back to thee by all reflected.
13379
13380 Though in its quantity be not so ample
13381 The image most remote, there shalt thou see
13382 How it perforce is equally resplendent.
13383
13384 Now, as beneath the touches of warm rays
13385 Naked the subject of the snow remains
13386 Both of its former colour and its cold,
13387
13388 Thee thus remaining in thy intellect,
13389 Will I inform with such a living light,
13390 That it shall tremble in its aspect to thee.
13391
13392 Within the heaven of the divine repose
13393 Revolves a body, in whose virtue lies
13394 The being of whatever it contains.
13395

13396 The following heaven, that has so many eyes,
 13397 Divides this being by essences diverse,
 13398 Distinguished from it, and by it contained.
 13399
 13400 The other spheres, by various differences,
 13401 All the distinctions which they have within them
 13402 Dispose unto their ends and their effects.
 13403
 13404 Thus do these organs of the world proceed,
 13405 As thou perceivest now, from grade to grade;
 13406 Since from above they take, and act beneath.
 13407
 13408 Observe me well, how through this place I come
 13409 Unto the truth thou wishest, that hereafter
 13410 Thou mayst alone know how to keep the ford
 13411
 13412 The power and motion of the holy spheres,
 13413 As from the artisan the hammer's craft,
 13414 Forth from the blessed motors must proceed.
 13415
 13416 The heaven, which lights so manifold make fair,
 13417 From the Intelligence profound, which turns it,
 13418 The image takes, and makes of it a seal.
 13419
 13420 And even as the soul within your dust
 13421 Through members different and accommodated
 13422 To faculties diverse expands itself,
 13423
 13424 So likewise this Intelligence diffuses
 13425 Its virtue multiplied among the stars.
 13426 Itself revolving on its unity.
 13427
 13428 Virtue diverse doth a diverse alloyage
 13429 Make with the precious body that it quickens,
 13430 In which, as life in you, it is combined.
 13431
 13432 From the glad nature whence it is derived,
 13433 The mingled virtue through the body shines,
 13434 Even as gladness through the living pupil.
 13435
 13436 From this proceeds whate'er from light to light
 13437 Appeareth different, not from dense and rare:
 13438 This is the formal principle that produces,
 13439
 13440 According to its goodness, dark and bright."
 13441
 13442
 13443
 13444 Paradiso: Canto III
 13445
 13446
 13447 That Sun, which erst with love my bosom warmed,
 13448 Of beauteous truth had unto me discovered,
 13449 By proving and reproving, the sweet aspect.
 13450
 13451 And, that I might confess myself convinced
 13452 And confident, so far as was befitting,

13453 I lifted more erect my head to speak.
13454
13455 But there appeared a vision, which withdrew me
13456 So close to it, in order to be seen,
13457 That my confession I remembered not.
13458
13459 Such as through polished and transparent glass,
13460 Or waters crystalline and undisturbed,
13461 But not so deep as that their bed be lost,
13462
13463 Come back again the outlines of our faces
13464 So feeble, that a pearl on forehead white
13465 Comes not less speedily unto our eyes;
13466
13467 Such saw I many faces prompt to speak,
13468 So that I ran in error opposite
13469 To that which kindled love 'twixt man and fountain.
13470
13471 As soon as I became aware of them,
13472 Esteeming them as mirrored semblances,
13473 To see of whom they were, mine eyes I turned,
13474
13475 And nothing saw, and once more turned them forward
13476 Direct into the light of my sweet Guide,
13477 Who smiling kindled in her holy eyes.
13478
13479 "Marvel thou not," she said to me, "because
13480 I smile at this thy puerile conceit,
13481 Since on the truth it trusts not yet its foot,
13482
13483 But turns thee, as 'tis wont, on emptiness.
13484 True substances are these which thou beholdest,
13485 Here relegate for breaking of some vow.
13486
13487 Therefore speak with them, listen and believe;
13488 For the true light, which giveth peace to them,
13489 Permits them not to turn from it their feet."
13490
13491 And I unto the shade that seemed most wishful
13492 To speak directed me, and I began,
13493 As one whom too great eagerness bewilders:
13494
13495 "O well-created spirit, who in the rays
13496 Of life eternal dost the sweetness taste
13497 Which being untasted ne'er is comprehended,
13498
13499 Grateful 'twill be to me, if thou content me
13500 Both with thy name and with your destiny."
13501 Whereat she promptly and with laughing eyes:
13502
13503 "Our charity doth never shut the doors
13504 Against a just desire, except as one
13505 Who wills that all her court be like herself.
13506
13507 I was a virgin sister in the world;
13508 And if thy mind doth contemplate me well,
13509 The being more fair will not conceal me from thee,

13510
 13511 But thou shalt recognise I am Piccarda,
 13512 Who, stationed here among these other blessed,
 13513 Myself am blessed in the slowest sphere.
 13514
 13515 All our affections, that alone inflamed
 13516 Are in the pleasure of the Holy Ghost,
 13517 Rejoice at being of his order formed;
 13518
 13519 And this allotment, which appears so low,
 13520 Therefore is given us, because our vows
 13521 Have been neglected and in some part void."
 13522
 13523 Whence I to her: "In your miraculous aspects
 13524 There shines I know not what of the divine,
 13525 Which doth transform you from our first conceptions.
 13526
 13527 Therefore I was not swift in my remembrance;
 13528 But what thou tellest me now aids me so,
 13529 That the refiguring is easier to me.
 13530
 13531 But tell me, ye who in this place are happy,
 13532 Are you desirous of a higher place,
 13533 To see more or to make yourselves more friends?"
 13534
 13535 First with those other shades she smiled a little;
 13536 Thereafter answered me so full of gladness,
 13537 She seemed to burn in the first fire of love:
 13538
 13539 "Brother, our will is quieted by virtue
 13540 Of charity, that makes us wish alone
 13541 For what we have, nor gives us thirst for more.
 13542
 13543 If to be more exalted we aspired,
 13544 Discordant would our aspirations be
 13545 Unto the will of Him who here secludes us;
 13546
 13547 Which thou shalt see finds no place in these circles,
 13548 If being in charity is needful here,
 13549 And if thou lookest well into its nature;
 13550
 13551 Nay, 'tis essential to this blest existence
 13552 To keep itself within the will divine,
 13553 Whereby our very wishes are made one;
 13554
 13555 So that, as we are station above station
 13556 Throughout this realm, to all the realm 'tis pleasing,
 13557 As to the King, who makes his will our will.
 13558
 13559 And his will is our peace; this is the sea
 13560 To which is moving onward whatsoever
 13561 It doth create, and all that nature makes."
 13562
 13563 Then it was clear to me how everywhere
 13564 In heaven is Paradise, although the grace
 13565 Of good supreme there rain not in one measure.
 13566

13567 But as it comes to pass, if one food sates,
 13568 And for another still remains the longing,
 13569 We ask for this, and that decline with thanks,
 13570
 13571 E'en thus did I; with gesture and with word,
 13572 To learn from her what was the web wherein
 13573 She did not ply the shuttle to the end.
 13574
 13575 "A perfect life and merit high in-heaven
 13576 A lady o'er us," said she, "by whose rule
 13577 Down in your world they vest and veil themselves,
 13578
 13579 That until death they may both watch and sleep
 13580 Beside that Spouse who every vow accepts
 13581 Which charity conformeth to his pleasure.
 13582
 13583 To follow her, in girlhood from the world
 13584 I fled, and in her habit shut myself,
 13585 And pledged me to the pathway of her sect.
 13586
 13587 Then men accustomed unto evil more
 13588 Than unto good, from the sweet cloister tore me;
 13589 God knows what afterward my life became.
 13590
 13591 This other splendour, which to thee reveals
 13592 Itself on my right side, and is enkindled
 13593 With all the illumination of our sphere,
 13594
 13595 What of myself I say applies to her;
 13596 A nun was she, and likewise from her head
 13597 Was ta'en the shadow of the sacred wimple.
 13598
 13599 But when she too was to the world returned
 13600 Against her wishes and against good usage,
 13601 Of the heart's veil she never was divested.
 13602
 13603 Of great Costanza this is the effulgence,
 13604 Who from the second wind of Suabia
 13605 Brought forth the third and latest puissance."
 13606
 13607 Thus unto me she spake, and then began
 13608 "Ave Maria" singing, and in singing
 13609 Vanished, as through deep water something heavy.
 13610
 13611 My sight, that followed her as long a time
 13612 As it was possible, when it had lost her
 13613 Turned round unto the mark of more desire,
 13614
 13615 And wholly unto Beatrice reverted;
 13616 But she such lightnings flashed into mine eyes,
 13617 That at the first my sight endured it not;
 13618
 13619 And this in questioning more backward made me.
 13620
 13621
 13622
 13623 Paradiso: Canto IV

13624
13625
13626 Between two viands, equally removed
13627 And tempting, a free man would die of hunger
13628 Ere either he could bring unto his teeth.
13629
13630 So would a lamb between the ravennings
13631 Of two fierce wolves stand fearing both alike;
13632 And so would stand a dog between two does.
13633
13634 Hence, if I held my peace, myself I blame not,
13635 Impelled in equal measure by my doubts,
13636 Since it must be so, nor do I commend.
13637
13638 I held my peace; but my desire was painted
13639 Upon my face, and questioning with that
13640 More fervent far than by articulate speech.
13641
13642 Beatrice did as Daniel had done
13643 Relieving Nebuchadnezzar from the wrath
13644 Which rendered him unjustly merciless,
13645
13646 And said: "Well see I how attracteth thee
13647 One and the other wish, so that thy care
13648 Binds itself so that forth it does not breathe.
13649
13650 Thou arguest, if good will be permanent,
13651 The violence of others, for what reason
13652 Doth it decrease the measure of my merit?
13653
13654 Again for doubting furnish thee occasion
13655 Souls seeming to return unto the stars,
13656 According to the sentiment of Plato.
13657
13658 These are the questions which upon thy wish
13659 Are thrusting equally; and therefore first
13660 Will I treat that which hath the most of gall.
13661
13662 He of the Seraphim most absorbed in God,
13663 Moses, and Samuel, and whichever John
13664 Thou mayst select, I say, and even Mary,
13665
13666 Have not in any other heaven their seats,
13667 Than have those spirits that just appeared to thee,
13668 Nor of existence more or fewer years;
13669
13670 But all make beautiful the primal circle,
13671 And have sweet life in different degrees,
13672 By feeling more or less the eternal breath.
13673
13674 They showed themselves here, not because allotted
13675 This sphere has been to them, but to give sign
13676 Of the celestial which is least exalted.
13677
13678 To speak thus is adapted to your mind,
13679 Since only through the sense it apprehendeth
13680 What then it worthy makes of intellect.

13681
13682 On this account the Scripture condescends
13683 Unto your faculties, and feet and hands
13684 To God attributes, and means something else;
13685
13686 And Holy Church under an aspect human
13687 Gabriel and Michael represent to you,
13688 And him who made Tobias whole again.
13689
13690 That which Timaeus argues of the soul
13691 Doth not resemble that which here is seen,
13692 Because it seems that as he speaks he thinks.
13693
13694 He says the soul unto its star returns,
13695 Believing it to have been severed thence
13696 Whenever nature gave it as a form.
13697
13698 Perhaps his doctrine is of other guise
13699 Than the words sound, and possibly may be
13700 With meaning that is not to be derided.
13701
13702 If he doth mean that to these wheels return
13703 The honour of their influence and the blame,
13704 Perhaps his bow doth hit upon some truth.
13705
13706 This principle ill understood once warped
13707 The whole world nearly, till it went astray
13708 Invoking Jove and Mercury and Mars.
13709
13710 The other doubt which doth disquiet thee
13711 Less venom has, for its malevolence
13712 Could never lead thee elsewhere from me.
13713
13714 That as unjust our justice should appear
13715 In eyes of mortals, is an argument
13716 Of faith, and not of sin heretical.
13717
13718 But still, that your perception may be able
13719 To thoroughly penetrate this verity,
13720 As thou desirest, I will satisfy thee.
13721
13722 If it be violence when he who suffers
13723 Co-operates not with him who uses force,
13724 These souls were not on that account excused;
13725
13726 For will is never quenched unless it will,
13727 But operates as nature doth in fire
13728 If violence a thousand times distort it.
13729
13730 Hence, if it yieldeth more or less, it seconds
13731 The force; and these have done so, having power
13732 Of turning back unto the holy place.
13733
13734 If their will had been perfect, like to that
13735 Which Lawrence fast upon his gridiron held,
13736 And Mutius made severe to his own hand,
13737

13738 It would have urged them back along the road
 13739 Whence they were dragged, as soon as they were free;
 13740 But such a solid will is all too rare.
 13741
 13742 And by these words, if thou hast gathered them
 13743 As thou shouldst do, the argument is refuted
 13744 That would have still annoyed thee many times.
 13745
 13746 But now another passage runs across
 13747 Before thine eyes, and such that by thyself
 13748 Thou couldst not thread it ere thou wouldst be weary.
 13749
 13750 I have for certain put into thy mind
 13751 That soul beatified could never lie,
 13752 For it is near the primal Truth,
 13753
 13754 And then thou from Piccarda might'st have heard
 13755 Costanza kept affection for the veil,
 13756 So that she seemeth here to contradict me.
 13757
 13758 Many times, brother, has it come to pass,
 13759 That, to escape from peril, with reluctance
 13760 That has been done it was not right to do,
 13761
 13762 E'en as Alcmaeon (who, being by his father
 13763 Thereto entreated, his own mother slew)
 13764 Not to lose pity pitiless became.
 13765
 13766 At this point I desire thee to remember
 13767 That force with will commingles, and they cause
 13768 That the offences cannot be excused.
 13769
 13770 Will absolute consenteth not to evil;
 13771 But in so far consenteth as it fears,
 13772 If it refrain, to fall into more harm.
 13773
 13774 Hence when Piccarda uses this expression,
 13775 She meaneth the will absolute, and I
 13776 The other, so that both of us speak truth."
 13777
 13778 Such was the flowing of the holy river
 13779 That issued from the fount whence springs all truth;
 13780 This put to rest my wishes one and all.
 13781
 13782 "O love of the first lover, O divine,"
 13783 Said I forthwith, "whose speech inundates me
 13784 And warms me so, it more and more revives me,
 13785
 13786 My own affection is not so profound
 13787 As to suffice in rendering grace for grace;
 13788 Let Him, who sees and can, thereto respond.
 13789
 13790 Well I perceive that never sated is
 13791 Our intellect unless the Truth illumine it,
 13792 Beyond which nothing true expands itself.
 13793
 13794 It rests therein, as wild beast in his lair,

13795 When it attains it; and it can attain it;
 13796 If not, then each desire would frustrate be.
 13797
 13798 Therefore springs up, in fashion of a shoot,
 13799 Doubt at the foot of truth; and this is nature,
 13800 Which to the top from height to height impels us.
 13801
 13802 This doth invite me, this assurance give me
 13803 With reverence, Lady, to inquire of you
 13804 Another truth, which is obscure to me.
 13805
 13806 I wish to know if man can satisfy you
 13807 For broken vows with other good deeds, so
 13808 That in your balance they will not be light."
 13809
 13810 Beatrice gazed upon me with her eyes
 13811 Full of the sparks of love, and so divine,
 13812 That, overcome my power, I turned my back
 13813
 13814 And almost lost myself with eyes downcast.
 13815
 13816
 13817
 13818 Paradiso: Canto V
 13819
 13820
 13821 "If in the heat of love I flame upon thee
 13822 Beyond the measure that on earth is seen,
 13823 So that the valour of thine eyes I vanquish,
 13824
 13825 Marvel thou not thereat; for this proceeds
 13826 From perfect sight, which as it apprehends
 13827 To the good apprehended moves its feet.
 13828
 13829 Well I perceive how is already shining
 13830 Into thine intellect the eternal light,
 13831 That only seen enkindles always love;
 13832
 13833 And if some other thing your love seduce,
 13834 'Tis nothing but a vestige of the same,
 13835 Ill understood, which there is shining through.
 13836
 13837 Thou fain wouldst know if with another service
 13838 For broken vow can such return be made
 13839 As to secure the soul from further claim."
 13840
 13841 This Canto thus did Beatrice begin;
 13842 And, as a man who breaks not off his speech,
 13843 Continued thus her holy argument:
 13844
 13845 "The greatest gift that in his largess God
 13846 Creating made, and unto his own goodness
 13847 Nearest conformed, and that which he doth prize
 13848
 13849 Most highly, is the freedom of the will,
 13850 Wherewith the creatures of intelligence
 13851 Both all and only were and are endowed.

13852
13853 Now wilt thou see, if thence thou reasonest,
13854 The high worth of a vow, if it he made
13855 So that when thou consentest God consents:
13856
13857 For, closing between God and man the compact,
13858 A sacrifice is of this treasure made,
13859 Such as I say, and made by its own act.
13860
13861 What can be rendered then as compensation?
13862 Think'st thou to make good use of what thou'st offered,
13863 With gains ill gotten thou wouldst do good deed.
13864
13865 Now art thou certain of the greater point;
13866 But because Holy Church in this dispenses,
13867 Which seems against the truth which I have shown thee,
13868
13869 Behoves thee still to sit awhile at table,
13870 Because the solid food which thou hast taken
13871 Requireth further aid for thy digestion.
13872
13873 Open thy mind to that which I reveal,
13874 And fix it there within; for 'tis not knowledge,
13875 The having heard without retaining it.
13876
13877 In the essence of this sacrifice two things
13878 Convene together; and the one is that
13879 Of which 'tis made, the other is the agreement.
13880
13881 This last for evermore is cancelled not
13882 Unless complied with, and concerning this
13883 With such precision has above been spoken.
13884
13885 Therefore it was enjoined upon the Hebrews
13886 To offer still, though sometimes what was offered
13887 Might be commuted, as thou ought'st to know.
13888
13889 The other, which is known to thee as matter,
13890 May well indeed be such that one errs not
13891 If it for other matter be exchanged.
13892
13893 But let none shift the burden on his shoulder
13894 At his arbitrament, without the turning
13895 Both of the white and of the yellow key;
13896
13897 And every permutation deem as foolish,
13898 If in the substitute the thing relinquished,
13899 As the four is in six, be not contained.
13900
13901 Therefore whatever thing has so great weight
13902 In value that it drags down every balance,
13903 Cannot be satisfied with other spending.
13904
13905 Let mortals never take a vow in jest;
13906 Be faithful and not blind in doing that,
13907 As Jephthah was in his first offering,
13908

13909 Whom more beseemed to say, 'I have done wrong,
13910 Than to do worse by keeping; and as foolish
13911 Thou the great leader of the Greeks wilt find,
13912
13913 Whence wept Iphigenia her fair face,
13914 And made for her both wise and simple weep,
13915 Who heard such kind of worship spoken of.'
13916
13917 Christians, be ye more serious in your movements;
13918 Be ye not like a feather at each wind,
13919 And think not every water washes you.
13920
13921 Ye have the Old and the New Testament,
13922 And the Pastor of the Church who guideth you
13923 Let this suffice you unto your salvation.
13924
13925 If evil appetite cry aught else to you,
13926 Be ye as men, and not as silly sheep,
13927 So that the Jew among you may not mock you.
13928
13929 Be ye not as the lamb that doth abandon
13930 Its mother's milk, and frolicsome and simple
13931 Combats at its own pleasure with itself."
13932
13933 Thus Beatrice to me even as I write it;
13934 Then all desireful turned herself again
13935 To that part where the world is most alive.
13936
13937 Her silence and her change of countenance
13938 Silence imposed upon my eager mind,
13939 That had already in advance new questions;
13940
13941 And as an arrow that upon the mark
13942 Strikes ere the bowstring quiet hath become,
13943 So did we speed into the second realm.
13944
13945 My Lady there so joyful I beheld,
13946 As into the brightness of that heaven she entered,
13947 More luminous thereat the planet grew;
13948
13949 And if the star itself was changed and smiled,
13950 What became I, who by my nature am
13951 Exceeding mutable in every guise!
13952
13953 As, in a fish-pond which is pure and tranquil,
13954 The fishes draw to that which from without
13955 Comes in such fashion that their food they deem it;
13956
13957 So I beheld more than a thousand splendours
13958 Drawing towards us, and in each was heard:
13959 "Lo, this is she who shall increase our love."
13960
13961 And as each one was coming unto us,
13962 Full of beatitude the shade was seen,
13963 By the effulgence clear that issued from it.
13964
13965 Think, Reader, if what here is just beginning

13966 No farther should proceed, how thou wouldst have
 13967 An agonizing need of knowing more;
 13968
 13969 And of thyself thou'lt see how I from these
 13970 Was in desire of hearing their conditions,
 13971 As they unto mine eyes were manifest.
 13972
 13973 "O thou well-born, unto whom Grace concedes
 13974 To see the thrones of the eternal triumph,
 13975 Or ever yet the warfare be abandoned
 13976
 13977 With light that through the whole of heaven is spread
 13978 Kindled are we, and hence if thou desirest
 13979 To know of us, at thine own pleasure sate thee."
 13980
 13981 Thus by some one among those holy spirits
 13982 Was spoken, and by Beatrice: "Speak, speak
 13983 Securely, and believe them even as Gods."
 13984
 13985 "Well I perceive how thou dost nest thyself
 13986 In thine own light, and drawest it from thine eyes,
 13987 Because they coruscate when thou dost smile,
 13988
 13989 But know not who thou art, nor why thou hast,
 13990 Spirit august, thy station in the sphere
 13991 That veils itself to men in alien rays."
 13992
 13993 This said I in direction of the light
 13994 Which first had spoken to me; whence it became
 13995 By far more lucent than it was before.
 13996
 13997 Even as the sun, that doth conceal himself
 13998 By too much light, when heat has worn away
 13999 The tempering influence of the vapours dense,
 14000
 14001 By greater rapture thus concealed itself
 14002 In its own radiance the figure saintly,
 14003 And thus close, close enfolded answered me
 14004
 14005 In fashion as the following Canto sings.
 14006
 14007
 14008
 14009 Paradiso: Canto VI
 14010
 14011
 14012 "After that Constantine the eagle turned
 14013 Against the course of heaven, which it had followed
 14014 Behind the ancient who Lavinia took,
 14015
 14016 Two hundred years and more the bird of God
 14017 In the extreme of Europe held itself,
 14018 Near to the mountains whence it issued first;
 14019
 14020 And under shadow of the sacred plumes
 14021 It governed there the world from hand to hand,
 14022 And, changing thus, upon mine own alighted.

14023
14024 Caesar I was, and am Justinian,
14025 Who, by the will of primal Love I feel,
14026 Took from the laws the useless and redundant;
14027
14028 And ere unto the work I was attent,
14029 One nature to exist in Christ, not more,
14030 Believed, and with such faith was I contented.
14031
14032 But blessed Agapetus, he who was
14033 The supreme pastor, to the faith sincere
14034 Pointed me out the way by words of his.
14035
14036 Him I believed, and what was his assertion
14037 I now see clearly, even as thou seest
14038 Each contradiction to be false and true.
14039
14040 As soon as with the Church I moved my feet,
14041 God in his grace it pleased with this high task
14042 To inspire me, and I gave me wholly to it,
14043
14044 And to my Belisarius I commended
14045 The arms, to which was heaven's right hand so joined
14046 It was a signal that I should repose.
14047
14048 Now here to the first question terminates
14049 My answer; but the character thereof
14050 Constrains me to continue with a sequel,
14051
14052 In order that thou see with how great reason
14053 Men move against the standard sacrosanct,
14054 Both who appropriate and who oppose it.
14055
14056 Behold how great a power has made it worthy
14057 Of reverence, beginning from the hour
14058 When Pallas died to give it sovereignty.
14059
14060 Thou knowest it made in Alba its abode
14061 Three hundred years and upward, till at last
14062 The three to three fought for it yet again.
14063
14064 Thou knowest what it achieved from Sabine wrong
14065 Down to Lucretia's sorrow, in seven kings
14066 O'ercoming round about the neighboring nations;
14067
14068 Thou knowest what it achieved, borne by the Romans
14069 Illustrious against Brennus, against Pyrrhus,
14070 Against the other princes and confederates.
14071
14072 Torquatus thence and Quinctius, who from locks
14073 Unkempt was named, Decii and Fabii,
14074 Received the fame I willingly embalm;
14075
14076 It struck to earth the pride of the Arabians,
14077 Who, following Hannibal, had passed across
14078 The Alpine ridges, Po, from which thou glidest;
14079

14080 Beneath it triumphed while they yet were young
14081 Pompey and Scipio, and to the hill
14082 Beneath which thou wast born it bitter seemed;
14083
14084 Then, near unto the time when heaven had willed
14085 To bring the whole world to its mood serene,
14086 Did Caesar by the will of Rome assume it.
14087
14088 What it achieved from Var unto the Rhine,
14089 Isere beheld and Saone, beheld the Seine,
14090 And every valley whence the Rhone is filled;
14091
14092 What it achieved when it had left Ravenna,
14093 And leaped the Rubicon, was such a flight
14094 That neither tongue nor pen could follow it.
14095
14096 Round towards Spain it wheeled its legions; then
14097 Towards Durazzo, and Pharsalia smote
14098 That to the calid Nile was felt the pain.
14099
14100 Antandros and the Simois, whence it started,
14101 It saw again, and there where Hector lies,
14102 And ill for Ptolemy then roused itself.
14103
14104 From thence it came like lightning upon Juba;
14105 Then wheeled itself again into your West,
14106 Where the Pompeian clarion it heard.
14107
14108 From what it wrought with the next standard-bearer
14109 Brutus and Cassius howl in Hell together,
14110 And Modena and Perugia dolent were;
14111
14112 Still doth the mournful Cleopatra weep
14113 Because thereof, who, fleeing from before it,
14114 Took from the adder sudden and black death.
14115
14116 With him it ran even to the Red Sea shore;
14117 With him it placed the world in so great peace,
14118 That unto Janus was his temple closed.
14119
14120 But what the standard that has made me speak
14121 Achieved before, and after should achieve
14122 Throughout the mortal realm that lies beneath it,
14123
14124 Becometh in appearance mean and dim,
14125 If in the hand of the third Caesar seen
14126 With eye unclouded and affection pure,
14127
14128 Because the living Justice that inspires me
14129 Granted it, in the hand of him I speak of,
14130 The glory of doing vengeance for its wrath.
14131
14132 Now here attend to what I answer thee;
14133 Later it ran with Titus to do vengeance
14134 Upon the vengeance of the ancient sin.
14135
14136 And when the tooth of Lombardy had bitten

14137 The Holy Church, then underneath its wings
 14138 Did Charlemagne victorious succor her.
 14139
 14140 Now hast thou power to judge of such as those
 14141 Whom I accused above, and of their crimes,
 14142 Which are the cause of all your miseries.
 14143
 14144 To the public standard one the yellow lilies
 14145 Opposes, the other claims it for a party,
 14146 So that 'tis hard to see which sins the most.
 14147
 14148 Let, let the Ghibellines ply their handicraft
 14149 Beneath some other standard; for this ever
 14150 Ill follows he who it and justice parts.
 14151
 14152 And let not this new Charles e'er strike it down,
 14153 He and his Guelfs, but let him fear the talons
 14154 That from a nobler lion stripped the fell.
 14155
 14156 Already oftentimes the sons have wept
 14157 The father's crime; and let him not believe
 14158 That God will change His scutcheon for the lilies.
 14159
 14160 This little planet doth adorn itself
 14161 With the good spirits that have active been,
 14162 That fame and honour might come after them;
 14163
 14164 And whensoever the desires mount thither,
 14165 Thus deviating, must perforce the rays
 14166 Of the true love less vividly mount upward.
 14167
 14168 But in commensuration of our wages
 14169 With our desert is portion of our joy,
 14170 Because we see them neither less nor greater.
 14171
 14172 Herein doth living Justice sweeten so
 14173 Affection in us, that for evermore
 14174 It cannot warp to any iniquity.
 14175
 14176 Voices diverse make up sweet melodies;
 14177 So in this life of ours the seats diverse
 14178 Render sweet harmony among these spheres;
 14179
 14180 And in the compass of this present pearl
 14181 Shineth the sheen of Romeo, of whom
 14182 The grand and beauteous work was ill rewarded.
 14183
 14184 But the Provençals who against him wrought,
 14185 They have not laughed, and therefore ill goes he
 14186 Who makes his hurt of the good deeds of others.
 14187
 14188 Four daughters, and each one of them a queen,
 14189 Had Raymond Berenger, and this for him
 14190 Did Romeo, a poor man and a pilgrim;
 14191
 14192 And then malicious words incited him
 14193 To summon to a reckoning this just man,

14194 Who rendered to him seven and five for ten.
 14195
 14196 Then he departed poor and stricken in years,
 14197 And if the world could know the heart he had,
 14198 In begging bit by bit his livelihood,
 14199
 14200 Though much it laud him, it would laud him more."
 14201
 14202
 14203
 14204 Paradiso: Canto VII
 14205
 14206
 14207 "Osanna sanctus Deus Sabaoth,
 14208 Superillustrans claritate tua
 14209 Felices ignes horum malahoth!"
 14210
 14211 In this wise, to his melody returning,
 14212 This substance, upon which a double light
 14213 Doubles itself, was seen by me to sing,
 14214
 14215 And to their dance this and the others moved,
 14216 And in the manner of swift-hurrying sparks
 14217 Veiled themselves from me with a sudden distance.
 14218
 14219 Doubting was I, and saying, "Tell her, tell her,"
 14220 Within me, "tell her," saying, "tell my Lady,"
 14221 Who slakes my thirst with her sweet effluences;
 14222
 14223 And yet that reverence which doth lord it over
 14224 The whole of me only by B and ICE,
 14225 Bowed me again like unto one who drowns.
 14226
 14227 Short while did Beatrice endure me thus;
 14228 And she began, lighting me with a smile
 14229 Such as would make one happy in the fire:
 14230
 14231 "According to infallible advisement,
 14232 After what manner a just vengeance justly
 14233 Could be avenged has put thee upon thinking,
 14234
 14235 But I will speedily thy mind unloose;
 14236 And do thou listen, for these words of mine
 14237 Of a great doctrine will a present make thee.
 14238
 14239 By not enduring on the power that wills
 14240 Curb for his good, that man who ne'er was born,
 14241 Damning himself damned all his progeny;
 14242
 14243 Whereby the human species down below
 14244 Lay sick for many centuries in great error,
 14245 Till to descend it pleased the Word of God
 14246
 14247 To where the nature, which from its own Maker
 14248 Estranged itself, he joined to him in person
 14249 By the sole act of his eternal love.
 14250

14251 Now unto what is said direct thy sight;
14252 This nature when united to its Maker,
14253 Such as created, was sincere and good;
14254
14255 But by itself alone was banished forth
14256 From Paradise, because it turned aside
14257 Out of the way of truth and of its life.
14258
14259 Therefore the penalty the cross held out,
14260 If measured by the nature thus assumed,
14261 None ever yet with so great justice stung,
14262
14263 And none was ever of so great injustice,
14264 Considering who the Person was that suffered,
14265 Within whom such a nature was contracted.
14266
14267 From one act therefore issued things diverse;
14268 To God and to the Jews one death was pleasing;
14269 Earth trembled at it and the Heaven was opened.
14270
14271 It should no longer now seem difficult
14272 To thee, when it is said that a just vengeance
14273 By a just court was afterward avenged.
14274
14275 But now do I behold thy mind entangled
14276 From thought to thought within a knot, from which
14277 With great desire it waits to free itself.
14278
14279 Thou sayest, 'Well discern I what I hear;
14280 But it is hidden from me why God willed
14281 For our redemption only this one mode.'
14282
14283 Buried remaineth, brother, this decree
14284 Unto the eyes of every one whose nature
14285 Is in the flame of love not yet adult.
14286
14287 Verily, inasmuch as at this mark
14288 One gazes long and little is discerned,
14289 Wherefore this mode was worthiest will I say.
14290
14291 Goodness Divine, which from itself doth spurn
14292 All envy, burning in itself so sparkles
14293 That the eternal beauties it unfolds.
14294
14295 Whate'er from this immediately distils
14296 Has afterwards no end, for ne'er removed
14297 Is its impression when it sets its seal.
14298
14299 Whate'er from this immediately rains down
14300 Is wholly free, because it is not subject
14301 Unto the influences of novel things.
14302
14303 The more conformed thereto, the more it pleases;
14304 For the blest ardour that irradiates all things
14305 In that most like itself is most vivacious.
14306
14307 With all of these things has advantaged been

14308 The human creature; and if one be wanting,
14309 From his nobility he needs must fall.
14310
14311 'Tis sin alone which doth disfranchise him,
14312 And render him unlike the Good Supreme,
14313 So that he little with its light is blanced,
14314
14315 And to his dignity no more returns,
14316 Unless he fill up where transgression empties
14317 With righteous pains for criminal delights.
14318
14319 Your nature when it sinned so utterly
14320 In its own seed, out of these dignities
14321 Even as out of Paradise was driven,
14322
14323 Nor could itself recover, if thou notest
14324 With nicest subtilty, by any way,
14325 Except by passing one of these two fords:
14326
14327 Either that God through clemency alone
14328 Had pardon granted, or that man himself
14329 Had satisfaction for his folly made.
14330
14331 Fix now thine eye deep into the abyss
14332 Of the eternal counsel, to my speech
14333 As far as may be fastened steadfastly!
14334
14335 Man in his limitations had not power
14336 To satisfy, not having power to sink
14337 In his humility obeying then,
14338
14339 Far as he disobeying thought to rise;
14340 And for this reason man has been from power
14341 Of satisfying by himself excluded.
14342
14343 Therefore it God behoved in his own ways
14344 Man to restore unto his perfect life,
14345 I say in one, or else in both of them.
14346
14347 But since the action of the doer is
14348 So much more grateful, as it more presents
14349 The goodness of the heart from which it issues,
14350
14351 Goodness Divine, that doth imprint the world,
14352 Has been contented to proceed by each
14353 And all its ways to lift you up again;
14354
14355 Nor 'twixt the first day and the final night
14356 Such high and such magnificent proceeding
14357 By one or by the other was or shall be;
14358
14359 For God more bounteous was himself to give
14360 To make man able to uplift himself,
14361 Than if he only of himself had pardoned;
14362
14363 And all the other modes were insufficient
14364 For justice, were it not the Son of God

14365 Himself had humbled to become incarnate.
 14366
 14367 Now, to fill fully each desire of thine,
 14368 Return I to elucidate one place,
 14369 In order that thou there mayst see as I do.
 14370
 14371 Thou sayst: 'I see the air, I see the fire,
 14372 The water, and the earth, and all their mixtures
 14373 Come to corruption, and short while endure;
 14374
 14375 And these things notwithstanding were created;
 14376 Therefore if that which I have said were true,
 14377 They should have been secure against corruption.
 14378
 14379 The Angels, brother, and the land sincere
 14380 In which thou art, created may be called
 14381 Just as they are in their entire existence;
 14382
 14383 But all the elements which thou hast named,
 14384 And all those things which out of them are made,
 14385 By a created virtue are informed.
 14386
 14387 Created was the matter which they have;
 14388 Created was the informing influence
 14389 Within these stars that round about them go.
 14390
 14391 The soul of every brute and of the plants
 14392 By its potential temperament attracts
 14393 The ray and motion of the holy lights;
 14394
 14395 But your own life immediately inspires
 14396 Supreme Beneficence, and enamours it
 14397 So with herself, it evermore desires her.
 14398
 14399 And thou from this mayst argue furthermore
 14400 Your resurrection, if thou think again
 14401 How human flesh was fashioned at that time
 14402
 14403 When the first parents both of them were made."
 14404
 14405
 14406
 14407 Paradiso: Canto VIII
 14408
 14409
 14410 The world used in its peril to believe
 14411 That the fair Cypria delirious love
 14412 Rayed out, in the third epicycle turning;
 14413
 14414 Wherefore not only unto her paid honour
 14415 Of sacrifices and of votive cry
 14416 The ancient nations in the ancient error,
 14417
 14418 But both Dione honoured they and Cupid,
 14419 That as her mother, this one as her son,
 14420 And said that he had sat in Dido's lap;
 14421

14422 And they from her, whence I beginning take,
14423 Took the denomination of the star
14424 That woos the sun, now following, now in front.
14425
14426 I was not ware of our ascending to it;
14427 But of our being in it gave full faith
14428 My Lady whom I saw more beauteous grow.
14429
14430 And as within a flame a spark is seen,
14431 And as within a voice a voice discerned,
14432 When one is steadfast, and one comes and goes,
14433
14434 Within that light beheld I other lamps
14435 Move in a circle, speeding more and less,
14436 Methinks in measure of their inward vision.
14437
14438 From a cold cloud descended never winds,
14439 Or visible or not, so rapidly
14440 They would not laggard and impeded seem
14441
14442 To any one who had those lights divine
14443 Seen come towards us, leaving the gyration
14444 Begun at first in the high Seraphim.
14445
14446 And behind those that most in front appeared
14447 Sounded "Osanna!" so that never since
14448 To hear again was I without desire.
14449
14450 Then unto us more nearly one approached,
14451 And it alone began: "We all are ready
14452 Unto thy pleasure, that thou joy in us.
14453
14454 We turn around with the celestial Princes,
14455 One gyre and one gyration and one thirst,
14456 To whom thou in the world of old didst say,
14457
14458 'Ye who, intelligent, the third heaven are moving;'
14459 And are so full of love, to pleasure thee
14460 A little quiet will not be less sweet."
14461
14462 After these eyes of mine themselves had offered
14463 Unto my Lady reverently, and she
14464 Content and certain of herself had made them,
14465
14466 Back to the light they turned, which so great promise
14467 Made of itself, and "Say, who art thou?" was
14468 My voice, imprinted with a great affection.
14469
14470 O how and how much I beheld it grow
14471 With the new joy that superadded was
14472 Unto its joys, as soon as I had spoken!
14473
14474 Thus changed, it said to me: "The world possessed me
14475 Short time below; and, if it had been more,
14476 Much evil will be which would not have been.
14477
14478 My gladness keepeth me concealed from thee,

14479 Which rayeth round about me, and doth hide me
14480 Like as a creature swathed in its own silk.
14481
14482 Much didst thou love me, and thou hadst good reason;
14483 For had I been below, I should have shown thee
14484 Somewhat beyond the foliage of my love.
14485
14486 That left-hand margin, which doth bathe itself
14487 In Rhone, when it is mingled with the Sorgue,
14488 Me for its lord awaited in due time,
14489
14490 And that horn of Ausonia, which is towned
14491 With Bari, with Gaeta and Catona,
14492 Whence Tronto and Verde in the sea disgorge.
14493
14494 Already flashed upon my brow the crown
14495 Of that dominion which the Danube waters
14496 After the German borders it abandons;
14497
14498 And beautiful Trinacria, that is murky
14499 'Twixt Pachino and Peloro, (on the gulf
14500 Which greatest scath from Eurys doth receive,)
14501
14502 Not through Typhoeus, but through nascent sulphur,
14503 Would have awaited her own monarchs still,
14504 Through me from Charles descended and from Rudolph,
14505
14506 If evil lordship, that exasperates ever
14507 The subject populations, had not moved
14508 Palermo to the outcry of 'Death! death!'
14509
14510 And if my brother could but this foresee,
14511 The greedy poverty of Catalonia
14512 Straight would he flee, that it might not molest him;
14513
14514 For verily 'tis needful to provide,
14515 Through him or other, so that on his bark
14516 Already freighted no more freight be placed.
14517
14518 His nature, which from liberal covetous
14519 Descended, such a soldiery would need
14520 As should not care for hoarding in a chest."
14521
14522 "Because I do believe the lofty joy
14523 Thy speech infuses into me, my Lord,
14524 Where every good thing doth begin and end
14525
14526 Thou seest as I see it, the more grateful
14527 Is it to me; and this too hold I dear,
14528 That gazing upon God thou dost discern it.
14529
14530 Glad hast thou made me; so make clear to me,
14531 Since speaking thou hast stirred me up to doubt,
14532 How from sweet seed can bitter issue forth."
14533
14534 This I to him; and he to me: "If I
14535 Can show to thee a truth, to what thou askest

14536 Thy face thou'lt hold as thou dost hold thy back.
14537
14538 The Good which all the realm thou art ascending
14539 Turns and contents, maketh its providence
14540 To be a power within these bodies vast;
14541
14542 And not alone the natures are foreseen
14543 Within the mind that in itself is perfect,
14544 But they together with their preservation.
14545
14546 For whatsoever thing this bow shoots forth
14547 Falls foreordained unto an end foreseen,
14548 Even as a shaft directed to its mark.
14549
14550 If that were not, the heaven which thou dost walk
14551 Would in such manner its effects produce,
14552 That they no longer would be arts, but ruins.
14553
14554 This cannot be, if the Intelligences
14555 That keep these stars in motion are not maimed,
14556 And maimed the First that has not made them perfect.
14557
14558 Wilt thou this truth have clearer made to thee?"
14559 And I: "Not so; for 'tis impossible
14560 That nature tire, I see, in what is needful."
14561
14562 Whence he again: "Now say, would it be worse
14563 For men on earth were they not citizens?"
14564 "Yes," I replied; "and here I ask no reason."
14565
14566 "And can they be so, if below they live not
14567 Diversely unto offices diverse?
14568 No, if your master writeth well for you."
14569
14570 So came he with deductions to this point;
14571 Then he concluded: "Therefore it behoves
14572 The roots of your effects to be diverse.
14573
14574 Hence one is Solon born, another Xerxes,
14575 Another Melchisedec, and another he
14576 Who, flying through the air, his son did lose.
14577
14578 Revolving Nature, which a signet is
14579 To mortal wax, doth practise well her art,
14580 But not one inn distinguish from another;
14581
14582 Thence happens it that Esau differeth
14583 In seed from Jacob; and Quirinus comes
14584 From sire so vile that he is given to Mars.
14585
14586 A generated nature its own way
14587 Would always make like its progenitors,
14588 If Providence divine were not triumphant.
14589
14590 Now that which was behind thee is before thee;
14591 But that thou know that I with thee am pleased,
14592 With a corollary will I mantle thee.

14593
14594 Evermore nature, if it fortune find
14595 Discordant to it, like each other seed
14596 Out of its region, maketh evil thrift;
14597
14598 And if the world below would fix its mind
14599 On the foundation which is laid by nature,
14600 Pursuing that, 'twould have the people good.
14601
14602 But you unto religion wrench aside
14603 Him who was born to gird him with the sword,
14604 And make a king of him who is for sermons;
14605
14606 Therefore your footsteps wander from the road."
14607
14608
14609
14610 Paradiso: Canto IX
14611
14612
14613 Beautiful Clemence, after that thy Charles
14614 Had me enlightened, he narrated to me
14615 The treacheries his seed should undergo;
14616
14617 But said: "Be still and let the years roll round;"
14618 So I can only say, that lamentation
14619 Legitimate shall follow on your wrongs.
14620
14621 And of that holy light the life already
14622 Had to the Sun which fills it turned again,
14623 As to that good which for each thing sufficeth.
14624
14625 Ah, souls deceived, and creatures impious,
14626 Who from such good do turn away your hearts,
14627 Directing upon vanity your foreheads!
14628
14629 And now, behold, another of those splendours
14630 Approached me, and its will to pleasure me
14631 It signified by brightening outwardly.
14632
14633 The eyes of Beatrice, that fastened were
14634 Upon me, as before, of dear assent
14635 To my desire assurance gave to me.
14636
14637 "Ah, bring swift compensation to my wish,
14638 Thou blessed spirit," I said, "and give me proof
14639 That what I think in thee I can reflect!"
14640
14641 Whereat the light, that still was new to me,
14642 Out of its depths, whence it before was singing,
14643 As one delighted to do good, continued:
14644
14645 "Within that region of the land depraved
14646 Of Italy, that lies between Rialto
14647 And fountain-heads of Brenta and of Piava,
14648
14649 Rises a hill, and mounts not very high,

14650 Wherefrom descended formerly a torch
14651 That made upon that region great assault.
14652
14653 Out of one root were born both I and it;
14654 Cunizza was I called, and here I shine
14655 Because the splendour of this star o'ercame me.
14656
14657 But gladly to myself the cause I pardon
14658 Of my allotment, and it does not grieve me;
14659 Which would perhaps seem strong unto your vulgar.
14660
14661 Of this so luculent and precious jewel,
14662 Which of our heaven is nearest unto me,
14663 Great fame remained; and ere it die away
14664
14665 This hundredth year shall yet quintupled be.
14666 See if man ought to make him excellent,
14667 So that another life the first may leave!
14668
14669 And thus thinks not the present multitude
14670 Shut in by Adige and Tagliamento,
14671 Nor yet for being scourged is penitent.
14672
14673 But soon 'twill be that Padua in the marsh
14674 Will change the water that Vicenza bathes,
14675 Because the folk are stubborn against duty;
14676
14677 And where the Sile and Cagnano join
14678 One lordeth it, and goes with lofty head,
14679 For catching whom e'en now the net is making.
14680
14681 Feltro moreover of her impious pastor
14682 Shall weep the crime, which shall so monstrous be
14683 That for the like none ever entered Malta.
14684
14685 Ample exceedingly would be the vat
14686 That of the Ferrarese could hold the blood,
14687 And weary who should weigh it ounce by ounce,
14688
14689 Of which this courteous priest shall make a gift
14690 To show himself a partisan; and such gifts
14691 Will to the living of the land conform.
14692
14693 Above us there are mirrors, Thrones you call them,
14694 From which shines out on us God Judicant,
14695 So that this utterance seems good to us."
14696
14697 Here it was silent, and it had the semblance
14698 Of being turned elsewhither, by the wheel
14699 On which it entered as it was before.
14700
14701 The other joy, already known to me,
14702 Became a thing transplendent in my sight,
14703 As a fine ruby smitten by the sun.
14704
14705 Through joy effulgence is acquired above,
14706 As here a smile; but down below, the shade

14707 Outwardly darkens, as the mind is sad.
 14708
 14709 "God seeth all things, and in Him, blest spirit,
 14710 Thy sight is," said I, "so that never will
 14711 Of his can possibly from thee be hidden;
 14712
 14713 Thy voice, then, that for ever makes the heavens
 14714 Glad, with the singing of those holy fires
 14715 Which of their six wings make themselves a cowl,
 14716
 14717 Wherefore does it not satisfy my longings?
 14718 Indeed, I would not wait thy questioning
 14719 If I in thee were as thou art in me."
 14720
 14721 "The greatest of the valleys where the water
 14722 Expands itself," forthwith its words began,
 14723 "That sea excepted which the earth engarlands,
 14724
 14725 Between discordant shores against the sun
 14726 Extends so far, that it meridian makes
 14727 Where it was wont before to make the horizon.
 14728
 14729 I was a dweller on that valley's shore
 14730 'Twixt Ebro and Magra that with journey short
 14731 Doth from the Tuscan part the Genoese.
 14732
 14733 With the same sunset and same sunrise nearly
 14734 Sit Buggia and the city whence I was,
 14735 That with its blood once made the harbour hot.
 14736
 14737 Folco that people called me unto whom
 14738 My name was known; and now with me this heaven
 14739 Imprints itself, as I did once with it;
 14740
 14741 For more the daughter of Belus never burned,
 14742 Offending both Sichaeus and Creusa,
 14743 Than I, so long as it became my locks,
 14744
 14745 Nor yet that Rodophean, who deluded
 14746 was by Demophoon, nor yet Alcides,
 14747 When Iole he in his heart had locked.
 14748
 14749 Yet here is no repenting, but we smile,
 14750 Not at the fault, which comes not back to mind,
 14751 But at the power which ordered and foresaw.
 14752
 14753 Here we behold the art that doth adorn
 14754 With such affection, and the good discover
 14755 Whereby the world above turns that below.
 14756
 14757 But that thou wholly satisfied mayst bear
 14758 Thy wishes hence which in this sphere are born,
 14759 Still farther to proceed behoveth me.
 14760
 14761 Thou fain wouldst know who is within this light
 14762 That here beside me thus is scintillating,
 14763 Even as a sunbeam in the limpid water.

14764
14765 Then know thou, that within there is at rest
14766 Rahab, and being to our order joined,
14767 With her in its supremest grade 'tis sealed.
14768
14769 Into this heaven, where ends the shadowy cone
14770 Cast by your world, before all other souls
14771 First of Christ's triumph was she taken up.
14772
14773 Full meet it was to leave her in some heaven,
14774 Even as a palm of the high victory
14775 Which he acquired with one palm and the other,
14776
14777 Because she favoured the first glorious deed
14778 Of Joshua upon the Holy Land,
14779 That little stirs the memory of the Pope.
14780
14781 Thy city, which an offshoot is of him
14782 Who first upon his Maker turned his back,
14783 And whose ambition is so sorely wept,
14784
14785 Brings forth and scatters the accursed flower
14786 Which both the sheep and lambs hath led astray
14787 Since it has turned the shepherd to a wolf.
14788
14789 For this the Evangel and the mighty Doctors
14790 Are derelict, and only the Decretals
14791 So studied that it shows upon their margins.
14792
14793 On this are Pope and Cardinals intent;
14794 Their meditations reach not Nazareth,
14795 There where his pinions Gabriel unfolded;
14796
14797 But Vatican and the other parts elect
14798 Of Rome, which have a cemetery been
14799 Unto the soldiery that followed Peter
14800
14801 Shall soon be free from this adultery."
14802
14803
14804
14805 Paradiso: Canto X
14806
14807
14808 Looking into his Son with all the Love
14809 Which each of them eternally breathes forth,
14810 The Primal and unutterable Power
14811
14812 Whate'er before the mind or eye revolves
14813 With so much order made, there can be none
14814 Who this beholds without enjoying Him.
14815
14816 Lift up then, Reader, to the lofty wheels
14817 With me thy vision straight unto that part
14818 Where the one motion on the other strikes,
14819
14820 And there begin to contemplate with joy

14821 That Master's art, who in himself so loves it
14822 That never doth his eye depart therefrom.
14823
14824 Behold how from that point goes branching off
14825 The oblique circle, which conveys the planets,
14826 To satisfy the world that calls upon them;
14827
14828 And if their pathway were not thus inflected,
14829 Much virtue in the heavens would be in vain,
14830 And almost every power below here dead.
14831
14832 If from the straight line distant more or less
14833 Were the departure, much would wanting be
14834 Above and underneath of mundane order.
14835
14836 Remain now, Reader, still upon thy bench,
14837 In thought pursuing that which is foretasted,
14838 If thou wouldst jocund be instead of weary.
14839
14840 I've set before thee; henceforth feed thyself,
14841 For to itself diverteth all my care
14842 That theme whereof I have been made the scribe.
14843
14844 The greatest of the ministers of nature,
14845 Who with the power of heaven the world imprints
14846 And measures with his light the time for us,
14847
14848 With that part which above is called to mind
14849 Conjoined, along the spirals was revolving,
14850 Where each time earlier he presents himself;
14851
14852 And I was with him; but of the ascending
14853 I was not conscious, saving as a man
14854 Of a first thought is conscious ere it come;
14855
14856 And Beatrice, she who is seen to pass
14857 From good to better, and so suddenly
14858 That not by time her action is expressed,
14859
14860 How lucent in herself must she have been!
14861 And what was in the sun, wherein I entered,
14862 Apparent not by colour but by light,
14863
14864 I, though I call on genius, art, and practice,
14865 Cannot so tell that it could be imagined;
14866 Believe one can, and let him long to see it.
14867
14868 And if our fantasies too lowly are
14869 For altitude so great, it is no marvel,
14870 Since o'er the sun was never eye could go.
14871
14872 Such in this place was the fourth family
14873 Of the high Father, who forever sates it,
14874 Showing how he breathes forth and how begets.
14875
14876 And Beatrice began: "Give thanks, give thanks
14877 Unto the Sun of Angels, who to this

14878 Sensible one has raised thee by his grace!"
 14879
 14880 Never was heart of mortal so disposed
 14881 To worship, nor to give itself to God
 14882 With all its gratitude was it so ready,
 14883
 14884 As at those words did I myself become;
 14885 And all my love was so absorbed in Him,
 14886 That in oblivion Beatrice was eclipsed.
 14887
 14888 Nor this displeased her; but she smiled at it
 14889 So that the splendour of her laughing eyes
 14890 My single mind on many things divided.
 14891
 14892 Lights many saw I, vivid and triumphant,
 14893 Make us a centre and themselves a circle,
 14894 More sweet in voice than luminous in aspect.
 14895
 14896 Thus girt about the daughter of Latona
 14897 We sometimes see, when pregnant is the air,
 14898 So that it holds the thread which makes her zone.
 14899
 14900 Within the court of Heaven, whence I return,
 14901 Are many jewels found, so fair and precious
 14902 They cannot be transported from the realm;
 14903
 14904 And of them was the singing of those lights.
 14905 Who takes not wings that he may fly up thither,
 14906 The tidings thence may from the dumb await!
 14907
 14908 As soon as singing thus those burning suns
 14909 Had round about us whirled themselves three times,
 14910 Like unto stars neighbouring the steadfast poles,
 14911
 14912 Ladies they seemed, not from the dance released,
 14913 But who stop short, in silence listening
 14914 Till they have gathered the new melody.
 14915
 14916 And within one I heard beginning: "When
 14917 The radiance of grace, by which is kindled
 14918 True love, and which thereafter grows by loving,
 14919
 14920 Within thee multiplied is so resplendent
 14921 That it conducts thee upward by that stair,
 14922 Where without reascending none descends,
 14923
 14924 Who should deny the wine out of his vial
 14925 Unto thy thirst, in liberty were not
 14926 Except as water which descends not seaward.
 14927
 14928 Fain wouldst thou know with what plants is enflowered
 14929 This garland that encircles with delight
 14930 The Lady fair who makes thee strong for heaven.
 14931
 14932 Of the lambs was I of the holy flock
 14933 Which Dominic conducteth by a road
 14934 Where well one fattens if he strayeth not.

14935
14936 He who is nearest to me on the right
14937 My brother and master was; and he Albertus
14938 Is of Cologne, I Thomas of Aquinum.
14939
14940 If thou of all the others wouldst be certain,
14941 Follow behind my speaking with thy sight
14942 Upward along the blessed garland turning.
14943
14944 That next effulgence issues from the smile
14945 Of Gratian, who assisted both the courts
14946 In such wise that it pleased in Paradise.
14947
14948 The other which near by adorns our choir
14949 That Peter was who, e'en as the poor widow,
14950 Offered his treasure unto Holy Church.
14951
14952 The fifth light, that among us is the fairest,
14953 Breathes forth from such a love, that all the world
14954 Below is greedy to learn tidings of it.
14955
14956 Within it is the lofty mind, where knowledge
14957 So deep was put, that, if the true be true,
14958 To see so much there never rose a second.
14959
14960 Thou seest next the lustre of that taper,
14961 Which in the flesh below looked most within
14962 The angelic nature and its ministry.
14963
14964 Within that other little light is smiling
14965 The advocate of the Christian centuries,
14966 Out of whose rhetoric Augustine was furnished.
14967
14968 Now if thou trainest thy mind's eye along
14969 From light to light pursuant of my praise,
14970 With thirst already of the eighth thou waitest.
14971
14972 By seeing every good therein exults
14973 The sainted soul, which the fallacious world
14974 Makes manifest to him who listeneth well;
14975
14976 The body whence 'twas hunted forth is lying
14977 Down in Cieldauro, and from martyrdom
14978 And banishment it came unto this peace.
14979
14980 See farther onward flame the burning breath
14981 Of Isidore, of Beda, and of Richard
14982 Who was in contemplation more than man.
14983
14984 This, whence to me returneth thy regard,
14985 The light is of a spirit unto whom
14986 In his grave meditations death seemed slow.
14987
14988 It is the light eternal of Sigier,
14989 Who, reading lectures in the Street of Straw,
14990 Did syllogize invidious verities."
14991

14992 Then, as a horologe that calleth us
 14993 What time the Bride of God is rising up
 14994 With matins to her Spouse that he may love her,
 14995
 14996 Wherein one part the other draws and urges,
 14997 Ting! ting! resounding with so sweet a note,
 14998 That swells with love the spirit well disposed,
 14999
 15000 Thus I beheld the glorious wheel move round,
 15001 And render voice to voice, in modulation
 15002 And sweetness that can not be comprehended,
 15003
 15004 Excepting there where joy is made eternal.
 15005
 15006
 15007
 15008 Paradiso: Canto XI
 15009
 15010
 15011 O Thou insensate care of mortal men,
 15012 How inconclusive are the syllogisms
 15013 That make thee beat thy wings in downward flight!
 15014
 15015 One after laws and one to aphorisms
 15016 Was going, and one following the priesthood,
 15017 And one to reign by force or sophistry,
 15018
 15019 And one in theft, and one in state affairs,
 15020 One in the pleasures of the flesh involved
 15021 Wearied himself, one gave himself to ease;
 15022
 15023 When I, from all these things emancipate,
 15024 With Beatrice above there in the Heavens
 15025 With such exceeding glory was received!
 15026
 15027 When each one had returned unto that point
 15028 Within the circle where it was before,
 15029 It stood as in a candlestick a candle;
 15030
 15031 And from within the effulgence which at first
 15032 Had spoken unto me, I heard begin
 15033 Smiling while it more luminous became:
 15034
 15035 "Even as I am kindled in its ray,
 15036 So, looking into the Eternal Light,
 15037 The occasion of thy thoughts I apprehend.
 15038
 15039 Thou doubtst, and wouldst have me to resift
 15040 In language so extended and so open
 15041 My speech, that to thy sense it may be plain,
 15042
 15043 Where just before I said, 'where well one fattens,'
 15044 And where I said, 'there never rose a second;'
 15045 And here 'tis needful we distinguish well.
 15046
 15047 The Providence, which governeth the world
 15048 With counsel, wherein all created vision

15049 Is vanquished ere it reach unto the bottom,
15050
15051 (So that towards her own Beloved might go
15052 The bride of Him who, uttering a loud cry,
15053 Espoused her with his consecrated blood,
15054
15055 Self-confident and unto Him more faithful,)
15056 Two Princes did ordain in her behoof,
15057 Which on this side and that might be her guide.
15058
15059 The one was all seraphical in ardour;
15060 The other by his wisdom upon earth
15061 A splendour was of light cherubical.
15062
15063 One will I speak of, for of both is spoken
15064 In praising one, whichever may be taken,
15065 Because unto one end their labours were.
15066
15067 Between Tupino and the stream that falls
15068 Down from the hill elect of blessed Ubald,
15069 A fertile slope of lofty mountain hangs,
15070
15071 From which Perugia feels the cold and heat
15072 Through Porta Sole, and behind it weep
15073 Gualdo and Nocera their grievous yoke.
15074
15075 From out that slope, there where it breaketh most
15076 Its steepness, rose upon the world a sun
15077 As this one does sometimes from out the Ganges;
15078
15079 Therefore let him who speaketh of that place,
15080 Say not Ascesi, for he would say little,
15081 But Orient, if he properly would speak.
15082
15083 He was not yet far distant from his rising
15084 Before he had begun to make the earth
15085 Some comfort from his mighty virtue feel.
15086
15087 For he in youth his father's wrath incurred
15088 For certain Dame, to whom, as unto death,
15089 The gate of pleasure no one doth unlock;
15090
15091 And was before his spiritual court
15092 'Et coram patre' unto her united;
15093 Then day by day more fervently he loved her.
15094
15095 She, reft of her first husband, scorned, obscure,
15096 One thousand and one hundred years and more,
15097 Waited without a suitor till he came.
15098
15099 Naught it availed to hear, that with Amyclas
15100 Found her unmoved at sounding of his voice
15101 He who struck terror into all the world;
15102
15103 Naught it availed being constant and undaunted,
15104 So that, when Mary still remained below,
15105 She mounted up with Christ upon the cross.

15106
15107 But that too darkly I may not proceed,
15108 Francis and Poverty for these two lovers
15109 Take thou henceforward in my speech diffuse.
15110
15111 Their concord and their joyous semblances,
15112 The love, the wonder, and the sweet regard,
15113 They made to be the cause of holy thoughts;
15114
15115 So much so that the venerable Bernard
15116 First bared his feet, and after so great peace
15117 Ran, and, in running, thought himself too slow.
15118
15119 O wealth unknown! O veritable good!
15120 Giles bares his feet, and bares his feet Sylvester
15121 Behind the bridegroom, so doth please the bride!
15122
15123 Then goes his way that father and that master,
15124 He and his Lady and that family
15125 Which now was girding on the humble cord;
15126
15127 Nor cowardice of heart weighed down his brow
15128 At being son of Peter Bernardone,
15129 Nor for appearing marvellously scorned;
15130
15131 But regally his hard determination
15132 To Innocent he opened, and from him
15133 Received the primal seal upon his Order.
15134
15135 After the people mendicant increased
15136 Behind this man, whose admirable life
15137 Better in glory of the heavens were sung,
15138
15139 Incoronated with a second crown
15140 Was through Honorius by the Eternal Spirit
15141 The holy purpose of this Archimandrite.
15142
15143 And when he had, through thirst of martyrdom,
15144 In the proud presence of the Sultan preached
15145 Christ and the others who came after him,
15146
15147 And, finding for conversion too unripe
15148 The folk, and not to tarry there in vain,
15149 Returned to fruit of the Italic grass,
15150
15151 On the rude rock 'twixt Tiber and the Arno
15152 From Christ did he receive the final seal,
15153 Which during two whole years his members bore.
15154
15155 When He, who chose him unto so much good,
15156 Was pleased to draw him up to the reward
15157 That he had merited by being lowly,
15158
15159 Unto his friars, as to the rightful heirs,
15160 His most dear Lady did he recommend,
15161 And bade that they should love her faithfully;
15162

15163 And from her bosom the illustrious soul
 15164 Wished to depart, returning to its realm,
 15165 And for its body wished no other bier.
 15166
 15167 Think now what man was he, who was a fit
 15168 Companion over the high seas to keep
 15169 The bark of Peter to its proper bearings.
 15170
 15171 And this man was our Patriarch; hence whoever
 15172 Doth follow him as he commands can see
 15173 That he is laden with good merchandise.
 15174
 15175 But for new pasturage his flock has grown
 15176 So greedy, that it is impossible
 15177 They be not scattered over fields diverse;
 15178
 15179 And in proportion as his sheep remote
 15180 And vagabond go farther off from him,
 15181 More void of milk return they to the fold.
 15182
 15183 Verily some there are that fear a hurt,
 15184 And keep close to the shepherd; but so few,
 15185 That little cloth doth furnish forth their hoods.
 15186
 15187 Now if my utterance be not indistinct,
 15188 If thine own hearing hath attentive been,
 15189 If thou recall to mind what I have said,
 15190
 15191 In part contented shall thy wishes be;
 15192 For thou shalt see the plant that's chipped away,
 15193 And the rebuke that lieth in the words,
 15194
 15195 'Where well one fattens, if he strayeth not.'"

15196
 15197
 15198
 15199 Paradiso: Canto XII
 15200
 15201
 15202 Soon as the blessed flame had taken up
 15203 The final word to give it utterance,
 15204 Began the holy millstone to revolve,
 15205
 15206 And in its gyre had not turned wholly round,
 15207 Before another in a ring enclosed it,
 15208 And motion joined to motion, song to song;
 15209
 15210 Song that as greatly doth transcend our Muses,
 15211 Our Sirens, in those dulcet clarions,
 15212 As primal splendour that which is reflected.
 15213
 15214 And as are spanned athwart a tender cloud
 15215 Two rainbows parallel and like in colour,
 15216 When Juno to her handmaid gives command,
 15217
 15218 (The one without born of the one within,
 15219 Like to the speaking of that vagrant one

15220 Whom love consumed as doth the sun the vapours,)
15221
15222 And make the people here, through covenant
15223 God set with Noah, presageful of the world
15224 That shall no more be covered with a flood,
15225
15226 In such wise of those sempiternal roses
15227 The garlands twain encompassed us about,
15228 And thus the outer to the inner answered.
15229
15230 After the dance, and other grand rejoicings,
15231 Both of the singing, and the flaming forth
15232 Effulgence with effulgence blithe and tender,
15233
15234 Together, at once, with one accord had stopped,
15235 (Even as the eyes, that, as volition moves them,
15236 Must needs together shut and lift themselves,)
15237
15238 Out of the heart of one of the new lights
15239 There came a voice, that needle to the star
15240 Made me appear in turning thitherward.
15241
15242 And it began: "The love that makes me fair
15243 Draws me to speak about the other leader,
15244 By whom so well is spoken here of mine.
15245
15246 'Tis right, where one is, to bring in the other,
15247 That, as they were united in their warfare,
15248 Together likewise may their glory shine.
15249
15250 The soldiery of Christ, which it had cost
15251 So dear to arm again, behind the standard
15252 Moved slow and doubtful and in numbers few,
15253
15254 When the Emperor who reigneth evermore
15255 Provided for the host that was in peril,
15256 Through grace alone and not that it was worthy;
15257
15258 And, as was said, he to his Bride brought succour
15259 With champions twain, at whose deed, at whose word
15260 The straggling people were together drawn.
15261
15262 Within that region where the sweet west wind
15263 Rises to open the new leaves, wherewith
15264 Europe is seen to clothe herself afresh,
15265
15266 Not far off from the beating of the waves,
15267 Behind which in his long career the sun
15268 Sometimes conceals himself from every man,
15269
15270 Is situate the fortunate Calahorra,
15271 Under protection of the mighty shield
15272 In which the Lion subject is and sovereign.
15273
15274 Therein was born the amorous paramour
15275 Of Christian Faith, the athlete consecrate,
15276 Kind to his own and cruel to his foes;

15277
15278 And when it was created was his mind
15279 Replete with such a living energy,
15280 That in his mother her it made prophetic.
15281
15282 As soon as the espousals were complete
15283 Between him and the Faith at holy font,
15284 Where they with mutual safety dowered each other,
15285
15286 The woman, who for him had given assent,
15287 Saw in a dream the admirable fruit
15288 That issue would from him and from his heirs;
15289
15290 And that he might be construed as he was,
15291 A spirit from this place went forth to name him
15292 With His possessive whose he wholly was.
15293
15294 Dominic was he called; and him I speak of
15295 Even as of the husbandman whom Christ
15296 Elected to his garden to assist him.
15297
15298 Envoy and servant sooth he seemed of Christ,
15299 For the first love made manifest in him
15300 Was the first counsel that was given by Christ.
15301
15302 Silent and wakeful many a time was he
15303 Discovered by his nurse upon the ground,
15304 As if he would have said, 'For this I came.'
15305
15306 O thou his father, Felix verily!
15307 O thou his mother, verily Joanna,
15308 If this, interpreted, means as is said!
15309
15310 Not for the world which people toil for now
15311 In following Ostiense and Taddeo,
15312 But through his longing after the true manna,
15313
15314 He in short time became so great a teacher,
15315 That he began to go about the vineyard,
15316 Which fadeth soon, if faithless be the dresser;
15317
15318 And of the See, (that once was more benignant
15319 Unto the righteous poor, not through itself,
15320 But him who sits there and degenerates,)
15321
15322 Not to dispense or two or three for six,
15323 Not any fortune of first vacancy,
15324 'Non decimas quae sunt pauperum Dei,'
15325
15326 He asked for, but against the errant world
15327 Permission to do battle for the seed,
15328 Of which these four and twenty plants surround thee.
15329
15330 Then with the doctrine and the will together,
15331 With office apostolical he moved,
15332 Like torrent which some lofty vein out-presses;
15333

15334 And in among the shoots heretical
 15335 His impetus with greater fury smote,
 15336 Wherever the resistance was the greatest.
 15337
 15338 Of him were made thereafter divers runnels,
 15339 Whereby the garden catholic is watered,
 15340 So that more living its plantations stand.
 15341
 15342 If such the one wheel of the Biga was,
 15343 In which the Holy Church itself defended
 15344 And in the field its civic battle won,
 15345
 15346 Truly full manifest should be to thee
 15347 The excellence of the other, unto whom
 15348 Thomas so courteous was before my coming.
 15349
 15350 But still the orbit, which the highest part
 15351 Of its circumference made, is derelict,
 15352 So that the mould is where was once the crust.
 15353
 15354 His family, that had straight forward moved
 15355 With feet upon his footprints, are turned round
 15356 So that they set the point upon the heel.
 15357
 15358 And soon aware they will be of the harvest
 15359 Of this bad husbandry, when shall the tares
 15360 Complain the granary is taken from them.
 15361
 15362 Yet say I, he who searcheth leaf by leaf
 15363 Our volume through, would still some page discover
 15364 Where he could read, 'I am as I am wont.'
 15365
 15366 'Twill not be from Casal nor Acquasparta,
 15367 From whence come such unto the written word
 15368 That one avoids it, and the other narrows.
 15369
 15370 Bonaventura of Bagnoregio's life
 15371 Am I, who always in great offices
 15372 Postponed considerations sinister.
 15373
 15374 Here are Illuminato and Agostino,
 15375 Who of the first barefooted beggars were
 15376 That with the cord the friends of God became.
 15377
 15378 Hugh of Saint Victor is among them here,
 15379 And Peter Mangiador, and Peter of Spain,
 15380 Who down below in volumes twelve is shining;
 15381
 15382 Nathan the seer, and metropolitan
 15383 Chrysostom, and Anselmus, and Donatus
 15384 Who deigned to lay his hand to the first art;
 15385
 15386 Here is Rabanus, and beside me here
 15387 Shines the Calabrian Abbot Joachim,
 15388 He with the spirit of prophecy endowed.
 15389
 15390 To celebrate so great a paladin

15391 Have moved me the impassioned courtesy
 15392 And the discreet discourses of Friar Thomas,
 15393
 15394 And with me they have moved this company."
 15395
 15396
 15397
 15398 Paradiso: Canto XIII
 15399
 15400
 15401 Let him imagine, who would well conceive
 15402 What now I saw, and let him while I speak
 15403 Retain the image as a steadfast rock,
 15404
 15405 The fifteen stars, that in their divers regions
 15406 The sky enliven with a light so great
 15407 That it transcends all clusters of the air;
 15408
 15409 Let him the Wain imagine unto which
 15410 Our vault of heaven sufficeth night and day,
 15411 So that in turning of its pole it fails not;
 15412
 15413 Let him the mouth imagine of the horn
 15414 That in the point beginneth of the axis
 15415 Round about which the primal wheel revolves,--
 15416
 15417 To have fashioned of themselves two signs in heaven,
 15418 Like unto that which Minos' daughter made,
 15419 The moment when she felt the frost of death;
 15420
 15421 And one to have its rays within the other,
 15422 And both to whirl themselves in such a manner
 15423 That one should forward go, the other backward;
 15424
 15425 And he will have some shadowing forth of that
 15426 True constellation and the double dance
 15427 That circled round the point at which I was;
 15428
 15429 Because it is as much beyond our wont,
 15430 As swifter than the motion of the Chiana
 15431 Moveth the heaven that all the rest outspeeds.
 15432
 15433 There sang they neither Bacchus, nor Apollo,
 15434 But in the divine nature Persons three,
 15435 And in one person the divine and human.
 15436
 15437 The singing and the dance fulfilled their measure,
 15438 And unto us those holy lights gave need,
 15439 Growing in happiness from care to care.
 15440
 15441 Then broke the silence of those saints concordant
 15442 The light in which the admirable life
 15443 Of God's own mendicant was told to me,
 15444
 15445 And said: "Now that one straw is trodden out
 15446 Now that its seed is garnered up already,
 15447 Sweet love invites me to thresh out the other.

15448
15449 Into that bosom, thou believest, whence
15450 Was drawn the rib to form the beauteous cheek
15451 Whose taste to all the world is costing dear,
15452
15453 And into that which, by the lance transfixed,
15454 Before and since, such satisfaction made
15455 That it weighs down the balance of all sin,
15456
15457 Whate'er of light it has to human nature
15458 Been lawful to possess was all infused
15459 By the same power that both of them created;
15460
15461 And hence at what I said above dost wonder,
15462 When I narrated that no second had
15463 The good which in the fifth light is enclosed.
15464
15465 Now ope thine eyes to what I answer thee,
15466 And thou shalt see thy creed and my discourse
15467 Fit in the truth as centre in a circle.
15468
15469 That which can die, and that which dieth not,
15470 Are nothing but the splendour of the idea
15471 Which by his love our Lord brings into being;
15472
15473 Because that living Light, which from its fount
15474 Effulgent flows, so that it disunites not
15475 From Him nor from the Love in them intrined,
15476
15477 Through its own goodness reunites its rays
15478 In nine subsistences, as in a mirror,
15479 Itself eternally remaining One.
15480
15481 Thence it descends to the last potencies,
15482 Downward from act to act becoming such
15483 That only brief contingencies it makes;
15484
15485 And these contingencies I hold to be
15486 Things generated, which the heaven produces
15487 By its own motion, with seed and without.
15488
15489 Neither their wax, nor that which tempers it,
15490 Remains immutable, and hence beneath
15491 The ideal signet more and less shines through;
15492
15493 Therefore it happens, that the selfsame tree
15494 After its kind bears worse and better fruit,
15495 And ye are born with characters diverse.
15496
15497 If in perfection tempered were the wax,
15498 And were the heaven in its supremest virtue,
15499 The brilliance of the seal would all appear;
15500
15501 But nature gives it evermore deficient,
15502 In the like manner working as the artist,
15503 Who has the skill of art and hand that trembles.
15504

15505 If then the fervent Love, the Vision clear,
15506 Of primal Virtue do dispose and seal,
15507 Perfection absolute is there acquired.
15508
15509 Thus was of old the earth created worthy
15510 Of all and every animal perfection;
15511 And thus the Virgin was impregnate made;
15512
15513 So that thine own opinion I commend,
15514 That human nature never yet has been,
15515 Nor will be, what it was in those two persons.
15516
15517 Now if no farther forth I should proceed,
15518 'Then in what way was he without a peer?'
15519 Would be the first beginning of thy words.
15520
15521 But, that may well appear what now appears not,
15522 Think who he was, and what occasion moved him
15523 To make request, when it was told him, 'Ask.'
15524
15525 I've not so spoken that thou canst not see
15526 Clearly he was a king who asked for wisdom,
15527 That he might be sufficiently a king;
15528
15529 'Twas not to know the number in which are
15530 The motors here above, or if 'necesse'
15531 With a contingent e'er 'necesse' make,
15532
15533 'Non si est dare primum motum esse,'
15534 Or if in semicircle can be made
15535 Triangle so that it have no right angle.
15536
15537 Whence, if thou notest this and what I said,
15538 A regal prudence is that peerless seeing
15539 In which the shaft of my intention strikes.
15540
15541 And if on 'rose' thou turnest thy clear eyes,
15542 Thou'lt see that it has reference alone
15543 To kings who're many, and the good are rare.
15544
15545 With this distinction take thou what I said,
15546 And thus it can consist with thy belief
15547 Of the first father and of our Delight.
15548
15549 And lead shall this be always to thy feet,
15550 To make thee, like a weary man, move slowly
15551 Both to the Yes and No thou seest not;
15552
15553 For very low among the fools is he
15554 Who affirms without distinction, or denies,
15555 As well in one as in the other case;
15556
15557 Because it happens that full often bends
15558 Current opinion in the false direction,
15559 And then the feelings bind the intellect.
15560
15561 Far more than uselessly he leaves the shore,

15562 (Since he returneth not the same he went,)
 15563 Who fishes for the truth, and has no skill;
 15564
 15565 And in the world proofs manifest thereof
 15566 Parmenides, Melissus, Brissus are,
 15567 And many who went on and knew not whither;
 15568
 15569 Thus did Sabellius, Arius, and those fools
 15570 Who have been even as swords unto the Scriptures
 15571 In rendering distorted their straight faces.
 15572
 15573 Nor yet shall people be too confident
 15574 In judging, even as he is who doth count
 15575 The corn in field or ever it be ripe.
 15576
 15577 For I have seen all winter long the thorn
 15578 First show itself intractable and fierce,
 15579 And after bear the rose upon its top;
 15580
 15581 And I have seen a ship direct and swift
 15582 Run o'er the sea throughout its course entire,
 15583 To perish at the harbour's mouth at last.
 15584
 15585 Let not Dame Bertha nor Ser Martin think,
 15586 Seeing one steal, another offering make,
 15587 To see them in the arbitrament divine;
 15588
 15589 For one may rise, and fall the other may."
 15590
 15591
 15592
 15593 Paradiso: Canto XIV
 15594
 15595
 15596 From centre unto rim, from rim to centre,
 15597 In a round vase the water moves itself,
 15598 As from without 'tis struck or from within.
 15599
 15600 Into my mind upon a sudden dropped
 15601 What I am saying, at the moment when
 15602 Silent became the glorious life of Thomas,
 15603
 15604 Because of the resemblance that was born
 15605 Of his discourse and that of Beatrice,
 15606 Whom, after him, it pleased thus to begin:
 15607
 15608 "This man has need (and does not tell you so,
 15609 Nor with the voice, nor even in his thought)
 15610 Of going to the root of one truth more.
 15611
 15612 Declare unto him if the light wherewith
 15613 Blossoms your substance shall remain with you
 15614 Eternally the same that it is now;
 15615
 15616 And if it do remain, say in what manner,
 15617 After ye are again made visible,
 15618 It can be that it injure not your sight."

15619
15620 As by a greater gladness urged and drawn
15621 They who are dancing in a ring sometimes
15622 Uplift their voices and their motions quicken;
15623
15624 So, at that orison devout and prompt,
15625 The holy circles a new joy displayed
15626 In their revolving and their wondrous song.
15627
15628 Whoso lamenteth him that here we die
15629 That we may live above, has never there
15630 Seen the refreshment of the eternal rain.
15631
15632 The One and Two and Three who ever liveth,
15633 And reigneth ever in Three and Two and One,
15634 Not circumscribed and all things circumscribing,
15635
15636 Three several times was chanted by each one
15637 Among those spirits, with such melody
15638 That for all merit it were just reward;
15639
15640 And, in the lustre most divine of all
15641 The lesser ring, I heard a modest voice,
15642 Such as perhaps the Angel's was to Mary,
15643
15644 Answer: "As long as the festivity
15645 Of Paradise shall be, so long our love
15646 Shall radiate round about us such a vesture.
15647
15648 Its brightness is proportioned to the ardour,
15649 The ardour to the vision; and the vision
15650 Equals what grace it has above its worth.
15651
15652 When, glorious and sanctified, our flesh
15653 Is reassumed, then shall our persons be
15654 More pleasing by their being all complete;
15655
15656 For will increase whate'er bestows on us
15657 Of light gratuitous the Good Supreme,
15658 Light which enables us to look on Him;
15659
15660 Therefore the vision must perforce increase,
15661 Increase the ardour which from that is kindled,
15662 Increase the radiance which from this proceeds.
15663
15664 But even as a coal that sends forth flame,
15665 And by its vivid whiteness overpowers it
15666 So that its own appearance it maintains,
15667
15668 Thus the effulgence that surrounds us now
15669 Shall be o'erpowered in aspect by the flesh,
15670 Which still to-day the earth doth cover up;
15671
15672 Nor can so great a splendour weary us,
15673 For strong will be the organs of the body
15674 To everything which hath the power to please us."
15675

15676 So sudden and alert appeared to me
15677 Both one and the other choir to say Amen,
15678 That well they showed desire for their dead bodies;
15679
15680 Nor sole for them perhaps, but for the mothers,
15681 The fathers, and the rest who had been dear
15682 Or ever they became eternal flames.
15683
15684 And lo! all round about of equal brightness
15685 Arose a lustre over what was there,
15686 Like an horizon that is clearing up.
15687
15688 And as at rise of early eve begin
15689 Along the welkin new appearances,
15690 So that the sight seems real and unreal,
15691
15692 It seemed to me that new subsistences
15693 Began there to be seen, and make a circle
15694 Outside the other two circumferences.
15695
15696 O very sparkling of the Holy Spirit,
15697 How sudden and incandescent it became
15698 Unto mine eyes, that vanquished bore it not!
15699
15700 But Beatrice so beautiful and smiling
15701 Appeared to me, that with the other sights
15702 That followed not my memory I must leave her.
15703
15704 Then to uplift themselves mine eyes resumed
15705 The power, and I beheld myself translated
15706 To higher salvation with my Lady only.
15707
15708 Well was I ware that I was more uplifted
15709 By the enkindled smiling of the star,
15710 That seemed to me more ruddy than its wont.
15711
15712 With all my heart, and in that dialect
15713 Which is the same in all, such holocaust
15714 To God I made as the new grace beseemed;
15715
15716 And not yet from my bosom was exhausted
15717 The ardour of sacrifice, before I knew
15718 This offering was accepted and auspicious;
15719
15720 For with so great a lustre and so red
15721 Splendours appeared to me in twofold rays,
15722 I said: "O Helios who dost so adorn them!"
15723
15724 Even as distinct with less and greater lights
15725 Glimmers between the two poles of the world
15726 The Galaxy that maketh wise men doubt,
15727
15728 Thus constellated in the depths of Mars,
15729 Those rays described the venerable sign
15730 That quadrants joining in a circle make.
15731
15732 Here doth my memory overcome my genius;

15733 For on that cross as levin gleamed forth Christ,
 15734 So that I cannot find ensample worthy;
 15735
 15736 But he who takes his cross and follows Christ
 15737 Again will pardon me what I omit,
 15738 Seeing in that aurora lighten Christ.
 15739
 15740 From horn to horn, and 'twixt the top and base,
 15741 Lights were in motion, brightly scintillating
 15742 As they together met and passed each other;
 15743
 15744 Thus level and aslant and swift and slow
 15745 We here behold, renewing still the sight,
 15746 The particles of bodies long and short,
 15747
 15748 Across the sunbeam move, wherewith is listed
 15749 Sometimes the shade, which for their own defence
 15750 People with cunning and with art contrive.
 15751
 15752 And as a lute and harp, accordant strung
 15753 With many strings, a dulcet tinkling make
 15754 To him by whom the notes are not distinguished,
 15755
 15756 So from the lights that there to me appeared
 15757 Upgathered through the cross a melody,
 15758 Which rapt me, not distinguishing the hymn.
 15759
 15760 Well was I ware it was of lofty laud,
 15761 Because there came to me, "Arise and conquer!"
 15762 As unto him who hears and comprehends not.
 15763
 15764 So much enamoured I became therewith,
 15765 That until then there was not anything
 15766 That e'er had fettered me with such sweet bonds.
 15767
 15768 Perhaps my word appears somewhat too bold,
 15769 Postponing the delight of those fair eyes,
 15770 Into which gazing my desire has rest;
 15771
 15772 But who bethinks him that the living seals
 15773 Of every beauty grow in power ascending,
 15774 And that I there had not turned round to those,
 15775
 15776 Can me excuse, if I myself accuse
 15777 To excuse myself, and see that I speak truly:
 15778 For here the holy joy is not disclosed,
 15779
 15780 Because ascending it becomes more pure.
 15781
 15782
 15783
 15784 Paradiso: Canto XV
 15785
 15786
 15787 A will benign, in which reveals itself
 15788 Ever the love that righteously inspires,
 15789 As in the iniquitous, cupidity,

15790
15791 Silence imposed upon that dulcet lyre,
15792 And quieted the consecrated chords,
15793 That Heaven's right hand doth tighten and relax.
15794
15795 How unto just entreaties shall be deaf
15796 Those substances, which, to give me desire
15797 Of praying them, with one accord grew silent?
15798
15799 'Tis well that without end he should lament,
15800 Who for the love of thing that doth not last
15801 Eternally despoils him of that love!
15802
15803 As through the pure and tranquil evening air
15804 There shoots from time to time a sudden fire,
15805 Moving the eyes that steadfast were before,
15806
15807 And seems to be a star that changeth place,
15808 Except that in the part where it is kindled
15809 Nothing is missed, and this endureth little;
15810
15811 So from the horn that to the right extends
15812 Unto that cross's foot there ran a star
15813 Out of the constellation shining there;
15814
15815 Nor was the gem dissevered from its ribbon,
15816 But down the radiant fillet ran along,
15817 So that fire seemed it behind alabaster.
15818
15819 Thus piteous did Anchises' shade reach forward,
15820 If any faith our greatest Muse deserve,
15821 When in Elysium he his son perceived.
15822
15823 "O sanguis meus, O superinfusa
15824 Gratia Dei, sicut tibi, cui
15825 Bis unquam Coeli janua reclusa?"
15826
15827 Thus that effulgence; whence I gave it heed;
15828 Then round unto my Lady turned my sight,
15829 And on this side and that was stupefied;
15830
15831 For in her eyes was burning such a smile
15832 That with mine own methought I touched the bottom
15833 Both of my grace and of my Paradise!
15834
15835 Then, pleasant to the hearing and the sight,
15836 The spirit joined to its beginning things
15837 I understood not, so profound it spake;
15838
15839 Nor did it hide itself from me by choice,
15840 But by necessity; for its conception
15841 Above the mark of mortals set itself.
15842
15843 And when the bow of burning sympathy
15844 Was so far slackened, that its speech descended
15845 Towards the mark of our intelligence,
15846

15847 The first thing that was understood by me
15848 Was "Benedight be Thou, O Trine and One,
15849 Who hast unto my seed so courteous been!"
15850
15851 And it continued: "Hunger long and grateful,
15852 Drawn from the reading of the mighty volume
15853 Wherein is never changed the white nor dark,
15854
15855 Thou hast appeased, my son, within this light
15856 In which I speak to thee, by grace of her
15857 Who to this lofty flight with plumage clothed thee.
15858
15859 Thou thinkest that to me thy thought doth pass
15860 From Him who is the first, as from the unit,
15861 If that be known, ray out the five and six;
15862
15863 And therefore who I am thou askest not,
15864 And why I seem more joyous unto thee
15865 Than any other of this gladsome crowd.
15866
15867 Thou think'st the truth; because the small and great
15868 Of this existence look into the mirror
15869 Wherein, before thou think'st, thy thought thou showest.
15870
15871 But that the sacred love, in which I watch
15872 With sight perpetual, and which makes me thirst
15873 With sweet desire, may better be fulfilled,
15874
15875 Now let thy voice secure and frank and glad
15876 Proclaim the wishes, the desire proclaim,
15877 To which my answer is decreed already."
15878
15879 To Beatrice I turned me, and she heard
15880 Before I spake, and smiled to me a sign,
15881 That made the wings of my desire increase;
15882
15883 Then in this wise began I: "Love and knowledge,
15884 When on you dawned the first Equality,
15885 Of the same weight for each of you became;
15886
15887 For in the Sun, which lighted you and burned
15888 With heat and radiance, they so equal are,
15889 That all similitudes are insufficient.
15890
15891 But among mortals will and argument,
15892 For reason that to you is manifest,
15893 Diversely feathered in their pinions are.
15894
15895 Whence I, who mortal am, feel in myself
15896 This inequality; so give not thanks,
15897 Save in my heart, for this paternal welcome.
15898
15899 Truly do I entreat thee, living topaz!
15900 Set in this precious jewel as a gem,
15901 That thou wilt satisfy me with thy name."
15902
15903 "O leaf of mine, in whom I pleasure took

15904 E'en while awaiting, I was thine own root!"
 15905 Such a beginning he in answer made me.
 15906
 15907 Then said to me: "That one from whom is named
 15908 Thy race, and who a hundred years and more
 15909 Has circled round the mount on the first cornice,
 15910
 15911 A son of mine and thy great-grandsire was;
 15912 Well it behoves thee that the long fatigue
 15913 Thou shouldst for him make shorter with thy works.
 15914
 15915 Florence, within the ancient boundary
 15916 From which she taketh still her tierce and nones,
 15917 Abode in quiet, temperate and chaste.
 15918
 15919 No golden chain she had, nor coronal,
 15920 Nor ladies shod with sandal shoon, nor girdle
 15921 That caught the eye more than the person did.
 15922
 15923 Not yet the daughter at her birth struck fear
 15924 Into the father, for the time and dower
 15925 Did not o'errun this side or that the measure.
 15926
 15927 No houses had she void of families,
 15928 Not yet had thither come Sardanapalus
 15929 To show what in a chamber can be done;
 15930
 15931 Not yet surpassed had Montemalo been
 15932 By your Uccellatojo, which surpassed
 15933 Shall in its downfall be as in its rise.
 15934
 15935 Bellincion Berti saw I go begirt
 15936 With leather and with bone, and from the mirror
 15937 His dame depart without a painted face;
 15938
 15939 And him of Nerli saw, and him of Vecchio,
 15940 Contented with their simple suits of buff
 15941 And with the spindle and the flax their dames.
 15942
 15943 O fortunate women! and each one was certain
 15944 Of her own burial-place, and none as yet
 15945 For sake of France was in her bed deserted.
 15946
 15947 One o'er the cradle kept her studious watch,
 15948 And in her lullaby the language used
 15949 That first delights the fathers and the mothers;
 15950
 15951 Another, drawing tresses from her distaff,
 15952 Told o'er among her family the tales
 15953 Of Trojans and of Fesole and Rome.
 15954
 15955 As great a marvel then would have been held
 15956 A Lapo Salterello, a Cianghella,
 15957 As Cincinnatus or Cornelia now.
 15958
 15959 To such a quiet, such a beautiful
 15960 Life of the citizen, to such a safe

15961 Community, and to so sweet an inn,
 15962
 15963 Did Mary give me, with loud cries invoked,
 15964 And in your ancient Baptistery at once
 15965 Christian and Cacciaguida I became.
 15966
 15967 Moronto was my brother, and Eliseo;
 15968 From Val di Pado came to me my wife,
 15969 And from that place thy surname was derived.
 15970
 15971 I followed afterward the Emperor Conrad,
 15972 And he begirt me of his chivalry,
 15973 So much I pleased him with my noble deeds.
 15974
 15975 I followed in his train against that law's
 15976 Iniquity, whose people doth usurp
 15977 Your just possession, through your Pastor's fault.
 15978
 15979 There by that execrable race was I
 15980 Released from bonds of the fallacious world,
 15981 The love of which defileth many souls,
 15982
 15983 And came from martyrdom unto this peace."
 15984
 15985
 15986
 15987 Paradiso: Canto XVI
 15988
 15989
 15990 O thou our poor nobility of blood,
 15991 If thou dost make the people glory in thee
 15992 Down here where our affection languishes,
 15993
 15994 A marvellous thing it ne'er will be to me;
 15995 For there where appetite is not perverted,
 15996 I say in Heaven, of thee I made a boast!
 15997
 15998 Truly thou art a cloak that quickly shortens,
 15999 So that unless we piece thee day by day
 16000 Time goeth round about thee with his shears!
 16001
 16002 With 'You,' which Rome was first to tolerate,
 16003 (Wherein her family less perseveres,)
 16004 Yet once again my words beginning made;
 16005
 16006 Whence Beatrice, who stood somewhat apart,
 16007 Smiling, appeared like unto her who coughed
 16008 At the first failing writ of Guenever.
 16009
 16010 And I began: "You are my ancestor,
 16011 You give to me all hardihood to speak,
 16012 You lift me so that I am more than I.
 16013
 16014 So many rivulets with gladness fill
 16015 My mind, that of itself it makes a joy
 16016 Because it can endure this and not burst.
 16017

16018 Then tell me, my beloved root ancestral,
16019 Who were your ancestors, and what the years
16020 That in your boyhood chronicled themselves?
16021
16022 Tell me about the sheepfold of Saint John,
16023 How large it was, and who the people were
16024 Within it worthy of the highest seats."
16025
16026 As at the blowing of the winds a coal
16027 Quickens to flame, so I beheld that light
16028 Become resplendent at my blandishments.
16029
16030 And as unto mine eyes it grew more fair,
16031 With voice more sweet and tender, but not in
16032 This modern dialect, it said to me:
16033
16034 "From uttering of the 'Ave,' till the birth
16035 In which my mother, who is now a saint,
16036 Of me was lightened who had been her burden,
16037
16038 Unto its Lion had this fire returned
16039 Five hundred fifty times and thirty more,
16040 To rekindle itself beneath his paw.
16041
16042 My ancestors and I our birthplace had
16043 Where first is found the last ward of the city
16044 By him who runneth in your annual game.
16045
16046 Suffice it of my elders to hear this;
16047 But who they were, and whence they thither came,
16048 Silence is more considerate than speech.
16049
16050 All those who at that time were there between
16051 Mars and the Baptist, fit for bearing arms,
16052 Were a fifth part of those who now are living;
16053
16054 But the community, that now is mixed
16055 With Campi and Certaldo and Figghine,
16056 Pure in the lowest artisan was seen.
16057
16058 O how much better 'twere to have as neighbours
16059 The folk of whom I speak, and at Galluzzo
16060 And at Trespiano have your boundary,
16061
16062 Than have them in the town, and bear the stench
16063 Of Aguglione's churl, and him of Signa
16064 Who has sharp eyes for trickery already.
16065
16066 Had not the folk, which most of all the world
16067 Degenerates, been a step-dame unto Caesar,
16068 But as a mother to her son benignant,
16069
16070 Some who turn Florentines, and trade and discount,
16071 Would have gone back again to Simifonte
16072 There where their grandsires went about as beggars.
16073
16074 At Montemurlo still would be the Counts,

16075 The Cerchi in the parish of Acone,
 16076 Perhaps in Valdigrieve the Buondelmonti.
 16077
 16078 Ever the intermingling of the people
 16079 Has been the source of malady in cities,
 16080 As in the body food it surfeits on;
 16081
 16082 And a blind bull more headlong plunges down
 16083 Than a blind lamb; and very often cuts
 16084 Better and more a single sword than five.
 16085
 16086 If Luni thou regard, and Urbisaglia,
 16087 How they have passed away, and how are passing
 16088 Chiusi and Sinigaglia after them,
 16089
 16090 To hear how races waste themselves away,
 16091 Will seem to thee no novel thing nor hard,
 16092 Seeing that even cities have an end.
 16093
 16094 All things of yours have their mortality,
 16095 Even as yourselves; but it is hidden in some
 16096 That a long while endure, and lives are short;
 16097
 16098 And as the turning of the lunar heaven
 16099 Covers and bares the shores without a pause,
 16100 In the like manner fortune does with Florence.
 16101
 16102 Therefore should not appear a marvellous thing
 16103 What I shall say of the great Florentines
 16104 Of whom the fame is hidden in the Past.
 16105
 16106 I saw the Ughi, saw the Catellini,
 16107 Filippi, Greci, Ormanni, and Alberichi,
 16108 Even in their fall illustrious citizens;
 16109
 16110 And saw, as mighty as they ancient were,
 16111 With him of La Sannella him of Arca,
 16112 And Soldanier, Ardinghi, and Bostichi.
 16113
 16114 Near to the gate that is at present laden
 16115 With a new felony of so much weight
 16116 That soon it shall be jetsam from the bark,
 16117
 16118 The Ravignani were, from whom descended
 16119 The County Guido, and whoe'er the name
 16120 Of the great Bellincione since hath taken.
 16121
 16122 He of La Pressa knew the art of ruling
 16123 Already, and already Galigajo
 16124 Had hilt and pommel gilded in his house.
 16125
 16126 Mighty already was the Column Vair,
 16127 Sacchetti, Giuochi, Fifant, and Barucci,
 16128 And Galli, and they who for the bushel blush.
 16129
 16130 The stock from which were the Calfucci born
 16131 Was great already, and already chosen

16132 To curule chairs the Sizii and Arrigucci.
 16133
 16134 O how beheld I those who are undone
 16135 By their own pride! and how the Balls of Gold
 16136 Florence enflowered in all their mighty deeds!
 16137
 16138 So likewise did the ancestors of those
 16139 Who evermore, when vacant is your church,
 16140 Fatten by staying in consistory.
 16141
 16142 The insolent race, that like a dragon follows
 16143 Whoever flees, and unto him that shows
 16144 His teeth or purse is gentle as a lamb,
 16145
 16146 Already rising was, but from low people;
 16147 So that it pleased not Ubertain Donato
 16148 That his wife's father should make him their kin.
 16149
 16150 Already had Caponsacco to the Market
 16151 From Fesole descended, and already
 16152 Giuda and Infangato were good burghers.
 16153
 16154 I'll tell a thing incredible, but true;
 16155 One entered the small circuit by a gate
 16156 Which from the Della Pera took its name!
 16157
 16158 Each one that bears the beautiful escutcheon
 16159 Of the great baron whose renown and name
 16160 The festival of Thomas keepeth fresh,
 16161
 16162 Knighthood and privilege from him received;
 16163 Though with the populace unites himself
 16164 To-day the man who binds it with a border.
 16165
 16166 Already were Gualterotti and Importuni;
 16167 And still more quiet would the Borgo be
 16168 If with new neighbours it remained unfed.
 16169
 16170 The house from which is born your lamentation,
 16171 Through just disdain that death among you brought
 16172 And put an end unto your joyous life,
 16173
 16174 Was honoured in itself and its companions.
 16175 O Buondelmonte, how in evil hour
 16176 Thou fled'st the bridal at another's promptings!
 16177
 16178 Many would be rejoicing who are sad,
 16179 If God had thee surrendered to the Ema
 16180 The first time that thou camest to the city.
 16181
 16182 But it behoved the mutilated stone
 16183 Which guards the bridge, that Florence should provide
 16184 A victim in her latest hour of peace.
 16185
 16186 With all these families, and others with them,
 16187 Florence beheld I in so great repose,
 16188 That no occasion had she whence to weep;

16189
 16190 With all these families beheld so just
 16191 And glorious her people, that the lily
 16192 Never upon the spear was placed reversed,
 16193
 16194 Nor by division was vermillion made."
 16195
 16196
 16197
 16198 Paradiso: Canto XVII
 16199
 16200
 16201 As came to Clymene, to be made certain
 16202 Of that which he had heard against himself,
 16203 He who makes fathers chary still to children,
 16204
 16205 Even such was I, and such was I perceived
 16206 By Beatrice and by the holy light
 16207 That first on my account had changed its place.
 16208
 16209 Therefore my Lady said to me: "Send forth
 16210 The flame of thy desire, so that it issue
 16211 Imprinted well with the internal stamp;
 16212
 16213 Not that our knowledge may be greater made
 16214 By speech of thine, but to accustom thee
 16215 To tell thy thirst, that we may give thee drink."
 16216
 16217 "O my beloved tree, (that so dost lift thee,
 16218 That even as minds terrestrial perceive
 16219 No triangle containeth two obtuse,
 16220
 16221 So thou beholdest the contingent things
 16222 Ere in themselves they are, fixing thine eyes
 16223 Upon the point in which all times are present,)
 16224
 16225 While I was with Virgilius conjoined
 16226 Upon the mountain that the souls doth heal,
 16227 And when descending into the dead world,
 16228
 16229 Were spoken to me of my future life
 16230 Some grievous words; although I feel myself
 16231 In sooth foursquare against the blows of chance.
 16232
 16233 On this account my wish would be content
 16234 To hear what fortune is approaching me,
 16235 Because foreseen an arrow comes more slowly."
 16236
 16237 Thus did I say unto that selfsame light
 16238 That unto me had spoken before; and even
 16239 As Beatrice willed was my own will confessed.
 16240
 16241 Not in vague phrase, in which the foolish folk
 16242 Ensnared themselves of old, ere yet was slain
 16243 The Lamb of God who taketh sins away,
 16244
 16245 But with clear words and unambiguous

16246 Language responded that paternal love,
16247 Hid and revealed by its own proper smile:
16248
16249 "Contingency, that outside of the volume
16250 Of your materiality extends not,
16251 Is all depicted in the eternal aspect.
16252
16253 Necessity however thence it takes not,
16254 Except as from the eye, in which 'tis mirrored,
16255 A ship that with the current down descends.
16256
16257 From thence, e'en as there cometh to the ear
16258 Sweet harmony from an organ, comes in sight
16259 To me the time that is preparing for thee.
16260
16261 As forth from Athens went Hippolytus,
16262 By reason of his step-dame false and cruel,
16263 So thou from Florence must perforce depart.
16264
16265 Already this is willed, and this is sought for;
16266 And soon it shall be done by him who thinks it,
16267 Where every day the Christ is bought and sold.
16268
16269 The blame shall follow the offended party
16270 In outcry as is usual; but the vengeance
16271 Shall witness to the truth that doth dispense it.
16272
16273 Thou shalt abandon everything beloved
16274 Most tenderly, and this the arrow is
16275 Which first the bow of banishment shoots forth.
16276
16277 Thou shalt have proof how savoureth of salt
16278 The bread of others, and how hard a road
16279 The going down and up another's stairs.
16280
16281 And that which most shall weigh upon thy shoulders
16282 Will be the bad and foolish company
16283 With which into this valley thou shalt fall;
16284
16285 For all ingrate, all mad and impious
16286 Will they become against thee; but soon after
16287 They, and not thou, shall have the forehead scarlet.
16288
16289 Of their bestiality their own proceedings
16290 Shall furnish proof; so 'twill be well for thee
16291 A party to have made thee by thyself.
16292
16293 Thine earliest refuge and thine earliest inn
16294 Shall be the mighty Lombard's courtesy,
16295 Who on the Ladder bears the holy bird,
16296
16297 Who such benign regard shall have for thee
16298 That 'twixt you twain, in doing and in asking,
16299 That shall be first which is with others last.
16300
16301 With him shalt thou see one who at his birth
16302 Has by this star of strength been so impressed,

16303 That notable shall his achievements be.
16304
16305 Not yet the people are aware of him
16306 Through his young age, since only nine years yet
16307 Around about him have these wheels revolved.
16308
16309 But ere the Gascon cheat the noble Henry,
16310 Some sparkles of his virtue shall appear
16311 In caring not for silver nor for toil.
16312
16313 So recognized shall his magnificence
16314 Become hereafter, that his enemies
16315 Will not have power to keep mute tongues about it.
16316
16317 On him rely, and on his benefits;
16318 By him shall many people be transformed,
16319 Changing condition rich and mendicant;
16320
16321 And written in thy mind thou hence shalt bear
16322 Of him, but shalt not say it"--and things said he
16323 Incredible to those who shall be present.
16324
16325 Then added: "Son, these are the commentaries
16326 On what was said to thee; behold the snares
16327 That are concealed behind few revolutions;
16328
16329 Yet would I not thy neighbours thou shouldst envy,
16330 Because thy life into the future reaches
16331 Beyond the punishment of their perfidies."
16332
16333 When by its silence showed that sainted soul
16334 That it had finished putting in the woof
16335 Into that web which I had given it warped,
16336
16337 Began I, even as he who yearneth after,
16338 Being in doubt, some counsel from a person
16339 Who seeth, and uprightly wills, and loves:
16340
16341 "Well see I, father mine, how spurreth on
16342 The time towards me such a blow to deal me
16343 As heaviest is to him who most gives way.
16344
16345 Therefore with foresight it is well I arm me,
16346 That, if the dearest place be taken from me,
16347 I may not lose the others by my songs.
16348
16349 Down through the world of infinite bitterness,
16350 And o'er the mountain, from whose beauteous summit
16351 The eyes of my own Lady lifted me,
16352
16353 And afterward through heaven from light to light,
16354 I have learned that which, if I tell again,
16355 Will be a savour of strong herbs to many.
16356
16357 And if I am a timid friend to truth,
16358 I fear lest I may lose my life with those
16359 Who will hereafter call this time the olden."

16360
 16361 The light in which was smiling my own treasure
 16362 Which there I had discovered, flashed at first
 16363 As in the sunshine doth a golden mirror;
 16364
 16365 Then made reply: "A conscience overcast
 16366 Or with its own or with another's shame,
 16367 Will taste forsooth the tartness of thy word;
 16368
 16369 But ne'ertheless, all falsehood laid aside,
 16370 Make manifest thy vision utterly,
 16371 And let them scratch wherever is the itch;
 16372
 16373 For if thine utterance shall offensive be
 16374 At the first taste, a vital nutriment
 16375 'Twill leave thereafter, when it is digested.
 16376
 16377 This cry of thine shall do as doth the wind,
 16378 Which smiteth most the most exalted summits,
 16379 And that is no slight argument of honour.
 16380
 16381 Therefore are shown to thee within these wheels,
 16382 Upon the mount and in the dolorous valley,
 16383 Only the souls that unto fame are known;
 16384
 16385 Because the spirit of the hearer rests not,
 16386 Nor doth confirm its faith by an example
 16387 Which has the root of it unknown and hidden,
 16388
 16389 Or other reason that is not apparent."
 16390
 16391
 16392
 16393 Paradiso: Canto XVIII
 16394
 16395
 16396 Now was alone rejoicing in its word
 16397 That soul beatified, and I was tasting
 16398 My own, the bitter tempering with the sweet,
 16399
 16400 And the Lady who to God was leading me
 16401 Said: "Change thy thought; consider that I am
 16402 Near unto Him who every wrong disburdens."
 16403
 16404 Unto the loving accents of my comfort
 16405 I turned me round, and then what love I saw
 16406 Within those holy eyes I here relinquish;
 16407
 16408 Not only that my language I distrust,
 16409 But that my mind cannot return so far
 16410 Above itself, unless another guide it.
 16411
 16412 Thus much upon that point can I repeat,
 16413 That, her again beholding, my affection
 16414 From every other longing was released.
 16415
 16416 While the eternal pleasure, which direct

16417 Rayed upon Beatrice, from her fair face
 16418 Contented me with its reflected aspect,
 16419
 16420 Conquering me with the radiance of a smile,
 16421 She said to me, "Turn thee about and listen;
 16422 Not in mine eyes alone is Paradise."
 16423
 16424 Even as sometimes here do we behold
 16425 The affection in the look, if it be such
 16426 That all the soul is wrapt away by it,
 16427
 16428 So, by the flaming of the effulgence holy
 16429 To which I turned, I recognized therein
 16430 The wish of speaking to me somewhat farther.
 16431
 16432 And it began: "In this fifth resting-place
 16433 Upon the tree that liveth by its summit,
 16434 And aye bears fruit, and never loses leaf,
 16435
 16436 Are blessed spirits that below, ere yet
 16437 They came to Heaven, were of such great renown
 16438 That every Muse therewith would affluent be.
 16439
 16440 Therefore look thou upon the cross's horns;
 16441 He whom I now shall name will there enact
 16442 What doth within a cloud its own swift fire."
 16443
 16444 I saw athwart the Cross a splendour drawn
 16445 By naming Joshua, (even as he did it,)
 16446 Nor noted I the word before the deed;
 16447
 16448 And at the name of the great Maccabee
 16449 I saw another move itself revolving,
 16450 And gladness was the whip unto that top.
 16451
 16452 Likewise for Charlemagne and for Orlando,
 16453 Two of them my regard attentive followed
 16454 As followeth the eye its falcon flying.
 16455
 16456 William thereafterward, and Renouard,
 16457 And the Duke Godfrey, did attract my sight
 16458 Along upon that Cross, and Robert Guiscard.
 16459
 16460 Then, moved and mingled with the other lights,
 16461 The soul that had addressed me showed how great
 16462 An artist 'twas among the heavenly singers.
 16463
 16464 To my right side I turned myself around,
 16465 My duty to behold in Beatrice
 16466 Either by words or gesture signified;
 16467
 16468 And so translucent I beheld her eyes,
 16469 So full of pleasure, that her countenance
 16470 Surpassed its other and its latest wont.
 16471
 16472 And as, by feeling greater delectation,
 16473 A man in doing good from day to day

16474 Becomes aware his virtue is increasing,
16475
16476 So I became aware that my gyration
16477 With heaven together had increased its arc,
16478 That miracle beholding more adorned.
16479
16480 And such as is the change, in little lapse
16481 Of time, in a pale woman, when her face
16482 Is from the load of bashfulness unladen,
16483
16484 Such was it in mine eyes, when I had turned,
16485 Caused by the whiteness of the temperate star,
16486 The sixth, which to itself had gathered me.
16487
16488 Within that Jovial torch did I behold
16489 The sparkling of the love which was therein
16490 Delineate our language to mine eyes.
16491
16492 And even as birds uprisen from the shore,
16493 As in congratulation o'er their food,
16494 Make squadrons of themselves, now round, now long,
16495
16496 So from within those lights the holy creatures
16497 Sang flying to and fro, and in their figures
16498 Made of themselves now D, now I, now L.
16499
16500 First singing they to their own music moved;
16501 Then one becoming of these characters,
16502 A little while they rested and were silent.
16503
16504 O divine Pegasea, thou who genius
16505 Dost glorious make, and render it long-lived,
16506 And this through thee the cities and the kingdoms,
16507
16508 Illume me with thyself, that I may bring
16509 Their figures out as I have them conceived!
16510 Apparent be thy power in these brief verses!
16511
16512 Themselves then they displayed in five times seven
16513 Vowels and consonants; and I observed
16514 The parts as they seemed spoken unto me.
16515
16516 'Diligite justitiam,' these were
16517 First verb and noun of all that was depicted;
16518 'Qui judicatis terram' were the last.
16519
16520 Thereafter in the M of the fifth word
16521 Remained they so arranged, that Jupiter
16522 Seemed to be silver there with gold inlaid.
16523
16524 And other lights I saw descend where was
16525 The summit of the M, and pause there singing
16526 The good, I think, that draws them to itself.
16527
16528 Then, as in striking upon burning logs
16529 Upward there fly innumerable sparks,
16530 Whence fools are wont to look for auguries,

16531
 16532 More than a thousand lights seemed thence to rise,
 16533 And to ascend, some more, and others less,
 16534 Even as the Sun that lights them had allotted;
 16535
 16536 And, each one being quiet in its place,
 16537 The head and neck beheld I of an eagle
 16538 Delineated by that inlaid fire.
 16539
 16540 He who there paints has none to be his guide;
 16541 But Himself guides; and is from Him remembered
 16542 That virtue which is form unto the nest.
 16543
 16544 The other beatitude, that contented seemed
 16545 At first to bloom a lily on the M,
 16546 By a slight motion followed out the imprint.
 16547
 16548 O gentle star! what and how many gems
 16549 Did demonstrate to me, that all our justice
 16550 Effect is of that heaven which thou ingemmest!
 16551
 16552 Wherefore I pray the Mind, in which begin
 16553 Thy motion and thy virtue, to regard
 16554 Whence comes the smoke that vitiates thy rays;
 16555
 16556 So that a second time it now be wroth
 16557 With buying and with selling in the temple
 16558 Whose walls were built with signs and martyrdoms!
 16559
 16560 O soldiery of heaven, whom I contemplate,
 16561 Implore for those who are upon the earth
 16562 All gone astray after the bad example!
 16563
 16564 Once 'twas the custom to make war with swords;
 16565 But now 'tis made by taking here and there
 16566 The bread the pitying Father shuts from none.
 16567
 16568 Yet thou, who writest but to cancel, think
 16569 That Peter and that Paul, who for this vineyard
 16570 Which thou art spoiling died, are still alive!
 16571
 16572 Well canst thou say: "So steadfast my desire
 16573 Is unto him who willed to live alone,
 16574 And for a dance was led to martyrdom,
 16575
 16576 That I know not the Fisherman nor Paul."
 16577
 16578
 16579
 16580 Paradiso: Canto XIX
 16581
 16582
 16583 Appeared before me with its wings outspread
 16584 The beautiful image that in sweet fruition
 16585 Made jubilant the interwoven souls;
 16586
 16587 Appeared a little ruby each, wherein

16588 Ray of the sun was burning so enkindled
16589 That each into mine eyes refracted it.
16590
16591 And what it now behoves me to retrace
16592 Nor voice has e'er reported, nor ink written,
16593 Nor was by fantasy e'er comprehended;
16594
16595 For speak I saw, and likewise heard, the beak,
16596 And utter with its voice both 'I' and 'My,'
16597 When in conception it was 'We' and 'Our.'
16598
16599 And it began: "Being just and merciful
16600 Am I exalted here unto that glory
16601 Which cannot be exceeded by desire;
16602
16603 And upon earth I left my memory
16604 Such, that the evil-minded people there
16605 Commend it, but continue not the story."
16606
16607 So doth a single heat from many embers
16608 Make itself felt, even as from many loves
16609 Issued a single sound from out that image.
16610
16611 Whence I thereafter: "O perpetual flowers
16612 Of the eternal joy, that only one
16613 Make me perceive your odours manifold,
16614
16615 Exhaling, break within me the great fast
16616 Which a long season has in hunger held me,
16617 Not finding for it any food on earth.
16618
16619 Well do I know, that if in heaven its mirror
16620 Justice Divine another realm doth make,
16621 Yours apprehends it not through any veil.
16622
16623 You know how I attentively address me
16624 To listen; and you know what is the doubt
16625 That is in me so very old a fast."
16626
16627 Even as a falcon, issuing from his hood,
16628 Doth move his head, and with his wings applaud him,
16629 Showing desire, and making himself fine,
16630
16631 Saw I become that standard, which of lauds
16632 Was interwoven of the grace divine,
16633 With such songs as he knows who there rejoices.
16634
16635 Then it began: "He who a compass turned
16636 On the world's outer verge, and who within it
16637 Devised so much occult and manifest,
16638
16639 Could not the impress of his power so make
16640 On all the universe, as that his Word
16641 Should not remain in infinite excess.
16642
16643 And this makes certain that the first proud being,
16644 Who was the paragon of every creature,

16645 By not awaiting light fell immature.
16646
16647 And hence appears it, that each minor nature
16648 Is scant receptacle unto that good
16649 Which has no end, and by itself is measured.
16650
16651 In consequence our vision, which perforce
16652 Must be some ray of that intelligence
16653 With which all things whatever are replete,
16654
16655 Cannot in its own nature be so potent,
16656 That it shall not its origin discern
16657 Far beyond that which is apparent to it.
16658
16659 Therefore into the justice sempiternal
16660 The power of vision that your world receives,
16661 As eye into the ocean, penetrates;
16662
16663 Which, though it see the bottom near the shore,
16664 Upon the deep perceives it not, and yet
16665 'Tis there, but it is hidden by the depth.
16666
16667 There is no light but comes from the serene
16668 That never is o'ercast, nay, it is darkness
16669 Or shadow of the flesh, or else its poison.
16670
16671 Amply to thee is opened now the cavern
16672 Which has concealed from thee the living justice
16673 Of which thou mad'st such frequent questioning.
16674
16675 For saidst thou: 'Born a man is on the shore
16676 Of Indus, and is none who there can speak
16677 Of Christ, nor who can read, nor who can write;
16678
16679 And all his inclinations and his actions
16680 Are good, so far as human reason sees,
16681 Without a sin in life or in discourse:
16682
16683 He dieth unbaptised and without faith;
16684 Where is this justice that condemneth him?
16685 Where is his fault, if he do not believe?'
16686
16687 Now who art thou, that on the bench wouldst sit
16688 In judgment at a thousand miles away,
16689 With the short vision of a single span?
16690
16691 Truly to him who with me subtilizes,
16692 If so the Scripture were not over you,
16693 For doubting there were marvellous occasion.
16694
16695 O animals terrene, O stolid minds,
16696 The primal will, that in itself is good,
16697 Ne'er from itself, the Good Supreme, has moved.
16698
16699 So much is just as is accordant with it;
16700 No good created draws it to itself,
16701 But it, by raying forth, occasions that."

16702
16703 Even as above her nest goes circling round
16704 The stork when she has fed her little ones,
16705 And he who has been fed looks up at her,
16706
16707 So lifted I my brows, and even such
16708 Became the blessed image, which its wings
16709 Was moving, by so many counsels urged.
16710
16711 Circling around it sang, and said: "As are
16712 My notes to thee, who dost not comprehend them,
16713 Such is the eternal judgment to you mortals."
16714
16715 Those lucent splendours of the Holy Spirit
16716 Grew quiet then, but still within the standard
16717 That made the Romans reverend to the world.
16718
16719 It recommenced: "Unto this kingdom never
16720 Ascended one who had not faith in Christ,
16721 Before or since he to the tree was nailed.
16722
16723 But look thou, many crying are, 'Christ, Christ!'
16724 Who at the judgment shall be far less near
16725 To him than some shall be who knew not Christ.
16726
16727 Such Christians shall the Ethiop condemn,
16728 When the two companies shall be divided,
16729 The one for ever rich, the other poor.
16730
16731 What to your kings may not the Persians say,
16732 When they that volume opened shall behold
16733 In which are written down all their dispraises?
16734
16735 There shall be seen, among the deeds of Albert,
16736 That which ere long shall set the pen in motion,
16737 For which the realm of Prague shall be deserted.
16738
16739 There shall be seen the woe that on the Seine
16740 He brings by falsifying of the coin,
16741 Who by the blow of a wild boar shall die.
16742
16743 There shall be seen the pride that causes thirst,
16744 Which makes the Scot and Englishman so mad
16745 That they within their boundaries cannot rest;
16746
16747 Be seen the luxury and effeminate life
16748 Of him of Spain, and the Bohemian,
16749 Who valour never knew and never wished;
16750
16751 Be seen the Cripple of Jerusalem,
16752 His goodness represented by an I,
16753 While the reverse an M shall represent;
16754
16755 Be seen the avarice and poltroonery
16756 Of him who guards the Island of the Fire,
16757 Wherein Anchises finished his long life;
16758

16759 And to declare how pitiful he is
 16760 Shall be his record in contracted letters
 16761 Which shall make note of much in little space.
 16762
 16763 And shall appear to each one the foul deeds
 16764 Of uncle and of brother who a nation
 16765 So famous have dishonoured, and two crowns.
 16766
 16767 And he of Portugal and he of Norway
 16768 Shall there be known, and he of Rascia too,
 16769 Who saw in evil hour the coin of Venice.
 16770
 16771 O happy Hungary, if she let herself
 16772 Be wronged no farther! and Navarre the happy,
 16773 If with the hills that gird her she be armed!
 16774
 16775 And each one may believe that now, as hansel
 16776 Thereof, do Nicosia and Famagosta
 16777 Lament and rage because of their own beast,
 16778
 16779 Who from the others' flank departeth not."
 16780
 16781
 16782
 16783 Paradiso: Canto XX
 16784
 16785
 16786 When he who all the world illuminates
 16787 Out of our hemisphere so far descends
 16788 That on all sides the daylight is consumed,
 16789
 16790 The heaven, that erst by him alone was kindled,
 16791 Doth suddenly reveal itself again
 16792 By many lights, wherein is one resplendent.
 16793
 16794 And came into my mind this act of heaven,
 16795 When the ensign of the world and of its leaders
 16796 Had silent in the blessed beak become;
 16797
 16798 Because those living luminaries all,
 16799 By far more luminous, did songs begin
 16800 Lapsing and falling from my memory.
 16801
 16802 O gentle Love, that with a smile dost cloak thee,
 16803 How ardent in those sparks didst thou appear,
 16804 That had the breath alone of holy thoughts!
 16805
 16806 After the precious and pellucid crystals,
 16807 With which begemmed the sixth light I beheld,
 16808 Silence imposed on the angelic bells,
 16809
 16810 I seemed to hear the murmuring of a river
 16811 That clear descendeth down from rock to rock,
 16812 Showing the affluence of its mountain-top.
 16813
 16814 And as the sound upon the cithern's neck
 16815 Taketh its form, and as upon the vent

16816 Of rustic pipe the wind that enters it,
16817
16818 Even thus, relieved from the delay of waiting,
16819 That murmuring of the eagle mounted up
16820 Along its neck, as if it had been hollow.
16821
16822 There it became a voice, and issued thence
16823 From out its beak, in such a form of words
16824 As the heart waited for wherein I wrote them.
16825
16826 "The part in me which sees and bears the sun
16827 In mortal eagles," it began to me,
16828 "Now fixedly must needs be looked upon;
16829
16830 For of the fires of which I make my figure,
16831 Those whence the eye doth sparkle in my head
16832 Of all their orders the supremest are.
16833
16834 He who is shining in the midst as pupil
16835 Was once the singer of the Holy Spirit,
16836 Who bore the ark from city unto city;
16837
16838 Now knoweth he the merit of his song,
16839 In so far as effect of his own counsel,
16840 By the reward which is commensurate.
16841
16842 Of five, that make a circle for my brow,
16843 He that approacheth nearest to my beak
16844 Did the poor widow for her son console;
16845
16846 Now knoweth he how dearly it doth cost
16847 Not following Christ, by the experience
16848 Of this sweet life and of its opposite.
16849
16850 He who comes next in the circumference
16851 Of which I speak, upon its highest arc,
16852 Did death postpone by penitence sincere;
16853
16854 Now knoweth he that the eternal judgment
16855 Suffers no change, albeit worthy prayer
16856 Maketh below to-morrow of to-day.
16857
16858 The next who follows, with the laws and me,
16859 Under the good intent that bore bad fruit
16860 Became a Greek by ceding to the pastor;
16861
16862 Now knoweth he how all the ill deduced
16863 From his good action is not harmful to him,
16864 Although the world thereby may be destroyed.
16865
16866 And he, whom in the downward arc thou seest,
16867 Guglielmo was, whom the same land deplores
16868 That weepeth Charles and Frederick yet alive;
16869
16870 Now knoweth he how heaven enamoured is
16871 With a just king; and in the outward show
16872 Of his effulgence he reveals it still.

16873
16874 Who would believe, down in the errant world,
16875 That e'er the Trojan Ripheus in this round
16876 Could be the fifth one of the holy lights?
16877
16878 Now knoweth he enough of what the world
16879 Has not the power to see of grace divine,
16880 Although his sight may not discern the bottom."
16881
16882 Like as a lark that in the air expatiates,
16883 First singing and then silent with content
16884 Of the last sweetness that doth satisfy her,
16885
16886 Such seemed to me the image of the imprint
16887 Of the eternal pleasure, by whose will
16888 Doth everything become the thing it is.
16889
16890 And notwithstanding to my doubt I was
16891 As glass is to the colour that invests it,
16892 To wait the time in silence it endured not,
16893
16894 But forth from out my mouth, "What things are these?"
16895 Extorted with the force of its own weight;
16896 Whereat I saw great joy of coruscation.
16897
16898 Thereafterward with eye still more enkindled
16899 The blessed standard made to me reply,
16900 To keep me not in wonderment suspended:
16901
16902 "I see that thou believest in these things
16903 Because I say them, but thou seest not how;
16904 So that, although believed in, they are hidden.
16905
16906 Thou doest as he doth who a thing by name
16907 Well apprehendeth, but its quiddity
16908 Cannot perceive, unless another show it.
16909
16910 'Regnum coelorum' suffereth violence
16911 From fervent love, and from that living hope
16912 That overcometh the Divine volition;
16913
16914 Not in the guise that man o'ercometh man,
16915 But conquers it because it will be conquered,
16916 And conquered conquers by benignity.
16917
16918 The first life of the eyebrow and the fifth
16919 Cause thee astonishment, because with them
16920 Thou seest the region of the angels painted.
16921
16922 They passed not from their bodies, as thou thinkest,
16923 Gentiles, but Christians in the steadfast faith
16924 Of feet that were to suffer and had suffered.
16925
16926 For one from Hell, where no one e'er turns back
16927 Unto good will, returned unto his bones,
16928 And that of living hope was the reward,--
16929

16930 Of living hope, that placed its efficacy
 16931 In prayers to God made to resuscitate him,
 16932 So that 'twere possible to move his will.
 16933
 16934 The glorious soul concerning which I speak,
 16935 Returning to the flesh, where brief its stay,
 16936 Believed in Him who had the power to aid it;
 16937
 16938 And, in believing, kindled to such fire
 16939 Of genuine love, that at the second death
 16940 Worthy it was to come unto this joy.
 16941
 16942 The other one, through grace, that from so deep
 16943 A fountain wells that never hath the eye
 16944 Of any creature reached its primal wave,
 16945
 16946 Set all his love below on righteousness;
 16947 Wherefore from grace to grace did God uncloze
 16948 His eye to our redemption yet to be,
 16949
 16950 Whence he believed therein, and suffered not
 16951 From that day forth the stench of paganism,
 16952 And he reprov'd therefor the folk perverse.
 16953
 16954 Those Maidens three, whom at the right-hand wheel
 16955 Thou didst behold, were unto him for baptism
 16956 More than a thousand years before baptizing.
 16957
 16958 O thou predestination, how remote
 16959 Thy root is from the aspect of all those
 16960 Who the First Cause do not behold entire!
 16961
 16962 And you, O mortals! hold yourselves restrained
 16963 In judging; for ourselves, who look on God,
 16964 We do not know as yet all the elect;
 16965
 16966 And sweet to us is such a deprivation,
 16967 Because our good in this good is made perfect,
 16968 That whatsoe'er God wills, we also will."
 16969
 16970 After this manner by that shape divine,
 16971 To make clear in me my short-sightedness,
 16972 Was given to me a pleasant medicine;
 16973
 16974 And as good singer a good lutanist
 16975 Accompanies with vibrations of the chords,
 16976 Whereby more pleasantness the song acquires,
 16977
 16978 So, while it spake, do I remember me
 16979 That I beheld both of those blessed lights,
 16980 Even as the winking of the eyes concords,
 16981
 16982 Moving unto the words their little flames.
 16983
 16984
 16985
 16986 Paradiso: Canto XXI

16987
16988
16989 Already on my Lady's face mine eyes
16990 Again were fastened, and with these my mind,
16991 And from all other purpose was withdrawn;
16992
16993 And she smiled not; but "If I were to smile,"
16994 She unto me began, "thou wouldst become
16995 Like Semele, when she was turned to ashes.
16996
16997 Because my beauty, that along the stairs
16998 Of the eternal palace more enkindles,
16999 As thou hast seen, the farther we ascend,
17000
17001 If it were tempered not, is so resplendent
17002 That all thy mortal power in its effulgence
17003 Would seem a leaflet that the thunder crushes.
17004
17005 We are uplifted to the seventh splendour,
17006 That underneath the burning Lion's breast
17007 Now radiates downward mingled with his power.
17008
17009 Fix in direction of thine eyes the mind,
17010 And make of them a mirror for the figure
17011 That in this mirror shall appear to thee."
17012
17013 He who could know what was the pasturage
17014 My sight had in that blessed countenance,
17015 When I transferred me to another care,
17016
17017 Would recognize how grateful was to me
17018 Obedience unto my celestial escort,
17019 By counterpoising one side with the other.
17020
17021 Within the crystal which, around the world
17022 Revolving, bears the name of its dear leader,
17023 Under whom every wickedness lay dead,
17024
17025 Coloured like gold, on which the sunshine gleams,
17026 A stairway I beheld to such a height
17027 Uplifted, that mine eye pursued it not.
17028
17029 Likewise beheld I down the steps descending
17030 So many splendours, that I thought each light
17031 That in the heaven appears was there diffused.
17032
17033 And as accordant with their natural custom
17034 The rooks together at the break of day
17035 Bestir themselves to warm their feathers cold;
17036
17037 Then some of them fly off without return,
17038 Others come back to where they started from,
17039 And others, wheeling round, still keep at home;
17040
17041 Such fashion it appeared to me was there
17042 Within the sparkling that together came,
17043 As soon as on a certain step it struck,

17044
17045 And that which nearest unto us remained
17046 Became so clear, that in my thought I said,
17047 "Well I perceive the love thou showest me;
17048
17049 But she, from whom I wait the how and when
17050 Of speech and silence, standeth still; whence I
17051 Against desire do well if I ask not."
17052
17053 She thereupon, who saw my silentness
17054 In the sight of Him who seeth everything,
17055 Said unto me, "Let loose thy warm desire."
17056
17057 And I began: "No merit of my own
17058 Renders me worthy of response from thee;
17059 But for her sake who granteth me the asking,
17060
17061 Thou blessed life that dost remain concealed
17062 In thy beatitude, make known to me
17063 The cause which draweth thee so near my side;
17064
17065 And tell me why is silent in this wheel
17066 The dulcet symphony of Paradise,
17067 That through the rest below sounds so devoutly."
17068
17069 "Thou hast thy hearing mortal as thy sight,"
17070 It answer made to me; "they sing not here,
17071 For the same cause that Beatrice has not smiled.
17072
17073 Thus far adown the holy stairway's steps
17074 Have I descended but to give thee welcome
17075 With words, and with the light that mantles me;
17076
17077 Nor did more love cause me to be more ready,
17078 For love as much and more up there is burning,
17079 As doth the flaming manifest to thee.
17080
17081 But the high charity, that makes us servants
17082 Prompt to the counsel which controls the world,
17083 Allotteth here, even as thou dost observe."
17084
17085 "I see full well," said I, "O sacred lamp!
17086 How love unfettered in this court sufficeth
17087 To follow the eternal Providence;
17088
17089 But this is what seems hard for me to see,
17090 Wherefore predestinate wast thou alone
17091 Unto this office from among thy consorts."
17092
17093 No sooner had I come to the last word,
17094 Than of its middle made the light a centre,
17095 Whirling itself about like a swift millstone.
17096
17097 When answer made the love that was therein:
17098 "On me directed is a light divine,
17099 Piercing through this in which I am embosomed,
17100

17101 Of which the virtue with my sight conjoined
17102 Lifts me above myself so far, I see
17103 The supreme essence from which this is drawn.
17104
17105 Hence comes the joyfulness with which I flame,
17106 For to my sight, as far as it is clear,
17107 The clearness of the flame I equal make.
17108
17109 But that soul in the heaven which is most pure,
17110 That seraph which his eye on God most fixes,
17111 Could this demand of thine not satisfy;
17112
17113 Because so deeply sinks in the abyss
17114 Of the eternal statute what thou askest,
17115 From all created sight it is cut off.
17116
17117 And to the mortal world, when thou returnest,
17118 This carry back, that it may not presume
17119 Longer tow'rd such a goal to move its feet.
17120
17121 The mind, that shineth here, on earth doth smoke;
17122 From this observe how can it do below
17123 That which it cannot though the heaven assume it?"
17124
17125 Such limit did its words prescribe to me,
17126 The question I relinquished, and restricted
17127 Myself to ask it humbly who it was.
17128
17129 "Between two shores of Italy rise cliffs,
17130 And not far distant from thy native place,
17131 So high, the thunders far below them sound,
17132
17133 And form a ridge that Catria is called,
17134 'Neath which is consecrate a hermitage
17135 Wont to be dedicate to worship only."
17136
17137 Thus unto me the third speech recommenced,
17138 And then, continuing, it said: "Therein
17139 Unto God's service I became so steadfast,
17140
17141 That feeding only on the juice of olives
17142 Lightly I passed away the heats and frosts,
17143 Contented in my thoughts contemplative.
17144
17145 That cloister used to render to these heavens
17146 Abundantly, and now is empty grown,
17147 So that perforce it soon must be revealed.
17148
17149 I in that place was Peter Damiano;
17150 And Peter the Sinner was I in the house
17151 Of Our Lady on the Adriatic shore.
17152
17153 Little of mortal life remained to me,
17154 When I was called and dragged forth to the hat
17155 Which shifteth evermore from bad to worse.
17156
17157 Came Cephas, and the mighty Vessel came

17158 Of the Holy Spirit, meagre and barefooted,
 17159 Taking the food of any hostelry.
 17160
 17161 Now some one to support them on each side
 17162 The modern shepherds need, and some to lead them,
 17163 So heavy are they, and to hold their trains.
 17164
 17165 They cover up their palfreys with their cloaks,
 17166 So that two beasts go underneath one skin;
 17167 O Patience, that dost tolerate so much!"
 17168
 17169 At this voice saw I many little flames
 17170 From step to step descending and revolving,
 17171 And every revolution made them fairer.
 17172
 17173 Round about this one came they and stood still,
 17174 And a cry uttered of so loud a sound,
 17175 It here could find no parallel, nor I
 17176
 17177 Distinguished it, the thunder so o'ercame me.
 17178
 17179
 17180
 17181 Paradiso: Canto XXII
 17182
 17183
 17184 Oppressed with stupor, I unto my guide
 17185 Turned like a little child who always runs
 17186 For refuge there where he confideth most;
 17187
 17188 And she, even as a mother who straightway
 17189 Gives comfort to her pale and breathless boy
 17190 With voice whose wont it is to reassure him,
 17191
 17192 Said to me: "Knowest thou not thou art in heaven,
 17193 And knowest thou not that heaven is holy all
 17194 And what is done here cometh from good zeal?
 17195
 17196 After what wise the singing would have changed thee
 17197 And I by smiling, thou canst now imagine,
 17198 Since that the cry has startled thee so much,
 17199
 17200 In which if thou hadst understood its prayers
 17201 Already would be known to thee the vengeance
 17202 Which thou shalt look upon before thou diest.
 17203
 17204 The sword above here smiteth not in haste
 17205 Nor tardily, howe'er it seem to him
 17206 Who fearing or desiring waits for it.
 17207
 17208 But turn thee round towards the others now,
 17209 For very illustrious spirits shalt thou see,
 17210 If thou thy sight directest as I say."
 17211
 17212 As it seemed good to her mine eyes I turned,
 17213 And saw a hundred spherules that together
 17214 With mutual rays each other more embellished.

17215
17216 I stood as one who in himself represses
17217 The point of his desire, and ventures not
17218 To question, he so feareth the too much.
17219
17220 And now the largest and most luculent
17221 Among those pearls came forward, that it might
17222 Make my desire concerning it content.
17223
17224 Within it then I heard: "If thou couldst see
17225 Even as myself the charity that burns
17226 Among us, thy conceits would be expressed;
17227
17228 But, that by waiting thou mayst not come late
17229 To the high end, I will make answer even
17230 Unto the thought of which thou art so chary.
17231
17232 That mountain on whose slope Cassino stands
17233 Was frequented of old upon its summit
17234 By a deluded folk and ill-disposed;
17235
17236 And I am he who first up thither bore
17237 The name of Him who brought upon the earth
17238 The truth that so much sublimateth us.
17239
17240 And such abundant grace upon me shone
17241 That all the neighbouring towns I drew away
17242 From the impious worship that seduced the world.
17243
17244 These other fires, each one of them, were men
17245 Contemplative, enkindled by that heat
17246 Which maketh holy flowers and fruits spring up.
17247
17248 Here is Macarius, here is Romualdus,
17249 Here are my brethren, who within the cloisters
17250 Their footsteps stayed and kept a steadfast heart."
17251
17252 And I to him: "The affection which thou showest
17253 Speaking with me, and the good countenance
17254 Which I behold and note in all your ardours,
17255
17256 In me have so my confidence dilated
17257 As the sun doth the rose, when it becomes
17258 As far unfolded as it hath the power.
17259
17260 Therefore I pray, and thou assure me, father,
17261 If I may so much grace receive, that I
17262 May thee behold with countenance unveiled."
17263
17264 He thereupon: "Brother, thy high desire
17265 In the remotest sphere shall be fulfilled,
17266 Where are fulfilled all others and my own.
17267
17268 There perfect is, and ripened, and complete,
17269 Every desire; within that one alone
17270 Is every part where it has always been;
17271

17272 For it is not in space, nor turns on poles,
17273 And unto it our stairway reaches up,
17274 Whence thus from out thy sight it steals away.
17275
17276 Up to that height the Patriarch Jacob saw it
17277 Extending its supernal part, what time
17278 So thronged with angels it appeared to him.
17279
17280 But to ascend it now no one uplifts
17281 His feet from off the earth, and now my Rule
17282 Below remaineth for mere waste of paper.
17283
17284 The walls that used of old to be an Abbey
17285 Are changed to dens of robbers, and the cowl's
17286 Are sacks filled full of miserable flour.
17287
17288 But heavy usury is not taken up
17289 So much against God's pleasure as that fruit
17290 Which maketh so insane the heart of monks;
17291
17292 For whatsoever hath the Church in keeping
17293 Is for the folk that ask it in God's name,
17294 Not for one's kindred or for something worse.
17295
17296 The flesh of mortals is so very soft,
17297 That good beginnings down below suffice not
17298 From springing of the oak to bearing acorns.
17299
17300 Peter began with neither gold nor silver,
17301 And I with orison and abstinence,
17302 And Francis with humility his convent.
17303
17304 And if thou lookest at each one's beginning,
17305 And then regardest whither he has run,
17306 Thou shalt behold the white changed into brown.
17307
17308 In verity the Jordan backward turned,
17309 And the sea's fleeing, when God willed were more
17310 A wonder to behold, than succour here."
17311
17312 Thus unto me he said; and then withdrew
17313 To his own band, and the band closed together;
17314 Then like a whirlwind all was upward rapt.
17315
17316 The gentle Lady urged me on behind them
17317 Up o'er that stairway by a single sign,
17318 So did her virtue overcome my nature;
17319
17320 Nor here below, where one goes up and down
17321 By natural law, was motion e'er so swift
17322 That it could be compared unto my wing.
17323
17324 Reader, as I may unto that devout
17325 Triumph return, on whose account I often
17326 For my transgressions weep and beat my breast,--
17327
17328 Thou hadst not thrust thy finger in the fire

17329 And drawn it out again, before I saw
17330 The sign that follows Taurus, and was in it.
17331
17332 O glorious stars, O light impregnated
17333 With mighty virtue, from which I acknowledge
17334 All of my genius, whatsoe'er it be,
17335
17336 With you was born, and hid himself with you,
17337 He who is father of all mortal life,
17338 When first I tasted of the Tuscan air;
17339
17340 And then when grace was freely given to me
17341 To enter the high wheel which turns you round,
17342 Your region was allotted unto me.
17343
17344 To you devoutly at this hour my soul
17345 Is sighing, that it virtue may acquire
17346 For the stern pass that draws it to itself.
17347
17348 "Thou art so near unto the last salvation,"
17349 Thus Beatrice began, "thou oughtest now
17350 To have thine eyes unclouded and acute;
17351
17352 And therefore, ere thou enter farther in,
17353 Look down once more, and see how vast a world
17354 Thou hast already put beneath thy feet;
17355
17356 So that thy heart, as jocund as it may,
17357 Present itself to the triumphant throng
17358 That comes rejoicing through this rounded ether."
17359
17360 I with my sight returned through one and all
17361 The sevenfold spheres, and I beheld this globe
17362 Such that I smiled at its ignoble semblance;
17363
17364 And that opinion I approve as best
17365 Which doth account it least; and he who thinks
17366 Of something else may truly be called just.
17367
17368 I saw the daughter of Latona shining
17369 Without that shadow, which to me was cause
17370 That once I had believed her rare and dense.
17371
17372 The aspect of thy son, Hyperion,
17373 Here I sustained, and saw how move themselves
17374 Around and near him Maia and Dione.
17375
17376 Thence there appeared the temperateness of Jove
17377 'Twixt son and father, and to me was clear
17378 The change that of their whereabouts they make;
17379
17380 And all the seven made manifest to me
17381 How great they are, and eke how swift they are,
17382 And how they are in distant habitations.
17383
17384 The threshing-floor that maketh us so proud,
17385 To me revolving with the eternal Twins,

17386 Was all apparent made from hill to harbour!
 17387
 17388 Then to the beauteous eyes mine eyes I turned.
 17389
 17390
 17391
 17392 Paradiso: Canto XXIII
 17393
 17394
 17395 Even as a bird, 'mid the beloved leaves,
 17396 Quiet upon the nest of her sweet brood
 17397 Throughout the night, that hideth all things from us,
 17398
 17399 Who, that she may behold their longed-for looks
 17400 And find the food wherewith to nourish them,
 17401 In which, to her, grave labours grateful are,
 17402
 17403 Anticipates the time on open spray
 17404 And with an ardent longing waits the sun,
 17405 Gazing intent as soon as breaks the dawn:
 17406
 17407 Even thus my Lady standing was, erect
 17408 And vigilant, turned round towards the zone
 17409 Underneath which the sun displays less haste;
 17410
 17411 So that beholding her distraught and wistful,
 17412 Such I became as he is who desiring
 17413 For something yearns, and hoping is appeased.
 17414
 17415 But brief the space from one When to the other;
 17416 Of my awaiting, say I, and the seeing
 17417 The welkin grow resplendent more and more.
 17418
 17419 And Beatrice exclaimed: "Behold the hosts
 17420 Of Christ's triumphal march, and all the fruit
 17421 Harvested by the rolling of these spheres!"
 17422
 17423 It seemed to me her face was all aflame;
 17424 And eyes she had so full of ecstasy
 17425 That I must needs pass on without describing.
 17426
 17427 As when in nights serene of the full moon
 17428 Smiles Trivia among the nymphs eternal
 17429 Who paint the firmament through all its gulfs,
 17430
 17431 Saw I, above the myriads of lamps,
 17432 A Sun that one and all of them enkindled,
 17433 E'en as our own doth the supernal sights,
 17434
 17435 And through the living light transparent shone
 17436 The lucent substance so intensely clear
 17437 Into my sight, that I sustained it not.
 17438
 17439 O Beatrice, thou gentle guide and dear!
 17440 To me she said: "What overmasters thee
 17441 A virtue is from which naught shields itself.
 17442

17443 There are the wisdom and the omnipotence
17444 That oped the thoroughfares 'twixt heaven and earth,
17445 For which there erst had been so long a yearning."
17446
17447 As fire from out a cloud unlocks itself,
17448 Dilating so it finds not room therein,
17449 And down, against its nature, falls to earth,
17450
17451 So did my mind, among those aliments
17452 Becoming larger, issue from itself,
17453 And that which it became cannot remember.
17454
17455 "Open thine eyes, and look at what I am:
17456 Thou hast beheld such things, that strong enough
17457 Hast thou become to tolerate my smile."
17458
17459 I was as one who still retains the feeling
17460 Of a forgotten vision, and endeavours
17461 In vain to bring it back into his mind,
17462
17463 When I this invitation heard, deserving
17464 Of so much gratitude, it never fades
17465 Out of the book that chronicles the past.
17466
17467 If at this moment sounded all the tongues
17468 That Polyhymnia and her sisters made
17469 Most lubrical with their delicious milk,
17470
17471 To aid me, to a thousandth of the truth
17472 It would not reach, singing the holy smile
17473 And how the holy aspect it illumed.
17474
17475 And therefore, representing Paradise,
17476 The sacred poem must perforce leap over,
17477 Even as a man who finds his way cut off;
17478
17479 But whoso thinketh of the ponderous theme,
17480 And of the mortal shoulder laden with it,
17481 Should blame it not, if under this it tremble.
17482
17483 It is no passage for a little boat
17484 This which goes cleaving the audacious prow,
17485 Nor for a pilot who would spare himself.
17486
17487 "Why doth my face so much enamour thee,
17488 That to the garden fair thou turnest not,
17489 Which under the rays of Christ is blossoming?
17490
17491 There is the Rose in which the Word Divine
17492 Became incarnate; there the lilies are
17493 By whose perfume the good way was discovered."
17494
17495 Thus Beatrice; and I, who to her counsels
17496 Was wholly ready, once again betook me
17497 Unto the battle of the feeble brows.
17498
17499 As in the sunshine, that unsullied streams

17500 Through fractured cloud, ere now a meadow of flowers
 17501 Mine eyes with shadow covered o'er have seen,
 17502
 17503 So troops of splendours manifold I saw
 17504 Illumined from above with burning rays,
 17505 Beholding not the source of the effulgence.
 17506
 17507 O power benignant that dost so imprint them!
 17508 Thou didst exalt thyself to give more scope
 17509 There to mine eyes, that were not strong enough.
 17510
 17511 The name of that fair flower I e'er invoke
 17512 Morning and evening utterly enthralled
 17513 My soul to gaze upon the greater fire.
 17514
 17515 And when in both mine eyes depicted were
 17516 The glory and greatness of the living star
 17517 Which there excelleth, as it here excelled,
 17518
 17519 Athwart the heavens a little torch descended
 17520 Formed in a circle like a coronal,
 17521 And cinctured it, and whirled itself about it.
 17522
 17523 Whatever melody most sweetly soundeth
 17524 On earth, and to itself most draws the soul,
 17525 Would seem a cloud that, rent asunder, thunders,
 17526
 17527 Compared unto the sounding of that lyre
 17528 Wherewith was crowned the sapphire beautiful,
 17529 Which gives the clearest heaven its sapphire hue.
 17530
 17531 "I am Angelic Love, that circle round
 17532 The joy sublime which breathes from out the womb
 17533 That was the hostelry of our Desire;
 17534
 17535 And I shall circle, Lady of Heaven, while
 17536 Thou followest thy Son, and mak'st diviner
 17537 The sphere supreme, because thou enterest there."
 17538
 17539 Thus did the circulated melody
 17540 Seal itself up; and all the other lights
 17541 Were making to resound the name of Mary.
 17542
 17543 The regal mantle of the volumes all
 17544 Of that world, which most fervid is and living
 17545 With breath of God and with his works and ways,
 17546
 17547 Extended over us its inner border,
 17548 So very distant, that the semblance of it
 17549 There where I was not yet appeared to me.
 17550
 17551 Therefore mine eyes did not possess the power
 17552 Of following the incoronated flame,
 17553 Which mounted upward near to its own seed.
 17554
 17555 And as a little child, that towards its mother
 17556 Stretches its arms, when it the milk has taken,

17557 Through impulse kindled into outward flame,
 17558
 17559 Each of those gleams of whiteness upward reached
 17560 So with its summit, that the deep affection
 17561 They had for Mary was revealed to me.
 17562
 17563 Thereafter they remained there in my sight,
 17564 'Regina coeli' singing with such sweetness,
 17565 That ne'er from me has the delight departed.
 17566
 17567 O, what exuberance is garnered up
 17568 Within those richest coffers, which had been
 17569 Good husbandmen for sowing here below!
 17570
 17571 There they enjoy and live upon the treasure
 17572 Which was acquired while weeping in the exile
 17573 Of Babylon, wherein the gold was left.
 17574
 17575 There triumpheth, beneath the exalted Son
 17576 Of God and Mary, in his victory,
 17577 Both with the ancient council and the new,
 17578
 17579 He who doth keep the keys of such a glory.
 17580
 17581
 17582
 17583 Paradiso: Canto XXIV
 17584
 17585
 17586 "O company elect to the great supper
 17587 Of the Lamb benedight, who feedeth you
 17588 So that for ever full is your desire,
 17589
 17590 If by the grace of God this man foretaste
 17591 Something of that which falleth from your table,
 17592 Or ever death prescribe to him the time,
 17593
 17594 Direct your mind to his immense desire,
 17595 And him somewhat bedew; ye drinking are
 17596 For ever at the fount whence comes his thought."
 17597
 17598 Thus Beatrice; and those souls beatified
 17599 Transformed themselves to spheres on steadfast poles,
 17600 Flaming intensely in the guise of comets.
 17601
 17602 And as the wheels in works of horologes
 17603 Revolve so that the first to the beholder
 17604 Motionless seems, and the last one to fly,
 17605
 17606 So in like manner did those carols, dancing
 17607 In different measure, of their affluence
 17608 Give me the gauge, as they were swift or slow.
 17609
 17610 From that one which I noted of most beauty
 17611 Beheld I issue forth a fire so happy
 17612 That none it left there of a greater brightness;
 17613

17614 And around Beatrice three several times
17615 It whirled itself with so divine a song,
17616 My fantasy repeats it not to me;
17617
17618 Therefore the pen skips, and I write it not,
17619 Since our imagination for such folds,
17620 Much more our speech, is of a tint too glaring.
17621
17622 "O holy sister mine, who us implorest
17623 With such devotion, by thine ardent love
17624 Thou dost unbind me from that beautiful sphere!"
17625
17626 Thereafter, having stopped, the blessed fire
17627 Unto my Lady did direct its breath,
17628 Which spake in fashion as I here have said.
17629
17630 And she: "O light eterne of the great man
17631 To whom our Lord delivered up the keys
17632 He carried down of this miraculous joy,
17633
17634 This one examine on points light and grave,
17635 As good beseemeth thee, about the Faith
17636 By means of which thou on the sea didst walk.
17637
17638 If he love well, and hope well, and believe,
17639 From thee 'tis hid not; for thou hast thy sight
17640 There where depicted everything is seen.
17641
17642 But since this kingdom has made citizens
17643 By means of the true Faith, to glorify it
17644 'Tis well he have the chance to speak thereof."
17645
17646 As baccalaureate arms himself, and speaks not
17647 Until the master doth propose the question,
17648 To argue it, and not to terminate it,
17649
17650 So did I arm myself with every reason,
17651 While she was speaking, that I might be ready
17652 For such a questioner and such profession.
17653
17654 "Say, thou good Christian; manifest thyself;
17655 What is the Faith?" Whereat I raised my brow
17656 Unto that light wherefrom was this breathed forth.
17657
17658 Then turned I round to Beatrice, and she
17659 Prompt signals made to me that I should pour
17660 The water forth from my internal fountain.
17661
17662 "May grace, that suffers me to make confession,"
17663 Began I, "to the great centurion,
17664 Cause my conceptions all to be explicit!"
17665
17666 And I continued: "As the truthful pen,
17667 Father, of thy dear brother wrote of it,
17668 Who put with thee Rome into the good way,
17669
17670 Faith is the substance of the things we hope for,

17671 And evidence of those that are not seen;
17672 And this appears to me its quiddity."
17673
17674 Then heard I: "Very rightly thou perceivest,
17675 If well thou understandest why he placed it
17676 With substances and then with evidences."
17677
17678 And I thereafterward: "The things profound,
17679 That here vouchsafe to me their apparition,
17680 Unto all eyes below are so concealed,
17681
17682 That they exist there only in belief,
17683 Upon the which is founded the high hope,
17684 And hence it takes the nature of a substance.
17685
17686 And it behoveth us from this belief
17687 To reason without having other sight,
17688 And hence it has the nature of evidence."
17689
17690 Then heard I: "If whatever is acquired
17691 Below by doctrine were thus understood,
17692 No sophist's subtlety would there find place."
17693
17694 Thus was breathed forth from that enkindled love;
17695 Then added: "Very well has been gone over
17696 Already of this coin the alloy and weight;
17697
17698 But tell me if thou hast it in thy purse?"
17699 And I: "Yes, both so shining and so round
17700 That in its stamp there is no peradventure."
17701
17702 Thereafter issued from the light profound
17703 That there resplendent was: "This precious jewel,
17704 Upon the which is every virtue founded,
17705
17706 Whence hadst thou it?" And I: "The large outpouring
17707 Of Holy Spirit, which has been diffused
17708 Upon the ancient parchments and the new,
17709
17710 A syllogism is, which proved it to me
17711 With such acuteness, that, compared therewith,
17712 All demonstration seems to me obtuse."
17713
17714 And then I heard: "The ancient and the new
17715 Postulates, that to thee are so conclusive,
17716 Why dost thou take them for the word divine?"
17717
17718 And I: "The proofs, which show the truth to me,
17719 Are the works subsequent, whereunto Nature
17720 Ne'er heated iron yet, nor anvil beat."
17721
17722 'Twas answered me: "Say, who assureth thee
17723 That those works ever were? the thing itself
17724 That must be proved, nought else to thee affirms it."
17725
17726 "Were the world to Christianity converted,"
17727 I said, "withouten miracles, this one

17728 Is such, the rest are not its hundredth part;
 17729
 17730 Because that poor and fasting thou didst enter
 17731 Into the field to sow there the good plant,
 17732 Which was a vine and has become a thorn!"
 17733
 17734 This being finished, the high, holy Court
 17735 Resounded through the spheres, "One God we praise!"
 17736 In melody that there above is chanted.
 17737
 17738 And then that Baron, who from branch to branch,
 17739 Examining, had thus conducted me,
 17740 Till the extremest leaves we were approaching,
 17741
 17742 Again began: "The Grace that dallying
 17743 Plays with thine intellect thy mouth has opened,
 17744 Up to this point, as it should opened be,
 17745
 17746 So that I do approve what forth emerged;
 17747 But now thou must express what thou believest,
 17748 And whence to thy belief it was presented."
 17749
 17750 "O holy father, spirit who beholdest
 17751 What thou believedst so that thou o'ercamest,
 17752 Towards the sepulchre, more youthful feet,"
 17753
 17754 Began I, "thou dost wish me in this place
 17755 The form to manifest of my prompt belief,
 17756 And likewise thou the cause thereof demandest.
 17757
 17758 And I respond: In one God I believe,
 17759 Sole and eterne, who moveth all the heavens
 17760 With love and with desire, himself unmoved;
 17761
 17762 And of such faith not only have I proofs
 17763 Physical and metaphysical, but gives them
 17764 Likewise the truth that from this place rains down
 17765
 17766 Through Moses, through the Prophets and the Psalms,
 17767 Through the Evangel, and through you, who wrote
 17768 After the fiery Spirit sanctified you;
 17769
 17770 In Persons three eterne believe, and these
 17771 One essence I believe, so one and trine
 17772 They bear conjunction both with 'sunt' and 'est.'
 17773
 17774 With the profound condition and divine
 17775 Which now I touch upon, doth stamp my mind
 17776 Ofttimes the doctrine evangelical.
 17777
 17778 This the beginning is, this is the spark
 17779 Which afterwards dilates to vivid flame,
 17780 And, like a star in heaven, is sparkling in me."
 17781
 17782 Even as a lord who hears what pleaseth him
 17783 His servant straight embraces, gratulating
 17784 For the good news as soon as he is silent;

17785
 17786 So, giving me its benediction, singing,
 17787 Three times encircled me, when I was silent,
 17788 The apostolic light, at whose command
 17789
 17790 I spoken had, in speaking I so pleased him.
 17791
 17792
 17793
 17794 Paradiso: Canto XXV
 17795
 17796
 17797 If e'er it happen that the Poem Sacred,
 17798 To which both heaven and earth have set their hand,
 17799 So that it many a year hath made me lean,
 17800
 17801 O'ercome the cruelty that bars me out
 17802 From the fair sheepfold, where a lamb I slumbered,
 17803 An enemy to the wolves that war upon it,
 17804
 17805 With other voice forthwith, with other fleece
 17806 Poet will I return, and at my font
 17807 Baptismal will I take the laurel crown;
 17808
 17809 Because into the Faith that maketh known
 17810 All souls to God there entered I, and then
 17811 Peter for her sake thus my brow encircled.
 17812
 17813 Thereafterward towards us moved a light
 17814 Out of that band whence issued the first-fruits
 17815 Which of his vicars Christ behind him left,
 17816
 17817 And then my Lady, full of ecstasy,
 17818 Said unto me: "Look, look! behold the Baron
 17819 For whom below Galicia is frequented."
 17820
 17821 In the same way as, when a dove alights
 17822 Near his companion, both of them pour forth,
 17823 Circling about and murmuring, their affection,
 17824
 17825 So one beheld I by the other grand
 17826 Prince glorified to be with welcome greeted,
 17827 Lauding the food that there above is eaten.
 17828
 17829 But when their gratulations were complete,
 17830 Silently 'coram me' each one stood still,
 17831 So incandescent it o'ercame my sight.
 17832
 17833 Smiling thereafterwards, said Beatrice:
 17834 "Illustrious life, by whom the benefactions
 17835 Of our Basilica have been described,
 17836
 17837 Make Hope resound within this altitude;
 17838 Thou knowest as oft thou dost personify it
 17839 As Jesus to the three gave greater clearness."--
 17840
 17841 "Lift up thy head, and make thyself assured;

17842 For what comes hither from the mortal world
17843 Must needs be ripened in our radiance."
17844
17845 This comfort came to me from the second fire;
17846 Wherefore mine eyes I lifted to the hills,
17847 Which bent them down before with too great weight.
17848
17849 "Since, through his grace, our Emperor wills that thou
17850 Shouldst find thee face to face, before thy death,
17851 In the most secret chamber, with his Counts,
17852
17853 So that, the truth beholden of this court,
17854 Hope, which below there rightfully enamours,
17855 Thereby thou strengthen in thyself and others,
17856
17857 Say what it is, and how is flowering with it
17858 Thy mind, and say from whence it came to thee."
17859 Thus did the second light again continue.
17860
17861 And the Compassionate, who piloted
17862 The plumage of my wings in such high flight,
17863 Did in reply anticipate me thus:
17864
17865 "No child whatever the Church Militant
17866 Of greater hope possesses, as is written
17867 In that Sun which irradiates all our band;
17868
17869 Therefore it is conceded him from Egypt
17870 To come into Jerusalem to see,
17871 Or ever yet his warfare be completed.
17872
17873 The two remaining points, that not for knowledge
17874 Have been demanded, but that he report
17875 How much this virtue unto thee is pleasing,
17876
17877 To him I leave; for hard he will not find them,
17878 Nor of self-praise; and let him answer them;
17879 And may the grace of God in this assist him!"
17880
17881 As a disciple, who his teacher follows,
17882 Ready and willing, where he is expert,
17883 That his proficiency may be displayed,
17884
17885 "Hope," said I, "is the certain expectation
17886 Of future glory, which is the effect
17887 Of grace divine and merit precedent.
17888
17889 From many stars this light comes unto me;
17890 But he instilled it first into my heart
17891 Who was chief singer unto the chief captain.
17892
17893 'Sperent in te,' in the high Theody
17894 He sayeth, 'those who know thy name;' and who
17895 Knoweth it not, if he my faith possess?
17896
17897 Thou didst instil me, then, with his instilling
17898 In the Epistle, so that I am full,

17899 And upon others rain again your rain."
17900
17901 While I was speaking, in the living bosom
17902 Of that combustion quivered an effulgence,
17903 Sudden and frequent, in the guise of lightning;
17904
17905 Then breathed: "The love wherewith I am inflamed
17906 Towards the virtue still which followed me
17907 Unto the palm and issue of the field,
17908
17909 Wills that I breathe to thee that thou delight
17910 In her; and grateful to me is thy telling
17911 Whatever things Hope promises to thee."
17912
17913 And I: "The ancient Scriptures and the new
17914 The mark establish, and this shows it me,
17915 Of all the souls whom God hath made his friends.
17916
17917 Isaiah saith, that each one garmented
17918 In his own land shall be with twofold garments,
17919 And his own land is this delightful life.
17920
17921 Thy brother, too, far more explicitly,
17922 There where he treateth of the robes of white,
17923 This revelation manifests to us."
17924
17925 And first, and near the ending of these words,
17926 "Sperent in te" from over us was heard,
17927 To which responsive answered all the carols.
17928
17929 Thereafterward a light among them brightened,
17930 So that, if Cancer one such crystal had,
17931 Winter would have a month of one sole day.
17932
17933 And as uprises, goes, and enters the dance
17934 A winsome maiden, only to do honour
17935 To the new bride, and not from any failing,
17936
17937 Even thus did I behold the brightened splendour
17938 Approach the two, who in a wheel revolved
17939 As was be seeming to their ardent love.
17940
17941 Into the song and music there it entered;
17942 And fixed on them my Lady kept her look,
17943 Even as a bride silent and motionless.
17944
17945 "This is the one who lay upon the breast
17946 Of him our Pelican; and this is he
17947 To the great office from the cross elected."
17948
17949 My Lady thus; but therefore none the more
17950 Did move her sight from its attentive gaze
17951 Before or afterward these words of hers.
17952
17953 Even as a man who gazes, and endeavours
17954 To see the eclipsing of the sun a little,
17955 And who, by seeing, sightless doth become,

17956
17957 So I became before that latest fire,
17958 While it was said, "Why dost thou daze thyself
17959 To see a thing which here hath no existence?
17960
17961 Earth in the earth my body is, and shall be
17962 With all the others there, until our number
17963 With the eternal proposition tallies.
17964
17965 With the two garments in the blessed cloister
17966 Are the two lights alone that have ascended:
17967 And this shalt thou take back into your world."
17968
17969 And at this utterance the flaming circle
17970 Grew quiet, with the dulcet intermingling
17971 Of sound that by the trinal breath was made,
17972
17973 As to escape from danger or fatigue
17974 The oars that erst were in the water beaten
17975 Are all suspended at a whistle's sound.
17976
17977 Ah, how much in my mind was I disturbed,
17978 When I turned round to look on Beatrice,
17979 That her I could not see, although I was
17980
17981 Close at her side and in the Happy World!
17982
17983
17984
17985 Paradiso: Canto XXVI
17986
17987
17988 While I was doubting for my vision quenched,
17989 Out of the flame refulgent that had quenched it
17990 Issued a breathing, that attentive made me,
17991
17992 Saying: "While thou recoverest the sense
17993 Of seeing which in me thou hast consumed,
17994 'Tis well that speaking thou shouldst compensate it.
17995
17996 Begin then, and declare to what thy soul
17997 Is aimed, and count it for a certainty,
17998 Sight is in thee bewildered and not dead;
17999
18000 Because the Lady, who through this divine
18001 Region conducteth thee, has in her look
18002 The power the hand of Ananias had."
18003
18004 I said: "As pleaseth her, or soon or late
18005 Let the cure come to eyes that portals were
18006 When she with fire I ever burn with entered.
18007
18008 The Good, that gives contentment to this Court,
18009 The Alpha and Omega is of all
18010 The writing that love reads me low or loud."
18011
18012 The selfsame voice, that taken had from me

18013 The terror of the sudden dazzlement,
18014 To speak still farther put it in my thought;
18015
18016 And said: "In verity with finer sieve
18017 Behoveth thee to sift; thee it behoveth
18018 To say who aimed thy bow at such a target."
18019
18020 And I: "By philosophic arguments,
18021 And by authority that hence descends,
18022 Such love must needs imprint itself in me;
18023
18024 For Good, so far as good, when comprehended
18025 Doth straight enkindle love, and so much greater
18026 As more of goodness in itself it holds;
18027
18028 Then to that Essence (whose is such advantage
18029 That every good which out of it is found
18030 Is nothing but a ray of its own light)
18031
18032 More than elsewhither must the mind be moved
18033 Of every one, in loving, who discerns
18034 The truth in which this evidence is founded.
18035
18036 Such truth he to my intellect reveals
18037 Who demonstrates to me the primal love
18038 Of all the sempiternal substances.
18039
18040 The voice reveals it of the truthful Author,
18041 Who says to Moses, speaking of Himself,
18042 'I will make all my goodness pass before thee.'
18043
18044 Thou too revealest it to me, beginning
18045 The loud Evangel, that proclaims the secret
18046 Of heaven to earth above all other edict."
18047
18048 And I heard say: "By human intellect
18049 And by authority concordant with it,
18050 Of all thy loves reserve for God the highest.
18051
18052 But say again if other cords thou feelest,
18053 Draw thee towards Him, that thou mayst proclaim
18054 With how many teeth this love is biting thee."
18055
18056 The holy purpose of the Eagle of Christ
18057 Not latent was, nay, rather I perceived
18058 Whither he fain would my profession lead.
18059
18060 Therefore I recommenced: "All of those bites
18061 Which have the power to turn the heart to God
18062 Unto my charity have been concurrent.
18063
18064 The being of the world, and my own being,
18065 The death which He endured that I may live,
18066 And that which all the faithful hope, as I do,
18067
18068 With the forementioned vivid consciousness
18069 Have drawn me from the sea of love perverse,

18070 And of the right have placed me on the shore.
18071
18072 The leaves, wherewith embowered is all the garden
18073 Of the Eternal Gardener, do I love
18074 As much as he has granted them of good."
18075
18076 As soon as I had ceased, a song most sweet
18077 Throughout the heaven resounded, and my Lady
18078 Said with the others, "Holy, holy, holy!"
18079
18080 And as at some keen light one wakes from sleep
18081 By reason of the visual spirit that runs
18082 Unto the splendour passed from coat to coat,
18083
18084 And he who wakes abhorreth what he sees,
18085 So all unconscious is his sudden waking,
18086 Until the judgment cometh to his aid,
18087
18088 So from before mine eyes did Beatrice
18089 Chase every mote with radiance of her own,
18090 That cast its light a thousand miles and more.
18091
18092 Whence better after than before I saw,
18093 And in a kind of wonderment I asked
18094 About a fourth light that I saw with us.
18095
18096 And said my Lady: "There within those rays
18097 Gazes upon its Maker the first soul
18098 That ever the first virtue did create."
18099
18100 Even as the bough that downward bends its top
18101 At transit of the wind, and then is lifted
18102 By its own virtue, which inclines it upward,
18103
18104 Likewise did I, the while that she was speaking,
18105 Being amazed, and then I was made bold
18106 By a desire to speak wherewith I burned.
18107
18108 And I began: "O apple, that mature
18109 Alone hast been produced, O ancient father,
18110 To whom each wife is daughter and daughter-in-law,
18111
18112 Devoutly as I can I supplicate thee
18113 That thou wouldst speak to me; thou seest my wish;
18114 And I, to hear thee quickly, speak it not."
18115
18116 Sometimes an animal, when covered, struggles
18117 So that his impulse needs must be apparent,
18118 By reason of the wrappage following it;
18119
18120 And in like manner the primeval soul
18121 Made clear to me athwart its covering
18122 How jubilant it was to give me pleasure.
18123
18124 Then breathed: "Without thy uttering it to me,
18125 Thine inclination better I discern
18126 Than thou whatever thing is surest to thee;

18127
 18128 For I behold it in the truthful mirror,
 18129 That of Himself all things parhelion makes,
 18130 And none makes Him parhelion of itself.
 18131
 18132 Thou fain wouldst hear how long ago God placed me
 18133 Within the lofty garden, where this Lady
 18134 Unto so long a stairway thee disposed.
 18135
 18136 And how long to mine eyes it was a pleasure,
 18137 And of the great disdain the proper cause,
 18138 And the language that I used and that I made.
 18139
 18140 Now, son of mine, the tasting of the tree
 18141 Not in itself was cause of so great exile,
 18142 But solely the o'erstepping of the bounds.
 18143
 18144 There, whence thy Lady moved Virgilius,
 18145 Four thousand and three hundred and two circuits
 18146 Made by the sun, this Council I desired;
 18147
 18148 And him I saw return to all the lights
 18149 Of his highway nine hundred times and thirty,
 18150 Whilst I upon the earth was tarrying.
 18151
 18152 The language that I spake was quite extinct
 18153 Before that in the work interminable
 18154 The people under Nimrod were employed;
 18155
 18156 For nevermore result of reasoning
 18157 (Because of human pleasure that doth change,
 18158 Obedient to the heavens) was durable.
 18159
 18160 A natural action is it that man speaks;
 18161 But whether thus or thus, doth nature leave
 18162 To your own art, as seemeth best to you.
 18163
 18164 Ere I descended to the infernal anguish,
 18165 'El' was on earth the name of the Chief Good,
 18166 From whom comes all the joy that wraps me round
 18167
 18168 'Eli' he then was called, and that is proper,
 18169 Because the use of men is like a leaf
 18170 On bough, which goeth and another cometh.
 18171
 18172 Upon the mount that highest o'er the wave
 18173 Rises was I, in life or pure or sinful,
 18174 From the first hour to that which is the second,
 18175
 18176 As the sun changes quadrant, to the sixth."
 18177
 18178
 18179
 18180 Paradiso: Canto XXVII
 18181
 18182
 18183 "Glory be to the Father, to the Son,

18184 And Holy Ghost!" all Paradise began,
18185 So that the melody inebriate made me.
18186
18187 What I beheld seemed unto me a smile
18188 Of the universe; for my inebriation
18189 Found entrance through the hearing and the sight.
18190
18191 O joy! O gladness inexpressible!
18192 O perfect life of love and peacefulness!
18193 O riches without hankering secure!
18194
18195 Before mine eyes were standing the four torches
18196 Enkindled, and the one that first had come
18197 Began to make itself more luminous;
18198
18199 And even such in semblance it became
18200 As Jupiter would become, if he and Mars
18201 Were birds, and they should interchange their feathers.
18202
18203 That Providence, which here distributeth
18204 Season and service, in the blessed choir
18205 Had silence upon every side imposed.
18206
18207 When I heard say: "If I my colour change,
18208 Marvel not at it; for while I am speaking
18209 Thou shalt behold all these their colour change.
18210
18211 He who usurps upon the earth my place,
18212 My place, my place, which vacant has become
18213 Before the presence of the Son of God,
18214
18215 Has of my cemetery made a sewer
18216 Of blood and stench, whereby the Perverse One,
18217 Who fell from here, below there is appeased!"
18218
18219 With the same colour which, through sun adverse,
18220 Painteth the clouds at evening or at morn,
18221 Beheld I then the whole of heaven suffused.
18222
18223 And as a modest woman, who abides
18224 Sure of herself, and at another's failing,
18225 From listening only, timorous becomes,
18226
18227 Even thus did Beatrice change countenance;
18228 And I believe in heaven was such eclipse,
18229 When suffered the supreme Omnipotence;
18230
18231 Thereafterward proceeded forth his words
18232 With voice so much transmuted from itself,
18233 The very countenance was not more changed.
18234
18235 "The spouse of Christ has never nurtured been
18236 On blood of mine, of Linus and of Cletus,
18237 To be made use of in acquest of gold;
18238
18239 But in acquest of this delightful life
18240 Sixtus and Pius, Urban and Calixtus,

18241 After much lamentation, shed their blood.
18242
18243 Our purpose was not, that on the right hand
18244 Of our successors should in part be seated
18245 The Christian folk, in part upon the other;
18246
18247 Nor that the keys which were to me confided
18248 Should e'er become the escutcheon on a banner,
18249 That should wage war on those who are baptized;
18250
18251 Nor I be made the figure of a seal
18252 To privileges venal and mendacious,
18253 Whereat I often redden and flash with fire.
18254
18255 In garb of shepherds the rapacious wolves
18256 Are seen from here above o'er all the pastures!
18257 O wrath of God, why dost thou slumber still?
18258
18259 To drink our blood the Caorsines and Gascons
18260 Are making ready. O thou good beginning,
18261 Unto how vile an end must thou needs fall!
18262
18263 But the high Providence, that with Scipio
18264 At Rome the glory of the world defended,
18265 Will speedily bring aid, as I conceive;
18266
18267 And thou, my son, who by thy mortal weight
18268 Shalt down return again, open thy mouth;
18269 What I conceal not, do not thou conceal."
18270
18271 As with its frozen vapours downward falls
18272 In flakes our atmosphere, what time the horn
18273 Of the celestial Goat doth touch the sun,
18274
18275 Upward in such array saw I the ether
18276 Become, and flaked with the triumphant vapours,
18277 Which there together with us had remained.
18278
18279 My sight was following up their semblances,
18280 And followed till the medium, by excess,
18281 The passing farther onward took from it;
18282
18283 Whereat the Lady, who beheld me freed
18284 From gazing upward, said to me: "Cast down
18285 Thy sight, and see how far thou art turned round."
18286
18287 Since the first time that I had downward looked,
18288 I saw that I had moved through the whole arc
18289 Which the first climate makes from midst to end;
18290
18291 So that I saw the mad track of Ulysses
18292 Past Gades, and this side, well nigh the shore
18293 Whereon became Europa a sweet burden.
18294
18295 And of this threshing-floor the site to me
18296 Were more unveiled, but the sun was proceeding
18297 Under my feet, a sign and more removed.

18298
18299 My mind enamoured, which is dallying
18300 At all times with my Lady, to bring back
18301 To her mine eyes was more than ever ardent.
18302
18303 And if or Art or Nature has made bait
18304 To catch the eyes and so possess the mind,
18305 In human flesh or in its portraiture,
18306
18307 All joined together would appear as nought
18308 To the divine delight which shone upon me
18309 When to her smiling face I turned me round.
18310
18311 The virtue that her look endowed me with
18312 From the fair nest of Leda tore me forth,
18313 And up into the swiftest heaven impelled me.
18314
18315 Its parts exceeding full of life and lofty
18316 Are all so uniform, I cannot say
18317 Which Beatrice selected for my place.
18318
18319 But she, who was aware of my desire,
18320 Began, the while she smiled so joyously
18321 That God seemed in her countenance to rejoice:
18322
18323 "The nature of that motion, which keeps quiet
18324 The centre and all the rest about it moves,
18325 From hence begins as from its starting point.
18326
18327 And in this heaven there is no other Where
18328 Than in the Mind Divine, wherein is kindled
18329 The love that turns it, and the power it rains.
18330
18331 Within a circle light and love embrace it,
18332 Even as this doth the others, and that precinct
18333 He who encircles it alone controls.
18334
18335 Its motion is not by another meted,
18336 But all the others measured are by this,
18337 As ten is by the half and by the fifth.
18338
18339 And in what manner time in such a pot
18340 May have its roots, and in the rest its leaves,
18341 Now unto thee can manifest be made.
18342
18343 O Covetousness, that mortals dost ingulf
18344 Beneath thee so, that no one hath the power
18345 Of drawing back his eyes from out thy waves!
18346
18347 Full fairly blossoms in mankind the will;
18348 But the uninterrupted rain converts
18349 Into abortive wildings the true plums.
18350
18351 Fidelity and innocence are found
18352 Only in children; afterwards they both
18353 Take flight or e'er the cheeks with down are covered.
18354

18355 One, while he prattles still, observes the fasts,
 18356 Who, when his tongue is loosed, forthwith devours
 18357 Whatever food under whatever moon;
 18358
 18359 Another, while he prattles, loves and listens
 18360 Unto his mother, who when speech is perfect
 18361 Forthwith desires to see her in her grave.
 18362
 18363 Even thus is swarthy made the skin so white
 18364 In its first aspect of the daughter fair
 18365 Of him who brings the morn, and leaves the night.
 18366
 18367 Thou, that it may not be a marvel to thee,
 18368 Think that on earth there is no one who governs;
 18369 Whence goes astray the human family.
 18370
 18371 Ere January be unwintered wholly
 18372 By the centesimal on earth neglected,
 18373 Shall these supernal circles roar so loud
 18374
 18375 The tempest that has been so long awaited
 18376 Shall whirl the poops about where are the prows;
 18377 So that the fleet shall run its course direct,
 18378
 18379 And the true fruit shall follow on the flower."
 18380
 18381
 18382
 18383 Paradiso: Canto XXVIII
 18384
 18385
 18386 After the truth against the present life
 18387 Of miserable mortals was unfolded
 18388 By her who doth imparadise my mind,
 18389
 18390 As in a looking-glass a taper's flame
 18391 He sees who from behind is lighted by it,
 18392 Before he has it in his sight or thought,
 18393
 18394 And turns him round to see if so the glass
 18395 Tell him the truth, and sees that it accords
 18396 Therewith as doth a music with its metre,
 18397
 18398 In similar wise my memory recollecteth
 18399 That I did, looking into those fair eyes,
 18400 Of which Love made the springes to ensnare me.
 18401
 18402 And as I turned me round, and mine were touched
 18403 By that which is apparent in that volume,
 18404 Whenever on its gyre we gaze intent,
 18405
 18406 A point beheld I, that was raying out
 18407 Light so acute, the sight which it enkindles
 18408 Must close perforce before such great acuteness.
 18409
 18410 And whatsoever star seems smallest here
 18411 Would seem to be a moon, if placed beside it.

18412 As one star with another star is placed.
18413
18414 Perhaps at such a distance as appears
18415 A halo cincturing the light that paints it,
18416 When densest is the vapour that sustains it,
18417
18418 Thus distant round the point a circle of fire
18419 So swiftly whirled, that it would have surpassed
18420 Whatever motion soonest girds the world;
18421
18422 And this was by another circumcinct,
18423 That by a third, the third then by a fourth,
18424 By a fifth the fourth, and then by a sixth the fifth;
18425
18426 The seventh followed thereupon in width
18427 So ample now, that Juno's messenger
18428 Entire would be too narrow to contain it.
18429
18430 Even so the eighth and ninth; and every one
18431 More slowly moved, according as it was
18432 In number distant farther from the first.
18433
18434 And that one had its flame most crystalline
18435 From which less distant was the stainless spark,
18436 I think because more with its truth imbued.
18437
18438 My Lady, who in my anxiety
18439 Beheld me much perplexed, said: "From that point
18440 Dependent is the heaven and nature all.
18441
18442 Behold that circle most conjoined to it,
18443 And know thou, that its motion is so swift
18444 Through burning love whereby it is spurred on."
18445
18446 And I to her: "If the world were arranged
18447 In the order which I see in yonder wheels,
18448 What's set before me would have satisfied me;
18449
18450 But in the world of sense we can perceive
18451 That evermore the circles are diviner
18452 As they are from the centre more remote
18453
18454 Wherefore if my desire is to be ended
18455 In this miraculous and angelic temple,
18456 That has for confines only love and light,
18457
18458 To hear behoves me still how the example
18459 And the exemplar go not in one fashion,
18460 Since for myself in vain I contemplate it."
18461
18462 "If thine own fingers unto such a knot
18463 Be insufficient, it is no great wonder,
18464 So hard hath it become for want of trying."
18465
18466 My Lady thus; then said she: "Do thou take
18467 What I shall tell thee, if thou wouldst be sated,
18468 And exercise on that thy subtlety.

18469
18470 The circles corporal are wide and narrow
18471 According to the more or less of virtue
18472 Which is distributed through all their parts.
18473
18474 The greater goodness works the greater weal,
18475 The greater weal the greater body holds,
18476 If perfect equally are all its parts.
18477
18478 Therefore this one which sweeps along with it
18479 The universe sublime, doth correspond
18480 Unto the circle which most loves and knows.
18481
18482 On which account, if thou unto the virtue
18483 Apply thy measure, not to the appearance
18484 Of substances that unto thee seem round,
18485
18486 Thou wilt behold a marvellous agreement,
18487 Of more to greater, and of less to smaller,
18488 In every heaven, with its Intelligence."
18489
18490 Even as remaineth splendid and serene
18491 The hemisphere of air, when Boreas
18492 Is blowing from that cheek where he is mildest,
18493
18494 Because is purified and resolved the rack
18495 That erst disturbed it, till the welkin laughs
18496 With all the beauties of its pageantry;
18497
18498 Thus did I likewise, after that my Lady
18499 Had me provided with her clear response,
18500 And like a star in heaven the truth was seen.
18501
18502 And soon as to a stop her words had come,
18503 Not otherwise does iron scintillate
18504 When molten, than those circles scintillated.
18505
18506 Their coruscation all the sparks repeated,
18507 And they so many were, their number makes
18508 More millions than the doubling of the chess.
18509
18510 I heard them sing hosanna choir by choir
18511 To the fixed point which holds them at the 'Ubi,'
18512 And ever will, where they have ever been.
18513
18514 And she, who saw the dubious meditations
18515 Within my mind, "The primal circles," said,
18516 "Have shown thee Seraphim and Cherubim.
18517
18518 Thus rapidly they follow their own bonds,
18519 To be as like the point as most they can,
18520 And can as far as they are high in vision.
18521
18522 Those other Loves, that round about them go,
18523 Thrones of the countenance divine are called,
18524 Because they terminate the primal Triad.
18525

18526 And thou shouldst know that they all have delight
 18527 As much as their own vision penetrates
 18528 The Truth, in which all intellect finds rest.
 18529
 18530 From this it may be seen how blessedness
 18531 Is founded in the faculty which sees,
 18532 And not in that which loves, and follows next;
 18533
 18534 And of this seeing merit is the measure,
 18535 Which is brought forth by grace, and by good will;
 18536 Thus on from grade to grade doth it proceed.
 18537
 18538 The second Triad, which is germinating
 18539 In such wise in this sempiternal spring,
 18540 That no nocturnal Aries despoils,
 18541
 18542 Perpetually hosanna warbles forth
 18543 With threefold melody, that sounds in three
 18544 Orders of joy, with which it is intrined.
 18545
 18546 The three Divine are in this hierarchy,
 18547 First the Dominions, and the Virtues next;
 18548 And the third order is that of the Powers.
 18549
 18550 Then in the dances twain penultimate
 18551 The Principalities and Archangels wheel;
 18552 The last is wholly of angelic sports.
 18553
 18554 These orders upward all of them are gazing,
 18555 And downward so prevail, that unto God
 18556 They all attracted are and all attract.
 18557
 18558 And Dionysius with so great desire
 18559 To contemplate these Orders set himself,
 18560 He named them and distinguished them as I do.
 18561
 18562 But Gregory afterwards dissented from him;
 18563 Wherefore, as soon as he unclosed his eyes
 18564 Within this heaven, he at himself did smile.
 18565
 18566 And if so much of secret truth a mortal
 18567 Proffered on earth, I would not have thee marvel,
 18568 For he who saw it here revealed it to him,
 18569
 18570 With much more of the truth about these circles."
 18571
 18572
 18573
 18574 Paradiso: Canto XXIX
 18575
 18576
 18577 At what time both the children of Latona,
 18578 Surmounted by the Ram and by the Scales,
 18579 Together make a zone of the horizon,
 18580
 18581 As long as from the time the zenith holds them
 18582 In equipoise, till from that girdle both

18583 Changing their hemisphere disturb the balance,
18584
18585 So long, her face depicted with a smile,
18586 Did Beatrice keep silence while she gazed
18587 Fixedly at the point which had o'ercome me.
18588
18589 Then she began: "I say, and I ask not
18590 What thou dost wish to hear, for I have seen it
18591 Where centres every When and every 'Ubi.'
18592
18593 Not to acquire some good unto himself,
18594 Which is impossible, but that his splendour
18595 In its resplendency may say, 'Subsisto,'
18596
18597 In his eternity outside of time,
18598 Outside all other limits, as it pleased him,
18599 Into new Loves the Eternal Love unfolded.
18600
18601 Nor as if torpid did he lie before;
18602 For neither after nor before proceeded
18603 The going forth of God upon these waters.
18604
18605 Matter and Form unmingled and conjoined
18606 Came into being that had no defect,
18607 E'en as three arrows from a three-stringed bow.
18608
18609 And as in glass, in amber, or in crystal
18610 A sunbeam flashes so, that from its coming
18611 To its full being is no interval,
18612
18613 So from its Lord did the triform effect
18614 Ray forth into its being all together,
18615 Without discrimination of beginning.
18616
18617 Order was con-created and constructed
18618 In substances, and summit of the world
18619 Were those wherein the pure act was produced.
18620
18621 Pure potentiality held the lowest part;
18622 Midway bound potentiality with act
18623 Such bond that it shall never be unbound.
18624
18625 Jerome has written unto you of angels
18626 Created a long lapse of centuries
18627 Or ever yet the other world was made;
18628
18629 But written is this truth in many places
18630 By writers of the Holy Ghost, and thou
18631 Shalt see it, if thou lookest well thereat.
18632
18633 And even reason seeth it somewhat,
18634 For it would not concede that for so long
18635 Could be the motors without their perfection.
18636
18637 Now dost thou know both where and when these Loves
18638 Created were, and how; so that extinct
18639 In thy desire already are three fires.

18640
18641 Nor could one reach, in counting, unto twenty
18642 So swiftly, as a portion of these angels
18643 Disturbed the subject of your elements.
18644
18645 The rest remained, and they began this art
18646 Which thou discernest, with so great delight
18647 That never from their circling do they cease.
18648
18649 The occasion of the fall was the accursed
18650 Presumption of that One, whom thou hast seen
18651 By all the burden of the world constrained.
18652
18653 Those whom thou here beholdest modest were
18654 To recognise themselves as of that goodness
18655 Which made them apt for so much understanding;
18656
18657 On which account their vision was exalted
18658 By the enlightening grace and their own merit,
18659 So that they have a full and steadfast will.
18660
18661 I would not have thee doubt, but certain be,
18662 'Tis meritorious to receive this grace,
18663 According as the affection opens to it.
18664
18665 Now round about in this consistory
18666 Much mayst thou contemplate, if these my words
18667 Be gathered up, without all further aid.
18668
18669 But since upon the earth, throughout your schools,
18670 They teach that such is the angelic nature
18671 That it doth hear, and recollect, and will,
18672
18673 More will I say, that thou mayst see unmixed
18674 The truth that is confounded there below,
18675 Equivocating in such like prelections.
18676
18677 These substances, since in God's countenance
18678 They jocund were, turned not away their sight
18679 From that wherefrom not anything is hidden;
18680
18681 Hence they have not their vision intercepted
18682 By object new, and hence they do not need
18683 To recollect, through interrupted thought.
18684
18685 So that below, not sleeping, people dream,
18686 Believing they speak truth, and not believing;
18687 And in the last is greater sin and shame.
18688
18689 Below you do not journey by one path
18690 Philosophising; so transporteth you
18691 Love of appearance and the thought thereof.
18692
18693 And even this above here is endured
18694 With less disdain, than when is set aside
18695 The Holy Writ, or when it is distorted.
18696

18697 They think not there how much of blood it costs
18698 To sow it in the world, and how he pleases
18699 Who in humility keeps close to it.
18700
18701 Each striveth for appearance, and doth make
18702 His own inventions; and these treated are
18703 By preachers, and the Evangel holds its peace.
18704
18705 One sayeth that the moon did backward turn,
18706 In the Passion of Christ, and interpose herself
18707 So that the sunlight reached not down below;
18708
18709 And lies; for of its own accord the light
18710 Hid itself; whence to Spaniards and to Indians,
18711 As to the Jews, did such eclipse respond.
18712
18713 Florence has not so many Lapi and Bindi
18714 As fables such as these, that every year
18715 Are shouted from the pulpit back and forth,
18716
18717 In such wise that the lambs, who do not know,
18718 Come back from pasture fed upon the wind,
18719 And not to see the harm doth not excuse them.
18720
18721 Christ did not to his first disciples say,
18722 'Go forth, and to the world preach idle tales,'
18723 But unto them a true foundation gave;
18724
18725 And this so loudly sounded from their lips,
18726 That, in the warfare to enkindle Faith,
18727 They made of the Evangel shields and lances.
18728
18729 Now men go forth with jests and drolleries
18730 To preach, and if but well the people laugh,
18731 The hood puffs out, and nothing more is asked.
18732
18733 But in the cowl there nestles such a bird,
18734 That, if the common people were to see it,
18735 They would perceive what pardons they confide in,
18736
18737 For which so great on earth has grown the folly,
18738 That, without proof of any testimony,
18739 To each indulgence they would flock together.
18740
18741 By this Saint Anthony his pig doth fatten,
18742 And many others, who are worse than pigs,
18743 Paying in money without mark of coinage.
18744
18745 But since we have digressed abundantly,
18746 Turn back thine eyes forthwith to the right path,
18747 So that the way be shortened with the time.
18748
18749 This nature doth so multiply itself
18750 In numbers, that there never yet was speech
18751 Nor mortal fancy that can go so far.
18752
18753 And if thou notest that which is revealed

18754 By Daniel, thou wilt see that in his thousands
 18755 Number determinate is kept concealed.
 18756
 18757 The primal light, that all irradiates it,
 18758 By modes as many is received therein,
 18759 As are the splendours wherewith it is mated.
 18760
 18761 Hence, inasmuch as on the act conceptive
 18762 The affection followeth, of love the sweetness
 18763 Therein diversely fervid is or tepid.
 18764
 18765 The height behold now and the amplitude
 18766 Of the eternal power, since it hath made
 18767 Itself so many mirrors, where 'tis broken,
 18768
 18769 One in itself remaining as before."
 18770
 18771
 18772
 18773 Paradiso: Canto XXX
 18774
 18775
 18776 Perchance six thousand miles remote from us
 18777 Is glowing the sixth hour, and now this world
 18778 Inclines its shadow almost to a level,
 18779
 18780 When the mid-heaven begins to make itself
 18781 So deep to us, that here and there a star
 18782 Ceases to shine so far down as this depth,
 18783
 18784 And as advances bright exceedingly
 18785 The handmaid of the sun, the heaven is closed
 18786 Light after light to the most beautiful;
 18787
 18788 Not otherwise the Triumph, which for ever
 18789 Plays round about the point that vanquished me,
 18790 Seeming enclosed by what itself encloses,
 18791
 18792 Little by little from my vision faded;
 18793 Whereat to turn mine eyes on Beatrice
 18794 My seeing nothing and my love constrained me.
 18795
 18796 If what has hitherto been said of her
 18797 Were all concluded in a single praise,
 18798 Scant would it be to serve the present turn.
 18799
 18800 Not only does the beauty I beheld
 18801 Transcend ourselves, but truly I believe
 18802 Its Maker only may enjoy it all.
 18803
 18804 Vanquished do I confess me by this passage
 18805 More than by problem of his theme was ever
 18806 O'ercome the comic or the tragic poet;
 18807
 18808 For as the sun the sight that trembles most,
 18809 Even so the memory of that sweet smile
 18810 My mind depriveth of its very self.

18811
18812 From the first day that I beheld her face
18813 In this life, to the moment of this look,
18814 The sequence of my song has ne'er been severed;
18815
18816 But now perforce this sequence must desist
18817 From following her beauty with my verse,
18818 As every artist at his uttermost.
18819
18820 Such as I leave her to a greater fame
18821 Than any of my trumpet, which is bringing
18822 Its arduous matter to a final close,
18823
18824 With voice and gesture of a perfect leader
18825 She recommenced: "We from the greatest body
18826 Have issued to the heaven that is pure light;
18827
18828 Light intellectual replete with love,
18829 Love of true good replete with ecstasy,
18830 Ecstasy that transcendeth every sweetness.
18831
18832 Here shalt thou see the one host and the other
18833 Of Paradise, and one in the same aspects
18834 Which at the final judgment thou shalt see."
18835
18836 Even as a sudden lightning that disperses
18837 The visual spirits, so that it deprives
18838 The eye of impress from the strongest objects,
18839
18840 Thus round about me flashed a living light,
18841 And left me swathed around with such a veil
18842 Of its effulgence, that I nothing saw.
18843
18844 "Ever the Love which quieteth this heaven
18845 Welcomes into itself with such salute,
18846 To make the candle ready for its flame."
18847
18848 No sooner had within me these brief words
18849 An entrance found, than I perceived myself
18850 To be uplifted over my own power,
18851
18852 And I with vision new rekindled me,
18853 Such that no light whatever is so pure
18854 But that mine eyes were fortified against it.
18855
18856 And light I saw in fashion of a river
18857 Fulvid with its effulgence, 'twixt two banks
18858 Depicted with an admirable Spring.
18859
18860 Out of this river issued living sparks,
18861 And on all sides sank down into the flowers,
18862 Like unto rubies that are set in gold;
18863
18864 And then, as if inebriate with the odours,
18865 They plunged again into the wondrous torrent,
18866 And as one entered issued forth another.
18867

18868 "The high desire, that now inflames and moves thee
18869 To have intelligence of what thou seest,
18870 Pleaseth me all the more, the more it swells.
18871
18872 But of this water it behoves thee drink
18873 Before so great a thirst in thee be slaked."
18874 Thus said to me the sunshine of mine eyes;
18875
18876 And added: "The river and the topazes
18877 Going in and out, and the laughing of the herbage,
18878 Are of their truth foreshadowing prefaces;
18879
18880 Not that these things are difficult in themselves,
18881 But the deficiency is on thy side,
18882 For yet thou hast not vision so exalted."
18883
18884 There is no babe that leaps so suddenly
18885 With face towards the milk, if he awake
18886 Much later than his usual custom is,
18887
18888 As I did, that I might make better mirrors
18889 Still of mine eyes, down stooping to the wave
18890 Which flows that we therein be better made.
18891
18892 And even as the penthouse of mine eyelids
18893 Drank of it, it forthwith appeared to me
18894 Out of its length to be transformed to round.
18895
18896 Then as a folk who have been under masks
18897 Seem other than before, if they divest
18898 The semblance not their own they disappeared in,
18899
18900 Thus into greater pomp were changed for me
18901 The flowerets and the sparks, so that I saw
18902 Both of the Courts of Heaven made manifest.
18903
18904 O splendour of God! by means of which I saw
18905 The lofty triumph of the realm veracious,
18906 Give me the power to say how it I saw!
18907
18908 There is a light above, which visible
18909 Makes the Creator unto every creature,
18910 Who only in beholding Him has peace,
18911
18912 And it expands itself in circular form
18913 To such extent, that its circumference
18914 Would be too large a girdle for the sun.
18915
18916 The semblance of it is all made of rays
18917 Reflected from the top of Primal Motion,
18918 Which takes therefrom vitality and power.
18919
18920 And as a hill in water at its base
18921 Mirrors itself, as if to see its beauty
18922 When affluent most in verdure and in flowers,
18923
18924 So, ranged aloft all round about the light,

18925 Mirrored I saw in more ranks than a thousand
 18926 All who above there have from us returned.
 18927
 18928 And if the lowest row collect within it
 18929 So great a light, how vast the amplitude
 18930 Is of this Rose in its extremest leaves!
 18931
 18932 My vision in the vastness and the height
 18933 Lost not itself, but comprehended all
 18934 The quantity and quality of that gladness.
 18935
 18936 There near and far nor add nor take away;
 18937 For there where God immediately doth govern,
 18938 The natural law in naught is relevant.
 18939
 18940 Into the yellow of the Rose Eternal
 18941 That spreads, and multiplies, and breathes an odour
 18942 Of praise unto the ever-vernal Sun,
 18943
 18944 As one who silent is and fain would speak,
 18945 Me Beatrice drew on, and said: "Behold
 18946 Of the white stoles how vast the convent is!
 18947
 18948 Behold how vast the circuit of our city!
 18949 Behold our seats so filled to overflowing,
 18950 That here henceforward are few people wanting!
 18951
 18952 On that great throne whereon thine eyes are fixed
 18953 For the crown's sake already placed upon it,
 18954 Before thou suppest at this wedding feast
 18955
 18956 Shall sit the soul (that is to be Augustus
 18957 On earth) of noble Henry, who shall come
 18958 To redress Italy ere she be ready.
 18959
 18960 Blind covetousness, that casts its spell upon you,
 18961 Has made you like unto the little child,
 18962 Who dies of hunger and drives off the nurse.
 18963
 18964 And in the sacred forum then shall be
 18965 A Prefect such, that openly or covert
 18966 On the same road he will not walk with him.
 18967
 18968 But long of God he will not be endured
 18969 In holy office; he shall be thrust down
 18970 Where Simon Magus is for his deserts,
 18971
 18972 And make him of Alagna lower go!"
 18973
 18974
 18975
 18976 Paradiso: Canto XXXI
 18977
 18978
 18979 In fashion then as of a snow-white rose
 18980 Displayed itself to me the saintly host,
 18981 Whom Christ in his own blood had made his bride,

18982
18983 But the other host, that flying sees and sings
18984 The glory of Him who doth enamour it,
18985 And the goodness that created it so noble,
18986
18987 Even as a swarm of bees, that sinks in flowers
18988 One moment, and the next returns again
18989 To where its labour is to sweetness turned,
18990
18991 Sank into the great flower, that is adorned
18992 With leaves so many, and thence reascended
18993 To where its love abideth evermore.
18994
18995 Their faces had they all of living flame,
18996 And wings of gold, and all the rest so white
18997 No snow unto that limit doth attain.
18998
18999 From bench to bench, into the flower descending,
19000 They carried something of the peace and ardour
19001 Which by the fanning of their flanks they won.
19002
19003 Nor did the interposing 'twixt the flower
19004 And what was o'er it of such plenitude
19005 Of flying shapes impede the sight and splendour;
19006
19007 Because the light divine so penetrates
19008 The universe, according to its merit,
19009 That naught can be an obstacle against it.
19010
19011 This realm secure and full of gladsomeness,
19012 Crowded with ancient people and with modern,
19013 Unto one mark had all its look and love.
19014
19015 O Trinal Light, that in a single star
19016 Sparkling upon their sight so satisfies them,
19017 Look down upon our tempest here below!
19018
19019 If the barbarians, coming from some region
19020 That every day by Helice is covered,
19021 Revolving with her son whom she delights in,
19022
19023 Beholding Rome and all her noble works,
19024 Were wonder-struck, what time the Lateran
19025 Above all mortal things was eminent,--
19026
19027 I who to the divine had from the human,
19028 From time unto eternity, had come,
19029 From Florence to a people just and sane,
19030
19031 With what amazement must I have been filled!
19032 Truly between this and the joy, it was
19033 My pleasure not to hear, and to be mute.
19034
19035 And as a pilgrim who delighteth him
19036 In gazing round the temple of his vow,
19037 And hopes some day to retell how it was,
19038

19039 So through the living light my way pursuing
19040 Directed I mine eyes o'er all the ranks,
19041 Now up, now down, and now all round about.
19042
19043 Faces I saw of charity persuasive,
19044 Embellished by His light and their own smile,
19045 And attitudes adorned with every grace.
19046
19047 The general form of Paradise already
19048 My glance had comprehended as a whole,
19049 In no part hitherto remaining fixed,
19050
19051 And round I turned me with rekindled wish
19052 My Lady to interrogate of things
19053 Concerning which my mind was in suspense.
19054
19055 One thing I meant, another answered me;
19056 I thought I should see Beatrice, and saw
19057 An Old Man habited like the glorious people.
19058
19059 O'erflowing was he in his eyes and cheeks
19060 With joy benign, in attitude of pity
19061 As to a tender father is becoming.
19062
19063 And "She, where is she?" instantly I said;
19064 Whence he: "To put an end to thy desire,
19065 Me Beatrice hath sent from mine own place.
19066
19067 And if thou lookest up to the third round
19068 Of the first rank, again shalt thou behold her
19069 Upon the throne her merits have assigned her."
19070
19071 Without reply I lifted up mine eyes,
19072 And saw her, as she made herself a crown
19073 Reflecting from herself the eternal rays.
19074
19075 Not from that region which the highest thunders
19076 Is any mortal eye so far removed,
19077 In whatsoever sea it deepest sinks,
19078
19079 As there from Beatrice my sight; but this
19080 Was nothing unto me; because her image
19081 Descended not to me by medium blurred.
19082
19083 "O Lady, thou in whom my hope is strong,
19084 And who for my salvation didst endure
19085 In Hell to leave the imprint of thy feet,
19086
19087 Of whatsoever things I have beheld,
19088 As coming from thy power and from thy goodness
19089 I recognise the virtue and the grace.
19090
19091 Thou from a slave hast brought me unto freedom,
19092 By all those ways, by all the expedients,
19093 Whereby thou hadst the power of doing it.
19094
19095 Preserve towards me thy magnificence,

19096 So that this soul of mine, which thou hast healed,
19097 Pleasing to thee be loosened from the body."
19098
19099 Thus I implored; and she, so far away,
19100 Smiled, as it seemed, and looked once more at me;
19101 Then unto the eternal fountain turned.
19102
19103 And said the Old Man holy: "That thou mayst
19104 Accomplish perfectly thy journeying,
19105 Whereunto prayer and holy love have sent me,
19106
19107 Fly with thine eyes all round about this garden;
19108 For seeing it will discipline thy sight
19109 Farther to mount along the ray divine.
19110
19111 And she, the Queen of Heaven, for whom I burn
19112 Wholly with love, will grant us every grace,
19113 Because that I her faithful Bernard am."
19114
19115 As he who peradventure from Croatia
19116 Cometh to gaze at our Veronica,
19117 Who through its ancient fame is never sated,
19118
19119 But says in thought, the while it is displayed,
19120 "My Lord, Christ Jesus, God of very God,
19121 Now was your semblance made like unto this?"
19122
19123 Even such was I while gazing at the living
19124 Charity of the man, who in this world
19125 By contemplation tasted of that peace.
19126
19127 "Thou son of grace, this jocund life," began he,
19128 "Will not be known to thee by keeping ever
19129 Thine eyes below here on the lowest place;
19130
19131 But mark the circles to the most remote,
19132 Until thou shalt behold enthroned the Queen
19133 To whom this realm is subject and devoted."
19134
19135 I lifted up mine eyes, and as at morn
19136 The oriental part of the horizon
19137 Surpasses that wherein the sun goes down,
19138
19139 Thus, as if going with mine eyes from vale
19140 To mount, I saw a part in the remoteness
19141 Surpass in splendour all the other front.
19142
19143 And even as there where we await the pole
19144 That Phaeton drove badly, blazes more
19145 The light, and is on either side diminished,
19146
19147 So likewise that pacific oriflamme
19148 Gleamed brightest in the centre, and each side
19149 In equal measure did the flame abate.
19150
19151 And at that centre, with their wings expanded,
19152 More than a thousand jubilant Angels saw I,

19153 Each differing in effulgence and in kind.
 19154
 19155 I saw there at their sports and at their songs
 19156 A beauty smiling, which the gladness was
 19157 Within the eyes of all the other saints;
 19158
 19159 And if I had in speaking as much wealth
 19160 As in imagining, I should not dare
 19161 To attempt the smallest part of its delight.
 19162
 19163 Bernard, as soon as he beheld mine eyes
 19164 Fixed and intent upon its fervid fervour,
 19165 His own with such affection turned to her
 19166
 19167 That it made mine more ardent to behold.
 19168
 19169
 19170
 19171 Paradiso: Canto XXXII
 19172
 19173
 19174 Absorbed in his delight, that contemplator
 19175 Assumed the willing office of a teacher,
 19176 And gave beginning to these holy words:
 19177
 19178 "The wound that Mary closed up and anointed,
 19179 She at her feet who is so beautiful,
 19180 She is the one who opened it and pierced it.
 19181
 19182 Within that order which the third seats make
 19183 Is seated Rachel, lower than the other,
 19184 With Beatrice, in manner as thou seest.
 19185
 19186 Sarah, Rebecca, Judith, and her who was
 19187 Ancestress of the Singer, who for dole
 19188 Of the misdeed said, 'Miserere mei,'
 19189
 19190 Canst thou behold from seat to seat descending
 19191 Down in gradation, as with each one's name
 19192 I through the Rose go down from leaf to leaf.
 19193
 19194 And downward from the seventh row, even as
 19195 Above the same, succeed the Hebrew women,
 19196 Dividing all the tresses of the flower;
 19197
 19198 Because, according to the view which Faith
 19199 In Christ had taken, these are the partition
 19200 By which the sacred stairways are divided.
 19201
 19202 Upon this side, where perfect is the flower
 19203 With each one of its petals, seated are
 19204 Those who believed in Christ who was to come.
 19205
 19206 Upon the other side, where intersected
 19207 With vacant spaces are the semicircles,
 19208 Are those who looked to Christ already come.
 19209

19210 And as, upon this side, the glorious seat
19211 Of the Lady of Heaven, and the other seats
19212 Below it, such a great division make,
19213
19214 So opposite doth that of the great John,
19215 Who, ever holy, desert and martyrdom
19216 Endured, and afterwards two years in Hell.
19217
19218 And under him thus to divide were chosen
19219 Francis, and Benedict, and Augustine,
19220 And down to us the rest from round to round.
19221
19222 Behold now the high providence divine;
19223 For one and other aspect of the Faith
19224 In equal measure shall this garden fill.
19225
19226 And know that downward from that rank which cleaves
19227 Midway the sequence of the two divisions,
19228 Not by their proper merit are they seated;
19229
19230 But by another's under fixed conditions;
19231 For these are spirits one and all assoiled
19232 Before they any true election had.
19233
19234 Well canst thou recognise it in their faces,
19235 And also in their voices puerile,
19236 If thou regard them well and hearken to them.
19237
19238 Now doubttest thou, and doubting thou art silent;
19239 But I will loosen for thee the strong bond
19240 In which thy subtile fancies hold thee fast.
19241
19242 Within the amplitude of this domain
19243 No casual point can possibly find place,
19244 No more than sadness can, or thirst, or hunger;
19245
19246 For by eternal law has been established
19247 Whatever thou beholdest, so that closely
19248 The ring is fitted to the finger here.
19249
19250 And therefore are these people, festinate
19251 Unto true life, not 'sine causa' here
19252 More and less excellent among themselves.
19253
19254 The King, by means of whom this realm reposes
19255 In so great love and in so great delight
19256 That no will ventureth to ask for more,
19257
19258 In his own joyous aspect every mind
19259 Creating, at his pleasure dowers with grace
19260 Diversely; and let here the effect suffice.
19261
19262 And this is clearly and expressly noted
19263 For you in Holy Scripture, in those twins
19264 Who in their mother had their anger roused.
19265
19266 According to the colour of the hair,

19267 Therefore, with such a grace the light supreme
19268 Consenteth that they worthily be crowned.
19269
19270 Without, then, any merit of their deeds,
19271 Stationed are they in different gradations,
19272 Differing only in their first acuteness.
19273
19274 'Tis true that in the early centuries,
19275 With innocence, to work out their salvation
19276 Sufficient was the faith of parents only.
19277
19278 After the earlier ages were completed,
19279 Behoved it that the males by circumcision
19280 Unto their innocent wings should virtue add;
19281
19282 But after that the time of grace had come
19283 Without the baptism absolute of Christ,
19284 Such innocence below there was retained.
19285
19286 Look now into the face that unto Christ
19287 Hath most resemblance; for its brightness only
19288 Is able to prepare thee to see Christ."
19289
19290 On her did I behold so great a gladness
19291 Rain down, borne onward in the holy minds
19292 Created through that altitude to fly,
19293
19294 That whatsoever I had seen before
19295 Did not suspend me in such admiration,
19296 Nor show me such similitude of God.
19297
19298 And the same Love that first descended there,
19299 "Ave Maria, gratia plena," singing,
19300 In front of her his wings expanded wide.
19301
19302 Unto the canticle divine responded
19303 From every part the court beatified,
19304 So that each sight became serener for it.
19305
19306 "O holy father, who for me endurest
19307 To be below here, leaving the sweet place
19308 In which thou sittest by eternal lot,
19309
19310 Who is the Angel that with so much joy
19311 Into the eyes is looking of our Queen,
19312 Enamoured so that he seems made of fire?"
19313
19314 Thus I again recourse had to the teaching
19315 Of that one who delighted him in Mary
19316 As doth the star of morning in the sun.
19317
19318 And he to me: "Such gallantry and grace
19319 As there can be in Angel and in soul,
19320 All is in him; and thus we fain would have it;
19321
19322 Because he is the one who bore the palm
19323 Down unto Mary, when the Son of God

19324 To take our burden on himself decreed.
 19325
 19326 But now come onward with thine eyes, as I
 19327 Speaking shall go, and note the great patricians
 19328 Of this most just and merciful of empires.
 19329
 19330 Those two that sit above there most enrapture
 19331 As being very near unto Augusta,
 19332 Are as it were the two roots of this Rose.
 19333
 19334 He who upon the left is near her placed
 19335 The father is, by whose audacious taste
 19336 The human species so much bitter tastes.
 19337
 19338 Upon the right thou seest that ancient father
 19339 Of Holy Church, into whose keeping Christ
 19340 The keys committed of this lovely flower.
 19341
 19342 And he who all the evil days beheld,
 19343 Before his death, of her the beauteous bride
 19344 Who with the spear and with the nails was won,
 19345
 19346 Beside him sits, and by the other rests
 19347 That leader under whom on manna lived
 19348 The people ingrate, fickle, and stiff-necked.
 19349
 19350 Opposite Peter seest thou Anna seated,
 19351 So well content to look upon her daughter,
 19352 Her eyes she moves not while she sings Hosanna.
 19353
 19354 And opposite the eldest household father
 19355 Lucia sits, she who thy Lady moved
 19356 When to rush downward thou didst bend thy brows.
 19357
 19358 But since the moments of thy vision fly,
 19359 Here will we make full stop, as a good tailor
 19360 Who makes the gown according to his cloth,
 19361
 19362 And unto the first Love will turn our eyes,
 19363 That looking upon Him thou penetrate
 19364 As far as possible through his effulgence.
 19365
 19366 Truly, lest peradventure thou recede,
 19367 Moving thy wings believing to advance,
 19368 By prayer behoves it that grace be obtained;
 19369
 19370 Grace from that one who has the power to aid thee;
 19371 And thou shalt follow me with thy affection
 19372 That from my words thy heart turn not aside."
 19373
 19374 And he began this holy orison.
 19375
 19376
 19377
 19378 Paradiso: Canto XXXIII
 19379
 19380

19381 "Thou Virgin Mother, daughter of thy Son,
19382 Humble and high beyond all other creature,
19383 The limit fixed of the eternal counsel,
19384
19385 Thou art the one who such nobility
19386 To human nature gave, that its Creator
19387 Did not disdain to make himself its creature.
19388
19389 Within thy womb rekindled was the love,
19390 By heat of which in the eternal peace
19391 After such wise this flower has germinated.
19392
19393 Here unto us thou art a noonday torch
19394 Of charity, and below there among mortals
19395 Thou art the living fountain-head of hope.
19396
19397 Lady, thou art so great, and so prevailing,
19398 That he who wishes grace, nor runs to thee,
19399 His aspirations without wings would fly.
19400
19401 Not only thy benignity gives succour
19402 To him who asketh it, but oftentimes
19403 Forerunneth of its own accord the asking.
19404
19405 In thee compassion is, in thee is pity,
19406 In thee magnificence; in thee unites
19407 Whate'er of goodness is in any creature.
19408
19409 Now doth this man, who from the lowest depth
19410 Of the universe as far as here has seen
19411 One after one the spiritual lives,
19412
19413 Supplicate thee through grace for so much power
19414 That with his eyes he may uplift himself
19415 Higher towards the uttermost salvation.
19416
19417 And I, who never burned for my own seeing
19418 More than I do for his, all of my prayers
19419 Proffer to thee, and pray they come not short,
19420
19421 That thou wouldst scatter from him every cloud
19422 Of his mortality so with thy prayers,
19423 That the Chief Pleasure be to him displayed.
19424
19425 Still farther do I pray thee, Queen, who canst
19426 Whate'er thou wilt, that sound thou mayst preserve
19427 After so great a vision his affections.
19428
19429 Let thy protection conquer human movements;
19430 See Beatrice and all the blessed ones
19431 My prayers to second clasp their hands to thee!"
19432
19433 The eyes beloved and revered of God,
19434 Fastened upon the speaker, showed to us
19435 How grateful unto her are prayers devout;
19436
19437 Then unto the Eternal Light they turned,

19438 On which it is not credible could be
19439 By any creature bent an eye so clear.
19440
19441 And I, who to the end of all desires
19442 Was now approaching, even as I ought
19443 The ardour of desire within me ended.
19444
19445 Bernard was beckoning unto me, and smiling,
19446 That I should upward look; but I already
19447 Was of my own accord such as he wished;
19448
19449 Because my sight, becoming purified,
19450 Was entering more and more into the ray
19451 Of the High Light which of itself is true.
19452
19453 From that time forward what I saw was greater
19454 Than our discourse, that to such vision yields,
19455 And yields the memory unto such excess.
19456
19457 Even as he is who seeth in a dream,
19458 And after dreaming the imprinted passion
19459 Remains, and to his mind the rest returns not,
19460
19461 Even such am I, for almost utterly
19462 Ceases my vision, and distilleth yet
19463 Within my heart the sweetness born of it;
19464
19465 Even thus the snow is in the sun unsealed,
19466 Even thus upon the wind in the light leaves
19467 Were the soothsayings of the Sibyl lost.
19468
19469 O Light Supreme, that dost so far uplift thee
19470 From the conceits of mortals, to my mind
19471 Of what thou didst appear re-lend a little,
19472
19473 And make my tongue of so great puissance,
19474 That but a single sparkle of thy glory
19475 It may bequeath unto the future people;
19476
19477 For by returning to my memory somewhat,
19478 And by a little sounding in these verses,
19479 More of thy victory shall be conceived!
19480
19481 I think the keenness of the living ray
19482 Which I endured would have bewildered me,
19483 If but mine eyes had been averted from it;
19484
19485 And I remember that I was more bold
19486 On this account to bear, so that I joined
19487 My aspect with the Glory Infinite.
19488
19489 O grace abundant, by which I presumed
19490 To fix my sight upon the Light Eternal,
19491 So that the seeing I consumed therein!
19492
19493 I saw that in its depth far down is lying
19494 Bound up with love together in one volume,

19495 What through the universe in leaves is scattered;
19496
19497 Substance, and accident, and their operations,
19498 All interfused together in such wise
19499 That what I speak of is one simple light.
19500
19501 The universal fashion of this knot
19502 Methinks I saw, since more abundantly
19503 In saying this I feel that I rejoice.
19504
19505 One moment is more lethargy to me,
19506 Than five and twenty centuries to the emprise
19507 That startled Neptune with the shade of Argo!
19508
19509 My mind in this wise wholly in suspense,
19510 Steadfast, immovable, attentive gazed,
19511 And evermore with gazing grew enkindled.
19512
19513 In presence of that light one such becomes,
19514 That to withdraw therefrom for other prospect
19515 It is impossible he e'er consent;
19516
19517 Because the good, which object is of will,
19518 Is gathered all in this, and out of it
19519 That is defective which is perfect there.
19520
19521 Shorter henceforward will my language fall
19522 Of what I yet remember, than an infant's
19523 Who still his tongue doth moisten at the breast.
19524
19525 Not because more than one unmingled semblance
19526 Was in the living light on which I looked,
19527 For it is always what it was before;
19528
19529 But through the sight, that fortified itself
19530 In me by looking, one appearance only
19531 To me was ever changing as I changed.
19532
19533 Within the deep and luminous subsistence
19534 Of the High Light appeared to me three circles,
19535 Of threefold colour and of one dimension,
19536
19537 And by the second seemed the first reflected
19538 As Iris is by Iris, and the third
19539 Seemed fire that equally from both is breathed.
19540
19541 O how all speech is feeble and falls short
19542 Of my conceit, and this to what I saw
19543 Is such, 'tis not enough to call it little!
19544
19545 O Light Eterne, sole in thyself that dwellest,
19546 Sole knowest thyself, and, known unto thyself
19547 And knowing, lovest and smilest on thyself!
19548
19549 That circulation, which being thus conceived
19550 Appeared in thee as a reflected light,
19551 When somewhat contemplated by mine eyes,

19552
19553 Within itself, of its own very colour
19554 Seemed to me painted with our effigy,
19555 Wherefore my sight was all absorbed therein.
19556
19557 As the geometrician, who endeavours
19558 To square the circle, and discovers not,
19559 By taking thought, the principle he wants,
19560
19561 Even such was I at that new apparition;
19562 I wished to see how the image to the circle
19563 Conformed itself, and how it there finds place;
19564
19565 But my own wings were not enough for this,
19566 Had it not been that then my mind there smote
19567 A flash of lightning, wherein came its wish.
19568
19569 Here vigour failed the lofty fantasy:
19570 But now was turning my desire and will,
19571 Even as a wheel that equally is moved,
19572
19573 The Love which moves the sun and the other stars.
19574

APPENDIX

SIX SONNETS ON DANTE'S DIVINE COMEDY BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW (1807-1882)

I

Oft have I seen at some cathedral door
A laborer, pausing in the dust and heat,
Lay down his burden, and with reverent feet
Enter, and cross himself, and on the floor
Kneel to repeat his paternoster o'er;
Far off the noises of the world retreat;
The loud vociferations of the street
Become an undistinguishable roar.
So, as I enter here from day to day,
And leave my burden at this minster gate,
Kneeling in prayer, and not ashamed to pray,
The tumult of the time disconsolate
To inarticulate murmurs dies away,
While the eternal ages watch and wait.

II

How strange the sculptures that adorn these towers!
This crowd of statues, in whose folded sleeves
Birds build their nests; while canopied with leaves
Parvis and portal bloom like trellised bowers,
And the vast minster seems a cross of flowers!
But fiends and dragons on the gargoyled eaves
Watch the dead Christ between the living thieves,
And, underneath, the traitor Judas lowers!
Ah! from what agonies of heart and brain,
What exultations trampling on despair,
What tenderness, what tears, what hate of wrong,
What passionate outcry of a soul in pain,
Uprose this poem of the earth and air,
This mediaeval miracle of song!

III

I enter, and I see thee in the gloom
Of the long aisles, O poet saturnine!
And strive to make my steps keep pace with thine.
The air is filled with some unknown perfume;
The congregation of the dead make room
For thee to pass; the votive tapers shine;
Like rooks that haunt Ravenna's groves of pine,
The hovering echoes fly from tomb to tomb.
From the confessionals I hear arise

Rehearsals of forgotten tragedies,
And lamentations from the crypts below
And then a voice celestial that begins
With the pathetic words, "Although your sins
As scarlet be," and ends with "as the snow."

IV

With snow-white veil, and garments as of flame,
She stands before thee, who so long ago
Filled thy young heart with passion and the woe
From which thy song in all its splendors came;
And while with stern rebuke she speaks thy name,
The ice about thy heart melts as the snow
On mountain heights, and in swift overflow
Comes gushing from thy lips in sobs of shame.
Thou makest full confession; and a gleam
As of the dawn on some dark forest cast,
Seems on thy lifted forehead to increase;
Lethe and Eunoe--the remembered dream
And the forgotten sorrow--bring at last
That perfect pardon which is perfect peace.

V

I Lift mine eyes, and all the windows blaze
With forms of saints and holy men who died,
Here martyred and hereafter glorified;
And the great Rose upon its leaves displays
Christ's Triumph, and the angelic roundelays,
With splendor upon splendor multiplied;
And Beatrice again at Dante's side
No more rebukes, but smiles her words of praise.
And then the organ sounds, and unseen choirs
Sing the old Latin hymns of peace and love
And benedictions of the Holy Ghost;
And the melodious bells among the spires
O'er all the house-tops and through heaven above
Proclaim the elevation of the Host!

VI

O star of morning and of liberty!
O bringer of the light, whose splendor shines
Above the darkness of the Apennines,
Forerunner of the day that is to be!
The voices of the city and the sea,
The voices of the mountains and the pines,
Repeat thy song, till the familiar lines
Are footpaths for the thought of Italy!
Thy fame is blown abroad from all the heights,
Through all the nations; and a sound is heard,
As of a mighty wind, and men devout,
Strangers of Rome, and the new proselytes,

In their own language hear thy wondrous word,
And many are amazed and many doubt.

POSTSCRIPT

'Ich habe unter meinen Papieren ein Blatt gefunden,
wo ich die Baukunst eine erstarrte Musik nenne.'
(Johann Wolfgang Goethe, 1829 March 23)

I found Dante in a bar. The Poet had indeed lost the True Way to be found
reduced to party chatter in a Capitol Hill basement, but I had found him at
last. I must have been drinking in the Dark Tavern of Error, for I did not
even realize I had begun the dolorous path followed by many since the Poet's journey of A.D. 1300. Actually no one spoke a word about Dante or
his Divine Comedy, rather I heard a second-hand Goethe call architecture
"frozen music." Soon I took my second step through the gate to a people
lost; this time on a more respectable occasion--a lecture at the Catholic
University of America. Clio, the muse of history, must have been aiding
Prof. Schumacher that evening, because it sustained my full three-hour attention, even after I had just presented an all-night project. There I
heard of a most astonishing Italian translation of 'la Divina Commedia' di
Dante Alighieri. An Italian architect, Giuseppe Terragni, had translated
the Comedy into the 'Danteum,' a projected stone and glass monument to Poet
and Poem near the Basilica of Maxentius in Rome.

Do not look for the Danteum in the Eternal City. In true Dantean form, politics stood in the way of its construction in 1938. Ironically this literature-inspired building can itself most easily be found in book form.
Reading this book I remembered Goethe's quote about frozen music. Did Terragni try to freeze Dante's medieval miracle of song? Certainly a cold-poem seems artistically repulsive. Unflattering comparisons to the
lake of Cocytus spring to mind too. While I cannot read Italian, I can read
some German. After locating the original quotation I discovered that 'frozen' is a problematic (though common) translation of Goethe's original
'erstarnte.' The verb 'erstarren' more properly means 'to solidify' or 'to
stiffen.' This suggests a chemical reaction in which the art does not

necessarily chill in the transformation. Nor can simple thawing yield the original work. Like a chemical reaction it requires an artistic catalyst, a muse. Indeed the Danteum is not a physical translation of the Poem. Terragni thought it inappropriate to translate the Comedy literally into a non-literary work. The Danteum would not be a stage set, rather Terragni generated his design from the Comedy's structure, not its finishes.

The poem is divided into three canticles of thirty-three cantos each, plus one extra in the first, the Inferno, making a total of one hundred cantos. Each canto is composed of three-line tercets, the first and third lines rhyme, the second line rhymes with the beginning of the next tercet, establishing a kind of overlap, reflected in the overlapping motif of the Danteum design. Dante's realms are further subdivided: the Inferno is composed of nine levels, the vestibule makes a tenth. Purgatory has seven terraces, plus two ledges in an ante-purgatory; adding these to the Earthly Paradise yields ten zones. Paradise is composed of nine heavens; Empyrean makes the tenth. In the Inferno, sinners are organized by three vices--Incontinence, Violence, and Fraud--and further subdivided by the seven deadly sins. In Purgatory, penance is ordered on the basis of three types of natural love. Paradise is organized on the basis of three types of Divine Love, and further subdivided according to the three theological and four cardinal virtues.

(Thomas Schumacher, "The Danteum,"
Princeton Architectural Press, 1993)

By translating the structure, Terragni could then layer the literal and the spiritual meanings of the Poem without allowing either to dominate. These layers of meaning are native to the Divine Comedy as they are native to much medieval literature, although modern readers and tourists may not be so familiar with them. They are literal, allegorical, moral, and anagogical. I offer you St. Thomas of Aquinas' definition of these last three as they relate to Sacred Scripture:

. . .this spiritual sense has a threefold division. . .so far as the things of the Old Law signify the things of the New Law, there is the allegorical sense; so far as the things done in Christ, or so far as the things which signify Christ, are types of what we ought to do, there is the moral sense. But so far as they signify what relates to eternal glory, there is the anagogical sense. (Summa Theologica I, 1, 10)

Within the Danteum the Poet's meanings lurk in solid form. An example: the Danteum design does have spaces literally associated with the Comedy--the Dark Wood of Error, Inferno, Purgatorio, and the Paradiso--but these spaces

also relate among themselves spiritually. Dante often highlights a virtue by first condemning its corruption. Within Dante's system Justice is the greatest of the cardinal virtues; its corruption, Fraud, is the most contemptible of vices. Because Dante saw the papacy as the most precious of sacred institutions, corrupt popes figure prominently among the damned in the Poet's Inferno. In the Danteum the materiality of the worldly Dark Wood directly opposes the transcendence of the Paradiso. In the realm of error every thought is lost and secular, while in heaven every soul's intent is directed toward God. The shadowy Inferno of the Danteum mirrors the Purgatorio's illuminated ascent to heaven. Purgatory embodies hope and growth where hell chases its own dark inertia. Such is the cosmography shared by Terragni and Dante.

In this postscript I intend neither to fully examine the meaning nor the plan of the Danteum, but rather to evince the power that art has acted as a catalyst to other artists. The Danteum, a modern design inspired by a medieval poem, is but one example. Dante's poem is filled with characters epitomizing the full range of vices and virtues of human personalities. Dante's characters come from his present and literature's past; they are mythological, biblical, classical, ancient, and medieval. They, rather than Calliope and her sisters, were Dante's muses.

'La Divina Commedia' seems a natural candidate to complete Project Gutenberg's first milleditio and to begin its second thousand e-texts. Although distinctly medieval, its continuum of influence spans the Renaissance and modernity. Terragni saw his place within the Comedy as surely as Dante saw his own. We too fit within Dante's understanding of the human condition; we differ less from our past than we might like to believe. T. S. Eliot understood this when he wrote "Dante and Shakespeare divide the modern world between them, there is no third." So now Dante joins Shakespeare (e-text #100) in the Project Gutenberg collection. Two works that influenced Dante are also part of the collection: The Bible (#10) and Virgil's Aeneid (#227). Other major influences--St. Thomas of Aquinas' Summa Theologica, The Metamorphoses of Ovid, and Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics--are available in electronic form at other Internet sites. If one searches enough he may even find a computer rendering of the Danteum on the Internet. By presenting this electronic text to Project Gutenberg it is my hope that it will not rest in a computer unknown and unread; it is my hope that artists will see themselves in the Divine Comedy

and be inspired, just as Dante ran the paths left by Virgil and St.
Thomas
that led him to the stars.

Dennis McCarthy, July 1997
Atlanta, Georgia USA
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TECHNICAL NOTES

Text that was originally in italics has been placed within single quotes ('italics'). Where italic text coincided with existing quotation marks it was not given any additional markup. Extended characters, used occasionally in the original, have been transcribed into 7-bit ASCII. To view the italics and special characters please refer to the HTML version of this e-text.

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