DANTE

EDMUND G. GARDNER

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DANTE ***

DANTE

BY

EDMUND G. GARDNER, M.A.



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TO
PHILIP H. WICKSTEED
A SMALL TRIBUTE
OF
DEEP AFFECTION AND HIGH ESTEEM

AUTHOR'S NOTE

I would ask the reader to take the present volume, not as a new book on Dante, but merely as a revision of the Primer which was first published in 1900. It has been as far as possible brought up to date, the chief modifications being naturally in the sections devoted to the poet's life and *Opere minori*, and in the bibliographical appendix; but the work remains substantially the same. Were I now to write a new Dante Primer, after the interval of nearly a quarter of a century, I should be disposed to attach considerably less importance to the allegorical meaning of the *Divina Commedia*, and to emphasise, more than I have here done, the aspect of Dante as the symbol and national hero of Italy.

E. G. G.

LONDON, *July, 1923*.

N.B.—The “Sexcentenary Dante” (the *testo critico* published under the auspices of the *Società Dantesca Italiana*) adopts a slightly different numbering of the chapters, or paragraphs, of the *Vita Nuova* and the second treatise of the *Convivio* from that presented by the “Oxford Dante” and the “Temple Classics.” I have kept to the latter (which is indicated in brackets in the *testo critico*). Similarly, I have followed the numbering of the *Epistolae* in Dr. Toynbee’s edition and the “Oxford Dante” (also given in brackets in the *testo critico*). In the section on the lyrical poetry, *Rime* refers to the *testo critico* as edited by Professor Barbi, *O*. to the new Oxford edition revised by Dr. Toynbee. In the closing passage of the Letter to a Florentine friend, I have followed the reading retained by Dr. Toynbee. I have frequently availed myself of Dr. Wicksteed’s translation of the Letters and *Monarchia*, of Mr. A. G. F. Howell’s version of the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, and occasionally of Carlyle’s rendering of the *Inferno*. Every student of Dante must inevitably owe much to others; but, in this new edition of my Primer, I would express my indebtedness in particular to the writings of Dr. Paget Toynbee, Dr. Philip H. Wicksteed, the late Ernesto Giacomo Parodi, and Prof. Michele Barbi.

⁂ To the Bibliographical Appendix should be added: A. Fiammazzo, *Il commento dantesco di Graziolo de’ Bambaglioli* (Savona, 1915), and P. Revelli, *L’Italia nella Divina Commedia* (Milan, 1923).

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DANTE

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CHAPTER I
DANTE IN HIS TIMES

1. *The End of the Middle Ages*

FROM GREGORY VII. TO FREDERICK II.—The twelfth and thirteenth centuries cover the last and more familiar portion of the Middle Ages. They are the period of chivalry, of the crusades and of romance, when the Neo-Latin languages bore fruit in the prose and poetry of France, the lyrics of the Provençal troubadours, and the earliest vernacular literature of Italy; the period which saw the development of Gothic architecture, the rise of scholastic philosophy, the institution of the Franciscan and Dominican orders, the recovery by western Europe of the works of Aristotle, the elevation of Catholic theology into a systematic harmony of reason and revelation under the influence of the christianised Aristotelianism of Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas. The vernacular literature of Italy developed comparatively late, and (until the time of Aquinas and Bonaventura) her part in the scholastic movement was secondary to that of France, but she had led the way in the revival of the study of Roman law and jurisprudence, which centred at Bologna, where the great Irnerius taught at the beginning of

the twelfth century. It was thus that the first European university, *studium generale*, came into being, and Bologna boasts the proud title *alma mater studiorum*.

There are two predominant political factors in Italy which appear at the end of the twelfth century, and hold the field up to the time of Dante's birth. Out of the war of investitures between Pope and Emperor, the struggle which we associate mainly with the name of Hildebrand (Gregory VII.), emerged the Italian city-states, the free communes of northern and central Italy, whose development culminated in the heroic resistance offered by the first Lombard League to the mightiest of mediaeval German Caesars, Frederick I. (Barbarossa), which won the battle of Legnano (1176) and obtained the peace of Constance (1183). In the south, the Normans—conquering Apulia and Calabria, delivering Sicily from the Saracens—consolidated their rule into a feudal monarchy, making their capital Palermo one of the most splendid cities of the mediaeval world. The third and last of these Norman kings of Sicily, William II. (*Par.* xx. 61-66), died in 1189. The son of Barbarossa, Henry VI., claimed the kingdom in the right of his wife Constance (*Par.* iii. 115-120), and established the Suabian dynasty on the throne. His son, Frederick II., continued the cultured traditions of the Norman kings; but the union in his person of the kingdom of Sicily with the Empire led to a continuous struggle with the Italian communes and the Papacy, which embittered his closing years until his death in 1250. The reign of Frederick II. is the period of the Guelf and Ghibelline factions, and the beginning of the rise of tyrants in the Italian cities, tyrants of whom the most terrible example was Ezzelino da Romano (*Inf.* xii. 110).

THE BATTLE OF BENEVENTO.—The policy of Frederick II. was continued by his son Manfred (crowned King of Sicily in 1258), against whom Pope Clement IV., claiming the right to dispose of the kingdom as a fief of the Church, summoned Charles of Anjou, the brother of St. Louis of France. Charles entered Italy (*Purg.* xx. 67), encountered and defeated Manfred on the plains of Grandella near Benevento, in February 1266, and the papal legate refused the rites of Christian burial to the fallen king (*Purg.* iii. 124-132). This battle of Benevento marks an epoch in Italian history. It ended for the time the struggle between the Roman Pontiffs and the German Caesars; it initiated the new strife between the Papacy and the royal house of France. Henceforth the old ideal significance of "Guelf" and "Ghibelline," as denoting adherents of Church and Empire respectively, becomes lost in the local conflicts of each Italian district and city. The imperial power was at an end in Italy; but the Popes, by calling in this new foreign aid, had prepared the way for the humiliation of Pope Boniface at Anagni and the corruption of Avignon. The fall of the silver eagle from Manfred's helmet before the golden lilies on Charles's standard may be taken as symbolical. The preponderance in Italian politics had passed back from Germany to France; the influence of the house of Capet was substituted for the overthrown authority of the Emperor (*Purg.* xx. 43, 44). Three weeks after the battle Charles entered Naples in triumph, King of Apulia and Sicily; an Angevin dynasty was established upon the throne of the most potent state of Italy.

ART AND LETTERS.—This political transformation was profoundly felt in Italian literature. A new courtly poetry, that of the so-called "Sicilian School,"

had come into being in the south, partly based on Provençal models, in the first quarter of the thirteenth century. Its poets—mainly Sicilians and Apulians, but with recruits from other parts of the peninsula—had almost given to Italy a literary language. “The Sicilian vernacular,” writes Dante in his *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, “seems to have gained for itself a renown beyond the others; for whatever Italians produce in poetry is called Sicilian, and we find that many native poets have sung weightily.” This he ascribes to the fostering influence of the imperial rule of the house of Suabia: “Those illustrious heroes, Frederick Caesar and his well-begotten son Manfred, showing their nobility and rectitude of soul, as long as fortune lasted, followed human things, disdaining the bestial; wherefore the noble in heart and endowed with graces strove to cleave to the majesty of such great princes; so that, in their time, whatever the excellent among Italians attempted first appeared at the court of these great sovereigns. And, because the royal throne was Sicily, it came about that whatever our predecessors produced in the vernacular is called Sicilian” (*V. E.* i. 12). The house of Anjou made Naples their capital, and treated Sicily as a conquered province. After Benevento the literary centre of Italy shifted from Palermo and the royal court of the south to Bologna and the republican cities of Tuscany. Guittone d’Arezzo (*Purg.* xxvi. 124-126) founded a school of Tuscan poets, extending the field of Italian lyrical poetry to political and ethical themes as well as love (which had been the sole subject of the Sicilian School). The beginnings of Italian literary prose had already appeared at Bologna, with the first vernacular models for composition of the rhetoricians, the masters of the *ars dictandi*. Here,

within the next eight years, St. Thomas Aquinas published the first and second parts of the *Summa Theologica*; and the poetry of the first great singer of modern Italy, Guido Guinizelli (*Purg.* xxvi. 91-114), rose to spiritual heights undreamed of in the older schools, in his canzone on Love and true nobility: *Al cor gentil ripara sempre Amore*; "To the gentle heart doth Love ever repair." And, in the sphere of the plastic arts, these were the years that saw the last triumphs of Niccolò Pisano, "the Father of Sculpture to Italy," and the earliest masterpieces of Cimabue, the teacher of Giotto (*Purg.* xi. 94-96), the shepherd boy who came from the fields to free Italian painting from Byzantine fetters, and who "developed an artistic language which was the true expression of the Italian national character."

2. *Dante's Childhood and Adolescence*

BIRTH AND FAMILY.—Dante Alighieri, in its Latin form Alagherii, was born at Florence in 1265, probably in the latter part of May, some nine months before the battle of Benevento. His father, Alighiero di Bellincione di Alighiero, came of an ancient and honourable family of that section of the city named from the Porta San Piero. Although Guelfs, the Alighieri were probably of the same stock as the Elisei, decadent nobles of supposed Roman descent, who took the Ghibelline side in the days of Frederick II., when the city was first involved in these factions after the murder of young Buondelmonte in her "last peace" in 1215 (*Par.* xvi. 136-147). Among the warriors of the Cross, in the Heaven of Mars, Dante meets his great-great-grandfather Cacciaguida. Born probably in 1091, Cacciaguida married a wife from the valley of the Po, a member of one or other of the

families afterwards known as the Aldighieri or Alighieri at Ferrara, Parma, and Bologna, was knighted by Conrad III., and died in battle against the infidels in the disastrous second crusade (*Par.* xv. 137-148). None of Cacciaguida's descendants had attained to any distinction in the Republic. Brunetto di Bellincione, Dante's uncle, probably fought for the Guelfs at Montaperti in 1260, where he may have been one of those in charge of the *carroccio*, the battle-car which accompanied the army. Besides Cacciaguida and his son Alaghiero, or Alighiero, the first to bear the name, who is said by his father to be still in the purgatorial terrace of the proud (*Par.* xv. 91-96), the only other member of the family introduced into the *Divina Commedia* is Geri del Bello, a grandson of the elder Alighiero and cousin of Dante's father, a sower of discord and a murderer (*Inf.* xxix. 13-36), whose violent and well-deserved death had not yet been avenged.

THE FLORENTINE REPUBLIC.—As far as Florence was concerned, the real strife of Guelfs and Ghibellines was a struggle for supremacy, first without and then within the city, of a democracy of merchants and traders, with a military aristocracy of partly Teutonic descent, who were gradually being deprived of their territorial and feudal sway, which they had held nominally from the Emperor in the *contado*, the country districts of Tuscany included in the continually extending Florentine commune. Although the party names were first introduced into Florence in 1215, the struggle had virtually begun after the death of the great Countess Matilda in 1115; and had resulted in a regular and constitutional advance of the power of the people, interrupted by a few intervals. It was in one of these intervals that Dante was born. The popular

government (*Primo Popolo*), which had been established shortly before the death of Frederick II. in 1250, and worked victoriously for ten years, had been overthrown in 1260 at the disastrous battle of Montaperti, "the havoc and the great slaughter, which dyed the Arbia red" (*Inf.* x. 85, 86). The patriotism of Farinata degli Uberti saved Florence from total destruction, but all the leading Guelf families were driven out, and the government remained in the power of a despotic Ghibelline aristocracy, under Manfred's vicar, Count Guido Novello, supported by German mercenaries. After the fall of Manfred, an attempt was made to effect a peace between the Ghibellines and the people; but a revolution on St. Martin's Day, November 11th, 1266, led to the expulsion of Guido Novello and his forces, and the formation of a provisional democratic government. In January 1267 the banished Guelfs—many of whom had fought under the papal banner at Benevento—returned; on Easter Day French troops entered Florence, the Ghibellines fled, the Guelfs made Charles of Anjou suzerain of the city, and accepted his vicar as podestà. The government was reorganised, with a new institution, the *Parte Guelfa*, to secure the Guelf predominance in the Republic.

The defeat of young Conradin, grandson of Frederick II., at Tagliacozzo in 1268, followed by his judicial murder (*Purg.* xx. 68), confirmed the triumph of the Guelfs and the power of Charles in Italy. In Florence the future conflict lay between the new Guelf aristocracy and the burghers and people, between the *Grandi* and the *Popolani*; the magnates in their palaces and towers, associated into societies and groups of families, surrounding themselves with retainers and swordsmen, but always divided among

themselves; and the people, soon to become "very fierce and hot in lordship," as Villani says, artisans and traders ready to rush out from stalls and workshops to follow the standards of their Arts or Guilds in defence of liberty. In the year after the House of Suabia ended with Conradin upon the scaffold, the Florentines took partial vengeance for Montaperti at the battle of Colle di Valdelsa (*Purg.* xiii. 115-120), where the Sienese were routed and Provenzano Salvani (*Purg.* xi. 109-114) killed. It is said to have been Provenzano Salvani who, in the great Ghibelline council at Empoli, had proposed that Florence should be destroyed.

DANTE'S BOYHOOD.—It is not clear how Dante came to be born in Florence, since he gives us to understand (*Inf.* x. 46-50) that his family were fiercely adverse to the Ghibellines and would naturally have been in exile until the close of 1266. Probably his father, of whom scarcely anything is known, took no prominent part in politics and had been allowed to remain in the city. Besides the houses in the Piazza San Martino, he possessed two farms and some land in the country. Dante's mother, Bella (perhaps an abbreviation of Gabriella), is believed to have been Alighiero's first wife, and to have died soon after the poet's birth. Her family is not known, though it has been suggested that she may have been the daughter of Durante di Scolaio degli Abati, a Guelf noble. Alighiero married again, Lapa di Chiarissimo Cialuffi, the daughter of a prominent Guelf popolano; by this second marriage he had a son, Francesco, and a daughter, Tana (Gaetana), who married Lapo Riccomanni. Another daughter, whose name is not known, married Leone Poggi; it is not quite certain whether her mother was Bella or Lapa. Dante never mentions his mother nor

his father, whom he also lost in boyhood, in any of his works (excepting such indirect references as *Inf.* viii. 45, and *Conv.* i. 13); but, in the *Vita Nuova*, a "young and gentle lady, who was united to me by very near kindred," appears watching by the poet in his illness. In the loveliest of his early lyrics she is described as

Adorna assai di gentilezze umane,

which Rossetti renders:

Exceeding rich in human sympathies.

This lady was, perhaps, one of these two sisters; and it is tempting to infer from Dante's words that a tender affection existed between him and her. It was from Dante's nephew, Andrea Poggi, that Boccaccio obtained some of his information concerning the poet, and it would be pleasant to think that Andrea's mother is the heroine of this canzone (*V. N.* xxiii.); but there are chronological difficulties in the identification.

SOURCES.—Our sources for Dante's biography, in addition to his own works, are primarily a short chapter in the Chronicle of his neighbour Giovanni Villani, the epoch-making work of Boccaccio, Filippo Villani's unimportant sketch at the end of the fourteenth and the brief but reliable life by Leonardo Bruni at the beginning of the fifteenth century. In addition we have some scanty hints given by the early commentators on the *Divina Commedia*, and a few documents, including the *consulte* or reports of the deliberations of the various councils of the Florentine Republic. Boccaccio's work has come down to us in two forms: the *Vita di Dante* (or

Trattatello in laude di Dante) and the so-called *Compendio* (itself in two redactions, the *Primo* and *Secondo Compendio*); the researches of Michele Barbi have finally established that both are authentic, the *Compendio* being the author's own later revision. The tendency of recent scholarship has in a considerable measure rehabilitated the once discredited authority of Boccaccio, and rejected the excessive scepticism represented in the nineteenth century by Bartoli and Scartazzini.

BEATRICE.—Although Leonardo Bruni rebukes Boccaccio, "our Boccaccio that most sweet and pleasant man," for having lingered so long over Dante's love affairs, still the story of the poet's first love remains the one salient fact of his youth and early manhood. We may surmise from the *Vita Nuova* that at the end of his eighteenth year, presumably in May 1283, Dante became enamoured of the glorious lady of his mind, Beatrice, who had first appeared to him as a child in her ninth year, nine years before. It is not quite certain whether Beatrice was her real name or one beneath which Dante conceals her identity; assuredly she was "Beatrice," the giver of blessing, to him and through him to all lovers of the noblest and fairest things in literature. Tradition, following Boccaccio, has identified her with Bice, the daughter of Folco Portinari, a wealthy Florentine who founded the hospital of S. Maria Nuova, and died in 1289 (*cf. V. N.* xxii.). Folco's daughter is shown by her father's will to have been the wife of Simone dei Bardi, a rich and noble banker. This has been confirmed by the discovery that, while the printed commentary of Dante's son Pietro upon the *Commedia* hardly suggests that Beatrice was a real woman at all, there exists a fuller and later recension

by Pietro of his own work which contains a distinct statement that the lady raised to fame in his father's poem was in very fact Bice Portinari. Nevertheless, there are still found critics who see in Beatrice not a real woman, but a mystically exalted ideal of womanhood or a merely allegorical figure; while Scartazzini at one time maintained that the woman Dante loved was an unknown Florentine maiden, who would have been his wife but for her untimely death. This can hardly be deduced from the *Vita Nuova*; in its noblest passages the woman of Dante's worship is scarcely regarded as an object that can be possessed; death has not robbed him of an expected beatitude, but all the world of an earthly miracle. But, although it was in the fullest correspondence with mediaeval ideals and fashions that chivalrous love and devotion should be directed by preference to a married woman, the love of Dante for Beatrice was something at once more real and more exalted than the artificial passion of the troubadours; a true romantic love that linked heaven to earth, and was a revelation for the whole course of life.

POETRY, FRIENDSHIP, STUDY.—Already, at the age of eighteen, Dante was a poet: "I had already seen for myself the art of saying words in rhyme" (*V. N.* iii.). It was on the occasion of what we take as the real beginning of his love that he wrote the opening sonnet of the *Vita Nuova*, in which he demands an explanation of a dream from "all the faithful of Love." The new poet was at once recognised. Among the many answers came a sonnet from the most famous Italian lyrist then living, Guido Cavalcanti, henceforth to be the first of Dante's friends: "And this was, as it were, the beginning of the friendship between him and me, when he knew that I was he who had sent that sonnet to him" (*cf. Inf.* x. 60). In

the same year, 1283, Dante's name first occurs in a document concerning some business transactions as his late father's heir.

There are no external events recorded in Dante's life between 1283 and 1289. Boccaccio represents him as devoted to study. He certainly owed much to the paternal advice of the old rhetorician and statesman, Brunetto Latini, who had been secretary of the commune and, until his death in 1294, was one of the most influential citizens in the state: "For in my memory is fixed, and now goes to my heart, the dear, kind, paternal image of you, when in the world, from time to time, you taught me how man makes himself eternal" (*Inf.* xv. 82). Of his growing maturity in art, the lyrics of the *Vita Nuova* bear witness; the prose narrative shows that he had studied the Latin poets as well as the new singers of Provence and Italy, had already dipped into scholastic philosophy, and was not unacquainted with Aristotle. At the same time, Leonardo Bruni was obviously right in describing Dante as not severing himself from the world, but excelling in every youthful exercise; and it would seem from the *Vita Nuova* that, in spite of his supreme devotion for Beatrice, there were other Florentine damsels who moved his heart for a time. Dante speaks of "one who, according to the degrees of friendship, is my friend immediately after the first," and than whom there was no one nearer in kinship to Beatrice (*V. N.* xxxiii.). Those who identify Dante's Beatrice with the daughter of Messer Folco suppose that this second friend was one of her three brothers, probably Manetto Portinari, to whom a sonnet of Guido's may have been addressed. Casella the musician, and Lapo Gianni the poet, are mentioned with affection in the *Purgatorio* (Canto ii.), and in one of Dante's sonnets

respectively; Lippo de' Bardi, evidently like Casella a musician, and a certain Meuccio likewise appear as friends in other of his earliest lyrics. Cino da Pistoia, like Cavalcanti, seems to have answered Dante's dream; their friendship was perhaps at present mainly confined to exchanging poems. Boccaccio and Benvenuto da Imola speak of an early visit of Dante's to the universities of Bologna and Padua, and there is some evidence for thinking that he was at Bologna some time not later than 1287. He may possibly have served in some cavalry expedition to check the harrying parties of Aretines in 1288; for, when the great battle of the following year was fought, it found Dante "no novice in arms," as a fragment of one of his lost letters puts it, *non fanciullo nell' armi*.

POPULAR GOVERNMENT.—Twenty years had now passed since the victory of Colle di Valdelsa in 1269. Great changes had taken place in the meanwhile. The estrangement between Charles of Anjou and the Popes, Gregory X. and Nicholas III., the attempts of these latter to weaken the king's power by reconciling the Florentine Guelfs with the Ghibelline exiles, and the dissensions among the Guelf magnates themselves within the city, had led, in 1280, to the peace arranged by Cardinal Latino Frangipani. A government was set up of fourteen *buonuomini*, magnates and popolani, eight Guelfs and six Ghibellines. But the city remained strenuously Guelf. Nicholas III. had deprived King Charles of the offices of Senator of Rome and Vicar Imperial and had allowed Rudolph of Hapsburg to establish a vicar in Tuscany (*Inf.* xix. 99). In 1282 came the Vespers of Palermo (*Par.* viii. 75). The Sicilians rose, massacred Charles's adherents, and received as their king Peter of Aragon, the husband of Manfred's daughter Constance (*Purg.* iii. 143). The hitherto united

kingdom of Sicily, which had been the heritage of the imperial Suabians from the Norman heroes of the house of Hauteville, was thus divided between a French and a Spanish line of kings (*Par.* xx. 63); the former at Naples as kings of "Sicily and Jerusalem," the latter in the island as kings of "Trinacria." Charles was henceforth too much occupied in war with the Sicilians and Aragonese to interfere in the internal affairs of Tuscany. In the June of this year a peaceful revolution took place in Florence. Instead of the fourteen *buonuomini*, the government was put into the hands of the Priors of the Arts or Guilds, who, associated with the Captain, were henceforth recognised as the chief magistrates of the Republic, composing the Signoria, during the two months for which they were elected to hold office. Their number, originally three, was raised to six; both *grandi* and *popolani* were at first eligible, provided the former left their order by enrolling themselves in one of the Guilds. A thorough organisation of these Guilds, the *Arti maggiori* (which were mainly engaged in wholesale commerce, exportation and importation, and the mercantile relations of Florence with foreign countries) and *Arti minori* (which carried on the retail traffic and internal trade of the city), secured the administration in the hands of the trading classes.

Thus was established the democratic constitution of the state in which Dante was afterwards to play his part. There was the central administration of the six Priors, one for each *sesto* of the city, with the council of a hundred "good men of the people without whose deliberation no great thing or expenditure could be done" (Villani, vii. 16). The executive was composed of the Captain of the People and the Podestà, both Italian nobles from other

states, holding office for six months, each with his two councils, a special and a general council, the general council of the Podestà being the general council of the Commune. The great Guilds had their own council (*Consiglio delle Capitudini delle Arti*), and their consuls or rectors, while specially associated with the two councils of the Captain, were sometimes admitted to those of the Podestà; the nobles were excluded from all these councils, excepting the special council of the Podestà and the general council of the Commune. But, while the central government of the Republic was thus entirely popular, the magnates still retained control over the captains of the Guelf Society, with their two councils, and exerted considerable influence upon the Podestà, always one of their own order and an alien, in whose councils they still sat. The Podestà, however, was now little more than a chief justice; "the Priors, with the Captain of the People, had to determine the great and weighty matters of the commonwealth, and to summon and conduct councils and make regulations" (Villani).

Battle of Campaldino.—A period of prosperity and victory followed for Florence. The crushing defeat inflicted upon Pisa by Genoa at the great naval battle of Meloria in 1284 was much to her advantage; as was also, perhaps, the decline of the Angevin power after the victory of Peter of Aragon's fleet (*Purg.* xx. 79). Charles II., the "cripple of Jerusalem," who succeeded his father as king of Naples, was a less formidable suzerain. On June 11th, 1289, the Tuscan Ghibellines were utterly defeated by the Florentines and their allies at the battle of Campaldino. According to Leonardo Bruni—and there seems no adequate reason for rejecting his testimony—Dante was present, "fighting valiantly on

horseback in the front rank," apparently among the 150 who volunteered or were chosen as *feditori*, amongst whom was Vieri de' Cerchi, who was later to acquire a more dubious reputation in politics. Bruni states that in a letter Dante draws a plan of the fight; and he quotes what seems to be a fragment of another letter, written later, where Dante speaks of "the battle of Campaldino, in which the Ghibelline party was almost utterly destroyed and undone; where I found myself no novice in arms, and where I had much fear, and in the end very great gladness, by reason of the varying chances of that battle."

Dante probably took part in the subsequent events of the campaign; the wasting of the Aretine territory, the unsuccessful attack upon Arezzo, the surrender of the Pisan fortress of Caprona. "Thus once I saw the footmen, who marched out under treaty from Caprona, fear at seeing themselves among so many enemies" (*Inf.* xxi. 94-96). There appears to be a direct reference to his personal experiences of the campaign in the opening of *Inferno* xxii.: "I have seen ere now horsemen moving camp and beginning the assault, and holding their muster, and at times retiring to escape; coursers have I seen upon your land, O Aretines! and seen the march of foragers, the shock of tournaments and race of jousts, now with trumpets and now with bells, with drums and castle signals." He has sung of Campaldino in peculiarly pathetic strains in Canto V. of the *Purgatorio*. On the lower slopes of the Mountain of Purgation wanders the soul of Buonconte da Montefeltro, who led the Aretine cavalry, and whose body was never found; mortally wounded and forsaken by all, he had died gasping out the name of Mary, and his Giovanna had forgotten even to pray for his soul.

DEATH OF BEATRICE.—In the following year, 1290, Beatrice died: “The Lord of justice called this most gentle one to glory under the banner of that blessed queen Mary virgin, whose name was in very great reverence in the words of this blessed Beatrice” (*V. N.* xxix.). Although Dante complicates the date by a reference to “the usage of Arabia,” she appears to have died on the evening of June 8th;[1] and the poet lifts up his voice with the prophet: “How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! How is she become as a widow, she that was great among the nations!”

3. *After the Death of Beatrice*

PHILOSOPHIC REFUGE.—It is not easy to get a very definite idea of Dante’s private life during the next ten years. With the completion of the *Vita Nuova*, shortly after Beatrice’s death, an epoch closes in his life, as in his work. From the *Convivio* it would appear that in his sorrow Dante took refuge in the study of the *De Consolatione Philosophiae* of Boëthius and Cicero’s *De Amicitia*; that he frequented “the schools of the religious and the disputations of philosophers,” where he became deeply enamoured of Philosophy. Cino da Pistoia addressed to him an exceedingly beautiful canzone, consoling him for the loss of Beatrice, bidding him take comfort in the contemplation of her glory among the saints and angels of Paradise, where she is praying to God for her lover’s peace. This poem is quoted years later by Dante himself in the second book of the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (ii. 6), where he couples it with his own canzone—

Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona,

"Love that in my mind discourses to me," with which Casella consoles the penitent spirits upon the shore of Purgatory: "The amorous chant which was wont to quiet all my desires."

ABERRATIONS.—It would seem, however, that neither the memory of Beatrice nor his philosophical devotion kept Dante from falling into what he afterwards came to regard as a morally unworthy life. *Tanto giù cadde*, "so low he fell" (*Purg.* xxx. 136). It is almost impossible to hold, as Witte and Scartazzini would have us do, that the poignant reproaches which Beatrice addresses to Dante, when he meets her on Lethe's banks, are connected mainly with intellectual errors, with culpable neglect of Theology or speculative wanderings from revealed truth, for there are but scanty, if any, traces of this in the poet's writings at any period of his career. The dark wood in which he wandered, led by the world and the flesh, was that of sensual passion and moral aberration for a while from the light of reason and the virtue which is the "ordering of love."

FRIENDSHIP WITH FORESE DONATI.—Dante was evidently intimate with the great Donati family, whose houses were in the same district of the city. Corso di Simone Donati, a turbulent and ambitious spirit, had done heroically at Campaldino, and was now intent upon having his own way in the state. A close and familiar friendship united Dante with Corso's brother Forese, a sensual man of pleasure. Six sonnets interchanged between these two friends, though now only in part intelligible, do little credit to either. "If thou recall to mind," Dante says to Forese in the sixth terrace of Purgatory, "what thou wast with me and I was with thee, the present memory will still be grievous" (*Purg.* xxiii, 115).

Forese died in July 1296; the author of the *Ottimo Commento*, who wrote about 1334, and professes to have known the divine poet, tells us that Dante induced his friend when on his death-bed to repent and receive the last sacraments. Another sonnet of Dante's shows him in friendly correspondence with Brunetto (Betto) Brunelleschi, a noble who later played a sinister part in the factions and, like Corso Donati, met a violent death.

LOVES, MARRIAGE, AND DEBTS.—Several very striking canzoni, written for a lady whom Dante represents under various stony images, and whose name may possibly have been Pietra, are frequently assigned to this period of the poet's life, but may perhaps have been written in the early days of his exile. From other lyrics and sonnets we dimly discern that several women may have crossed Dante's life now and later, of whom nothing can be known. Dante married Gemma di Manetto Donati, a distant kinswoman of Corso and Forese. In the *Paradiso* (xvi. 119) he refers with complacency to his wife's ancestor, Ubertino Donati, Manetto's great-grandfather, whose family pride scorned any alliance with the Adimari. According to Boccaccio, the marriage took place some time after the death of Beatrice, and it was certainly not later than 1297; but there is documentary evidence that Gemma's dowry was settled in 1277, which points to an early betrothal. The union has generally been supposed—on somewhat inadequate grounds—to have been an unhappy one. Gemma bore Dante two sons, Jacopo and Pietro, and either one or two daughters. Boccaccio's statement, that she did not share the poet's exile, is usually accepted; she was living in Florence after his death, and died there after 1332.[2] During the following years, between 1297 and 1300,

Dante was contracting debts (Durante di Scolaio degli Abati and Manetto Donati being among his sureties), which altogether amounted to a very large sum, but which were cleared off from the poet's estate after his death.

4. *Dante's Political Life*

ELECTION OF BONIFACE VIII.—Upon the abdication of Celestine V., Cardinal Benedetto Gaetani was made Pope on Christmas Eve 1294, under the title of Boniface VIII. (*Inf.* xix. 52-57), an event ominous for Florence and for Dante. Although canonised by the Church, there is little doubt that St. Celestine is the first soul met by Dante in the vestibule of Hell: *Colui che fece per viltà il gran rifiuto* (*Inf.* iii. 58-60), "He who made from cowardice the great renunciation."

GIANO DELLA BELLA.—Florence had just confirmed the democratic character of her constitution by the reforms of Giano della Bella, a noble who had identified himself with the popular cause (*Par.* xvi. 132). By the Ordinances of Justice in 1293 stringent provisions were enacted against the nobles, who since Campaldino had grown increasingly aggressive towards the people and factious against each other. They were henceforth more rigorously excluded from the Priorate and Council of the Hundred, as also from the councils of the Captain and Capitudini; severe penalties were exacted for offences against *popolani*; and, in order that these ordinances should be carried out, a new magistrate, the Gonfaloniere di Guistizia or Standard-bearer of Justice, was added to the Signoria to hold office like the Priors for two months in rotation from the different districts of the city. Thus was completed the *secondo popolo*, the

second democratic constitution of Florence. The third of these standard-bearers was Dino Compagni, the chronicler. Giano della Bella was meditating the continuation of his work by depriving the captains of the Guelf Society of their power and resources, when a riot, in which Corso Donati played a prominent part, caused his overthrow in March 1295. By his fall the government remained in the hands of the rich burghers, being practically an oligarchy of merchants and bankers.

First Steps in Political Life.—In this same year 1295, the first year of the pontificate of Boniface VIII., Dante entered political life. Although of noble descent, the Alighieri do not seem to have ranked as magnates. By a modification in the Ordinances of Justice in July 1295, citizens, without actually exercising an "art," were admitted to office provided they had matriculated and were not knights, if not more than two persons in their family had held knighthood within the last twenty years. Dante now (or perhaps a little later) enrolled his name in the *matricola* of the Art of Physicians and Apothecaries, which included painters and booksellers. For the six months from November 1st, 1295, to April 30th, 1296, he was a member of the Special Council of the Captain. On December 14th, as one of the savi or specially summoned counsellors, he gave his opinion (*consuluit*) in the Council of the Capitudini of the Arts on the procedure to be adopted for the election of the new Signoria. On January 23rd, 1296, the Pope inaugurated his aggressive policy towards the Republic by addressing a bull to the Podestà, Captain, Ancients, Priors and Rectors of the Arts, to the Council and the Commune of Florence (purposely ignoring the new office of Gonfaloniere). After denouncing in unmeasured terms the wickedness of

that “rock of scandal,” Giano della Bella, and extolling the prudence of the Florentines in expelling him, the Pope, hearing that certain persons are striving to obtain his recall, utterly forbids anything of the kind without special licence from the Holy See, under penalty of excommunication and interdict. The Pope further protests his great and special affection for Florence, amongst the cities devoted to God and the Apostolic See. “I love France so well,” says Shakespeare’s King Henry, “that I will not part with a village of it; I will have it all mine.”

Although Boccaccio, and others in his steps, have somewhat exaggerated Dante’s influence in the politics of the Republic, there can be no doubt that he soon came to take a decided attitude in direct opposition to all lawlessness, and in resistance to any external interference in Florentine matters, whether from Rome, Naples, or France. The eldest son of Charles II., Carlo Martello, whom Dante had “loved much and with good cause” (*Par.* viii. 55) during his visit to Florence in the spring of 1294, had died in the following year; and his father was harassing the Florentines for money to carry on the Sicilian war. Dante, on leaving the Council of the Captain, had been elected to the Council of the Hundred, in which, on June 5th, 1296, he spoke in support of various proposals, including one on the embellishment of the cathedral and baptistery by the removal of the old hospital, and another undertaking not to receive men under ban of the Commune of Pistoia in the city and contado of Florence. In the previous May, in consequence of internal factions, Pistoia had given Florence control of the city, with power to send a podestà and a captain every six months. After this we do not hear of Dante again until May 7th, 1300, when he acted as ambassador to

San Gemignano to announce that a parliament was to be held for the purpose of electing a captain for the Guelf League of Tuscany, and to invite the Commune to send representatives. But already the storm cloud which loomed on the horizon had burst upon the city on May Day 1300.

BLACKS AND WHITES.—The new division of parties in Florence became associated with the feud between two noble families, the Donati and the Cerchi, headed respectively by two of the heroes of Campaldino, Corso Donati and Vieri de' Cerchi. The names Neri and Bianchi, Black Guelfs and White Guelfs, by which the two factions became known, seem to have been derived from a similar division in Pistoia, the ringleaders of which, being banished to Florence, embittered the quarrels already in progress in the ruling city. But the roots of the trouble went deeper and were political, connected with the discontent of both magnates and *popolo minuto* under the hegemony of the Greater Arts. The Bianchi were opposed to a costly policy of expansion; the Neri, who had wider international and mercantile connections, looked beyond the affairs of the Commune, and favoured intimate relations with the Angevin sovereigns of Naples and the Pope. To the Bianchi adhered those nobles who had matriculated in the Arts, the more moderate spirits among the burghers, the remains of the party of Giano della Bella who supported the Ordinances of Justice in a modified form. While the Bianchi drew closer to the constitutional government, the strength of the Neri lay in the councils of the Guelf Society and the influence of the aristocratic bankers. Guido Cavalcanti (who, even after the modification of the Ordinances, would have been excluded from office) was allied with the Cerchi, but probably less

influenced by political considerations than by his personal hostility towards Messer Corso, who was in high favour with the Pope. Florence was now indeed "disposed for woeful ruin" (*Purg.* xxiv. 81), but there had been a "long contention" (*Inf.* vi. 64) before the parties came to bloodshed.

THE JUBILEE.—On February 22nd, 1300, Pope Boniface issued the bull proclaiming the first papal jubilee. It began with the previous Christmas Day and lasted through the year 1300. Amongst the throngs of pilgrims from all parts of the world to Rome were Giovanni Villani and, probably, Dante (*Inf.* xviii. 29). This visit to Rome inspired Villani to undertake his great chronicle; and it is the epoch to which Dante assigns the vision which is the subject of the *Divina Commedia* (*Purg.* ii. 98). The Pope, however, had his eyes on Florence, and had apparently resolved to make Tuscany a part of the Papal States. Possibly he had already opened negotiations with the Neri through his agents and bankers, the Spini. A plot against the state on the part of three Florentines in the service of the Pope was discovered to the Signoria, and sentence passed against the offenders on April 18th.[3] Boniface wrote to the Bishop of Florence, on April 24th, 1300, demanding from the Commune that the sentences should be annulled and the accusers sent to him. The Priors having refused compliance and denied his jurisdiction in the matter, the Pope issued a second bull, declaring that he had no intention of derogating from the jurisdiction or liberty of Florence, which he intended to increase; but asserting the absolute supremacy of the Roman Pontiff both in spiritual and temporal things over all peoples and kingdoms, and demanding again, with threats of vengeance spiritual and temporal, that the sentences against his

adherents should be annulled, that the three accusers with six of the most violent against his authority should appear before him, and that the officers of the Republic should send representatives to answer for their conduct. This was on May 15th, but, two days earlier, the Pope had written to the Duke of Saxony, and sent the Bishop of Ancona to Germany, to demand from Albert of Austria the renunciation absolutely to the Holy See of all rights claimed by the Emperors in Tuscany.

DANTE'S PRIORATE.—But in the meantime bloodshed had taken place in Florence. On May 1st the two factions came to blows in the Piazza di Santa Trinita; and on May 4th full powers had been given to the Priors to defend the liberty of the Commune and People of Florence against dangers from within and without (which had evidently irritated the Pope). The whole city was now divided; magnates and burghers alike became bitter partisans of one or other faction. The Pope, who had previously made a vain attempt to reconcile Vieri de' Cerchi with the Donati, sent the Franciscan Cardinal Matteo d'Acquasparta as legate and peacemaker to Florence, in the interests of the captains of the Guelf Society and the Neri, who accused the Signoria of Ghibelline tendencies. The Cardinal arrived in June. From June 15th to August 14th Dante was one of the six Priors by election. "All my misfortunes," he says in the letter quoted by Leonardo Bruni, "had their cause and origin in my ill-omened election to the Priorate; of which Priorate, though by prudence I was not worthy, still by faith and age I was not unworthy." We know too little of the facts to be able to comment upon this cryptic utterance. On the first day of office (June 15th), the sentence passed in the previous April against the three Florentines in the papal

service was formally consigned to Dante and his colleagues—Lapo Gianni (probably the same person as his poet friend of that name) acting as notary. There were disturbances in the city. On St. John's Eve an assault was made upon the Consuls of the Arts by certain magnates of the Neri, and their opponents threatened to take up arms. The Priors, perhaps on Dante's motion, exiled (or, more accurately, put under bounds outside the territory of the Republic) some prominent members of both factions, including Corso Donati and Guido Cavalcanti. The Neri attempted to resist, expecting aid from the Cardinal and from Lucca; the Bianchi obeyed. Negotiations continued between the Signoria and the Cardinal, Dante and his colleagues resisting the papal demands without coming to a formal rupture.

THE BIANCHI IN POWER.—The succeeding Signoria was less prudent. The banished Bianchi were allowed to return just after Dante had left office (as he himself states in a lost letter seen by Leonardo Bruni), on the plea of the illness of Guido Cavalcanti, who had contracted malaria at Sarzana, and died at Florence in the last days of August. At the end of September a complete rupture ensued with Cardinal Matteo d'Acquasparta, who broke off negotiations and retired to Bologna, leaving the city under an interdict. Corso Donati had broken bounds and gone to the Pope, who, towards the close of 1300, nominated Charles of Valois, brother of Philip the Fair, captain-general of the papal states, and summoned him to Italy to aid Charles of Naples against Frederick of Aragon in Sicily and reduce the "rebels" of Tuscany to submission.

We meet the name of Dante on several occasions

among the *consulte* of the Florentine Republic during 1301. It is probable that he was one of the *savi* called to council on March 15th, and that he opposed the granting of a subsidy in money which the King of Naples had demanded for the Sicilian war and which was made by the Council of the Hundred.[4] On April 14th he was among the *savi* in the Council of the Capitudini for the election of the new Signoria, of which Palmieri Altoviti was the leading spirit. On April 28th Dante was appointed *officialis et superestans*, in connection with the works in the street of San Procolo, possibly with the object of more readily bringing up troops from the country. During the priorate of Palmieri Altoviti (April 15th to June 14th), a conspiracy was discovered, hatched at a meeting of the Neri in the church of S. Trinita, to overthrow the government and invite the Pope to send Charles of Valois to Florence. In consequence a number of Neri were banished and their possessions confiscated, a fresh sentence being passed against Corso Donati. The Bianchi were all potent in Florence; and, in May 1301, they procured the expulsion of the Neri from Pistoia (ruthlessly carried out by the Florentine captain, Andrea Gherardini), which was the beginning of the end (*Inf.* xxiv. 143): "Pistoia first is thinned of Neri; then Florence renovates folk and rule."

THE COMING OF CHARLES OF VALOIS.—The government still shrank from directly opposing the Pope, who, by letter from Cardinal Matteo d'Acquasparta, demanded the continuation of the service of a hundred horsemen. On June 19th, 1301, in a united meeting of the Councils of the Hundred, of the Captain, and of the Capitudini, and again in the Council of the Hundred apart, Dante spoke against compliance, urging "quod de servitio

faciendo domini Papae nihil fiat"—with the result that the matter was postponed. In the united Councils of the Hundred, the Captain, the Podestà, and the Capitudini, on September 13th, he pleaded for the preservation of the Ordinances of Justice (a sign that the State was regarded as in peril). On this occasion all the twenty-one arts were represented, which we may connect with Leonardo Bruni's statement that Dante had advised the Priors to strengthen themselves with the support of the "moltitudine del popolo." On September 20th, in the Council of the Captain, he supported a request of the ambassadors of the Commune of Bologna (then allied with the Bianchi) for free passage for their importation of grain. On September 28th, again in the Council of the Captain, he defended a certain Neri di Gherardino Diedati (whose father was destined to share the poet's fate) from an injust charge. This is the last recorded time that *Dantes Alagherii consuluit* in Florence. Already Charles of Valois was on his way, preparing to "joust with the lance of Judas" (*Purg.* xx. 70-78). On November 1st, after giving solemn pledges to the Signoria (Dino Compagni being one of the Priors), Charles with 1200 horsemen entered Florence without opposition.

Leonardo Bruni asserts that Dante was absent at Rome on an embassy to the Pope when the latter's "peacemaker" entered Florence. It would appear that the Florentine government had requested the allied Commune of Bologna to send an embassy to Boniface, simultaneously with an embassy from Siena with which were associated three ambassadors from Florence: Maso di Ruggierino Minerbetti, Corazza da Signa, and Dante Alighieri. Their purpose was to make their own terms with the Pontiff in order to avert the intervention of Charles. The

mission set out at the beginning of October; but one of the Bolognese ambassadors, Ubaldino Malavolti, having business of his own with the Florentine government, delayed the others so long that they did not arrive in time.[5] Boccaccio asserts that, when the Bianchi proposed to send Dante on such an embassy, he answered somewhat arrogantly: “If I go, who stays? and if I stay, who goes?” According to Dino Compagni, Boniface sent two of the Florentines —Maso Minerbetti and Corazza da Signa—back to Florence to demand submission to his will, but detained Dante at his court. The fact of Dante taking part in such an embassy is confirmed by the author of the *Ottimo Commento*, as also by an anonymous commentator on the canzone of the *Tre donne*, and, though seriously questioned by many Dante scholars, it is now generally accepted as historical. The other two ambassadors returned almost simultaneously with the arrival of the French prince. Yielding to necessity and trusting to his solemn oath, the Signoria, in a parliament held in S. Maria Novella, gave Charles authority to pacify the city; which he set about doing by restoring the Neri to power. Corso Donati with his allies entered Florence in arms, to plunder and massacre at their pleasure, the last Signoria of the Bianchi being compelled to resign on November 7th (cf. *Purg.* vi. 143, 144). A second effort by the Cardinal Matteo from the Pope to reconcile the two factions was resisted by Charles and the Neri; and the work of proscription began. The new Podestà, Cante de’ Gabrielli da Gubbio, passed sentence after sentence against the ruined Bianchi. Finally, at the beginning of April, their chiefs were betrayed into a real or pretended conspiracy against Charles, and driven out with their followers and adherents, both nobles and burghers,

six hundred in number; their houses were destroyed, and their goods confiscated, themselves sentenced as rebels. On April 4th, 1302, Charles left Florence, covered with disgrace and full of plunder, leaving the government entirely in the hands of the Neri. “Having cast forth the greatest part of the flowers from thy bosom, O Florence,” writes Dante in the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, “the second Totila went fruitlessly to Sicily” (*V. E.* ii. 6).

SENTENCES AGAINST DANTE.—The first sentence against Dante is dated January 27th, 1302, and includes four other names. Gherardino Diedati, formerly Prior, is accused of taking bribes for the release of a prisoner, and has not appeared when summoned. Palmieri Altoviti (who had taken the lead in putting down the conspiracy hatched in Santa Trinita), Dante Alighieri, Lippo Becchi (one of the denouncers of Boniface’s agents in 1300), and Orlanduccio Orlandi are accused of “barratry,” fraud and corrupt practices, unlawful gains and extortions and the like, in office and out of office; of having corruptly and fraudulently used the money and resources of the Commune against the Supreme Pontiff, and to resist the coming of Messer Carlo, or against the pacific state of Florence and the Guelf Party; of having caused the expulsion of the Neri from Pistoia, and severed that city from Florence and the Church. Since they have contumaciously absented themselves, when summoned to appear before the Podestà’s court, they are held to have confessed their guilt, and sentenced to pay a heavy fine and restore what they have extorted. If not paid in three days, all their goods shall be confiscated; even if they pay, they are exiled for two years and perpetually excluded as falsifiers and barrators, *tamquam falsarii et barattarii*, from holding any office

or benefice under the Commune of Florence. On March 10th, a further sentence condemns these five with ten others to be burned to death, if any of them at any time shall come into the power of the Commune. In this latter sentence there is no mention of any political offence, but only of malversation and contumacy. None of Dante's six colleagues in the Signoria are included in either sentence; but in the second appear the names of Lapo Salterelli, who had headed the opposition to Boniface in the spring of 1300, but whom the poet judges sternly (cf. *Par.* xv. 128), and Andrea Gherardini, who had been Florentine captain at Pistoia.

There can be little doubt that, in spite of the wording of these two sentences, Dante's real offence was his opposition to the policy of Pope Boniface. In the *De Volgari Eloquentia* (i. 6) he declares that he is suffering exile unjustly because of his love for Florence. All his early biographers bear testimony to his absolute innocence of the charge of malversation and barratry; it has been left to modern commentators to question it. In the letter to a Florentine friend, Dante speaks of his innocence manifest to all, *innocentia manifesta quibuslibet*, as though in direct answer to the *fama publica referente* of the Podestà's sentence. His likening himself to Hippolytus is a no less emphatic protestation of innocence: "As Hippolytus departed from Athens, by reason of his pitiless and treacherous stepmother, so from Florence needs must thou depart. This is willed, this is already being sought, and soon will it be done for him who thinks it, there where Christ is put to sale each day" (*Par.* xvii. 46-51). "I hold my exile as an honour":

L'essilio che m'è dato, on or mi tegno,

he says in his canzone of the *Tre donne*. Had Dante completed the *Convivio*, he would probably have furnished us with a complete apologia in the fourteenth treatise, where he intended to comment upon this canzone and discuss Justice. “Justice,” he says in *Conv.* i. 12, “is so lovable that, as the philosopher says in the fifth of the Ethics, even her enemies love her, such as thieves and robbers; and therefore we see that her contrary, which is injustice, is especially hated (as is treachery, ingratitude, falseness, theft, rapine, deceit, and their like). The which are such inhuman sins that, to defend himself from the infamy of these, it is conceded by long usance that a man may speak of himself, and may declare himself to be faithful and loyal. Of this virtue I shall speak more fully in the fourteenth treatise.”

5. *First Period of Exile*

“Since it was the pleasure of the citizens of the most beautiful and most famous daughter of Rome, Florence, to cast me forth from her sweet bosom (in which I was born and nourished up to the summit of my life, and in which, with her goodwill, I desire with all my heart to rest my wearied mind and to end the time given me), I have gone through almost all the parts to which this language extends, a pilgrim, almost a beggar, showing against my will the wound of fortune, which is wont unjustly to be ofttimes reputed to the wounded.”

In these words (*Conv.* i. 3), Dante sums up the earlier portion of his exile. There are few lines of poetry more noble in pathos, more dignified in reticence, than those which he has put into the mouth of Cacciaguida (*Par.* xvii. 55-60): “Thou shalt leave everything beloved most dearly, and this is that

arrow which the bow of exile first shoots. Thou shalt test how savours of salt another's bread, and how hard the ascending and descending by another's stairs."

EARLY DAYS OF EXILE.—The terms of the first sentence against Dante seem to imply that, if he had returned to Florence, he fled from the city before January 27th, 1302. We do not know where he went. Boccaccio, apparently from a misunderstanding of *Par.* xvii. 70, says Verona; if we suppose it to have been Siena, this would explain Leonardo Bruni's account of Dante's first hearing particulars of his ruin at the latter city. The sentence against Messer Vieri de' Cerchi, with the other leaders, is dated April 5th in the terrible *Libro del Chiodo*, the black book of the Guelf Party. Arezzo, Forlì, Siena, Bologna, were the chief resorts of the exiled Bianchi; in Bologna they seem for some time to have been especially welcome. Dante first joined them in a meeting held at Gargonza, where they are said by Bruni to have made the poet one of their twelve councillors, and to have fixed their headquarters at Arezzo. For a short time Dante made common cause with them, but found their society extremely uncongenial (*Par.* xvii. 61-66). On June 8th, 1302, there is documentary evidence of his presence with some others in the choir of San Godenzo at the foot of the Apennines, where the Bianchi allied with the Ghibelline Ubaldini to make war upon Florence. The fact of this meeting having been held in Florentine territory and followed by several cavalry raids induced a fresh sentence in July from the new Podestà, Gherardino da Gambara of Brescia, in which, however, Dante is not mentioned.

FAILURE OF THE BIANCHI.—A heavy blow was

inflicted upon the exiles by the treachery of Carlino di Pazzi (*Inf.* xxxii. 69), who surrendered the castle of Piantravigne in Valdarno to the Neri, when many Bianchi were slain or taken. The cruelty of the Romagnole, Count Fulcieri da Calboli, the next Podestà of Florence from January to September 1303, towards such of the unfortunate Bianchi as fell into his hands has received its meed of infamy in *Purg.* xiv. 58-66. It is perhaps noteworthy (as bearing upon the date of Dante's separation from his fellow-exiles) that the poet's name does not appear among the Bianchi who, under the leadership of the Ghibelline captain, Scarpetta degli Ordelaffi of Forlì, signed an agreement with their allies in Bologna on June 18th in this year; but this may merely imply that he did not go to Bologna. He was possibly associated with Scarpetta at Forlì about this time. These renewed attempts to recover the state by force of arms resulted only in the disastrous defeat of Pulicciano in Mugello.

DEATH OF BONIFACE VIII.—In this same year Sciarra Colonna and William of Nogaret, in the name of Philip the Fair, seized Boniface VIII. at Anagni, and treated the old Pontiff with such barbarity that he died in a few days, October 11th, 1303. The seizure had been arranged by the infamous Musciatto Franzesi, who had been instrumental in the bringing of Charles of Valois to Florence. "I see the golden lilies enter Alagna," cries Hugh Capet in the *Purgatorio*; "and in His vicar Christ made captive. I see Him mocked a second time. I see renewed the vinegar and gall, and Him slain between thieves that live" (*Purg.* xx. 86-90).

BENEDICT XI.—In succession to Boniface, Nicholas of Treviso, the master-general of the Dominicans, a

man of humble birth and of saintly life, was made Pope on October 22nd, 1303, as Benedict XI. He at once devoted himself to healing the wounds of Italy, and sent to Florence as peacemaker the Dominican Cardinal, Niccolò da Prato, who was of Ghibelline origin. The peacemaker arrived in March 1304, and was received with great honour. Representatives of the Bianchi and Ghibellines came to the city at his invitation; and, when May opened, there was an attempt to revive the traditional festivities which had ended on that fatal May Day of 1300. But a terrible disaster on the Ponte alla Carraia cast an ominous gloom over the city, and the Neri treacherously forced the Cardinal to leave. Hardly had he gone when, on June 10th, fighting broke out in the streets, and a fire, purposely started by the Neri, devastated Florence. On July 7th Pope Benedict died, perhaps poisoned, at Perugia; and, seeing this last hope taken from them, the irreconcilable portion of the Bianchi, led by Baschiera della Tosa, aided by the Ghibellines of Tuscany under Tolosato degli Uberti, with allies from Bologna and Arezzo, made a valiant attempt to surprise Florence on July 20th from Lastra. Baschiera, with about a thousand horsemen, captured a part of the suburbs, and drew up his force near San Marco, "with white standards displayed, and garlands of olives, with drawn swords, crying peace" (Compagni). Through his impetuosity and not awaiting the coming of Tolosato, this enterprise ended in utter disaster, and with its failure the last hopes of the Bianchi were dashed to the ground.

SEPARATION FROM THE BIANCHI AND WANDERINGS IN EXILE.—After the defeat of Lastra, Bruni represents Dante as going from Arezzo to Verona, utterly humbled. We learn from the *Paradiso* (xvii. 61-69) that, estranged from his fellow-exiles

who had turned violently against him, he had been compelled to form a party to himself. It is held by some scholars that he had broken away from them in the previous year, and that, towards the end of 1303, he had found his first refuge at Verona in "the courtesy of the great Lombard," Bartolommeo della Scala, at whose court he now first saw his young brother, afterwards famous as Can Grande, and already in boyhood showing sparks of future greatness (*ibid.* 70-78). Others would identify *il gran Lombardo* with Bartolommeo's brother and successor, Albuino della Scala, who ruled in Verona from March 1304 until October 1311, and associated Can Grande with him as the commander of his troops. There is no certain documentary evidence of Dante's movements between June 1302 and October 1306. It is not improbable that, in 1304 or 1305, he stayed some time at Bologna. The first book of the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* seems in many respects to bear witness to this stay at Bologna, where the exiles were still welcome; a certain kindliness towards the Bolognese, very different from his treatment of them later in the *Divina Commedia*, is apparent, together with a peculiar acquaintance with their dialect. But on March 1st, 1306, the Bolognese made a pact with the Neri, after which they expelled the Florentine exiles, ordering that no Bianchi or Ghibellines should be found in Bolognese territory on pain of death. Dante perhaps went to Padua from Bologna, and, though the supposed documentary proof of his residence in Padua on August 27th, 1306, cannot be accepted without reserve, it is tempting to accept the statement of Benvenuto da Imola that the poet was entertained by Giotto when the painter was engaged upon the frescoes of the Madonna dell' Arena. In October, Dante was in Lunigiana, a guest of the

Malaspina, that honoured race adorned with the glory of purse and sword (*Purg.* viii. 121-139). Here, according to Boccaccio, he recovered from Florence some manuscript which he had left behind him in his flight; possibly what he afterwards rewrote as the first seven cantos of the *Inferno*. On October 6th he acted as ambassador and *nuncio* of the Marquis Franceschino Malaspina in establishing peace between his house and the Bishop of Luni. This is the last certain trace of Dante's feet in Italy for nearly five years. There is a strangely beautiful canzone of his which may have been written at this time. Love has seized upon the poet in the midst of the Alps (*i.e.* Apennines): "In the valley of the river by whose side thou hast ever power upon me"; "Thou goest, my mountain song; perchance shalt see Florence, my city, that bars me out of herself, void of love and nude of pity; if thou dost enter in, go saying: Now my maker can no more make war upon you; there, whence I come, such a chain binds him that, even if your cruelty relax, he has no liberty to return hither."[6]

Dante had probably, as Bruni tells us, been abstaining from any hostile action towards Florence, and hoping to be recalled by the government spontaneously. There are traces of this state of mind in the *Convivio* (i. 3). It would be about this time that he wrote in vain the letter mentioned by Bruni, but now lost, *Populo mee quid feci tibi.*

CLEMENT V.—DEATH OF CORSO DONATI.—In the meantime Clement V., a Gascon, and formerly Archbishop of Bordeaux, had been elected Pope. "From westward there shall come a lawless shepherd of uglier deeds" than even Boniface VIII., writes Dante in *Inferno* xix. He translated the Papal Court

from Rome to Avignon, and thus in 1305 initiated the Babylonian captivity of the Popes, which lasted for more than seventy years, “to the great damage of all Christendom, but especially of Rome” (Platina). Scandalous as was his subservience to the French king, and utterly unworthy of the Papacy as he showed himself, it must be admitted that Clement made serious efforts to relieve the persecuted Bianchi and Ghibellines—efforts which were cut short by the surrender of Pistoia in 1306 and the incompetence of his legate, the Cardinal Napoleone Orsini. In October 1308, Corso Donati came to the violent end mentioned as a prophecy in *Purg.* xxiv.; suspected, with good reason, of aiming at the lordship of Florence with the aid of the Ghibelline captain, Uguccione della Faggiuola, whose daughter he had married, he was denounced as a traitor and killed in his flight from the city.

DANTE POSSIBLY AT PARIS.—Villani tells us that Dante, after exile, went to the Studio at Bologna, and then to Paris and to many parts of the world. The visit to Paris is also affirmed by Boccaccio, and it is not impossible that Dante went thither, between 1307 and 1309, by way of the Riviera and Provence. A highly improbable legend of his presence at Oxford is based upon an ambiguous line in a poetical epistle from Boccaccio to Petrarch and the later testimony of Giovanni da Serravalle at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Dante’s stay in Paris has been seriously questioned, and still remains uncertain. The University of Paris was then the first in the world in theology and scholastic philosophy. Boccaccio tells us that the disputations which Dante sustained there were regarded as most marvellous triumphs of scholastic subtlety. According to Giovanni da Serravalle (who has, however, placed his Parisian

experiences too early), Dante was forced to return before taking the doctorate of theology, for which he had already fulfilled the preliminaries. He may have stayed in Paris until 1310, when tremendous events put an end to his studies and imperatively summoned him back to Italy.

6. *The Invasion of Henry VII.*

"Lo, now is the acceptable time wherein arise the signs of consolation and peace. For a new day is breaking from the east, showing forth the dawn which already is dispersing the darkness of our long calamity; and already the eastern breezes begin to blow, the face of heaven glows red, and confirms the hopes of the nations with a caressing calm. And we too shall see the looked-for joy, we who have kept vigil through the long night in the desert" (*Epist.* v. 1).

ELECTION OF HENRY VII.—On May 1st, 1308, Albert of Austria, who, by his neglect of Italy, had suffered the garden of the Empire to be desert, was assassinated by his nephew (*Purg.* vi. 97-105). In November, with the concurrence of the Pope and in opposition to the royal house of France, Henry of Luxemburg was elected Emperor. In January 1309 he was crowned at Aix as Henry VII.; in May 1310 he announced to the Italian cities his intention of coming to Rome for the imperial crown. Here was a true King of the Romans and successor of Caesar, such as the Italians had not recognised since the death of Frederick II. (*Conv.* iv. 3). The saddle was no longer empty; Italy had once more a king and Rome a spouse. It is in the glory of this imperial sunrise that Dante appears again, and, in the letter just quoted to the Princes and Peoples of Italy, his

voice is heard, hailing the advent of this new Moses, this most clement Henry, *divus Augustus Caesar*, who is hastening to the nuptials, illuminated in the rays of the Apostolic benediction. The letter seems to have been written after the beginning of September, when the Pope issued an encyclical on Henry's behalf, and before the latter part of October 1310, when the Emperor arrived in Italy. According to the fifteenth-century historian, Flavio Biondo, Dante was at this time at Forlì with Scarpetta degli Ordelaffi. In January 1311 Henry took the iron crown (or its substitute) at Milan. Dante, sometime before the end of March, paid his homage to the Emperor (*Epist.* vii. 2): "I saw thee, as beseems Imperial Majesty, most benignant, and heard thee most clement, when that my hands handled thy feet and my lips paid their debt. Then did my spirit exult in thee, and I spoke silently with myself: 'Behold the Lamb of God. Behold Him who hath taken away the sins of the world.'"

National Policy of Florence.—The Emperor himself shared the golden dream of the Italian idealists, and, believing in the possibility of the union of Church and Empire in a peaceful Italy healed of her wounds, addressed himself ardently to his impossible task, forcing cities to take back their exiles, patching up old quarrels. Opposed to him arises the less sympathetic figure of King Robert of Naples, who, having succeeded his father, Charles II., in May 1309, was preparing—though still for a while negotiating on his own account with Henry—to head the Guelf opposition. While others temporised, Florence openly defied the Emperor, insulted his envoys, and refused to send ambassadors to his coronation. While the Emperor put his imperial vicars into Italian cities, as though he were another

Frederick Barbarossa, the Florentines drew closer their alliance with Robert, formed a confederation of Guelf cities, and aided with money and men all who made head against the German King. In spite of the bitter language used by Dante in his letters, modern historians have naturally recognised in this one of the most glorious chapters in the history of the Republic. “Florence,” writes Pasquale Villari, “called on the Guelf cities, and all seeking to preserve freedom and escape foreign tyranny, to join in an Italian confederation, with herself at its head. This is, indeed, the moment in which the small merchant republic initiates a truly national policy, and becomes a great Italian power. So, in the medieval shape of a feudal and universal Empire, on the one hand, and in that of a municipal confederation on the other, a gleam of the national idea first began to appear, though still in the far distance and veiled in clouds.”

Letters and Fresh Sentence.—On March 31st, 1311, from “the boundaries of Tuscany under the source of the Arno,” and on April 17th, from “Tuscany under the source of the Arno,” Dante addressed two terrible letters to “the most wicked Florentines within,” and to “the most sacred triumphant and only lord, Henry by divine providence King of the Romans, ever Augustus.” In the former he reasserts the rights and sanctity of the Empire, and, whilst hurling the fiercest invective upon the Florentine government, foretells their utter destruction and warns them of their inability to withstand the might of the Emperor. In the latter he rebukes the “minister of God and son of the Church and promoter of Roman glory” for his delay in Lombardy, and urges him on against Florence, “the sick sheep that infects all the flock of the Lord with

her contagion." Let him lay her low and Israel will be delivered. "Then shall our heritage, the taking away of which we weep without ceasing, be restored to us again; and even as we now groan, remembering the holy Jerusalem, exiles in Babylon, so then, citizens breathing again in peace, we shall look back in our joy upon the miseries of confusion." These letters were evidently written from the Casentino, where Dante had gone probably on an imperial mission to one or other of the Conti Guidi. He was perhaps staying at the castle of Poppi, and there is a tradition that the Florentine government sent agents to arrest him there. Probably in consequence of these letters, a new condemnation was pronounced against him; on September 2nd, 1311, Dante is included in the long list of exiles who, in the "reform" of Baldo d'Aguglione, are to be excepted from amnesty and for ever excluded from Florence.

FAILURE OF THE EMPEROR.—But in the meantime Brescia, "the lioness of Italy," who had offered as heroic a resistance to Henry VII. as she was to do five centuries later to the Austrians of Haynau, had been forced to surrender; and the Emperor had at last moved southwards to Genoa and thence to Pisa, from which parties of imperialists ravaged the Florentine territory. From Genoa, on December 24th, 1311, he issued a decree placing Florence under the ban of the Empire, and declaring the Florentine exiles under his special protection. Dante (with Palmieri Altoviti and other exiles) was probably at Pisa in the early spring of 1312, and it may well have been there that Petrarch—then a little boy in his eighth year—saw his great predecessor. Rome itself was partly held by the troops of King Robert and the Florentines; with difficulty was Henry crowned by the Pope's legates in the Church of St. John Lateran on June 29th,

1312. From September 19th to October 31st Henry besieged Florence, himself ill with fever. “Do ye trust in any defence girt by your contemptible rampart?” Dante had written to the Florentines: “What shall it avail to have girt you with a rampart and to have fortified yourselves with outworks and battlements, when, terrible in gold, that eagle shall swoop down on you which, soaring now over the Pyrenees, now over Caucasus, now over Atlas, ever strengthened by the support of the soldiery of heaven, looked down of old upon vast oceans in its flight?” But the golden eagle did not venture upon an assault. Wasting the country as it went, the imperial army retreated. Early in 1313 the Florentines gave the signory of their city to King Robert for five years, while the Emperor from Pisa placed the king under the ban of the Empire, and declared him a public enemy. The Pope himself had deserted the imperial cause, and was fulminating excommunication if Henry invaded Robert’s kingdom (cf. *Par.* xvii. 82; xxx. 144), when the Emperor, moving from Pisa with reinforcements from Germany and Sicily, died on the march towards Naples at Buonconvento, near Siena, on August 24th, 1313. Dante had not accompanied the imperialists against Florence; he yet retained so much reverence for his fatherland, as Bruni writes, apparently from some lost letter of the poet’s. We do not know where he was when the fatal news reached him. Cino da Pistoia and Sennuccio del Bene broke out into elegiac canzoni on the dead hero; Dante was silent, and waited till he could more worthily write the apotheosis of his *alto Arrigo* in the Empyrean (*Par.* xxx. 133-138).

7. *Last Period of Exile*

DANTE'S WANDERINGS—DEATH OF CLEMENT V.—Dante was again a proscribed fugitive. His movements are hardly known, excepting by more or less happy conjecture, from the spring of 1311 in the Casentino to the close of his days at Ravenna. Boccaccio and Bruni agree that he had now given up all hope of return to Florence. According to the latter, he wandered about in great poverty, under the protection of various lords, in different parts of Lombardy, Tuscany, and Romagna. There is a tradition, perhaps mainly based upon a passage in the *Paradiso* (*Par.* xxi. 106-120), that Dante retired to the convent of Santa Croce di Fonte Avellana in the Apennines, from which he gazed forth upon the perishing world of the Middle Ages, which was finding imperishable monument in his work. To this epoch might possibly be assigned—for what it may be worth—the story of his visit to the other convent of Santa Croce del Corvo in Lunigiana in quest of peace; but the only authority for this episode is the letter of Frate Ilario to Uguccione della Faggiuola, now almost universally regarded as a fabrication. But, if his steps are hidden, his voice is heard, and with no uncertain sound. On April 20th, 1314, Clement V. died in Provence (*Par.* xxx. 145); and, early in the interregnum that followed, Dante addressed a famous letter to the Italian cardinals, rebuking them for their backsliding and corruption, urging them to make amends by striving manfully for the restoration of the papacy to Rome. It is a noble production, full of zeal and dignity, impregnated with the sublimest spirit of mediaeval Catholicity. It had no immediate effect; after a long interval the Cahorsine, John XXII., was elected in August 1316; and the disgrace of Avignon continued. The ideal Emperor had failed; no ideal Pope was forthcoming;

conscious at last of his own greatness, with *luci chiare ed acute* (*Par.* xxii. 126), eyes clear from passion and acute with discernment, the divine poet turned to the completion of his *Commedia*.

REJECTION OF THE AMNESTY.—After the death of the Emperor, the Ghibelline leader, Uguccione della Faggiuola, had been chosen lord of Pisa; he captured Lucca in June, 1314, and began a brief career of conquest in Tuscany which seriously alarmed Florence. In this crisis the Florentine government on May 19th, 1315, decreed a general *ribandimento*, or recall of exiles, under condition of a small fine, a merely formal imprisonment, and the ceremony of "oblation" in the Baptistery. Dante was probably at Lucca when he received letters to the effect that he was included.[7] The famous letter to a Florentine friend contains his rejection of this amnesty. While deeply and affectionately grateful to the friends who have striven for his return, the conditions of this "revocatio gratiosa" seem to Dante derogatory to his fame and honour, and with calm dignity he refuses to avail himself of it: "This is not the way of return to our native land, my father; but if another may be found, first by you and then by others, which does not derogate from Dante's fame and honour, that will I accept with no lagging feet. But, if by no such way Florence may be entered, I will never enter Florence. What then? May I not anywhere gaze upon the mirror of the sun and stars? Can I not ponder on the sweetest truths anywhere beneath the heaven, unless first I return to the city, inglorious, nay dishonoured, in the sight of the Florentine people? Nor, assuredly, will bread fail me" (Epist. ix 4).[8]

NEW CONDEMNATION.—On August 29th, 1315, Uguccione utterly defeated the united armies of

Florence and Naples at the great battle of Montecatini; the Pisan ploughman had crushed the flowers and the lilies, as Giovanni del Virgilio afterwards wrote to Dante. Dante's two sons, Jacopo and Pietro, had perhaps joined him in Lucca. The original death sentence had apparently been commuted (probably because of his having refrained from joining in the imperialist attack upon Florence in 1312) to being placed under bounds in some defined locality; and in October 1315 the poet, with his two sons, and others were cited to appear before Ranieri di Zaccaria of Orvieto, royal vicar in the city of Florence and its district (King Robert's vicars having replaced the podestàs), to give surety as to going and staying in the places appointed. On their neglecting to appear, "Dante Alighieri and his sons," in Ranieri's sentence of November 6th, are condemned as contumacious and rebels, and sentenced to be beheaded if they ever come into the power of the royal vicar or of the Commune of Florence. "And, lest they should glory in their contumacy, we put all and each of them under ban of the city of Florence and district, giving licence to anyone to offend all and any one of them in goods and in person, according to the form of the statutes of Florence." All the Portinari are included in this decree, with the exception of Manetto and fourteen others who have given security.

DANTE AT VERONA.—In the following year, 1316, Uguccione lost Pisa and Lucca, and fled to Verona, where Can Grande della Scala, since the death of his brother Albuino in 1311, held sovereign sway as imperial vicar, and had become the champion of Ghibellinism in northern Italy; in 1318 Cane was elected captain of the Ghibelline League, and in his service Uguccione died during the siege of Padua in

1319 or 1320. It is probable that, somewhere about this time, Dante's wandering feet had led him back to Verona to renew his friendship with Can Grande (*Par.* xvii. 85-90; *Epist.* x. 1). The old legend of Dante having met with discourtesy at his hands is to be absolutely rejected, as indeed every reference to Can Grande in his works demands. That, on his earlier visit, there may have been some unpleasantness with Albuino (*Conv.* iv. 16) is more credible. But Dante needed a more peaceful refuge than Verona to complete his life's work; the city of the imperial vicar resounded with the clash of warlike preparations:

> But at this court, peace still must wrench
> Her chaplet from the teeth of war:
> By day they held high watch afar,
> At night they cried across the trench;
> And still, in Dante's path, the fierce
> Gaunt soldiers wrangled o'er their spears.

AT RAVENNA.—It was most likely towards the end of 1316, or early in 1317, that Dante finally settled at Ravenna; probably, as Boccaccio tells us, on the invitation of Guido Novello da Polenta, who had succeeded to the lordship of Ravenna in June 1316. This Guido was the nephew of Francesca da Rimini, the hapless heroine of one of the most familiar episodes of the *Inferno*. These few remaining years of Dante's life are the pleasantest to contemplate. His two sons were with him, though their mother apparently remained in Florence. Dino Perini, a younger Florentine, seems to have been to some extent the friend of Dante's later days, as Guido Cavalcanti had been of his youth. And there were other congenial companions round him, including perhaps Giotto, who was probably working at

Ravenna about this time. It is possible that Dante held some kind of professorship in the local university. Scholars and disciples came to be instructed in the poetic art, among them, it would seem, Guido da Polenta himself. His relations were still cordial with Can Grande, to whom, probably in 1318 or 1319, he addressed the epistle which contains the dedication of the *Paradiso*. From the *Quaestio de Aqua et Terra* (which is now generally accepted as authentic) we gather that, at the end of 1319 or beginning of 1320, Dante paid a visit to Mantua, and that at Verona, on January 20th, 1320, he delivered a discourse concerning the relative position of the two elements, earth and water, on the globe's surface. A curious document of 1320—the report of a process at Avignon in which Dante's name is incidentally mentioned—seems to show that the poet was regarded as an authority upon sorcery, but as one whom persons intending to put this power to guilty use should abstain from consulting. There is also some vague evidence that accusations of heresy may have been brought against him.

LAST DAYS AND DEATH.—At Ravenna, amidst the monuments of ancient Caesars and the records in mosaic of primitive Christianity, where the church walls testified the glory of Justinian and the music of the Pine Forest sounded in his ears, Dante finished his *Divina Commedia*. His poetical correspondence with Giovanni del Virgilio, a shining light of the University of Bologna, reveals the kindliness and affability of the austere "preacher of Justice." But he was not to end his days in peace. A storm cloud of war seemed about to burst over Ravenna. According to Venetian accounts—and we have no version of the matter from the other side—the Ravennese had taken Venetian ships and killed Venetian sailors in time of

peace without just cause. In consequence the Doge entered into an alliance with the lords of Forlì and Rimini, and prepared to make war upon Ravenna with forces far beyond Guido's power to meet. In August 1321 an embassy was sent by Guido to Venice, to avert the war by diplomatic means. Of this embassy Dante formed part. According to Filippo Villani, the Venetians refused the poet a hearing, and forced him, sick with fever, to return by land. It is more probable that Dante returned with offered terms by the quickest way, which would bring him back through the Pineta to Ravenna. There he died in the night between September 13th and 14th, 1321, in the fifty-seventh year of his age. The poet of a renovated Empire and a purified Church had passed away on the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross—the Cross which he represents as the mystical bond with which Christ had bound the chariot of the Church to the tree of the Empire. He left his Church sinking, though but for a time, still deeper into the scandal and corruption of Avignon; his Empire preparing new degradation for itself, now that the Eagle had passed into the greedy and unworthy hands of Bavarian Louis; his Italy torn and rent by factions and dissensions; his own Florence still ranking him as a proscribed rebel and criminal. But the divine work of his life had been completed, and remains an everlasting proof of the doctrine formulated by another poet, five hundred years later: "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world."[9]

8. *Dante's Work and First Interpreters*

FOUR PERIODS IN HUMAN LIFE.—In the *Convivio* (iv. 23, 24) Dante represents human life under the

image of an arch, ascending and descending. For the perfectly-natured the summit of this arch is in the thirty-fifth year. Life is divided into four ages, like the four seasons of the year. Adolescence, *Adolescenza*, the increase of life, ascends from birth to the twenty-fifth year; Youth or Manhood, *Gioventute*, the perfection and culmination of life, lasts from the twenty-fifth to the forty-fifth year; Age, *Senettute*, descends from the forty-fifth to the seventieth year; after which remains Old Age, *Senio*, the winter of life.

THREE PERIODS IN DANTE'S WORK.—Dante's work falls into three periods, representing to some extent *Adolescenza*, *Gioventute*, *Senettute*. The first is that of his "New Life," the epoch of the romantic worship of Beatrice in her life and after her death, in which the youthful poet beheld many things by his intellect, as it were dreaming, *quasi come sognado* (*Conv.* ii. 13). This period comprises the *Vita Nuova*, with the lyrics contemporaneous with it, and closes in the promise "yet to utter concerning her what hath never been said of any woman." The second period corresponds to Dante's second age, or *Gioventute*; it is the period in which the image of Beatrice in the citadel of his mind is somewhat obscured by the tempests of passion and political turmoil, and for a while had become less paramount when her poet directed his thoughts to the service of philosophical research. Joined to the first period by the canzone addressed to the angelic movers of the sphere of Venus, it includes the greater part of the collection of lyrics (Canzoni, Bellate, Sonnets) included in the *Rime* or *Canzoniere*; the two unfinished prose treatises which expound the mystical meaning and technical construction of these canzoni, the *Convivio* and the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*. The three political letters

connected with the Italian expedition of Henry VII. and, most probably, the special treatise in Latin prose on the Empire, the *Monarchia*, connect the second with the third period. This last period is the period of the *Divina Commedia*; the return to Beatrice, but now the allegorical Beatrice; the fulfilment of the supreme promise of the *Vita Nuova*; the result of the labours in art and philosophy which the second period had witnessed, of political experience, and of the spiritual and moral revulsion of Dante's later years, after the bitter disillusion of the Emperor Henry's enterprise and failure: "A fruit of sufferings excess." To this period, subsidiary to the *Divina Commedia*, belong the letters to the Italian Cardinals, to the Florentine friend and to Can Grande, the *Quaestio de Aqua et Terra* (if authentic), and the two *Eclogues*.

In addition to these works, several Italian scholars of high repute have attributed to Dante the *Fiore*—a rendering of the *Roman de la Rose* in 232 sonnets—the author of which twice calls himself "Durante." The editors of the sexcentenary *testo critico* have wisely excluded it from their volume, and it has been edited as an "appendice dantiana" by Parodi. Also we know of several smaller things of Dante's now lost: the letters mentioned by Leonardo Bruni and Flavio Biondo; a *serventese* containing the names of the sixty most beautiful women in Florence, referred to in the *Vita Nuova* (*V. N.* vi.), one of his earliest poems; and a canzone on love, of peculiar structure, quoted in the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (*V. E.* ii. 11).

EARLY COMMENTATORS.—No sooner had Dante passed away than his apotheosis began with the epitaph by Giovanni del Virgilio:

Theologus Dantes, nullius dogmatis expers

—"Dante, the theologian, skilled in every branch of knowledge," and the canzone on his death by Cino da Pistoia:

Su per la costa, Amor, de l'alto monte

—"Up the side, Love, of the lofty mountain." Boccaccio tells us that it was Dante's custom to send the *Divina Commedia* by instalments to Can Grande at Verona, and he adds a striking story of how, eight months after his death, the poet appeared in a vision, "clad in whitest garments and his face shining with an unwonted light," to his son Jacopo, to reveal to the world where the manuscript of the last thirteen cantos of the *Paradiso* was hidden. It is a fact that in April or May, 1322, Jacopo presented a complete copy of the sacred poem to Guido da Polenta, who was then Captain of the People at Bologna. Straightway the work of copyists and commentators began, above all at Florence and Bologna. The earliest dated MSS. are the *Codice Landiano* at Piacenza and the *Codice Trivulziano* at Milan (the latter of Florentine origin), dated 1336 and 1337 respectively. Of commentaries, the first two are those on the *Inferno*, written in the twenties of the century, by Dante's son, Jacopo Alighieri, in Italian, and Ser Graziolo de' Bambaglioli, chancellor of the Commune of Bologna, in Latin. The earliest extant commentators on the complete poem are the Bolognese Jacopo della Lana and the Florentine author of the *Ottimo Commento*, probably Andrea Lancia; the former wrote shortly before and the latter shortly after 1330. Both wrote in Italian. Pietro Alighieri composed a Latin commentary on his father's work about 1340, and revised it, with additions, some years later. An important Latin commentary on the *Inferno*, by the Carmelite Guido

da Pisa, dates from the forties of the century. And, before the fourteenth century closed, a new epoch in Dante scholarship was inaugurated by the lectures and commentaries of Giovanni Boccaccio at Florence (1373), Benvenuto da Imola at Bologna (1375-80), and Francesco da Buti at Pisa (1380-90). Of all these earlier commentators, Benvenuto da Imola is by far the greatest; and he unites mediaeval Dantology with England's cult of the divine poet in the first complete edition of his commentary which was given to the world by Lacaita and William Warren Vernon.

In his proem, Ser Graziolo, or his contemporary translator, strikes the keynote of all reverent criticism of the *Divina Commedia*, and defines the attitude in which the divine poet and his works should be approached:

"Although the unsearchable Providence of God hath made many men blessed with prudence and virtue, yet before all hath it put Dante Alighieri, a man of noble and profound wisdom, true fosterling of philosophy and lofty poet, the author of this marvellous, singular, and most sapient work. It hath made him a shining light of spiritual felicity and of knowledge to the people and cities of the world, in order that every science, whether of heavenly or of earthly things, should be amply gathered up in this public and famous champion of prudence, and through him be made manifest to the desires of men in witness of the Divine Wisdom; so that, by the new sweetness and universal matter of his song, he should draw the souls of his hearers to self-knowledge, and that, raised above earthly desires, they should come to know not only the beauties of this great author, but should attain to still higher grades of knowledge. To him can be applied the text in Ecclesiasticus: 'The

great Lord will fill him with the spirit of understanding, and he will pour forth the words of his wisdom as showers.'"

FOOTNOTES:

[1] *V. N.* xxx. *Cf.* Moore, *Studies in Dante*, ii. pp. 123, 124. Del Lungo and others calculate the date as June 19th.

[2] Two daughters are mentioned: Antonia and Beatrice. It is probable that they are one and the same person, Antonia being the name in the world of the daughter who became a nun at Ravenna as "Suora Beatrice." A recent discovery has revealed the existence of a Giovanni di Dante Alighieri, "Johannes filius Dantis Alagherii de Florentia," at Lucca in October 1308, who would then have been at least fourteen years old. But it seems more probable that the "Dante Alighieri" in question is not the poet. See M. Barbi, *Un altro figlio di Dante?* in *Studi danteschi, v.* (Florence, 1922).

[3] It is to this conspiracy, as initiating the papal interference in Florentine politics which led ultimately to Dante's own exile, that the poet alludes in *Par.* xvii. 49-51, where Cacciaguida speaks from the standpoint of April 1300.

[4] See B. Barbadoro, *La condanna di Dante*, in *Studi danteschi diretti da* Michele Barbi, vol. ii.

[5] Cf. Del Lungo's notes to *La Cronica di Dino Compagni* in the new Muratori (tom. ix. pt. ii.), and Luzzatto, *La Cronica di Dino Compagni*, p. 70, n. 1. It is clear that both Bologna and Siena sent ambassadors, but that Compagni (misled by the name) erroneously supposed Malavolti to have been a Sienese.

[6] *Rime* cxvi.: O. canz. xi. Torraca takes this canzone as written when Dante was in the Casentino in 1311. Boccaccio speaks of an earlier stay of the poet in that region. It should be noted that Del Lungo has argued that Dante, after withdrawing from the active measures of the Bianchi, remained in Tuscany, or near at hand, until the dissolution of the party in 1307, when he may have gone to Verona.

[7] We know from the *Purgatorio* that Dante at some time visited Lucca, where a lady, said to have been Gentucca Morla, made the city pleasant to him. Dante's words seem to imply no more than an agreeable friendship (*Purg.* xxiv. 43-45). This visit may have been at an earlier date.

[8] Cf. A. Della Torre, *L'epistola all' Amico fiorentino*, in *Bullettino della Società Dantesca Italiana*, n.s. xii.; M. Barbi, *Per un passo dell' epistola all' Amico fiorentino*, in *Studi danteschi*, ii.

[9] In 1350 Boccaccio was commissioned by the captains of Or San Michele, a religious confraternity at Florence, to convey a sum of money to "Suora Beatrice, daughter of the late Dante Alighieri," a Dominican nun in the monastery of Santo Stefano degli Ulivi at Ravenna. This Suora Beatrice is mentioned, as no longer living, in a document of 1371. In a document of 1332, the only children of the poet who appear, together with his widow Gemma, are Jacopo, Pietro, and Antonia (of whom we know nothing more). It seems, therefore, probable that Dante had one daughter, Antonia, who, after 1332 (perhaps after the death of her mother), entered religion at Ravenna as Suora Beatrice. See O. Bacci, "Beatrice di Dante," in *Giornale Dantesco*, viii.

pp. 465-471.

CHAPTER II
DANTE'S MINOR ITALIAN WORKS

1. *The "Vita Nuova"*

Guido Guinizelli is acknowledged by Dante himself as his master in poetic art and the founder of the great new school of Italian poetry: "The father of me and of the others, my betters, who ever used sweet and gracious rhymes of love" (*Purg.* xxvi. 97). Guido's "Canzone of the Gentle Heart":

Al cor gentil ripara sempre Amore,

"To the gentle heart doth Love ever repair," the first great Italian lyric of this *dolce stil nuovo*, set forth an ideal creed of love which Dante made his own, and is the most fitting introduction to the *Vita Nuova* and the *Rime*. Love has its proper dwelling in the gentle heart, as light in the sun, for Nature created them simultaneously for each other, and they cannot exist apart. "The fire of Love is caught in gentle heart as virtue in the precious stone, to which no power descends from the star before the sun makes it a gentle thing. After the sun has drawn forth from it all which there is vile, the star gives it power. So the heart which is made by Nature true, pure, and noble, a woman like a star enamours." But a base nature will extinguish love as water does fire. Unless a man has true gentlehood in his soul, no high birth or

ancient lineage will ennoble him. Even as God fills the celestial intelligence with the Beatific Vision of His Essence, so the *bella donna* inspires him of gentle heart with the perfection of faithful love. Nor need the poet fear to take divine things as similitudes of his love, for such love as this is celestial, and will be accepted in Paradise:

My lady, God shall ask, "What daredst thou?"
(When my soul stands with all her acts reviewed)
"Thou passedst Heaven, into My sight, as now,
To make Me of vain love similitude.
To Me doth praise belong,
And to the Queen of all the realm of grace
Who slayeth fraud and wrong."
Then may I plead: "As though from Thee he came,
Love wore an angel's face:
Lord, if I loved her, count it not my shame."

ROSSETTI'S *Translation*.

The poetry of the *dolce stil nuovo* developed the spiritual conception of love already in germ in the later troubadours, and added an infusion of the new scholastic philosophy, but the real novelty lay in the superiority of Guido Guinizelli as a poet over his predecessors. From Bologna the pre-eminence passed to Florence with Guido Cavalcanti, who took from the other Guido "la gloria de la lingua" (*Purg.* xi. 98), and developed a complicated poetical psychology which culminates in his famous canzone on the nature of love:

Donna me prega, perch'io voglio dire;

"A lady prays me, therefore I would tell of an accident which is often fierce and is so lofty that it is called Love." The *Vita Nuova*, beginning under the influence of Cavalcanti, becomes the supreme development in prose and verse of the doctrine of Guinizelli.

"This glorious poet," writes Boccaccio, "first, when still weeping for the death of his Beatrice, about in his twenty-sixth year put together in a little volume, which he called the *New Life*, certain small works, as sonnets and canzoni, made by him in diverse times before and in rhyme, marvellously beautiful; writing at the head of each, severally and in order, the occasions which had moved him to make them, and adding at the end the divisions of each poem. And although, in maturer years, he was much ashamed of having made this little book, nevertheless, when his age is considered, it is very beautiful and pleasing, and especially to the general reader."

But this spotless lily of books is too delicate a flower in the garden of art to be plucked by the hands of the writer of the *Decameron*. A greater poet than Boccaccio has said of it: "Throughout the *Vita Nuova* there is a strain like the first falling murmur which reaches the ear in some remote meadow, and prepares us to look upon the sea." It is a preparation for the *Commedia*, inasmuch as it tells us how the divine singer became a poet, and how she crossed his path who was to be his spiritual pilot over that mighty ocean. Boccaccio's statement, that Dante in maturer years was ashamed of having written this book, is perhaps due to a misunderstanding or confused recollection of a passage about certain canzoni in the *Convivio* (i. 2). In the *Convivio*, where he discusses the nature of allegory and interprets the

whole of certain later poems in an allegorical sense, Dante suggests no such significance for Beatrice in the *Vita Nuova*; but, while declaring that the *Vita Nuova* was written at the entrance of manhood, he seems to contrast it with his more mature work, to which alone he would apply an allegorical interpretation. And he is most emphatic that this is in no way to derogate from the *Vita Nuova* (*Conv.* i. 1): "For it is fitting to speak and act differently in one age than in another."

The *Vita Nuova* is the most spiritual and ethereal romance of love that exists, but its purity is such as comes, not from innocent simplicity of soul, but from self-repression. In the form of a collection of lyrics connected together by a prose narrative (itself a thing of rare and peculiar beauty), with quaint and curious scholastic divisions and explanations, Dante tells the tale of his love for Beatrice, from his first sight of her in their ninth year to a vision which is the anticipation of her final apotheosis. Although conforming with the poetic conventions of the age, especially in the earlier portions, it is based upon a real love story, however deeply tinged with mysticism and embellished with visionary episodes. The heroine in her loveliness and purity becomes an image upon earth of the Divine Beauty and Goodness; the poet's love for her is the stepping-stone to love of the Supreme Good. Dante has learned his lesson from Guido Guinizelli, and does not fear to take God Himself as a similitude of his love; Heaven itself requires his lady for its perfection of beatitude (*V. N.* xix.); she has her precursor in Monna Giovanna, even as St. John came before the True Light (xxiv.); nay, she is a very miracle whose only root is the Blessed Trinity (xxx.).

Here beginneth the "New Life," *Incipit vita nova!* We shall probably do well in taking the New Life not as merely meaning the poet's youth, but as referring to the new life that began with the dawn of love, the regeneration of the soul. Dante's first meeting with Beatrice at the beginning of her ninth and at the end of his ninth year, when she appeared to him robed in crimson, the colour of love and charity—and her "most sweet salutation" nine years later, when she came dressed all in pure white, the hue of Faith and Purity, between two gentle ladies older than herself —these things may have a certain analogy with the representation of his moral and political conversion, in the vision of the *Commedia*, as happening in his thirty-fifth year, 1300, the year of Jubilee. We may perhaps surmise that Dante, looking back from this second meeting, from which his love really dates, artistically worked up the recollections of his childhood to correspond with it; just as many years later, when he turned to the composition of the sacred poem, he looked back in his memory to some great spiritual experience when "in the middle of the journey of our life." And, although Dante's own words in the *Convivio* seem absolutely to preclude any possibility of allegorising the figure of Beatrice herself, it is clear that many of the minor episodes in the *Vita Nuova* must be regarded as symbolical.

After the proem, in which the poet's intention is set forth, the *Vita Nuova* falls into three divisions. Each contains ten poems set as gems in a golden prose framework, the end of each part being indicated by a reference to new matter, *nuova matera* (xvii., xxxi.). The whole book is closed by an epilogue containing one sonnet, *una cosa nuova*, "a new thing," with an introductory episode and a visionary sequel. In the first part Dante mainly

depicts the effects in himself of Beatrice's beauty, the loveliness of the *belle membra*, "the fair members in which I was enclosed" (*Purg.* xxxi. 50); in the second, the miracles wrought by the splendour of her soul; the third contains his worship of her memory, when "the delight of her fairness, departing from our view, became great spiritual beauty that spreads through heaven a light of love, gives bliss to the Angels, and makes their lofty and subtle intellect wonder" (xxxiv.).

The first part (ii. to xvii.) contains nine of Dante's earliest sonnets and one ballata, with the story of his youthful love up to a certain point, where, after having passed through a spiritual crisis, he resolves to write upon a new and nobler matter than the past. We have the wondrous effects of Beatrice's salutation; the introductory sonnet resulting in the friendship with Guido Cavalcanti, to whom the book is dedicated, and who seems to have induced Dante to write in Italian instead of Latin (*V. N.* xxxi.); his concealment of his love by feigning himself enamoured of two other ladies. Throughout the *Vita Nuova*, while Beatrice on earth or in heaven is, as it were, the one central figure in the picture, there is a lovely background of girlish faces behind her; just as, in the paintings of many early Italian masters, there is shown in the centre the Madonna and her Divine Babe, while around her all the clouds and sky are full of sweetly smiling cherubs' heads. There have been students of the book who supposed that, while Beatrice represents the ideal of womanhood, these others are the real Florentine women in whom Dante for a while sought this glorious ideal of his mind; others have endeavoured in one or other of the minor characters of the *Vita Nuova* to recognise the Matelda of the Earthly Paradise. And there are

visions and dreams introduced, in which Love himself appears in visible form, now as a lord of terrible aspect within a cloud of fire with Beatrice in his arms, now by a river-side in the garb of a traveller to bid Dante feign love for another lady, now as a youth clad in very white raiment to console him when Beatrice refuses her salutation. It may be that these two latter episodes mean that Dante was for a time enamoured of some girl whom he afterwards represented as the second lady who shielded his real love from discovery, and that he resolved to turn from it to a nobler worship of Beatrice. The most beautiful sonnet of this group is the fifth:

Cavalcando l'altr'ier per un cammino,

"As I rode the other day along a path, thinking of the journey that was irksome to me," the journey in question being probably to Bologna (cf. p. 12).

This part is not wanting in the "burning tears" which Leonardo Bruni finds such a stumbling-block in Boccaccio's narrative. Its lyrics show the influence of Guido Cavalcanti, particularly in the personification of the faculties of the soul as *spiriti*, and in the somewhat extravagant metaphors with which Dante depicts his torment in love. But a complete change comes. The mysterious episode of Dante's agony at a wedding feast, where Beatrice mocks him, marks a crisis in his new life. *Io tenni li piedi in quella parte de la vita di là da la quale non si puote ire più per intendimento di ritornare*, "I have set my feet on that part of life beyond the which one can go no further with intention of returning." He crushes the more personal element out of his love, and will be content to worship her from afar; he has

sufficiently made manifest his own condition, even if he should ever after abstain from addressing her. “It behoved me to take up a new matter and one nobler than the past.”

This *matera nuova e più nobile che la passata* is the subject of the second part of the *Vita Nuova* (xviii. to xxviii.). The poet’s youthful love has become spiritual adoration for a living personification of all beauty and nobleness. Since Beatrice denies him her salutation, Love has placed all his beatitude in those words that praise his lady: so he tells the lady of very sweet speech, *donna di motto leggiadro parlare*, who questions him concerning this love, and whose rebuke marks the turning-point of the whole book. And, for the first time, the supreme poet is revealed in the great canzone:

Donne ch’avete intelletto d’amore,

“Ladies that have understanding of love,” uniting earth and heaven in glorification of her who was the giver of blessing. Here the apotheosis of womanhood, sketched by Guido Guinizelli, is developed with mystical fullness, and there is even perhaps a hint of some future work in honour of Beatrice that will deal with the world beyond the grave. The two sonnets that follow are a kind of supplement; the first:

Amore e ’l cor gentil sono una cosa,

“Love and the gentle heart are one same thing,” gives a definition of love, elaborating the Guinizellian doctrine; the second:

Ne li occhi porta la mia donna Amore,

“Within her eyes my lady carries Love,” pursues the

conception further, to represent Beatrice herself as the creatrix of the divine gift of *gentilezza* by which the heart is capable of noble love. Two sonnets on the death of Beatrice's father lead up to a veritable lyrical masterpiece, the canzone:

Donna pietosa e di novella etate,

"A lady pitiful and of tender age," the anticipatory vision of Beatrice's death—the "Dante's Dream" of Rossetti's famous picture. The following sonnet, in which Beatrice and Cavalcanti's lady, Primavera or Giovanna, appear together, is the only place in the *Vita Nuova* where Dante calls her whom he loved by the name by which she was actually known—"Bice." Love now no longer appears weeping, but speaks joyfully in the poet's heart. All that was personal in Dante's worship seems to have passed away with his earlier lamentations; his love has become a transcendental rapture, an ecstasy of self-annihilation. This part of the book culminates in the two sonnets:

Tanto gentile e tanto onesta pare,

"So noble and so pure seems my lady," in which a similar sonnet of Guinizelli's is easily surpassed, and

Vede perfettamente onne salute,

"He seeth perfectly all bliss, who beholds my lady among the ladies"; sonnets which are flawless gems of mediaeval poetry. Then abruptly, in the composition of a canzone which should have shown how Love by means of Beatrice regenerated his soul, the pen falls from his hand: Beatrice has been called by God to Himself, to be glorious under the banner

of Mary, “How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people!”

Some falling off may be detected here and there in the third part of the *Vita Nuova* (xxix. to xli.), which includes the prose and poetry connected with Beatrice’s death, the love for the lady who takes pity upon the poet’s grief, his repentance and return to Beatrice’s memory. A stately canzone:

Li occhi dolenti per pietà del core,

“The eyes that grieve for pity of the heart,” is a companion piece to the opening canzone of the second part; the poet now speaks of Beatrice’s death in the same form and to the same love-illumined ladies to whom he had formerly sung her praises. More beautiful are the closing lines of the shorter canzone, written for Dante’s second friend, who was apparently Beatrice’s brother. After the charming episode of the poet drawing an Angel on her anniversary, the “gentle lady, young and very fair,” inspires him with four sonnets; and his incipient love for her is dispelled by a “strong imagination,” a vision of Beatrice as he had first seen her in her crimson raiment of childhood. The bitterness of Dante’s repentance is a foretaste of the confession upon Lethe’s bank in the *Purgatorio*. The pilgrims pass through the city on their way to Rome, “in that season when many folk go to see that blessed likeness which Jesus Christ left us as exemplar of His most beauteous face, which my lady sees in glory” (*V. N.* xli.); and this third part closes with the sonnet in which Dante calls upon the pilgrims to tarry a little, till they have heard how the city lies desolate for the loss of Beatrice.

In the epilogue (xlii., xliii.), in answer to the request of two of those noble ladies who throng the ways of Dante's mystical city of youth and love as God's Angels guard the terraces of the Mount of Purgation, Dante writes the last sonnet of the book; wherein a "new intelligence," born of Love, guides the pilgrim spirit beyond the spheres into the Empyrean to behold the blessedness of Beatrice. It is an anticipation of the spiritual ascent of the *Divina Commedia*, which is confirmed in the famous passage which closes the "new life" of Love:

"After this sonnet there appeared unto me a wonderful vision: wherein I saw things which made me purpose to say no more of this blessed one, until such time as I could discourse more worthily concerning her. And to attain to that I labour all I can, even as she knoweth verily. Wherefore if it shall be His pleasure, through whom is the life of all things, that my life continue for some years, I hope that I shall yet utter concerning her what hath never been said of any woman. And then may it seem good unto Him, who is the Lord of courtesy, that my soul may go hence to behold the glory of its lady: to wit, of that blessed Beatrice who gazeth gloriously upon the countenance of Him who is blessed throughout all ages."[10]

From the mention of the pilgrimage, and this wonderful vision, it has been sometimes supposed that the closing chapters of the *Vita Nuova* were written in 1300. It seems, however, almost certain that there is no reference whatever to the year of Jubilee in the first case. When Dante's positive statement in the *Convivio*, that he wrote the *Vita Nuova* at the entrance of manhood (*gioventute* being the twenty years from twenty-five to forty-five, *Conv.*

iv. 24), is compared with the internal evidence of the book itself, the most probable date for its completion would be between 1291 and 1293. It should, however, be borne in mind that, while there is documentary evidence that some of the single poems were in circulation before 1300, none of the extant manuscripts of the whole work can be assigned to a date much earlier than the middle of the fourteenth century. It is, therefore, not inconceivable that the reference to the vision may be associated with the spiritual experience of 1300 and slightly later than the rest of the book.[11]

The form of the *Vita Nuova*, the setting of the lyrics in a prose narrative and commentary, is one that Dante may well have invented for himself. If he had models before his eyes, they were probably, on the one hand, the *razos* or prose explanations which accompanied the poems of the troubadours, and, on the other, the commentaries of St. Thomas Aquinas on the works of Aristotle, which Dante imitates in his divisions and analyses of the various poems. His quotations show that he had already studied astronomy, and made some rudimentary acquaintance with Aristotle and with the four chief Latin poets; the section in which he speaks of the latter, touching upon the relations between classical and vernacular poetry (xxv.), suggests the germ of the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*. The close of the book implies that he regarded lack of scientific and literary equipment as keeping him from the immediate fulfilment of the greater work that he had even then conceived for the glory of Beatrice.

In the *Convivio*, where all else is allegorical, Beatrice is still simply his first love, *lo primo amore* (ii. 16). Even when allegorically interpreting the

canzone which describes how another lady took her place in his heart, after her death, as referring to Philosophy, there is no hint of any allegory about *quella viva Beatrice beata*, "that blessed Beatrice, who lives in heaven with the Angels and on earth with my soul" (*Conv.* ii. 2). When about to plunge more deeply into allegorical explanations, he ends what he has to say concerning her by a digression upon the immortality of the soul (*Conv.* ii. 9): "I so believe, so affirm, and so am certain that I shall pass after this to another better life, there where that glorious lady lives, of whom my soul was enamoured."

Those critics who question the reality of the story of the *Vita Nuova*, or find it difficult to accept without an allegorical or idealistic interpretation, are best answered in Dante's own words: *Questo dubbio è impossibile a solvere a chi non fosse in simile grado fedele d'Amore; e a coloro che vi sono è manifesto ciò che solverebbe le dubitose parole*; "This difficulty is impossible to solve for anyone who is not in similar grade faithful unto Love; and to those who are so, that is manifest which would solve the dubious words" (*V. N.* xiv.).

2. *The "Rime"*

The *Rime*—for which the more modern title, *Canzoniere*, has sometimes been substituted—comprise all Dante's lyrical poems, together with others that are more doubtfully attributed to him. In the *Vita Nuova* were inserted three canzoni, two shorter poems in the canzone mould, one ballata, twenty-five sonnets (including two double sonnets). The "testo critico" of the *Rime*, edited by Michele Barbi for the sexcentenary Dante, in addition to these accepts as authentic sixteen canzoni (the sestina is

merely a special form of canzone), five ballate, thirty-four sonnets, and two stanzas. Dante himself regards the canzone as the noblest form of poetry (*V. E.* ii. 3), and he expounded three of his canzoni in the *Convivio*. From the middle of the fourteenth century onwards, a large number of MSS. give these three and twelve others (fifteen in all) as a connected whole in a certain definite order, frequently with a special rubric in Latin or Italian prefixed to each; this order and these rubrics are due to Boccaccio.[12] It has been more difficult to distinguish between the certainly genuine and the doubtful pieces among the ballate and sonnets, and the authenticity of some of those now included by Barbi in the canon is still more or less open to question. The *Rime*, on the whole, are the most unequal of Dante's works; a few of the sonnets, particularly some of the earlier ones and those in answer to other poets, have but slight poetic merit, while several of the later canzoni rank among the world's noblest lyrics. In the sexcentenary edition the arrangement of the lyrics is tentatively chronological, with subsidiary groupings according to subject-matter. While following the same general scheme, I slightly modify the arrangement, as certain poems regarded by Barbi as "rime d'amore" appear to me to be more probably allegorical.

(*a*) A first group belongs to the epoch of the *Vita Nuova*. Conspicuous among them are two canzoni. One:

La dispietata mente che pur mira,

"Pitiless memory that still gazes back at the time gone by," is addressed directly to a woman (in this respect differing from Dante's other canzoni), who is probably the second lady represented as the poet's

screen. The other:

E ’m’ increscе di me si duramente,

“I grieve for myself so bitterly,” seems to give fuller expression to the first part of the *Vita Nuova* with an alien note—the image of the little maiden has yielded to that of the woman whose great beauty is the object of unattainable desire. At times a lighter note is struck; Dante is apparently simply supplying words for composers to set to music, or revealing a spirit of playfulness of which there is no trace in the *Vita Nuova*.[13] Besides sonnets in honour of Beatrice, we have a few relating to other women, and in two ballate even their names are given: Fioretta and Violetta. One delightful sonnet:

Sonar bracchetti e cacciatori aizzare,

“Beagles questing and huntsmen urging on,” reveals the poet taking part in sport and appreciating a jape at his own expense. A number of correspondence sonnets belong to this epoch, a small series addressed to Dante da Maiano (of which no MS. has been preserved) being probably earlier than the first sonnet of the *Vita Nuova*. A note of pure romance is struck in the charming sonnet to Guido Cavalcanti, in which the younger poet wishes that they two, with Lapo Gianni and their three ladies (Dante’s being the first lady who screened his love), might take a voyage over enchanted seas in Merlin’s magic barque. Several admirable sonnets, now included in this group, were formerly attributed to Cino da Pistoia.[14]

(*b*) The tenzone with Forese Donati forms a little group apart. Its date is uncertain, but may be

plausibly taken as between 1290 and 1296. These sonnets, though not free from bitterness which is perhaps serious, may be regarded as exercises in that style of burlesque and satirical poetry to which even Guido Guinizelli had once paid tribute, and which Rustico di Filippo had made characteristically Florentine.

(*c*) Next comes a group of poems, connected with the allegory of the *Convivio*, in which an intellectual ideal is pursued with the passion and wooed in the language of the lover who adores an earthly mistress. "I say and affirm that the lady, of whom I was enamoured after my first love, was the most beautiful and most pure daughter of the Emperor of the Universe, to whom Pythagoras gave the name Philosophy" (*Conv.* ii. 16). By some, not entirely reconcilable, process the *donna gentile*, who appears at the end of the *Vita Nuova*, has become a symbol of Philosophy, and the poet's love for her a most noble devotion. The canzone:

Voi che 'ntendendo il terzo ciel movete,

"Ye who by understanding move the third heaven" describing the conflict in Dante's mind between this new love and the memory of Beatrice, deals again with the matter of one of the sonnets of the *Vita Nuova*; but the allegory is perhaps an after-thought. It is commented upon in the second treatise of the *Convivio* and quoted in Canto viii. of the *Paradiso*. The other poems of this group seem purely allegorical: "By love, in this allegory, is always intended that study which is the application of the enamoured mind to that thing of which it is enamoured" (*Conv.* ii. 16). At first this service is painful and laborious; and the mystical lady seems a

cruel and proud mistress, as she is represented in the "pitiful ballata":

Voi che savete ragionar d'Amore,

"Ye who know how to discourse of love," which is referred to in the third treatise of the *Convivio* (iii. 9). But the defect is on the lover's own part, and in her light the difficulties which sundered him and her are dispersed like morning clouds before the face of the sun. This mystical worship culminates in the supreme hymn to his spiritual mistress, whose body is Wisdom and whose soul is Love:

Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona,

"Love that in my mind discourses to me of my lady desirously," which is the second canzone of the *Convivio* (quoted in *V. E.* ii. 6), the amorous song that Casella was to sing "met in the milder shades of Purgatory." It is one of Dante's lyrical masterpieces. Hardly less beautiful is the canzone, likewise cited in the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (*V. E.* ii. 5, II):

Amor, che movi tua vertù dal cielo,

"Love that movest thy power from heaven"; with a mystical comparison of the workings of love to those of the sun and striking lines on the supernatural power of the illumined imagination. This allegorical group may be regarded as closed by the canzone:

Io sento si d'Amor la gran possanza,

"I feel so the great power of love," in which Dante represents himself as too young to obtain his lady's grace, but is content to serve on, finding the quest of philosophic truth its own reward. This poem has two

commiati (the *commiato*, or *tornata*, being the stanza or part of a stanza, or a few independent lines, added as an address or farewell at the end of a canzone); both seem to imply that philosophic verse may be the instrument of political or social reform.[15]

(*d*) Dante originally held that Italian poetry should only be used for writing upon love, and therefore, in his younger days, a philosophical poem would naturally take the form of a love ode. In the *Vita Nuova*, he argues "against those who rhyme upon any matter other than amorous; seeing that such mode of speech was originally found for speaking of love" (*V. N.* xxv). His views naturally widened before he wrote his later canzoni (*cf. V. E.* ii. 2); but when, lacking inspiration for a higher lyrical flight or baffled by some metaphysical problem, he turns to set erring men right in didactic canzoni on some humbler ethical subject, he represents himself as so doing because out of favour with his lady or deserted by love. Thus, "The sweet rhymes of love, which I was wont to seek in my thoughts, needs must I leave"—

Le dolci rime d'amor, ch'i' solia

—opens the canzone on the spiritual nature of true *gentilezza* (inspired in part by Guinizelli), which is expounded in the fourth treatise of the *Convivio*, and, although somewhat unequal, contains one ineffable stanza upon the noble soul in life's four stages. A companion poem:

Poscia ch'Amor del tutto m' ha lasciato,

"Since love has left me utterly," deals with *leggiadria*, the outward expression of a chivalrous soul, and

shows the influence of the *Tesoretto* of Brunetto Latini. These two canzoni, which contain transcripts from the Aristotelian *Ethics*, only here and there become poetry. In the larger proportion of short lines in the stanza, Dante seems feeling his way to a more popular metrical form and a freer treatment, as well as a wider range of subject. The second has satirical sketches of vicious or offensive types of men, with whom he will deal more severely in the *Commedia*.

(*e*) There are certain lyrics of Dante's which can hardly admit of an allegorical interpretation, but are almost certainly the expression of passionate love for real women. Most notable among these are a group of four canzoni, known as the *rime per la donna pietra*, which are characterised by a peculiar incessant playing upon the word *pietra*, or "stone," which has led to the hypothesis that they were inspired by a lady named Pietra, or at least by one who had been as cold and rigid as Beatrice had been the giver of blessing. The canzone of the *aspro parlare*:

Così nel mio parlar voglio esser aspro,

"So in my speech would I be harsh, as this fair stone is in her acts," shows that Dante could be as terrible in his love as in his hate, and has a suggestion of sensuality which we hardly find elsewhere in his poetry. It is indirectly referred to in the *Convivio*, and quoted by Petrarch. The other three canzoni of this "stony" group show very strongly the influence of the Provençal Arnaut Daniel in their form, and all their imagery is drawn from nature in winter. The sestina:

Al poco giorno e al gran cerchio d'ombra,

"To the short day and the large circle of shade have I come," is the first Italian example of that peculiar variety of the canzone which was invented by Arnaut (*V. E.*, ii. 10, 13). It gives a most wonderful picture of this strange green-robed girl, her golden hair crowned with grass like Botticelli's Libyan Sibyl, in the meadow "girdled about with very lofty hills." Less beautiful and more artificial, the canzone:

Amor, tu vedi ben che questa donna,

"Love, thou seest well that this lady cares not for thy power," is likewise quoted with complacency, for its novelty and metrical peculiarity, in the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (ii. 13). And the passion of the whole group is summed up in the poem on Love and Winter:

Io son venuto al punto de la rota,

"I am come to the point of the wheel," where, stanza by stanza, the external phenomena of the world in winter are contrasted with the state of the poet's soul, ever burning in the "sweet martyrdom" of love's fire. It is the ultimate perfection of a species of poem employed by Arnaut and other troubadours; another lyrical masterpiece, anticipating in its degree the treatment of nature which we find in the *Commedia*. These four poems were probably composed shortly before Dante's banishment, but another canzone of somewhat similar tone was certainly written in exile—the famous and much discussed "mountain song":

Amor, da che convien pur ch'io mi doglia,

"Love, since I needs must make complaint," apparently describing an overwhelming passion for the fair lady of the Casentino; its pathetic close, with its reference to Florence, has been already quoted. The striking sonnet to Cino da Pistoia about the same time:

Io sono stato con Amore insieme.

"I have been in company with love since the circling of my ninth sun," affords further testimony that, at certain epochs of his life, earthly love took captive Dante's freewill.

(*f*) To the earlier years of Dante's exile belongs the noblest and most sublime of his lyrics, the canzone:

Tre donne intorno al cor mi son venute,

"Three ladies are come around my heart and are seated without, for within sits Love who is in lordship of my life." They are Justice and her spiritual children; Love prophesies the ultimate triumph of righteousness, and the poet, with such high companionship in outward misfortune, declares that he counts his exile as an honour. While recalling the legend of the apparition of Lady Poverty and her two companions to St. Francis of Assisi, and a poem of Giraut de Borneil on the decay of chivalry, the canzone echoes Isaiah (ch. li.). Its key may be found in the prophet's words: "Hearken unto me, ye that know Justice, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings." It was probably written between 1303 and 1306; its opening lines have been found transcribed in a document of 1310.[16] To about the same epoch must be assigned the powerful canzone

against vice in general and avarice in particular:

Doglia mi reca ne lo core ardire,

"Grief brings daring into my heart," which is cited in the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (associated with another poem of Giraut de Borneil) as a typical poem on *rectitudo*, "righteousness," "the direction of the will" (*V. E.* ii. 2). These two canzoni are the connecting link between the *Rime* and the *Commedia*; the first contains the germ of Dante's prophecy of the *Veltro*, his Messianic hope of the Deliverer to come, who shall make Love's darts shine with new lustre and renovate the world; in the second, we already catch the first notes of the *saeva indignatio* of the sacred poem. With the exception of the "montanina canzone" and some sonnets to Cino da Pistoia, Dante wrote few other lyrics at this period[17]; indeed, one of the sonnets seems to imply that he had finally turned away from such poetry (*da queste nostre rime*) in contemplation of his greater task:

Io mi credea del tutto esser partito,

"I deemed myself to have utterly departed from these our rhymes, Messer Cino, for henceforth another path befits my ship and further from the shore."

3. *The "Convivio"*

The *Convivio*, or "Banquet," bears a somewhat similar relation to the work of Dante's second period as the *Vita Nuova* did to that of his adolescence. Just as after the death of Beatrice he collected his earlier lyrics, furnishing them with prose narrative and commentary, so now in exile he intended to put together fourteen of his later canzoni and write a

prose commentary upon them, to the honour and glory of his mystical lady, Philosophy. Dante was certainly not acquainted with Plato's *Symposium*. It was from the *De Consolatione Philosophiae* of Boëthius that the idea came to him of representing Philosophy as a woman; but the "woman of ful greet reverence by semblaunt," who "was ful of so greet age, that men ne wolde nat trowen, in no manere, that she were of oure elde" (so Chaucer renders Boëthius), is transformed to the likeness of a *donna gentile*, the idealised human personality of the poetry of the "dolce stil nuovo":

> "And I imagined her fashioned as a gentle lady; and I could not imagine her in any bearing save that of compassion; wherefore so willingly did the sense of truth look upon her, that scarcely could I turn it from her. And from this imagining I began to go there where she revealed herself in very sooth, to wit, in the schools of religious and at the disputations of philosophers; so that in a short time, perchance of thirty months, I began to feel so much of her sweetness, that her love drove out and destroyed every other thought" (*Conv.* ii. 13).

The *Convivio* is an attempt to bring philosophy out of the schools of religious and away from the disputations of philosophers, to render her beauty accessible even, to the unlearned. "The *Convivio*", says Dr. Wicksteed, "might very well be described as an attempt to throw into popular form the matter of the Aristotelian treatises of Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas." Dante's text is the opening sentence of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*: "All men by nature desire to know"; which he elaborates from the commentary of Aquinas and the latter's *Summa*

contra gentiles. He would gather up the crumbs which fall from the table where the bread of Angels is eaten, and give a banquet to all who are deprived of this spiritual food. It is the first important work on philosophy written in Italian—an innovation which Dante thinks necessary to defend in the chapters of the introductory treatise, where he explains his reasons for commenting upon these canzoni in the vernacular instead of Latin, and incidentally utters an impassioned defence of his mother-tongue, with noteworthy passages on the vanity of translating poetry into another language and the potentialities of Italian prose (*Conv.* i. 7, 10).

In addition to this principal motive for writing the work, the desire of giving instruction, Dante himself alleges another—the fear of infamy, *timore d'infamia* (*Conv.* i. 2): "I fear the infamy of having followed such great passion as whoso reads the above-mentioned canzoni will conceive to have held sway over me; the which infamy ceases entirely by the present speaking of myself, which shows that not passion, but virtue, has been the moving cause." It would seem that Dante intended to comment upon certain of the canzoni connected with real women, and to represent them as allegorical; it may be that, consumed with a more than Shelleyan passion for reforming the world, he chose this method of getting rid of certain episodes in the past which he, with too much self-severity, regarded as rendering him unworthy of the sublime office he had undertaken. And, by a work of lofty style and authority, he would rehabilitate the man who, in his exiled wanderings, had "perchance cheapened himself more than truth wills" (i. 4).

Only the introductory treatise and three of the

commentaries were actually written: those on the canzoni *Voi cite 'ntendendo*, *Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona*, *Le dolci rime d'amor*. If the whole work had been completed on the same scale as these four treatises, a great part of the field of knowledge open to the fourteenth century would have been traversed in the ardent service of this mystical lady, whom the poet in the second treatise—not without considerable inconsistency—represents as the same as the *donna gentile* who appeared towards the end of the *Vita Nuova* (*Conv.* ii. 2). As it is, the movements of the celestial bodies, the ministry of the angelic orders, the nature of the human soul and the grades of psychic life, the mystical significance and universality of love, are among the subjects discussed in the second and third treatises. The fourth treatise is primarily ethical: nobility as inseparable from love and virtue, wealth, the Aristotelian definition of moral virtue and human felicity, the goal of human life, the virtues suitable to each age, are among the themes considered. Under one aspect the *Convivio* is a vernacular encyclopaedia (like the *Trésor* of Brunetto Latini), but distinguished from previous mediaeval works of the kind by its peculiar form, its artistic beauty, and its personal note. From the first treatise it is evident that the whole work had been fully planned; but it is not possible to reconstruct it with any plausibility, or to decide upon the question of which of the extant canzoni were to be included, and in what order. From iv. 26, it may be conjectured that the passionate canzone, *Così nel mio parlar voglio esser aspro* (*Rime* ciii., O. canz. xii.), was to be allegorised in the seventh treatise; while, from i. 12, ii. 1, iv. 27, it appears fairly certain that the canzone of the three ladies, *Tre donne intorno al cor* (*Rime* civ., O. canz. xx.), would have been expounded

in the fourteenth, where Justice and Allegory were to have been discussed; and, from i. 8 and iii. 15, that the canzone against the vices, *Doglia mi reca* (*Rime* cvi., O. canz. x.), was destined for the poetical basis of the last treatise of all. It is thus clear that the *Convivio* would have ended with the two canzoni which form the connecting link between the lyrical poems and the *Divina Commedia*. For the rest, it is certain that there would have been no mention of Beatrice in any of the unwritten treatises. In touching upon the immortality of the soul (*Conv.* ii. 9), Dante had seen fit to end what he wished to say of "that living blessed Beatrice, of whom I do not intend to speak more in this book." There seems also good reason for supposing that the canzone for the beautiful lady of the Casentino (*Rime* cxvi., O. canz. xi.), which may be of a slightly later date than the others, would not have formed part of the completed work.

Witte and others after him have supposed that the *Convivio* represents an alienation from Beatrice; that the Philosophy, which Dante defines as the amorous use of wisdom, is a presumptuous human science leading man astray from truth and felicity along the dangerous and deceptive paths of free speculation. There is, however, nothing in the book itself to support this interpretation,[18] and, indeed, a comparison between the second canzone, *Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona*, and the first canzone of the *Vita Nuova* points to the conclusion that the personification of philosophy is but a phase in the apotheosis of Beatrice herself. The *Convivio* is the first fruit of Dante's labours to fulfil the promise made at the end of the book of his youth; his knowledge of literature and philosophy has immeasurably widened, his speculations on human

life and nature have matured, and his prose style, in its comparative freedom and variety, its articulation and passages of spontaneous eloquence, shows a vast progress from that of the *Vita Nuova*.

There are passages in the *Convivio* which appear to be contradicted in the *Divina Commedia*. One of the most curious is the treatment of Guido da Montefeltro, who, in *Conv.* iv. 28, is "our most noble Italian," and a type of the noble soul returning to God in the last stage of life, whereas, in the *Inferno* (Canto xxvii.), he is found in the torturing flames of the evil counsellors. Several opinions are directly or indirectly withdrawn in the *Paradiso*; but these are to be rather regarded as mistakes which, in the light of subsequent knowledge, Dante desired to rectify or repudiate; such as the theory of the shadow on the moon being caused by rarity and density, based upon Averroës, and a peculiar arrangement of the celestial hierarchies, derived from the *Moralia* of St. Gregory the Great. And, in the *Purgatorio*, the poet discards his "dread of infamy," when he dares not meet Beatrice's gaze in the Garden of Eden; he casts aside the allegorical veil he had tried to draw over a portion of the past, and makes the full confession which we find in Cantos xxx. and xxxi. In the fourth treatise, an erroneous sentence attributed to Frederick II. (in reality a mutilated version of the definition of nobility given by Aristotle in the *Politics*) leads Dante to examine the limits and foundation of the imperial authority, the divine origin of Rome and the universal dominion of the Roman people, the relation of philosophy to government; a theme which he will work out more fully and scientifically in the *Monarchia*. The result is two singularly beautiful chapters (iv.-v.); a prose hymn to Rome, an idealised history of the city and

her empire. It is the first indication of the poet's conversion from the narrower political creed of the Florentine citizen to the ideal imperialism which inspires his later works.

It has sometimes been held that portions of the *Convivio* were written before exile. Nevertheless, while two of the canzoni were composed before 1300, it seems most probable that the prose commentaries took their present shape between Dante's breaking with his fellow-exiles and the advent of Henry VII. A passage concerning Frederick II., "the last emperor of the Romans with respect to the present time, although Rudolph and Adolph and Albert were elected after his death and that of his descendants" (*Conv.* iv. 3), shows that the fourth treatise was written before the election of Henry VII., in November 1308; while a reference to Gherardo da Cammino, lord of Treviso (iv. 14), seems to have been written after his death in March 1306. From the mention of Dante's wanderings in exile through so many regions of Italy (i. 3), it has sometimes been argued that the first is later than the subsequent treatises. It is tempting to associate the breaking off the work with Boccaccio's story of the recovery of the beginning of the *Inferno*. Be that as it may, the advent of the new Caesar, Dante's own return for a while to political activity, probably interrupted his life of study; and, when the storm passed away and left the poet disillusioned, his ideals had changed, another world lay open to his gaze, and the *Convivio* was finally abandoned.

FOOTNOTES:

[10] *Io spero di dicer di lei quello che mai non fue detto d'alcuna*: *dicer* (*dire*) and *detta*, have

here (as elsewhere in Dante) the sense of artistic utterance, and more particularly composition in poetry, whether in Latin or the vernacular. *Cf. V. N.* xxv.

[11] Livi has shown that the first documentary evidence of the existence of the *Vita Nuova* as a book is found at Bologna in June 1306.

[12] The Sexcentenary Dante admits as authentic one canzone not included in this series: *Lo doloroso amor che mi conduce* (*Rime* lxviii., O. canz. xvi.*); which is evidently an early composition.

[13] *Cf. Rime* xlviii., lvi., lxiii. and the later xcix.; O. son. xlviii.*, ball. viii., son. I.*, son. xxxvii.*

[14] Note especially Rime lix., lxvi.; O. sonnets lv., xxxviii*.

[15] To this group I would assign the sonnet, *Chi guarderà già mai sanza paura*, and the ballata, *I' mi son pargoletta bella e nova*, without attaching any special significance to the fact that "pargoletta" ("maiden" or "young girl") occurs also in the canzone, *Io son venuto al punto de la rota*, and in Beatrice's rebuke, *Purg.* xxxi. 59.

[16] *Cf.* G. Livi, *Dante suoi primi cultori sua gente in Bologna*, p. 24.

[17] Barbi adds to the *Rime* written in exile the impressive political sonnet, yearning for justice and peace, *Se vedi li docchi miei di pianger vaghi* (of which the attribution to Dante has sometimes been questioned), and the sonnet on Lisetta, *Per quella via che la bellezza corre*, a beautiful piece of unquestionable authenticity, but which may, perhaps, belong to an earlier epoch in the poet's life.

[18] But *cf.* Wicksteed, *From Vita Nuova to Paradiso*, pp. 93-121.

CHAPTER III
DANTE'S LATIN WORKS

1. *The "De Vulgari Eloquentia"*

In the first treatise of the *Convivio* (i. 5), Dante announces his intention of making a book upon *Volgare Eloquenza*, artistic utterance in the vernacular. Like the *Convivio*, the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* remains incomplete; only two books, instead of four, were written, and of these the second is not finished. In the first book the poet seeks the highest form of the vernacular, a perfect and imperial Italian language, to rule in unity and concord over all the dialects, as the Roman Empire over all the nations; in the second book he was proceeding to show how this illustrious vulgar tongue should be used for the art of poetry. Villani's description of the work applies only to the first book: "Here, in strong and ornate Latin, and with fair reasons, he reproves all the dialects of Italy"; Boccaccio's mainly to the second: "A little book in Latin prose, in which he intended to give instruction, to whoso would receive it, concerning composition in rhyme."[19]

BOOK I.—At the outset Dante strikes a slightly different note from that of the *Convivio*, by boldly asserting that vernacular in general (as the natural speech of man) is nobler than "grammar," literary languages like Latin or Greek, which he regards as

artificially formed (*V. E.* i. 1). To discover the noblest form of the Italian vernacular, the poet starts from the very origin of language itself. To man alone of creatures has the intercourse of speech been given: speech, the rational and sensible sign needed for the intercommunication of ideas. Adam and his descendants spoke Hebrew until the confusion of Babel (*cf.* the totally different theory in *Par.* xxvi. 124), after which this sacred speech remained only with the children of Heber (i. 2-7). From this point onwards the work becomes amazingly modern. Of the threefold language brought to Europe after the dispersion, the southernmost idiom has varied into three forms of vernacular speech—the language of those who in affirmation say *oc* (Spanish and Provençal), the language of *oil* (French), the language of *sì* (Italian).[20] And this Italian vulgar tongue has itself varied into a number of dialects, of which Dante distinguishes fourteen groups, none of which represent the illustrious Italian language which he is seeking. “He attacks,” wrote Mazzini, “all the Italian dialects, but it is because he intends to found a language common to all Italy, to create a form worthy of representing the national idea.” The Roman is worst of all (i. 11). A certain ideal language was indeed employed by the poets at the Sicilian court of Frederick and Manfred, but it was not the Sicilian dialect (i. 12). The Tuscans speak a degraded vernacular, although Guido Cavalcanti, Lapo Gianni and another Florentine (Dante himself), and Cino da Pistoia have recognised the excellence of the ideal vulgar tongue (i. 13). Bologna alone has a “locution tempered to a laudable suavity”; but which, nevertheless, cannot be the ideal language, or Guido Guinizelli and other Bolognese poets would not have written their poems in a form of speech

quite different from the special dialect of their city (i. 15). “The illustrious, cardinal, courtly, and curial vulgar tongue in Italy is that which belongs to every Italian city, and yet seems to belong to none, and by which all the local dialects of the Italians are measured, weighed, and compared” (i. 16). This is that ideal Italian which has been artistically developed by Cino and his friend (Dante himself) in their canzoni, and which makes its familiars so glorious that “in the sweetness of this glory we cast our exile behind our back” (*V. E.* i. 17). Such should be the language of the imperial Italian court of justice, and, although as far as Italy is concerned there is no prince, and that court is scattered in body, its members are united by the gracious light of reason (i. 18). This standard language belongs to the whole of Italy, and is called the Italian vernacular (*latinum vulgare*); “for this has been used by the illustrious writers who have written poetry in the vernacular throughout Italy, as Sicilians, Apulians, Tuscans, natives of Romagna, and men of both the Marches” (i. 19).

The examination of the dialects is perhaps the most original feature in the book; that Dante did not recognise that what was destined to be the literary language of Italy was, in reality, the Tuscan dialect, but adopted instead the theory of a conventional or artificial Italian, was largely due to his theories being based upon the lyrical poetry of his predecessors, in which he seemed to find this abstraction realised; for, though natives of different regions of Italy, they used—or, in the form in which their poems came to him, appeared to have used—a common literary language. Nevertheless in the *Divina Commedia*, which was to codify the national language, Dante recognised that he himself was speaking Tuscan (*Inf.*

xxiii. 76, *Purg.* xvi. 137).

BOOK II.—The unfinished second book is of the utmost value to the student of Italian poetic form. It makes us realise, too, how zealously Dante sought out technical perfection, studying subtle musical and rhythmical effects, curiously weighing the divisions of his stanzas, balancing lines, selecting words, harmonising syllables. No less noteworthy are his modest references to his own work and his generous appreciation of that of others, his predecessors and contemporaries, with reference to whose poems, as well as to his own, he illustrates his maxims. There is a certain limitation in that Dante conceives of poetry as only lyrical and written to be set to music (ii. 4), recognising only the most elaborate and least spontaneous forms of lyrical poetry—the Canzone (of which the Sestina is a variety), the Ballata, the Sonnet (ii. 3). There is no hint of that splendid rhythm, at once epical and lyrical, in which the *Divina Commedia* was to be written; though it is possible that Dante would have dealt with it in the fourth book, in which he intended to treat the discernment to be exercised with a subject fit to be sung in the "comic" style, in which sometimes the "middle" and sometimes the "lowly" vernacular may be used (ii. 4), and also, dealing with poems in the "middle" vulgar tongue, to treat specially of rhyme (ii. 13). The third book would perhaps have been concerned with the use of the illustrious vernacular in Italian prose (ii. 1.)

The illustrious vulgar tongue having been found, Dante proceeds thus to show the noblest use to which it can be put by the poet. Only three subjects are sufficiently exalted to be sung in this stateliest form of Italian speech, this highest vernacular: *Salus*,

Venus, *Virtus*; or those things which specially relate to them: the rightful use of arms, the fire of love, the direction of the will; and the first of these themes had not been handled, according to Dante, by any Italian poet. He cites Bertran de Born as having written on arms, Arnaut Daniel and Cino da Pistoia on love, Giraut de Borneil and "the friend of Cino" (himself) on *rectitudo* (ii. 2). Of the three legitimate lyrical forms the canzone is noblest, and contains what Rossetti called the "fundamental brainwork" of the most illustrious poets (ii. 3). And the ballata is nobler than the sonnet. It is in the canzone alone, in the "tragic" or highest style, that these sublime themes are to be sung; the style in which the stateliness of the lines, the loftiness of the construction, and the excellence of the words agree with the dignity of the subject. In this superexcellent sense, a canzone is a composition in the loftiest style of equal stanzas, without a refrain, referring to one subject.[21] And the rest of the book is occupied with rules for its proper construction; the different lines to be used, the choice of words, the structure of the various types of stanza, in which the whole art of the canzone is contained, the arrangement of rhymes; the work breaking off at the point where Dante was about to treat of the number of lines and syllables in the stanza. It is noteworthy that, though he illustrates his practical rules by examples from the Provençal troubadours, his Italian predecessors and contemporaries, and his own canzoni, the great Latin poets are set up as models: "The more closely we imitate these, the more correctly we write poetry" (ii. 4). There is some indication that the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* would have been dedicated to Cino da Pistoia as the *Vita Nuova* had been to Guido Cavalcanti.

DATE OF COMPOSITION.—The *De Vulgari Eloquentia* was probably written about the same time as the *Convivio* or slightly earlier. From a mention of the Marquis Giovanni of Monferrato apparently as living (*V. E.* i. 12), who died in January (?) 1305, it has been supposed that Book i. cannot be much later than the beginning of that year. Dante's evident friendly feeling for Bologna (which altered before he wrote the *Commedia*) may be connected with the time when the Florentine exiles were welcomed in that city, before the decree of expulsion in 1306. It has sometimes been thought that Book ii. may be a much later piece of work, produced as a poetical textbook at Ravenna in Dante's last years, and broken off, as Boccaccio suggests, by his death. Nevertheless, when the tone of the work and the probable dates of the lyrics quoted be taken into account, it seems more probable that what we have of the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* was written between 1304 and 1306; it represents part of the labours which were interrupted by the advent of Henry VII., or abandoned when the poet turned to the *Divina Commedia*.

2. *The "Monarchia"*

THE EMPIRE.—Upon all the political life of mediaeval Italy lay the gigantic shadow of a stupendous edifice, the Holy Roman Empire. Although the barbarians had struck down the body of the Empire of Rome, the spirit of Julius Caesar was mighty yet, as in Shakespeare's tragedy. The monarchy of Augustus, of Trajan, of Constantine and Justinian, still lived; not in the persons of the impotent Caesars of Byzantium, but in those of the successors of Charlemagne. From the coronation of

Otto the Saxon (962) to the death of the Suabian Frederick II. (1250), the mediaeval western world saw in the man whom the Germans recognised as their sovereign the "King of the Romans ever Augustus," the Emperor-elect, who when crowned at Rome would be "Romanorum Imperator," the supreme head of the universal Monarchy and the Vicar of God in things temporal, even as the Pope was the supreme head of the universal Church and the Vicar of God in things spiritual. In the eyes of Dante, the Papacy and the Empire alike proceeded from God, and were inseparably wedded to Rome, the eternal city; from which as two suns they should shed light upon man's spiritual and temporal paths, as divinely ordained by the infinite goodness of Him from whom the power of Peter and of Caesar bifurcates as from a point (*Purg. xvi.* 106-108, *Epist.* v. 5).

PAPAL CLAIMS.—With the increase of their temporal power, the successors of Hildebrand, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, had extended their authority from spiritual into purely secular regions. For them the imperial dignity was not of divine origin, but the gift of the Church to Charlemagne and his German successors. "What is the Teutonic King till consecrated at Rome?" wrote Adrian to Frederick Barbarossa: "The chair of Peter has given and can withdraw its gifts." In the interregnum that followed the fall of the house of Suabia, the Popes had claimed to exercise imperial rights in Italy, with disastrous results. They had joined the sword with the pastoral staff; and the Church, by confounding in herself the two governments, had fallen into the mire (*Purg.* xvi. 109-112, 127-129). And this tendency in the Papacy culminated in the extravagant pretensions of Boniface VIII., in his relations with

both the Empire and France, and his famous Bull *Unam Sanctam* (November 1302), declaring that the temporal power of kings is subject to the spiritual power of the priesthood, and directed by it as the body by the soul.

DATE OF THE "MONARCHIA."—The *Monarchia* is Dante's attempt to solve this burning mediaeval question of the proper relations of Church and State, of spiritual and temporal authority. Although it is undoubtedly the most famous of his prose works, the most widely divergent views have been held as to its date of composition. If the *Vita Nuova* is the most ideal book of love, the *Monarchia* is one of the most purely idealistic works ever written on politics. Even as Beatrice is the most glorious lady of the poet's mind, *la gloriosa donna de la mia mente*, so the temporal monarchy or Empire is to be considered by the poet in its ideal aspect according to the divine intention, *typo et secundum intentionem* (*Mon.* i. 2). Like the *Vita Nuova*, and unlike any other of Dante's longer works, the *Monarchia* contains no mention of the poet's exile, and no explicit references or allusions to contemporary events or persons. From this, and other considerations, it has sometimes been held that the *Monarchia* was written during his political life in Florence. Boccaccio, on the other hand, declares that Dante made this book on the coming of Henry VII., and the trend of criticism to-day is to accept 1313 as the approximate date. There are, however, scholars who consider it more probable that the *Monarchia* was written towards the close of the poet's life.

BOOK I.—The *Monarchia* is divided into three books, corresponding to the three questions to be answered touching this most useful and least

explored amongst occult and useful truths, the knowledge of the temporal monarchy (i. 1). In its ideal sense, the temporal Monarchy, or Empire, is defined as “a unique princedom extending over all persons in time, or in and over those things which are measured by time” (i. 2). And the first question arising concerning this temporal Monarchy is—whether it is necessary for the well-being of the world.

The proper function of the human race taken as a whole, the ultimate end or goal, for which the eternal God by His art, which is nature, brings into being the human race in its universality, is constantly to actualise or bring into play the whole capacity of the possible intellect, for contemplation and for action, for speculation and for operation (i. 3). And, for this almost divine function and goal, the most direct means is universal peace (i. 4). Since it is ordained for this goal, the human race must be guided by one ruling power, the Emperor, with reference to whom all its parts have their order; in subjection to whom, the human race becomes in its unity most like to God (i. 5-9). There must be some one supreme judge to decide by his judgment, mediately or immediately, all contentions; and such a judge can only be the Monarch (i. 10).

Again, the world is best disposed when justice is paramount therein; but this can only be under the Monarch or Emperor, who alone, free from covetousness and supreme in authority, will have the purest will and the greatest power to practise justice upon the earth (i. 11). Under him the human race will be most free, since it will have the fullest use of freewill, the greatest gift of God to man (i. 12). He alone, adorned with judgment and justice in the

highest degree, will be best disposed for ruling, and able to dispose others best (i. 13). From him the particular princes receive the common rule by which the human race is guided to peace; his is the dominating will that rules the wills of mortals, disposing them to unity and concord (i. 14, 15). All these and other reasons show that, for the well-being of the world, it is necessary that there should be the Monarchy. And they are confirmed by the sacred fact that Christ willed to become man in the "fullness of time," when the world was blessed with universal peace under the perfect monarchy of Augustus, the seamless garment that has since been rent by the nail of cupidity (i. 16).

To the modern mind the first book of the *Monarchia* is the most important. The conception that the goal of civilisation is the realising of all human potentialities is one of abiding significance. Divested of its mediaeval garb, the Empire itself becomes a permanent court of international justice, a supreme and impartial tribunal of international arbitration. Within such a restored unity of civilisation, nations and kingdoms and cities will develop freely and peacefully, in accordance with their own conditions and laws (*cf.* i. 10, 12, 14, and *Conv.* iv. 4). Here Dante anticipates what Mazzini called the "United States of Europe," or, more broadly, "Humanity."

BOOK II.—The second book answers the question whether the Roman people took to itself this dignity of Monarchy, or Empire, by right. But right in things is nothing else than the similitude of the Divine Will, and what God wills in human society is to be held as true and pure right. God's will is invisible; but it is manifested in this matter by the whole history of Rome (ii. 1, 2). The surpassing nobleness of Aeneas,

and therefore of his descendants (ii. 3); the traditional miracles wrought for the Romans (ii. 4); the devotion of the great Roman citizens from Cincinnatus to Cato, showing that the Roman people, in subjecting the world to itself, contemplated the good of the Commonwealth, and therefore the end of right (ii. 5, 6); the manifest adaptation of the Roman people by nature for ruling the nations with imperial sway (ii. 7);—all these prove that it was by right that the Romans acquired the Empire. The hidden judgment of God is sometimes revealed by contest, whether in the clash of champions in an ordeal or in the contention of rivals striving together for some prize (ii. 8). Such a prize was the empire of the world, which by divine judgment fell to the Roman people, when all were wrestling for it, and the kings of the Assyrians, Egyptians, and Persians, and even Alexander himself had failed (ii. 9). Their wars, too, from the earliest times were under the form of an ordeal; and Divine Providence declared in their favour. Thus arguments resting on principles of reason prove that the Roman people acquired the supreme and universal jurisdiction by right (ii. 10, 11). And arguments based upon principles of Christian faith support it. Christ, by His birth under the edict of Augustus, confirmed the imperial jurisdiction from which that edict proceeded; and, by His death under the vicar of Tiberius, He confirmed the universal penal jurisdiction of the Emperor over all the human race which was to be punished in His flesh (ii. 12, 13). “Let them cease to reproach the Roman Empire, who feign themselves to be sons of the Church; when they see that the Bridegroom, Christ, thus confirmed it at either limit of His warfare” (*i.e.* at the beginning and at the end of His life upon earth).

BOOK III.—And this rebuke to the clergy, from whom the main opposition to the Empire proceeded, naturally leads to the great question of the third book, the pith of the whole treatise.[22] Does the authority of the Roman Monarch or Emperor, who is thus by right the monarch of the world, depend immediately upon God, or upon some vicar of God, the successor of Peter? (iii. 1, 2, 3). The stock arguments of those who assert from passages of Scripture, such as the creation of the sun and moon, or the two swords mentioned in St. Luke's Gospel, that the authority of the Empire depends upon that of the Church, are readily brushed away (iii. 4-9). And, as for their historical evidence, the donation of Constantine, if genuine, was invalid; the coronation of Charlemagne was an act of usurpation (iii. 10, 11). The authority of the Church cannot be the cause of the imperial authority, since the latter was efficient, and was confirmed by Christ, before the Church existed (iii. 13). Neither has the Church this power of authorising the Emperor from God, nor from herself, nor from any Emperor, nor from the consent of the majority of mankind; indeed, such power is absolutely contrary to her very nature and the words of her Divine Founder (iii. 14, 15).

But it may be directly shown that the authority of the Emperor depends immediately upon God. For man, since he alone partakes of corruptibility and incorruptibility, is ordained for two ultimate ends—blessedness of this life, which is figured in the Earthly Paradise, and blessedness of life eternal, which consists in the fruition of the Divine Aspect in the Celestial Paradise.[23] To these two beatitudes, as to diverse ends, man must come by diverse means. For to the first we come by philosophic teachings, provided that we follow them by acting in

accordance with the moral and intellectual virtues; to the second by spiritual teachings, transcending human reason, as we follow them by acting in accordance with the theological virtues, Faith, Hope, Charity. But in spite of reason and revelation, which make these ends and means known to us, human cupidity would reject them, "were not men, like horses going astray in their brutishness, held in the way by bit and rein." "Wherefore man had need of a twofold directive power according to his twofold end, to wit, the supreme Pontiff, to lead the human race, in accordance with things revealed, to eternal life; and the Emperor, to direct the human race to temporal felicity in accordance with the teachings of philosophy." It is the special function of the Emperor to establish liberty and peace upon earth, to make the world correspond to the divinely ordained disposition of the heavens. Therefore he is chosen and confirmed by God alone; the so-called Electors are only the proclaimers (*denuntiatores*) of Divine Providence. "Thus, then, it is plain that the authority of the temporal monarch descends upon him without any mean from the fountain of universal authority." Yet it must not be taken that the Roman Prince is not subordinate in anything to the Roman Pontiff, since this mortal felicity is in some sort ordained with reference to immortal felicity. "Let Caesar, therefore, observe that reverence to Peter which a firstborn son should observe to a father, so that, illuminated by the light of paternal grace, he may with greater power irradiate the world, over which he is set by Him alone who is ruler of all things spiritual and temporal" (*Mon.* iii. 16).

RECEPTION OF THE WORK.—The *Monarchia* remained almost unknown until the great conflict between Louis of Bavaria and Pope John XXII., after

Dante's death. Boccaccio tells us that the Imperialists used arguments from the book in support of their claims, and it became in consequence very famous. A tempest of clerical indignation roared round it. A Dominican friar, Guido Vernani, wrote a virulent but occasionally acute treatise, "on the power of the Supreme Pontiff and in confutation of the *Monarchy* composed by Dante Alighieri," which he dedicated as a warning to Ser Graziolo de' Bambaglioli, chancellor of Bologna, Dante's commentator and apologist. The notorious Cardinal Bertrando del Poggetto, who had been sent as papal legate to Italy by John XXII., had the *Monarchia* burnt as heretical, and followed this up—apparently in 1329—by an infamous attempt to desecrate Dante's tomb. In the sixteenth century it was placed upon the Index of Prohibited Books. Dante had anticipated this, and the splendid passage which opens the third book of the *Monarchia* strikes the keynote, not only of this treatise, but of all his life-work for what he conceived the service of God and the welfare of man:

"Since the truth about it cannot be laid bare without putting certain to the blush, perchance it will be the cause of some indignation against me. But since Truth from her immutable throne demands it, and Solomon, too, as he enters the forest of the Proverbs, teaches us by his own example to meditate upon the truth and abjure the impious man, and the Philosopher, teacher of morals, urges us to sacrifice friendship for truth, therefore I take courage from the words of Daniel, wherein the divine power, the shield of such as defend the truth, is proffered; and, putting on the breastplate of faith, according to the admonition of Paul, in the warmth of that coal which one of the Seraphim took from the celestial altar and touched the lips of Isaiah withal, I will enter upon

the present wrestling-ground, and, by the arm of Him who delivered us from the power of darkness by His blood, will I hurl the impious and the liar out of the ring in the sight of all the world. What should I fear, since the Spirit, coeternal with the Father and with the Son, says by the mouth of David: 'The just shall be had in everlasting remembrance; he shall not be afraid of an evil report'?"

3. *The "Epistolae"*

Dante tells us in the *Vita Nuova* that, on the death of Beatrice, he wrote a Latin letter to the chief persons of the city, concerning its desolate and widowed condition, beginning with the text of Jeremiah: "How doth the city sit solitary." Neither this nor the letter mentioned by Leonardo Bruni, in which Dante described the fight at Campaldino, has survived. Many epistles ascribed to Dante were extant in the days of Boccaccio and Bruni. Bruni tells us that, after the affair at Lastra, Dante wrote for permission to return to Florence both to individual citizens in the government and to the people, especially a long letter beginning: "O my people, what have I done unto thee?" This may perhaps have been the letter which Bruni records, in which the poet defends his impartiality when the leaders of the two factions were banished; but there appears to have been another, denying that he had accompanied the Emperor against Florence. From one of these the perplexing fragment may have come, about his want of prudence in the priorate and his service at Campaldino. Giovanni Villani mentions three noble epistles, the style of which he praises highly: one to the government of Florence, "complaining of his unjust exile," which is probably

the lost letter mentioned by Bruni; the second, to the Emperor Henry, and the third, to the Italian cardinals, have both been preserved. Flavio Biondo, in the fifteenth century, professes to have seen letters at Forlì dictated by Dante, notably one addressed by the poet, in his own name and on behalf of the exiled Bianchi, to Can Grande della Scala concerning the reply of the Florentines to the ambassadors of the Emperor.

There are now thirteen extant Latin letters ascribed to Dante. They have come down to us mainly in two fourteenth-century manuscripts; three have been preserved in Boccaccio's handwriting in the Laurentian MS., known as the *Zibaldone Boccaccesco*; nine others in a Vatican MS., of which Boccaccio was perhaps the original compiler. Two of these latter have also been found in another MS. of the fourteenth century—the San Pantaleo MS. at Rome. No MS. of the letter to Can Grande is known earlier than the fifteenth century.[24]

EPISTLES I. AND II.—Epistles i. and ii. are connected with Count Alessandro da Romena, who, Bruni states, was appointed captain of the Bianchi in their meeting at Gargonza, and whom Dante brands with infamy in *Inferno* xxx. The former is addressed in the name of Alessandro, the council and whole body of the White party, to the Cardinal Niccolò da Prato, legate of Benedict XI., assuring him of their gratitude and confidence, promising to refrain from hostilities in expectation of his good offices in the pacification of Florence. It may be accepted as an authentic document of 1304; but whether it was written by Dante, who had perhaps already left his fellow-exiles, is still open to question. The second is a letter of condolence to Alessandro's nephews,

Oberto and Guido, on the occasion of their uncle's death, which probably occurred in the same year. Its authenticity is highly doubtful. Both letters are found only in the Vatican manuscript.

EPISTLES III. AND IV.—Epistles iii. and iv. are directly connected with the *Rime*. The third, which occurs in the Boccaccian autograph, seems to be to Cino da Pistoia, affectionate greetings from the Florentine exile to the Pistoian, explaining how one passion may be replaced by another in the soul. It was accompanied by a poem, which is identified with the sonnet, "Io sono stato con Amore insieme." If authentic, its date would be not later than 1306, when Cino's exile ended. The fourth letter, found in the Vatican MS., is addressed to the Marquis Moroello Malaspina, apparently from the Casentino, and describes in forcible language how the writer was suddenly enamoured of a woman's beauty. It, too, was accompanied by a poem, evidently the canzone, "Amor, da che convien pur ch'io mi doglia." The more probable date is 1307 or thereabouts.[25] The authenticity of these two letters is doubtful, but on the whole probable.

EPISTLES V., VI. AND VII.—Next come the three great political letters, glorified pamphlets on the enterprise of Henry of Luxemburg. Letter v., the manifesto to the Princes and Peoples of Italy, seems to have been written in September or October, 1310, before Henry crossed the Alps. It announces the advent of Henry, the bridegroom and glory of Italy, as bringing a new era of peace, declares the rightful authority and historical sanctity of the Empire, exhorting the peoples to free and joyous submission, and those who, like the writer himself, have suffered injustice to be merciful in their anticipated triumph.

The letter, one of the noblest of Dante's utterances, is a landmark in the growth of the national idea in Italy; rulers and peoples are admonished as members of one body; the good tidings are announced to the nation as a whole; the writer's Italian citizenship is placed before his Florentine origin, when he subscribes himself: "The humble Italian, Dante Alighieri, a Florentine unjustly exiled." It was in the bitter indignation caused by the Guelf opposition, the alliance between Florence and King Robert, and the doubt occasioned by the Emperor's own delay in Lombardy, that Dante from the Casentino wrote the terrible Letters vi. and vii., on March 31st, 1311, to the Florentines, "the most wicked Florentines within," and on April 17th to Henry himself, "the most sacred triumphant and only lord." The former denounces the Florentines for their rebellion, their "shrinking from the yoke of liberty," their attempt to make their civic life independent of that of Rome, and, in prophetic fashion, warns them of their coming destruction at the hands of "the prince who is the giver of the law." In the latter, adopting the part of Curio towards Caesar (which he himself condemns in the *Inferno*), Dante urges the Emperor without further delay to turn his forces upon Florence, who "sharpens the horns of rebellion against Rome which made her in her own image and after her likeness." The poet's attitude is that of the Hebrew prophets; his motive, the conviction that his native city had adopted a line of policy opposed to the true interests of Italy. These three letters are contained in the Vatican MS.; Letters v. and vii. (of both of which early Italian translations are extant) also in the S. Pantaleo MS., and there is a third (fifteenth century) MS. of the letter to the Emperor.

EPISTLES VII.*, VII.** AND VII.***.—These three

letters are a humble pendant to the three just considered. They are addressed to Margaret of Brabant, the wife of the Emperor Henry, in the name of the Countess of Battifolle (Gherardesca, daughter of Count Ugolino, married to Guido di Simone of the Conti Guidi). They are in answer to letters from the Empress, and, while containing mere expressions of loyal devotion and aspirations for the triumph of the imperial cause, their place in the Vatican MS. among the letters of Dante, together with the close resemblance in style and phraseology with the latter, has led to a general acceptance of the view that they were written by the poet. They were written in the spring of 1311, the third being dated from Poppi on May 18th.

EPISTLE VIII.—The letter to the Italian Cardinals, which is mentioned by Villani, and echoed by Petrarch in his canzone on Rome ("Spirto gentil che quelle membra reggi"), is found only in Boccaccio's autograph manuscript. It was written shortly after the death of Clement V. (April 20, 1314), when the cardinals were assembled in conclave at Carpentras; lamenting the desolation of the sacred city, it exhorts them, "for the bride of Christ, for the seat of the bride, which is Rome, for our Italy, and, to speak more fully, for the whole estate of those on pilgrimage on earth," to restore the Apostolic See to its consecrated place. It is a noble protest of a devout and learned layman against a corrupt and ignorant clergy, of a Catholic and an Italian patriot against the papal desertion of Rome, in which Dante stands forth as the new Jeremiah, renewing for the sacred city of Christendom the lamentation of his Hebrew predecessor for Jerusalem. The letter presents striking analogies with the canto of the simonist popes (*Inf.* xix.), but is more moderate in tone, as the

poet is here less denouncing than attempting to convert the cardinals to his point of view. There is extant a letter to the French King from Cardinal Napoleone Orsini (whom Dante admonishes by name in the epistle) with passages of a somewhat similar kind; it is tempting to suppose that the cardinal had actually received the exhortation and caught fire from the burning words of his fellow Italian.

EPISTLE IX.—The occasion of the letter refusing the amnesty has been already considered (chap. i.). It was probably written in the latter part of May 1315. In the Boccaccian autograph (in which alone it is found) it has no title; the traditional *Amico florentino*, "to a Florentine friend," is a later addition. It is practically the only example of the poet's personal correspondence that has been preserved. Barbi has thrown grave doubts upon the identification of the person to whom the letter is addressed with Teruccio di Manetto Donati, the brother of Dante's wife; the nephew mentioned may perhaps be Andrea Poggi (*cf.* chap. i.) or, more probably, Niccolò Donati, the son of Gemma's brother Foresino. It is here that Dante calls himself the preacher of justice, *vir praedicans iustitiam*, a claim which is the key of the *Commedia* and may be traced from the canzone of the "Tre donne." Nor is it without significance that the closing words of the letter, *nec panis deficiet*, "nor will bread fail me," echo the same chapter of Isaiah (li. 14) which inspired the canzone in which Dante holds his exile as an honour.

EPISTLE X.—The Epistle to Can Grande stands apart from the others. Although eight MSS. are now known, none are earlier than the fifteenth century, and the two earliest contain no more than the opening sections. Some of the early commentators—

Pietro Alighieri, Fra Guido da Pisa, and Boccaccio—were evidently acquainted with it; it was first expressly quoted by Filippo Villani in 1391, and published first in 1700, before any of Dante's letters had seen the light, excepting the unsatisfactory Italian version of the Epistle to Henry of Luxemburg. If genuine, and its authenticity though much disputed seems now almost certain, it was probably written in 1318 or early in 1319, apparently before the first Eclogue.

Beginning with language of enthusiastic praise and grateful friendship, which recalls analogous passages in Canto xvii., the poet prepares to pay back the benefits he has received with the dedication of the *Paradiso*. So far (1-4), the epistolary form has been maintained, and this is the only portion of the letter found in the earlier MSS.; but now the writer assumes the office of a lecturer, and, with a quotation from the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle, proceeds to give an introduction to the *Commedia* and a commentary upon the first canto of the third cantica. He distinguishes the literal and allegorical meanings, defines the title of the whole ("The Comedy of Dante Alighieri, Florentine by birth, not by character") and of the part, and explains the difference between comedy and tragedy from a somewhat different point of view from that of the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (ii. 4). The subject of the *Paradiso*, in the literal sense, is the state of the blessed after death; in the allegorical sense, man according as by meriting he is subject to Justice rewarding. "The end of the whole and of the part is to remove those living in this life from the state of misery, and to lead them to the state of felicity" (*Epist.* x. 15). Dante emphasises the ethical aspect of the poem: "The whole as well as the part was conceived, not for speculation, but with a

practical object" (x. 16). Then follows a minute scholastic and mystical interpretation of the opening lines of the first canto of the *Paradiso* in the literal sense, closing in an eloquent and very beautiful summary of the ascent through the spheres of Paradise to find true beatitude in the vision of the Divine Essence. Throughout this part of the letter Dante, when touching upon the details of his vision, always speaks of himself in the third person, evidently following the example of St. Paul in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. He unmistakably implies that he has actually been the recipient of some personal spiritual experience, which he is unable adequately to relate. That passionate self-reproach, which sounds in so many passages of the *Divina Commedia*, makes itself heard here too. If the invidious do not believe in the power of the human intellect so to transcend the measure of humanity, let them read the examples cited from Scripture and the mystical treatises of Richard of St. Victor, Bernard, Augustine. But, if the unworthiness of the speaker makes them question such an elevation, let them see in Daniel how Nebuchodonosor by divine inspiration had a vision against sinners: "For He who 'maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust,' sometimes in mercy for their conversion, sometimes in wrath for their punishment, reveals His glory, in greater or less measure, as He wills, to those who live never so evily" (*Epist.* x. 28). This section of the letter, for the student of mystical experience, is of the highest significance.

4. *The "Eclogae"*

Belonging, like the tenth Epistle, to that closing

period of Dante's life when he was engaged on the *Paradiso*, are two delightful pastoral poems in Latin hexameters. Here, too, we owe much to the piety of Boccaccio. The earliest and most authoritative of the five manuscripts is again in his handwriting, in the *Zibaldone Boccaccesco* (where the poems are accompanied by explanatory notes), in the Laurentian Library.

Giovanni del Virgilio, a young lecturer and a poet, had written to Dante from Bologna a letter in Latin verse, expressing his profound admiration for the singer of the Commedia, but respectfully remonstrating with him for writing in Italian, and suggesting some stirring contemporary subjects as worthy matters for his muse: the death of Henry VII., the battle of Montecatini, a victory of Can Grande over the Paduans, the struggle by sea and land between King Robert of Naples and the Visconti for the possession of Genoa. The reference to this last event shows that the letter cannot have been written before July 1318, while a passage towards the close clearly indicates the early part of the following year. It further contains a pressing invitation to come and take the laurel crown at Bologna, or, at least, to answer the letter, "if it vex thee not, to have read first the feeble numbers which the rash goose cackles to the clear-voiced swan."

Dante's first Eclogue is the answer. Adopting the pastoral style, he himself and his companion Dino Perini (whom Boccaccio afterwards knew) appear as shepherds, Tityrus and Meliboeus, discussing the invitation from Mopsus. It was probably written in the spring or early summer of 1319. In a medley of generous praise and kindly banter, Dante declines to visit Bologna, "that knows not the gods," and still

hopes to receive the poet's crown at Florence. When the *Paradiso* is finished, then will it be time to think of ivy and laurel; and in the meanwhile, to convert Mopsus from his errors with respect to vernacular poetry, he will send him ten measures of milk fresh from the best-loved ewe of all his flock—ten cantos from the *Paradiso*, which evidently are not yet published, since the sheep is yet unmilked.

Mopsus in his answer expresses the intense admiration with which he and his fellow Arcadians have heard this song, and adopts the same style. Condoling with Dante on his unjust exile, he foresees his return home and reunion with Phyllis, who may perhaps be Gemma or (as Carducci suggested) an impersonification of Florence. But, in the meanwhile, pastoral pleasures and an enthusiastic welcome await him at Bologna, if Iolas (Guido da Polenta) will let him go. A reference to "Phrygian Muso" enables us to fix approximately the date; towards the beginning of September, 1319, Albertino Mussato, the Paduan poet and patriot, was at Bologna, endeavouring to get aid from the Guelf communes for his native city against Can Grande. Dante could hardly have with consistency accepted the invitation.

The writer of the notes on the Laurentian manuscript, whether Boccaccio himself or another, commenting upon a poem sent by Giovanni del Virgilio to Albertino Mussato, states that Dante delayed a year before answering this Eclogue, and that his reply was forwarded after his death by his son. His second Eclogue is in narrative form, and professes to be no more than the report by the writer of a conversation between Dante and his friends which is overheard by Guido da Polenta. A new associate of the poet's last days is introduced to us:

the shepherd Alphesiboeus, who is identified with Fiducio de' Milotti of Certaldo, a distinguished physician resident at Ravenna. The tone is the same as that of the other Eclogue. Ravenna becomes the pastures of Pelorus, while Bologna is the Cyclops' cave, to which Dante still refuses to go, for fear of Polyphemus, whose atrocities in the past are recorded.[26] And the crown expected now is, perhaps, no longer one which any earthly city can give: "For this illustrious head already the Pruner is hastening to award an everlasting garland."

These two Eclogues are of priceless value. Nowhere else is such a comparatively bright picture of Dante's closing days given us. The genuine and hearty laughter which greets Giovanni's two letters, the generous tone of the supreme singer towards the young scholar poet, the kindly joking at the expense of Dino, make delightful reading and show us quite another side of Dante's character. Giovanni's first letter implies that the earlier parts of the *Commedia* had not only been published, but had acquired a certain popularity. From Dante's first Eclogue it follows that, by 1319, both *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* were completed, and that the *Paradiso* was in preparation: "When the bodies that flow round the world, and they that dwell among the stars, shall be shown forth in my song, even as the lower realms, then shall I delight to crown my head with ivy and with laurel." And after this the passage in the second Eclogue, written apparently in 1321, however we interpret it, has the same pathos and sanctity as Petrarch's note on the last line of his *Triumph of Eternity*, or the abrupt ending of Shelley's *Triumph of Life*:

Hoc illustre caput, cui iam frondator in alta

virgine perpetuas festinat cernere frondes.[27]

5. *The "Quaestio de Aqua et Terra"*

The *Quaestio de Aqua et Terra*—which purports to be a discourse or lecture delivered by Dante in the church of Sant' Elena at Verona on January 20th, 1320—was first published in 1508 by an Augustinian friar, Giovan Benedetto Moncetti. No manuscript of it is known to exist, and there is no reference to the work or to the event in any earlier writer, though Antonio Pucci (after the middle of the fourteenth century) implies that Dante sought disputations of this kind. In this work the poet—in accordance with the physical science of his age—discusses the question of the relative position of the element earth and the element water upon the surface of the globe. The *Quaestio* was until recently regarded as a fabrication of the early sixteenth century, but Moore in England and Vincenzo Biagi in Italy, mainly on the internal evidence of the work itself, have convinced many Dante scholars that it may be regarded with some probability as authentic.

FOOTNOTES:

[19] In the recently discovered codex at Berlin—the earliest of the four extant MSS.—the work is entitled *Rectorica Dantis* ("The Rhetoric of Dante"), which would associate it with the similarly named treatises of the masters of the *ars dictandi*, such as Boncompagno da Signa, who wrote a *Rhetorica novissima*.

[20] This southern idiom (*nostrum ydioma*, i. 10)—from which Dante apparently regards

both classical Latin and the modern romance languages derived—would be what we now call Vulgar Latin; but he restricts the phrase *vulgare latinum* (or *latium*) to Italian, which—when discussing the rival claims of the three vernaculars to pre-eminence—he rightly recognises to be closest to classical Latin.

[21] *Equalium stantiarum sine responsorio ad unam sententiam tragica coniugatio* (ii. 8). The *sine responsorio* distinguishes the true canzone, *canzone distesa*, from the ballata, *canzone a ballo*, in which the *ripresa* of from two to four lines was repeated after each stanza as well as sung as a prelude to the whole. Dante's example is his own *Donne ch'avete intelletto d'amore*, the poem which began "le nove rime" (*Purg.* xxiv. 49-51). The *tragica coniugatio* is most nearly realised in English poetry by the ode, while the closest counterpart to the canzone with stanzas divisible into metrical periods is offered by Spenser's *Epithalamion*. The sestina has been employed by English poets from the Elizabethans to Swinburne and Rudyard Kipling.

[22] Cipolla showed that the matter of the first two books more directly controverts the anti-imperialist and anti-Roman arguments of the French political writers of the beginning of the fourteenth century—writers like the Dominican, John of Paris. But these or similar views were now being adduced by Robert of Naples and supported by Clement V.

[23] These two ends are the two cities—the earthly and the heavenly—of St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*; but the earthly city, blessedness of this life, is more significant for Dante than it was for Augustine. Felicity in peace and freedom is in some sort man's right: *Che è quello per che esso è nato* (*Conv.* iv. 4).

[24] For the whole history of the Letters, the reader is referred to Dr. Paget Toynbee's introduction, *Dantis Alagherii Epistolae*, Oxford, 1920.

[25] Torraca would assign it to 1311.

[26] Polyphemus, as Biscaro has shown, is most probably Fulcieri da Calboli, the ferocious podestà of Florence in 1303, who had been elected Captain of the People at Bologna for the first six months of 1321 (his predecessor having died in office). *Cf. Ecl.* ii. (iv.) 76-83 with *Purg.* xiv. 58-66. See *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, lxxxi. p. 128. Others have taken the person meant as Robert of Naples, or, with Ricci, a kinsman of Venedico Caccianemico whom Dante had covered with infamy in *Inf.* xviii.

[27] "This illustrious head, for which the Pruner is already hastening to select unwithering leaves from the noble laurel," or "to decree an everlasting garland in the divine justice," according to whether the Virgin is taken as Daphne or Astraea.

CHAPTER IV
THE "DIVINA COMMEDIA"

1. *Introductory*

LETTER AND ALLEGORY.—The *Divina Commedia* is a vision and an allegory. It is a vision of the world beyond the grave; it is an allegory, based upon that vision, of the life and destiny of man, his need of light and guidance, his duties to the temporal and spiritual powers, to the Empire and the Church. In the literal sense, the subject is the state of souls after death. In the allegorical sense, according to the Epistle to Can Grande, the subject is "man as by freedom of will, meriting and demeriting, he is subject to Justice rewarding or punishing" (*Epist.* x. 11). There is, therefore, the distinction between the essential Hell, Purgatory, Paradise of separated spirits—the lost and the redeemed—after death; and the moral or spiritual Hell, Purgatory, Paradise, of men still united to their bodies in this life, using their free will for good or for evil; sinning, doing penance, living virtuously. The *Inferno* represents the state of ignorance and vice; the *Purgatorio* is the life of converted sinners, obeying Caesar and reconciled to Peter, doing penance and striving God-wards; after the state of felicity has been regained in the Earthly Paradise, the *Paradiso* represents the ideal life of action and contemplation, closing in an anticipation, here and now, of the Beatific Vision. The whole poem is the mystical epic of the freedom of man's

will in time and in eternity, the soul after conversion passing through the stages of purification and illumination to the attainment of union and fruition.

It must be admitted that the allegorical interpretation of the *Commedia* has frequently been carried to excess. This has led to a reaction, represented now by Benedetto Croce, who would separate the allegorical and didactic elements from the poetry, in which alone the true value of the work consists. Such a tendency in its turn, if pressed too far, derogates from Dante's greatness and mars the unity of the poem. In Dante the poet and the practical man—teacher, prophet, politician, philosopher, reformer—are inseparable; more often purely doctrinal themes become so fused in his imagination, so identified with his personality, that the result is lyrical and great poetry.

TITLE.—Dante unquestionably called his work simply *Commedia*, which he wrote *Comedia* and pronounced *Comedìa* (*Inf.* xvi. 128, xxi. 2). The epithet *divina* first appears in the sixteenth-century editions; but it would be almost as pedantic to discard it now as it would be, except when reading the word where it occurs in the poem, to return to the original pronunciation, *comedìa*.[28]

METRICAL STRUCTURE.—Each of the three parts, or cantiche, is divided into cantos: the *Inferno* into thirty-four, the *Purgatorio* into thirty-three, the *Paradiso* into thirty-three—thus making up a hundred cantos, the square of the perfect number. Each canto is composed of from one hundred and fifteen to one hundred and sixty lines, forming thirty-eight to fifty-three terzine, a continuous measure of three hendecasyllabic lines, woven together by the rhymes of the middle lines, with an extra line rhyming with

the second line of the last terzina to close the canto:

ABA, BCB, CDC, DED ... XYX, YZY, Z.

The normal hendecasyllabic line is the *endecasillabo piano*, in which the rhyme has the accent upon the penultimate syllable (*rima piana*, trochaic ending). Occasionally, but rarely, we find the *endecasillabo sdrucciolo*, with the rhyme accentuated on the antepenultimate syllable (*rima sdrucciola*, dactylic ending), or the *endecasillabo tronco*, with the accent on the final syllable (*rima tronca*). Italian prosody regards both these latter forms (which appear to have twelve and ten syllables respectively) as lines of eleven syllables.[29]

The *terza rima* seems to be derived from the *serventese incatenato* ("linked serventese"), one of the rather numerous forms of the Italian *serventese* or *sermontese*, a species of poem introduced from Provence in the first half of the thirteenth century. The Provençal *sirventes* was a serviceable composition employed mainly for satirical, political, and ethical purposes, in contrast with the more stately and "tragical" canzone of love. Although the Italians extended its range of subject and developed its metres, no one before Dante had used it for a great poem or had transfigured it into this superb new measure, at once lyrical and epical. In his hand, indeed, "the thing became a trumpet," sounding from earth to heaven, to call the dead to judgment.

SOURCES.—The earlier mediaeval visions of the spirit world, of which the most famous are Irish in origin, bear the same relation, in a much slighter degree, to the spiritual content of the *Commedia* as the Provençal *sirventes* does to its metrical form. Even if Dante was acquainted with them (and there

are episodes occasionally in the poem which recall the vision of Tundal or Tnuthgal), he was absolutely justified in asserting, in *Purgatorio* xvi., that God willed that he should see His court "by method wholly out of modern use":

Per modo tutto fuor del moderno uso.

Such ideas, even in special details, were common property. Dante transformed the mediaeval vision of the world beyond the grave into a supreme work of art, making it the receptacle for all that was noblest in the thought and aspiration of the centuries down to his own day. If a hint or two came from *Ibernia fabulosa*, as Ariosto calls Ireland, the main suggestion was Roman; and Virgil was his imperial master in very fact, as he was his guide by poetical fiction (*Inf.* i. 82-87): "O honour and light of the other poets, may the long study avail me, and the great love, that has made me search thy volume. Thou art my master and my author; thou alone art he from whom I took the fair style that hath gained me honour."

The influence of Virgil pervades the whole poem, and next to his comes that of Lucan. Ovid was mainly a source of classical mythology (frequently spiritualised in Dante's hands); the contribution of Horace, Statius, and Juvenal is slighter. And Dante was as familiar with the Bible as with the *Aeneid* and the *Pharsalia*; indeed, one of the most salient characteristics of the *Commedia* is the writer's adaptation of the message of the Hebrew prophets to his own times in the language and with the consummate art of the Latin poets. In its degree, the influence of Boëthius is as penetrating as that of Virgil; Orosius has contributed as much history as has Livy. The philosophy of the poem is naturally

coloured by Aristotle, studied in the Latin translations as interpreted by Albertus Magnus and Aquinas. Augustine and Aquinas (more generally the latter) are the poet's chief theological sources; his mysticism has derived something from Richard of St. Victor and Bonaventura as well as from Dionysius. But he deals with his matter with independence, as a poet, in the light of his own spiritual experience, his own imaginative interpretation of life and history, his own observation of nature. Though versed in a super-eminent degree with most of the knowledge, sacred and profane, possible to a man of his epoch, and well-read to an almost incredible extent when the circumstances of his life are considered, Dante's main and direct source of inspiration lay, not in books, but in that wonderful world of the closing Middle Ages that lay open to his gaze, as from a celestial watch-tower of contemplation: "The little space of earth that maketh us so fierce, as I turned me with the eternal Twins, all appeared to me from the hills to the sea" (*Par.* xxii. 151-153).

VIRGIL AND BEATRICE.—The end of the poem, as the Epistle to Can Grande shows, is to remove those living in this life from the state of misery, and lead them to the state of felicity. In the individual, this will be accomplished by opening his eyes to the nature of vice; by inducing him to contrition, confession, satisfaction; by leading him to contemplation of eternal Truth. In the universality, it can only be effected by the restoration of the Empire and the purification of the Church. The dual scheme of the *Monarchia* reappears in the *Commedia*, but transferred from the sphere of Church and State to the field of the individual soul. In the allegorical sense, Virgil may be taken to represent Human Philosophy based on Reason; Beatrice to symbolize

Divine Philosophy, which includes the sacred science of Theology, and is in possession of Revelation. But, primarily, Virgil and Beatrice (like the other souls in the poem) are living personalities, not allegorical types. Allegory may be forgotten in the tender relation between Dante and Virgil, and, when that "sweetest father" leaves his disciple in the Earthly Paradise to return to his own sad place in Limbo, there is little of it left in Beatrice's rebuke of her lover's past disloyalty; none when she is last seen enshrined in glory beneath the Blessed Virgin's throne.

There is then a universal and a personal meaning to be distinguished, as well as the literal and allegorical significations. The *Divina Commedia* is the tribute of devotion from one poet to another; it is the sequel to a real love, the glorification of the image of a woman loved in youth; the story of one man's conversion and spiritual experience. Nor can we doubt that the study of the imperial poet of *alma Roma* helped Dante to his great political conception of the destiny of the Empire, even as Philosophy first lifted him from the moral aberrations that severed him from the ideal life (*Purg.* xxiii. 118). But, at the same time, Dante represents all mankind; as Witte remarks, "the poet stands as the type of the whole race of fallen man, called to salvation."

DATES AND EPOCH.—Although the vision is poetically placed in the spring of 1300, during the Pope's jubilee and shortly before Dante's election to the priorate, the actual date of composition of the poem—as far as concerns the first two parts—is still uncertain and disputed. There are at present two principal theories. According to the one (very strongly held by Parodi), the *Inferno* was composed

shortly before the advent of Henry of Luxemburg, the *Purgatorio* during his Italian enterprise. According to the other, not only the *Paradiso*, but the whole poem was written after the death of the Emperor, and must therefore be regarded as the work of the closing years of the poet's life. On the former hypothesis, the allusion to the death of Clement V., in *Inf.* xix., must be taken as an indefinite prediction or a later insertion. It is possible to adopt a compromise between the two views. The poem may have been begun some time between 1306 and 1308, and portions of the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* composed before the catastrophe of 1313. After the death of the Emperor, Dante may well have revised and completed these two canticles. Boccaccio tells us—and the statement is confirmed (for the *Paradiso*) by a sonnet of Giovanni Quirino—that the poet was wont to send his work in instalments to Can Grande before any copies were made for others. There is no evidence of any circulation before 1317, when some lines from *Inf.* iii. appear among the papers of a notary at Bologna.[30] The first Eclogue shows that, by 1319, the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* had been, so to speak, published, and the *Paradiso* was in preparation; Boccaccio's story of the finding of the last thirteen cantos confirms the belief that this final canticle, which crowns the poet's whole life-work, was only completed shortly before Dante's death. Dante is in the position of a man who is now relating to the world the vision vouchsafed to him many years before. Hence everything that happened after April 1300 is spoken of as future and by way of prophecy, beginning with Ciacco's account in *Inf.* vi. of the famous faction fight of May Day in that year. With two exceptions—Frate Alberigo and Branca d'Oria (*Inf.* xxxiii.), whose souls went down to Hell

before their bodies died—every spirit met with in the ecstatic pilgrimage is represented as having died before April 1300. But Dante anticipates the certain damnation of some who, though living in 1300, were dead when he wrote the poem; Corso Donati, Popes Boniface and Clement, and a few less notorious sinners as Carlino de' Pazzi. In one instance, that of Venedico Caccianemico (*Inf.* xviii.), he seems to have supposed a man dead in 1300 who in reality lived a few years later.

TIME.—Dante's conferences with the dead open at sunrise on Good Friday, in his thirty-fifth year. He would impress upon us that his visionary world is no mere dreamland, but a terrible reality, and therefore his indications of time are frequent and precise. For poetical purposes, he seems to represent this Good Friday as an ideal Good Friday, March 25th, which was believed to have been the actual date of the Crucifixion on the thirty-fourth anniversary of the Annunciation (*cf. Inf.* xxi. 112, and the "three months" from Christmas Day in *Purg.* ii. 98). In reality, it fell upon April 8th in 1300; and, when Dante in his pilgrimage through Hell would mark the time by reference to moon and stars, he perhaps has recourse to the ecclesiastical calendar, in which the Paschal full moon was on Thursday, April 7th (see Dr. Moore's *Time-References in the Divine Comedy*):

E già iernotte fu la luna tonda,

"And already yesternight the moon was round" (*Inf.* xx. 127); the night of Maundy Thursday, that he has passed "so piteously" when the poem opens.

2. *The "Inferno"*

CANTOS I. AND II.—At break of day on Good Friday, Dante, in his thirty-fifth year, after a night of agonised wanderings, would fain issue from the dark wood into which he has, as it were in slumber, strayed. This tangled forest represents at once his own unworthy life and the corruption of human society; both the "sin of the speaker" (§ 28) and the "state of misery of those living in this life" (§ 15) of the Epistle to Can Grande. He would climb the "mountain of delight" which, for the individual, represents the state of felicity, and, for mankind in general, the goal of civilisation; mystically, it is the mountain of the Lord, to which only the innocent in hands and the clean of heart shall ascend. But he is impeded by a swift and beautiful leopard; terrified by a lion; driven back by a hideous she-wolf. The three beasts are derived from Jeremiah (v. 6), where they stand for the judgments to fall upon the people for their sins; here they symbolise the chief vices that keep man from the felicity for which he is born (*Conv.* iv. 4): Luxury in its mediaeval sense of Lust, Pride, Avarice or Cupidity in its widest meaning. The comparatively modern interpretation which would see in the beasts the three great Guelf powers that opposed the Empire—the republic of Florence, the royal house of France, the secular power of the Papacy—is now generally discarded.

From this peril Dante is delivered by the spirit of Virgil, who bids him take another way. The power of the wolf will extend until the *Veltro* or greyhound comes, who will deliver Italy and hunt the wolf back to Hell. The advent of this Deliverer is mysteriously announced (*Inf.* i. 100-111), and seems to be repeated in other forms at intervals throughout the poem (*Purg.* xx. 10-15, xxxiii. 37-45; *Par.* xxvii.

61-63). There can be little doubt that Virgil refers to a future Emperor, who shall re-establish the imperial power and make Roman law obeyed throughout the world, extirpate greed, bring about and preserve universal peace in a restored unity of civilisation. His mission will be the realisation of the ideals of the *Monarchia*, and will work the salvation of Italy who will be restored to her former leadership among the nations. At the same time, there may possibly be a remoter reference to the second coming of Christ. This double prophecy would have a certain fitness upon the lips of Virgil, who was believed to have sung mystically of the first coming of Christ in the fourth Eclogue (*cf. Purg.* xxii. 64-73), as well as of the foundation of Rome and her Empire in the *Aeneid*. It has frequently been supposed that Dante identified the *Veltro* with some definite person; of the various claimants to this honour Can Grande della Scala is, perhaps, the least improbable. In any case, whatever the nationality of the deliverer, the Empire of Dante's dream was, in fact as well as name, Roman (*cf. Epist. v.*).

Human Philosophy can lead man from moral unworthiness and guide him to temporal felicity; there are judgments of God to which human reason can attain. Therefore Virgil will guide Dante through Hell and Purgatory, that he may understand the nature of sin and the need of penance to fill up the void in the moral order; after which a worthier soul will lead him to Paradise and the contemplation of celestial things. Dante's sense of unworthiness keeps him back, until he learns that Virgil is but the emissary of Beatrice, to whom in turn Lucia (St. Lucy) has been sent to Dante's aid by a noble Lady in Heaven—evidently the Blessed Virgin Mary, who

may not be named in Hell, and who symbolises Divine Mercy, as Lucia does illuminating Grace. Thus encouraged, Dante follows his guide and master upon "the arduous and rugged way." Aeneas had been vouchsafed his descent to the shades to learn things that were the cause of the foundation of the Empire and the establishment of the Papacy (*Inf.* ii. 20-27); Dante shall learn things which may prepare men's hearts for the restoration of the imperial throne, and the cleansing of the papal mantle from the mire of temporal things. St. Paul was caught up into paradise "to bring confirmation to that faith which is the beginning of the way of salvation" (*ibid.* 29-30); Dante shall follow him to lead men back to the purity of that faith, from which they have wandered.

ANTE-HELL.—It is nightfall on Good Friday when Dante reads the terrible inscription on the infernal portal (*Inf.* iii. 1-9): "Leave all hope, ye that enter." The sense of the whole inscription is hard to him, but Virgil gently leads him in. In the dark plain of Ante-Hell, disdained alike by Mercy and by Justice, are those "who lived without blame and without praise," mingled with the Angels who kept neutral between God and Lucifer. Here the pusillanimous, who, taking no side in the struggle between good and evil, would follow no standard on earth, now rush for all eternity after a banner, "which whirling ran so quickly that it seemed to scorn all pause." Further on towards the centre, flowing round the mouth of Hell itself, is Acheron; where the souls of the lost assemble, and are conveyed across by Charon in his boat. Unconsciously borne across, Dante with Virgil now stands on the verge of the abyss, hearkening to the gathering thunder of endless wailings.

STRUCTURE AND MORAL TOPOGRAPHY OF HELL.—Hell is a vast pit or funnel piercing down to the centre of the earth, formed when Lucifer and his Angels were hurled down from Heaven. It lies beneath the inhabited world, whose centre is Jerusalem and Mount Calvary; its base towards the surface, and its apex at the centre. It is divided into nine concentric circles, the lower of which are separated by immense precipices—circles which grow more narrow in circumference, more intense and horrible in suffering, until the last is reached where Lucifer is fixed in the ice at the earth's centre, at the furthest point from God, buried below Jerusalem, where his power was overthrown on the Cross (*cf. Inf.* xxxiv. 106-126).

"There are two elements in sin," writes St. Thomas Aquinas: "the conversion to a perishable good, which is the material element in sin; and the aversion from the imperishable good, which is the formal and completing element of sin." In Dante's Purgatory the material element is purged away. In his Hell sin is considered mainly on the side of this formal element, its aversion from the Supreme Good; and its enormity is revealed in the hideousness of its effects. The ethical system of the *Inferno*, as set forth in Canto xi., combines Aristotle's threefold division of "dispositions" opposed to mortality into Incontinence, Bestiality, Malice (*Ethics* vii. 1), with Cicero's distinction of the two ways by which injury is done as Violence and Fraud (*De Officiis* i. 13). Dante equates the Aristotelian Bestiality and Malice with the Ciceronian Violence and Fraud respectively. Thus there is the upper Hell of sins proceeding from the irrational part of the soul, divided into five circles. The lower Hell of Bestiality and Malice is the terrible city of Dis, the true kingdom of Lucifer, in

which, after the intermediate sixth circle, come three great circles, each divided into a number of sub-divisions, and each separated by a chasm from the one above; the seventh circle of Violence and Bestiality; followed by two circles of Malice—the eighth of simple fraud, and the ninth of treachery. There is some doubt as to how far Dante further equates this division with the seven capital sins recognized by the Church. Although actual deeds are considered in Hell, rather than the sinful propensities which lead to them, it seems plausible to recognise in Incontinence the five lesser capital sins: Luxury, Gluttony, Avarice, Sloth (though the treatment of this vice in the *Inferno* is questionable), and Anger; and to regard the whole of the three circles of the city of Dis as proceeding from and being the visible effects of Envy and Pride, the sins proper to devils according to St. Thomas—seen in their supreme degree in him whose pride made him rebel against his Maker, and whose envy brought death into the world. As an alternative, it may be held that Dante began the *Inferno* with the intention of basing its ethical system upon the seven capital sins, but abandoned it in favour of a more ample treatment, and that the earlier design has been preserved only in the passage through the upper circles.[31]

LIMBO.—In "the first circle that girds the abyss," Dante sees in Limbo the unbaptised children and the virtuous heathen; without hope, they live in desire; free from physical torment, they suffer the pain of loss. Here Dante differs from Aquinas, who distinguishes the Limbo of the Fathers from the Limbo of the Infants, and who represents unbaptised children as not grieving at all for the loss of the Beatific Vision, but rather rejoicing in natural perfection and a certain participation of the Divine

Goodness. The example of Rhipeus in the *Paradiso* shows that Dante could have saved any of the ancients whom he chose, without any violence to his creed. “Any one,” says Aquinas, “can prepare himself for having faith through what is in natural reason; whence it is said that, if any one who is born in barbarous nations doth what lieth in him, God will reveal to him what is necessary for salvation, either by internal inspiration or by sending a teacher.” The reception of Dante by the five great classical poets as sixth in their company is his own affirmation of poetical succession; for the first time a poet in modern vernacular has attained equality with the masters of antiquity who “wrote poetry with regulated speech and art” (*V. E.* ii. 4). With them he enters the noble castle of Fame, from which the light of wisdom shone upon the pagan world; within are all the wise and virtuous spirits of antiquity, even Aristotle, “the master of those who know,” whose philosophical authority is for Dante supreme (*Inf.* iv. 131). Here, too, are certain moderns that “worshipped not God aright”; the Saladin, and Averroës “who made the great comment.”

UPPER HELL.—Out of Limbo Dante and Virgil descend into the darkness of the second circle, where the carnal sinners are whirled round and round, “through the nether storm-eddying winds.” At its entrance snarls Minos, a type of the sinner’s disordered and terrified conception of Divine Justice. The Virgilian “Mourning Fields” of the martyrs of love are transformed into a region of active torment, and when, in a lull in the storm, Francesca da Rimini pours forth her piteous story in lines of ineffable pathos, the colouring becomes that of Arthurian romance (*Inf.* v.). Down again through the third

circle of putrid rain and snow, where Cerberus (like the other hellish torturers, merely the effect of the sin, and the sinner's own creation) tortures the gluttonous (*Inf.* vi.), and the fourth, where Plutus, demon god of wealth, guards the avaricious and prodigal butting at each other for all eternity, Dante is led to the dark waters of Styx, shortly after midnight, as Friday is passing into the early hours of Saturday (*Inf.* vii. 97-99). The marsh of Styx represents the fifth circle. Fixed in the slime below are souls, made visible only by the bubbles from their sighs: "Sullen were we in the sweet air, that is gladdened by the Sun, carrying heavy fumes within our hearts: now lie we sullen here in the black mire" (*Inf.* vii. 121-124). These souls are usually identified as the *accidiosi*, or slothful. The material element in Sloth is lack of charity; the formal element is sadness, the sadness which takes away the spiritual life and withdraws the mind from the Divine Good. Some commentators think that the slothful are placed in the Ante-Hell, and that these sad souls are those guilty of sullen or sulky anger, in contrast to the violent anger of those fiercer spirits who, naked and miry, are rending each other on the surface of the marsh, over which the poets are ferried by Phlegyas, the boatman of Dis, as Charon of Upper Hell. The Florentine, Filippo Argenti, who bandies bitter words with Dante during the passage, connects Anger with Pride (*Inf.* viii. 46) and with Bestiality (*ibid.* 62-63). As Anger leads to violence and fraud for the sake of vengeance, so Phlegyas conveys them to the entrance of the city of Dis, glowing red with eternal fire.

THE CITY OF DIS.—The gate of the city is defended by fiends, while the Furies appear upon the turrets, girt with greenest hydras and with serpents for hair,

calling upon Medusa to come and turn Dante to stone. The Furies are symbols of hopeless remorse, and Medusa of the despair which renders repentance impossible. “A guilty deed is the death of the soul; but to despair is to go down into Hell” (St. Isidore, *cf.* Virgil’s words to Dante, *Inf.* ix. 55-57). Virgil can guard Dante from her, but he cannot open the gates; for the city of Dis is the mediaeval counterpart of the Virgilian Tartarus, through which the Sibyl could not lead Aeneas. With the sound of mighty tempest a messenger of Heaven passes the Styx with dry feet, and opens the portal with a little rod; he is a figure drawn from Mercury in the *Aeneid* (iv.), but here transformed to an Angel, akin to those two terrible beings who summon the dead to rise in Luca Signorelli’s Last Judgment.[32] Within the gate, round the circuit of the walls and at the same level as the last circle, the sixth circle confines the Heretics and Epicureans in burning tombs. They seem to hold this intermediate position in accordance with the teaching of St. Thomas that Infidelity, if reduced to one of the capital sins, must be regarded as arising from Pride, but may come also from cupidity or some fleshly illusion; and, in a passage in the *Convivio* (ii. 9), Dante appears to reduce one form of Heresy to *bestialitade*. Farinata degli Uberti, the Ghibelline hero of Montaperti, heroic even in Hell, rises to address his fellow countryman; and, from the same blazing sepulchre, Cavalcante de’ Cavalcanti, fondly believing that it is height of genius alone that leads Dante thus scathless through this blind prison, seeks vainly to see his own Guido with him. Emperor and Pope should lead man to blessedness; but Frederick II. and Pope Anastasius are buried here with the rest (*Inf.* x. 119, xi. 8). The horrible stench that rises from the abyss forces Dante

to delay his descent; and, in the pause, Virgil explains the moral structure of Hell, equating the Ciceronian with the Aristotelian division of vice (*Inf.* xi.), as already indicated, and adding a special explanation of how Usury, the breeding of money from money, is a sin against nature, and violence against the Diety.

SEVENTH CIRCLE.—They descend the precipice into the seventh circle, at the entrance to which the Minotaur, emblem of Violence and Bestiality, gnaws himself in bestial rage, on the top of the ruin formed by the earthquake when the Redeemer entered Hell. Since we are now within the Devil's city, fiends begin to appear as torturers, but in this seventh circle they take bestial forms, or forms which are half-bestial and half-human. There are three rounds in this circle. In the first, Phlegethon, the river of boiling blood, the violent against others are immersed to varying depths, and tormented by the Centaurs (*Inf.* xii.). Murderers and tyrants are here; and Benvenuto supposes that the Centaurs are types of their own hireling soldiers, the instruments of their cruelty upon earth. In the second round, the violent against themselves (*Inf.* xiii.) are punished in the pathless wood of the Harpies; the suicides, imprisoned in trees and preyed upon by these monsters, are regarded as bestial sinners, because, properly speaking, a man cannot hate himself; the destroyers of their own substance, similarly considered, are hunted by black hell-dogs. Yet in this round is one of the noblest souls in the *Inferno*, Piero della Vigna, still defending the memory of the imperial master who caused his death. Enclosed by the wood is a third round, the burning plain (*Inf.* xiv.), where the violent against God are subjected to a slow rain of dilated flakes of fire. Capaneus, the

typical blasphemer, is tortured even more by his own fury than by the flaming shower. It is in this round that Dante learns what Virgil tells him is the most notable thing he has yet seen in his pilgrimage (*Inf.* xiv. 88): the infernal rivers are produced by the tears and sins of all human generations since the golden age, and flow from rock to rock down the circles of Hell, back to Lucifer at the earth's core (*ibid.* 103, etc.). "The tears extorted from the sinners, the blood shed by tyrants and murderers, all the filth of the sinful world, flow down below by secret conduits, and are then transformed into instruments of torment" (Witte). There are few things in literature more poignant than Dante's cry of recognition: *Siete voi qui, ser Brunetto* (*Inf.* xv. 30), "Are you here, Ser Brunetto?" Nor is there, perhaps, anything that gives us a more terrible conception of Dante's claim to be the "preacher of justice," than the fearful doom he has inflicted upon "the dear and kind paternal image" of the sage who had taught him how man makes himself eternal, and upon the great Florentine citizens of the past, whose deeds and honoured names he had ever "rehearsed and heard with affection" (*Inf.* xvi. 58-60). In the last group of this round are the Usurers, "on the utmost limit of that seventh circle," where violence passes into fraud (*Inf.* xvii. 43); and it is worthy of note that the poet finds examples of this sin, not among the persecuted Jews, but in the noble houses of Padua and Florence.

MALEBOLGE.—A yawning abyss, down which the blood-stained Phlegethon dashes with deafening noise, reaches from the seventh to the eighth circle, Malebolge, the realm of Malice. Lured up by the cord which Dante has girt round him and abandons, Geryon, "unclean image of fraud," a combination of the mythological monster with the apocalyptic Angel

of the bottomless pit, bears Dante and Virgil to the place below. Malebolge is divided into ten valleys, with a gulf in the centre. Since they punish Fraud, *de l'uom proprio male*, "the vice peculiar to man," the demon tormentors have usually something of the human form (the serpent torturers of the thieves are an exception)—degraded Angels partaking of humanity's lowest features. Disgusting though many details of this circle may seem to modern taste, they are only terribly realised images of the sins themselves. Panders and seducers (*Inf.* xviii.), flatterers, simoniacs (xix., Pope Nicholas III.), diviners and sorcerers (xx.), barrators or sellers of justice in public offices (xxi. and xxii.), hypocrites (xxiii.), thieves (xxiv. and xxv.), fraudulent counsellors (xxvi. and xxvii.), sowers of scandal and schism (xxviii.), falsifiers of every kind (xxix. and xxx.)—each class occupies one of the ten valleys of Malebolge, and to each is awarded a special form of punishment representing the crime, observing the *contrapasso* (*Inf.* xxviii. 142), the law of retribution. In the meanwhile the sun has risen in the world above, though this makes no difference in Hell where the sun is silent (*Inf.* xx. 124); it is the morning of Holy Saturday for the Church; the bells have been rung again after the silence of Good Friday, and the *Gloria in excelsis* sung in anticipation of the morrow's feast—while Dante is rebuking Pope Nicholas for simony, and hearkening to Guido da Montefeltro's bitter tale of Pope Boniface's treachery (*Inf.* xxvii.). There are few nobler utterances of mediaeval Catholicity than that famous outburst of Dantesque indignation in Canto xix., against the unworthy and simoniacal holders of the papal chair, though restrained by the "reverence for the Great Keys." In one instance only does Dante seem in personal

danger, and, curiously enough, it is in the region of the Barrators (*Inf.* xxi. and xxii.), with whose sin his ungrateful countrymen had tried to render him infamous; Virgil himself is almost deceived, that is, Dante's reason is bewildered and his philosophy at fault; but, although hunted as a criminal, not a drop of the boiling pitch lights upon him, nor do the rakes and hooks of the "Evil-claws" as much as graze his skin. Here and there images from external nature relieve the horror: the country shining white with the hoar-frost before the spring (xxiv. 1-15); the fire-flies gleaming below the hill after the long summer day (xxvi. 25-30). The two cantos depicting the fate of the fraudulent counsellors (xxvi. and xxvii.) seem on a different plane from the rest; the sense of increasing degradation in the passage downwards through Malebolge is checked; the story of the last voyage of Ulysses with its spiritual nobility and imaginative splendour, the whole episode of Guido da Montefeltro with its dramatic intensity, are among the greatest creations of poetry. But so repulsive is much of the matter of Malebolge that Dante represents his own moral sense as becoming clouded; in the last valley he listens without disgust, almost with pleasure, to an unsavoury quarrel between the Greek Sinon and the coiner Adam of Brescia (*Inf.* xxx.), until a sharp rebuke from Virgil restores him to himself: *Chè voler ciò udire è bassa voglia*, "for to wish to hear that is a base desire."

NINTH CIRCLE.—In the centre of Malebolge yawns a huge chasm, like an immense well, where the precipice falls to the ninth and last circle. Like towers round the margin of this pit appear the upper parts of captive Giants, both of Scripture and mythology; Nimrod, Ephialtes, Briareus—the Paladins of the Emperor of Hell defending the last

and most secret chamber of his palace. The Giants connect this last circle with Pride (*Purg.* xii. 28-36), as the mention of Cain does with Envy (*Purg.* xiv. 133), and Lucifer himself with both Pride and Envy (*Inf.* vii. 12; *Purg.* xii. 25; *Par.* ix. 129, xix. 46, etc.). Treachery is a gigantic version of fraud, by which "is forgotten that love which nature makes, and also that which afterwards is added, giving birth to special trust" (*Inf.* xi. 61-63); hence the guardians of this circle are monstrosities in magnified human shape. Antaeus (*Inf.* xxxi.), less guilty, and therefore less fettered than the others, hands Virgil and Dante down into this last circle, where the traitors are eternally consumed in the river Cocytus, which is frozen to a vast dark lake of ice, sloping down to Lucifer. Nowhere else is Dante so utterly pitiless. Hardly can we recognise the man who had fainted with pity at the story of Francesca (*Inf.* v. 141) in the ruthless inquisitor, who is ready to add to the torture of Bocca degli Abati (*inf.* xxxii. 97), but will not stretch out his hand to afford a moment's alleviation to Frate Alberigo de' Manfredi (*Inf.* xxxiii. 149).

There are four concentric rings in this ninth circle, increasing in pain as they diminish in circumference. In Caina (*Inf.* xxxii. 58), the treacherous murderers of their kindred are chattering with their teeth like storks. In Antenora (88), traitors to country or party are still more deeply frozen into the ice. Bocca degli Abati, who betrayed the Guelfs to the Ghibellines at Montaperti, is side by side with Buoso da Duera, who, five years later, betrayed the Ghibellines to the lieutenant of Charles of Anjou. Frozen into one hole, Count Ugolino della Gherardesca is gnawing the head of Archbishop Ruggieri of Pisa; and the terror and pity of Dante's lines have made the tale of the dying agonies of the old noble and his children

perhaps the most famous episode in the *Commedia*. The terrible imprecation against Pisa adapts Lucan's curse upon Egypt after the murder of Pompey to the different geographical conditions of the Tuscan city. [33] In Tolomea (*Inf.* xxxiii. 124), those who slew treacherously, under mask of hospitality, have only their faces showing above the ice, their tears frozen into a crystalline mask; on earth their bodies ofttimes still seem to live, tenanted by a demon until their time is full, while the soul has already gone down into the ice. In Giudecca (xxxiv. 117) are souls of traitors to their lords and benefactors: "Already I was there (and with fear I put it into verse) where the souls were all covered, and shone through like straw in glass. Some are lying; some stand upright, this on its head, and that upon its soles; another, like a bow, bends face to feet" (*Inf.* xxxiv. 10-15); silent and immovable, in agonised and everlasting adoration in the court of the Emperor of the dolorious kingdom, who, gigantic and hideous, "from mid-breast stood forth out of the ice." The most radiant of God's Angels has become the source of evil, the symbol of sin's hideousness. His three faces, red, yellow-white, black, are an infernal parody of the Power, Wisdom, Love of the Blessed Trinity. Under each face are two huge bat-like wings, whose helpless flappings freeze all the lake of Cocytus. Tormented by his teeth and claws are the three arch-traitors: Judas Iscariot, who betrayed the Divine Founder of the Church; Brutus and Cassius, who murdered the imperial founder of the Empire. The condemnation of the two latter is an instance of how, while accepting the testimony of his sources as to facts, Dante preserves independence of judgment concerning their moral value; in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, Brutus and Cassius are the destined avengers of right, the champions of Roman liberty,

Brutus bearing the character with which we are familiar in Shakespeare.

OUT OF THE DEPTHS.—It is the night of Easter Eve in our world (*Inf.* xxxiv. 68) when the poets leave the accursed place. Virgil carries Dante like a child, for man will readily submit himself to the guidance of reason and philosophy when once the nature of sin has been thoroughly comprehended. Down by Lucifer's shaggy sides, they pass the centre of the universe (lines 76-81, 106-117). Virgil turns with Dante completely round (conversion from sin), so that they find themselves in a chasm left at Lucifer's fall, below the opposite hemisphere to that which man inhabits. But here it is morning (lines 96, 105, 118), the morning of Easter Eve of the southern hemisphere, which is twelve hours behind the time of its antipodes.[34] Through this space, opposite to "the tomb of Beelzebub," a rivulet descends, bringing the memory of sin that has been purged in Purgatory back to Lucifer. By a strange and arduous way, typical of the persevering struggle out of vice, Dante with his guide mounts upwards to the clear air; and, on the shores of Purgatory in the southern hemisphere, they "issued forth to rebehold the stars."

Like the Redeemer of mankind, Dante has been dead and buried part of three days, and it is not yet daybreak on Easter Sunday, "in the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week."

3. *The "Purgatorio"*

STRUCTURE AND ALLEGORICAL MEANING.—Purgatory is a steep mountain of surpassing height, on the only land rising out of the sea in the southern

hemisphere. Like Hell, it was formed when Lucifer and his followers were cast out of Heaven. To escape him the earth rushed up to form this mountain, and left void the cavern through which Dante ascended (*Inf.* xxxiv. 125). It is the exact antipodes of Jerusalem and Mount Calvary, rises beyond atmospheric changes, and is crowned by the Earthly Paradise, scene of man's fall and symbol of blessedness of this life.

In the literal sense the Purgatorio is the essential Purgatory of separated spirits, expiating and exercising, paying the debt of temporal punishment that remains after the guilt has been forgiven; purging away the material element of sin, after the formal element has been remitted. In the allegorical sense it represents the moral purgatory of repentant sinners in this world; and has for subject man, by penance and good works, becoming free from the tyranny of vice, attaining to moral and intellectual freedom. Thus it becomes a symbol of the whole life of man from conversion to death; man, no longer sunk in ignorance and sin, as in the *Inferno*; not yet soaring aloft on heights of impassioned contemplation, as in the *Paradiso*; but struggling against difficulties and temptations, making amends for misuse of Free Will, conforming with the practices of the Church, and obeying the imperial authority, until the time comes to pass to the blessedness of another world.

Dante's open-air treatment of Purgatory seems peculiar to him. Very wonderful is the transition from the dark night of Hell to the "sweet colour of oriental sapphire," where the star of Love comforts the pilgrim soul, and the four stars of the Southern Cross, which symbolise the cardinal virtues, make all

the sky rejoice in their flame—until Easter Day dawns, and from afar the poet "knew the quivering of the sea" (*Purg.* i. 117). Throughout this second Cantica the sun is our guide by day, and at night the stars are over our head; we behold the glory of sunrise and of sunset as upon earth, but with added beauty, for it is attended by celestial songs and the softly beating wings of angelic presences. Dante spends part of four days, with three nights, in this portion of his pilgrimage; for Purgatory is the symbol of the life of man, and the life of man has four periods. At the end of each day Dante rests and sleeps; before dawn on each day, except the first, a vision prepares him for the work of the day—the work which cannot begin or proceed save in the light of the sun, for man can advance no step in this spiritual expiation without the light of God's grace. But the fourth day does not close, like the other three, in night; for it corresponds to that fourth and last stage of man's life, in which the soul "returns to God, as to that port whence she set out, when she came to enter upon the sea of this life" (*Conv.* iv. 28).

There are three main divisions of the mountain. From the shore to the gate of St. Peter is Ante-Purgatory, still subject to atmospheric changes. Within the gate is Purgatory proper, with its seven terraces bounded above by a ring of purifying flames. Thence the way leads up to the Earthly Paradise; for by these purgatorial pains the fall of Adam is repaired, and the soul of man regains the state of innocence.

ANTE-PURGATORY.—In Ante-Purgatory Dante passes Easter Day and the following night. Here the souls of those who died in contumacy of the Church are detained at the foot of the mountain, and may

not yet begin the ascent; and the negligent, who deferred their conversion, and who now have to defer their purification, are waiting humbly around the lower slopes. For here purgation has not yet begun; this is the place where time makes amends for time (*Purg.* xxiii. 84).

Upon the face of Cato, the guardian of the shore and mountain, so shines the light of the four mystical stars, that he seems illumined with the very light of the sun of Divine Grace (*Purg.* i. 37-39). Cato, "the severest champion of true liberty," "to kindle the love of liberty in the world, gave proof of how dear he held her by preferring to depart from life a free man, rather than remain alive bereft of liberty" (*Mon.* ii. 5). He was one of those who "saw and believed that this goal of human life is solely rigid virtue" (*Conv.* iv. 6). Thus from Lucan's *Pharsalia*, Dante has recreated this austere and glorious figure to be the warden of the spiritual kingdom where virtue is made perfect by love and true liberty attained.

At sunrise the white-robed and white-winged Angel of Faith brings the ransomed souls over the ocean from the banks of the Tiber, where the redeemed gather, as the lost do upon the shores of Acheron (*Purg.* ii.). The *In exitu Israel* of their psalm signifies mystically, in Dante's allegory, the passing of the holy soul from the bondage of this corruption to the liberty of eternal glory (*Epist.* x. 7). His own song of love on the lips of Casella has peculiar fitness at the entrance of the realm of hope and purgation; for, in the eyes of that mystical lady, of whom Love discourses, is the anticipation of Paradise, and yet she is the example of humility—the humility in sign of which Dante has girded himself with a rush. As

they turn towards the ascent, the excommunicated draw near, led by Manfred; cut off from the body of the Church by the Pontiff's curse, they were reunited to its soul by tardy repentance. The episode of Manfred is a counterpart to that of Celestine in the corresponding canto of the *Inferno*. Dante would clearly show the difference of God's judgment from that of man. The figure of the canonised pope-hermit, whom the world extolled as a perfect type of Christian renunciation, and who died in the odour of sanctity, is contrasted with that of the worldly king who died excommunicate, and whose name was tainted with suspicion of incest and parricide: "Horrible were my sins, but Infinite Goodness has such wide arms that it takes whatever turns to it" (*Purg.* iii. 121-123).

Through a narrow gap they begin the ascent, which is so hard at the outset, but grows ever lighter as man ascends. Among the negligent through indolence, Belacqua seems as lazy as upon earth (*Purg.* iv.); but his laziness is now its own punishment. At midday Virgil's swift rebuke (*Purg.* v. 10-15) cures his pupil of one fatal obstacle to following philosophy in the search of moral and intellectual liberty—human respect. Among those cut off by violent deaths is Buonconte da Montefeltro, the story of whose fate, Canto v., is in designed contrast with the soul's tragedy that came from his father's lips out of the torturing flames of Malebolge (*Inf.* xxvii.). The *lacrimetta* of the dying knight—the "little tear" that saved his eternal part from the fiend (*Purg.* v. 107)—has become one of the priceless pearls in the treasury of the world's poetry. All these souls ask for remembrance in prayer, that their delay may be shortened, and Virgil's explanation centers upon the power of love to reach for expiation from

beyond the grave (vi. 37-39). In these earlier cantos of the *Purgatorio*, there are constant traces of the deep impression made upon Dante by the story of Palinurus, the pilot of Aeneas, in Books v. and vi. of the *Aeneid*.

THE VALLEY OF THE PRINCES.—They come to the solitary and lion-like soul of Sordello, whose loving greeting to his Mantuan countryman gives occasion to Dante's superb and famous outburst of Italian patriotism: *Ahi serva Italia, di dolore ostello* (*Purg.* vi. 76 *et seq.*); which shows a striking correspondence with the great passage where Lucan laments the overthrow of Roman liberty at Pharsalia (*Phars.* vii. 440 *et seq.*). The part of Sordello is very similar to that of Musaeus in the *Aeneid*, Book vi.; he leads Virgil and Dante to the Valley of the Princes, which corresponds to Elysium, the verdant vale where Aeneas met Anchises. Dante probably reconstructed the troubadour's personality from his own famous poem on the death of Blacatz, a Provençal hero of the thirteenth century, in which he upbraids and derides the kings and princes of Christendom, beginning with Frederick II., and ends with a proud assertion that he will speak the whole truth in spite of the powerful barons whom he may offend. So here, in the Valley of the Princes, where those are detained who neglected some peculiarly lofty mission, or postponed their spiritual welfare to worldly and political care, Sordello, beginning with the Emperor-elect, Rudolph of Hapsburg (*Purg.* vii. 94), points out the descendants or successors of those whom he had rebuked in the other life. Here, singing together to the Queen of Mercy, the deadliest foes sit side by side, consoling each other; Rudolph of Hapsburg with Ottocar of Bohemia, Charles of Anjou with Peter of Aragon; a motive found previously in

the vision of Tundal, where, however, the kings are naturally Irish. On Henry of England Sordello had been more severe when he lived. After sunset, in the light of three brighter stars, that symbolise the three theological virtues, Dante has pleasant talk with Nino Visconti and Currado Malaspina (*Purg.* viii.). And, as evening closes in, two golden-haired Angels, green-clad and green-winged, the Angels of Hope with the flaming but blunted swords of justice tempered with mercy, defend the noble souls from the assault of an evil serpent. In the literal sense, this episode (which seems a relic from earlier mediaeval visions) may imply that souls in Purgatory have not the intrinsic impossibility of sinning that is possessed by the blessed of Paradise, but are kept absolutely free from any sin by the Divine Providence. In the allegorical sense, the meaning clearly is that the way to moral and intellectual freedom is a hard one, and temptations to fall back in despair are many. The tempter would draw man back from regaining the Earthly Paradise, from which he has once caused his expulsion.

THE MYSTIC EAGLE AND THE GATE OF PURGATORY.—Just before the dawn Dante dreams of a golden eagle snatching him up to the sphere of fire, and, waking when the sun is more than two hours high, finds that Lucia has brought him to the Gate of Purgatory. Mystically, the eagle seems to represent the poet's own spirit, dreaming that he can soar unaided to the very outskirts of Paradise; but he wakes to realise that Divine grace indicates the preliminary stage of purification. The gate of St. Peter with its three steps, of white marble, exactly mirroring the whole man, of darkest purple cracked in the figure of the Cross, of flaming red porphyry, represents the Sacrament of Penance with its three

parts: Contrition, Confession, Satisfaction based upon the love of God. The mournfully robed Angel of Obedience seated on the rock of diamond, with dazzling face and flashing sword, is the confessor. His silver and gold keys, of judgment and absolution, open the gate to Dante; the seven P's traced by his sword on the poet's forehead are to be effaced one by one in his ascent (*Purg.* ix.).

MORAL TOPOGRAPHY.—Within the gate is Purgatory proper with its seven terraces, each devoted to the purgation of one of the seven capital sins, "out of which other vices spring, especially in the way of final causation" (Aquinas). Whereas in the *Inferno* sin was considered in its manifold and multiform effects, in the *Purgatorio* it is regarded in its causes, and all referred to disordered love. The formal element, the aversion from the imperishable good, which is the essence of Hell, has been forgiven; the material element, the conversion to the good that perishes, the disordered love, is now to be purged from the soul. In the allegorical or moral sense, since love, as Aquinas says, is "the ultimate cause of the true activities of every agent," it is clear that man's first duty in life is to set love in order; and, indeed, the whole moral basis of Dante's Purgatory rests upon the definition of St. Augustine that virtue is *ordo amoris*, "the ordering of love." In the first three terraces, sins of the spirit are expiated; in the fourth terrace, sloth, which is both spiritual and carnal; in the fifth, sixth, seventh terraces, sins of the flesh. This purgation, which involves both pain of loss for a time and punishment of sense, is effected by turning with fervent love to God and detesting what hinders union with Him. Therefore, at the beginning of each terrace, examples are seen or heard of virtue contrary to the sin, in order to excite the suffering

souls to extirpate its very roots; and, at the end, examples of its result or punishment (the "bit and bridle"). These examples are chosen with characteristic Dantesque impartiality alike from Scripture and legend or mythology; but, in each case, an example from the life of the Blessed Virgin is opposed to each capital sin. At the end of each terrace stands an Angel—personification of one of the virtues opposed to the sins or vices. These seven Angels in their successive apparitions are among the divinest things of beauty in the sacred poem. It is only when sin is completely purged away that man can contemplate the exceeding beauty, the "awful loveliness" of the contrary virtue.

FIRST TERRACE.—Steep and narrow is the path up to the first terrace, where Pride is purged away (*Purg.* x). Carved upon the mountain side are fair white marble images of wondrous beauty, setting forth great examples of Humility, alike in "them of low degree" (Mary at the Annunciation) and in "the mighty" (David and Trajan, rulers respectively of the chosen people of the two dispensations, the Jews and the Romans). Wearily and painfully the souls of the proud pass round, pressed down by terrible weights, reciting a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer, for themselves and those they have left on earth. And seldom has the Catholic doctrine of prayer for the dead been more winningly set forth than in Dante's comment (xi. 31-36). A partaker in some degree of their punishment, Dante, all bowed down, goes with these souls; he speaks with Omberto Aldobrandesco, who is expiating pride of birth, and Oderisi of Gubbio, the miniaturist, who is purifying his soul from pride of intellect. The latter points out the great Ghibelline burgher statesman of Siena, Provenzano Salvani, expiating pride of dominion—the sin which

turned so many an Italian patriot of the Middle Ages into a tyrant. Figured upon the pavement below their feet are examples of Pride's punishment, like the designs on the pavement of the Duomo of Siena (*Purg.* xii.). Noon has passed when the Angel of Humility shows the way up to the next terrace, and with the waving of his wing removes the first P from Dante's forehead. "Blessed are the poor in spirit," celestial voices sing, as, with almost all weariness gone since Pride is expiated, Dante ascends the steep way.

SECOND TERRACE.—In the second and narrower circle Envy is purged. Examples of charity, "courteous invitations to the table of Love," are cited by invisible spirits flying past. The envious, clothed in haircloth, lean helplessly shoulder to shoulder against the rock, their eyelids sewn up with iron stitching. Sapia of Siena, the kinswoman of Provenzano Salvani, at whose fall and the defeat of her countrymen she rejoiced, tells her history in lines of singular beauty (*Purg.* xiii.). Guido del Duca denounces the evil dispositions of the inhabitants of Tuscany, and bewails the degeneracy of the noble houses with the consequent decay of chivalry in his own province of Romagna; envious on earth of prosperity of others, these souls mourn now for its decline (xiv.). Like peals of thunder the cries of spirits follow each other in citing Envy's punishment. As they go towards the sunset, the dazzling Angel of Fraternal Love removes the mark of Envy. "Blessed are the merciful," "Rejoice thou that conquerest." As they mount Virgil expounds the difference between material goods, which are diminished by sharing and beget envy, and the infinite good of Paradise, where love increases with every soul that enters into the joy of the Lord, and its communication is measured only

by the charity of each soul that is made its mirror (*Purg.* xv.).

THIRD TERRACE.—On reaching the third terrace where Anger is purged, Dante sees examples of meekness and forgiveness in vision. From the black, pungent, and tormenting smoke which envelopes the souls of the once wrathful, who now call upon the Lamb of God for peace and mercy, the Lombard Marco reconciles Free Will with stellar influence, and ascribes the evil condition of Italy and the world to the neglect of law, the confusion of the spiritual and temporal power, and the papal usurpation of imperial rights (*Purg.* xvi.). In this terrace Dante again partakes of the pains of the penitent souls. As the sun is setting, he issues from the dark mist. A most significant passage on the power of the imagination to form images not derived from the senses (xvii. 13-18) introduces the visions of Anger's punishment, from which the poet is roused by the dazzling splendour of the Angel of Peace or Meekness, who fans away the third P and shows the way up: "Blessed are the peacemakers who are without evil wrath."

FOURTH TERRACE.—The stars are appearing as they reach the fourth terrace, where souls are purged from Sloth. We saw that, in the *Inferno*, the Aristotelian division of things to be morally shunned was discussed, and the ethical structure of the first canticle expounded, in the circle intermediate between Incontinence and Malice (*Inf.* xi.); so, in the *Purgatorio*, a compulsory pause in the terrace intermediate between sins of spirit and sins of flesh is selected by Virgil for his great discourse upon Love, on which is based the moral system of the second realm (*Purg.* xvii. 91-139, xviii. 13-75). It is

practically a sermon on the text of Jacopone da Todi, *Ordena questo amore, tu che m'ami*, "Set this love in order, thou that lovest me"; since in rational beings disordered love produces the seven capital vices. Pride, Envy, Anger are regarded as distorted love; Sloth as defective love; Avarice, Gluttony, Luxury as excessive love. Love is the golden net whereby God draws back to Himself all creatures that He has made, whether inanimate, sensitive, or rational—by the tendencies or inclinations He has given them to make them seek the end for which they are ordered and disposed, according to the Eternal Law. Rational beings alone have Free Will, by which man merits or demerits from the Divine Justice, according as he inclines to good or evil loves. Love's tendency to good is the precious material upon which Free Will acts like the craftsman's hand, to fashion a satyr's mask or a crucifix.

At the end of this discourse, the slothful rush by at full speed in the moonlight, so full of longing to lose no time through too little love, that the Abbot of San Zeno cannot stop while he answers Virgil's question; those in front cry out examples of alacrity in Mary and Caesar; those behind chant Sloth's punishment in the chosen people of the Old Testament and the Trojan ancestors of the Romans.

THE SIREN AND THE ANGEL OF ZEAL.—Before the dawn of the third day in Purgatory, Dante has in his sleep a marvellous dream of the Siren (sensual seduction, concupiscence of the flesh), from which he is delivered by a holy and alert lady who calls upon Virgil (prevenient grace, or the wisdom and prudence of Proverbs vii.). The Siren is the dream-prelude to the purgation of sins of the flesh, as the Eagle had been to that of sins of the spirit. The sun

has risen; and the Angel of Zeal (or of Spiritual Joy) cancels the fourth P and shows the way up to the next terrace. “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall have their souls wed to consolation.” Sloth is a heaviness and sadness which weighs down the soul, a sadness at spiritual good, to be fought by thinking on spiritual things. Most fitly then do the wings of the Angel of Zeal point upwards, and his words tell of a nobler sorrow, a mourning which shall be followed by Divine consolation (*Purg.* xix.).

FIFTH TERRACE.—In the fifth terrace, the avaricious and prodigal, whose souls on earth cleaved to the dust, lie face downwards to earth; unable to move hand or foot until the sin of Covetousness is purged away, the sin which, according to Aquinas, “although not absolutely the greatest of sins, yet has in some sense a greater deformity than the rest, since by it the human heart is subjected even to external things.” Pope Adrian V. tells the story of his tardy conversion, and has tender words for his niece Alagia, the wife of Moroello Malaspina (*Purg.* xix.). It is a companion episode to that of Nicholas III. in the corresponding canto of the *Inferno*. In this circle the souls themselves cry out the examples and warnings, by day and night respectively. The soul of Hugh Capet, “the root of the evil plant which overshadows all the Christian earth,” pours forth bitter sarcasm and scathing invective upon all the royal house of France, the great Guelf power that opposed the Empire, oppressed Italy, and wrought scandal in the Church. A monument of poetic infamy is especially raised to Philip the Fair and the three Carlos; and there are few more glorious examples of Christian magnanimity than the burning words in which Dante, distinguishing the man from the office, brands

the sacrilege of Anagni, the outrage committed upon him whom the poet held as his own deadliest foe, and yet the unworthy Vicar of Christ. Nowhere else, save in the reference to the Jubilee (*Purg.* ii. 98, 99), does Dante treat Boniface as lawful pope (*cf. Inf.* xix. 52-57; *Par.* ix. 142, xxvii. 22-24). It has been thought that Canto xx. was composed while the Church was ostensibly supporting the policy of Henry VII.; before attacking the Templars, the French king had endeavoured to renew the outrage of Anagni by inducing Pope Clement to condemn the memory of Boniface. With a mighty earthquake, a universal chorus of *Gloria in excelsis* from the suffering souls, the poet Statius is liberated, and joins Dante and Virgil (*Purg.* xxi.). He explains how the pains of Purgatory are voluntarily endured, since, against the hypothetic or absolute will with which they desire the bliss of Paradise, the souls suffer these purifying pains with the conditional or actual will, the same inclination or impulse or desire (*talento*) which they formerly had to sin. Thus it is free will itself that imposes the purgatorial process, and that alone shows the soul when purification is complete. The delicious scene of the recognition of Virgil by Statius is full of that peculiarly tender Dantesque playfulness that informs the two Eclogues; Dante's affectionate humour in dealing with those he loved is one of the most attractive aspects of his character, and one perhaps too often missed.

SIXTH TERRACE.—The Angel of Justice has removed the fifth P from Dante's forehead, opposing in his song the thirst of justice to that of gain. As they mount, Statius explains to Virgil how he was converted from prodigality by a line in the *Aeneid*, and led to Christianity by the fourth Eclogue (*Purg.* xxii.). The conversion of a pagan to Christianity

through reading Virgil occurs in a story told by Vincent of Beauvais; Dante was probably influenced in applying this to Statius, representing him as a secret convert to the true faith, by his study of the *Thebaid*; for there, in the last book, Statius describes the Altar of Mercy at Athens in language which harmonises with the words of Christ in the Gospels and the address of his own contemporary, St. Paul, to the Athenians in the Acts. The poets pursue their way with greater confidence now that Statius is with them, and reach the sixth terrace, where unseen spirits cry out examples of temperance from the tree beneath which drunkenness and gluttony are purged. The spirits, terribly wasted, suffer intense torments of hunger and thirst in the presence of most tempting food and drink; but the sanctifying pain is a solace, desired even as Christ willed to die for man. With the soul of Forese Donati, Dante holds loving converse; the memory of their dissolute lives together is still grievous; the poet makes amends for his old slander of Forese's wife Nella, by the tender lines now placed upon her husband's lips (*Purg.* xxiii. 85-93). Forese darkly foretells the death of Corso Donati, which appears to be the latest event in Florentine history mentioned in the poem (xxiv. 82-90). Whatever the friendship of these two had been on earth, it was fair and lovely indeed on the Mount of Purgation.

Amongst many others are Pope Martin IV. and the poet Bonagiunta of Lucca, whose talk with Dante upon the *dolce stil nuovo*, the "sweet new style," is one of the landmarks for the student of poetry (*Purg.* xxiv. 49-60). Dante's famous definition of his own position expresses, in another form, the truth that all great poetry is the "transfigured life" of its author: [35] "I am one who, when Love inspires me, note, and give utterance in that fashion which he dictates

within." It is already anticipated in the prose passage prefixed to the *Donne che avete* in the *Vita Nuova* (xix.), and completes the conception of poetry set forth in the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*.

THE SEVENTH TERRACE.—Passing another tree, a shoot from the tree of knowledge, beneath which the purging pangs are renewed, and from whose branches spirit voices proclaim examples of gluttony's punishment, they are summoned upwards by the glowing and dazzling Angel of Abstinence, fragrant with grass and flowers as the air of May. As they ascend the narrow stairs towards the last terrace, Statius explains the generation of the body and the infusion of the rational soul, which exists, after the body's death, invested with an aerial body as a shade (*Purg.* xxv. 31 *et seq.*). Apparently it is because revelation has some voice in these high matters that the Christian Statius gives Dante this exposition, instead of Virgil, and at the latter's request; until the seventh terrace is reached, where sensual passion is expiated in the bosom of the great burning. Singing to the God of Supreme Clemency, crying aloud examples of chastity or of lust's punishment, two bands of souls, divided according to the nature of their sin, pass through the fire in opposite ways (*Purg.* xxvi.). Here is Guido Guinizelli of Bologna, father of the poets of the *dolce stil nuovo*, whom Dante gazes upon in rapt admiration, and addresses with impassioned love and worship. But Guinizelli—with that humility which is so characteristically Dante's own—indicates as *miglior fabbro del parlar materno*, a "better craftsman of his mother-tongue," Arnaut Daniel, the cunning Provençal song-smith, who invented the sestina, and whose metrical skill and originality won for him a higher place in the estimation of the poet of the *rime*

pietrose than modern students of the troubadours are usually disposed to concede.

THE PURGING FIRE.—At sunset the Angel of Purity, singing "Blessed are the clean of heart," bids the poets pass through the flames that lie between them and the last stairway—the purging fire that is the wall between Dante and Beatrice. Dante endures the "burning without measure"; and they reach the ascent, greeted by dazzling light and celestial strains of *Venite benedicti Patris mei*. The Cherubims with the flaming sword, "turning every way to keep the way of the tree of life" (Gen. iii. 24), are thus welcoming man's restoration to the Garden of Eden, as the serpent had endeavoured to impede it in the Valley of the Princes. Now it is a delight to mount; but night comes on, and Dante, watched over by Statius and Virgil, falls asleep on the stairs (*Purg.* xxvii.).

LEAH AND LIBERTY.—Just before dawn, prelude to the new day, he dreams of Leah, a young and lovely lady gathering flowers in a meadow. The theologians took Leah as type of the active life, and Rachel, her sister, of the contemplative; a symbolism to which Richard of St. Victor gave a more mystical colour, by interpreting Leah as "affection inflamed by divine inspiration, composing itself to the norm of justice." Leah may then represent the affection, thus inflamed and ordered, which is the perfection of the active life. At sunrise the topmost stair of Purgatory is reached, and Virgil, who can himself discern no further, resigns his guidance at the entrance to the Garden of Eden. Dante's judgment has been made free, right, and whole; *per ch' io te sovra te corono e mitrio*, "wherefore I crown and mitre thee over thyself" (xxvii. 142). It has been supposed that Virgil is here resigning to Dante the crown and mitre of the

Emperor; *mitratus et coronatus* was the expression used for the coronation of an Emperor when the Pope placed upon his head a mitre and a crown, which afterwards were united in the mitred crown, as seen in the great fresco at Santa Maria Novella. Others refer the crown to temporal or imperial authority, and the mitre to spiritual or ecclesiastical; for (*Mon.* iii. 4) "if man had remained in the state of innocence in which he was made by God, he would have had no need of such directive regimens," which are "remedial against the infirmity of sin." Dante, purified from sin, has regained this state of innocence, and has attained that liberty through which "we have our felicity here as men and our felicity elsewhere as Gods" (*Mon.* i. 12). In any case, Virgil is confirming the freedom which Dante has sought and gained by the passage through Purgatory.

THE EARTHLY PARADISE AND MATELDA.—The Earthly Paradise represents "blessedness of this life, which consists in the exercise of man's natural powers" (*Mon.* iii. 16). This blessedness is found in the twofold exercise of the mind: the practical, which "consists in ourselves working virtuously, that is, in integrity, with prudence, with temperance, with fortitude, and with justice"; and the speculative, which consists "in considering the works of God and of nature" (*Conv.* iv. 22). In this Earthly Paradise, the music of whose birds and trees has surely passed into the wonderful six cantos that close the *Purgatorio*, Dante meets, amidst the flowers on Lethe's banks, the glorified realisation of the Leah of his dream (*Purg.* xxviii.). She has been taken as symbolising the glorified active life in the state of recovered Eden, realising in the Church of Christ what Leah had dimly prefigured in the Old Testament; the active Christian life; *innocentia bonorum operum*, the

virtuous use of earthly things, directly ordered to the love of our neighbour; the temporal felicity of the Earthly Paradise. Since the purgatorial process is the freeing of the soul from disordered love, we may follow Richard's interpretation of Leah, and take her as representing love rightly ordered and inflamed by divine inspiration. Presently she is called Matelda (xxxiii. 119), and it is probable that she is the idealised presentment of a real person. All the earliest commentators, excepting the *Ottimo*, identify her with the great Countess of Tuscany, in support of which view might be urged the historical work of the Countess in the revival of the study of Roman Law at Bologna—Roman Law being, for Dante, the secular counterpart of the "perfect law of liberty." Some modern commentators prefer to seek her prototype in one or other of the ladies of *Vita Nuova*; for instance, in that lady of very sweet speech who had rebuked Dante at the crisis of his "new life." Others have attempted to identify her with Mechthild of Magdeburg or Mechthild of Hackeborn, two German mystical writers of the latter part of the thirteenth century whose works show occasional analogies with the *Commedia*. It may be observed that her counterpart, as Rachel to Leah, is not Beatrice, as sometimes supposed, but St. Bernard, in the closing cantos of the *Paradiso*. Matelda explains her joyous aspect by referring Dante to the Psalm *Delectasti* (Ps. 92, 91 Vulgate), and her discourse of Eden and its rivers (realising the Golden Age sung by the classical poets) communicates to Virgil and Statius her own celestial joy: "Thou has given me, O Lord, a delight in what Thou hast made: in the works of Thy hands I shall rejoice." She points out to Dante's gaze the wondrous pageant, which astonishes Virgil as much as his pupil, the mystical procession that represents

the triumphal march of the Church (*Purg.* xxix.).

THE PAGEANT OF THE CHURCH.—With brilliant light and ineffable melody, the triumph advances: "I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. xxi. 2). Headed by seven candlesticks of gold as standards, followed by the twenty-four elders, white-robed and crowned with lilies, singing Mary's praises; between the four living creatures of Ezekiel and St. John, crowned with green, comes a triumphal chariot, more glorious than the sun, upon two wheels; drawn by a Griffin, half lion and half eagle, whose golden wings stretch up far out of sight, through the seven luminous bands that form the processional canopy. By the right wheel dance three maidens, symbolic of the theological virtues; by the left wheel dance four, who represent the cardinal virtues, following the measure of Prudence, as the others take their step from the song of Charity. The seven candlesticks are the gifts of the Holy Spirit; the twenty-four elders, either the patriarchs and prophets, or the books of the Old Testament; the four living creatures, the four Evangelists, or their four Gospels; the Griffin, Christ Himself in His Human and Divine Natures. Lastly, follow seven more elders, white-robed but crowned with flaming red flowers; a physician, and one with shining sword; four of humble appearance; an old man "sleeping with face alert." According to Benvenuto da Imola, these represent St. Peter (who had intrusted to him the power of healing souls) and St. Paul, the four great Latin doctors, and St. Bernard. More usually they are regarded as personifying the books of the New Testament—the Acts, St. Paul's Epistles, the Epistles of St. Peter, James, John, and Jude, the Apocalypse or Revelation

of St. John. Upon the chariot, amidst a hundred Angels singing and scattering flowers, Beatrice appears, clad in the mystical colours, red, white, green, crowned with the olive of wisdom and of peace over her snow-white veil. And, at the advent of the Wisdom divinely revealed to man, Virgil silently vanishes; he has tasted of the delights of the Earthly Paradise, has witnessed the triumph of the Church from which he is for ever cut off, the Faith he never knew, and has gone back to his mournful dwelling-place (*Purg.* xxx.).

BEATRICE AND DANTE.—The precise significance of the reproaches which Beatrice pours upon Dante for his mode of life after her death, with the poet's own bitter shame and intense repentance (xxx., xxxi.), depends upon the view taken of his character and the nature of the wanderings represented in the dark wood. That these aberrations were mainly philosophical and intellectual, as sometimes supposed, appears highly improbable. We would regard Dante's confession here as one of his most personal utterances, and hold that the cherubically inspired singer of righteousness is deliberately casting aside the allegorical veil which, in the *Convivio*, he had attempted to throw over the things in the past which still severed him from the ideal life when he wrote: "I fear the infamy of having followed such great passion." It is a personal episode, in which Beatrice is the woman loved and to whose memory the poet has been unfaithful, standing out clearly from the allegorical mystery by which it is surrounded and in which it is set. After Matelda has drawn Dante through Lethe, the four cardinal virtues, which "perfect the intellect and appetite of man according to the capacity of human nature," lead him to the breast of the mystic Griffin; and, in

response to the song of the three theological virtues, which perfect man supernaturally, Beatrice at last unveils her countenance to his gaze: “O splendour of living light eternal.”

CONCLUDING ALLEGORIES OF THE “PURGATORIO.”—The allegory is resumed. In the light of this revelation, now that he is purified and free from sin, Dante beholds a vision of the Church and Empire (*Purg.* xxxii.). That glorious procession had first presented an ideal of the Church as Divine Providence intended it to be, before it became the vessel that the serpent of simony broke; the Bride that the Divine Spouse ordained for the guidance of the world. Such being the ideal, Dante beholds in a series of allegorical visions its history, in conjunction with the Empire, from the first coming to Rome down to the transference of the papal chair to Avignon. The great procession moves on through the divine forest, the Griffin still drawing the chariot with Beatrice seated upon it; Matelda with Dante and Statius following after the right wheel. Even as the divine origin of the Church has been seen in the triumphal car, so now the divine origin of the Empire is indicated in the desolate and despoiled tree which they reach. The tree of knowledge of good and evil, since the prohibition to eat of that tree was the beginning of law and the duty of obedience, represents Natural Law or Natural Justice, what Dante calls *ius*; which “in things is nought else than the similitude of the divine will” (*Mon.* ii. 2). The expression of this natural justice and the means for its effectuation in human society is Law, which Dante identifies with the Empire, and thus the tree becomes the symbol of the Empire and of the obedience due to it. The tree is destitute of flowers and foliage till the Griffin comes to it, who plucks nothing from it:

"Thus is preserved the seed of all justice" (*Purg.* xxxii. 48; *cf.* our Lord's words to St. John, Matt. iii. 15). Justice can alone be fulfilled when the Church follows this example of her Divine Founder, and usurps none of the temporal rights of the Empire. After the chariot has been bound to the tree, the previously bare plant breaks out into purple leaves and flowers. The Griffin and his train return to Heaven, leaving Beatrice to guard the chariot of the Church, seated beneath the shadow of the Imperial Tree, upon its root, which is Rome. In a new series of visions Dante beholds the sequel; he sees the conflict of the past, contemplates the corruption of the present, hearkens to the hope of the future. The persecution of the Church by the early Roman Emperors is followed by the inroad of the first heresies; and the donation of Constantine by the rising of the dragon of schism or simony. By more assumption of secular power and dignities, the chariot becomes monstrously transformed, and shamelessly usurped by the harlot, who represents the corrupt ecclesiastical authority enthroned in the place of Revelation, a false and degraded theology based upon the Decretals instead of the true divine science of the Scripture and the Fathers. By her side a giant appears who, after alternate caressing and scourging of the usurper, unbinds the transfigured chariot from the tree, and drags it away through the forest—symbolical of the interference of the royal house of France, ending in the transference of the Papacy from Rome to Avignon.

A DELIVERER ANNOUNCED.—But to the mournful psalm that the maidens around her raise, *Deus venerunt gentes*, Beatrice answers in words of hope; "a little while," and the spiritual guide shall rise again

from the black tomb of Avignon. And, as they move on, she utters to Dante a further prophecy (*Purg.* xxxiii.). "The vessel that the serpent broke was and is not," so completely has corruption and simony degraded the chariot of the Bride of Christ. But vengeance shall fall upon the guilty parties, and the eagle shall not for ever be without an heir; for already a favourable disposition of the stars is at hand, under which a messenger of God shall come, who shall slay the harlot and the giant. It is probably the same event as the coming of the *Veltro*. Dante is to repeat her words "to those that live the life which is a running to death," and not to conceal what he has seen of the tree. Apparently (*Purg.* xxxiii. 58-72) he is to make manifest that the Empire is of divine origin, and to recognise that the precept given by God to our first parents corresponds now with the duty and obedience man owes to the Empire. The law under which Adam lived was the prohibition to eat of the tree; the law under which his descendants, the commonwealth of the human race, live is the Empire. As Parodi puts it, it is not a new sense superimposed upon the first; "it is simply the same single meaning, the historical circumstances alone appearing changed." The sin of Adam is repeated when the Empire is usurped of its rights or its authority attacked, for God created it holy for the purpose of leading man to temporal felicity—the goal, here and now, of the human race.[36]

LETHE AND EUNOË.—At noon they come to where the rivers of Lethe and Eunoë issue from one mystical fountain, the fountain of the grace of God. Here Beatrice refers Dante to Matelda, who leads him and Statius to drink of Eunoë, which quickens dead virtue and restores memory of every good deed in those who have first been bathed in Lethe, which

takes away the memory of sin. According to St. Thomas Aquinas (*Summa*, iii. 89, 5), works done in charity, although in a sense dead through sin, are brought to life through penance. Through repentance they regain their efficacy of leading him who did them into eternal life. Therefore Dante writes: "I returned from the most holy stream, remade even as young trees renewed with new foliage, pure and disposed to ascend to the stars."

4. *The "Paradiso"*

STRUCTURE.—Dante's Paradise consists of the nine moving heavens, according to Ptolemaic astronomy, crowned by the tenth motionless and divinest Empyrean heaven, "according to what Holy Church teacheth, who cannot lie" (*Conv.* ii. 3, 4). The nine moving spheres revolve round our globe, the fixed centre of the Universe, each of the lower eight being enclosed in the sphere above itself. The seven lowest are the heavens of the planets: the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. The eighth or stellar heaven, the sphere of the Fixed Stars or Firmament, is the highest visible region of the celestial world, and to some extent corresponds to the Earthly Paradise in the lower realms. Above this visible firmament, the ninth or Crystalline heaven, the *Primum Mobile*, directs with its movements the daily revolution of all the others. In it nature starts; from it proceed time and motion, with all celestial influence for the government of the world (*Par.* xxvii. 106-120). It is "the royal mantle of all the volumes of the world, which is most fervent and most living in God's breath, and in His ways" (*Par.* xxiii. 112-114); and it communicates in different degrees some participation in this quickening breath

of God to the other sphere which it encloses, and to all the Universe. It moves swiftest of all, from the fervent desire of all its parts to be united to the Empyrean, the spaceless and motionless ocean of Divine love, where God beatifies the saints and Angels in the vision of His Essence. This Empyrean is the true intellectual Paradise, for which the lower heavens are merely sensible preparations. "This is the sovereign edifice of the world, in which all the world is included, and outside of which is nothing; and it is not in space, but was formed only in the First Mind" (*Conv.* ii. 4); "The heaven that is pure light; light intellectual full of love, love of true good full of joy, joy that transcendeth every sweetness" (*Par.* xxx. 39-42).

GRADATIONS.—Each of the nine lower spheres represents a step higher in knowledge, in love, in blessedness, until in the true Paradise the soul attains to perfect knowledge, supreme love, and infinite blessedness in union with the First Cause, in the Beatific Vision of the Divine Essence. The ascent is marked by the increased loveliness of Beatrice, as she guides Dante upwards from heaven to heaven; it is marked, too, by gradations in the brilliancy of the blessed spirits themselves, by their ever increasing ardour of charity towards the poet, and by the growing spirituality of the matters discussed in each sphere—veil after veil being drawn aside from the mysteries of the Divine treasure-house.

THE SAINTS.—"To show forth the glory of beatitude in those souls," says the letter to Can Grande, "from them, as from those who see all truth, many things will be sought which have great utility and delight" (*Epist.* x. 33). All the saints without exception have their home and glorious seats with

Mary and the Angels in that Empyrean heaven, where they are finally seen as glorified spirit likenesses of what they were on earth. But into each preparatory sphere, excepting the ninth, these citizens of eternal life descend to meet Dante as, with Beatrice, he approaches the gates of the celestial city —like the noble soul returning home to God in the fourth and last part of life:

"And even as its citizens come forth to meet him who returns from a long journey, before he enters the gate of the city, so to the noble soul come forth, as is fitting, those citizens of eternal life. And thus they do because of her good works and contemplations; for, being now rendered to God and abstracted from worldly things and thoughts, she seems to see those whom she believes to be with God" (*Conv.* iv. 28).

In all these spheres, excepting the first, and to some extent the second, the spirits of the blessed appear clothed in dazzling light, which hides their proper semblances from Dante's gaze, making them appear as brilliant stars or flaming splendours. In the tenth Heaven of Heavens he is supernaturally illumined, and enabled thereby to behold them in their glorified spirit forms "with countenance unveiled" (*Par.* xxii. 60, xxx. 96, xxxi. 49).

In the three lower heavens, to which earth's shadow was supposed to extend (*Par.* ix. 118, 119), appear the souls whose lives were marred by inconstancy in their vows, who were moved by vain glory, or yielded to sensual love. They descend into these lower spheres to give Dante a sensible sign of the lesser degree of the perfection of their beatitude in the Empyrean. *Domus est una, sed diversitas est ibi mansionum*; "The house is one, but there is a

diversity of mansions there." There are different mansions of beatitude in God's house, proceeding from inequality in the soul's capacity of the Divine Charity; but in that house all are fulfilled with the Vision of the Divine Essence, and each perfectly beatified according to his own capacity of love and knowledge. In the spheres of the four higher planets appear the souls of great teachers and doctors, of Jewish warriors and Christian knights, of just rulers, of ascetic monks and hermits; they appear as types of lives perfected in action or in contemplation, as a sign of the different ways in which perfection may be reached on earth and beatitude attained in Paradise. These successive manifestations in the seven spheres of the planets obviate what might otherwise have proved the monotony of a single heaven, and suggest that, although each soul partakes supremely according to its individual capacity of the Beatific Vision, which is essentially one and the same in all, yet there are not only grades but subtle differences in the possession of it, in which the life on earth was a factor. In the eighth, the Stellar Heaven, still under sensible figures and allegorical veils, Dante sees "the host of the triumph of Christ, and all the fruit gathered by the circling of these spheres" (*Par.* xxiii. 19-21), representing the Church in which these various modes and degrees of life are brought into unison. In the ninth, the Crystalline, the angelic hierarchies are manifested with imagery symbolical of their office towards God and man, representing the principle of Divine Order, the overruling and disposition of Divine Providence in which the celestial intelligences are the agents and instruments. The Empyrean Heaven depicts the soul *in patria*, with all the capacities of love and knowledge actualised in the fruition of the Ultimate Reality, the supreme and

universal truth which is the object of the understanding, the supreme and universal good which is the object of the will.

THE ANGELS.—Each of the nine moving spheres is assigned to the care of one of the nine angelic orders: Angels, Archangels, Principalities; Powers, Virtues, Dominations; Thrones, Cherubim, Seraphim. And the character of the blessed spirits that appear to Dante in each heaven, and the subjects discussed, seem in almost every case to correspond more or less closely with the functions assigned by mystical theologians, especially Dionysius, St. Gregory and St. Bernard, to the special angelic order which presides over the sphere in question. There are two fundamental principles in the life of the soul: nature and grace. The one is represented in the *Paradiso* by the astronomical order of the heavens and their influence upon individual disposition, furnishing man with a natural aptitude for the moral and intellectual virtues; the other by the bounty of Divine Grace, which reveals itself in the perfecting of the natural and the infusion of the supernatural virtues, whereby souls become assimilated to the angelic orders.[37] It is through these Angels (the name is applied generally to all, as well as to the lowest order) that God disposes the visible world; in the hands of the celestial intelligences the heavens are as hammers, to stamp the Divine ideas upon material creation and carry out the Divine plan in the government of the Universe (*cf. Par.* ii. 127-129). And, by means of the influence of the stars, these Angels have impressed certain men with their own characteristics; perhaps to fill up the vacant places in their ranks left by the fall of Lucifer's followers, certainly to co-operate on earth in their work. Dante himself was born beneath the constellation of the

Gemini, the glorious stars impregnated with the virtue of the Cherubim who rule the eighth sphere (*Par.* xxii. 112-123). The Cherubim represent the Divine Wisdom; their name signifies plenitude of knowledge. According to St. Bernard, they "draw from the very fountain of wisdom, the mouth of the Most High, and pour out the streams of knowledge upon all His citizens." Their special prerogatives are fullness of Divine light, and contemplation of the beauty of the Divine order of things; they see most into the profound mysteries of the hidden things of God, and spread the knowledge of Him upon all beneath them. By their inspiration Dante co-operated in this cherubical work by writing the *Divina Commedia*. The Seraphim especially represent the Divine Love. No soul appears in the ninth heaven which they guide and in which the angelic hierarchies are manifested; Beatrice is the sole interpreter between the poet and the Angels, as she had been the revealer to him on earth of Love's "possible divinities and celestial prophecies."

TIME IN PARADISE.—The action of the *Paradiso* begins at noon, immediately after Dante's return from Eunoë; that is, noon on Wednesday in Easter week in the Earthly Paradise and (the following) midnight at Jerusalem (*Par.* i. 37-45). The time-references in this third Cantica are rather doubtful (*Par.* xxii. 151-153, xxvii. 77-87), but it seems probable that Dante takes twenty-four hours to ascend through the nine material heavens to the Empyrean, which is beyond time and space, where "the natural law in nought is relevant" (*Par.* xxx. 123). When Dante woke from his "mighty trance" to the "sound of the importunate earth," it was perhaps about dawn on the morning of Friday in Easter week in our world, thus completing the seven days of his

ecstatic pilgrimage, which had begun at about the same hour on Good Friday.

CANTO I.—In a lyrical prologue of stately music (*Par.* i. 1-36), the poet sings of the glory of the First Mover, and prays for light and inspiration to complete this third most arduous portion of his divine poem. Then, in the noblest season of the year and noblest hour of the day, as Beatrice gazes upon the sun and Dante upon her, his mind becomes godlike, and he ascends to Heaven swifter than lightning. To explain his ascent, Beatrice discourses upon the form and order of God's visible image, the Universe; and on His Eternal Law, the sovereign plan of government existing in the Divine Mind, to which all movements and actions of nature are subject (*ibid.* 103-141). To all created things God has given an instinct, or principle of inclination, by which, in different ways according to their nature, He draws them all back to Himself over the great sea of being. Rational beings alone can resist the order of the Universe and defeat the Eternal Law by sin, which is expiated by temporary or eternal suffering, as Dante has seen in the lower realms; but the purified soul, in accordance with this order and law, inevitably mounts up to find its rest in union with the First Cause. It is the doctrine of spiritual gravitation (derived from St. Augustine), according to which the soul is moved by love as bodies are by their weight, and all things find their rest in order.

THE HEAVEN OF THE MOON.—They are received into the eternal pearl of the Moon (*Par.* ii.); where Beatrice first confutes Dante's former theory concerning the luminous substance of the celestial bodies, and, by explaining how everything in the visible world depends upon the angelic movers of the

sphere, gives a mystical interpretation of a natural phenomenon, on this first step of his ascent to the suprasensible. Within this eternal pearl appear faint but divinely beautiful forms of women; the souls of those who had yielded to violence and broken their solemn vow (*Par.* iii.). Piccarda Donati, sister of Corso and Forese, sets forth the perfection of celestial charity, where all wills are made absolutely one with the will of God, who has awarded different degrees or mansions of beatitude to all His chosen ones:

E la sua volontade è nostra pace,

"And His will is our peace."[38] Transfigured now with ineffable joy, Piccarda tells the pathetic story of her frustrated life on earth; and points out to Dante the Empress Constance, mother of Frederick II., torn, like her, from the convent's shelter. Beatrice explains to the poet the place of all the saints in the Empyrean—the "heaven of humility where Mary is," as Dante had sung long before of Beatrice herself in the *Vita Nuova*—and the reason of this temporary apparition in the moon (*Par.* iv.). The other questions solved in this sphere are all connected with Free Will. Rectitude of will is necessary for the gaining of Paradise, and nothing whatever can take away that freedom of the will. "As regards the proper act of the will, no violence can be done to the will"; and, since Piccarda and Constance yielded through fear of greater evil, they fell voluntarily from the state of perfection to which they were called. Freedom of the will is God's greatest gift to man (*Par.* v. 19-24); hence the sanctity of an accepted vow, wherein this supreme gift is offered to God as victim, although Holy Church has power to commute, save, apparently, in the case of solemn vows of perpetual chastity. It will be observed that this heaven is

moved by the Angels, who are severally assigned to individuals as guardians, and who are the bearers of tidings of God's bounty to men; and, corresponding to this, the questions solved relate to the salvation and guidance of individual souls, and to the great gift of liberty, whereby God's bounty is specially shown.

THE HEAVEN OF MERCURY.—In the second sphere, the heaven of Mercury, appear the souls of those who did great things for humanity or for special nations, but who were actuated by mixed motives; personal ambition, desire of fame and honour, made "the rays of true love mount upwards less vividly" (*Par.* vi. 117); and they have thus the next lowest mansion of beatitude to the spirits that appeared in the inconstant Moon. The Emperor Justinian recites the proud history of the Roman Eagle, and shows how Divine Providence established the sway of the Roman people over all the earth, made the Eagle the instrument of the Atonement offered by Christ for all mankind, the avenger of His death, the protector of His Church. As the monarch who reformed and codified Roman Law, of which he is for Dante the personification, and who restored Italy to the Empire (the work which the *Veltro* is to renew under altered conditions of Christendom), Justinian lifts the imperial ideal far above the factious politics of the Middle Ages, condemning Guelfs and Ghibellines alike as traitors and sowers of discord. Here, too, is Romeo of Villanova, who did in a lesser degree for Provence what Justinian did for the Empire, thus appearing with him in the sphere that is moved by the Archangels, whose function is to guide and protect particular nations. The figure of Romeo—unjustly accused of corrupt practices in office, supporting with magnanimous heart the poverty and

humiliations of voluntary exile—is perhaps an unconscious portrait of Dante himself. Even as the Archangels announce messages of special import and sacredness, as Gabriel did to Mary, so Beatrice explains to Dante the mystery of man's redemption by the Incarnation and Crucifixion, the supremest work at once of Divine Justice and Divine Mercy (*Par.* vii.), and touches somewhat upon the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body.

THE HEAVEN OF VENUS.—The third heaven, the sphere of Venus, is moved by the celestial Principalities, whose office is to influence earthly rulers to imitate the principality of God, by uniting love with their lordship. They are those, according to St. Bernard, "by whose management and wisdom all principality on earth is set up, ruled, limited, transferred, diminished, and changed." Into this sphere descend the souls of purified lovers, brilliant lights moving circle-wise and hidden in the rays of their own joy. Carlo Martello, son of Charles II. of Naples, and son-in-law of Rudolph of Hapsburg, who, by reason of his marriage with Clemenza, might have healed the feuds of Guelfs and Ghibellines, pictures the realms over which he should have ruled, denounces the misgovernment of his own house, and explains the influence of the celestial bodies for the constitution of society and the government of states (*Par.* viii.). Cunizza da Romano, the famous sister of Ezzelino, rebukes the anarchy of the March of Treviso; a "modern child of Venus," she here appears as the type of a perfect penitent (*Par.* ix.). Like her, Folco of Marseilles, poet then prelate, but here recorded only as troubadour, remembers the love sins of his youth, not with sorrow, but with gratitude to the Divine Mercy and wonder at the mysteries of

Providence. Rahab of Jericho, the highest spirit of this sphere, is a type of the Church, saved by Christ's blood from the ruin of the world; and, with a fine thrust at the loveless avarice of the Pope and his cardinals, Dante passes with Beatrice beyond the shadow of the earth.

THE HEAVEN OF THE SUN.—To mark this higher grade of bliss and knowledge, Dante pauses on his entrance into the fourth sphere, the heaven of the Sun, to sing again of the Creation, the work of the Blessed Trinity, and the order of the Universe, the visible expression of the perfection of Divine art (*Par.* x. 1-21). The Sun is ruled by the celestial Powers, the angelic order that represents the Divine majesty and power, combats the powers of darkness, and stays diseases. Here, in two garlands of celestial lights surrounding Dante and Beatrice, appear the glorious souls of twenty-four teachers and doctors, who illuminated the world by example and doctrine; the twofold work of co-operation with the celestial Powers, which is seen in its supereminent degree in the lives of St. Francis and St. Dominic, the champions who led the armies of Christ against the powers of darkness and healed the spiritual diseases of the Christian world. St. Thomas Aquinas, the great light of the Dominicans, after naming the other eleven spirits of his circle (Albertus Magnus, Gratian, Peter Lombard, Solomon, Dionysius, Orosius, Boëthius, Isidore, Bede, Richard of St. Victor, and Siger), sings the glorious panegyric of St. Francis, the seraphic bridegroom of Poverty, laments the backsliding of the Dominicans (*Par.* xi.). St. Bonaventura, once minister-general of the Franciscans, extols the marvellous life of St. Dominic, the cherubical lover of Faith, the great paladin in Holy Church's victorious battle where St. Francis

bore the standard of the Crucified (*Par.* xii.). Lamenting the degenerate state of the Franciscans, he names the eleven spirits that accompany him; two of the followers of St. Francis, Illuminato and Agostino; Hugh of St. Victor; Peter Comestor, Peter of Spain (the logician whose elevation to the papacy as John XXI. may be ignored in Paradise), Nathan, Chrysostom, St. Anselm, Aelius Donatus (the Latin grammarian), Rabanus Maurus, and the Calabrian abbot Joachim. Lovers of poverty, rebukers of corruption, historians, mystics, theologians, writers of humble text-books are here associated in the same glory, as servants of truth in the same warfare against the powers of darkness. They illustrate what St. Bonaventura calls the broadness of the illuminative way. Each group closes with a spirit whose orthodoxy had been at least questioned. Siger of Brabant, the champion of Averroism at the university of Paris, had "syllogised invidious truths," and met with a violent death at the Papal Court at Orvieto about 1284. Joachim of Flora, "endowed with prophetic spirit," had foretold the advent of the epoch of the Holy Ghost, in which the Everlasting Gospel, the spiritual interpretation of the Gospel of Christ, would leave no place for disciplinary institutions; his later followers among the Franciscans had been condemned at the Council of Anagni in 1256.

St. Thomas further explains to Dante the grades of perfection in God's creatures, from the Angels downwards; whereby His Divine light is more or less imperfectly reflected, and the likeness of the Divine ideas more or less imperfectly expressed—perfectly only when the Trinity creates immediately, as in the case of Adam and the humanity of Christ (*Par.* xiii.). Solomon, whose peerless wisdom St. Thomas had

explained as “royal prudence,” instructs Dante concerning the splendour of the body after the resurrection, when human personality will be completed and the perfection of beatitude fulfilled (*Par.* xiv.). In a mysteriously beautiful apparition of what seems to be another garland of spirits in the Sun, this vision of the fourth heaven closes; and Beatrice and her lover are “translated to more lofty salvation” in the glowing red of Mars.

THE HEAVEN OF MARS.—The fifth heaven, the sphere of Mars, is ruled by the angelic Virtues. This is the order which images the Divine strength and fortitude; their name, according to Dionysius, signifies “a certain valiant and unconquerable virility.” According to St. Bernard, they are those “by whose command or work signs and prodigies are wrought among the elements, for the admonition of mortals,” and it is through them that the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in heaven as foretold in the Gospel.[39] Therefore, in Mars, Dante beholds a great image of the Crucified, blood-red, formed by stars which are the souls of the warrior saints, whom the Virtues impressed at their birth with the influence of the planet (*Par.* xvii. 76-78), to be strongly and manfully valiant, and to do notable things on earth (*ibid.* 92, 93), even as the Virtues, according to St. Bernard, work signs and prodigies among the elements.

Cacciaguida passes from the right arm of the Cross to greet his descendant, like Anchises to Aeneas in Elysium. In his long discourse with the poet (*Par.* xv. and xvi.) we dimly discern a splendidly ideal picture of a free Italian commune of the twelfth century, before what Dante regards as the corrupting influence of wealth and illegitimate extension of its

boundaries had fallen upon it, and before the hostility of the Church to the Empire, with the resulting confusion of persons in the city, had involved the Florentines in the feuds of Guelfs and Ghibellines. Then, having bitterly lamented the decay of the old Florentine families and the corruption of their successors, Cacciaguida co-operates with the Virtues by inspiring Dante with endurance and fortitude to suffer unjust exile and perform his life's work (*Par.* xvii.). In the famous and most noble lines, to which reference has already been made in touching upon this epoch of Dante's life, Cacciaguida foretells the poet's banishment, the calumnies of his enemies, his sufferings in exile, his forming a party to himself, the future greatness of Can Grande, Dante's own certainty of eternal fame. And let him be no timid friend to truth, but make manifest his whole vision, and especially assail corruption in highest places (*cf. Mon.* iii. 1). It is Dante's apologia for his own life, first as citizen, then as poet. The keynote of the closing years of his life is struck at the opening of Canto xviii.: "And that Lady who was leading me to God said: 'Change thy thought; think that I am near to Him who unburdens every wrong.'" Gazing upon her, his affection "was free from every other desire." Then, with a charge of celestial chivalry across the sky, this vision of warriors closes; Joshua and Judas Maccabaeus, Charlemagne and Orlando, William of Orange still with Renoardo, Godfrey de Bouillon and Robert Guiscard, flash through the Cross, and are rejoined by Cacciaguida in their motion and their song.

THE HEAVEN OF JUPITER.—The silvery white sphere of Jupiter, the sixth heaven, is ruled by the Dominations, the angelic order which images the archetypal dominion in God as the source of true

dominion. “We must consider in the Dominations,” writes St. Bernard, “how great is the majesty of the Lord, at whose bidding empire is established, and of whose empire universality and eternity are the bounds.” This, then, is the sphere of ideal government, the heaven of the planet that effectuates justice upon earth (*Par.* xviii. 115-117). The souls of faithful and just rulers appear as golden lights, singing and flying like celestial birds. They first form the text, *Diligite iustitiam que iudicatis terram*, “Love justice, you that are the judges of the earth” (*Wisdom*, i. 1, Vulgate), tracing successively the letters until they rest in the final golden M, the initial letter of Monarchy or Empire, under which alone can justice be paramount on earth, and then, with further transformations, become the celestial Eagle (*Par.* xviii. 100-114). This is the “sign which made the Romans reverend in the world” (xix. 101); no emblem of material conquest, but the image of the sempiternal justice of the Primal Will, the type of dominion on earth ordained by God. It is the allegorical representation of the doctrines of the *Monarchia*. And, since justice is obscured and good government rendered abortive by the simony of the pastors of the Church, which leads them to oppose the Empire, Dante has a bitter word in season for the reigning pontiff, John XXII (*Par.* xviii. 130-136).

In the perfect concord of its component spirits the Eagle, speaking with one voice, discourses upon the immutability and absolute justice of the Divine Will, which is inscrutable and incomprehensible to mortals (*Par.* xix.). Having rebuked the wickedness of all the kings and princes then reigning, from the Emperor-elect (Albert of Austria in 1300) to the King of Cyprus, it sets forth in contrast to them the example of just and righteous monarchs and rulers of olden

time, the six noblest of whom now form its eye—David, Trajan, Hezekiah, Constantine, the Norman William II. of Sicily, and Rhipeus the Trojan (*Par.* xx.). Three exquisite lines (73-75)—introduced as a mere image—render the flight and song of the skylark with a beauty and fidelity to nature which even Shelley was not to surpass. The salvation of Trajan, through the prayers of St. Gregory, and Rhipeus, by internal inspiration concerning the Redeemer to come, unveils yet more wondrous mysteries in the treasury of Divine Justice, which suffers itself to be overcome by hope and love. Rhipeus, the justest among the Trojans and the strictest observer of right (Virgil, *Aen.* ii. 426, 427; *cf.* Acts x. 35), by his presence solves Dante's doubt concerning the fate of the just heathen who die without baptism, and indicates that the race which gave the ancestors to the Roman people was not without Divine light.

HEAVEN OF SATURN.—The last of the seven heavens of the planets is the sphere of Saturn, over which the Thrones preside. According to Dionysius, the Thrones are associated with steadfastness, supermundane tendency towards and reception of the Divine. They represent, according to St. Bernard, supreme tranquillity, most calm serenity, peace which surpasses all understanding; and upon them God sits as judge (*cf. Par.* ix. 61, 62). In Saturn appear the contemplative saints, and the monks who kept firm and steadfast in the cloister. They pass up and down the celestial Ladder of Contemplation (*Par.* xxi. and xxii.), the stairway by which the soul mystically ascends to the consideration of the impenetrable mysteries of God which transcend all reason. In this high stage of progress towards the suprasensible Beatrice does not smile, for Dante's

human intellect could not yet sustain it, and the sweet symphonies of Paradise are silent. St. Peter Damian discourses upon the impenetrable mysteries of Divine predestination, and rebukes the vicious and luxurious lives of the great prelate and cardinals. St. Benedict describes the foundation of his own great order, and laments the shameless corruption of contemporary Benedictines. Thus in this, and, above all, in the cry like thunder which bursts from the contemplatives at the conclusion of Peter Damian's words, threatening the Divine vengeance which is to fall upon the corrupt pastors of the Church, the saints of the seventh sphere unite themselves with the celestial Thrones, whose office is purification, and who are the mirrors of the terrible judgments of God.

THE GEMINI.—At Beatrice's bidding, Dante follows the contemplatives up the celestial ladder, entering the Firmament at the sign of the Gemini or Twins, beneath which he was born (*Par.* xxii. 112-123). To his natal stars, and thus to the Cherubim with whose virtue they are animated, he appeals for power to complete the work for which they have inspired him. In a momentary vision, with the capacity of his inward soul enlarged, he looks down upon the whole Universe, and estimates aright the relative value of all things in heaven and earth, now that he is prepared to witness the true glories of Paradise.

THE STELLAR HEAVEN.—The Firmament or stellar heaven, the eighth sphere, is ruled by the Cherubim, who represent the Divine Wisdom; it is the celestial counterpart of the Garden of Eden. Here the fruit of man's redemption is mystically shown in a vision of the triumph of Christ, the new Adam, surrounded by myriads of shining lights which draw their light from Him and represent the souls of the blessed whom He

has sanctified (*Par.* xxiii.). After Christ has ascended from this celestial garden, where Mary is the rose and the Apostles the lilies, the Archangel Gabriel descends with ineffable melody and attends upon the new Eve, "the living garden of delight, wherein the condemnation was annulled and the tree of life planted,"[40] in her Assumption.

The four spheres of the higher planets had set forth a celestial realisation of the four cardinal virtues, Prudence, Fortitude, Justice, and Temperance, with perfect man according to the capacity of human nature; now, in this sphere of the Cherubim whose name indicates plenitude of the knowledge of God, Dante is examined upon the three theological virtues, which have God for their object as He transcends the knowledge of our reason, and which put man on the way to supernatural happiness. "If we would enter Paradise and the fruition of Truth," writes St. Bonaventura, "the image of our mind must be clothed with the three theological virtues, whereby the mind is purified, illumined, and rendered perfect, and thus the image is reformed and made fit for the Jerusalem which is above." Dante's answers to St. Peter upon Faith (*Par.* xxiv.), to St. James upon Hope (*Par.* xxv.), to St. John upon Charity (*Par.* xxvi.), contain the essence of the devout wisdom of the schoolmen upon those three divine gifts, whereby man participates in the Deity, and "we ascend to philosophise in that celestial Athens, where Stoics and Peripatetics and Epicureans, by the art of the eternal Truth, harmoniously concur in one will" (*Conv.* iii. 14). For the object of Faith and Love alike Dante, even in Paradise, can appeal to the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle (*Par.* xxiv. 130-132, xxvi. 37-39); and all the celestial music cannot quite drown the poet's sigh for that fair Florentine

sheepfold, from which he is still barred out, though Hell and Heaven have opened for him their eternal gates (*Par.* xxv. 1-12). Within a fourth light the soul of Adam appears, to instruct Dante upon the proper cause of his fall and upon his life in the Earthly Paradise, now that the poet has seen the triumph and ascent of the new Adam. Adam, in whom was directly infused all the light lawful to human nature to have (*Par.* xiii. 43), is the last soul that appears to Dante until the consummation of the vision in the Empyrean. On the close of his discourse, a hymn of glory to the Blessed Trinity resounds through Paradise, a laugh of the Universe in joy of the mystery of Redemption (*Par.* xxvii. 1-9). Then, while all Heaven blushes and there is a celestial eclipse as at the Crucifixion, St. Peter utters a terrible denunciation of the scandals and corruption in the Papacy and the Church, wherein Dante, as in the Epistle to the Italian Cardinals, takes his stand as the Jeremiah of Roman Catholicity.

THE NINTH HEAVEN.—When the saints have returned to their places in the Empyrean, Dante, after a last look to earth, passes up with his lady into the ninth sphere, the Crystalline heaven. Beatrice discourses upon the order of the heavens and the want of government upon earth, prophesying that, before very long, deliverance and reformation will come, even as St. Peter had announced in the sphere below. Here, where nature begins, Dante has a preparatory manifestation of the nine angelic orders, the ministers of Divine Providence, who ordain and dispose all things by moving the spheres. They appear as nine circles of flame, revolving round an atomic Point of surpassing brilliancy, which symbolises the supreme unity of God, the poet again having recourse to the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle:

"From that Point depends heaven and all nature" (*Par.* xxviii. 41, 42). Each angelic circle is swifter and more brilliant as it is nearer to the centre, each hierarchy striving after the utmost possible assimilation to God and union with Him. Swiftest and brightest of all are the Seraphim, who move this ninth sphere; the angelic order that, representing the Divine Love, loves most and knows most. "In the Angels," says Colet on Dionysius, "an intensity of knowledge is love; a less intense love is knowledge." The relation of the Seraphim to the Cherubim is that of fire to light; their special office is perfecting, as that of the Cherubim is illumination. All the orders contemplate God, and manifest Him to creatures to draw them to Him. Receiving from God the Divine light and love that makes them like to Him, the higher orders reflect this to the lower, like mirrors reflecting the Divine rays; and these lower orders reflect it to men, so rendering all things, as far as possible to each nature, like to God and in union with Him. After distinguishing between the different orders according to Dionysius, Beatrice speaks of their creation as especially illustrating the Divine Love, which the Seraphim represent (*Par.* xxix.), and their place in the order of the Universe, the fall of the rebellious, the reward of the faithful, and their immeasurable number. Each Angel belongs to a different species, and each differs from every other in its reception of Divine light and love.

THE EMPYREAN.—Dante and Beatrice now issue forth of the last material sphere into the Empyrean, the true Paradise of vision, comprehension, and fruition, where man's will is set at rest in union with universal Good, and his intellect in the possession of universal Truth. In preparation for this Divine union, Dante is momentarily blinded by the Divine light

which overpowers him with its radiance—a blindness followed by a new celestial sight and new faculties for comprehending the essence of spiritual things. The first empyreal vision is still a foreshadowing preface: a river of light, the stream which makes the city of God joyful, the wondrous flowers of celestial spring, the living sparks of angelic fire. This river of Divine grace is the fountain of wisdom from which, according to Bernard, the Cherubim drink, to pour out the streams of knowledge upon all God's citizens; and of this fountain Dante, too, drinks with his eyes, that he may more fully see the vision of God which he has to relate, to diffuse His knowledge upon earth as the Cherubim do from Heaven. By the light of glory his mind is rendered capable of seeing those spiritual things which the blessed behold with immediate intuition, and of ultimate union with the Divine Essence (*Par.* xxx. 100-102). The river seems to change to a circular ocean of light; the saints and Angels appear in their true forms, all united in the sempiternal Rose of Paradise. Even at this height of ecstatic alienation from terrestrial things, Dante can turn in thought to Pope and Emperor who should be leading men to beatitude; a throne is prepared for Henry in this convent of white stoles, while the hell of the simoniacs is gaping for Boniface and Clement.

Eternity, as defined by Boëthius, is "the complete and perfect simultaneous possession of unlimited life"; and Dante is one who has come from time to the eternal: *a l'etterno dal tempo era venuto* (*Par.* xxxi. 38).[41] Beatrice has returned to her throne, her allegorical mission ended; and for this supreme revelation of the Divine beauty in the mystical Rose, where there is no medium to impede the poet's sight of the Divine light (for his is now that of a separated

spirit), but blessed souls and flying Angels are absorbed in love and vision, St. Bernard completes her work, even as that of Virgil had been completed by Matelda in the Earthly Paradise. St. Bernard may represent the glorified contemplative life in our heavenly country, as Matelda may symbolise the glorified active life in the state of restored Eden; or, perhaps better, if Matelda is taken as the love rightly ordered to which the *Purgatorio* leads, Bernard represents the loving contemplation or contemplative love, attained by the mystic in brief moments here and now, in which the eternal and unchanging life of the soul in the hereafter consists. In an exquisite lyrical inter-breathing Dante addresses Beatrice for the last time, thanking her for having led him from servitude to liberty, praying to her for final perseverance (*Par.* xxxi. 79-90). Under the guidance of Bernard, he prepares himself for the vision of the Divine Essence, by disciplining his spiritual sight in contemplation of the glory of the saints and of the ineffable beauty of Mary, surrounded by her Angels, and clothed, as Bernard himself puts it elsewhere, in the Sun by whose fire the prophet's lips were cleansed and the Cherubim kindled with love.

Throughout the Rose two descending lines divide the redeemed of the old law from the redeemed under the new. The one line passes down from Mary's throne, composed of holy women, ancestresses of Christ or types of His Church: Eve, Rachel, Sarah, Rebecca, Judith, Ruth (*Par.* xxxii.). With Rachel, in the third row, Beatrice is seated. The opposite line passes down from the seat of the Baptist, Christ's precursor; and begins with St. Francis, His closest and most perfect imitator, St. Benedict (in the third row opposite to Rachel and Beatrice), St. Augustine. The lower sections of each

half of the Rose are occupied by the little children who died before attaining use of reason; and who yet have different degrees of bliss, according to the inscrutable mysteries of predestination and Divine Justice, which willed to give grace differently to each. Another vision of Mary, the supreme of created things, "the face that is most like to Christ, whose beauty alone can dispose thee to see Christ" (*Par.* xxxii. 85-87), is the prelude to the vision of the Deity. Before her hovers her chosen knight, Gabriel, the "strength of God," the pattern of celestial chivalry, *leggiadria*. Round her are Adam and St. Peter, Moses and St. John the Divine; opposite the two latter are St. Anne and St. Lucy. Thus the three Ladies who took pity upon Dante in the dark wood, when the mystical journey opened, have been seen in their glory at its close.

MARY AND THE DIVINE ESSENCE.—And the poet turns finally to the Primal Love, by Mary's grace and Bernard's intercession, in the lyrical prayer that opens the wonderful closing canto of the *Commedia*:

Vergine madre, figlia del tuo figlio,

"Virgin Mother, daughter of thy Son." Setting forth her predestination from eternity to bring the Redeemer into the world, her office of love and hope to Heaven and earth, her infinite excellence and dignity, her power and never-failing love, St. Bernard implores of her grace for Dante to rise to the vision of the Divine Essence now, in ecstatic contemplation, and then for his final perseverance that, on his return to earth, her loving protection may strengthen him against the assaults of passion, until he rejoice once more in the Beatific Vision for all eternity. Human love becomes one with the divine where Beatrice—

joined with him now in the union of fruition—is named for the last time in the poem as he draws near to his mystical goal.

In answer to Mary's intercession, an anticipation is granted to Dante of the vision wherein the last and perfect beatitude of man consists. The supreme experience of the soul, recognised by the great mystics from Plotinus and Augustine to Richard of St. Victor and Bonaventura, is rendered into unsurpassable poetry with the impassioned conviction that it has been the writer's own. All ardour of desire dies away. Entering into the Divine light, uniting his intellectual gaze with the Divine Essence, he actualises all potentialities of spiritual vision therein. In the Divine light, he beholds all nature, all Being scattered in leaves throughout the Universe here united by love into one volume; the vision of the First Cause which satisfies the understanding becomes that of the Supreme Goodness which fulfils the will; and this First Cause, this Supreme Goodness, itself remaining unchanged, becomes revealed to the poet's ever strengthening intuition as the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, in which the Person of the Word took Human Nature.

A l'alta fantasia qui mancò possa;

"Here power failed the lofty phantasy"—the inspired imagination of the prophet; but it left the desire and will assimilated in perfect harmony with the will of God—the Divine will revealed as universal, all-pervading, and all-moving love, "the love that moves the sun and the other stars":

L'AMOR CHE MOVE IL SOLE E L'ALTRE STELLE.

FOOTNOTES:

[28] "Della insufficienza del titolo è prova ed effetto il pronto e universale accoglimento, che, messo una volta sul frontespizio, trovò l'epiteto *divina*, che al generico *Commedia* diede determinatezza e colore" (P. Rajna, *Il titolo del poema dantesco*, in *Studi danteschi diretti da* M. Barbi, vol. iv.).

[29] For details of structure and scansion, the reader should consult P. E. Guarnerio, *Manuale di versificazione italiana*; G. Federzoni, *Dei versi e dei metri italiani*; F. D'Ovidio, *Versificaizone italiana e arte poetica medioevale*.

[30] *Cf.* G. Livi, *op. cit.*, pp. 26, 27.

[31] Traces of an earlier design have been tentatively found in various places of the first seven cantos, and associated with Boccaccio's story of Dante having begun the poem before his exile and resumed it after the recovery of his manuscript when the guest of Moroello Malaspina. In Boccaccio's commentary upon the opening of *Inf.* viii., Andrea Poggi and Dino Perini are represented as rival claimants for the honor of having recovered the manuscript for Dante.

[32] *Cf. Conv.* ii. 5.

[33] *Cf. Inf.* xxxiii. 79-84 with *Phars.* viii. 827-830.

[34] See Moore's *Time-References*.

[35] *Cf.* Sonnets lx. and lxi. of *The House of Life*.

[36] See in particular Parodi, "L'Albero dell'Impero," in his *Poesia e storia nella Divina Commedia*.

[37] In *Purg.* xxx. 109-117, Dante thus

distinguishes between the *ovra de le rote magne* and the *larghezza di grazie divine* in his own case. St. Gregory the Great, speaking of the correspondence of men with the angelic orders, uses the phrase: *divinae largitatis munere refecti* (*Hom. in Evangelia*, ii. 34).

[38] I venture to retain this reading, although the *testo critico* now gives: *E'n la sua volontade*.

[39] The Vulgate has *virtutes caelorum*, in Matt. xxiv. and Luke xxi., where the English Bible reads "the powers of the heavens."

[40] St. John of Damascus.

[41] Note the scansion of the previous line (37): *Io che al divino da l'umano*. There is no syneresis in *ïo*, no elision of the *e* in *che*; thus emphasising Dante's personal experience, his wonder that it should be vouchsafed to him, and producing the slow movement, the solemn intonation of the line.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL APPENDIX

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The Epistle to Can Grande was first published in 1700, the Eclogues in 1719. The Letters as a whole were edited by Witte in 1827 and by Torri in 1842.

Special editions and studies. (*a*) VITA NUOVA. Critical edition by M. Barbi (Florence, 1907); with notes and commentary by M. Scherillo (Milan, 1911, reprinted with the *Canzoniere*); G. Salvadori, *Sulla vita giovanile di Dante* (Rome, 1906); *Vita Nuova* and *Canzoniere*, text, translation, and notes by P. H. Wicksteed and T. Okey ("Temple Classics"). For the "dolce stil nuovo," V. Rossi, in *Lectura Dantis, Le Opere Minori* (Florence, 1906), and Parodi, *Poesia e storia nella D.C.* A new edition of the *Vita Nuova* is published by K. McKenzie (London, 1923). (*b*) RIME OR CANZONIERE. M. Barbi, *Studi sul Canzoniere di Dante* (Florence, 1915); G. Zonta, *La lirica di Dante* (in *Miscellanea dantesca*, supplement 18-21 of *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, Turin, 1922); E. G. Gardner, *The Lyrical Poetry of Dante* (in preparation). For the tenzone with Forese F. Torraca, *Nuovi studi danteschi* (Naples, 1921), and A. F. Massèra, *Sonetti burleschi e realistici dei primi due secoli* (Bari, 1920); for the tenzone with Dante da Maiano, S. Santangelo, *Dante Alighieri e Dante da Maiano* (in *Bullettino della Società Dantesca Italiana*, N. S., XXVII., 1920); for the canzone of the *Tre donne*, Torraca, *op. cit.*, and Carducci, *Opere* xvi ("Poesia e Storia"). The majority of the *Rime* are translated by Wicksteed in the "Temple Classics" volume cited above. (*c*) CONVIVIO. Translation by W. W. Jackson (Oxford, 1909); translation and commentary by Wicksteed in the "Temple Classics"; Wicksteed, *From Vita Nuova to Paradiso* (Manchester University Press, 1922). (*d*) DE VULGARI ELOQUENTIA. Critical edition by P. Rajna (Florence, 1896); facsimile reproduction of Berlin MS., L. Bertalot, *Il Codice B del "De Vulgari Eloquentia"* (Florence, 1923); studies by F. D'Ovidio, *Versificazione italiana e arte poetica medioevale* (Milan,

1910); translation and commentary by A. G. F. Howell in "Temple Classics Latin Works of Dante"; C. Foligno, *Dante, the Poet* (Brit. Acad. Annual Italian Lecture, 1921). (*e*) MONARCHIA. C. Cipolla, *Il trattato "De Monarchia" di D. A. e l'opuscolo "De potestate regia et papali" di Giovanni da Parigi* (reprinted in *Gli studi danteschi di Carlo Cipolla*, Verona, 1921); F. Ercole, *L'unità politica della nazione italiana e l'Impero nel pensiero di Dante* (in *Archivio storico italiano*, LXXV., Florence, 1917), and *Per la genesi del pensiero politico di Dante* (in *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, LXXII., *Turin*, 1918); E. G. Parodi, *Del concetto dell'Impero in Dante e del suo averroismo* (in *Bull. d. Soc. Dantesca Italiana*, N.S., XXVI., Florence, 1919); A. Solmi, *Il pensiero politico di Dante* (Florence, 1922); C. Foligno, *The Date of the Monarchia* (in Dante, *Essays in Commemoration*, University of London Press, 1921); translation and commentary by P. H. Wicksteed in "Temple Classics Latin Works of Dante." (*f*) EPISTOLAE. P. Toynbee, *Dantis Alagherii Epistolae* (The Letters of Dante, emended text, with introduction, translation, notes, etc., Oxford, 1920); F. Torraca, *Le lettere di Dante* (in *Nuovi studi danteschi*); E. Moore, *The Genuineness of the Dedicatory Epistle to Can Grande* (in *Studies in Dante*, Series III.). (*g*) ECLOGAE. P. H. Wicksteed, *Dante and Giovanni del Virgilio* (London, 1902); G. Albini, *Dantis Eclogae*, etc. (Florence, 1903). (*h*) QUAESTO DE AQUA ET TERRA. Edited and translated by C. L. Shadwell (Oxford, 1909); ed. V. Biagi, with critical dissertation (Modena, 1907); E. Moore, *Studies in Dante*, Series II. (Oxford, 1899); Wicksteed, translation and commentary in "Temple Classics Latin Works of Dante."

E. The "Divina Commedia"

Editions with Notes and Commentaries

[The first three editions of the *Divina Commedia* were printed in 1472, at Foligno, Mantua, and Jesi. They were reprinted, together with the Neapolitan edition of 1477, by Lord Vernon and Panizzi: *Le Prime Quattro Edizioni della Divina Commedia letteralmente ristampate* (London, 1858). The first Venetian edition is dated 1477, the first Florentine 1481. There were about fifteen editions of the *Divina Commedia* published before the end of the fifteenth century. The first Aldine was printed in 1502. The two earliest dated manuscripts, the Landiano (1336) and the Trivulziano (1337), have been published in facsimile: *Il Codice Trivulziano 1080 della D.C.*, with introduction by L. Rocca (Milan, 1921); *Il Codice Landiano* with preface by A. Balsamo and introduction by G. Bertoni (Florence, 1921).]

La Divina Commedia nuovamente commentata da F. Torraca. Milan and Rome, third edition 1915.

La Divina Commedia commentata da G. A. Scartazzini. Seventh edition revised by G. Vandelli, Milan, 1914.

La Divina Commedia con il commento di Tommaso Casini. Sixth edition renovated and augmented by S. A. Barbi. Florence, 1923.

Inferno, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso*, Italian text with English prose translation on opposite pages, maps and notes, three vols., “Temple Classics” (London). *Inferno*, Carlyle’s translation with notes by H. Oelsner; *Purgatorio*, translation and notes by T. Okey; *Paradiso*, translation and notes by P. H. Wicksteed.

Vernon, W. W., *Readings on the Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso*, chiefly based upon the Commentary of

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F. Subsidiary to the "Commedia" and General.

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Croce, B., *La poesia di Dante*. Bari, 1921. (English translation by Douglas Ainslie, London, 1922.)

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Hauvette, H., *Études sur la Divine Comédie*. Paris, 1922.

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Livi, G., *Dante suoi primi cultori sua gente in Bologna* (Bologna, 1918); *Dante e Bologna* (Bologna, 1921).

Moore, E., *Textual Criticism of the Divina Commedia*

(Cambridge, 1889); *Studies in Dante*, four series (Oxford, 1896-1917); *Time-References in the Divina Commedia* (Oxford, 1887).

Parodi, E. G., *Poesia e storia nella Divina Commedia* (Naples, 1921); *Il Fiore e il Detto d'Amore* (edited in appendix to the *Opere di Dante*, Florence, 1922).

Reade, W. H. V., *The Moral System of Dante's Inferno*. Oxford, 1909.

Ricci, C., *La Divina Commedia illustrata nei luoghi e nelle persone* (Edizione del secentenario della morte di Dante). Milan, 1921.

Rocca, L., *Di alcuni commenti della D.C. composti nei primi vent' anni dopo la morte di Dante*. Florence, 1891.

Santangelo, S., *Dante e i trovatori provenzali*. Catania, 1922.

Torraca, F., *Studi danteschi* (Naples, 1912); *Nuovi studi danteschi* (Naples, 1921).

Toynbee, P., *Dante Studies and Researches* (London, 1902); *Dante in English Literature from Chaucer to Cary* (two vols., London, 1909); *Dante Studies* (London, 1921).

Wicksteed, P. H., *Dante and Aquinas* (London, 1913); *From Vita Nuova to Paradiso*, two essays on the vital relations between Dante's successive works (Manchester University Press, 1922).

Witte, K., *Essays on Dante*: selected, translated and edited, with introduction, notes, and appendices, by C. M. Lawrence and P. H. Wicksteed. London, 1898.

Besides Boccaccio and Benvenuto da Imola, the modern editions of the other early commentators, Graziolo de' Bambaglioli (Udine, 1892), Jacopo della

Lana (Bologna, 1866, etc.), the Ottimo (Pisa, 1827-29), Pietro Alighieri (Florence, 1845), Francesco da Buti (Pisa, 1858-62), are worth consulting. Extracts, with notably better texts, are given by Biagi in *La D.C. nella figurazione artistica e nel secolare commento*.

For the question of the Letter of Frate Ilario, see P. Rajna, *Testo della lettera di frate Ilario e osservazioni sul suo valore storico*, in *Dante e la Lunigiana* (Milan, 1909). On the date of composition of the *Divina Commedia*, *cf.* Parodi, *Poesia e storia nella D.C.*; Ercole, *Le tre fasi del pensiero politico di Dante*, in the *Miscellanea dantesca* of the *Gior. stor. della lett. ital.*, and D'Ovidio in the *Nuova Antologia*, March, 1923. In addition to the works already cited, published for the sexcentenary of 1921, may be particularly mentioned the sumptuous volume *Dante e Siena* (Siena, 1921), and *Dante, la Vita, le Opere, le grandi città dantesche, Dante e l'Europa* (Milan, 1921).

The *Giornale Dantesco*, the *Bullettino della Società Dantesca Italiana*, and *Studi danteschi diretti da* Michele Barbi (Florence) are invaluable periodical publications.

Of the numerous English translations of the *Divina Commedia*, besides those of Cary and Longfellow, may be mentioned that of C. E. Norton in prose; Haselfoot and M. B. Anderson in *terza rima*; G. Musgrave of the *Inferno* in Spenserian stanzas, and H. J. Hooper in amphiambics; C. L. Shadwell of the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* in the metre used by Andrew Marvell in his Horatian "Ode to Cromwell." The *terza rima* is a measure not easily adapted to English speech. First introduced into English by Chaucer, with the modifications which the difference of our prosody from the Italian requires, in two fragments

of *A Compleint to his Lady* (Minor Poems vi. in Skeat's *Student's Chaucer*), it was used by Wyatt and Surrey, by Sir Philip Sidney and other Elizabethans, and even once by Milton (in his paraphrase of Psalm ii.). Among the few notable English poems in *terza rima* written during the nineteenth century, Shelley's unfinished *Triumph of Life* stands supreme, and in it we may in very truth:

> Behold a wonder worthy of the rhyme
>
> Of him who from the lowest depths of hell,
> Through every paradise and through all glory,
> Love led serene, and who returned to tell
>
> The words of hate and awe; the wondrous story
> How all things are transfigured except Love.

APPENDIX

I. DIAGRAM OF THE UNIVERSE

II. CLOCK OF THE DIVINE COMEDY

III. TABLE OF HELL

IV. TABLE OF PURGATORY

V. TABLE OF PARADISE

VI. THE MYSTIC ROSE OF PARADISE

VII. PRINCIPAL SOVEREIGNS CONTEMPORARY WITH DANTE

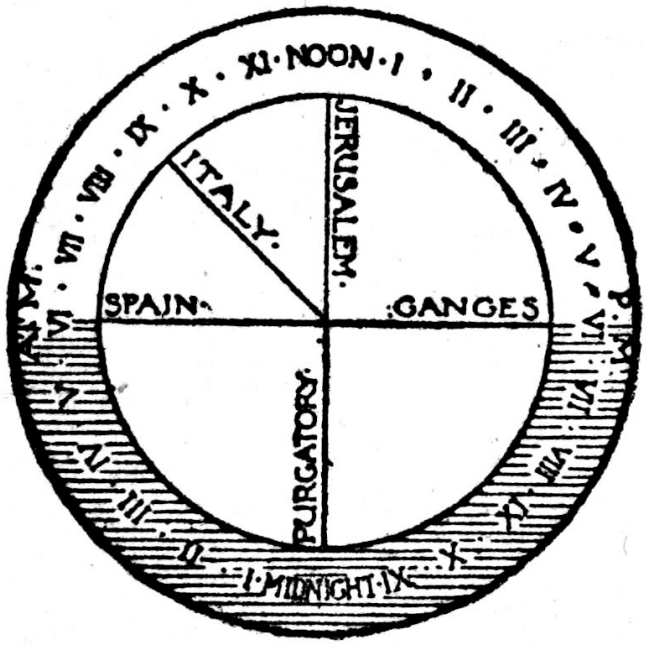
I. DIAGRAM OF THE UNIVERSE IN THE DIVINE COMEDY



A = Jerusalem, crowned by Calvary; B = Italy, and, presumably, the Dark Wood; C = Centre of Earth; D = Spain, the Western limit of the inhabited world; E = The Ganges, the Eastern limit; F = Hell; G = Purgatory, crowned by Eden, H.

II. CLOCK MARKING SIMULTANEOUS HOURS AT DIFFERENT REGIONS OF THE EARTH

[After Dr. E. Moore's *Time-References in the Divina Commedia*.]



To indicate changes of hour, the reader may imagine the rim of the clock to revolve

***counterclockwise*, while the five hands remain stationary, or the hands to revolve *clockwise*, while the rim remains stationary.**

Thus, for example, *Purg.* xxvii. 1-5, the sun was rising at Jerusalem, 'there where his Maker shed His blood,' when it was midnight in Spain (on the Ebro) and noon in India, 'the waves in Ganges burnt by noon'; and therefore sunset in Purgatory: 'wherefore the day was departing, when the Angel of God joyfully appeared to us.'

III. HELL

			CANTOS
Dark Wood.	Leopard, Lion, and Wolf. Guidance of Virgil.		i.-ii.
Gate of Hell.			iii.
Ante-Hell.	Pusillanimous and neutrals, souls and Angels. St. Celestine v. (Some place Slothful, *Accidiosi*, here.		iii.

Acheron.	Charon's boat.		iii.
Brink of the Abyss.			iv.

Circle I. (Limbo.)	Unbaptized Children and Virtuous Heathen. The Noble Castle. Homer, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Lucan. Electra, Hector, Aeneas, Caesar; Camilla, Penthesilea, Latinus, Lavinia; the elder Brutus, Lucretia, Julia, Martia, Cornelia, The Saladin. Aristotle; Socrates, Plato; Democritus, Diogenes, Anaxagoras, Thales, Empedocles,	Outside ethical scheme of Hell, because unknown to Aristotle as sin. Some regard this circle, with Ante-Hell, as representing *Negative Incontinence*.	iv.

	Heraclitus, Zeno, Dioscorides; Orpheus, Cicero, Linus, Seneca; Euclid and Ptolemy; Hippocrates, Avicenna, Galen; Averroës.		
Circle II.	Minos. The Lustful: Semiramis, Dido, Cleopatra, Helen, Achilles, Paris, Tristram; Paolo Malatesta and Francesca da Polenta.	*Incontinence.*	v.
Circle III.	Cerberus. The Gluttonous: Ciacco of Florence.		vi.

Circle IV.	Plutus. Avaricious and Prodigal (none recognisable).		vii.
Circle V. (Styx.)	The Slothful? Angry and Sullen. Phlegyas and his boat. Filippo Argenti.		vii.-viii.
Walls of City of Dis.	Fiends and Furies. The Messenger of Heaven.		viii.-ix.

Circle VI.	Heretics. Epicurus and his followers. Farinata degli Uberti, Cavalcante de' Cavalcanti; Frederick ii, Cardinal Ottaviano degli Ubaldini; Pope Anastasius.	Outside ethical scheme. Intermediate between *Incontinence* and *Violence*. Some regard this Circle as included in *Bestiality*, or as *Negative Violence*.	ix.-xi.
Precipice.	The Minotaur.		xii.

Circle VII.	(1) In the river Phlegethon, the violent against others, tyrants and murderers; Alexander the Great, Dionysius of Sicily; Ezzelino, Obizzo da Esti; Guy de Montfort; Attila, Pyrrhus, Sextus Pompeius; Rinier da Corneto, Rinier Pazzo. Chiron, Nessus, Pholus and other centaurs.	*Violence* or *Bestiality*.	xii.

(2) In the wood of harpies and hell-hounds, the violent against themselves, suicides and squanderers; Pier della Vigna; Lano of Siena, Giacomo da Santo Andrea; a Florentine suicide.

xiii.

(3) On the burning sand:— (*a*) The violent against God; Capaneus. (*b*) The violent against Nature; Brunetto Latini; Priscian, Francesco d'Accorso, Andrea de' Mozzi; Guido Guerra, Tegghiaio Aldobrandi, Jacopo Rusticucci, Guglielmo Borsiere. (*c*) The violent against Art (Usurers); unrecognisable individuals of Gianfigliazzi	xiv.-xvii

	and Ubbriachi, and Rinaldo degli Scrovigni, expecting Vitaliano del Dente and Giovanni Buiamonte.		
Great Abyss.	Geryon.		xvii.
Circle VIII. (Malebolge.)	(1) Panders and Seducers; Venedico Caccianemico, Jason. Horned Devils. (2) Flatterers; Alessio Interminei, Thais.	*Fraud, Malice.*	xviii.

(3) Simoniacs; Nicholas iii, awaiting Boniface viii and Clement v.	xix.
(4) Soothsayers and Sorcerers; Amphiaraus, Tiresias, Aruns, Manto, Eurypylus, Michael Scot, Guido Bonatti, Asdente of Parma.	xx.

(5) Barrators; the Elder of Lucca, Ciampolo, Frate Gomita, Michel Zanche. Malacoda and the Malebranche.	xxi.-xxiii.
(6) Hypocrites; two Frati Godenti of Bologna (Catalano	xxiii.

(7) Thieves; Vanni Fucci; Cacus; Cianfa Donati, Francesco de' Cavalcanti, Agnello Brunelleschi, Buoso (Donati or degli Abati), Puccio de' Galigai.	xxiv.-xxv.
(8) Evil Counsellors; Ulysses and Diomed; Guido da Montefeltro.	xxvi.-xxvii.

(9) Sowers of Scandal and Schism; Mahomet, Ali, Pier da Medicina, Curio, Mosca de' Lamberti, Bertran de Born; Geri del Bello.	xxviii.-xxix.
(10) Falsifiers; Griffolino, Capocchio; Gianni Schicchi, Myrrha; Adam of Brescia, one of the Counts of Romena; Potiphar's wife; Sinon.	xxix-xxx.

Well of Giants.	Nimrod, Ephialtes, Briareus, Antaeus, Tityus, Typhon.		xxxi.
Circle IX. (Cocytus.)	(1) In Caina; traitors to their kindred; Alessandro and Napoleone degli Alberti, Mordred, Focaccia, Sassolo Mascheroni, Camicione dei Pazzi.	*Treachery, Malice.*	xxxii.-xxxiv.

(2) In Antenora; traitors to country or party; Bocca degli Abati, Buoso da Duera, Tesauro Beccheria, Gianni de' Soldanieri, Tebaldello, Ganelon, Count Ugolino and Archbishop Ruggieri.

(3) In Tolomea; traitors to their guests; Alberigo de' Manfredi, Branca d'Oria.

	(4) In Giudecca; traitors to their benefactors and their lords; Judas, Brutus, Cassius.		
Centre of the Earth.	Lucifer.		xxxiv.

IV. PURGATORY

			CANTOS
Shore of Island.	Cato. Angel of Faith. Casella.	Negligence through lack of Love.	i.-ii.
Foot of Mountain.	Contumacious, but repentant; Manfred.		iii.
Gap where Ascent begins.			iv.

Ante-Purgatory.	Penitence deferred through Indolence; Belacqua.	iv.
	Violently slain unabsolved; Jacopo del Cassero, Buonconte, Pia, Guccio de' Tarlati, Benincasa, Federigo Novello, Gano degli Scornigiani, Orso degli Alberti, Pierre de la Brosse.	v.-vi.

Sordello. In Valley of Princes: Rudolph of Hapsburg, Ottocar of Bohemia; Philip III of France, Henry I of Navarre; Peter III of Aragon, Charles I of Anjou; Alfonso III of Aragon; Henry III of England; William of Montferrat; Nino Visconti, Currado Malaspina. Serpent, and two Angels of Hope.	vi.-viii.

Gate of St. Peter.	(Dream of Eagle; St. Lucy). Angel Confessor of Obedience.		ix.
First Terrace.	Purgation of Pride. Omberto Aldobrandesco, Oderisi of Gubbio, Provenzano Salvani. [Alighiero I.]	Sins of the Spirit, or Love distorted.	x.-xii.
Steps.	Angel of Humility.		xii.
Second Terrace.	Purgation of Envy. Siena, Guido del Duca, Sapia of Rinier da Calboli.		xiii.-xiv.
Steps.	Angel of Fraternal Love.		xv.

Third Terrace.	Purgation of Anger. Marco Lombardo.		xv.-xvii.
Steps.	Angel of Peace or Meekness.		xvii.
Fourth Terrace.	(Virgil's discourse of Love.) Purgation of Sloth. Abbot of San Zeno. (Dream of Siren.)	Love defective.	xvii.-xix.
Steps.	Angel of Zeal (Spiritual Joy).		xix.
Fifth Terrace.	Purgation of Avarice and Prodigality. Adrian V; Hugh Capet; Statius (who joins Virgil and Dante).	Sins of the Flesh, or Love excessive.	xix.-xxii.

Steps.	Angel of Justice (cupidity being its chief opponent).	xxii.
Sixth Terrace.	Purgation of Gluttony. Forese Donati; Bonagiunta of Lucca; Martin IV; Ubaldo della Pila; Archbishop Boniface of Ravenna; Messer Marchese of Forlì.	xxii.-xxiv.
Steps.	Angel of Abstinence. (Statius on Generation.	xxiv.-xxv.
Seventh Terrace.	Purgation of Lust. Guido Guinizelli, Arnaut Daniel.	xxv.-xxvi.

Purging Fire.	Angel of Purity.		xxvii.
Last Steps.	Cherubim with flaming sword? (Dream of Leah.)		xxvii.
EARTHLY PARADISE.	Matelda. Triumph of the Church. BEATRICE. Mystical Tree of the Empire. Lethe and Eunoë.	Eden State of Innocence Regained.	xxviii.-xxxiii.

V. PARADISE

The Spheres.	*Angelic Orders.*	*Sciences.*	*Virtues.*	CANTOS
	The Order of the Universe and the Eternal Law.			i.

First Heaven, of the Moon.	(Physical phenomena the work of Celestial Intelligences. Inconstancy in vows; Piccarda, Donati and Empress Constance. (Freedom of the Will.)	Angels (guardians of individuals and bearers of divine gifts and tidings of God's bounty).	Grammar.	Deficient.-v. Fortitude.

Second Heaven, of Mercury.	Ambitious spirits of the Active Life; Justinian and Romeo. (The Roman Empire and the Mystery of Redemption.)	Archangels (announce messages of great import and protect nations).	Logic.	Imperfect Justice.	v.-vii.
Third Heaven, of Venus.	Purified Lovers; Carlo Martello, Cunizza, Folco, Rahab. (Constitution of Society and bad government.)	Principalities (regulate earthly principalities and draw princes to rule with love).	Rhetoric.	Defective Temperance.	viii.-ix.
Termination of Earth's Shadow.					ix.

Fourth Heaven, of the Sun.	Doctors and Teachers: Aquinas, Albertus, Gratian, Peter Lombard, Solomon, Dionysius, Orosius, Boëthius, Isidore, Bede, Richard, Siger. Bonaventura, Agostino and Illuminato, Hugh, Peter Comestor, Peter of Spain, Nathan, Chrysostom, Anselm, Aelius Donatus, Rabanus, Joachim. (Work of SS.	Powers (represent Divine Power and Majesty; combat powers of darkness; stay diseases).	Arithmetic.	Prudence.	&c. xiv.

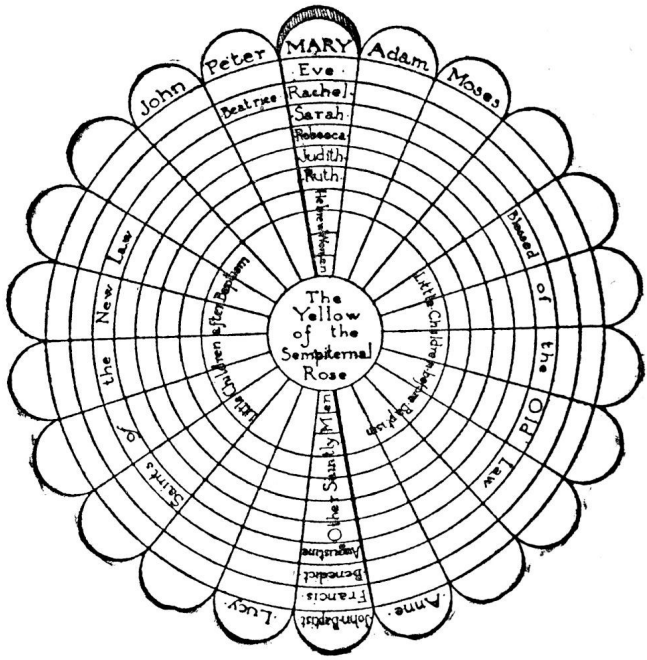
	Francis and Dominic; wisdom of Solomon; glory of risen body.)					
Fifth Heaven, of Mars.	Warriors forming Crucifix Cacciaguida, Joshua, Judas Maccabaeus, Charlemagne, Orlando, William of Orange, Renoardo, Godfrey de Bouillon, Guiscard. (Florence; Dante's exile and life-work.)	Virtues (imitate Divine Strength and Fortitude; inspire endurance).	Music.	Fortitude.		div.-xviii.

Sixth Heaven, of Jupiter.	Rulers form Imperial Eagle. David, Trajan, Hezekiah, Constantine, William II. of Sicily, Rhipeus. (Justice, divine and human.)	Dominations (image of Divine Dominion).	Geometry.		Justice.	xviii.-xx.
Seventh Heaven, of Saturn.	Contemplative spirits. Peter Damian, Benedict, Macarius, Romuald. (Predestination; the ascetic life; God's vengeance on corruption.)	Thrones (imitate Divine Steadfastness; execute God's judgments; purification;	Astrology.		Temperance.	xxi.-xxii.
Celestial Ladder.						xxii.

Eighth Heaven, of the Fixed Stars.	Triumph of Christ; Assumption of Mary; Peter, James, and John; Adam. (Theological Virtues; St. Peter's rebuke of corruption in Church.)	Cherubim (image of Divine Wisdom; spread knowledge of God; illuminate).	Natural Philosophy.	Faith, Hope, and Charity.	xxiii.-xxvii.
Ninth Heaven, the Crystalline.	The Angelic Hierarchies. (Creation as illustrating the Divine Love.)	Seraphim (image of Divine Love; ministering order perfect).	Moral Philosophy.		xxvii.-xxix.

Tenth Heaven, the Empyrean.	The Essential Paradise of Angels and Saints (Throne of Henry VII.) Bernard. Blessed of the Mystic Rose. Gabriel. Blessed Virgin Mary.	Divine Science of Theology.	xxx.-xxxiii.
Beatific Vision of the Divine Essence.			xxxiii.

VI. THE MYSTIC ROSE OF PARADISE


MARY
Eve
Rachel
Sarah
Rebecca
Judith
Ruth
Beatrice
Peter
Adam
Moses
John
Anne
Lucy
The Yellow of the Sempiternal Rose
Blessed of Old Law
Little Children before Baptism
Little Children after Baptism
Saints of the New Law
Holy Innocents
Virgin Mary
Gabriel
Augustine
Benedict
Francis
John Baptist

VII. PRINCIPAL SOVEREIGNS CONTEMPORARY WITH DANTE

(1265-1321)

POPES

CLEMENT IV, 1265-1268.

[*Purg.* iii. 125.]

B. GREGORY X, 1271-1276.

B. INNOCENT V, 1276.

ADRIAN V, 1276.

[*Purg.* xix. 88-145.]

JOHN XXI, 1276-1277.

[*Par.* xii. 134.]

NICHOLAS III, 1277-1280.

[*Inf.* xix. 31 *et seq.*]

MARTIN IV, 1281-1285.

[*Purg.* xxiv. 20-24.]

HONORIUS IV, 1285-1287.

NICHOLAS IV, 1288-1292.

ST. CELESTINE V, 1294.

[*Inf.* iii. 59-60; *Inf.* xxvii. 105.]

BONIFACE VIII, 1294-1303.

[*Inf.* xix. 52-57, 76-78; xxvii. 70-111; *Purg.* viii. 131; xx. 85-90; xxxii. 153-156; *Par.* ix. 126; xii. 90; xvii. 50; xxvii. 22; xxx. 148.]

B. BENEDICT XI, 1303-1304.

[*Epist.* i. 1. Nowhere else mentioned in Dante's works, though some identify him, rather than Boniface, with the 'defunct high-priest' of *Epist.* viii. 10.]

CLEMENT V, 1305-1314.

[*Inf.* xix. 82-87; *Purg.* xxxii. 157-160; *Par.* xvii. 82; xxvii. 58; xxx. 142-148; *Epist.* v. 10; vii. 7; viii. 4.]

JOHN XXII, 1316-1334.

[*Par.* xviii. 130-136; xxvii. 58.]

EMPERORS

RUDOLPH OF HAPSBURG, 1273-1291.

[*Purg.* vi. 103; vii. 94-96; *Par.* viii. 72; *Conv.* iv. 3.]

ADOLPH OF NASSAU, 1292-1298.

[*Conv.* iv. 3.]

ALBERT OF HAPSBURG, 1298-1308.

[*Purg.* vi. 97 *et seq.*; *Par.* xix. 115; *Conv.* iv. 3.]

HENRY OF LUXEMBURG, HENRY VII, 1308-1313.

[*Purg.* vii. 96; *Par.* xvii. 82; xxx. 133-138; *Epist.* v., vi., vii., vii.*, vii.**, vii.***]

LOUIS OF BAVARIA, 1314-1347.

KINGS OF FRANCE

ST. LOUIS IX, 1226-1270.

[Not mentioned by Dante; unless, perhaps, indirectly in *Purg.* vii. 127-129, and xx. 50.]

PHILIP III, 1270-1285.

[*Purg.* vii. 103-105.]

PHILIP IV, 1285-1314.

[*Inf.* xix. 87; *Purg.* vii. 109-111; xx. 91-93; xxxii. 152; *Par.* xix. 120; *Epist.* viii. 4.]

LOUIS X, 1314-1316.

PHILIP V, 1316-1322.

KINGS OF ENGLAND

HENRY III, 1216-1272.

[*Purg.* vii. 131.]

EDWARD I, 1272-1307.

[*Purg.* vii. 132; *Par.* xix. 122.]

EDWARD II, 1307-1327.

KINGS OF NAPLES AND SICILY

MANFRED OF SUABIA, 1258-1266.

[*Purg.* iii. 103-145; *V. E.* i. 12.]

CHARLES I OF ANJOU, 1266-1282.

[*Inf.* xix. 99; *Purg.* vii. 113, 124; xi. 137; xx. 67-69.]

(After the Vespers of Palermo, Sicily under House

of Aragon separated from Angevin Naples.)

KINGS OF NAPLES[42]

CHARLES I OF ANJOU, 1282-1285.

CHARLES II OF ANJOU, 1285-1309.

[*Purg.* v. 69. vii. 126; xx. 79; *Par.* vi. 106; viii. 72; xix. 127-129; xx. 63; *Conv.* iv. 6; V. E. i. 12.]

ROBERT OF ANJOU, 1309-1343.

[*Par.* viii. 76-84, 147; *Epist.* vii. 7; perhaps the 'Golias' of *Epist.* vii. 8.]

KINGS OF SICILY[42]

PETER III OF ARAGON, 1282-1285.

JAMES II OF ARAGON, 1285-1296.

FREDERICK II OF ARAGON, 1296-1337.

[*Purg.* iii. 116; vii. 119; *Par.* xix. 130; xx. 63; *Conv.* iv. 6; *V. E.* i. 12.]

KINGS OF ARAGON

JAMES I, 1213-1276.

PETER III, 1276-1285. (Also King of Sicily after 1282.)

[*Purg.* vii. 112-129.]

ALFONSO III, 1285-1291.

[*Purg.* vii. 116.]

JAMES II, 1291-1327. (King of Sicily from 1285 to

1296.)

[*Purg.* iii. 116; vii. 119; *Par.* xix. 137.]

FOOTNOTES:

[42] The Angevin sovereigns of Naples retained the title “King of Sicily and Jerusalem,” the Aragonese ruler of Sicily being “King of Trinacria.”

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Transcriber's Notes

Page 206: "St. Anslem" changed to "St. Anselm"

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