

Dr. 168.6 Bd. May, 1890.



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FROM

Philip Schaff, D.D.

26 Feb. 1890.

DANTE

AND

THE DIVINA COMMEDIA

BY

PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D., LL.D.

PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY IN THE UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
NEW YORK.

[From "LITERATURE AND POETRY," published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1890]

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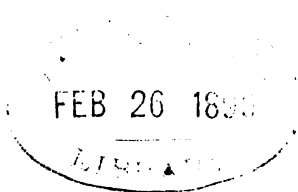
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The Auction

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DANTE ALIGHIERI.

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Their theme is man as man. They sympathize with all that is human. They reproduce with the intuition of genius, in classical style, our common nature in all its phases from the lowest to the highest, from the worst to the best. Hence they interest all classes of men.

But while they agree in this general characteristic, they differ as widely as the nations and ages to which they belong, and as the languages in which they wrote. They are intensely human, and yet intensely national. Dante (1265-1321) could only have arisen in Italy, and in the thirteenth century; Shakespeare (1564-1616) only in England, and in the sixteenth; Goethe (1749-1832) only in Germany, and in the eighteenth century. Dante is the poet of the Middle Ages; Shakespeare is the poet of the transition period of the Renaissance and Reformation; Goethe is the poet of modern cosmopolitan culture.

It is impossible to say who is the greatest and the most universal of the three. Shakespeare is an unexplained literary miracle as to creative fertility of genius which "gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name," and as to intuitive knowledge of human nature—English, old Roman, Italian, French, Scandinavian, Christian, Jewish, heathen, noble and wicked, angelic and Satanic. Goethe presents greater variety of poetic and literary composition, and excels equally in drama, epos, and song, in narrative prose and literary criticism. Dante is the most exalted and sublime of the three, as he follows men into the eternal world of bliss and woe. //

Viewed in their relation to religion, Dante is the most reli-

gious of the three. He is the Homer of mediæval Christianity, and reflects the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas. The divine inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, the Holy Trinity, the divinity of Christ and the Holy Spirit, the necessity of the atonement, conversion and sanctification, future rewards and punishments, were to him as certain truths as mathematical propositions, and heaven and hell as real facts as happiness and misery in this life. In this respect he resembles the singer of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, and the singer of the *Messiad* much more than Shakespeare and Goethe; but the English Milton and the German Klopstock, with a purer and simpler faith, do not reach the height of the genius of the Tuscan poet.

Dante and Milton have several points in common: both are intensely religious, one as a Catholic, the other as a Puritan; both stood at the height of learning and culture, the one of the thirteenth, the other of the seventeenth century; both were champions of freedom against despotism; both engaged in party politics, and failed; both ended their life in unhappy isolation; but both rose in sublime heroism above personal misfortune, and produced in sorrow and disappointment their greatest works, full of inspiring thoughts for future generations.

Shakespeare is a secular poet, and professes no religion at all, whether Catholic or Protestant; he is hid behind his characters. But he always speaks respectfully of religion; he makes virtue lovely and vice hateful; he punishes sin and crime, and his tragedies have the moral effect of powerful sermons. He is full of reminiscences of, and allusions to, the Bible.¹ He passed through the great convulsion of the Reformation without losing his faith. There can be no doubt that he reverently bowed before Him whose

"Blessed feet were nailed
For our advantage on the bitter cross."²

¹ Bishop Charles Wordsworth, of St. Andrews, has written a book of 420 pages on *Shakespeare's Knowledge and Use of the Bible* (London, third ed., 1880), in which he traces over 400 passages of the Bible quoted or referred to by Shakespeare. As he wrote most of his works before 1611, when the Authorized Version appeared, he used earlier translations. Wordsworth asserts (p. 9) that King James' translators owed more to Shakespeare than he to them.

² Henry IV., P. I., Act I., Sc. 1.

And we look in vain in all literature, outside of the New Testament, for a more eloquent and truly Christian description of mercy than that given by "gentle William":¹

"The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice bless'd ;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes :
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest ; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown :
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the fear and dread of kings ;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway :
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself,
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice."

Goethe is likewise a worldly poet, and touches religion only incidentally and casually as one of the essential elements of human life ; as for instance in the confessions of a beautiful soul (Fräulein von Klettenberg, a pious Moravian lady and friend of his mother), inserted among the mixed theatrical company of Wilhelm Meister. He characterized himself as a liberal and impartial outsider,² and as a child of the world between two prophets.³ He had a Pelagian or Unitarian view of the way of salvation, and expressed it in the Second Part of *Faust*, which has been called the tragedy of the modern age of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Faust is saved, not in the evangelical way by free grace through repentance and faith in Christ, but by his own constant endeavor and self-culture, aided by divine love, and by Mary and Gretchen drawing him heavenward. Angels bear Faust's immortal part and sing—

¹Merchant of Venice, Act IV., Sc. 1.

² " *Ich bin kein Unchrist, kein Widerchrist, doch ein decidirter Nichtchrist.*" Letter to the pious Lavater, the friend of his youth, 1782.

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“ Und hat an ihm die Liebe gar
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We need not wonder that Goethe had the highest admiration for Shakespeare, but disliked Dante, and called his *Inferno* “abominable;” his *Purgatorio* “ambiguous” and his *Paradiso* “tiresome” (May, 1787). In showing a bust of Dante to Eckermann, he said: “He looks as if he came out of hell.” The contrast between the two men is almost as great as the contrast between Gretchen and Beatrice. And yet the First Part of the tragedy of *Faust* furnishes a striking parallel to the *Inferno* of the *Divine Comedy*, and contains some of the profoundest Christian ideas, expressed in the purest language. Think of the prelude in heaven, imitated from the Book of Job, the sublime songs of the three archangels, the triumphant Easter hymn, which prevents Faust from committing suicide, the solemn cathedral scene, the judgment trumpet of the *Dies Iræ*, the terrors of a guilty conscience, and the downward progress of sin begetting new sin and leading step by step to insanity, prison and death. The description of Mephistopheles is far more true to the character of the sneering, scoffing, hideous arch-fiend of the human race than Dante’s horrid monster at the bottom of the *Inferno*. The concluding act before the day of execution, the salvation of the innocently guilty and penitent Gretchen,

¹ The emphasis lies on the third and fourth lines, the earnest and constant endeavor of man, as the chief condition of salvation, to which is added divine love as a help from above. Goethe himself declared to Eckermann (June 6, 1831) that in these verses lies the key for the redemption of Faust. “*In Faust selber eine immer höhere und reinere Thätigkeit bis an’s Ende, und von oben die ihm zu Hülfe kommende ewige Liebe. Es steht dies mit unserer religiösen Vorstellung durchaus in Harmonie, nach welcher wir nicht bloss durch eigene Kraft selig werden, sondern durch die hinzukommende göttliche Gnade.*” This reverses the evangelical order, which puts Divine grace first and human endeavor second, and puts both in the relation of cause and effect.

and the perdition of her guilty seducer, followed by the cry of pity: "Henry, Henry!" is the very perfection of tragical art, and overpowering in its moral effect. The Second Part, which occupied the trembling hand of the aged poet during the last seven years of his life, is full of unexplained allegorical mysteries, and ends with the attraction of "the eternal womanly." So far, but no further, it resembles the Paradise of Dante and the attraction of Beatrice. The Purgatory is missing in *Faust*, or hid in silence between the First and Second Part.

Of the life of Dante and Shakespeare we know very little, and that little is uncertain and disputed. Goethe left a charming record of his early life, and his later years are equally well known. Dante and Shakespeare died in the vigor of manhood, the former at the age of fifty-six, the latter at the age of fifty-three, both in the Christian faith and the hope of immortality. Goethe lived to a serene old age of eighty-two, praying for "more light," and left, ten days before his departure from this world of mystery to the world of light, as his last wise utterance, a testimony to the Christ of the Gospel which is well worth pondering by every thinking skeptic, saying: "Let mental culture go on advancing, let mental sciences go on gaining in depth and breadth, and the human mind expand as it may, it will never surpass the elevation and moral culture of Christianity as it glistens and shines forth in the Gospels." Add to this his emphatic declaration: "I consider the Gospels to be thoroughly genuine; for there is reflected in them a majesty and sublimity which emanated from the person of Christ, and which is as truly divine as anything ever seen on earth."

The great poet of Weimar pointed in these testimonies to the strongest and most convincing internal evidence of Christianity: the perfect teaching and perfect example of its Founder. If this once takes hold of the heart as well as the mind of a man, he is impregnable against the attacks of infidelity. This was the confession of one of the profoundest thinkers of the nineteenth century. "The foundation of all my thinking," says Richard Rothe,¹ "I may honestly declare, is the simple faith in Christ,

¹ Preface to the first edition of his *Theologische Ethik*, reprinted in the second edition (Wittenberg, 1867, sqq.), vol. I., p. xvi.

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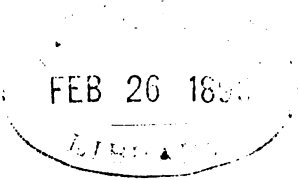
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We need not wonder that Goethe had the highest admiration for Shakespeare, but disliked Dante, and called his *Inferno* “abominable;” his *Purgatorio* “ambiguous” and his *Paradiso* “tiresome” (May, 1787). In showing a bust of Dante to Eckermann, he said: “He looks as if he came out of hell.” The contrast between the two men is almost as great as the contrast between Gretchen and Beatrice. And yet the First Part of the tragedy of *Faust* furnishes a striking parallel to the *Inferno* of the *Divine Comedy*, and contains some of the profoundest Christian ideas, expressed in the purest language. Think of the prelude in heaven, imitated from the Book of Job, the sublime songs of the three archangels, the triumphant Easter hymn, which prevents Faust from committing suicide, the solemn cathedral scene, the judgment trumpet of the *Dies Iræ*, the terrors of a guilty conscience, and the downward progress of sin begetting new sin and leading step by step to insanity, prison and death. The description of Mephistopheles is far more true to the character of the sneering, scoffing, hideous arch-fiend of the human race than Dante’s horrid monster at the bottom of the *Inferno*. The concluding act before the day of execution, the salvation of the innocently guilty and penitent Gretchen,

¹ The emphasis lies on the third and fourth lines, the earnest and constant endeavor of man, as the chief condition of salvation, to which is added divine love as a help from above. Goethe himself declared to Eckermann (June 6, 1831) that in these verses lies the key for the redemption of Faust. “*In Faust selber eine immer höhere und reinere Thätigkeit bis an’s Ende, und von oben die ihm zu Hülfe kommende ewige Liebe. Es steht dies mit unserer religiösen Vorstellung durchaus in Harmonie, nach welcher wir nicht bloss durch eigene Kraft selig werden, sondern durch die hinzukommende göttliche Gnade.*” This reverses the evangelical order, which puts Divine grace first and human endeavor second, and puts both in the relation of cause and effect.

and the perdition of her guilty seducer, followed by the cry of pity: "Henry, Henry!" is the very perfection of tragical art, and overpowering in its moral effect. The Second Part, which occupied the trembling hand of the aged poet during the last seven years of his life, is full of unexplained allegorical mysteries, and ends with the attraction of "the eternal womanly." So far, but no further, it resembles the Paradise of Dante and the attraction of Beatrice. The Purgatory is missing in *Faust*, or hid in silence between the First and Second Part.

Of the life of Dante and Shakespeare we know very little, and that little is uncertain and disputed. Goethe left a charming record of his early life, and his later years are equally well known. Dante and Shakespeare died in the vigor of manhood, the former at the age of fifty-six, the latter at the age of fifty-three, both in the Christian faith and the hope of immortality. Goethe lived to a serene old age of eighty-two, praying for "more light," and left, ten days before his departure from this world of mystery to the world of light, as his last wise utterance, a testimony to the Christ of the Gospel which is well worth pondering by every thinking skeptic, saying: "Let mental culture go on advancing, let mental sciences go on gaining in depth and breadth, and the human mind expand as it may, it will never surpass the elevation and moral culture of Christianity as it glistens and shines forth in the Gospels." Add to this his emphatic declaration: "I consider the Gospels to be thoroughly genuine; for there is reflected in them a majesty and sublimity which emanated from the person of Christ, and which is as truly divine as anything ever seen on earth."

The great poet of Weimar pointed in these testimonies to the strongest and most convincing internal evidence of Christianity: the perfect teaching and perfect example of its Founder. If this once takes hold of the heart as well as the mind of a man, he is impregnable against the attacks of infidelity. This was the confession of one of the profoundest thinkers of the nineteenth century. "The foundation of all my thinking," says Richard Rothe,¹ "I may honestly declare, is the simple faith in Christ,

¹ Preface to the first edition of his *Theologische Ethik*, reprinted in the second edition (Wittenberg, 1867, sqq.), vol. I., p. xvi.

as it (not this or that dogma or this or that theology) has for eighteen centuries overcome the world. It is to me the ultimate certainty, in view of which I am ready, unhesitatingly and joyfully, to cast overboard every other assumption of knowledge which should be found to contradict it. I know no other fixed point into which I could cast out the anchor for my thought except the historical manifestation, which is designated by the sacred name, Jesus Christ. It is to me the unassailable Holy of Holies of mankind, the most exalted thing that has ever come into a human consciousness, and a sunrise in history, from which alone light diffuses itself over the collective circle of the objects which fall within our view. With this one absolutely undiscoverable datum, the knowledge of which moreover bears direct testimony to its reality, as the light to itself, and in which lie involved consequences beyond the reach of anticipation, stands and falls for me, in the ultimate ground, every certainty of the spiritual and therefore eternal nobility of the human race."

Will America ever produce a poet equal in genius to Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, but free from their errors; a poet who shall identify his life and work with the cause of Christianity pure and undefiled, and show forth the blissful harmony of beauty, truth, and goodness? Or must we wait for the millennium, or for Paradise?

THE LIFE OF DANTE.

✠ "Behold the man who has been in Hell,"¹ exclaimed the women of Verona when they looked on Dante, as an exile, walking lonely, thoughtful, sad and solemn through the streets. They might have added, "and in Purgatory and in Paradise." But the *Paradiso* was at that time not yet finished, and the women were naturally struck with the most prominent feature; they expressed the popular preference for the *Inferno*, which is most read and best known. Few have the patience to climb up the mountain of the *Purgatorio*, and to follow him into the *Paradiso*, though this is the purest and sublimest part of the *Divina Commedia*. Eternity in all its phases seems impressed upon that countenance, painted by his friend Giotto, which once

¹ "Eccovi l'uom ch'è stato all' inferno."

seen can never be forgotten. We behold there combined the solemn sadness, the discipline of sorrow, and the repose of faith.

Dante's life is a tragedy. It opens with the sweet spring of pure love, passes into the summer heat of severe study and political strife, and ends in an autumn of poverty and exile; but the outcome of all was the *Divina Commedia*, by which he continues to live.

“Nurtured into poverty by wrong
He learnt in suffering what he taught in song.”

His inner life is written in his works; but of his outward life we know only a few facts with any degree of certainty; others are doubtful or differently interpreted; hence we must be guarded in our assertions.

Dante—an abridgment of Durante, the Enduring—was descended from the ancient and noble family of the Aligeri or Alighieri (Allighieri), and born at Florence in the month of May or June, 1265, during the pontificate of Clement IV. (1265–1268), in the age of the Crusades, the cathedrals, the scholastic philosophy, the monastic orders, the papal theocracy in conflict with the empire, and of the gigantic contrast between monkish world-renunciation (*Weltentsagung*) and ~~popish~~ world-dominion (*Weltbeherrschung*).

He was a boy of ~~thirteen~~ when Conradin, the last scion of the illustrious imperial house of Hohenstaufen, was beheaded at Naples (1268); he was ~~fifteen~~ at the death of St. Louis, of France, the last of the Crusaders (1270); ~~nineteen~~, when St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventura, his masters in theology, ascended to the beatific vision in Paradise (1274). He was yet a youth when Giotto was born (1276), when Albertus Magnus died (1280), when the Sicilian Vespers took place (1282). In the year 1289, Francesca da Rimini was murdered, whom he immortalized in the fifth Canto of the *Inferno*. The death and glorification of Beatrice occurred in 1290, when he had reached his twenty-fifth year.

Some important events fell in the period of his exile: the first papal jubilee at Rome (1300), the conflict of Boniface VIII. with Philip the Fair; the beginning of the Babylonian exile of the papacy (1309–1370); the suppression of the Templars

papal
three year
five year
years

(1312); the birth of Petrarca (1304), and of Boccaccio (1313); and from these two poets may be dated the Italian Renaissance, and that Revival of Letters which, in turn, prepared the way for modern civilization.

Dante's father was a lawyer. His mother, Donna Bella, is once mentioned by Virgil in the words addressed to Dante:—

“Blessed is she that bore thee.”¹

DANTE AND BEATRICE.

In his ninth year Dante saw for the first time, on a festive May-day, under a laurel tree, a Florentine maiden of angelic beauty and loveliness, with fair hair, bright blue eyes and pearl-white complexion, only a few months younger than himself. She was the daughter of Falco Portinari, a noble Florentine, and bore the Christian name of Bice or Beatrice, which recalls the idea of beatitude or blessedness.

He touchingly describes the interview in his *New Life* (*Vita Nuova*). “She appeared to me,” he says, “clothed in a most noble color, a modest and becoming crimson, garlanded and adorned in such wise as befitted her very youthful age. At that instant the spirit of life which dwells in the most secret chamber of the heart, began to tremble, and said: ‘Behold a god, stronger than I, who, coming, shall rule me’ (*Ecce deus fortior me, qui veniens dominabitur mihi*).”

“This most gentle lady reached such favor among the people, that when she passed along the way persons ran to see her, which gave me wonderful delight. And when she was near any one, such modesty took possession of his heart, that he did not dare to raise his eyes or to return her salutation; and to this, should any one doubt it, many, as having experienced it, could bear witness for me. She, crowned and clothed with humility, took her way, displaying no pride in that which she saw and heard. Many, when she had passed, said: ‘This is not a woman, rather is she one of the most beautiful angels of heaven.’ Others said: ‘She is a miracle. Blessed be the Lord who can perform such a marvel.’ I say that she showed herself so gentle and so full of

¹ *Inferno*, VIII., 45: “*Benedetta colei che in te s'incinse.*”

all beauties, that those who looked on her felt within themselves a pure and sweet delight, such as they could not tell in words."¹ At the end of that book he calls this Florentine maiden "the blessed Beatrice who in glory looks upon the face of Him *qui est per omnia secula benedictus*."

The meeting of Dante with Beatrice was to him a revelation and an inspiration, the beginning of a new life, the turning point of his career, the germ of his great poem. It opened to him the fountain of love and poetry. Beatrice was not destined to be the companion of his life, but they continued to be united by the bands of Platonic love.

Nine years after the first interview, when they were eighteen, he saw her again, clothed in pure white, and received her smiling salutation, which filled him with such an ecstasy of delight, that on returning home he fell into a sweet slumber and had a marvelous vision. He described this vision in a sonnet, his first poetic composition, and sent it, according to the custom of the age, to several eminent persons, among others to Guido Cavalcanti, who became his faithful friend till his death (1300).

From this time dates his fame as a poet. He continued to dream and to love, and to gaze at Beatrice from a distance and to write poems in her praise, yet without naming her, lest he should offend her modesty or compromise her honor.

In a canzone he describes a dream in which he beheld the lifeless form of Beatrice in sorrowful procession carried to the grave, while angels in a white cloud took up her spirit to God.

Soon after this dream Beatrice died, in her twenty-fifth year, June 9th, 1290.

But Beatrice rose again in his imagination under a higher character, as the symbol of divine wisdom, and accompanied him as guide and interpreter in the *Divina Commedia* through the regions of the Blessed in Paradise up to the dazzling vision of the Triune God. Earthly love was thus transformed into heavenly love and wisdom.

Beatrice is the golden thread which runs through the *Divina Commedia*. She is, so to say, the heroine of the poem. She appeared as a "fair, saintly lady," with eyes shining brighter

¹ *The New Life*, translated by C. E. Norton, pp. 51, 52.

than the stars, to the poet Virgil of imperial Rome, and commanded him, with the angelic voice of love, to extricate Dante from the dangers of the dark forest and to lead him through Hell and Purgatory to the gates of Paradise. She meets him on the top of the mountain of Purgatory, "smiling and happy." She rebukes him for his sins, and then leads him to Paradise. He sees her—

"Gazing at the sun ;
Never did eagle fasten so upon it."

"And she such lightnings flashed into mine eyes,
That at the first my sight endured it not."

"Beatrice gazed upon me with her eyes
Full of the sparks of love, and so divine,
That, overcome my power, I turned my back
And almost lost myself with eyes cast down."

"And Beatrice, she who is seen to pass
From good to better, and so suddenly
That not by time her action is expressed,
How lucent in herself must she have been !"

"While the eternal pleasure, which direct
Rayed upon Beatrice, from her fair face
Contented me with its reflected aspect,
Conquering me with the radiance of a smile,
She said to me, 'Turn thee about and listen ;
Not in mine eyes alone is Paradise.'"

"And so translucent I beheld her eyes,
So full of pleasure, that her countenance
Surpassed its other and its latest wont."—

"O Beatrice, thou gentle guide and dear !"

"And around Beatrice three several times
It whirled itself with so divine a song,
My fantasy repeats it not to me."—

"So from before mine eyes did Beatrice
Chase every mote with radiance of her own,
That cast its light a thousand miles and more."—

“She smiled so joyously
That God seemed in her countenance to rejoice.”—¹

As Dante approached the Empyrean or the highest heaven, he again turns to Beatrice with intense admiration and love.

“If what has hitherto been said of her
Were all concluded in a single praise,
Scant would it be to serve the present turn.

Not only does the beauty I beheld
Transcend ourselves, but truly I believe
Its Maker only may enjoy it all.

Vanquished do I confess me by this passage
More than by problem of his theme was ever
O'ercome the comic or the tragic poet.

For as the sun the sight that trembles most,
Even so the memory of that sweet smile
My mind depriveth of its very self.

From the first day that I beheld her face
In this life, to the moment of this look,
The sequence of my song has ne'er been severed ;

But now perforce this sequence must desist
From following her beauty with my verse,
As every artist at his uttermost.

Such as I leave her to a greater fame
Than any of my trumpet, which is bringing
Its arduous matter to a final close,

With voice and gesture of a perfect leader
She recommenced : ‘We from the greatest body
Have issued to the heaven that is pure light ;

¹ See references to Beatrice in *Inferno*, II. 53 sqq., 70, 103 ; x. 131 ; XII. 88 ; xv. 90. *Purgatorio*, I. 53 ; VI. 47 ; xv. 77 ; xviii. 48, 73 ; xxiii. 128 ; xxvii. 36, 53, 136 ; xxx. 73 ; xxxi. 80, 107, 114, 133 ; xxxii. 36, 85, 106. *Paradiso*, I. 46 ; III. 127 ; IV. 139-142 ; x. 37-40 ; xviii. 16-21 ; 55-58 ; xxiii. 34 ; xxiv. 22-25 ; xxvi. 76-79 ; xxvii. 104, 105 ; xxix. 8 ; xxx. 14, 128 ; xxxi. 59, 66, 76 ; xxxii. 9 ; xxxiii. 38. The passages quoted are from Longfellow's translation.

Light intellectual replete with love,
 Love of true good replete with ecstasy,
 Ecstasy that transcendeth every sweetness.

Here shalt thou see the one host and the other
 Of Paradise, and one in the same aspects
 Which at the final judgment thou shalt see.'"¹

So far all is pure and lovely. Dante and Beatrice are an ideal and inspiring pair of beauty, and exert a perennial charm upon the imagination. They represent a love that is kindled by an earthly and by a heavenly flame, and blends in harmony the natural and spiritual. As Uhland sings:—

*“Ja! mit Fug wird dieser Sanger
 Als der gottliche verehret,
 Dante, welchem irdsche Liebe
 Sich zu himmlischer verklaret.”*

The relation of Dante to Beatrice is altogether unique. It is the last and highest stage of chivalric sentiment, but transformed into a mystic devotion to an ideal. Beatrice was a woman of flesh and blood, and at the same time the impersonation of Divine wisdom; the lovely daughter of Folco Portinari and the symbol of theology, that queen of sciences which comes from God and leads to God. She was both real and ideal, terrestrial and celestial, human and divine. She was to him all that is pure, lovely and attractive in innocent womanhood, and all that is sacred and sublime in Divine wisdom. She was while on earth the guardian angel of his youth, and after her death the guardian angel of his lonely exile. She was to him the golden ladder from earth to heaven, the bridge from Paradise Lost to Paradise

¹ *Parad.* xxx. 16-45, Longfellow's translation. If Beatrice represents true theology, or the knowledge of God, then God only can fully know and fully enjoy it, ver. 21. The artist fails in his highest aim, which is the perfect revelation of his ideal, ver. 32. The heaven of pure light, ver. 39, is the tenth and last heaven, above all space. Dante says (*Convito*, II. 15): "The Empyrean Heaven, by its peace, resembles the Divine Science, which is full of all peace; and which suffers no strife of opinions or sophistical arguments, because of the exceeding certitude of its subject, which is God." In ver. 45 we must distinguish the host of angels who have the same aspect after the last judgment as before, and the host of saints who will wear "the twofold garment," the spiritual body and the glorified earthly body (*Canto xxv.* 92).

Regained. She symbolizes that "love which moves the sun and the stars," that "eternal womanly," which in its deepest Christian sense is the ever watchful love of God irresistibly drawing us onward and upward.

"Mortal that perishes
Types the ideal ;
All that faith cherishes
Thus becomes real ;
Wrought superhumanly
Here it is done ;
The ever-womanly
Draweth us on."¹

The double character of Beatrice agrees with the double sense, the literal and spiritual, which Dante gives to his poem. He accepted the exegetical canon of mediæval theology which distinguished in the Bible four senses—the literal, the allegorical, the moral, and the anagogic (corresponding to history, and to the three cardinal virtues, faith, love and hope).

There are some distinguished Dante scholars who deny the historic character of Beatrice and regard her as a pure symbol, as a creature of the poet's imagination.² But this is inconsistent with a natural interpretation of the *Vita Nuova*, and of the sonnets to Beatrice which are addressed to a living being. Dante might in his ninth year have fallen in love with a pretty girl, but not with an abstract symbol of which he knew nothing.

¹ The mystic conclusion of the Second Part of Goethe's *Faust* :—

"*Alles Vergängliche
Ist nur ein Gleichniss ;
Das Unzulängliche
Hier wird's Ereigniss ;
Das Unbeschreibliche
Hier ist's gethan ;
Das Ewig-Weibliche
Zieht uns hinan.*"

² Canon Biscioni (1723) understood Beatrice to mean simply wisdom or theology ; Rossetti, the imperial monarchy ; Prof. Bartoli, woman in her ideal character. According to other Italian commentators, she is *la teologia ; la grazia cooperante ; la grazia salvificante ; la scienza divina*. Katharine Hillard, in the introduction to her translation of *The Banquet* (London, 1889, pp. xxxix, sqq.), favors the purely allegorical conception of Beatrice and the Donna gentile. She discredits "the untrustworthy romancer, Boccaccio." Gietmann (*Beatrice*, 1889) makes Beatrice the symbol of the ideal church.

This was an after-thought of later years, when she was in heaven. Her death and his deep grief over it have no meaning if she was a mere allegory.¹

There is one spot on this bright picture. Judging from the standpoint of Christian ethics, we should think that such an ideal relationship must end either in legitimate marriage, or in perpetual virginity. But neither was the case. Beatrice did not return the love of Dante, except by a smile from a distance. She married—if we are to credit Boccaccio—a rich banker of Florence, Simone de' Bardi, and became the mother of several children. Dante, after two years of grief for Beatrice, married Gemma Donati, who bore him four or seven children. He never mentions the husband of Beatrice, nor his own wife, and remained true to the love of his youth.

These facts mar both the poetry and the reality of that relationship. But the chivalry of the Middle Ages and the custom of Italy allowed a division of affection which is inconsistent with modern ideas. The troubadours ignored their own wives, and idolized other women, married or single.

THE DONNA PIETOSA.

Dante mourned the death of Beatrice, "the first delight of his soul," till he had no more tears to give ease to his sorrow.

"The eyes that weep for pity of my heart
Have wept so long that their grief languisheth,
And they have no more tears to weep withal."

He gave utterance to his grief in sonnets to

"That lady of all gentle memories."

He thus celebrated the first anniversary of her departure (June 9th, 1291).

About that time he saw the "gentle and compassionate lady,"

¹ Giov. da Serravalle, who wrote a Latin translation and commentary (as quoted by Dean Plumptre, I, p. LII, from the MS. in the British Museum), sums up the case with the words: "*Dante dilexit hanc puellam Beatricem historice et literaliter, sed allegorice, sacram Theologiam.*" But theology is too narrow a conception; Beatrice in her ideal nature combines Divine revelation, Divine wisdom, and Divine love.

whom he does not name, but who captivated his eyes and his heart. She has given great trouble to his biographers and commentators, who are divided between a literal and an allegorical conception, or combine the two.

“I lifted up mine eyes”—so he tells the story towards the end of the *Vita Nuova*—“and perceived a gentle (noble) lady, young and very beautiful, who was gazing upon me from a window with a gaze full of pity, so that the very sum of pity appeared gathered around her.¹ And seeing, that unhappy persons, when they beget compassion in others, are then most moved into weeping, as though they also felt pity for themselves, it came to pass that mine eyes began to be inclined unto tears. Wherefore, becoming fearful lest I should make manifest mine abject condition, I rose up, and went where I could not be seen by that lady; saying afterward within myself: ‘Certainly with her also must abide most noble love.’ And with that I resolved upon writing a sonnet, wherein, speaking unto her, I should say all that I have just said.”

Then follows this sonnet, after which he continues: “It happened after this, that whensoever I was seen by this lady, she became pale and of a piteous countenance, as though it had been with love; whereby *she reminded me many times of my own most noble lady, who was wont to be of a like paleness.* And I know that often, when I could not weep nor in any way give ease to mine anguish, I went to look upon this lady, who seemed to bring the tears into mine eyes by the mere sight of her. . . . At length, by the constant sight of this lady, mine eyes began to be gladdened overmuch with her company; through which thing many times I had much unrest and rebuked myself as a base person; also many times I cursed the unsteadfastness of mine eyes. . . . The sight of this lady brought me into so unwonted a condition that I often thought of her as of one too dear unto me; and I began to consider her thus: ‘This lady is young, beautiful, gentle, and wise: perchance it was Love himself who

¹ “*Vidi una gentil donna, giovane e bella molto, la quale da una fenestra mi riguardava molto pietosamente quant' alla vista; sicchè tutta la pietade pareva in lei accolta.*” Dante uses *gentile* in the old English sense of *noble*, and *gentilezza* and *nobiltà* as synonymous.

set her in my path, that so my life might find peace.' And there were times when I thought yet more fondly, until my heart consented unto this reasoning."

He then describes in a sonnet the battle between reason and appetite, and a vision of "the most gracious Beatrice," which led him painfully to repent of his evil desire. From this time on his thoughts turned again to Beatrice with his whole humbled and ashamed heart. He concludes the *Vita Nuova* with a wonderful vision, which determined him "to say nothing further of this most blessed lady until such time when he could discourse more worthily of her who now gazes continually on the countenance of God, blessed for ever. *Laus Deo.*"

In the *Banquet*, which was written several years later, he refers to the same gentle lady, and remarks that she appeared to him a year after the death of Beatrice, who "lives in heaven with the angels, and on earth with his soul," and that she was accompanied by *Amor* and took possession of his mind.¹

This is a clear hint at the sensual character of his new love.

In the same *Banquet* he tells us that after the death of Beatrice he read for his comfort the famous book of Boëthius on the *Consolation of Philosophy*, and Cicero's treatise on *Friendship*, and speaks of the philosophy of these authors as "a gentle lady." And he describes her as "the daughter of God, the queen of all, the most noble and most beautiful philosophy."²

Connecting these passages, it is very evident that the gentle and piteous lady has a double character, like Beatrice, but is in some respects her counterpart. Dante himself says at the close of the first sonnet addressed to the compassionate lady:—

"Lo ! with this lady dwells the counterpart
Of the same Love who holds me weeping now."

The fair lady of the window was an actual being, a Florentine

¹ *Convito*, Trattato Secondo, cap. 2 (ed. Fraticelli, p. 111) : "quella gentil donna, di cui feci menzione nella fine della 'Vita Nuova,' apparve primamente accompagnata d'Amore agli occhi miei, e prese alcuno luogo nella mia mente." This reference sets aside the supposition of two distinct ladies.

² II. 13 : "E immaginava lei fatta come una donna gentile : e non la potea immaginare in atto alcuno, se non misericordioso . . . Questa donna fu figlia d'Iddio, regina di tutto, nobilissima e bellissima filosofa."

beauty of flesh and blood, and at the same time a symbol of philosophy as represented by Cicero and Boëthius. She symbolizes sensual love and worldly wisdom ; while Beatrice symbolizes ideal love and heavenly wisdom. We have again here a combination of the literal or historical with the spiritual or allegorical sense which runs through Dante's whole poem and the events of his life.

We reject therefore the notion that the Donna Pietosa was merely an abstract symbol of philosophy¹, or skepticism², or something higher.³ Nor can we identify her with Gemma Donati ;⁴ for how could he reproach himself for loving his legitimate wife and the mother of his children ? She must have been a different lady who captivated him between the death of Beatrice and his marriage. She was probably that " little girl " (*pargoletta*), or other transient vanity (*altra vanità con sì breve uso*), for which he was reproved by Beatrice.⁵

It is useless to deny that Dante went astray for a period from the path of purity and the love of Beatrice. Boccaccio, his first biographer and commentator, who lived in Florence, reports that

¹ George B. Carpenter, the most recent investigator of this subject, comes to the conclusion that she is simply " a symbol of Dante's love for and study of philosophy, which began in September, 1291, and came to a sudden close in 1298." See his *Episode of the Donna Pietosa*, in the " Eighth Annual Report of the Dante Society," Cambridge, Mass., 1889, p. 75. But Dante's study of philosophy did not come to a close in 1298 ; it runs through the whole *Divina Commedia*.

² So Scartazzini, who, however, distinguishes two " gentle ladies."

³ Some Italian theological commentators have identified her with *la grazia preveniente, la pietosa orazione, la clemenza divina*, and even with *Maria Virgine!*

⁴ So Rossetti in *Dante and his Circle*, p. 101, note.

⁵ *Purg.* XXXI., 58-60 :—

"Thou oughtest not to have stooped thy pinions downward
To wait for further blows, or little girl,
Or other vanity of such brief use."

"There is," says Longfellow (II., 365), " a good deal of gossiping among commentators about this little girl or *pargoletta*." He takes it as a collective term (with Ottimo), and includes in it the lady of Bologna, of whom Dante sings in one of his sonnets :

" And I may say
That in an evil hour I saw Bologna,
And that fair lady whom I looked upon."

R.

he was much given to sensuality.¹ This testimony is confirmed by Dante's own son, Jacopo², and by a sonnet of his friend Guido Cavalcanti, who reproaches him with falling from his "many virtues" into an "abject life."³ But the strongest proof we have in the *Divina Commedia*, which is autobiographic and implies his own need of purification and Divine pardon. He puts into the mouth of Beatrice, when she meets him on the mountain of *Purgatory*, the following severe reproof:—

"Some time did I sustain him with my look ;
 Revealing unto him my youthful eyes,
 I led him with me turned in the right way.
 As soon as ever of my second age
 I was upon the threshold and changed life,
 Himself from me he took and gave to others.
 When from the flesh to spirit I ascended,
 And beauty and virtue were in me increased,
 I was to him less dear and less delightful ;
 And into ways untrue he turned his steps,
 Pursuing the false images of good,
 That never any promises fulfil ;
 Nor prayer for inspiration me availed,
 By means of which in dreams and otherwise
 I called him back, so little did he heed them.
 So low he fell, that all appliances
 For his salvation were already short,
 Save showing him the people of perdition.
 For this I visited the gates of death,
 And unto him, who so far up hath led him,
 My intercessions were with weeping borne.
 God's lofty fiat would be violated,
 If Lethe should be passed, and if such viands
 Should tasted be, withouten any scot
 Of penitence, that gushes forth in tears."⁴

¹ "*molto dedito alla lussuria.*"

² In an unpublished commentary on the *Inferno* in the National Library of Paris, as quoted by Ozanam, in *Les Poetes Franciscains*, p. 356 sq., third edition, Jacopo says that when Dante began the *Commedia* he was "*peccatore e vizioso, e era quasi in una selva di vizi e d'ignoranza,*" and a man who lived carnally (*carnalmente vive*), but that after his ascent to the mountain of true knowledge and true love he left "*questa valle e vita di miseria.*"

³ The sonnet is translated in Rossetti's *Early Italian Poets*, p. 358, and in Longfellow's *Dante*, II., 364.

⁴ *Purg.*, xxx., 121-145. Longfellow's translation. Compare Canto xxxi., 37-63, where Beatrice continues her censure of Dante.

“Pricked by the thorn of penitence,” and “stung at the heart by self-conviction,”¹ Dante makes his confession, falls to the ground, and is drawn neck-deep by Matilda through the river Lethe to be cleansed. On the other shore he is presented first to the four nymphs, who symbolize the four natural virtues; these in turn lead him to the Gryphon, a symbol of the Divine-human Saviour, where Beatrice is standing; and three virgins, who represent the evangelical virtues of faith, hope and love, intercede for him with Beatrice that she would display to him her second beauty.²

Most of the Dante scholars refer these reproaches and confessions to practical transgressions.³

Dante's aberrations were probably confined to the transition period from Beatrice's death and the early part of his political life to his exile, and are not inconsistent with the testimonies in favor of his many virtues.⁴

The self-accusations and repentance of Dante, like the confessions of St. Augustin, impart a personal interest to his *Commedia*, bring him nearer to our sympathy and lessen his guilt.⁵

¹ *Purg.*, xxxi., 35, 38 *sqq.*

² *Ibid.*, xxxi., 130 *sqq.*

³ Cary, Longfellow, Lowell, Plumptre, Ozanam, D'Ancona, Carducci, Rossetti, Philalethes, Witte, Wegele, Döllinger, Scheffer-Boichorst, and others. Witte takes a comprehensive view and combines philosophical, political and erotic aberrations. “*Es wäre ein Irrthum,*” he says (*D. A. Göttl. Kom.*, p. 20), “*wenn man die Entfremdung von dem Andenken an Beatrice, deren Dante sich selber anklagt, ausschliesslich in philosophisch-theoretischen Untersuchungen finden wollte. Gewiss haben wir dabei zugleich an ein weltliches Treiben von mancherlei Art (Fegefeuer, xxiii., 115), an leidenschaftliche Betheligung bei den Partekämpfen und mehr dergleichen zu denken; auch ist kein Grund vorhanden, neuaufkeimende Neigungen zu anderen Frauen (Fegefeuer, xxxi., 58) auszuschliessen.*” Compare the notes of Longfellow on *Purgat.* xxx.

⁴ Melchior Stefano Coppi says that Dante led a moral life (*moralmente visse*), and Sebastiano Engubinus, that he excelled by gifts of nature and every virtue (*inter humana ingenia naturæ dotibus corruscantem et omnium morum habitibus rutilantem*).

⁵ He alludes to St. Augustin in the *Convito* I, 2: “The other case [in which speaking of oneself is allowable] is when the greatest good may come to others by the teaching conveyed; and this reason moved Augustin in his *Confessions* to speak of himself; since in the course of his life, which was from bad to good, and from good to better, and from better to best, he set forth an example and instruction, to which we could have no such true testimony.” St. Augustin is mentioned in *Par.* x., 120, and xxxii., 35.

“O noble conscience and without a stain,
How sharp a sting is trivial fault to thee.”¹

DANTE'S EDUCATION.

Dante received a good education, and was a profound student. He passed through the usual course of the *Trivium* and *Quadrivium*. He studied grammar, rhetoric, music, chronology, astronomy (or astrology rather), medicine, and the old Roman classics, especially Virgil and Cicero. He learned a few Greek and Hebrew words, but depended for his knowledge of the Bible, with nearly all the Christian scholars of the Middle Ages, on the Vulgate of Jerome. He mastered the philosophy of Aristotle (in Latin translations), and the theology of Thomas Aquinas. He had an encyclopædic knowledge of the learning of his age, and worked it up into an independent organic view of the universe. The best proof he gives in his *Convito*. But his knowledge of history was very limited and inaccurate. He believed with his whole age in the false donation of Constantine, and made no distinction between facts, legends and myths.

He attended the schools of his native city, which was the centre of intellectual life in Italy, and probably also the Universities of Bologna, Padua, and Paris, although the date is uncertain. His visit to Oxford is more than doubtful.

His principal teacher in Florence was Brunetto Latini (d. 1294), to whom he addressed a sonnet, accompanied by a copy of the *Vita Nuova*.² He is described by Villani (in his *Cronica*) as a worthy citizen, a great philosopher and perfect master of rhetoric both in speaking and writing, also as the first master in refining the Florentines, and teaching them to speak correctly and to govern the Republic on political principles. He wrote several books, among them a poem in a jingling metre, the *Tesoretto*, which describes a vision, with the customary allegorical personages of the Virtues and Vices. He is supposed by some to have suggested to Dante the first idea of the *Commedia*.

¹ *Purgat.*, III., 8, 9 (Witte's text) :—

“O dignitosa coscienza e netta,
Come t'è picciol fallo amaro morso !”

² Translated by Rossetti, in *Dante and his Circle*, p. 110, beginning
“Master Brunetto, this my little maid.”

But—strange to say—Dante placed him in Hell for a sin against nature, and forever branded him with the mark of infamy.¹ We may admire the stern impartiality of justice, but it would have been far better if he had covered the name of his teacher and friend with the charity of silence.

Dante passed through a period of skepticism, which tempted independent thinkers even in those ages of faith. He substituted, as he informs us in the *Convito*, philosophy for faith, classical literature for the Bible and the Fathers, Athens for Jerusalem. The study of natural science and of medicine emancipates from superstition, but often tends towards materialism and pantheism; hence the proverb which originated in the period of the *Renaissance*, if not earlier: "Where are three physicians, there are two atheists."²

But Dante, like all truly profound intellects, returned to faith, and verified Bacon's maxim, that philosophy superficially tasted leads away from God, thoroughly studied, leads back to God.³ He subordinated philosophy to theology, regarding it as the handmaid of religion, and retained a profound regard for Aristotle and Virgil.

HIS MARRIAGE.

In 1292, two years after the death of Beatrice, in the 27th year of his life, according to others in 1294, he married Gemma Donati, who bore him at least four children (some reports say six, others seven). Two sons, Pietro and Jacopo, and two daughters, Imperia and Beatrice, survived him. Beatrice became a Franciscan nun at Ravenna, and received some aid from the city of Florence through Boccaccio.

Dante never mentions his wife, nor did he see her after his exile. This silence has given rise to the suspicion, supported by Boccaccio, that she was a Xanthippe, or at all events that he was unfortunate in his domestic relations, like Socrates, Milton, Goethe, Byron, Dickens, Carlyle, and other men of genius, who are apt to move in an ideal world above the prosy realities and

¹ *Inferno* xv., 30 sqq.; 101 sqq.

² "Ubi tres medici, duo athei."

³ "*Philosophia, obiter libata, abducit a Deo, penitus hausta, reducit ad eundem.*"

homely duties of ordinary life. It is quite likely that she could not appreciate him, or she would have followed him into exile. But in this case, silence on his part was kinder than speech, and his poverty would go far to explain, if not to excuse, the permanent separation from his family, which it was his duty to support.

A highly gifted German lady, who translated the *Divina Commedia* within the brief space of sixteen months,¹ has taken up the cause of Dante's wife in a remarkable poem, of which I give the first and last stanzas :—

“ On every tongue is Beatrice's name :
 Of thee, much sorrowing one, no song doth tell ;
 The pang of parting like a keen dart came,
 And pierced thee with a wound invisible :
 Art brings her incense to the fair,
 Virtue must wait her crown in heaven to wear.

Yes, thou brave woman, mother of his sons,
 'Twas thine to know the weight of daily care ;
 'Twas thine to understand those piteous tones,
 Thine much to suffer, all in silence bear ;
 How great thy grief, thy woes how manifold,
 God only knows—of them no song hath told.”

DANTE IN PUBLIC LIFE.

The public life of Dante was a disastrous failure. He plunged himself into the whirlpool of party politics. Poetry and politics rarely agree ; the one or the other must suffer by the contact. The one is soaring to the skies, the other cleaves to the earth. Dante was a man of much uncommon sense, but of little common sense which, in practical life, is far more important than the former.

Dante joined the guild of Physicians and Apothecaries, being familiar with their arts, and his name was entered in 1295 as

¹ Josepha von Hoffinger, born at Vienna, 1820, died in 1866, in consequence of her over-exertions in nursing the sick and wounded during the war between Austria and Prussia. She studied theology with Döllinger. Her translation of Dante appeared as a contribution to the sixth centenary of Dante, at Vienna (Braumüller), 1865, in 3 small vols. with brief notes. See Plumptre's *Dante*, II., 492, where her poem on Dante's wife is translated.

“the poet of Florence” (*poeta Fiorentino*). It was one of the seven guilds which controlled the city. In 1299 he was sent as ambassador to the Commune of S. Gemignano to settle a dispute. This is the only embassy before that to Rome, of which we have documentary evidence; other embassies to Siena, Genoa, Perugia, Ferrara, Venice, Naples, and to foreign kings, reported by some writers (Filelfo, Balbo), are mere myths, or at least very doubtful. He was not long enough in political life to fulfill so many missions, and during the seven years from 1294 to 1301 he seems to have been in Florence.

In 1300 he was elected one of the six *Priori delle Arti*, who ruled the city for two months at a time. The Signory of Florence was composed of seven persons, namely, six Priors of professions, and one Gonfaloniere of justice. They were subject to the popular will and an assembly of nobles called the Council of the Hundred. Dante was to hold office from June 15th to August 15th. His colleagues were insignificant persons, scarcely known by name. From that appointment to the priorship, he dated the beginning of his misfortunes.

The little aristocratic Republic of Florence was involved in the great contest between the Guelfs (*Guelfi, Welfen*, from Wolf, a family name) and the Ghibellines (*Ghibellini, Ghibellinen*, from Waiblingen, the patrimonial castle of Conrad of Hohenstaufen, in Swabia), or between the Papists and the Imperialists. This contest may be dated from the time of Pope Gregory VII. and Emperor Henry IV. and the humiliating scene at Canossa, and continued for three or four hundred years. It caused 7200 revolutions and more than 700 wholesale murders in Italy.¹ Every city of Italy was torn by factions headed by petty tyrants. Every Italian was born to an inheritance of hatred and revenge, and could not avoid sharing in the fight. The war between the Guelfs and Ghibellines, under its general and most comprehensive aspect, was a war for the supremacy of Church or State in temporal matters. Boniface VIII., who ascended the chair of St. Peter in 1294, and celebrated the first papal Jubilee in 1300,

¹ This calculation has been made by Ferrari, *Histoire des révolutions d' Italie, ou Guelfes et Ghibelins*, Paris, 1858, 4 vols. (quoted by Döllinger, *Akad. Vorträge*, I., 117.)

claimed the two swords of the Apostles (Luke xxii. 38), the spiritual and the temporal; the spiritual sword to be wielded by the pope directly, the temporal to be wielded by the emperor, but under the pope's authority. The Imperialists maintained the divine origin and independent authority of the State in all things temporal. They anticipated the modern theory which has come to prevail since the sixteenth century.

Besides this, there was in Florence a local family quarrel between the party of Corso Donati, called the Neri or Blacks, and the party of Bianco, called the Bianchi (also Cerchi) or Whites. Florence was predominantly Guelf. Dante himself belonged originally to that party, and fought for it in 1289, at the battle of Campaldino, and at the siege of the castle of Caprona; but when the Bianchi families united with the Ghibellines, he joined them, with the reservation of a certain independence.¹ Pope Boniface VIII. interfered with the government of Florence, and threw all his influence in favor of the Neri and Guelfs.

Dante and his five obscure colleagues acted with strict impartiality, and banished the leaders of both factions. This is the only memorable act in his political career, and it proved fatal to him. Both parties plotted against him. The banished Corso Donati, the *gran barone* of Florence, was determined on revenge, and appealed to Pope Boniface, who eagerly accepted the opportunity of dividing and governing the cities of Tuscany.

Dante was sent with three others to Rome by the Priors who held office from Aug. 15th to Oct. 15th, 1301. He was to oppose the coming of Charles of Valois, brother of King Philip of France, or to induce him to wait for the consent of the ruling party. On that occasion he uttered the proud word of contempt: "If I go, who is to remain; if I remain, who is to go?" This saying was treasured up and promoted his ruin.

He went to Rome without dreaming that he was never to return to his native city, never to see his family, never to sit again on the *Sasso di Dante* in the Piazza of the magnificent

¹ Boccaccio represents him as a most violent Ghibelline, from his exile until his death (see Longfellow, I., 222); but this is inconsistent with his friendship for Guido da Polenta, who was a Guelf, and with his impartial distribution of members of both parties to the places of punishment or reward.

cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, whose foundations had been laid a few years before (1298).

THE BANISHMENT. DANTE AND BONIFACE VIII.

On Nov. 1st, 1301, Charles of Valois entered Florence by authority of the Pope, under the title of "Pacifier of Tuscany." With his aid the Guelf or Donati party triumphed.

Dante and three of his colleagues in office as Priori were banished from Tuscany for two years, and declared incapable of holding any public office, on the charge of extortion, embezzlement, and corruption, and of having resisted the Pope and expelled the Neri, the faithful servants of the Pope. Having been cited for trial and not appearing, they were also fined 5000 florins each for contumacy. The sentence is dated January 27th, 1302. It was repeated March 10th, with the threat that they would be burnt alive if they ever returned to the territory of Florence. Their property was confiscated.

The charges were never proved, and were no doubt invented or exaggerated by the party fanaticism of his enemies. Dante treated the charges with the contempt of silence. His innocence is asserted by all his biographers, including Giovanni Villani, who was a Guelf.

Dante spent several months in Rome. The Pope summoned him and his fellow-ambassadors, and scolded them for their obstinacy, but promised them his benediction on condition of obedience to his authority. This is all we know about this embassy, and even this is very uncertain.¹

Dante assigned to Boniface, for his grasping ambition, avarice and simony, a place in hell.² He calls him "the

¹ Quite recently the fact of Dante's embassy to Boniface VIII., which rests on the authority of Boccaccio and Bruni, has been denied by Scartazzini (*Handbook to Dante*, transl. by Th. Davidson, p. 82), on the ground chiefly of the silence of Giovanni Villani, the contemporary chronicler of Florence. If Dante was in Florence at the time of the catastrophe, he must have fled with his political partisans after the first sentence of banishment.

² *Inferno*, XIX., 53 sqq. The *Divina Commedia* was commenced in 1300, but not completed before 1321; Boniface died 1303.

prince of modern Pharisees,"¹ and a usurper, who turned the cemetery of St. Peter (that is, the Vatican hill) into a common sewer.²

This was the pope who asserted, but could no longer maintain, the most extravagant claims of divine authority over the church and the world, and marks the beginning of the decline of the papacy from such a giddy height. He frightened Celestine into a resignation, and was inaugurated with extraordinary pomp, riding on a white horse instead of an humble ass, two kings holding the bridle, but amidst a furious hurricane which extinguished every lamp and torch in St. Peter's. A similar storm interrupted the crowning ceremony of the Vatican Council in 1870, when Pope Pius IX. read the decree of his own infallibility by candle-light in midnight darkness.

Yet Dante did not spare his righteous wrath against Philip the Fair of France, that "modern Pilate," who with sacrilegious violence seized the aged Boniface at Anagni,

"And Christ in his own Vicar captive made."³

DANTE IN EXILE.

Dante learned the sentence of his banishment at Siena, on his return from Rome, probably in April, 1302. The other exiles joined him and engaged with the Ghibellines in vain plots for a recovery of power. "Florence," he said, "we must recover: Florence for Italy, and Italy for the world." They established a provisional government, raised an army and made

¹ *Inferno*, xxvii., 85.

² *Parad.*, xxvii., 22-27, where St. Peter says:

"He who usurps upon the earth my place,
My place, my place, which vacant has become
Before the presence of the Son of God,
Has of my cemetery made a sewer
Of blood and stench, whereby the Perverse One,
Who fell from hence, below there is appeased!"

["*Fatto ha del cimiterio mio cloaca
Del sangue e della puzza; onde il perverso,
Che cadde di quassù, laggiù (i. e., nell' inferno) si placa.*"]

³ *Purg.*, xx., 87 sqq.

two attacks upon Florence, but were defeated, and the prisoners were slaughtered without mercy.

Dante became discouraged, and finally withdrew from all parties. He always was a patriot rather than a partisan, and tried to reconcile parties for the good of the country. He esteemed patriotism as the highest natural virtue, and abhorred treason as the most hideous crime, worthy of a place with Judas in the lowest depth of hell.

The confiscation of his property left him and his family destitute; but his wife, being of the wealthy Donati family, may have recovered a portion under the plea of a settlement for dowry.

From the time of his banishment to his death, a period of nearly twenty years, Dante wandered through Upper and Middle Italy from city to city, from court to court, from convent to convent, a poor, homeless and homesick exile, with the sentence of death by fire hanging over him; everywhere meeting friends and admirers among Ghibellines and those who could appreciate poetry and virtue, but also enemies and detractors, finding rest and happiness nowhere except in the study of truth and the contemplation of eternity. "Florence," he says in his *Convito* (I. 3), "the beautiful city, the famous daughter of Rome, has rejected me from her sweet bosom, where I was born, where I grew to middle life, and where, if it may please her, I wish from my heart to end my life and then to rest my weary soul. Through almost all parts where our language is spoken, I have gone, a wanderer, well-nigh a beggar, showing against my will the wounds of fortune. Truly I have been a vessel without sail or rudder, driven to divers ports and shores by that hot blast, the breath of dolorous poverty." It must have been hard, very hard indeed, for such a proud spirit to eat the salty bread of others, and to go up and down the stairs of strangers.¹ He fully experienced the bitter truth of the words of Ecclesias-

¹ *Parad.*, XVII., 58-60:

"Thou shalt have proof how savoreth of salt (*sa di sale*)
The bread of others, and how hard a road
The going down and up another's stairs."

ticus: "It is a miserable thing to go from house to house; for where thou art a stranger, thou darest not open thy mouth. . . . My son, lead not a beggar's life, for better is it to die than to beg."

When stopping at the convent of Santa Croce del Corvo and asked by the prior what he wanted, he replied: "Peace."

And yet it was during this sad period of exile that he wrote his *Divina Commedia*. It brought him no earthly reward (for authorship was unprofitable in the Middle Ages), but immortal fame. It was truly a child of sorrow and grief, like many of the greatest and most enduring works of man. For—

*"Poesie ist tiefes Schmerzen,
Und es kommt das schönste Lied
Nur aus einem Menschenherzen,
Das ein schweres Leid durchglüht."*²

He seems to have spent most of the years of his banishment in Bologna, Padua, and Verona, studying everywhere and gathering local and historical information for his great poem. He probably visited Paris also about the year 1309, and buried himself in theological study. Other reports place this visit before his exile. Perhaps he was there twice. The chronicler Villani simply says: "Dante was expelled and banished from Florence, and went to study at Bologna, and then to Paris, and into several parts of the world." Boccaccio's account is vague and confused.

The expedition of Emperor Henry VII., of Luxemburg, to Italy in 1310, excited in him the hope of the overthrow of the Guelfs and the realization of his theory on the Monarchy, that is, the temporal supremacy of the holy Roman Empire in independent connection with the Catholic Church. He hailed him as a "Second Moses," who was called to heal Italy, which had been without an emperor since the extinction of the house of

² Justinus Kerner, the Swabian poet and friend of Uhland and Schwab. Remember also Goethe's—

*"Wer nie sein Brot mit Thränen ass,
Wer nie die kummervollen Nächte
Auf seinem Bette weinend sass,
Der kennt euch nicht, ihr himmlischen Mächte."*

Hohenstaufen, and torn by feuds, civil wars and anarchy.¹ He would not recognize Rudolph of Habsburg (1273–1292), nor Albert I. (“*Alberto tedesco*”, 1298–1308), as emperors, because they never came to Italy and were not crowned by the pope. He regarded Frederick II. (1220–1250) as the last emperor, but placed him in Hell among the heretics.² He exhorted Henry in a letter to pursue energetic measures for the restoration of peace. He addressed a letter to all the rulers of Italy, urging them to yield obedience to the new Cæsar consecrated by the successor of Peter. But the emperor could accomplish nothing. He died—it was said of poison—Aug. 24th, 1313, after a short reign of five years, near Siena and was buried in the Campo Santo of Pisa.³

With his death the cause of the Ghibellines and the political aspirations of Dante were well-nigh crushed.

In the year 1316 or 1317, the government of Florence, in the feeling of security, offered amnesty to political exiles, but on condition of a fine and penance in the church, thus degrading them to a level with criminals. A nephew of Dante and his friends urged him to accept, but he proudly refused pardon at the expense of honor.

¹ Schiller calls the interregnum, from 1254 to 1273, “*die kaiserlose, die schreckliche Zeit.*”

² *Inf.*, x., 118–20 :

“Within here is the second Frederick,
And the Cardinal ; and of the rest I speak not.”

Frederick II., the most brilliant of the Hohenstaufen emperors, successively the pupil, the enemy and the victim of the papacy, was called by Pope Gregory IX. “a beast, full of the words of blasphemy,” and accused of being the author of the sentence “*De Tribus Impostoribus*” (Moses, Jesus, Mohammed), which haunted the Middle Ages like a ghost. “The Cardinal” is Ottaviano degli Ubaldini, of Florence, who doubted the immortality of the soul. On the skepticism of Frederick II., see H. Reuter’s *Geschichte der Aufklärung im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1877), Vol. II., 251–304, especially 275 sqq. He thinks that the word about “the three impostors” is probably authentic, but cannot be proven.

³ See Robert Pöhlmann, *Der Römerzug Kaiser Heinrichs VII. und die Politik der Curie, des Hauses Anjou und der Welfenliga*, Nürnberg, 1875 ; and Georg Irmer, *Die Romfahrt Kaiser Heinrichs VII.*, 1881. They shed light on many obscure passages in the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*. See Plumptre, I, p. CXXVIII. sq.

"Has my innocence," he wrote to a priest, "which is manifest to all, after nearly fifteen years of banishment, deserved such a recall? Have my incessant labors and studies deserved it? Far be it from a man familiar with philosophy to submit to such indignity. Far be it from a man who is a preacher of righteousness and suffered injustice, to pay those who did him injustice, as if they were his benefactors? This is not the way to return to my native city. I will rather never enter Florence. And what then? Can I not everywhere behold the mirrors of the sun and the stars? Can I not everywhere study the sweetest truths rather than render myself inglorious, yea, most ignominious to the people and commonwealth of Florence? Nor will bread fail me."¹

CAN GRANDE, THE VELTRO, AND THE DUX.

In the year 1317, Dante went to Can Grande, of the family della Scala (Scaligeri) of Verona, who was the leader of the Ghibelline party in Lombardy, and appointed Vicar of Henry VII. in 1311. He was much younger than the poet and survived him eight years (b. 1291, d. 1329). Many exiled Ghibellines and other unfortunate persons of distinction found refuge at his hospitable court, which displayed a barbaric magnificence similar to the court of Frederick II. in Sicily. He kept, we are told, actors, buffoons, musicians and parasites, who were more caressed by the courtiers than poets and scholars. "Various apartments in the palace were assigned to them, designated by various symbols; a Triumph for the warriors, Groves of the Muses for the poets; Mercury for the artists; Paradise for the preachers; and for all inconstant Fortune. . . . All had their private attendants, and a table equally well served. At times Can Grande invited some of them to his own table, particularly Dante and Guido di Castel di Reggio, exiled from his country with the friends of liberty."²

Dante fixed his political hopes, after the death of Henry VII. (1313), upon Can Grande, and gave him an undeserved celebrity.

¹ An extract from *Ep. x.*, 500-503 (ed. of Fraticelli).

² Quoted by Longfellow, III., 308. A lively picture of Can Grande's court and Dante's life there is given by Ferrari in his comedy, *Dante a Verona*.

He made him the subject of predictions in the *Commedia*, none of which were fulfilled.

He mentions him first in the introductory canto of the *Inferno* under the allegorical name of *Veltro*, which means *greyhound*, and was suggested by the name *cane*, *hound*, and the boundary of his territory, "*tra Feltro e Feltro*," i. e., between Feltro in Friuli and Montefeltro in Romagna. He describes him as the coming saviour of Italy, who sets his heart not on land and money, but on wisdom, love and virtue, and who will slay the wolf of avarice, the root of many evils (1 Tim. 6 : 8, 9).¹

"Many the animals with whom she [the she-wolf, *lupa*] weds,
And more they shall be still, until the greyhound [*il veltro*]
Comes, who shall make her perish in her pain.

He shall not feed on either earth or pelf,
But upon wisdom, and on love and virtue ;
'Twixt Feltro and Feltro shall his nation be ;

Of that low Italy shall he be the saviour,
On whose account the maid Camilla died,
Euryalus, Turnus, Nisus, of their wounds ;

Through every city he shall hunt her down,
Until he shall have driven her back to Hell,
There from whence envy first did let her loose."

In the *Paradiso* he praises his benefactor in similar terms.²

"But ere the Gascon cheat the noble Henry,
Some sparkles of his virtue shall appear
In caring not for silver nor for toil.
So recognized shall his magnificence
Become hereafter, that his enemies
Will not have power to keep mute tongues about it.

On him rely, and on his benefits ;
By him shall many people be transformed,
Changing condition rich and mendicant."³

¹ *Inferno*, I., 100 sqq.

² *Parad.*, XVII., 82-90, sqq.

³ The Gascon is Clement V., who was elected Pope in 1305. The "noble Henry" is the Emperor Henry VII., who came to Italy in 1310, when Can Grande was about 19 years of age. Clement publicly professed to be Henry's friend, but secretly he was his enemy, and is said to have instigated or connived at his death by poison.

He dedicated to him the first cantos of the *Paradiso*, and wrote him a letter which furnishes the key to the allegorical understanding of the *Commedia*.

In all probability Can Grande is also meant in that passage of the *Purgatorio*—the obscurest in the whole poem—where Beatrice predicts the coming of a mighty captain and messenger of God who would restore the Roman empire and slay the Roman harlot, (*i. e.*, the corrupt, rapacious papacy), together with her giant paramour (*i. e.*, the King of France who transferred the papacy to Avignon).¹

“ Without an heir shall not forever be
The Eagle that left his plumes upon the car,
Whence it became a monster, then a prey ;

For verily I see, and hence narrate it,
The stars already near to bring the time,
From every hindrance safe, and every bar,

Within which a *Five-hundred, Ten, and Five*,
One sent from God, shall slay the thievish woman,
And that same giant who is sinning with her.”²

The mystic number 515, in Roman numerals DXV, or with a slight transposition DVX, means not a period (as between Charlemagne and Louis the Bavarian, 799–1314), but a person, a *Dux*, a captain, a prince. Some eminent commentators refer it to Emperor Henry VII.;³ but he was more than a *Dux*, and died (1313) before the *Purgatorio* was completed (about 1318). We must, therefore, either think of some unknown future Roman emperor,⁴ or of Can Grande whom

¹ *Purg.*, XXXIII., 37–45.

² “ *Nel quale un cinquecento diece e cinque,
Messo da Dio, anciderà la fuia,
Con quel gigante che con lei delinque.*”

³ Longfellow, Plumptre, and others who understand the *Veltro* of Can Grande.

⁴ So Witte (p. 649) : “ *Der Dichter wird in der Zeit die vergangen war, seit er die Prophezeiung zu Anfang der Hölle geschrieben hatte, erkannt haben, dass Can Grande der Aufgabe, die er ihm damals gestellt hatte, nicht genügte, und so überweist er nun deren Erfüllung entfernteren unbestimmteren Hoffnungen. Ob Dante dabei an eine schon lebende, bestimmte Persönlichkeit gedacht habe, und an welche, ist zweifelhaft. Möglich wäre es, dass er um diese Zeit noch von dem mehr als zwanzigjährigen Sohne Heinrichs VII., dem König Johann von Böhmen, solche Erwartungen gehegt hätte.*”

Dante praised both before in the *Inferno*, and afterward in the *Paradiso*.¹ The initials of his name and title have been found in the number 515.²

Dante was sadly disappointed in his expectations. Henry VII. died before he could accomplish any reform. Can Grande, though a liberal patron of the poet, was a tyrant, and in no way qualified for such a high task. Dante overestimated his character. Men of genius are often lacking in knowledge of human nature, or understand it better in general than in particular. It is always dangerous to prophesy.

But if we apply Dante's hermeneutical canon of a double sense to this case, we may find in the *Veltro* and the *Dux* some future restorer and reformer for whom Can Grande was merely to pave the way.

NOTE.—The name *Veltro* and the mystic number DXV have given as much trouble to Dante scholars, as the apocalyptic number 666 (Rev. 13: 18) to biblical commentators. Scartazzini, in a special excursus (*Com. on Purgat.*, II., 802, sqq.), enumerates a list of no less than 65 separate monographs and essays on the subject. The majority understand both terms, or at least *Veltro*, of Can Grande. Other interpretations are:—

1. Ugucione della Faggiola, a brave Ghibelline captain, who, with the remaining soldiers of Henry VII. and other Ghibellines subdued Lucca, and defeated the Guelfs, in 1315, but afterwards met reverses and retired to Can della Scala. (Troya, *Del Veltro allegorico di Dante*, Firenze, 1826; and *Del Veltro allegorico dei Ghibellini*, Napoli, 1856).

2. Emperor Henry VII. Very plausible, but impossible, for chronological reasons.

¹ So Blanc, Philaethes, Wegele, Scartazzini, and many others.

² According to the following computation of the numerical value of letters:—

k = 10	s = 90
g = 7	d = 4
d = 4	e = 5
e = 5	v = 300
s = 90	
	515

Kan [for Can] Grande **DE** Scala Signore **DE** Verona. Scartazzini (in his *Com.* II., 779) remarks: "*Tutto s' accorda adunque a rendere assai verisimile l' opinione che il DXV sia Cangrande della Scalla, opinione che, come vedremo nella digressione, fu adottata dal maggior numero dei commentatori antichi e moderni.*" The computation, however, is very artificial, more so than the reference of the apocalyptic number 666 to Nero [n] Cæsar (נרון קסר = 50, 200, 6, 50, 100, 60, 200, in all 666).

3. Emperor Louis the Bavarian, who was chosen Henry's successor in October, 1314, crowned in Milan, and in Rome by two bishops. He quarreled with Pope John XXII., declared him a heretic, was excommunicated, deposed the pope and elected an anti-pope, but could not maintain the opposition, and died in 1347 while preparing for another expedition to Italy.

4. An undefined future emperor and reformer.

5. Jesus Christ coming to judgment. DXV is interpreted *Dominus Xristus Victor*, or *Vindex*.

6. The archangel Michael.

7. A Roman Pontiff: DXV = *Domini Xristi Vicarius*. But Dante had a poor opinion of popes and saw none of them in heaven. Still less can he mean a particular pope of his own time, as Benedict XI, who was elected 1303 and died 1304, or Clement V. (1305-1314), or John XXII. (1316-1334), who resided in Avignon.

The most absurd interpretations are: Dante himself; Luther (*Veltro* = *Lutero*); Garibaldi; Victor Immanuel II.; William I. of Prussia, first Protestant Emperor of Germany!!!

DANTE IN RAVENNA.

Dante spent two or three years at the court of Can Grande. Even there he was not happy. He lost more and more the hope of the regeneration of Italy during his lifetime, and put it off to the indefinite future.¹ He felt the salt savor of the bread of poverty, and the want of appreciation among his surroundings. His patron once asked him why a buffoon won greater favor with the courtiers by his wit than he by his genius. Dante replied: "Because like loves like."² The friendship was seriously disturbed, though not entirely broken.

Dante repaired to the ruined city of Ravenna on the Adriatic, famous for its pine woods, basilicas and baptisteries from the post-Nicene age. It is the last outpost of Byzantine rule in the West, and to the historian and antiquarian one of the most remarkable spots in Italy.

In this city the weary pilgrim spent the rest of his life under the protection of Guido Novello da Polenta, the lord of Ravenna, who, being himself well educated, knew how to appreciate scholars. Although he was a Guelf, he treated the Ghibelline poet with all due honor.

¹ *Purg.* XXXIII., 40; *Parad.* XXVII., 42.

² "*Perchè ciascuno ama il suo simile.*" "*Similis simili gaudet.*" "*Gleich und gleich gesellt sich gern.*"

Here he finished the *Paradiso*. Here, it seems, his sons Pietro and Jacopo, and his daughter Beatrice joined him. Long after his death we find her, whose very name reminded him of the love of his youth and the solace of his manhood, as a nun in a Franciscan convent at Ravenna. The city of Florence sent her, through Boccaccio, some aid, which was the first sign of regret for the injustice done to her father.

DEATH AND BURIAL.

Once more Dante's rest was disturbed by a mission to Venice to settle a quarrel between that city and the lord of Ravenna. This mission, like all his political life, was a failure. The senate of Venice refused him permission to return in one of her ships, and passing in midsummer through that unhealthy region which lies between the two cities, he caught a fever which proved fatal.

He died under the roof of Guido da Polenta, after having devoutly partaken of the last sacrament, at the age of fifty-six years and four months, on September 14th, 1321, the day of the elevation of the cross. "He was no doubt" says Boccaccio, "received into the arms of his most noble Beatrice, and now enjoys with her, after the miseries of this earthly life, that bliss which has no end."

Dante lost his early love, but found it again in Paradise. His labors for Florence were rewarded with exile from his native city. But he always held fast to his principles and ideals. What his age refused him, posterity has abundantly granted, and will continue to grant, to the sublimest of poets. "The homeless exile found a home in thousands of grateful hearts." *E venne dall' esilio a questa pace.*

Dante was honorably buried in the Franciscan chapel of St. Mary with a wreath of laurel on his head and a lyre at his feet, perhaps, also, according to an uncertain tradition, in the garb of a Franciscan friar. A plain monument repeatedly restored¹ is erected over his remains, with a Latin inscription of six

¹ Lowell describes it as "a little shrine covered with a dome, not unlike the tomb of a Mohammedan saint," and as "the chief magnet which draws foreigners and their gold to Ravenna." I visited the shrine and the old Basilicas and the Baptistery of St. John in June, 1888.

hexameters, said to have been written by himself, and ending with the words :—

“ *Hic claudor Dantes, patriis extorris ab oris,
Quem genuit parvi Florentia mater amoris.*”

“ Here am I, Dante, shut, exiled from the ancestral shore,
Whom Florence, the of all least loving mother, bore.”¹

POSTHUMOUS FAME.

Florence asked in vain for the ashes of her greatest son, but she created a chair for the explanation of his *Divina Commedia*, in 1373,² and erected a costly monument to his memory in the church of Santa Croce, the pantheon of Italian geniuses, between those of Michael Angelo and the poet Alfieri, with the inscription :—

“ *Onorate l' altissimo poeta !*”

“ Honor the loftiest of poets.”³

The example of Florence was followed by other cities, and before the end of the fourteenth century Dante chairs were erected in Bologna, Pisa, Piacenza, and Milan. Quite recently such a chair was established also in the University of Rome, and offered to the distinguished liberal poet Carducci, of Bologna, who, however, declined the call (1888). In Germany, England and America special Dante societies have been organized for the same purpose.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Dante was

¹ A close translation of J. Russell Lowell in his essay on Dante. Plumptre (I., p. CXXVII.), translates the two hexameters more freely thus :—

“ Here am I laid, I, Dante, far from home,
Exiled from that fair city, doomed to roam,
To whom I owed my birth, who yet did prove
To me, her child, without a mother's love.”

There is reason to doubt that Dante thus took revenge in his last word on his native city. The first inscription, according to Villani and Boccaccio, was that of his scholarly friend, Giovanni di Virgilio, who praises his merits and likewise reproaches Florence for her ingratitude. It is given by Plumptre, with a translation I., CXXVII., sq.

² The Dante chair was first occupied by Boccaccio, who explained the first 17 cantos of the *Inferno*, when he was interrupted by a fatal sickness (d. Dec. 21st, 1375), and then by Villani, and Filelfo.

³ Words which Dante applies to Virgil. *Inf.* IV., 80.

neglected even in Italy, and between 1629 and 1726 no edition of his works appeared.

But in the present century, especially during the last fifty years, Italian, German, French, English and American scholars have vied with each other in editing and expounding the works and reproducing the ideas of the great poet for the benefit of the present generation. Between 1800 and 1865, the sixth centenary of his birth, no less than 238 editions of the *Divina Commedia* have been published; while the total sum of editions to date reaches about 350 or more.¹

THE SIXTH CENTENARY OF DANTE'S BIRTH.

The veneration for Dante culminated in the celebration of the sixth centenary of his birth in Florence, Ravenna, and other Italian cities. It was at the same time a patriotic festival of united and free Italy, toward which his name and genius had richly contributed. For more than a year the *Giornale del Centenario*, devoted to Dantesque subjects, had prepared the public mind. A hundred thousand people, including representatives of poetry, literature, science and politics, gathered in Florence—then the national capital—to do honor to his memory. Three days were given up to public rejoicings, eloquent speaking, processions, tournaments, illuminations, banquets, musical and theatrical entertainments. The great feature was the unveiling of Piazza's statue of Dante in the Piazza of Santa Croce, by Victor Emanuel II., the first king of united Italy. The multitude shouted:

“Honor to the loftiest of poets.”

Five years afterward Rome was made the capital of Italy, and thus Dante's political aspirations, as far as Italy is concerned, were fulfilled.

¹ Hettinger, *Die Göttliche Kōmodie*, etc. (1880), p. 55. Scartazzini (*Handbook to Dante*, p. 159) counts 15 editions from 1472-1500, 30 editions from 1501-1600, 3 editions from 1601-1700, 257 editions from 1801-1882; in all he counts 336 editions including his own (1882). Several new editions from stereotype plates have appeared since. Botta (p. 142) estimates the total number of editions at about four hundred (in 1886). Catalogues of the editions are given by Lord Vernon in his *édition de luxe*, in Ferrazi's *Manuale Dantesco*, and other bibliographical works on Dante.

CHARACTER AND HABITS OF DANTE.

The personal appearance and habits of Dante are described by Boccaccio, his first biographer, who knew his nephew, and delivered lectures on the *Divina Commedia* in 1373.

According to him, Dante was of middle height, slightly bent in later years, dignified and courteous, always decently dressed; his face long, his nose aquiline, his eyes large, his cheeks full, his lower lip somewhat protruding beyond the upper; his complexion dark, his hair and beard black, thick and crisp; his countenance always sad and thoughtful; his manner calm and polished. He was most temperate in eating and drinking, fond of music and singing, most zealous in study, of marvellous capacity of memory; much inclined to solitude, and familiar with few; grave and taciturn, but fervent and eloquent when occasion required. The author of the *Decamerone* charges him with incontinence, which, in his eyes and that of his age and nation, was an excusable weakness; but, whatever view we may take of his unfaithfulness to Beatrice, for which he was severely rebuked in Purgatory, he deeply repented of it.¹

Dante was no saint, any more than Milton or Goethe, but profoundly religious and serious to austerity. He charges himself with pride and envy. He had a violent temper, and indulged in the language of scorn and contempt. He was deficient in the crowning graces of humility and charity. But his principles were pure, and his ideas rose to the highest peak of grandeur and sublimity. He was capable of the sweetest love and the bitterest hatred. His relation to Beatrice reveals an unfathomable depth of soul. He was a man of intense belief, and thought himself invested with a divine mission, like the Hebrew Prophets. He loved truth and righteousness, and hated falsehood and iniquity. He loved his native Florence and Italy, in spite of ill treatment. He was the most ardent patriot—the Italian of Italians—and yet a cosmopolitan. He was true to his convictions, and uttered them without fear or favor of men, and without regard to his own comfort and happiness.

¹ See above, pp. 295 sqq.

In his immortal work he wrote his own biography, his passage through the knowledge of sin and the struggle of repentance to the holiness and bliss of heaven.

PORTRAITS OF DANTE.¹

There are two contemporaneous and equally characteristic pictures of Dante: the portrait painted by Giotto on wood and copied al fresco on the altar-wall of the chapel of the Palace of the Podestà in Florence (now the Bargello, a police-station and prison), and a plaster cast of his face taken after his death and preserved in the Museum in Florence. They substantially agree with the description of Boccaccio (except the absence of the beard), but differ as youth differs from mature age. Giotto represents the poet in the beauty and vigor of youth or early manhood with a pomegranate in his hand and a cap gracefully covering his head. Professor Charles E. Norton, of Harvard College, places "this likeness of the supreme poet by the supreme artist of mediæval Europe at the head of all the portraits of the revival of art." After centuries of neglect it was recovered in 1848 and chromo-lithographed by the Arundel Society from the tracing of the fresco, which Seymour Kirkup, an English artist, made previously to its restoration or *rifacimento*.² The mask represents the poet in the repose of death at the age of fifty-six years, grave, stern, melancholy, with the marks of the conflict of an iron will with misfortune. It furnished the outlines to Raphael's pictures, which have made Dante's mortal frame so familiar to the world.³ "The face of the youth," says

¹ Much has been written on the portraits of Dante by Italians, in the *Giornale del Centenario di Dante* (Florence 1864-65); by Witte, Welcker, Savi and Paur, in the "Transactions of the German Dante Society" (1869, 1871, etc.); by Charles E. Norton (*On the Original Portraits of Dante*, Cambridge, Mass., 1865, reprinted in Longfellow's *Dante* I., 363 sqq.), S. F. Clarke (1884), and Dean Plumtre (vol. II., 529-532). See note on p. 325.

² The original of the tracing is in possession of Lord Vernon, the liberal patron of Dante scholarship. A facsimile in the first volume of Plumtre's *Dante* (1887), in Fraticelli's and other editions of the *Commedia*.

³ Norton gives three photographs of the plaster cast; and Plumtre puts a copy in front of his second volume.

Norton, "is grave, as with the shadow of distant sorrow; the face of the man is solemn, as of one who had gone

*"Per tutti i cerchj del dolente regno."*¹

"All the portraits of Dante," says Lord Macaulay, in his essay on Milton, "are singularly characteristic. No person can look on the features, noble even to ruggedness, the dark furrows of the cheek, the haggard and woful stare of the eye, the sullen and contemptuous curl of the lip, and doubt that they belonged to a man too proud and too sensitive to be happy."

Thomas Carlyle, a poet in prose and a painter in words, calls Dante's portrait "the mournfullest face that ever was painted from reality; an altogether tragic, heart-affecting face. There is in it, as foundation of it, the softness, tenderness, gentle affection as of a child; but all this is as if congealed into sharp contradiction, into abnegation, isolation, proud, hopeless pain. A soft, ethereal soul looking out so stern, implacable, grim, trenchant, as from imprisonment of thick-ribbed ice! Withal it is a silent pain too, a silent, sorrowful one; the lip is curled in a kind of god-like disdain of the thing that is eating out his heart,—as if it were withal a mean, insignificant thing, as if he whom it had power to torture and strangle were greater than it. The face of one wholly in protest, and life-long, unsundering battle against the world. Affection all converted into indignation—an implacable indignation; slow, equable, silent, like that of a god! The eye too, it looks out as in a kind of surprise, a kind of inquiry, why the world was of such a sort? This is Dante: so he looks, this 'voice of ten silent centuries,' and sings us 'his mystic, unfathomable song.'"

What Giotto painted from life, Raphael, with equal genius, reproduced from the mask. In his "Disputa" on the mystical presence, he places Dante between Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus, the heads of the two rival schools of scholastic theology; in his "Parnassus," he places Dante between Virgil and Homer, the two master poets of classical antiquity.

¹ The famous descriptions of Dante's picture by Macaulay (1825), and Carlyle (1840), apply to the copies made from the mask rather than the picture of Giotto, which was recovered afterward, and they must be judged accordingly.

This was Dante: the poet, philosopher, theologian, prophet. He made love and poetry, learning and art subservient to faith, which lifts man from the abyss of hell to the beatific vision of saints in heaven.

THE WORKS OF DANTE.

The writings of Dante (with the exception of that on Vulgar Eloquence), are autobiographic and turn around his personal experience.

The *Vita Nuova*, the *Convito*, and the *De Monarchia* form a trilogy: the first represents youth, poetry and love; the second manhood, philosophy and learning; the third statesmanship and an ideal commonwealth.

THE NEW LIFE.

The *Vita Nuova*¹ is the charming story of his love for Beatrice, and the transfiguration of an earthly into a heavenly beauty and of human into divine wisdom. It is the autobiography of his youth, the rising and the setting of the morning star of his life. The narrative is interspersed with sonetti, ballate and canzoni. It was written in Florence, shortly after the death of Beatrice, in his 26th or 27th year (1290 or 1291), while his tears for her were still flowing.² It is dedicated to his friend Guido Cavalcanti, who died in 1300.³

THE BANQUET.

The Convito (Convivio),⁴ or *Banquet (Feast)*, so called probably

¹ Some explain the title literally: *The Early or Youthful Life*; others mystically: *The New Life*, or Palingenesia, Regeneration, caused by Beatrice.

² As Boccaccio says: "*duranti ancora le lagrime della sua morta Beatrice.*"

³ Best Italian editions by Alessandro d'Ancona (2d ed., Pisa), 1884, with commentary and a discourse on Beatrice, pp. lxxxviii., and 257); by Pietro Fraticelli (in the second vol. of *Opere Minori di Dante*, Firenze, 1835, etc.); by Giambattista Giuliani (*Vita Nuova e il Canzoniere di D. A.*, Firenze, 1868, with a list of editions, pp. 155-168); and by Karl Witte (Leipzig, 1876, with an account of all earlier editions). Best English translations by Charles Eliot Norton (Prof. of Fine Arts in Harvard College, Cambridge): *The New Life of Dante Al.*, Boston, 1876 (pp. 149), and by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, in his *Dante and His Circle* (pp. 29-110), Boston ed., 1876. Comp. also Rod. Renier, *La Vita Nuova e la Fiammetta*, Turin and Rome, 1879; and Gietmann, *Beatrice*, Freiburg, i. B., 1889.

⁴ Witte prefers *Convivio*.

in reminiscence of Plato's *Symposion*, is an encyclopædic compend of the theological, philosophical and scientific knowledge of his age for the unlearned in their own language. It is likewise composed of prose and poetry, but unfinished. It was to embrace fifteen books or *trattati* (including the introduction), and fourteen canzoni, but only four books and three canzoni were completed. It is esteemed as the first masterpiece of Italian prose, and contains passages of great eloquence and pathos. It is, however, very hard reading, and the text is exceedingly corrupt.

The *Banquet* contains, as far as it goes, the raw material of the *Comedy*. In it theology and philosophy are for the first time addressed to the laity in the vernacular language.

The *Convito* was begun perhaps as early as 1298, but enlarged during his exile, to which it alludes.¹

ON THE EMPIRE.

The book *De Monarchia* is a political treatise in which Dante unfolds in the Latin language, for scholars, his views on government and the relation of the papacy and the empire. It contains the programme of the Ghibellines or the imperial party, but it is rather an ideal Ghibellinism which rose above the narrowness of party spirit. He proves, in three parts, first, that there must be a universal monarchy or empire; secondly, that this monarchy belongs of right and by tradition to the Roman people; and thirdly, that the monarchy depends immediately upon God, and not upon the pope.

The conflicting interests of society in his judgment require an impartial arbiter, and only a universal monarch can be an impartial arbiter, since kings of limited territories are always liable to be influenced by selfish motives and aims. A universal monarch alone can insure universal peace. The right of Rome is based upon the facts that Christ was born under the reign of Augustus and died under Tiberius. The universal rule of God is divided

¹ The Italian text with notes in Fraticelli's ed. of *Dante's Opere Minori* (Firenze, ed. II., 1862, pp. 399); Giuliani's ed. (1875); English translation by Elizabeth Price Sayer, London, 1887, with an introduction by Henry Morley, and another by Katharine Hillard, London, 1889, with an introduction. The chronology of the *Convito* is much disputed; the estimates vary from 1298 to 1314. Witte assigns it to the period from 1300 to 1308.

between the emperor and the pope; the emperor is supreme by divine right in temporal things, and is to guide the human race to temporal felicity in accordance with the teaching of philosophy; the pope also by divine right is supreme in spiritual or ecclesiastical things, and is to guide men to eternal life in accordance with the truth of Revelation.

This theory is in direct opposition to the ultramontane doctrine of the two swords as proclaimed in the same age by Boniface VIII., in his famous bull *Unam Sanctam* (Nov. 24, 1302), which teaches an absolute papacy with supreme control over temporal sovereigns. Dante placed this pope in hell; no wonder that after his death the book *De Monarchia* (as Boccaccio reports) was condemned and burnt as heretical, in 1329, by the papal legate, Cardinal del Pogetto, with the authority of Pope John XXII., of Avignon. He intended also to burn the bones of the poet, but was restrained by powerful friends. The Council of Trent put the book on the Index.

The political theory of Dante has never been realized, except in part and on a limited national scale. Some have compared it with the constitution of the Netherlands, others with that of the United States; but neither comparison will hold. Dante was thoroughly aristocratic, monarchical and imperial. He had no proper conception of liberty and popular rights, no idea of "a government of the people, by the people, and for the people," but he approached modern ideas by laying down the important principle, that the government is for the people, and not the people for the government.¹ He strove for the political unity of Italy through the legitimate Roman empire; that empire is gone, but a new German empire arose in 1870, and stands in friendly alliance with united Italy. If Dante lived in the present age, he would no doubt sympathize with the United Kingdom of Italy and its independent relation to the papacy. He would accept Cavour's programme of a Free Church in a Free State, but probably look forward to a universal empire.

The book on the Monarchy, according to Boccaccio, was occasioned by the expedition of Emperor Henry VII. to Rome, in 1310, as a programme for the restoration of the empire. But

¹ " *Non enim gens propter regem, sed e converso rex propter gentem.*"

Witte, a very high authority, puts the composition before 1300, as there is no allusion in it to his exile.¹

THE CANZONIERE.

The lyric poems of Dante embrace the sonnets, ballads and canzoni scattered through his *Vita Nuova* and *Convito*, and other pieces, some of doubtful origin.

The theme of these lyrics is love to Beatrice, and devotion to natural and spiritual beauty. He infused into the chivalrous love-poetry of the troubadours a mystic afflatus, and directed it to philosophy and theology. His love wandered away for a while to the "gentle lady" of this world, but returned to Beatrice in Paradise.

In the editions of the Canzoniere are also included an Italian version of the seven Penitential Psalms in terza rima, and the Latin eclogues addressed to Giovanni del Virgilio, a teacher of Latin literature in Bologna (1318-1325). Giovanni praised Dante while at Ravenna, in a Latin ode, for his *Comedy*, but blamed him for writing it in a vulgar tongue, and invited him to come to Bologna, and to surpass his Italian *Comedy* by Latin poetry. Dante proved in his replies that he was master of Latin as well, and could resuscitate the bucolic poetry of the age of Virgil.²

¹ *Opere Minori*, ed. Fraticelli, vol. II. English translation by F. C. Church, pub., with his father's Essay on Dante, 1878. Scartazzini says (*Handbook to Dante*, p. 250): "The first edition of *De Monarchia* was issued at Bâle in 1559, by John Oporinus. Between that date and 1618 it was reprinted in Germany five times. It was first printed in Italy in 1740, at Venice, with the date Geneva. At the present day some twenty editions can be counted, the latest being that of Giuliani, with many textual emendations and a prolix commentary." Hettinger fully discusses Dante's politics, from the Roman Catholic point of view, in his *Die Göttl. Komödie des D. A.* (1880), pp. 510-554.

² Fraticelli (*Il Canzoniere di Dante A.*, Firenze, 1856, and later editions) includes *le rime sacre e le poesie latine*, i.e., the Penitential Psalms, the versified creed, and the eclogues. He vindicates to Dante 44 sonnets, 10 ballads, 20 odes or canzoni, 3 sextains; Giuliani, in his edition, gives the number of genuine sonnets as 37, ballads 5, odes 20, sextain 1. All the rest are doubtful or spurious. Comp. Giosuè Carducci, *Delle Rime di Dante*, in "Studi Letterari," 1874, pp. 139-237. English translation of the *canzoniere* and the *eclogues* by Plumptre, *Dante*, II., 199-344.

ON POPULAR ELOQUENCE.

De Vulgari Eloquentia,¹ is a defense of the literary use of the vernacular language, but written in Latin to influence the learned despisers of the language of the people. It was to embrace ten books, but only two have come down to us. It treats of language in general, and the different dialects of Italy, and is important for the development of a national Italian literature which Dante founded as the first and unsurpassed classic.

The treatise was written in the latter part of his exile, to which he touchingly alludes when he writes: "I have most pity for those, whosoever they are, that languish in exile, and revisit their country only in dreams."

ON WATER AND EARTH.

A Latin essay on the two elements of water and earth (*Quæstio de Aqua et Terra*) contains the substance of a disputation which Dante held January 20th, 1320, before the assembled clergy at Verona, in the chapel of St. Helena. It concludes with an honest confession of humble agnosticism, asking men to cease troubling their brains about subtle questions which transcend their capacity, and reminding them of Paul's words: "O the depth of the riches of both the wisdom and knowledge of God: how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out" (Rom. xi. 33).

In this treatise Dante maintains that the sea-level is uniform, that the earth is spherical, that the moon is the chief cause of the tides. Some zealous admirers claim for him an anticipation of Newton's theory of gravitation and other important discoveries of truths of modern science.² But this is about as preposterous as to assert that Shakespeare discovered the circulation of the blood before Harvey, or that St. James anticipated the Copernican system when speaking of the "Father of lights," with whom there can be "no shadow of turning" (i. 17). Dante was original as a poet, but as a philosopher he was a pupil of Aristotle, and as a theologian a pupil of Thomas Aquinas.

¹ Or better, *De vulgari Eloquentia*. See Scartazzini, p. 243.

² He was, however, aware of universal attraction. *Inf.* xxxiv., 106-114.

LETTERS.

Fourteen letters, two of them recently discovered by Professor Witte. They illustrate the prophetic character with which Dante believed himself to be endowed.

The longest and most important is addressed to his patron and friend, Can Grande della Scala, of Verona, and furnishes the key for the understanding of the *Divina Commedia*. The letters to Emperor Henry VII., and to the princes of Italy and the people of Florence cast light on his politics.

THE CREED.

The *Credo* of Dante, so called, is a series of didactic poems or poetic paraphrases of the Apostles' Creed, the seven Sacraments, the Ten Commandments, the seven Penitential Psalms, the seven deadly sins, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ave Maria. It is a sort of manual of faith and devotion and written in the same metre as the *Commedia*.¹ But it is so much inferior to his genuine poetry that it betrays either great haste, or premature decline of power, or, more probably, the hand of an admirer who wished to clear him of the suspicion of heresy.² This was a very unnecessary task. His *Comedy* is sufficiently orthodox for every intelligent Catholic, if we judge it from the mediæval, and not from the modern Vatican or ultramontane standard. His genuine prayer to the Virgin Mary in the thirty-third Canto of the *Paradiso* is far superior to the questionable Ave Maria of the *Credo*, both in ardor of devotion and poetic beauty.

¹ Plumptre (II., 318-325) gives a rhymed translation of the *Credo*, but confesses that he cannot find in it the traces of the master's hand. It is not mentioned by Boccaccio and the earliest commentators, and comes to us through an anonymous MS. in the Bibliotheca Riccardiana of Florence, but is received by Fraticelli and included in his edition of the *Canzoniere*, and by Witte and Kraft in their German translations of Dante's Minor Poems.

² According to an uncertain tradition, the Franciscans took offense at the lamentations of St. Francis over the degeneracy of his order in *Paradiso*, XI., 120-139, and brought Dante before the Inquisitor, but Dante asked for a short respite to prepare his defense, and produced over-night this *Credo*; whereupon he was acquitted.

THE COMEDY.

The *Divina Commedia*, which requires a separate essay, is Dante's last and greatest work, to which all others are preparatory and contributory. He calls it a "sacred poem"—

"To which both heaven and earth have set their hand."¹

¹ *Par.*, xxv., 1 :—

" *Il poema sacro,
Al quale ha posto, mano e cielo e terra.*"

NOTE TO p. 317, THE PORTRAITS OF DANTE.—Since the preceding pages were stereotyped, Prof. Thomas Davidson directed my attention to *Le Opere di Giorgio Vasari con nuove annotazioni e commenti di GAETANO MILANESI* (Firenze, 1878), which contains (p. 413 sqq.) a lengthy discussion on Giotto's portrait of Dante. Milanesi shows that Giotto was not the author, as is generally supposed, of the fresco picture of Dante in the capella del Palazzo del Poeta in Florence, but of a portrait on wood which stood on the altar, and was lost about the beginning of the fifteenth century, having, however, been previously copied on the wall of said palazzo and also on that of the Church of Santa Croce.

DANTE CHRONICLE.

- A. D., 1265. May or June. Dante born at Florence.
1268. Conradin, grandson of Frederick II., and the last of the Hohenstaufen, defeated at Tagliacozzo by Charles of Anjou, and beheaded at Naples. (Cf. *Inf.* xxviii. 17 *sqq.*; *Purg.* xx. 67 *sqq.*)
1274. May. Dante's first meeting with Beatrice (see *Vita Nuova*). Death of Thomas Aquinas, "the angelic doctor," and Bonaventura, "the seraphic doctor." (*Purg.* xx. 67-69; *Par.* x. 96: xii, 110, 127.)
1276. Birth of Giotto, the painter. (*Purg.* xi. 95.)
1280. Death of Albertus Magnus. (*Par.* x. 95.)
1281. Dante's second meeting with Beatrice. Death of Pope Nicholas III. (*Inf.* xix. 71.)
1282. The Sicilian Vespers, and revolt of Palermo. (*Par.* viii. 73 *sqq.*)
1289. June 11. Dante fights as a Guelf in the battle of Campaldino and the siege of Caprona. (*Inf.* xxi. 95.) Murder of Francesca da Rimini. (*Inf.* v. 71 *sqq.*) Death of Count Ugolino. (*Inf.* xxxii. 124, xxxiii. 78.)
1290. December 31. Death of Beatrice. (*Purg.* xxxii. 2, "decennial thirst.")
- 1290 or 1291. Dante wrote the *Vita Nuova*, the story of Beatrice.
- 1290-'92. Episode of the Donna Pietosa. Study of philosophy and secular pursuits. (See end of *Vita Nuova*, and beginning of *Convito*.)
1292. Dante marries Gemma Donati, of the noble family of Corso Donati, the leader of the Guelfs. (*Purg.* xxiv. 82: "he whose guilt is most.")
1294. Pope Celestine V. makes, through cowardice, "the great refusal." (*Inf.* iv. 59 *sqq.*, xxvii. 104 *sqq.*) But the reference to this sainted pope is doubtful. Election of Boniface VIII.
1295. Dante joins the guild of Physicians and Apothecaries, and is entered as Poeta Fiorentino.
1296. Dante exercises his civil rights as a citizen of Florence.
1299. May. Dante is sent as an ambassador of the republic of Florence to S. Gemignano.
1300. June 15th to Aug. 15th. Dante is one of the six Priors of the Republic of Florence. Joins the Ghibellines; opposes the interference of Boniface VIII.; expels the leaders of the Blacks and Whites. The Papal jubilee in Rome. (Alluded to in *Inf.* xviii. 29 *sqq.*; *Purg.* ii. 98.)
1301. September or October. Dante sent as ambassador to Rome.
1301. November. Charles of Valois, by authority of Pope Boniface VIII., enters Florence as "Pacifator of Tuscany." Triumph of the Guelfs.

1302. January 27th. Dante banished from Florence for two years and punished by a fine of 5000 florins.
1302. March 10th. Dante banished for life, on pain of being burnt alive in case of his return.
1303. Capture and death of Boniface VIII., at Anagni. (*Inf.* XIX. 53; XXVII. 70, 85; *Purg.* XVII. 50; XX. 85 *sqq.*; XXVII. 22; XXX. 148; XXXII. 148 *sqq.*; XXXIII. 44 *sqq.* *Par.* IX. 132; XII. 19; XXVII. 20 *sqq.*)
1305. Election of Pope Clement V. Transfer of the papal see to Avignon. (*Inf.* XIX. 83; *Par.* XVII. 82; XXX. 143.)
1308. Murder of Emperor Albert I. (*Purg.* VI. 98; *Par.* XIX. 115.) Death of Corso Donati, Dante's political enemy. (*Purg.* XXIV. 82.)
1309. Henry VII., Duke of Luxemburg, elected Emperor.
1310. Henry VII. arrives in Italy and is crowned at Milan, with the iron crown of Lombardy. Dante meets him at Susa, or Turin, or Milan, greets him as a second Moses, exhorts him to subdue Florence, and calls upon all the rulers of Italy to submit to the authority of the new Emperor, who was again crowned with the golden crown at Rome, 1312, but died in 1313. (*Par.* XVII. 82, "the noble Henry;" XXX. 135, 138.)
1311. September 6th. The sentence of banishment renewed against Dante.
1313. Death of Henry VII. Dante's political hopes transferred to Can Grande, of Verona, or some future deliverer and reformer.
1314. Uguccione della Faggiola conquers Lucca. Death of Clement V. and of Philip the Fair, of France. (*Inf.* XIX. 83 *sqq.*; *Purg.* VII. 109; *Par.* XIX. 118.)
1315. November 6th. Florence again renews the sentence of banishment, and extends it to the sons of Dante.
1316. John XXII. elected Pope. (*Par.* XXVII. 58.) Dante refuses to be pardoned on condition of admitting his guilt.
- 1317-1319 or 20. Dante resides at Verona with Can Grande. (*Inf.* I. 100 *sqq.*; *Par.* XVII. 75 *sqq.*; *Purg.* XXXIII. 39 *sqq.*)
- 1320-21. Dante at Ravenna, under the protection of Guido Novello da Polenta. Completes the *Divina Commedia*.
1321. September 14th. Death of Dante at Ravenna.
1865. Celebration of the sixth centenary of Dante's birth.

DANTE LITERATURE,

Selected, classified and arranged according to nationality and language.

The Dante literature is very extensive, and constantly increasing. It was most fruitful in 1865 (the sixth centenary of Dante's birth) and in the last few years (to 1890). It is very fully noticed in the following books:—

COLOMB DE BENTINES: *Bibliografia Dantesca*. Prato, 1846; with the supplements of GUIDO BIAGI, Firenze, 1888.

FERRAZI: *Manuale Dantesco*. Bassano, 1865-'77, vols. iv. and v.

J. PETZOLDT: *Catalogus Bibliothecæ Dantææ*. Nova editio, Dresdæ, 1855.

U. HOEPLI: *Biblioteca Dantesca; opere di Dante e commenti*. Milano, 1888, pp. 41.

Jahrbücher der Deutschen Dante Gesellschaft. Leipzig, 1877, vol. iv., 594-672.

Bollettino delle pubblicazioni italiane of the National Library of Florence.

Catalogue of the British Museum, London, 1887 (Dandagnan-Daventrys, col. 3-58).

Harvard University Bulletin, Cambridge, Mass., vol. iv., Nos. 2-6 (1885-'87); and vol. v., Nos. 2-6 (1888-'89).

W. C. LANE: *Dante Bibliography for the Year 1888*, in the "Eighth Annual Report of the Dante Society," Cambridge (University Press), 1889, pp. 83-98.

The richest Dante library in America belongs to Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass., and consists (as Mr. Justin Winsor, the librarian, informed me) of 1164 volumes of Dante and on Dante. The three most eminent Dante scholars in America—Longfellow, Lowell, and Norton—were connected with that college. The American Dante Society has its centre in Cambridge, and adds annually to the literature. Next to Harvard College, the Public Library of Boston has, perhaps, the largest Dante collection in America. I examined them both in July, 1889, ^{not} without profit. The Astor Library of New York and Cornell University have also a considerable number of works of Dante and on Dante.

I. STANDARD EDITIONS OF THE DIVINA COMMEDIA AND MINOR WORKS OF DANTE.

There are in all about 350 printed editions of the *Commedia* since 1472. (to 1890). Most of them appeared in the 19th century. Scartazzini counts 257 editions from 1801-1882. Lord Vernon gives a list of 394 complete and incomplete editions, translations, comments and illustrations of Dante, from 1472-1850. The best and most useful editions are those of LOMBARDI, FRATICELLI, BIANCHI, WITTE, and SCARTAZZINI, all with comments (except Witte's). HOEPLI's edition (Milan, 1878) is the smallest.

Le Prime Quattro Edizione della Divina Commedia literalmente ristampate per cura di G. G. WARREN, LORD VERNON. Londra (Boone), 1858, pp. 748 fol. Reprints of the four earliest and very rare editions of Foligno, Jesi, Mantua, and Naples. (Only 100 copies printed. A copy in the Astor Library.)

*L'Inferno di Dante Alighieri da G. G. WARREN, LORD VERNON (1803-'66). Londra (Boone), 1858-'65; 3 vols. fol. In Vol. I. fol. 487-529 there is a chronological list of 394 printed editions and translations of Dante's *Inferno*, and other parts of the *Commedia*, from 1472-1850. Vol. I. contains the Italian text with brief notes; Vol. II. documents; Vol. III. magnificent illustrations. An *édition de luxe*. A copy presented to the Astor Library by the son of Lord Vernon.*

La Commedia di Dante Alighieri col Commento inedito di Stefano Tulice da Ricaldone, pubblicato per cura di VINCENZO PROMIS e di CARLO NEGRONI. Torino, 1886, pp. XIX. and 593 fol. The Italian text with a Latin commentary from the year 1474. An ed. gotten up by King Umberto I. of Italy and dedicated to his son Vittorio Emanuele. Few copies printed and presented by the King—one to the Astor Library, one to Prof. Botta, in New York. The same text and commentary in 3 vols. 8°, published by Ulrico Hoepli, Milano, 1888.

La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri col commento del P. BALDASSARRE LOMBARDI. Roma, 1815, 3 vols.; Padua, 1822; Firenze, 1830, in 4 vols. 8°. The 4th Vol. contains the minor works of Dante. Also other edd.

L'Inferno di Dante Alighieri colle figure di G. DORÉ. Parigi, 1861, pp. 184 fol. Le Purgatoire et Paradis avec les dessins de G. DORÉ. Traduction française de Pier-Angelo Fiorentino, accompagnée du text italien. Paris, 1868, pp. 407. A French prose translation with the Italian text below and the magnificent illustrations of Doré interspersed.

CARLO (KARL) WITTE: *La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri ricorretta sopra quattro die più autorevoli testi a penna. Berlino (Ridolfo Decker), 1862, with critical prolegomena and notes, 725 pp. fol. Dedicated to King John of Saxony (Philalethes). The best critical text, which may be called the textus receptus. A small ed. without Prolegomena, Berlin, 1862, reprinted at Milan, 1864. I have followed Witte in the Italian quotations, but have also compared Scartazzini and Fraticelli.*

GIOVANNI A. SCARTAZZINI: *La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri riveduta nel testo e commentata. Leipzig (F. A. Brockhaus), 1874-'82, 3 vols. 12° (vol. I. pp. 444; vol. II, pp. 817; vol. III. p. 905). The text with an exhaustive commentary in very small type. In the Preface to vol. I., dated Coira (or Coire in Switzerland), July, 1873, the editor says that he has collected and studied all the commentaries, Italian, German and French, and promises a fourth volume containing *Prolegomeni storico-letterari*. Comp. the favorable notice of Witte in his *Dante-Forschungen*, II, 455, ~~which I have not seen.~~*

BRUNONE BIANCHI: *La Commedia di D. A.*, Firenze, 7th ed., 1868. Text and commentary (pp. 762), with rimario (pp. 112).

P. FRATICELLI's ed. in one volume, with rimario. Firenze, 1873, 1877; nova ed., 1887 (pp. 723 and 112).

RAFFAELE ANDREOLI: *La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri col commento. Napoli, 1856, etc., Firenze (editione stereotipa), 1887 (pp. 351).*

TOMMASO CASINI: *La Divina Commedia col commento*. Firenze, 1889.

Contributions to the Textual Criticisms of the Divina Commedia, including a complete Collation throughout the 'Inferno' of all the MSS. at Oxford and Cambridge. By the Rev. EDWARD MOORE, D.D., Principal of St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, and Barlow Lecturer on Dante in the University of London. Cambridge (University Press) and N. York, (Macmillan), 1889, pages 723, and Prolegg. LVI. Dedicated to the memory of Dr. Karl Witte. The most important contribution since Witte's edition, to the settlement of the true text. Moore reprints Witte's text of the 'Inferno' with a complete collation of 17 MSS., and a partial examination of the 500 to 600 known MSS. in regard to the most important test passages of the whole poem. He regards the *Commedia* as "perhaps the greatest work of human genius in any language."

Opere Minori di Dante (the *Vita Nuova*, the *Convito*, the *Canzoniere*, *De Monarchia*, *De Vulgari Elogio*, *Credo*, and *Epistole*), by PIETRO FRATICELLI and others, with notes. Firenze, 1834-'40, 3 vols. 12mo.; new ed. 1861, and 1873, several times reprinted; and by G. R. GIULIANI, Firenze, 1868-'82, 4 vols., 12mo.

II. ITALIAN WORKS ON DANTE.

GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO (1313-1375): *La Vita di Dante*. Venice, 1477, etc., last ed. Firenze, 1888, pp. 100. *Il Commento sopra la Commedia di Dante*. Roma, 1544, often republished (e. g., Firenze, 1831 and 1844, 3 vols., 1863, 2 vols.). Boccaccio's comments reach only to the 17th canto of the *Inferno*.

BENVENUTO RAMBALDI DA IMOLA: *Commentum, etc., Sumptibus Guil. Warren Vernon, curante Philippo Lacaita*. Florence, 1887, 5 vols. Benvenuto da Imola was a friend of Boccaccio and the oldest lecturer on Dante at Bologna (1375).

L'OTTIMO COMMENTO della *Divina Com.* *Testo inedito d'un contemporaneo di Dante* (1334) *pubblicato per cura di Aless. Torri*. Pisa, 1827-'29. 3 vols. 8°. Usually quoted *Ottimo*. Comp. Witte, *Dante-Forsch.* I., 358.

CESARE BALBO: *Vita di Dante*. Firenze, 1853. Translated by F. J. BUNBURY, in *The Life and Times of Dante*. London, 1852, 2 vols.

PIETRO FRATICELLI: *Storia della Vita di Dante Alighieri*. With documents partly unpublished. Firenze, 1861.

GIUSEPPE JAC. FERRAZI: *Manuale Dantesco*. Bassano, 1865-'77, 5 vols. The last two vols. contain the bibliography.

Giornale de Centenario di Dante Alighieri. Firenze, 1864-'65.

Dante e il suo secolo. Firenze, 1865. By various Dante scholars, in honor of the 600th anniversary of his birth.

A. G. DE MURZO: *Studi filosofici, morali, storici, politici, filologici su la Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri*. Firenze, 1864-'81, 3 large fol. vols.

GIOVANNI A. SCARTAZZINI (a Swiss pastor and eminent Dante scholar, who writes German and Italian): *Dante Alighieri, seine Zeit, sein Leben und seine Werke*, Biel, 1869; 2d ed., 1879. *Dante in Germania, storia letteraria e bibliografia Dantesca Alemanna*. Milano, 1881, 2 vols. *Abhandlungen über Dante*, 1880. *Dante* Milano, 1883; and other works. His edition of the *Com.* and commentary mentioned above. Thomas Davidson has translated his *Handbook to Dante*. See below.

ADOLFO BARTOLI: *Della Vita di Dante Alighieri*. Firenze, 1884 (pp. 365). This is the fifth volume of his *Storia della letteratura Italiana*.

G. GIORDANO: *Studi sulla Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri*. Napoli, 1884-'86, 2 vols.

G. POLETTI: *Dizionario Dantesco*. Siena, 1885-'87. 7 vols.

D. FRANSONI: *Studi vari sulla Divina Commedia di Dante*. Firenze, 1887.

G. STIAVELLI: *Gli amori di Dante raccontati da lui medesimo (Vita Nuova e Canzoniere) con prefazione e note*. Roma, 1888.

GIOSUÈ CARDUCCI: *Della varia Fortuna di Dante*, in his "Studi letterari." Lehorn, 1874, pp. 239-370; and *L'opera di Dante* (a discourse delivered in Rome, Jan. 8th, 1888), Bologna, 2d ed., 1888 (pp. 62).

GIUSEPPE FINZI: *Saggi Danteschi*. Torino, 1888 (pp. 148).

F. SCARAMUZZA: *Illustrazioni della Divina Commedia*. Milano, 1874-'76, 3 vols. fol. with 243 photographs.

III. FRENCH WORKS.

B. GRANGIER: *La comédie de Dante . . . mise en rime française et commentée*. Paris, 1596-'97, 3 vols.

VOLTAIRE, the keenest and sharpest wit of the 18th century, regarded Dante and Shakespeare as semi-barbarian monsters. In a sketch of Dante in the "Dictionnaire Philosophique," he says: "*Les Italiens l'appellent divin; mais c'est une divinité cachée; peu de gens entendent ses oracles; il a des commentateurs: c'est peut-être encore une raison de plus pour n'être pas compris. Sa réputation s'affermira toujours, parce qu'on ne le lit guère.*" Renan remarks, "Voltaire understood neither the Bible, nor Homer, nor Greek art, nor the ancient religions, nor Christianity, nor the Middle Ages."

A. F. OZANAM: *Dante et la philosophie catholique au 13me siècle*. Paris, 1840; new ed. 1845; third ed. 1855; 4th ed. 1859. Also translated into Italian, German and English. He translated the *Purgatoire*, 1862. He happily calls Dante "the Homer of Catholicism."

ARTAUD DE MONTOR: *Histoire de Dante Al.* Paris, 1841; *La divine comédie, traduite en français*; 3d ed. Paris, 1849. A prose translation first publ. 1811-13.

EDGAR QUINET: *Dante, in his Les révolutions d'Italie*. Paris, 1848. He calls the *Commedia* "*l'Odysée du chrétien; un voyage dans l'infini, mêlé d'angoisses et de chants de sirènes, un itinéraire de l'homme vers Dieu.*"

M. FAURIEL: *Dante et les origines de la littérature Italienne*. Paris, 1854, 2 vols.

M. DE SAINT-MAURIS: *La Div. comédie, trad., avec un résumé historique et une notice sur Dante*. Paris, 1853, 2 vols.

SÉB. RHÉAL: *La Divine comédie, traduction nouvelle, avec des notes d'après les meilleurs commentaires, par L. Barré*. Paris, 1854.

E. AROUX: *La comédie de Dante, traduite en vers selon la lettre, et commentée selon l'esprit*. Paris, 1856. *Dante hérétique, révolutionnaire et socialiste. Révélation d'un catholique sur le moyen-âge*. Paris, 1854 (pp. 472). This book is dedicated to Pope Pius IX., and the author is as good a Catholic as Ozanam, but he views Dante in an altogether different light, as a conceited heretic and enemy of the papacy.

F. BOISSARD: *Dante révolutionnaire et socialiste, mais non hérétique; révélation sur les révélations de M. Aroux et défense d'Ozanam*. Paris, 1854.

LOUIS RATISBONNE: *L'enfer, traduit en vers*. Paris, 1853; 3^e ed. 1860; *Le purgatoire*, 1856; *Le paradis*, 1860.

M. MESNARD: *La D. comédie de Dante A., trad. nouvelle. Notes per M. Léonce Mesnard*. Paris, 1854-'57, 3 vols.

LAMENAIS: *La D. comédie de Dante A., précédée d'une introduction sur la vie, la doctrine et les œuvres de Dante*. Paris, 1855, 3 vols.

J. A. DE MONGIS: *La D. comédie de D. A., traduite en vers français*. Dijon et Paris, 1857.

E. MAGNIER: *Dante et le moyen-âge*. Paris, 1860.

F. BERGMANN: *Dante, sa vie et ses œuvres*. Paris, 1866.

FRANCISQUE REYNARD: *La Divine Comédie. Traduction nouvelle*. Paris, 1877, 2 vols. (prose translation with a life of Dante).

MARC-MONNIER: *La renaissance de Dante a Luther*. Paris, 1884 (528 pp.).

H. VISON: *L'enfer, traduit*. Paris (Hachette), 1888 (232 pp.).

GUST. DORÉ'S 125 large illustrations, Paris (Hachette), 2 vols. fol., often reproduced in many editions.

IV. GERMAN WORKS.

JOS. VON SCHELLING: *Ueber Dante in philosophischer Beziehung*. An essay in the "Kritisches Journal der Philosophie," ed. by Schelling und Hegel, vol. II., No. 3, pp. 35-50, Tübingen, 1803. Reprinted in his *Works*, vol. v. 152 sqq. A masterpiece of philosophical criticism. An English translation in Longfellow's *Dante*, II. 435-446. Schelling has translated also some parts of the *Commedia*, viz.: the inscription on the gate of Hell (unrhymed) and the second canto of the Paradise (in terza rima). He fully appreciated Dante. So did also Hegel, who calls the *D. Comedy* "the purest and richest work, the proper epos of the Christian Catholic Middle Ages," and "the greatest poem in the department of religious heroic poetry." (*Lectures on Æsthetics*, III. 408.)

B. K. ABEKEN : *Beiträge für das Studium der Göttlichen Komödie Dante Alighieri's*. Berlin, 1826.

L. G. BLANC : *Dante Alighieri*. Leipzig, 1832. Article in Ersch and Gruber's "Encycl." Sect. I. Part XXIII., 34-79. Very elaborate and accurate. Blanc was one of the first Dante scholars, who wrote also a *Vocabolario Dantesco*, Leipzig, 1852, and a translation of the *Commedia* with commentary, 1864.

J. K. BAHR : *Dante's Göttl. Komödie in ihrer Anordnung nach Raum und Zeit*, etc. Dresden, 1852.

EMIL RUTH : *Studien über Dante Alighieri, ein Beitrag zum Verständniss der göttl. Komödie*. Tübingen, 1853.

F. CHR. SCHLOSSER : *Dante-Studien*. Leipzig, 1855.

H. FLOTO : *Dante A., sein Leben und seine Werke*. Stuttgart, 1858.

TH. PAUR : *Ueber die Quellen zur Lebensgeschichte Dante's*. Görlitz, 1862. A careful collocation of all the older reports of Dante's life.

F. PIPER : *Dante und seine Theologie*. In his "Evang. Kalender." Berlin, 1865.

K. F. GÖSCHEL : *Vorträge und Studien über Dante* (posthumous), Berlin, 1863. His article *Dante*, in Herzog's "Encycl." III. 286-296; revised by K. WITTE, in the second ed. vol. III. 485-495.

KARL WITTE (Prof. in Halle) : *Dante-Forschungen. Altes und Neues*. Halle and Heilbronn, 1869-'79. 2 vols. Witte was the greatest German Dante scholar. He and Scartazzini have made Dante a life-long study, and are his best interpreters. Witte wrote about 48 books and essays on Dante, and published one of the best editions of the Italian text (see above, p. 329,) and an excellent German version, *Dante Alighieri's Göttliche Komödie, im sechsten Säcularjahr nach des Dichters Geburt*, with introduction and notes, Berlin, 1865, pp. 728; 3d ed. 1876. Most of his minor Dante publications are collected in his *Dante-Forschungen*. Dean Plumptre (II., 487) pays him a just tribute of praise.

FRANZ X. WEGELE (Prof. of History in Würzburg) : *Dante Alighieri's Leben und Werke*. Jena, 1852; 2d ed. 1865 (pp. 604); 3d. ed., 1879 (pp. 629). A critical account of Dante's life, his politics, and *Divina Commedia*, with documents.

DEUTSCHE DANTE-GESELLSCHAFT : *Jahrbücher*, Leipzig, 1867-'77, 4 vols. Contributions from Witte, Scartazzini, Giuliani, Paur, Huber, etc.

F. HETTINGER (R. Cath. Professor of Theol. in Würzburg) : *Die göttliche Komödie des Dante Alighieri nach ihrem wesentlichen Inhalt und Charakter dargestellt*. Freiburg im Breisgau, 1880 (586 pages). Abridged English translation by H. S. Bouden, London, 1887. French transl. by P. Mansion. Gand, 1888. Hettinger also wrote *Dante and Beatrice*. Frankfurt-a-M., 1883. He gives the best exposition of Dante's theology from the Roman Catholic point of view, as Ozanam does in French.

PAUL SCHEFFER-BOICHORST : *Aus Dante's Verbannung*. Strassburg, 1882 (254 pp.).

LUDW. GEIGER: *Renaissance und Humanismus in Italien und Deutschland*. Berlin, 1882, pp. 7-23.

IG. VON DÖLLINGER (Old Cath.): *Dante als Prophet*. An address delivered before the Munich Academy of Sciences, Nov. 15, 1887. Publ. in his *Akadem. Vorträge*, Nördlingen, 1888, pp. 78-117,

G. GIETMANN, (S. J.): *Beatrice. Geist und Kern der Danteschen Dichtungen*. Freiburg i. B., 1889 (pp. 198). By the same: *Die Göttliche Komödie*, in "Klassische Dichter und Dichtungen." First Part (pp. 426).

German translations of the *D. Com.* with comments by CHR. JOS. JAGEMANN (the *Inferno*, unrhymed, 1781-'82); A. W. SCHLEGEL (portions only, but very well done, 1795); K. L. KANNEGIESSER (1809, '14, '25, 4th ed. 1843, in ternary rhyme); KARL STRECKFUSS (1824, third ed. 1853, in triple rhyme; new ed. by Rud. Pfeleiderer, 1876); AUG. KOPISCH (1837-'42, 3d ed. 1882); PHILALETHES (King John of Saxony—one of the very best translations, unrhymed, 1828, 1839, '65, '71); KARL GRAUL (*Hölle*, Leipzig, 1843; in triple rhyme); L. G. BLANO (1864, in blank verse); KARL WITTE (1865, 3d ed. 1876, in blank verse); KARL EITNER (1865); JOSEFA VON HOFFINGER (Wien, 1865, 3 vols., in triple rhyme); FR. NOTTER (Stuttgart, 1872); KARL BARTSCH (Leipzig, 1877); JUL. FRANCHE (1885); OTTO GILDEMEISTER (Berlin, 1888, pp. 551; with a general introduction of 23 pp., and brief introductions to each canto).

There are also fragmentary translations, especially of the fifth canto of the *Inferno* (Francesca da Rimini) of which Reinhold Köhler has published twenty-two in his *Der fünfte Gesang der Hölle in zwei und zwanzig Uebersetzungen seit 1763 bis 1865*. Weimar, 1865 (pp. 176).

Plumptre says (*Dante*, II. 486): "It is no exaggeration to say that the Germans have taught Italians to understand and appreciate their own poet, just as they have at least helped Englishmen to understand Shakespeare."

Prof. Botta (*Introd. to the Study of Dante*, p. 145), gives a list of Dante lectures delivered in German Universities, and says: "It is in Germany that Dantephilism has made most rapid progress. The writings of Schlosser, Kopisch, Ruth, Wegele, Paur, Blanc, Karl Witte, and Philalethes furnish a vast amount of valuable criticism and research in the various branches of history, theology, philosophy and æsthetics, as connected with the great poem."

V. ENGLISH AND AMERICAN WORKS.

(Lord) T. B. MACAULAY: *Criticisms on the Principal Italian Writers. No. I. Dante*. In "Knight's Quarterly Magazine," January, 1824; comp. also his essay on *Petrarch* (1824), and on *Milton* (1825); all these reprinted in the first volume of his *Essays*. In his essay on *Milton* is his brilliant comparison of the two poets. See Longfellow II. 395 sqq.

THOMAS CARLYLE: *The Hero as Poet*, in his *Heroes and Hero Worship*. London, 1840, etc. Reprinted in Longfellow II. 381-395.

JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT (d. 1859): *Stories from the Italian Poets*,

with *Lives of the Writers*. London, 1846, 2 vols. (Vol. I.) Reprinted in part by Longfellow, II. 409, *sqq.* Hunt calls the Comedy "the saddest poem in the world," "an infernal tragedy," "a series of imaginative pictures altogether forming an account of the author's times, his friends, his enemies, and himself, written to vent the spleen of his exile and the rest of his feelings, good and bad, and reform church and state by a spirit of resentment and obloquy, which highly needed reform itself." Hunt would have him send nobody to Hell. But, he adds, "when Dante is great, nobody surpasses him. . . . He was a gratuitous logician, a preposterous politician, a cruel theologian; but his wonderful imagination, and (considering the bitterness that was in him) still more wonderful sweetness, have gone into the hearts of his fellow-creatures, and will remain there in spite of the moral and religious absurdities with which they are mingled."

PHILIP SCHAFF: *Dante. An Address on the Divina Commedia, delivered before the Goethean Literary Society of Marshall [now Franklin and Marshall] College, at its Anniversary, Aug. 28, 1846. Translated by Jeremiah H. Good, A. M. Chambersburg, Penn., 1846, pp. 47.* [Written at a time when the author knew more Italian but less English than afterwards. His articles on Dante in this volume are entirely new, but the estimate of Dante is the same as that in his youthful address.]

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his pilgrimage. London (Rivingtons), 1871; 2d ed. 1872 (pp. 296); 4th ed. 1884. With illustrations. The same illustrations are found in many editions, e. g. that of Fraticelli. Dante's portrait, his universe, the hell, purgatory, and the rose of the blessed.

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S. F. CLARKE: *The Portraits of Dante*. New York, 1884. (The head from Raphael's *Disputa* in the Vatican, Giotto's portrait, and the profile on the mausoleum in Ravenna.) "The article reproduces a large part of Professor Norton's paper on the portraits of Dante," Harvard University Bulletin, Vol. IV., No. 7, p. 379.

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HON. WM. WARREN VERNON: *Readings, of the Purgatorio of Dante chiefly based upon the commentary of Benvenuto da Imola. With an Introduction by the Dean of St. Paul's*. London, 1889, 2 vols. Similar *Readings* on the *Inferno* by the same author are in course of preparation.

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FORD DUGDALE (the *Purgatorio*, the Italian text with a prose translation, similar to Carlyle's *Inferno*, London, 1883); JAMES ROMANES SIBBALD (1884, the *Inferno*, in single rhyme); ARTHUR JOHN BUTLER (The *Purgatory*, London, 1880; the *Paradiso*, 1885; the Italian text with prose translation, after the manner of Carlyle and Dugdale, useful for comparison); FRED. K. H. HASELFOOT (1887, in terza rima of the original); E. H. PLUMPTRE, Dean of Wells, 1887, '88, 2 vols., in monosyllabic terza rima, with a learned biographical introduction, and studies on important topics, and including a translation of the *Canzoniere*); JOHN AUGUSTINE WILSTACH (Boston and N. York, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1888, 2 vols.).

POETIC TRIBUTES TO DANTE.

TWO SONNETS ON DANTE.

BY MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI.

Translated from the Italian by DEAN PLUMPTRE (*Dante*, II. 420).

I.

Into the dark abyss he made his way ;
Both nether worlds he saw, and in the might
Of his great soul beheld God's splendor bright,
And gave to us on earth true light of day ;

Star of supremest worth with his clear ray,
Heaven's secrets he revealed to our dim sight,
And had for guerdon what the base world's spite
Oft gives to souls that noblest grace display.

Full ill was Dante's life-work understood,
His purpose high, by that ungrateful state,
That welcomed all with kindness but the good.
Would I were such, to bear like evil fate,
To taste his exile, share his lofty mood !
For this I'd gladly give all earth calls great.

II.

What should be said of him speech may not tell ;
His splendor is too great for men's dim sight ;
And easier 'twere to blame his foes aright
Than for his poorest gifts to praise him well.

He tracked the path that leads to depth of Hell,
To teach us wisdom, scaled the eternal height,
And Heaven with open gates did him invite,
Who in his own loved city might not dwell.

Ungrateful country, step-dame of his fate,
To her own loss ; full proof we have in this
That souls must perfect bear the greatest woe.
Of thousand things suffice it this to state :
No exile ever was unjust as his,
Nor did the world his equal ever know.¹

¹ Comp. Witte's German translation of these sonnets in *Dante-Forschungen*, I., 20.

DANTE.

BY LUDWIG UHLAND.

War's ein Thor der Stadt Florenz,
 Oder war's ein Thor der Himmel,
 Draus am klarsten Frühlingmorgen
 Zog ein festliches Gewimmel?

Kinder, hold wie Engelschaaren,
 Reich geschmückt mit Blumenkränzen,
 Zogen in das Rosenthal
 Zu den frohen Festestänzen.

Unter einem Lorbeerbaume
 Stand, damals neunjährig, Dante,
 Der im lieblichsten der Mädchen,
 Seinen Engel gleich erkannte.

Rauschten nicht des Lorbeers Zweige,
 Von der Frühlingsluft erschüttert?
 Klang nicht Dante's junge Seele,
 Von der Liebe Hauch durchzittert?

Ja! ihm ist in jener Stunde
 Des Gesanges Quell entsprungen,
 In Sonnetten, in Kanzonen
 Ist die Lieb' ihm früh erklungen.

Als, zur Jungfrau hold erwachsen,
 Jene wieder ihm begegnet,
 Steht auch seine Dichtung schon
 Wie ein Baum, der Blüthen regnet.

Aus dem Thore von Florenz
 Zogen dichte Schaaren wieder,
 Aber langsam, trauervoll,
 Bei dem Klange dumpfer Lieder.

Unter jenem schwarzen Tuch,
 Mit dem weissen Kreuz geschmücket,
 Trägt man Beatricen hin,
 Die der Tod so früh gepflücket.

Dante sass in seiner Kammer,
 Einsam, still, im Abendlichte,
 Hörte fern die Glocken tönen
 Und verhüllte sein Gesichte.

In der Wälder tiefste Schatten
 Stieg der edle Sänger nieder,
 Gleich den fernen Todtenglocken
 Töntent fortan seine Lieder.

Aber in der wildsten Oede,
 Wo er ging mit bagem Stöhnen;
 Kam zu ihm ein Abgesandter
 Von der hingeschiednen Schönen;

Der ihn führt' an treuer Hand
 Durch der Hölle tiefste Schluchten,
 Wo sein ird'scher Schmerz verstummte
 Bei dem Anblick der Verfluchten.

Bald zum sel'gen Licht empor
 Kam er auf den dunkeln Wegen;
 Aus des Paradieses Pforte
 Trat die Freundin ihm entgegen.

Hoch und höher schwebten Beide
 Durch des Himmels Glanz und Wonnen,
 Sie, aufblickend, ungeblendet,
 Zu der Sonne aller Sonnen;

Er, die Augen hingewendet
 Nach der Freundin Angesichte,
 Das, verklärt, ihn schauen liess
 Abglanz von dem ew'gen Lichte.

Einem göttlichen Gedicht
 Hat er alles einverleibet,
 Mit so ew'gen Feuerzügen,
 Wie der Blitz in Felsen schreibt.

Ja! mit Fug wird dieser Sänger
 Als der Göttliche verehret,
 Dante, welchem ird'sche Liebe
 Sich zu himmlischer verkläret.

UHLAND'S DANTE.

TRANSLATED BY REV. W. W. SKEAT, M.A. (1864).

Was it but the gate of Florence,
 Was't the gate of Paradise,
 Whence, upon a fair May morning,
 Poured a troop in festal guise?

Children, fair as troops of angels,
 Richly dight with garlands gay,
 Hastened tow'rd the vale of roses,
 There to join in dance and play.

Dante, who nine years had numbered,
 Stood beneath a laurel's shade ;
 Straight his glance discerned an angel
 In the loveliest youthful maid.

Rustled not the laurel's branches
 When the zephyr caught the grove ?
 Trembled not young Dante's spirit,
 Breathed on by the breath of love ?

Yes ! within his heart that instant
 Forth the fount of music brake ;
 Soon in canzonets and sonnets
 Tenderly his love outspake.

When once more she met the poet
 In her prime of maidenhood,
 Like a tree that raineth blossoms,
 Firm and fair his glory stood.

See ! from out the gates of Florence
 Pours once more a num'rous train ;
 Slowly, mournfully, it issues
 To a sad and plaintive strain.

'Neath a pall of sable velvet
 Which a silver cross doth wear,
 Plucked by Death in bloom of beauty.
 Beatricé forth they bear.

Dante in his chamber rested
 Lonely, still, till sunlight failed,
 Heard afar the death-bell booming ;
 Silently his face he veiled.

Through the forest's deepest shadow
 Paced the noble bard alone ;
 Like the death-bell's distant booming,
 Sounded then his music's tone.

But within that dreary desert
 Full to him of grief and fear,
 From the band of souls departed
 Came a God-sent messenger,

Who his steps securely guided
 Far through Hell's remotest gloom ;
 Where his earthly grief was silenced,
 Seeing souls fulfil their doom. ¹

Soon, his gloomy path pursuing,
 Came he to the blessed light ;
 Then, from Heav'n's wide-opened portals
 Came his love, to greet his sight.

Far through Heav'n's delightful regions
 Soared on high the favored ones ;
She, with eyes intent, unblinded,
 Gazing on the Sun of Suns ; ²

He, with eyes aside directed
 Tow'rds his loved one's countenance,
 Which, all-glorious, like a mirror,
 Shewed him the Eternal's glance.

Shrined in an immortal poem
 Is the splendid vision shown,
 Written with such fiery traces
 As the lightning writes on stone.

Rightly was this poet honored
 With the title—"the Divine"—
 Dante, who could earthly passion
 To celestial love refine.

¹ In the first Canto of the "Inferno," Dante describes himself as lost in a dreary forest ; where, as he wandered about in terror, he was met by Virgil, the "God-sent messenger," who guided him safely through the realms of Hell. [Note of the translator.]

² "*Beatrice tutta nell' eterne ruote* [the heavens]
Fissa con gli' occhi stava ; ed io in lei
Le luci fisse, di lassù remote."—*Paradiso*, i. 64-670.

"Her eyes fast fixed upon th' eternal wheels,
 Beatrice stood unmoved ; and I with ken
 Fixed upon her, from upward gaze removed."—

Cary's translation.

DANTE.

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

Tuscan, that wanderest through the realms of gloom,
 With thoughtful face, and sad, majestic eyes,
 Stern thoughts and awful from thy soul arise,
 Like Farinata from his fiery tomb.¹

Thy sacred song is like the trump of doom ;
 Yet in thy heart what human sympathies,
 What soft compassion glows, as in the skies
 The tender stars their clouded lamps relume !
 Methinks I see thee stand, with pallid cheeks,
 By Fra Hilario in his diocese,
 As up the convent-walls, in golden streaks,
 The ascending sunbeams mark the day's decrease ;
 And, as he asks what there the stranger seeks,
 Thy voice along the cloister whispers, " Peace ! "

ALFRED TENNYSON.

Tennyson probably alludes to Dante in the first two stanzas of his "The Poet :"—

"The poet in a golden clime was born,
 With golden stars above ;
 Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
 The love of love.
 He saw thro' life and death, thro' good and ill,
 He saw through his own soul.
 The marvel of the everlasting will,
 An open scroll,
 Before him lay" . . .

At the sixth centenary of Dante's birth (1865) Tennyson sent, at the request of the Florentines, the following lines :—

"King, that hast reign'd six hundred years, and grown
 In power, and ever growest ! Since thine own
 Fair Florence, honoring thy nativity—
 Thy Florence, now the crown of Italy,
 Hath sought the tribute of a verse from me,
 I, wearing but the garland of a day,
 Cast at thy feet one flower that fades away."

¹ *Comp. Inf.* vi. 79 ; x. 32 sqq. Farinata degli Uberti was the most valiant leader of the Ghibellines in Florence, and routed the Guelfs at the battle of Monte Aperto in 1260, but denied the immortality of the soul and hence was damned as a heretic.

DANTE IN VERONA.

BY EMANUEL GEIBEL.

Gedichte, Erste Periode. Stuttgart, 1888, 111th ed., p. 291.
Geibel wrote also a sonnet on Dante: "Sobald die Nacht mit
dunklem Flügelpaar." *Neue Gedichte, Dritte Periode* (21st ed.,
1886, p. 192).

Einsam durch Verona's Gassen wandelt' einst der grosse Dante,
Jener Florentiner Dichter, den sein Vaterland verbannte.

Da vernahm er, wie ein Mädchen, das ihn sah vorüberschreiten,
Also sprach zur jüngern Schwester, welche sass an ihrer Seiten:

"Siehe, das ist jener Dante, der zur Höll' hinabgestiegen,
Merke nur, wie Zorn und Schwermut auf der düstern Stirn ihm liegen!

Denn in jener Stadt der Qualen musst' er solche Dinge schauen,
Dass zu lächeln nimmer wieder er vermag vor innerm Grauen."

Aber Dante, der es hörte, wandte sich und brach sein Schweigen:
"Um das Lächeln zu verlernen, brauch't's nicht, dort hinabzusteigen.

Allen Schmerz, den ich gesungen, all die Qualen, Greu'l und Wunden
Hab'ich schon auf dieser Erden, hab'ich in Florenz gefunden."

THE DIVINA COMMEDIA.

GENERAL ESTIMATE.

Dante's *Divina Commedia* is one of those rare works of human genius which will command study and admiration to the end of time. There are many poems which interest and charm a much larger number of readers, but there is none which combines so many attractions for the man of letters, the philosopher, the theologian, and the historian. It is a poetic encyclopædia of mediæval civilization, learning and religion, a moral universe in song by the loftiest genius of that age. Hence few books have been so often edited, commented upon by scholars, and illustrated by artists; and few books have been like this, made the subject of serious and long continued study in all civilized countries. ✓

The *Commedia*, it is true, can never be popular. It is no easy task to read it through. It requires the closest attention and the aid of a commentary. Lord Macaulay says, the great majority of young gentlemen and ladies who profess to know Italian, "could as soon read a Babylonian brick as a canto of Dante." Of those who make the attempt, few get through the *Inferno*, or even from this they select only the cantos on Francesca da Rimini and the Count Ugolino.¹ The reason lies partly in the severe solemnity, partly in the obscurity of the poem, its allegorical imagery, and its many allusions to contemporary characters and events. It presupposes a considerable knowledge of classical mythology, scholastic philosophy and theology, and mediæval history. It can only be understood in connection with the condition of Florence and Italy during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and with the great conflict between the Guelfs and Ghibellines, the popes and emperors. ✓

But the more the poem is mastered and comprehended in the

¹Alfieri affirmed, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, that there were then not thirty persons in Italy who had really read the *Commedia*; but the number of readers, editions and commentaries has since been steadily increasing.

light of its age, the more it becomes an object of admiration. "What a fullness of intellectual treasures," says Witte, who himself devoted almost a lifetime to the study of Dante, "must that poet have to dispense who excited the same enthusiastic love in the youthful Schelling and the octogenarian Schlosser."¹ The German philosopher, here alluded to, who was gifted with poetic imagination and taste as well as speculative genius, calls Dante the high priest in the Holy of holies where religion and poetry are united.²

As a work of art, the *Commedia* is the first and the greatest classic of Italian literature, and has very few rivals in any language. Longfellow calls it "the mediæval miracle of song"; Tieck, "the mystic, unfathomable song." King John of Saxony, who, under the name of 'Philaethes,' published one of the best translations and commentaries of the *Commedia*, aptly compares it to "a Gothic cathedral where the exaggerations of ornament may sometimes offend our more refined taste; while the sublime and austere impression of the whole, and the exquisite finish and variety of details, fill our mind with wonder." And Thomas Carlyle describes it as "a great supernatural world-cathedral piled up there, stern, solemn, awful; Dante's world of souls!"

The *Commedia* is not simply a poem of the highest order, but a philosophy and theology as well; it reflects the social, intellectual, moral and political conditions of the Middle Ages; it embraces the present and future state of mankind; it has even a prophetic character, as a voice of warning and comfort for all time. Dante wrote in the assurance of a prophetic mission similar to that of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel. He felt it his imperative duty, without fear or favor of men, at the risk of exile and poverty, to tell the truth and nothing but the truth, to popes

¹ "Welche Fülle von geistigen Schätzen muss der Dichter zu bieten haben, in dessen Lied mit gleicher Vorliebe, wie der achtundzwanzigjährige Schelling, so der achtzigjährige Schlosser sich versenkt!"—Witte, *Dante-Forschungen* (Halle, 1869), I. p. 221.

² In the essay on Dante (1803) quoted in the *Literature*, p. 332: "Im Allerheiligsten, wo Religion und Poesie verbunden, steht Dante als Hoherpriester und weihet die ganze moderne Kunst für ihre Bestimmung ein; es ist die Durchdringung der Begebenheiten der ganzen Zeit des Dichters mit den Ideen der Religion, Wissenschaft und Poesie in dem überlegensten Geiste jenes Jahrhunderts."

and emperors, to kings and nobles, to the rich and the poor. He rebukes the evil-doers, he cheers the righteous, he paints in the strongest colors the eternal consequences of our conduct in this life of probation and trial, and holds up the prospects of an ideal commonwealth of justice, liberty and peace. He is a prophet of evil to the wicked, and a prophet of glad tidings to the righteous. He kindles from time to time the flame of patriotism among his countrymen, and keeps alive the hope and desire of a regeneration of the State and a reformation of the Church.

The attempt to describe the regions of the unseen world and to assume the office of the all-knowing judge of the living and the dead in the distribution of eternal rewards and eternal punishments, could originate only either in the brain of a fool or a madman, or in the bold imagination of a poetic genius, under the influence of a secondary inspiration. Dante has shown by the execution of this design that he was a genius of the highest order, though regarded by many of his countrymen as fit for a lunatic asylum rather than an office of public trust or any ordinary business of life.

Milton, who of all poets comes nearest to Dante, ventured on a poetic description of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, but abstained from peopling it with other than Scriptural characters. Emanuel Swedenborg, the Seer of the North, who claimed the supernatural gift of spiritual vision and intercourse with the departed, reports his conversations with men of different ages and religions in Heaven and Hell, but these conversations, though far superior to the twaddle and gossip of modern Spiritualism, are prosy, monotonous and tedious. Dante, without claiming a revelation, fixed the eternal destiny of eminent men and women of his age and country as well as of past generations, in the name of impartial justice to friend and foe: condemning the impenitent sinner to hopeless misery, comforting the penitent believer with the prospect of ultimate deliverance, and crowning the saints with the reward of celestial bliss.

THE SOURCES OF THE COMMEDIA. ¹

Nothing falls abruptly from heaven. Dante had many predecessors in the attempt to describe the invisible world, but he surpassed them all.

Homer and Virgil furnished illustrious precedents among classical authors and suggested to Dante the outlines of his *Inferno*. They divide Hades or the realm of the departed into Tartarus, the dark abode of the bad, and Elysium, the sunny fields of the good, but know no intervening Purgatory. They represent the dead as shadowy phantoms fluttering about in the air under an empty form.

Homer, in the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*, describes the visit of Ulysses to the joyless land of Hades, where he conversed with the Theban seer Tiresias, and with his own mother, and saw the shades of Agamemnon, Achilles and many heroes and heroines slain in battle and clad in bloody armor. ²

Virgil, the favorite poet and guide of Dante, to whom he was much more indebted for material than to Homer, minutely describes, in the sixth book of the *Æneid*, the descent of Æneas, accompanied by the Sibyl of Cumæ, to the infernal regions where he learns from his father Anchises his fate and the future of the world-conquering Romans.

Nor should Cicero's Vision of Scipio be forgotten among the pre-Christian antecedents of the *Commedia*.

The *Inferno* of Dante is a strange commingling of heathen and Christian mythology. He invokes Apollo and the Muses

¹ Comp. Ozanam on the poetic sources of the *Div. Com.* appended to his *Les Poetes Franciscains en Italie* (Paris, third ed. 1859, pp. 351-469; tom v. of his *Œuvres complètes*); Rossetti, *Dante and His Circle* (London, 1874); Aless. d'Ancona, *I precursori di Dante* (Florence, 1874); Labitte, *La D. Comédie avant Dante* (Paris, 1842); Th. Wright, *St. Patrick's Purgatory, an essay on the Legends of Purgatory, Hell and Paradise current during the Middle Ages* (London, 1844). Longfellow, in his *Illustrations to the Inferno* (i. 381 sqq.), gives several visions of the unseen world, beginning with the 11th book of the *Odyssey* and ending with the Anglo-Saxon description of Paradise.

² Dante had a very limited knowledge of Greek and of Homer. He says (*Convito* i. 7), that Homer was not yet turned, or could not be turned, from Greek into Latin (*non si mudò di greco in latino*), like other Greek writers, because translation would destroy all his "sweetness and harmony."

to aid him in his Christian poem.¹ He gives room to heathen gods and demi-gods, but transforms them into demons (as they are represented by sculpture in the Gothic cathedrals). He retains Minos as judge at the door, and Charon as boatman over the Stygian lake, and associates Centaurs and Furies with the agents of diabolical torture. But he puts even the best of the heathen, including his own honored Virgil and Aristotle, into Hell, with two singular exceptions,—Cato of Utica, who keeps watch at Purgatory, and the Emperor Trajan, who was believed to have been saved by the prayers of Pope Gregory I. nearly five hundred years after his death.²

The Christian religion purified and intensified the belief in the immortality of the soul, gave realness to the future life by teaching the resurrection of the body, and created a new idea of Heaven as an abode of holiness and bliss in communion with God and the saints. After the fourth century the Christian eschatology was enriched and obscured by the semi-heathenish conception of Purgatory as an intervening state of purification and preparation for Heaven. It was suggested as a probability by St. Augustin, and taught as a certainty by Pope Gregory I., and gave rise to many crude superstitions which haunted the Middle Ages, and which to this day disturb the peace of pious Roman Catholics in the hour of death. This good but credulous pope, in the fourth book of his "Dialogues" (593), tells incredible tales of visions of departed souls, which greatly

¹ *Inf.* II. 7; *Purg.* I. 8, 9; *Par.* I. 13; II. 8, 9.

² Dante refers twice to these prayers: *Purg.*, x. 75; and (without naming Gregory) *Par.*, xx. 109–111. He followed a curious legend current in the Middle Ages, as told by Paulus Diaconus in his *Life of Gregory*, by Brunetto Latini, in the *Fiore di Filosofi* attributed to him, and also in the famous *Legenda Aurea*, and other books. It is this: Trajan, though he persecuted the Christians, was reputed a just emperor. About five hundred years after his death, Pope Gregory, on hearing of his justice and seeing his statue, had him disinterred, and prayed God with tears to take the soul of this man out of Hell and put him into Heaven. The prayer was heard, and Trajan relieved; but an angel told Gregory never to make such a prayer again: and God laid upon him a penance, either to spend two days in Purgatory, or to be always ill with fever and side-ache (*male di fianco*). St. Gregory chose the latter as the lesser punishment.

strengthened the mediæval belief in Purgatory.¹ Dante mentions Gregory in Paradise, but only as differing from St. Dionysius in the arrangement of the celestial hierarchy.² He ought to have placed him in the fourth Heaven, among the great doctors of the Church.³

The Acts of the female (probably Montanist) martyrs Perpetua and Felicitas (quoted by Tertullian and Augustin), and still more the monastic literature of the Middle Ages and the Lives of Saints, abound in marvelous legends, visions and revelations of the future world. Such visions are reported by the venerable Bede (d. 735), St. Boniface (d. 755), Wettin of Reichenau (824), Prudentius of Troyes (839), Charles the Bald (875), in the Life of St. Brandan (eleventh century), in St. Patrick's Purgatory (twelfth century, by a monk, Owen), by Elizabeth of Schönau (d. 1162), St. Hildegardis (d. 1197), Joachim of Fiore (d. 1202), St. Matilda or Mechtildis (d. 1310). The Vision of Frate Alberico of Monte Cassino in the twelfth century contains a description of Hell, Purgatory and Paradise with Seven Heavens. "It is," says Longfellow, "for the most part a tedious tale, and bears evident marks of having been written by a friar of some monastery, when the afternoon sun was shining into his sleepy eyes." Dante's own teacher, Brunetto Latini, describes, in his *Tesoretto*, how he was lost in a forest and then led by Ptolemy the astronomer to the vision of the unseen world, and the punishments of the wicked. The *Golden Legend* of Jacopo da Voragine, archbishop of Genoa (d. about 1298), teems with supernatural marvels of saints; it was the most popular book in the Middle Ages, and passed through innumerable editions.⁴

The whole poetry of the Middle Ages, and the arts of painting

¹ *Dialogorum libri IV. de vita et miraculis patrum Italicorum, et de æternitate animæ.* King Alfred ordered an Anglo-Saxon translation. Gregory acknowledged that he knew these ghost stories only from hearsay, and defends his recording them by the example of Mark and Luke, who reported the Gospel second-hand on the authority of eye-witnesses.

² *Par.*, XVIII. 133.

³ *Par.*, X.

⁴ See an interesting article on the literary history of the *Aurea Legenda*, by Professor E. C. Richardson, in the first volume of the "Papers of the American Society of Church History," N. York, 1889, pp. 237-248.

and sculpture delighted in spectacles of the future world. Labitte states, as the result of his investigations, that the architecture of France alone—the frescoes, windows and porches of the cathedrals of Notre Dame, Chartres, Auxerre, etc.—supplies more than fifty illustrations of the *Commedia* by way of anticipation. The most popular plays in Europe were the miracle plays or mysteries, which enacted the descent into Hell and the scenes of the last Judgment. The theatres represented by three stories the three regions of the invisible world.

One of the grandest, but most disastrous, of these spectacles took place in Florence during Dante's lifetime, May, 1304, and is described by Villani in his Chronicle. The infernal regions were represented on one of the Arno bridges by misshapen men, hideous demons, divers torments, groans and cries, and other horrible scenes to satisfy the morbid curiosity of the multitude who crowded the banks of the river and the boats and wooden rafts, when suddenly the bridge fell with its weight, and many people were drowned.

The only survival of these mediæval miracle plays is the Passion Play of Oberammergau in the highlands of Bavaria, which is enacted once in every ten years, but is singularly free from superstitious admixtures and preternatural horrors, and confined within the limits of the biblical narrative.

The mediæval faith in a future life was strong, and lively, but sensuous, materialistic and superstitious. Everybody held the Ptolemaic and geocentric system of the universe, and believed in a material hell beneath the earth, a material heaven above the sky, and an intervening material purgatory or transition place and state for the discipline of those who by faith in Christ have escaped hell, but are not yet good enough for heaven. The reality of these subterrestrial and celestial regions was as little doubted as the reality of our terrestrial existence. There were, of course, skeptics who denied or doubted even the immortality of the soul, but they were rare, and abhorred or pitied as madmen. Dante says in his *Convito*¹—"of all idiocies, that is the most stupid, most vile, and most damnable² which holds that

¹ Bk. II. ch. 9 (Fraticelli, p. 139, Miss Hillard's translation, p. 90).

² "*Intra tutte le bestialitadi quella è stoltissima, vilissima e dannosissima,*" etc

after this life there is none other; because if we look through all the writings of the philosophers, as well as of the other wise authors, they all agree in this, that there is some part of us which is immortal." He then refers for proof to Aristotle, Cicero, the Gentile poets, the Jews, the Saracens, or any others who live at all according to law, to our aspiration after immortality, to the experience in the divinations of our dreams, and to "the most veracious teaching of Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Light (Life). This teaching gives us more certainty than all other reasons. . . . This should be the most potent of arguments; and thus I believe, assert and am certain, that after this I shall pass to another, better life where that glorious lady [Beatrice] lives, of whom my soul was enamored."

Thus Dante found and shared the general belief in the three regions and states of the future world. But he mastered the crude material of tradition for his supernatural journey with the independence of genius, and reduced the legendary chaos to order and beauty. He threw all his predecessors into the shade, and has not been surpassed or equaled by any of his successors.

NAME OF THE POEM.

Dante called his poem a *Comedy* in distinction from a *Tragedy*, for two reasons: because it begins horribly with Hell and ends happily in Paradise, and because it is written in vulgar or popular language.¹ An admiring posterity long after his death added

¹ In the Letter to Can Grande, ch. 10, in which he dedicates to him the *Paradiso*, he says: "*Libri titulus est: Incipit Comœdia Dantis Alagherii, Florentini natione, non moribus.*" He derives comedy from κῶμος, *villa*, and φῶς, *cantus*, so as to mean *villanus cantus*, a *village poem*, and tragedy from τράγος and φῶς, *cantus hircinus*, a *goat song*, and distinguishes comedy from tragedy in matter and style. "*Comœdia inchoat asperitatem alicujus rei, sed ejus materia prospere terminatur, ut patet per Terentium in suis Comœdiis . . . Similiter differunt in modo loquendi: elate et sublime tragœdia, comœdia vero remisse et humiliter, sicut vult Horatius in sua Poetica . . . Et per hoc patet, quod Comœdia dicitur præsens opus. Nam si ad materiam respiciamus, a principio horribilis et fetida est, quia Infernus; in fine prospera, desiderabilis et grata, quia Paradisus. Si ad modum loquendi, remissus est modus et humilis, quia loquutio vulgaris, in qua et mulierculæ communicant.*" He calls his poem a "Comedy" in *Inf.* XVI. 128; XXXI. 2 (*la mia commedia*). He does not seem to know the other derivation of comedy, from κῶμος, *merry-making, revelery* (a word which occurs several times in the Greek Testament).

the epithet *divine*, and bestowed it also upon the poet.¹ He himself calls it a *sacred* poem that made both heaven and earth co-partners in its toil.²

The ordinary meaning of *Comedy* does not apply at all to such a solemn and serious poem.³ The *Inferno* is rather an awful tragedy; the *Purgatory* is filled with penitential sorrow, irradiated by the hope of final deliverance; the *Paradiso* is joyful indeed, but far above earthly felicity. The whole poem has lyric episodes, epic and dramatic features, and a didactic aim. It may be called an allegorico-didactic epos of the religious history of the world. But it cannot be strictly ranked with lyric, or epic, or dramatic, or didactic poetry, any more than the Book of Job. It stands by itself without a parallel. In the judgment of Schelling, it is an "organic mixture" of all forms of poetry, "an absolute individuality, comparable with itself alone, and with nothing else. . . . It is not plastic, not picturesque, not musical, but all of these at once and in accordant harmony. It is not dramatic, not epic, not lyric, but a peculiar, unique, and unexampled mingling of all these."⁴

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¹ Scartazzini says that the epithet occurs first in Dolce's edition, Venice, 1555, but that Landino had previously called the poet *divine* in the edition of 1481.

² *Parad.*, xxv. 1 sq.

"*Se mai continga che il poema sacro,
Al quale ha posto mano e cielo e terra.*"

³ Macaulay (in his essay on Milton): "In every line of the Divine Comedy we discern the asperity which is produced by pride struggling with misery. There is perhaps no work in the world so deeply and uniformly sorrowful. The melancholy of Dante was no fantastic caprice. . . . It was from within. . . . His mind was, in the noble language of the Hebrew poet, 'a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and where the light was as darkness.' The gloom of his character discolors all the passions of men, and all the face of nature, and tinges with its own livid hue the flowers of Paradise, and the glories of the eternal throne."

⁴ "Ein absolutes Individuum, nichts anderem und nur sich selbst vergleichbar." Schelling's essay on *Dante in philosophischer Beziehung*, first published in 1803, and in his collected *Works*, vol. v. 152 sqq.

TIME OF COMPOSITION.

The *Commedia* is the life-work of Dante, conceived in his early love for Beatrice, composed during the twenty years of his exile, and completed shortly before his death. It was begun in the year 1300, when he had reached the meridian of life,¹ or finished the first half of the course of seventy years which the Psalmist of old sets as the normal limit to our mortal life.

“The days of our years are three score years and ten,
Or even by reason of strength four score years;
Yet is their pride but labor and sorrow;
For it is soon gone, and we fly away.”

The year 1300 is memorable in church history for the first papal jubilee, when two millions of Christian pilgrims visited Rome to offer their countless oblations to St. Peter, and to receive in return absolution from his successor, Boniface VIII.² It was a gigantic scheme for the increase of the papal power and wealth, to be repeated each hundredth year thereafter, and led in its ultimate consequences to the Protestant Reformation which began with Luther's Theses against the shameful traffic in indulgences for the rebuilding of St. Peter's. Dante may himself have been one of the pilgrims.³ He alludes twice to the jubilee, but without approval.⁴ He abhorred Boniface VIII. for his avarice and simony, and puts into the mouth of St. Peter a protest against being made

¹ *Inf.* I. 1. “*Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita,*” etc. He was born in 1265.

² Giovanni Villani, one of the Florentine pilgrims, says (*Chronica*, VIII. 36) that throughout the year there were in Rome, besides the Roman population, 200,000 pilgrims, not counting those who were on the way going and returning. G. Ventura, the chronicler of Asti, reports the total number of pilgrims as no less than two millions. The oblations exceed all calculation. Two priests stood with rakes in their hands, sweeping the gold from the altar of St. Peter's; and this immense treasure was at the irresponsible disposal of the pope.

³ As Ozanam conjectures (*l. c.*, p. 360), though without evidence.

⁴ *Inf.*, XVIII. 29 *sqq.*; *Purg.*, II. 98.

“The figure of a seal
To privileges venal and mendacious,
Whereat I often redden and flash with fire.”¹

The *Inferno* was probably completed in substance about 1308,² the *Purgatorio* about 1318, the *Paradiso* in 1321. But the chronology is not certain. He may have worked at different parts, revised the manuscript, and inserted allusions to facts which had occurred in the meantime.³

Boccaccio tells the story that the first seven cantos of the *Inferno* were written at Florence before the banishment, then lost and recovered, and that the last thirteen cantos of the *Paradiso* were found eight months after Dante's death, in a hiding-place in his bed-room, thanks to a marvelous dream, in which Dante appeared to his son Jacopo and revealed to him the place. This implies that those cantos were not published before his death.

Goethe's *Faust* furnishes a modern parallel of a poem on which the author labored for many years. He conceived the idea of *Faust* in his youth, 1769, composed at different times portions which interested him most, and published them from 1790 to 1808, when the First Part appeared complete under the title *Faust, eine Tragödie*. The Second Part he took in hand in August, 1824, at the age of seventy-five and completed it in August, 1831, when he sealed it up and directed that it should not be published till after his death. This “tragedy of the modern age,” then, covers the youth, manhood, and extreme old age of the poet.

¹ *Par.*, xxvii. 52-55. In Plumptre's translation:

“Not that I should, engraved on seal, give right
To venal and corrupt monopolies,
Which make me blush and kindle at the sight.”

The whole indignant invective of St. Peter against the corruption of his successors (ver. 19 *sqq.* and 66 *sqq.*) applies primarily to Boniface VIII., or to Rome in 1300, but as well also to John XXII., or to the Papal court at Avignon in 1320.

² Scartazzini thinks that the composition of the *Inferno* was not begun till after the death of Henry VII. (1313), but this is contradicted by Dante's own statement (*Inf.* i. 1), and by Boccaccio's account of the composition of the first seven cantos in Florence before the banishment.

³ For illustration I may refer to his translator Cary, who informs us in his preface that he began the translation of the *Purgatorio* and the *Paradiso* long before the translation of the *Inferno*.

DURATION OF THE VISION.¹

Dante presents his poem in the form of a spiritual journey or vision. He began it in the year 1300, on Good Friday, which commemorates the Crucifixion of our Lord.² He spent two days (Friday and Saturday) in Hell, as long as Christ remained in the spirit world to redeem the waiting saints of the old dispensation, and to transfer them to Paradise.³ On Easter morning (giorno di Pasqua) he again rises to the light. He needs one whole day and night for his subterranean journey from Hell to the foot of Purgatory, on the other hemisphere. In four days of toiling, from Monday till Thursday of the Easter week, he ascends to the top of the mountain of Purgatory. Then he flies through Purgatory in a day,⁴ or, according to another view, in three days; namely, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, so that the whole action would occupy ten days.⁵

¹ On the dates of the *Commedia*, see Kannegiesser's translation, and E. Moore, *the Time-References in the Div. Com. and their bearing on the assumed date and duration of the Vision*. London, 1887. Unfortunately, I could not procure this book.

² Inf. XXI., 112-114, where Virgil says to Dante:—

“Yesterday, five hours later than this hour,
One thousand and two hundred sixty-six
Years were complete, that here the way was broken.”

At the close of Canto XX., the time is indicated as being an hour after sunrise. Five hours later would be noon, or the sixth hour of the Crucifixion (Luke 23 : 44). Add to the 1266 years the 34 years of Christ's life on earth, and we get the year 1300, when Dante began his pilgrimage. The break or rent in the work alluded to was caused by the earthquake at the time of the Crucifixion.

³ He combines for this purpose, with Thomas Aquinas, the two passages Luke 23 : 43 and 1 Pet. 3 : 19.

⁴ According to Blanc, and Butler, who says (*The Paradise of Dante*, p. XIV.): “The time occupied in the journey through the different Heavens is twenty-four hours.”

⁵ So Fraticelli (*La Divina Com.*, p. 723): “*Il giorno di venerdì e quello di sabato (siccome rilevasi dal canto XXVII., 79-87) gl' impiega nel trapassare i nove cieli mobili; e nel giorno di domenica, ottava di Pasqua, sale all' empireo. E così in tutto l'azione del Poema dura dieci giorni.*” Davidson (in his translation of Scartazzini's *Handbook to D.*, p. 312) adopts the same view on the basis of

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DANTE'S COSMOLOGY.¹

Dante did not rise above the geography and astronomy of his age, but took poetic liberties in detail. His *Commedia* is based upon the Ptolemaic system, which prevailed till the middle of the sixteenth century, when it was gradually supplanted by the Copernican system.

The geography of the church in the Middle Ages did not extend much beyond the old *Orbis Romanus*, that is, those portions of three continents which are washed by the waters of the Mediterranean. Eastern Asia (except East India), Southern Africa and Northern Europe were *terræ incognitæ*, lying beyond the boundaries of civilization. America and Australia were not yet discovered. The earth was divided into two hemispheres, the eastern hemisphere of the inhabited land with Jerusalem as its centre, and the western hemisphere of water. Columbus undertook his voyage across the Atlantic in the hope of finding a western passage to East India, and died in the belief that he had found it when he discovered the "West Indies" in 1492.

The mediæval cosmology was geocentric. It regarded the earth as the immovable centre of the universe. It maximized our little globe, and made sun, moon and stars revolve around it as obedient servants, to give it light by day and by night. It was moreover, mixed up with astrology and the superstitious belief of the mysterious influence of the celestial bodies upon the birth and fate of men. Dante was full of it.

Par., xxvii., 79-87, but I confess I cannot find there no more than that Dante had been then six hours (*dal mezzo al fine*) in the Heaven of the Fixed Stars. Butler (p. 349) suggests the conjectural reading: "*Che va* (for *fa*) *dal mezzo al fin del* (for *il*) *primo clima.*"

¹ See especially Witte, *Dante's Weltgebäude* in "Jahrbuch der deutschen Dante-Gesellschaft" (1867), vol. I., 73-93; his *Dante-Forschungen* (1879), vol. II., 161-182; and the introduction to his German translation of the *Commedia* (1865 and 1876). Also Philalethes, *Ueber Kosmologie und Kosmogenie nach den Ansichten der Scholastiker in Dante's Zeit*, a dissertation in his translation of the first Canto of *Paradise* (pp. 11-19). Maria Francesca Rossetti, *A Shadow of Dante* (1871), pp. 9-13. Several editions of the *Commedia*, and the work of M. F. Rossetti give illustrations of Dante's Universe, which are very helpful.

The Ptolemaic system has lost all scientific value, but it retains its historical interest, and a certain practical necessity for our daily vision of sunrise and sunset. It is less grand, but more definite, phenomenal, and, we may say, more poetic than the Copernican system.

Dante locates Hell beneath the surface of the land hemisphere and extends it down to the centre of the earth at the opposite end of Jerusalem. He gives it the shape of a funnel or inverted cone, which ends in a narrow pit for the traitors, where Satan is stuck in ice. According to the data given by the poet, the dimensions of Hell would be four thousand miles in depth, and as many in breadth at its upper circumference. It is preceded by a vestibule. The entrance is beneath the forest at the "Fauces Averni," near Cumæ, on the coast of Campania, where Virgil places the entrance to Hades. Dante divides the infernal amphitheatre into three divisions, separated from each other by great spaces. Each division is subdivided into three concentric circles, corresponding to the several classes of sinners and the degrees of guilt. As they become narrower, the punishment increases.

Purgatory is located in the water hemisphere opposite Mount Sion and distant from it by the whole diameter of the globe, that is, somewhere near the South Sea Islands. Dante represents it as a vast conical mountain rising steep and high from the waters of the Southern ocean.¹ He surrounds the mountain with seven terraces for the punishment and expiation of the seven deadly sins. As sin and punishment increase in a descending line in Hell, so, on the contrary, sin and punishment decrease in an ascending line in Purgatory. Rough stairways, cut into the rock, lead from terrace to terrace. On the summit is the table land of the garden of Eden or the terrestrial Paradise, which must not be confounded with the celestial Paradise. Human history began in the innocence of the terrestrial Paradise; to it man is led back by penitence and purification till he is fit for the holiness and bliss of the celestial Paradise.

The fall of Lucifer, the archrebel, from heaven convulsed and perverted the original world which God had made. He

¹ "The mount that rises highest o'er the wave." (*Par.* xxvi., 139.)

struck the earth with such violence as to open a chasm clear through the centre and to throw up the Mount of Purgatory on the opposite side of the earth.¹ The Inferno is the eternal prison for the impenitent and lost; Purgatory is the temporary prison or penitentiary for penitent sinners and will be empty on the day of judgment. Paradise is the eternal home of holy angels and men. Dante reaches it, under the guidance of Beatrice, by flight from the top of Mount Purgatory, where the law of gravity has an end.

Paradise consists of nine heavens and the Empyrean. The nine heavens correspond to the nine circles of Hell and of Purgatory. The first seven heavens revolve around the earth as the immovable centre of the universe and are called after the then known planets: Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun (which was likewise regarded as a planet), Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. Each is supposed to be inhabited. Above them is the eighth heaven or the heaven of the Fixed Stars. The ninth heaven is the crystalline heaven or the Primum Mobile, which is the most rapid in motion, keeps the eight lower heavens in perpetual motion and is the root of time and change throughout creation. Without and beyond the Primum Mobile is the tenth heaven or the Empyrean, which contains the universe, is timeless, spaceless and motionless, the special abode of God and the eternal home of his saints. It is arranged in the form of a rose around a sea of light. All the blessed dwell in the Empyrean, but they appear to the poet in the different heavens according to the degrees of their merit and happiness.

The cosmology of Dante is complicated with astrology inherited from heathen times, and with the theory of a celestial hierarchy which was developed in the mystical writings of pseudo-Dionysius, the Areopagite, and excited great influence on the scholastic theology of the Middle Ages;² nine angelic orders are divided into three hierarchies: the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones; the Dominions, Virtues and Powers; the Principalities, Archangels and Angels. They move the nine Heavens and

¹ *Inf.*, xxxiv., 121 sqq.

² On the pseudo-Dionysian writings, see Schaff, *Church History*, vol. iv., 589-600.

are themselves unmoved. They receive power from the Empyrean above and stamp it like a seal upon the spheres below.

Dante, in accordance with Thomas Aquinas, placed the creation of the Angels on the first day, and the fall of Lucifer and the rebel Angels within the twenty minutes succeeding. The fall of man must have taken place after the upheaval of Paradise which was caused by the fall of Lucifer.

The localities and sceneries of the future world are measured by Dante with mathematical precision, and described with the genius of an architect and painter. Everything is definite and visible. He furnishes the richest material for painters. In this respect the *Comedy* strikingly contrasts with the vagueness and indefiniteness of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, which Ruskin has admirably described.¹

Even the departed souls assume a clear, definite shape. They are not nebulous shades, but clothed with a refined corporality resembling their earthly tabernacle. They can roll stones, lift burdens and feel the punishments of Hell and the penal sufferings of Purgatory. The blessed in the lower regions of Paradise retain human lineaments, but in the higher regions they appear only as flames, and in the Empyrean each regains his own body in glorified shape.

EXPLANATION OF THE COMMEDIA.

To understand the *Divina Commedia*, we must keep in mind that Dante accepted the mediæval hermeneutical canon of a four-fold sense of the Scriptures and applied it to his poem: a literal or historical sense, and three spiritual senses—the allegorical proper, the moral, and the anagogical, corresponding to the three cardinal graces: faith (*credenda*), love (*agenda*), and hope (*speranda*), as expressed in the couplet:—

“*Litera gesta docet; quid credas, allegoria;
Moralis, quid agas; quo tendas, anagogia.*”

Thus, Jerusalem means literally or historically the city in Palestine; allegorically, the church; morally, the believing soul;

¹ In *Modern Painters*, vol. III., ch. 14, copied in Longfellow's *Dante*, II., 422 sqq.

anagogically, the heavenly home of saints. Babylon may mean the city on the Euphrates, or the world, or heathen and anti-Christian Rome, or the enemies of the church. The three spiritual senses may be united in one sense, called allegorical or mystical.

The allegorical interpretation was first systematized by Origen in the third century, who followed in the steps of Philo, the Jewish Platonist, and distinguished three senses in the Bible, a somatic or literal, a psychic or moral, and a pneumatic or mystical sense, which correspond to the body, soul, and spirit of man (according to the Platonic trichotomy). The theory of a four-fold sense was developed in the fifth century by Eucherius (d. 450) and Cassian (d. 450), and more fully by Rabanus Maurus (d. 856). All the patristic, scholastic, and many of the older Protestant commentators indulged more or less in allegorical exposition and imposition. The grammatico-historical exegesis of modern times assumes that the biblical, like all other writers, intend to convey one and only one definite meaning, according to the use of words familiar to the readers. This sound principle is not inconsistent with the hidden depth and manifold applicability of the Scripture truths to all ages and conditions. But explication is one thing, and application is another thing. The business of the exegete is not to put his own fancies into the Bible, but to take out God's facts and truths from the Bible and to furnish a solid basis to the preacher for his practical application. An exception may be made with allegories, parables and fables, where the author, at the outset, contemplated a double meaning; and this was the case with the *Commedia*.

Dante expounds his theory in the *Convito* as follows:¹—

“We should know that books can be understood, and ought to be explained, in four principal senses. One is called *literal*, and this it is which goes no farther than the letter, such as the simple narration of the thing of which you treat [of which a perfect and appropriate example is to be found in the third canzone treating of nobility]. The second is called *allegorical*, and this is the meaning hidden under the cloak of fables, and is a truth concealed beneath a fair fiction; as when Ovid says that Orpheus with his lute tamed wild beasts and moved trees and rocks; which means that the wise man, with the instrument of his voice, softens and humbles

¹ Book II., ch. I., p. 51 sqq. in K. Hillard's translation.

cruel hearts, and moves at his will those who live neither for science nor for art, and those who, having no rational life whatever, are almost like stones. And how this hidden thing [the allegorical meaning] may be found by the wise, will be explained in the last book but one. The theologians, however, take this meaning differently from the poets; but because I intend to follow here the method of the poets, I shall take the allegorical meaning according to their usage.

“The third sense is called *moral*; and this readers should carefully gather from all writings for the benefit of themselves and their descendants; it is such as we may gather from the gospel when Christ went up into the mountain to be transfigured, and of the twelve apostles took with him but three; which, in the moral sense, may be understood thus, that in most secret things we should have few companions.

“The fourth sense is called *anagogical* [or mystical], that is, beyond sense; and this is when a book is spiritually expounded, which, although [a narration] in its literal sense, by the things signified refers to the supernatural things of the eternal glory; as we may see in that psalm of the Prophet (Ps. 114: 2), when he says that when Israel went out of Egypt Judæa became holy and free. Which, although manifestly true according to the letter, is nevertheless true also in its spiritual meaning—that the soul, in forsaking its sins, becomes holy and free in its powers [functions].

“And in such demonstration the literal sense should always come first, as that whose meaning includes all the rest, and without which it would be impossible and irrational to understand the others; and, above all, would it be impossible with the allegorical. Because in everything which has an inside and an outside, it is impossible to get at the inside if we have not first got at the outside. Therefore, as in books the literal sense is always outside, it is impossible to get at the other [senses], especially the allegorical, without first getting at the literal.”

In a long letter to Can Grande della Scala,¹ in which Dante dedicates to him the opening cantos of the *Paradiso*, he makes the same distinction and illustrates it more fully by the same example of the Exodus from Egypt (Ps. 114: 1), which, he says, means literally, the historical fact; allegorically, our redemption by Christ; morally, the conversion of the soul from the misery of sin to a state of grace; and anagogically, the exodus of the sanctified soul from the servitude of this corrupt state to the liberty of eternal glory. Then he makes the appli-

¹ *Magnifico atque victorioso domino, Kani Grandi de la Scala . . . devotissimus suus Dantes Alagherii, florentinus natione, non moribus, etc.*, in Fraticelli's ed. of *Il Convito e le Epistole*, p. 508 sqq. Fraticelli assigns the letter to 1316 or 1317, others to 1320. The genuineness has been disputed, but without good reason.

cation of this exegetical canon to his own *Comedy* in this important passage :—

“The subject of the whole work, taken literally, is the condition of souls after death, simply considered. For on this and around this the whole action of the work turns. But if the work be taken allegorically, the subject is man, how by actions of merit or demerit, through freedom of the will, he justly deserves reward or punishment.”¹

Plumptre (II. 358) directs attention to an interesting parallelism, the double sense of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, as explained in his Epistle to Sir Walter Raleigh, where he describes his book as “a continued Allegory or Dark Conceit.” The story of King Arthur is the outward framework; the Fairy Queen (resembling Beatrice) is both Queen Elizabeth and Glory; Duessa is Queen Mary of Scots [?] and the Church of Rome.

The hermeneutical canon of Dante does not require us to seek four senses in every word or character of the *Commedia*. This would be sheer pedantry and lead to endless confusion. It is enough to find a literal and a spiritual meaning in the work as a whole, and in its leading actors. Thus Dante is an individual and at the same time a representative of man in his pilgrimage to Heaven. Virgil is the old Roman poet, who wrote the *Æneid* and taught Dante his beautiful style, but represents at the same time human reason or the light of nature. Beatrice is the angelic maiden of Florence, and a symbol of divine revelation, wisdom and love. Lucia is the saintly virgin and martyr of Syracuse, the patroness of the blind, and signifies the illumination of prevenient grace. The mysterious DUX is Can Grande of Verona, and some future reformer of church and

¹ *Est ergo subjectum totius operis, literaliter tantum accepti, status animarum post mortem simpliciter sumptus. Nam de illo et circa illum totius operis versatur processus. Si vero accipiat opus allegorice, subjectum est homo, prout merendo et demerendo per arbitrii libertatem Justitiæ præmianti aut punienti obnoxius est.”* In *Par.*, v., 19 sqq., Beatrice thus instructs him on the high importance of the freedom of the will :—

“The greatest gift that in his largess God
 Creating made, and unto his own goodness
 Nearest conformed, and which he doth prize
 Most highly, is the freedom of the will,
 Wherewith the creatures of intelligence
 Both all and only were and are endowed.”

state. The dark forest in which the poet finds himself at the beginning is the labyrinth of sin and error. The three beasts which prevent him from climbing up the illuminated mountain are the human passions (lust, pride, and greed of gain) and at the same time Florence, France, and the corrupt papacy.

It is inconsistent with Dante's rule to deny either the allegorical meaning, or the historical reality of the persons introduced, and to resolve them into mere abstractions. The last has been done frequently in the case of Beatrice and the Donna Pietosa. The most recent writer on Beatrice makes her simply an allegory of the ideal church, as the spouse of Christ, the Shulamite of the Song of Solomon, and explains her death to mean the transfer of the papacy to Avignon and the Babylonian exile.¹ But Dante does not identify the church with the papacy, and attacks the papacy at Rome in the person of Boniface VIII., as well as the papacy at Avignon in the persons of Clement V. and John XXII. The severest rebuke of the Roman Church is put into the mouth of Beatrice and of St. Peter.² Beatrice distinguishes herself from the church triumphant when she, with flaming face and eyes full of ecstasy, points Dante to "the hosts of Christ's triumphal march."³ She is only one among the most exalted saints, and occupies in Paradise the same seat with Rachel, the emblem of contemplation, below Eve and the Virgin Mary.⁴

In calling one of his daughters *Beatrice*, Dante wished her to be a reflection of his saintly patron in heaven. His other

¹ G. Gietmann (of the Society of Jesus); *Beatrice, Geist und Kern der Dante'schen Dichtung*, Freiburg i. B. 1889. This book came to hand while writing the essay. My views of Beatrice are given in the article on Dante, p. 290 sq.

² *Comp. Inf.*, XIX., 53; XXVII., 70, 85; *Purg.*, XX., 87; XXXII., 149; XXXIII., 44; *Par.*, IX., 132; XII., 90; XVII., 50. sq. ("Where every day the Christ is bought and sold"); XXVII., 18 sqq. (Peter's fearful censure of the Church of Rome); XXX., 145 sqq. (where Beatrice predicts that Clement V. shall soon be thrust down to keep company with Simon Magus). The death of Boniface and the removal to Avignon is prophesied as a deliverance of the Vatican "from the adulterer" (Boniface VIII.). *Par.* IX., 139-142.

³ *Par.* XXIII., 19-21.

⁴ *Par.*, XXXII., 7; *comp. Inf.*, II., 102: "Where I was sitting with the ancient Rachel."

daughter he named *Imperia*, probably with reference to his political ideal, the *imperium Romanum*, which he set forth in his work on the Monarchy.

DESIGN OF THE COMMEDIA.

To the double sense of the *Commedia* corresponds a double design; one is individual, the other is general. Dante says, in the same letter to Can Grande, that the poem aims to remove the living from the state of misery and to lead them to the state of felicity.¹

The *Commedia* is Dante's own spiritual biography, his pilgrimage from the dark forest of temptation and sin through suffering and purification to the purity and peace of heaven. He is an interested spectator and participant in the awful sufferings of Hell,² and a penitent in Purgatory, from whose heart the seven mortal sins, like the seven P's upon his forehead, are gradually purged away.³ Then only he obtains a foretaste of that happiness which he hoped and longed to inherit.⁴ And this longing increased as he advanced in life and grew weary of the corruptions of this evil world.⁵

¹ "*Finis totius et partis esse potest multiplex, scilicet propinquus et remotus. Sed omnia subtili investigatione, dicendum est breviter quod finis totius et partis est, remove vivere in hac vita de statu miserix, et perducere ad statum felicitatis.*"

² *Inf.*, v., 140 sqq :—

"The other one did weep so, that, for pity,
I swooned away as if I had been dying,
And fell, even as a dead body falls."

³ *Purg.*, ix., 112-114 :—

"Seven P's upon my forehead he described
With the sword's point, and 'Take heed that thou wash
These wounds, when thou shalt be within,' he said."

⁴ *Par.*, v., 105 ; xxx., 135 :—

"Before thou suppest at this wedding feast."

⁵ *Purg.*, xxiv., 76-81 :—

"How long," I answered, "I may live, I know not ;
Yet my return will not so speedy be,
But I shall sooner in desire arrive ;
Because the place where I was set to live
From day to day of good is more depleted,
And unto dismal ruin seems ordained."

But the *Commedia* has a much wider meaning. It is the spiritual biography of man as man ; it is the sinner's pilgrimage from earth to heaven. Ruskin calls Dante "the central man of all the world." Dante's conceptions of the universe and the locality of the future world have passed away with the Ptolemaic system ; but the moral ideas of his poem remain. He knew no more than we do, and we know no more than he did about

"The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveler returns."

The supernatural geography is a subject of uncertain opinion and speculation, but not of revelation and of faith. We know nothing of the future world beyond that which God has chosen to reveal, and this is very little. There are more things in heaven and hell than "are dreamed of in our philosophy," or are taught us in the Bible. One thing is certain, however, that there is somewhere within or without the created universe a heaven and a hell, or a future state of reward and punishment. Without this final solution the present life has no meaning. Sin and misery is hell ; repentance and godly sorrow is purgatory ; holiness and bliss is heaven—already here on earth, and more fully hereafter. The way to heaven leads through knowledge of sin and through repentance.

In Dante's *Inferno* all is darkness and despair ; in the *Purgatorio*, sunlight and hope ; in the *Paradiso*, pure light and bliss. In the first we are repelled, shocked and disgusted by the pictures of moral deformity and hopeless misery ; in the second we are moved to tears by the struggles of penitent souls, their prayers, their psalms, their aspirations for purity and longings for peace ; in the third we are lost in the raptures of the beatific vision.

Purgatory, as a third or distinct place and state in the future world, is a mediæval fiction and has lost its significance in the Protestant creeds ; but as a poetic description of the transition state from sin to holiness, it comes home to our daily experience and appeals to our sympathies. For this life is a school of moral discipline and a constant battle between the flesh and the spirit. The *Inferno* is diabolic, the *Purgatorio* is human, the *Paradiso* is angelic.

THE WAY TO PARADISE.

On this pilgrimage from earth to heaven man needs the guidance of reason and revelation. The former is embodied in Virgil, the latter in Beatrice.

The Scholastic theology regarded Aristotle as the representative of reason and philosophy, who, like another John the Baptist, prepared the way for Christ. Dante himself calls him the "master of those who know," who presides over the philosophic family in the border land of the *Inferno*.¹ Nevertheless, he chose Virgil as his guide, for several reasons: Virgil was a poet and Dante's master and favorite author;² he had described the descent to the spirit world and thereby anticipated the *Commedia*;³ he was the prophet of imperial Rome and its successor, the holy Roman empire. Virgil and Aristotle combined represent the highest wisdom—poetry and philosophy—of which human reason is capable without the aid of divine grace.

Virgil came to Dante, not of his own accord, but at the request of Beatrice, who had been urged by St. Lucia at the desire of the Virgin Mary.⁴ Sympathetic, intercessory, and prevenient grace made use of human wisdom in the preparatory process of salvation. Reason is under higher influence and subservient to revelation.

Virgil leads Dante through the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, but is most at home in the former, where he takes sure steps and well knows the way.⁵ Only in that region where Hell has changed its form by reason of the earthquake at the death of

¹ *Inf.*, IV., 131 sq. —

"Vidi il Maestro di color che sanno,
Seder tra filosofica famiglia."

² *Inf.*, I., 85 sq. —

"Thou art my master, and my author thou,
Thou art alone the one from whom I took
The beautiful style that hath done honor to me."

In *Inf.*, VIII., 110, and *Purg.*, XXVII., 52, he calls him his "father sweet," *lo dolce padre*.

³ In the sixth book of the *Æneid*.

⁴ *Inf.*, II., 52 sq. ; 94 sqq.

⁵ *Inf.*, IX. 30 : "Ben so il cammin."

Christ is he forced to enquire the way.¹ In Purgatory he calls himself a stranger and takes uncertain and timid steps.² Hence, he himself needs the guidance of angels from terrace to terrace. He represents here that prophetic anticipation which goes beyond ordinary paganism. Human reason knows much of sin and misery, but very little of repentance unto life.

Having reached the summit of the Mount of Purgatory or the terrestrial Paradise, Virgil is compelled to return to the infernal region of darkness. Philosophy can only lead to the threshold of revelation.³ A higher guide is now needed. Beatrice conducts the poet from the terrestrial to the celestial Paradise in the name of revealed wisdom and the three Christian graces—faith, hope, love—which dance around her.⁴

God is love, and love only can know God. Hence St. Bernard of Clairvaux is given a prominent place in Paradise.⁵ His motto was: "God is known as far as he is loved."⁶ He is the champion of orthodox mysticism which approaches divine truth by devout contemplation and prayer; while scholasticism tries to reach it by a process of reasoning. He leads Dante to gaze upon the mystery of the Holy Trinity after preparing himself for it by prayer to the Holy Virgin.⁷

The Virgin Mary, St. Bernard, St. Lucia, Beatrice and all

¹ *Inf.*, XII., 91-94 ; XXIII., 127-132 (comp. ver. 37 sqq.).

² *Purg.*, II., 61-63 :—

“ And answer made Virgilius :—‘ Ye believe,
Perchance that we have knowledge of this place,
But we are strangers (*peregrin*), even as yourselves.’ ”

³ *Purg.*, XVIII., 46-49 :—

“ And he to me : ‘ What reason seeth here,
Myself can tell thee ; beyond that await
For Beatrice, since ’tis a work of faith.’ ”

⁴ *Purg.*, XXXI., 130-135.

⁵ *Par.*, XXXI., 94 sqq. ; 139 sqq. ; XXXII., 1 sqq.

⁶ “ *Tantum Deus cognoscitur quantum diligitur.* ”

⁷ *Par.*, XXXIII., 1 sqq. :—

“ Thou Virgin Mother, daughter of thy Son,
Humble and high beyond all other creatures.”

other saints are only agents of the one only Mediator Christ, without whom there is no salvation.

“Unto this Kingdom never
Ascended one who had not faith in Christ
Before or since He to the tree was nailed.”¹

Many, however, here cry, “Christ, Christ,” who at the judgment shall be far less near Him than “some shall be who knew not Christ.”² In the Rose of Paradise are seated on one side the saints of the Old Dispensation,

“Who believed in Christ who was to come;”
on the other side the saints of the New Dispensation,

“Who looked to Christ already come.”³

Under the Christian Dispensation baptism is necessary to salvation, so that even unbaptized innocence is detained in hell.⁴

Christ is often alluded to in the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* as our Lord and Saviour, as “the exalted Son of God and Mary,” as “God of very God,” as “the Lamb of God who taketh sins away,” who “suffered death that we may live.”⁵

In the *Inferno* the name of Christ is never mentioned, for the damned cannot endure it, but he is twice alluded to by Virgil as “the Mighty One” whom he saw descending into Hell “with the sign of victory crowned,” and in the closing Canto, when passing from the *Inferno* to the *Purgatorio*, as

“The Man who without sin was born and lived.”⁶

It is also significant that the Name, which is above every name and in which alone we can be saved, is made to rhyme only with itself. Hence he repeats the word *Cristo* three times whenever it closes a line.⁷

¹ *Par.*, XIX., 103-105. ² *Par.*, XIX., 106-108. ³ *Par.*, XXXII., 22-24.

⁴ *Par.*, XXXII., 76-84. This fearful doctrine of the damnation of unbaptized infants dying in infancy was first clearly stated by St. Augustin and is still held by the Roman Church.

⁵ *Purg.*, XVI., 18; XXIII., 75; XXXII., 113 sq.; *Par.*, XVI., 18; XXIII., 136; XXVI., 59; XXXI., 107; XXXII., 113, sq.

⁶ *Inf.* IV., 53, 54; XXXIV., 115.

⁷ See the passages ending with *Cristo*, e.g. *Par.* XIV., 104, 106, 108; XIX., 104, 106, 108; XXXII., 83, 85 and 87. The reason for this repetition is not a defect of the Italian language, which has many rhymes to *Cristo*, as *visto*, *misto*, *acquisto*, *tristo*.

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DANTE'S COSMOLOGY.¹

Dante did not rise above the geography and astronomy of his age, but took poetic liberties in detail. His *Commedia* is based upon the Ptolemaic system, which prevailed till the middle of the sixteenth century, when it was gradually supplanted by the Copernican system.

The geography of the church in the Middle Ages did not extend much beyond the old *Orbis Romanus*, that is, those portions of three continents which are washed by the waters of the Mediterranean. Eastern Asia (except East India), Southern Africa and Northern Europe were *terræ incognitæ*, lying beyond the boundaries of civilization. America and Australia were not yet discovered. The earth was divided into two hemispheres, the eastern hemisphere of the inhabited land with Jerusalem as its centre, and the western hemisphere of water. Columbus undertook his voyage across the Atlantic in the hope of finding a western passage to East India, and died in the belief that he had found it when he discovered the "West Indies" in 1492.

The mediæval cosmology was geocentric. It regarded the earth as the immovable centre of the universe. It maximized our little globe, and made sun, moon and stars revolve around it as obedient servants, to give it light by day and by night. It was moreover, mixed up with astrology and the superstitious belief of the mysterious influence of the celestial bodies upon the birth and fate of men. Dante was full of it.

Par., xxvii., 79-87, but I confess I cannot find there no more than that Dante had been then six hours (*dal mezzo al fine*) in the Heaven of the Fixed Stars. Butler (p. 349) suggests the conjectural reading: "*Che va* (for *fa*) *dal mezzo al fin del* (for *il*) *primo clima.*"

¹ See especially Witte, *Dante's Weltgebäude* in "Jahrbuch der deutschen Dante-Gesellschaft" (1867), vol. I., 73-93; his *Dante-Forschungen* (1879), vol. II., 161-182; and the introduction to his German translation of the *Commedia* (1865 and 1876). Also Philalethes, *Ueber Kosmologie und Kosmogenie nach den Ansichten der Scholastiker in Dante's Zeit*, a dissertation in his translation of the first Canto of *Paradise* (pp. 11-19). Maria Francesca Rossetti, *A Shadow of Dante* (1871), pp. 9-13. Several editions of the *Commedia*, and the work of M. F. Rossetti give illustrations of Dante's Universe, which are very helpful.

The Ptolemaic system has lost all scientific value, but it retains its historical interest, and a certain practical necessity for our daily vision of sunrise and sunset. It is less grand, but more definite, phenomenal, and, we may say, more poetic than the Copernican system.

Dante locates Hell beneath the surface of the land hemisphere and extends it down to the centre of the earth at the opposite end of Jerusalem. He gives it the shape of a funnel or inverted cone, which ends in a narrow pit for the traitors, where Satan is stuck in ice. According to the data given by the poet, the dimensions of Hell would be four thousand miles in depth, and as many in breadth at its upper circumference. It is preceded by a vestibule. The entrance is beneath the forest at the "Fauces Averni," near Cumæ, on the coast of Campania, where Virgil places the entrance to Hades. Dante divides the infernal amphitheatre into three divisions, separated from each other by great spaces. Each division is subdivided into three concentric circles, corresponding to the several classes of sinners and the degrees of guilt. As they become narrower, the punishment increases.

Purgatory is located in the water hemisphere opposite Mount Sion and distant from it by the whole diameter of the globe, that is, somewhere near the South Sea Islands. Dante represents it as a vast conical mountain rising steep and high from the waters of the Southern ocean.¹ He surrounds the mountain with seven terraces for the punishment and expiation of the seven deadly sins. As sin and punishment increase in a descending line in Hell, so, on the contrary, sin and punishment decrease in an ascending line in Purgatory. Rough stairways, cut into the rock, lead from terrace to terrace. On the summit is the table land of the garden of Eden or the terrestrial Paradise, which must not be confounded with the celestial Paradise. Human history began in the innocence of the terrestrial Paradise; to it man is led back by penitence and purification till he is fit for the holiness and bliss of the celestial Paradise.

The fall of Lucifer, the archrebel, from heaven convulsed and perverted the original world which God had made. He

¹ "The mount that rises highest o'er the wave." (*Par.* xxvi., 139.)

struck the earth with such violence as to open a chasm clear through the centre and to throw up the Mount of Purgatory on the opposite side of the earth.¹ The Inferno is the eternal prison for the impenitent and lost; Purgatory is the temporary prison or penitentiary for penitent sinners and will be empty on the day of judgment. Paradise is the eternal home of holy angels and men. Dante reaches it, under the guidance of Beatrice, by flight from the top of Mount Purgatory, where the law of gravity has an end.

Paradise consists of nine heavens and the Empyrean. The nine heavens correspond to the nine circles of Hell and of Purgatory. The first seven heavens revolve around the earth as the immovable centre of the universe and are called after the then known planets: Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun (which was likewise regarded as a planet), Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. Each is supposed to be inhabited. Above them is the eighth heaven or the heaven of the Fixed Stars. The ninth heaven is the crystalline heaven or the Primum Mobile, which is the most rapid in motion, keeps the eight lower heavens in perpetual motion and is the root of time and change throughout creation. Without and beyond the Primum Mobile is the tenth heaven or the Empyrean, which contains the universe, is timeless, spaceless and motionless, the special abode of God and the eternal home of his saints. It is arranged in the form of a rose around a sea of light. All the blessed dwell in the Empyrean, but they appear to the poet in the different heavens according to the degrees of their merit and happiness.

The cosmology of Dante is complicated with astrology inherited from heathen times, and with the theory of a celestial hierarchy which was developed in the mystical writings of pseudo-Dionysius, the Areopagite, and excited great influence on the scholastic theology of the Middle Ages;² nine angelic orders are divided into three hierarchies: the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones; the Dominions, Virtues and Powers; the Principalities, Archangels and Angels. They move the nine Heavens and

¹ *Inf.*, xxxiv., 121 sqq.

² On the pseudo-Dionysian writings, see Schaff, *Church History*, vol. iv., 589-600.

are themselves unmoved. They receive power from the Empyrean above and stamp it like a seal upon the spheres below.

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“*Litera gesta docet; quid credas, allegoria;
Moralis, quid agas; quo tendas, anagogia.*”

Thus, Jerusalem means literally or historically the city in Palestine; allegorically, the church; morally, the believing soul;

¹ In *Modern Painters*, vol. III., ch. 14, copied in Longfellow's *Dante*, II., 422 sqq.

anagogically, the heavenly home of saints. Babylon may mean the city on the Euphrates, or the world, or heathen and anti-Christian Rome, or the enemies of the church. The three spiritual senses may be united in one sense, called allegorical or mystical.

The allegorical interpretation was first systematized by Origen in the third century, who followed in the steps of Philo, the Jewish Platonist, and distinguished three senses in the Bible, a somatic or literal, a psychic or moral, and a pneumatic or mystical sense, which correspond to the body, soul, and spirit of man (according to the Platonic trichotomy). The theory of a four-fold sense was developed in the fifth century by Eucherius (d. 450) and Cassian (d. 450), and more fully by Rabanus Maurus (d. 856). All the patristic, scholastic, and many of the older Protestant commentators indulged more or less in allegorical exposition and imposition. The grammatico-historical exegesis of modern times assumes that the biblical, like all other writers, intend to convey one and only one definite meaning, according to the use of words familiar to the readers. This sound principle is not inconsistent with the hidden depth and manifold applicability of the Scripture truths to all ages and conditions. But explication is one thing, and application is another thing. The business of the exegete is not to put his own fancies into the Bible, but to take out God's facts and truths from the Bible and to furnish a solid basis to the preacher for his practical application. An exception may be made with allegories, parables and fables, where the author, at the outset, contemplated a double meaning; and this was the case with the *Commedia*.

Dante expounds his theory in the *Convito* as follows:¹—

“We should know that books can be understood, and ought to be explained, in four principal senses. One is called *literal*, and this it is which goes no farther than the letter, such as the simple narration of the thing of which you treat [of which a perfect and appropriate example is to be found in the third canzone treating of nobility]. The second is called *allegorical*, and this is the meaning hidden under the cloak of fables, and is a truth concealed beneath a fair fiction; as when Ovid says that Orpheus with his lute tamed wild beasts and moved trees and rocks; which means that the wise man, with the instrument of his voice, softens and humbles

¹ Book II., ch. I., p. 51 sqq. in K. Hillard's translation.

cruel hearts, and moves at his will those who live neither for science nor for art, and those who, having no rational life whatever, are almost like stones. And how this hidden thing [the allegorical meaning] may be found by the wise, will be explained in the last book but one. The theologians, however, take this meaning differently from the poets; but because I intend to follow here the method of the poets, I shall take the allegorical meaning according to their usage.

“The third sense is called *moral*; and this readers should carefully gather from all writings for the benefit of themselves and their descendants; it is such as we may gather from the gospel when Christ went up into the mountain to be transfigured, and of the twelve apostles took with him but three; which, in the moral sense, may be understood thus, that in most secret things we should have few companions.

“The fourth sense is called *anagogical* [or mystical], that is, beyond sense; and this is when a book is spiritually expounded, which, although [a narration] in its literal sense, by the things signified refers to the supernatural things of the eternal glory; as we may see in that psalm of the Prophet (Ps. 114: 2), when he says that when Israel went out of Egypt Judæa became holy and free. Which, although manifestly true according to the letter, is nevertheless true also in its spiritual meaning—that the soul, in forsaking its sins, becomes holy and free in its powers [functions].

“And in such demonstration the literal sense should always come first, as that whose meaning includes all the rest, and without which it would be impossible and irrational to understand the others; and, above all, would it be impossible with the allegorical. Because in everything which has an inside and an outside, it is impossible to get at the inside if we have not first got at the outside. Therefore, as in books the literal sense is always outside, it is impossible to get at the other [senses], especially the allegorical, without first getting at the literal.”

In a long letter to Can Grande della Scala,¹ in which Dante dedicates to him the opening cantos of the *Paradiso*, he makes the same distinction and illustrates it more fully by the same example of the Exodus from Egypt (Ps. 114:1), which, he says, means literally, the historical fact; allegorically, our redemption by Christ; morally, the conversion of the soul from the misery of sin to a state of grace; and anagogically, the exodus of the sanctified soul from the servitude of this corrupt state to the liberty of eternal glory. Then he makes the appli-

¹ *Magnifico atque victorioso domino, Kani Grandi de la Scala . . . devotissimus suus Dantes Alagherii, florentinus natione, non moribus*, etc., in Fraticelli's ed. of *Il Convito e le Epistole*, p. 508 sqq. Fraticelli assigns the letter to 1316 or 1317, others to 1320. The genuineness has been disputed, but without good reason.

cation of this exegetical canon to his own *Comedy* in this important passage :—

“The subject of the whole work, taken literally, is the condition of souls after death, simply considered. For on this and around this the whole action of the work turns. But if the work be taken allegorically, the subject is man, how by actions of merit or demerit, through freedom of the will, he justly deserves reward or punishment.”¹

Plumptre (II. 358) directs attention to an interesting parallelism, the double sense of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, as explained in his Epistle to Sir Walter Raleigh, where he describes his book as “a continued Allegory or Dark Conceit.” The story of King Arthur is the outward framework; the Fairy Queen (resembling Beatrice) is both Queen Elizabeth and Glory; Duessa is Queen Mary of Scots [?] and the Church of Rome.

The hermeneutical canon of Dante does not require us to seek four senses in every word or character of the *Commedia*. This would be sheer pedantry and lead to endless confusion. It is enough to find a literal and a spiritual meaning in the work as a whole, and in its leading actors. Thus Dante is an individual and at the same time a representative of man in his pilgrimage to Heaven. Virgil is the old Roman poet, who wrote the *Æneid* and taught Dante his beautiful style, but represents at the same time human reason or the light of nature. Beatrice is the angelic maiden of Florence, and a symbol of divine revelation, wisdom and love. Lucia is the saintly virgin and martyr of Syracuse, the patroness of the blind, and signifies the illumination of prevenient grace. The mysterious DUX is Can Grande of Verona, and some future reformer of church and

¹ *Est ergo subjectum totius operis, literaliter tantum accepti, status animarum post mortem simpliciter sumptus. Nam de illo et circa illum totius operis versatur processus. Si vero accipiatur opus allegorice, subjectum est homo, prout merendo et demerendo per arbitrii libertatem Justitiæ præmianti aut punienti obnoxius est.* In *Pur.*, v., 19 sqq., Beatrice thus instructs him on the high importance of the freedom of the will :—

“The greatest gift that in his largess God
 Creating made, and unto his own goodness
 Nearest conformed, and which he doth prize
 Most highly, is the freedom of the will,
 Wherewith the creatures of intelligence
 Both all and only were and are endowed.”

state. The dark forest in which the poet finds himself at the beginning is the labyrinth of sin and error. The three beasts which prevent him from climbing up the illuminated mountain are the human passions (lust, pride, and greed of gain) and at the same time Florence, France, and the corrupt papacy.

It is inconsistent with Dante's rule to deny either the allegorical meaning, or the historical reality of the persons introduced, and to resolve them into mere abstractions. The last has been done frequently in the case of Beatrice and the Donna Pietosa. The most recent writer on Beatrice makes her simply an allegory of the ideal church, as the spouse of Christ, the Shulamite of the Song of Solomon, and explains her death to mean the transfer of the papacy to Avignon and the Babylonian exile.¹ But Dante does not identify the church with the papacy, and attacks the papacy at Rome in the person of Boniface VIII., as well as the papacy at Avignon in the persons of Clement V. and John XXII. The severest rebuke of the Roman Church is put into the mouth of Beatrice and of St. Peter.² Beatrice distinguishes herself from the church triumphant when she, with flaming face and eyes full of ecstasy, points Dante to "the hosts of Christ's triumphal march."³ She is only one among the most exalted saints, and occupies in Paradise the same seat with Rachel, the emblem of contemplation, below Eve and the Virgin Mary.⁴

In calling one of his daughters *Beatrice*, Dante wished her to be a reflection of his saintly patron in heaven. His other

¹ G. Gietmann (of the Society of Jesus); *Beatrice, Geist und Kern der Dante'schen Dichtung*, Freiburg i. B. 1889. This book came to hand while writing the essay. My views of Beatrice are given in the article on Dante, p. 290 sq.

² *Comp. Inf.*, XIX., 53; XXVII., 70, 85; *Purg.*, XX., 87; XXXII., 149; XXXIII., 44; *Par.*, IX., 132; XII., 90; XVII., 50. sq. ("Where every day the Christ is bought and sold"); XXVII., 18 sqq. (Peter's fearful censure of the Church of Rome); XXX., 145 sqq. (where Beatrice predicts that Clement V. shall soon be thrust down to keep company with Simon Magus). The death of Boniface and the removal to Avignon is prophesied as a deliverance of the Vatican "from the adulterer" (Boniface VIII.). *Par.* IX., 139-142.

³ *Par.* XXXIII., 19-21.

⁴ *Par.*, XXXII., 7; *comp. Inf.*, II., 102: "Where I was sitting with the ancient Rachel."

daughter he named *Imperia*, probably with reference to his political ideal, the *imperium Romanum*, which he set forth in his work on the Monarchy.

DESIGN OF THE COMMEDIA.

To the double sense of the *Commedia* corresponds a double design; one is individual, the other is general. Dante says, in the same letter to Can Grande, that the poem aims to remove the living from the state of misery and to lead them to the state of felicity.¹

The *Commedia* is Dante's own spiritual biography, his pilgrimage from the dark forest of temptation and sin through suffering and purification to the purity and peace of heaven. He is an interested spectator and participant in the awful sufferings of Hell,² and a penitent in Purgatory, from whose heart the seven mortal sins, like the seven P's upon his forehead, are gradually purged away.³ Then only he obtains a foretaste of that happiness which he hoped and longed to inherit.⁴ And this longing increased as he advanced in life and grew weary of the corruptions of this evil world.⁵

¹ "*Finis totius et partis esse potest multiplex, scilicet propinquus et remotus. Sed omnia subtili investigatione, dicendum est breviter quod finis totius et partis est, remove vivere in hac vita de statu miserie, et perducere ad statum felicitatis.*"

² *Inf.*, v., 140 sqq :—

"The other one did weep so, that, for pity,
I swooned away as if I had been dying,
And fell, even as a dead body falls."

³ *Purg.*, ix., 112-114 :—

"Seven P's upon my forehead he described
With the sword's point, and 'Take heed that thou wash
These wounds, when thou shalt be within,' he said."

⁴ *Par.*, v., 105 ; xxx., 135 :—

"Before thou suppest at this wedding feast."

⁵ *Purg.*, xxiv., 76-81 :—

"How long," I answered, "I may live, I know not ;
Yet my return will not so speedy be,
But I shall sooner in desire arrive ;
Because the place where I was set to live
From day to day of good is more depleted,
And unto dismal ruin seems ordained."

But the *Commedia* has a much wider meaning. It is the spiritual biography of man as man ; it is the sinner's pilgrimage from earth to heaven. Ruskin calls Dante "the central man of all the world." Dante's conceptions of the universe and the locality of the future world have passed away with the Ptolemaic system ; but the moral ideas of his poem remain. He knew no more than we do, and we know no more than he did about

"The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveler returns."

The supernatural geography is a subject of uncertain opinion and speculation, but not of revelation and of faith. We know nothing of the future world beyond that which God has chosen to reveal, and this is very little. There are more things in heaven and hell than "are dreamed of in our philosophy," or are taught us in the Bible. One thing is certain, however, that there is somewhere within or without the created universe a heaven and a hell, or a future state of reward and punishment. Without this final solution the present life has no meaning. Sin and misery is hell ; repentance and godly sorrow is purgatory ; holiness and bliss is heaven—already here on earth, and more fully hereafter. The way to heaven leads through knowledge of sin and through repentance.

In Dante's *Inferno* all is darkness and despair ; in the *Purgatorio*, sunlight and hope ; in the *Paradiso*, pure light and bliss. In the first we are repelled, shocked and disgusted by the pictures of moral deformity and hopeless misery ; in the second we are moved to tears by the struggles of penitent souls, their prayers, their psalms, their aspirations for purity and longings for peace ; in the third we are lost in the raptures of the beatific vision.

Purgatory, as a third or distinct place and state in the future world, is a mediæval fiction and has lost its significance in the Protestant creeds ; but as a poetic description of the transition state from sin to holiness, it comes home to our daily experience and appeals to our sympathies. For this life is a school of moral discipline and a constant battle between the flesh and the spirit. The *Inferno* is diabolic, the *Purgatorio* is human, the *Paradiso* is angelic.

THE WAY TO PARADISE.

On this pilgrimage from earth to heaven man needs the guidance of reason and revelation. The former is embodied in Virgil, the latter in Beatrice.

The Scholastic theology regarded Aristotle as the representative of reason and philosophy, who, like another John the Baptist, prepared the way for Christ. Dante himself calls him the "master of those who know," who presides over the philosophic family in the border land of the *Inferno*.¹ Nevertheless, he chose Virgil as his guide, for several reasons: Virgil was a poet and Dante's master and favorite author;² he had described the descent to the spirit world and thereby anticipated the *Commedia*;³ he was the prophet of imperial Rome and its successor, the holy Roman empire. Virgil and Aristotle combined represent the highest wisdom—poetry and philosophy—of which human reason is capable without the aid of divine grace.

Virgil came to Dante, not of his own accord, but at the request of Beatrice, who had been urged by St. Lucia at the desire of the Virgin Mary.⁴ Sympathetic, intercessory, and prevenient grace made use of human wisdom in the preparatory process of salvation. Reason is under higher influence and subservient to revelation.

Virgil leads Dante through the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, but is most at home in the former, where he takes sure steps and well knows the way.⁵ Only in that region where Hell has changed its form by reason of the earthquake at the death of

¹ *Inf.*, IV., 131 sq. :—

"Vidi il Maestro di color che sanno,
Seder tra filosofica famiglia."

² *Inf.*, I., 85 sqq. :—

"Thou art my master, and my author thou,
Thou art alone the one from whom I took
The beautiful style that hath done honor to me."

In *Inf.*, VIII., 110, and *Purg.*, XXVII., 52, he calls him his "father sweet," *lo dolce padre*.

³ In the sixth book of the *Æneid*.

⁴ *Inf.*, II., 52 sqq. ; 94 sqq.

⁵ *Inf.*, IX. 30 : "Ben so il cammin."

Christ is he forced to enquire the way.¹ In Purgatory he calls himself a stranger and takes uncertain and timid steps.² Hence, he himself needs the guidance of angels from terrace to terrace. He represents here that prophetic anticipation which goes beyond ordinary paganism. Human reason knows much of sin and misery, but very little of repentance unto life.

Having reached the summit of the Mount of Purgatory or the terrestrial Paradise, Virgil is compelled to return to the infernal region of darkness. Philosophy can only lead to the threshold of revelation.³ A higher guide is now needed. Beatrice conducts the poet from the terrestrial to the celestial Paradise in the name of revealed wisdom and the three Christian graces—faith, hope, love—which dance around her.⁴

God is love, and love only can know God. Hence St. Bernard of Clairvaux is given a prominent place in Paradise.⁵ His motto was: "God is known as far as he is loved."⁶ He is the champion of orthodox mysticism which approaches divine truth by devout contemplation and prayer; while scholasticism tries to reach it by a process of reasoning. He leads Dante to gaze upon the mystery of the Holy Trinity after preparing himself for it by prayer to the Holy Virgin.⁷

The Virgin Mary, St. Bernard, St. Lucia, Beatrice and all

¹ *Inf.*, XII., 91-94; XXIII., 127-132 (comp. ver. 37 sqq.).

² *Purg.*, II., 61-63:—

“And answer made Virgilius:—‘Ye believe,
Perchance that we have knowledge of this place,
But we are strangers (*peregrin*), even as yourselves.’”

³ *Purg.*, XVIII., 46-49:—

“And he to me: ‘What reason seeth here,
Myself can tell thee; beyond that await
For Beatrice, since ’tis a work of faith.’”

⁴ *Purg.*, XXXI., 130-135.

⁵ *Par.*, XXXI., 94 sqq.; 139 sqq.; XXXII., 1 sqq.

⁶ “*Tantum Deus cognoscitur quantum diligitur.*”

⁷ *Par.*, XXXIII., 1 sqq.:—

“Thou Virgin Mother, daughter of thy Son,
Humble and high beyond all other creatures.”

other saints are only agents of the one only Mediator Christ, without whom there is no salvation.

“Unto this Kingdom never
Ascended one who had not faith in Christ
Before or since He to the tree was nailed.”¹

Many, however, here cry, “Christ, Christ,” who at the judgment shall be far less near Him than “some shall be who knew not Christ.”² In the Rose of Paradise are seated on one side the saints of the Old Dispensation,

“Who believed in Christ who was to come;”
on the other side the saints of the New Dispensation,

“Who looked to Christ already come.”³

Under the Christian Dispensation baptism is necessary to salvation, so that even unbaptized innocence is detained in hell.⁴

Christ is often alluded to in the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* as our Lord and Saviour, as “the exalted Son of God and Mary,” as “God of very God,” as “the Lamb of God who taketh sins away,” who “suffered death that we may live.”⁵

In the *Inferno* the name of Christ is never mentioned, for the damned cannot endure it, but he is twice alluded to by Virgil as “the Mighty One” whom he saw descending into Hell “with the sign of victory crowned,” and in the closing Canto, when passing from the *Inferno* to the *Purgatorio*, as

“The Man who without sin was born and lived.”⁶

It is also significant that the Name, which is above every name and in which alone we can be saved, is made to rhyme only with itself. Hence he repeats the word *Cristo* three times whenever it closes a line.⁷

¹ *Par.*, XIX., 103-105. ² *Par.*, XIX., 106-108. ³ *Par.*, XXXII., 22-24.

⁴ *Par.*, XXXII., 76-84. This fearful doctrine of the damnation of unbaptized infants dying in infancy was first clearly stated by St. Augustin and is still held by the Roman Church.

⁵ *Purg.*, XVI., 18; XXIII., 75; XXXII., 113 sq.; *Par.*, XVI., 18; XXIII., 136; XXVI., 59; XXXI., 107; XXXII., 113, sq.

⁶ *Inf.* IV., 53, 54; XXXIV., 115.

⁷ See the passages ending with *Cristo*, e.g. *Par.* XIV., 104, 106, 108; XIX., 104, 106, 108; XXXII., 83, 85 and 87. The reason for this repetition is not a defect of the Italian language, which has many rhymes to *Cristo*, as *visto*, *misto*, *acquisto*, *tristo*.

THE POETIC FORM OF THE COMMEDIA.

The *Commedia* consists of three parts, Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. Each part includes nine sub-divisions, and thirty-three songs or cantos. Hell, however, has an additional canto, which serves as a general introduction to the whole, so that the poem numbers altogether one hundred cantos, and fourteen thousand two hundred and thirty verses.

The system of versification chosen by Dante for the expression of his thoughts, is the terza rima, borrowed from the Provençal Troubadours, which combines the character of earnestness and solemnity with that of gracefulness and melody, and is admirably adapted to the contents of the poem. Each stanza consists of three lines, each line of eleven syllables, making thirty-three syllables for each stanza. One line rhymes with two in the following stanzas; but the last four rhymes of each canto are couplets instead of triplets. The accent falls regularly according to the law of poetic harmony. Thomas a Celano, who died several years before Dante was born, had used the triple rhyme in Latin (but in unbroken succession) most effectively and inimitably in his *Dies Iræ*.

Everywhere in the *Commedia* we meet with the number three. It is the symbolic number of the Deity. The *Paradiso* is full of the praise of the Triune God. The superscription of the *Inferno*, consisting of three stanzas, reminds us already of Him with fearful earnestness, and the thirty-third canto of the *Paradiso* closes with the vision of the Trinity. According to Aristotle, everything consists of beginning, middle, and end. According to Thomas Aquinas, this fundamental idea of Christianity pervades the whole constitution of the world. The name of the Holy Trinity is written upon creation, and stamped upon eternity. Our poet represents even Satan with three faces, as the terrible antitype of the Triune God. The fact that the *Commedia* embraces one hundred songs, symbolizes the perfection of the poem which is complete in itself, a true picture of the harmonious universe. The number ten is the symbol of perfection,¹ and its square, one hundred, designates absolute perfection or completion.²

¹ "*Numero perfetto*," as Dante designates it in the *Vita Nuova*.

² "*Numero perfettissimo*."

To show how strictly Dante made it his object to reach an even measure, or to make use of a certain economy in the form, we may mention the circumstance that each of the three parts closes with the word "*stelle*," or stars; for these are, according to him, the blessed abodes of peace, whither his view is ever directed, and to which he would also gladly draw with him his readers. "Can I not everywhere look up to the stars?" he wrote to the government of Florence when he proudly refused the offer of pardon.

As already remarked, he always rhymes the peerless name of Christ three times with itself, and with itself only.

The rhyme came to him most naturally as the expression of the idea. Both were born together as body and soul. A contemporary of Dante (the unknown author of the *Ottimo commento*) heard him say "that a rhyme had never led him to change his thought, but that often he had made words express for him new meanings."

The language of the poem is everywhere made to correspond with the character of the thought: in Hell, it is awfully earnest; in Purgatory, affectingly pensive; in Paradise, transportingly charming; in all parts simple and noble, solemn and elevated. It abounds in symbols and images, and sounds like cathedral music.

A striking feature is Dante's terseness and conciseness, which reminds one of Tacitus and Tertullian. He says no more than enough, and condenses *multum in parvo*, even at the expense of clearness. He writes as the lightning writes on rocks. "One smiting word, and then there is silence, nothing more said. His silence is more eloquent than words." (Th. Carlyle.)¹

Altogether, the form of the poem as much as the contents reveals the highest order of creative genius.

Dante intended to write the *Commedia* in Latin, but wisely abandoned the idea and chose the vernacular. He thus became the creator of Italian poetry, as Boccaccio, of Italian prose.

¹ Prof. Botta (*Introd. to Dante*, p. 137) thus describes Dante's style: "It combines sublimity with simplicity, strength with ardor, and intellectual speculation with glowing imagination. Vigorous and concise, it may be said of Dante as has been said of Homer, that it is easier to wrench the club from the hand of Hercules than to take a word from his verses without endangering their harmony and significance."

THE DARK FOREST.

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

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

The gloomy and savage forest to which the poet transports us in these first lines, represents the condition of the human heart lying in sin and error, and also the condition of the world at the time of Dante.

With the dawn of day he reaches the end of the forest, and seeks to ascend a delectable mountain illuminated by the sun, the symbol of virtue and of the empire. His efforts are in vain, for he is confronted and driven back by a spotted, deceitful and light-footed leopard, a haughty and terrible lion, and a meagre and ravenous she-wolf.¹ This allegory has a moral as well as a political and historical meaning. The three animals reflect the ruling passions of the human heart in youth, manhood, and old age, and symbolize at the same time the principal powers of the times: the leopard stands for cunning, and the republic of Florence; the lion for violence, and the kingdom of France; the she-wolf for avarice, and the papal court at Rome.

Just as the poet rushes down the mountain and back again into the dark forest, he beholds the shade of the old singer of the *Æneid* and prophet of the Roman empire, who represents secular wisdom and statesmanship, and had taught him the poetic art.² Virgil was sent to his rescue by Beatrice, the impersonation of divine love and wisdom, who herself was moved by the prayers of St. Lucia and the sympathy of the Virgin Mary. He comforts Dante by predicting, under the

¹ Doubtless he had in mind here the passage in Jeremiah v., 6: “Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, a wolf of the evenings [or, deserts] shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities; every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased.” The three sins may have been suggested by “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the vain-glory of life.” 1 John ii., 16.

² “*Lo bello stile che m’ ha fatto onore.*” *Inf.*, I., 89.

form of a Greyhound, a reformer of church and state, and offers to lead him on a journey through Hell and Purgatory that he might witness the terrible punishments of the wicked, and the purifying sufferings of the penitent. Through Paradise he would be conducted by a worthier spirit, Beatrice herself.

And thus the two brother poets enter upon their visionary pilgrimage.

THE INSCRIPTION ON THE GATE OF THE INFERNO.

Per me si va nella città dolente ;
Per me si va nell' eterno dolore ;
Per me si va tra la perduta gente.

Giustizia mosse il mio alto Fattore :
Fecemi la divina Potestate,
La somma Sapienza, e il primo Amore.

Dinanzi a me non fur cose create,
Se non eterne, ed io eterna duro :
Lasciate ogni speranza, voi, ch' entrate!¹

This inscription written in dark colors on the gate to the abode of the lost has, for terrific grandeur, no parallel in poetic literature. It is as trying to translators as the *Dies Irae*. Let us compare some of the best versions, unrhymed and rhymed.

H. F. CARY. 1805.

Through me you pass into the city of
woe :

Through me you pass into eternal pain :
Through me among the people lost for aye.

Justice the founder of my fabric moved :
To rear me was the task of power divine,
Supremest wisdom, and primeval love.

Before me things create were none, save
things

Eternal, and eternal I endure.

All hope abandon, ye who enter here.

¹ *Inf.*, III., 1-9. Witte's text, but I have capitalized the three nouns which refer to the Persons of the Holy Trinity. Fraticelli and Scartazzini read : *eterno (eternamente)* for *eterna* (which refers to *porta*, vers. 11).

² Longfellow (as he told me himself in his study, where I saw him once, not long after the publication of his translation) wished to imitate the repetition of sounds like the tolling of a funeral bell : *dolente, dolore*. But it is too literal for easy idiomatic English, as is, in fact, his whole otherwise admirable translation.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW. 1867.

Through me the way is to the city do-
lent ;

Through me the way is to eternal dole ;²
Through me the way among the people
lost.

Justice incited my sublime Creator ;
Created me divine Omnipotence,
The highest Wisdom, and the primal
Love.

Before me there were no created things,
Only eterne, and I eternal last.

All hope abandon, ye who enter in !

ICHABOD CHARLES WRIGHT. 1833.

Through me ye enter the abode of woe:
Through me to endless sorrow are conveyed:
Through me amid the souls accurst ye go.

Justice did first my lofty Maker move:
By Power Almighty was my fabric made,
By highest Wisdom, and by primal Love.

Ere I was form'd, no things created were,
Save those eternal—I eternal last:
All hope abandon—ye who enter here.

KARL STRECKFUSS. 1824.

Ich führe dich¹ zur Stadt der Qualerkornen,
Ich führe dich zum unbegrenzten Leid,
Ich führe dich zum Volke der Verlorenen.

Mich schuf mein Meister aus Gerechtigkeit,
Die erste Liebe wirkte mich zu gründen,
Die höchste Weisheit und Allmächtigkeit.

Vor mir war nichts Erschaffenes zu finden,
Als Ewiges, und ewig daur' auch ich.
Lasst, die ihr eingeht, jede Hoffnung schwinden!

DEAN E. H. PLUMPTRE. 1887.

Through me men pass to city of great woe;
Through me men pass to endless misery;
Through me men pass where all the lost ones go.

Justice it was that moved my Maker high,
The Power of God it was that fashioned me,
Wisdom supreme, and primal Charity.

Before me nothing was of things that be,
Save the eterne, and I eterne endure:
Ye that pass in, all hope abandon ye.

OTTO GILDEMEISTER. 1888.

Ich führe zu der Stadt voll Schmerz und Grausen,
Ich führe zu dem wandellosen Leid,
Ich führe hin, wo die Verlorenen hausen.

Ihn, der mich schuf, bewog Gerechtigkeit,
Mich gründete die Macht des Unsichtbaren,
Die erste Lieb und die Allwissenheit.

Geschöpfe giebt es nicht, die vor mir waren,
Als ewige, die selbst ich ewig bin.
Lasst, die ihr eingeht, alle Hoffnung fahren!

Hell was founded after the fall of Adam by the Holy Trinity, the Almighty power of the Father (*la divina Potestate*), the Wisdom of the Son (*la somma Sapienza*), and the Love of the Holy Spirit (*il primo Amore*). Love is called the "first" because it is the motive of the creation and of all the works of God. According to Thomas Aquinas, all the works of the Holy Trinity are common to the three Persons.

¹ *Durch mich geht man*, would be more literal and just as good. A door cannot be said to lead.

ENDLESS PUNISHMENT.

Dante agrees with the orthodox Catholic faith as to endless punishment, and peoples hell not only with all impenitent sinners who rejected the gospel, but also with all unbaptized adults and children who never heard the name of Christ. This would include all the heathen, Jews and Mohammedans who, before and after Christ, constitute the overwhelming majority of the human race. He exempts only the Hebrew saints who were redeemed by Christ from their subterranean prison at his descent into the nether world.

It is true, he moderates, in accordance with Catholic doctrine, the sufferings of unbaptized children and the nobler heathen. The Scholastic divines make a distinction between the negative penalty of loss (*pœna damni*), and the positive penalty of sense (*pœna sensus*), and usually exempted infants from the latter. According to Dante, they utter "no lamentations but only sighs" from "sorrow without pain."¹ The reason of their exclusion from heaven is not that they sinned, but that they "had not baptism, which is the portal of the faith."²

The heathen are lost, as Virgil says, who includes himself in the number, because

"In the right manner they adored not God, . . .
For such defects, and not for other guilt,
Lost are we, and are only so far punished,
That without hope we live on in desire."³

Dante is "seized with grief in his heart" when he hears this, because "some people of much worthiness" he knew "were suspended in that Limbo." Virgil informs him that at one time Adam, Abel, Noah, Moses, Abraham, David, Rachel and many others were confined there, but were released and transferred to Paradise by "a Mighty One (Christ) at his triumphant entrance."

Virgil has no hope that he and his heathen brethren will be released in a similar manner at some future day. Their lot, however, is tolerable, and virtually a continuation of their life on earth. The poets and philosophers sit in the dim twilight of

¹ *Inf.*, IV., 25-30.

² *Inf.*, IV., 36.

³ *Inf.*, IV., 37-42.

reason, continue their occupation, and are very courteous and polite to each other.

Dante sees first on a summit enlightened by a fire the shades of Homer, the poet sovereign, Horace, the satirist, Ovid and Lucan. They respectfully salute Virgil as he reappears among them, and then after proper introduction they salute Dante also, and receive him as the sixth in the distinguished band of master poets.¹

Then coming into "a meadow of fresh verdure," he beholds in a place open, luminous and high, a company of the mighty spirits of ancient Greece and Rome, walking on "the green enamel." Electra, Hector and Æneas, Cæsar "in armor, with falcon eyes," King Latinus with his daughter Lavinia, Brutus "who drove Tarquin forth," Lucretia, Julia, Marcia, and Cornelia; and associated with them, but in a separate spot, the noble Saracen knight Saladin; and higher up Aristotle, "the master of those who know," surrounded by his philosophic family, "all gazing upon him and doing him honor;" nearest to him Socrates and Plato; and after them Democritus, "who puts the world on chance," Diogenes, the cynic, Empedocles, Thales, Heraclitus, the weeping philosopher, Dioscorides, Orpheus, Cicero and Livy, and "moral Seneca," Euclid, the geometrician, Ptolemy, the astronomer, Galen, the physician, Hippocrates, Avicenna, and Averrhoës, the Arabian translator and commentator of Aristotle, and many others whom he "cannot all portray in full."²

As for the bad heathen and bad Christians, they are doomed to fearful, never ending torments, which Dante describes in picturesque, but horrible forms.

The doctrine of eternal punishment is the most awful that can be conceived of. The more we think of it, the more we shrink from it, and the more we desire to escape from it. The Roman Catholic doctrine of Purgatory applies only to imperfect Catholic Christians, and leaves the entire heathen world to outer darkness and despair. The theory of an ultimate restoration of all human beings to holiness and happiness would give absolute relief, and completely restore the harmony of the universe and the concord of all the discords of history, but it is not sustained by the

¹ *Inf.*, IV., 67 sqq.

² *Inf.*, IV., 121-145.

Bible or any orthodox Church. The theory of the annihilation of rational beings made in the image of God and redeemed by the blood of Christ is hard enough, but not nearly as revolting to every sentiment of sympathy and compassion, as the doctrine of never-ending punishment. It is difficult to conceive that an infinitely wise and merciful God should have created so many beings in full foreknowledge of such a terrible fate. But we humbly bow before the highest authority of Him who came into this world for the express purpose to save it from sin and perdition.

There is, however, good scriptural ground for a very serious modification of the orthodox doctrine as far as the *number* of the lost and the *mode* of their punishment are concerned. There is no Scripture warrant for excluding from heaven the overwhelming majority of mankind, *i.e.*, not only all bad Christians, but also all the heathen, Jews, Mohammedans, together with their unbaptized (or, in Calvinistic phraseology, non-elect) children dying in infancy. St. Augustin, who exerted more influence upon the Creeds of Christendom than any other divine, first clearly taught the "terrible dogma" of the damnation of all unbaptized infants, though he reduces their sufferings to a minimum. He inferred it from the doctrine of the absolute necessity of water baptism for salvation, which he based upon a one-sided interpretation of John 3 : 5 and Mark 16 : 16. But these passages can only refer to those who come within the reach of the visible church and the ordinary means of grace. We are bound to these means, but God is free and his Spirit can work where, when, and how he pleases (John 3 : 8). As regards children dying in infancy before they have committed any actual transgression, we have the word and act of our Saviour who invited them to his arms, blessed them, and declared, without any reference to circumcision or baptism, and before Christian baptism was instituted or could be exercised : "Of such is the Kingdom of God" (Mark 10 : 13-16). Here is a firm and immovable ground of hope for all bereaved parents. Surely there is nothing in the Bible rightly interpreted to prevent, and much, very much to encourage the charitable hope that the overwhelming mass of God's creatures made in his own image

and redeemed by the blood of his Son, will ultimately be saved and join "the great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" (Rev. vii : 9), in the praise of his infinite wisdom and love.

THE VESTIBULE.

As the poets enter through the gate of despair they are overwhelmed with the horrid lamentations of the lost.

"There sighs, complaints, and ululations loud
 Resounded through the air without a star,
 Whence I, at the beginning, wept thereat.
 Languages diverse, horrible dialects,
 Accents of anger, words of agony,
 And voices high and hoarse, with sound of hands
 Made up a tumult that goes whirling on
 Forever in that air forever black,
 Even as the sand doth, when the whirlwind breathes."¹

The description reminds one of the fearful words of the ghost of Hamlet's father who, however, was not in Hell, but only in Purgatory.

"I am thy father's spirit ;
 Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
 And for the day confin'd to lasting fires,
 Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
 Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
 To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
 I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
 Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
 Make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres,
 Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
 And each particular hair to stand on end,
 Like quills upon the fretful porcupine ;
 But this eternal blazon must not be
 To ears of flesh and blood."

The vestibule or outer court of Hell is the abode of the melancholy crowd of cowards and indifferentists, who are too bad for Heaven and too good for Hell, and hence spit out by both in disgust. Dante pours upon them the vial of his scorching sarcasm, of which he was a perfect master. He had in his mind the lukewarm Laodiceans who were neither hot nor cold, and

¹ *Inf.*, III., 22-30.

whom the Lord threatened to spew out of his mouth (Rev. iii. : 15, 16). The inhabitants of the Ante-Hell lived in selfish indifference, without fame or infamy, unconcerned about the great moral struggle going on in the world. Mercy and justice alike disdain them. Hell would be too proud to receive such guests who had not courage enough to be bad. Their names are unknown, lost and forgotten.¹ They are mingled with that caitiff choir of angels who remained neutral in the great rebellion of Satan against God. This miserable rabble is driven by an unceasingly whirling flag; while wasps and flies sting their naked bodies. Dante is surprised at their large number. Virgil tells him :

“Let us not speak of them, but look and pass.”²

Yet Dante recognizes the shade of him,

“Who made through cowardice the great refusal.”³

This is usually referred to Pope Cœlestine V. (elected July 5, 1294), and “the great refusal,” to his abdication of the papacy (December 13, 1294)—an event which had never occurred before. He was a saintly monk, but ignorant of the world and human nature. Cardinal Benedetto Gaetano, afterwards Boniface VIII., persuaded him, a few months after his election, to resign the highest dignity on earth, and imprisoned him, to prevent a schism, in a castle near Anagni, where he died (May 19, 1296). The resignation of Cœlestine was regarded as a sublime act of self-denial and sacrifice, for which he was canonized by Clement V., in 1313.

It is strange that the first person whom Dante met in Hell should be a pope; and stranger still, that it should be such an humble and innocent pope whom he exposes to contempt, in direct opposition to the judgment of the Church. He may have looked upon the resignation as an act of cowardly escape from solemn duty, prompted by the unholy ambition of Pope Boniface

¹ Like that tyrant in Uhland's *Minstrel's Curse* :

“*Versunken und vergessen : das ist des Sängers Fluch.*”

² *Inf.*, III., 51 :

“*Non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda e passa.*”

³ *Ibid.*, III., 60 :

“*Che fece per villate il gran rifiuto.*”

VIII., whom above all popes he hated as a bad man and a disgrace to the papacy.¹ But resignation is not "refusal."

Some have conjectured that Dante meant Esau who sold his birthright, or the rich youth who was invited by Christ to follow him, but "went away sorrowful" (Matt. xix.: 22). But "the great refusal" points to a historic person and act well known in the time of the poet under that name.

I deem it most probable that the poet had in mind Pontius Pilate, who was perfectly convinced of the innocence of Christ, but from cowardice and fear of losing his place refused to do him justice and surrendered him to the bloodthirsty design of the Jewish hierarchy.² The basest act a judge could commit. Of all men in biblical or ecclesiastical history, Pilate was the fittest representative of cowardly and selfish neutrality. He was also best known to the readers of the *Commedia*, as his name is embedded in the Apostles' Creed to designate the historic connection of Christ's death with the Roman empire. Dante does not mention Pontius Pilate elsewhere, except figuratively by calling Philip the Fair of France "the modern Pilate," for his cowardly cruelty to a defenceless old pope.³

THE STRUCTURE OF THE INFERNO.

From the Vestibule the poets are in sleep as by a divine miracle transported across the cheerless Acheron to the *Inferno* proper. I shall confine myself to an outline of the pilgrimage.

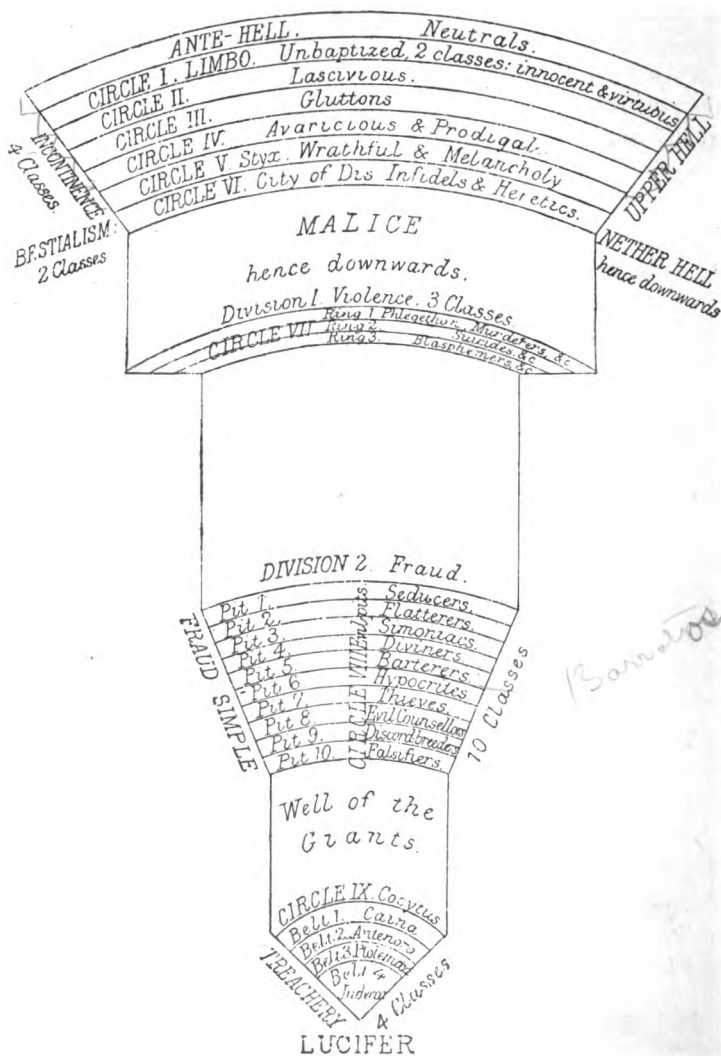
The structure of the *Inferno*, as already observed, is that of a huge subterranean amphitheatre in the shape of a funnel, becoming narrower and narrower in the descent till it reaches the abode of Satan in the centre of the earth. This form corresponds to the nature and progress of sin, which consists in ever narrowing and contracting selfishness. As the number of slight and ordinary sinners is larger than that of great trans-

¹ In *Inf.*, xxvii., 104, 105, he makes Boniface say of his predecessor, that he despised the two keys of the papal power.

² This interpretation as far as I know is new, and was suggested to me recently by a friend in a conversation on Dante, as a plausible conjecture. I wonder that it has not occurred to any of the numerous commentators on Dante.

³ *Purg.* xx., 91.

SECTION OF THE HELL.



gressors, the upper circles are broader and more densely crowded.

It is also very expressive, that over these regions there reigns a constant darkness¹ growing denser with the depth. Still, a faint gleam of light overspreads the gloomy terraces; and the lower portions are illumined by the unquenchable fire,² but only to increase the horror of the damned by rendering their misery visible to them. Thomas Aquinas teaches that the inhabitants of Hell see their misery "*sub quadem umbrositate.*"

Milton describes Hell as

"A dungeon horrible, on all sides around,
As one great furnace, flam'd; yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible,
Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all, but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever burning sulphur unconsumed."³

In consequence of the meaning of the number three, reaching as it does even to the lower world, Dante divides Hell into three regions, each one comprising three terraces, so that it on the whole consists of nine circles. To them must be added a preliminary circle, the vestibule of Hell.

The regions are separated from one another by the windings of a large stream, which flows in circles through Hell. Of these circular windings there are four. The first, separating the fore-court from Hell properly so called, is the joyless Acheron; the second, the marshy Styx; the third, the burning Phlegethon; and the fourth, the cold Cocytus. The stream ends at last in an icy lake, in the centre of which sits the Devil. This is probably intended to represent the stream of Belial, mentioned in 2 Samuel xxii.: 5, as encompassing the dead in Hell. It rises, according to Dante, in the island of Crete, from the confluence of all the tears which the human race has ever wept in

¹ Matt. viii.: 12, "Cast into outer darkness."

² Compare Mark ix.: 44; Matt. iii.: 12 ("unquenchable fire").

³ *Par. Lost*, Book I., 61 sqq.

consequence of sin, and will yet weep during the different ages of its existence, which increase in wickedness, and find their representatives in these four streams.

SIN AND PUNISHMENT.

In the division of sins our poet follows Aristotle, who divides the sins into three classes; namely, incontinence (*ἀκρασία*), wickedness (*κακία*), and violence, or beastliness (*θηριότης*).¹ But, in accordance with his Christian standpoint, Dante differs from Aristotle in that he places wickedness, or as he terms it cunning (*froda*), lowest in the scale. The first kind of sin, that of incontinence, is human; the second, violence, is bestial; the third, cunning, is demoniacal. Each of these genera comprises again a number of distinct species. Under incontinence, for example, he ranks licentiousness, avarice, prodigality, wrath, etc.; under violence he includes murder, blasphemy. etc.; under cunning, the different forms of treachery.

The punishments of the damned are, according to Dante, both spiritual and bodily. The spiritual punishments consist chiefly in an impotent hatred towards God, in envying the happy condition of the blessed, in dissensions among themselves, and in a continual lust for sin without the power or prospect of satisfying it. This everlasting torment expresses itself also externally, and Dante exhausts ingenuity in describing the bodily punishments.

In doing this he follows the general principle laid down in the Book of Wisdom, xi., 17: "Wherewithal a man sinneth, by the same also shall he be punished." A similar thought was supposed to be implied in the assertion of our Lord: "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Mark iv.: 24; Luke vi.: 38). Sin itself, in the other world, is the punishment of sin. Sinners flee from punishment, but desire the sin; the desire is present, but its satisfaction is unattainable; the desire itself has become a tormenting sting.

This general idea of a close connection between sin and the form of its punishment is, however, carried out, not in a pedantic and literal, but in a very free and manifold way. The lazy, for

¹ *Ethics*, VII., 1.

example, roll themselves about in the mire; the licentious are driven to and fro by a whirlwind; the irascible smite each other in the muddy Styx; the Archbishop Ruggieri, who upon earth had denied food to Count Ugolino, is doomed to have his head chewed by him in Hell.

IMPARTIALITY OF DANTE.

Dante brings together a variegated mass of pictures from all ages and ranks. Poets, scholars, philosophers, heroes, princes, emperors, monks, priests, cardinals, and popes, in short, all that Truth and History, Poetry and Mythology, have been able to afford of distinguished sins and vices, he causes to pass before us, living, speaking, and suffering, until overcome with horror we feel compelled to bow before the terrible justice of God, to whom every sin is an abomination. There is opened here to the careful reader, a wide field of the most interesting, historical, psychological, metaphysical, theological and edifying observations. No poet has ever so forcibly and graphically described the sinfulness of sin and the well deserved terror of its guilt.

In his stern impartiality Dante spares neither friends nor foes, neither Ghibellines nor Guelfs, neither popes nor emperors, and restrains the claims of mercy. He assigns to everlasting woe Farinata degli Uberti, the most valiant and renowned leader of the Ghibellines in Florence who died 1264;¹ Cavalcante de' Cavalcanti, the father of his most intimate friend, Guido Cavalcanti;² even Brunetto Latini, his own beloved teacher;³ and the unfortunate Francesca da Rimini, a near relative of his last patron, Guido da Polenta, under whose roof he died.⁴ She is said to have been deceived by her father into marrying the deformed and repulsive Gianciotto Malatesta, son of the Lord of Rimini, while she loved his handsome brother Paolo, and was

¹ *Inf.*, x., 32 sqq.

² *Ibid.* x., 52 sqq. He was a Guelf and doomed to the same torment with the Ghibelline.

³ *Ibid.* xv., 30 sqq.

⁴ *Ibid.* v., 80 sqq. She was either an aunt, or niece of Guido. See Nota A., in Scartazzini's *La Div. Com.* I., 45, who gives the reports of Boccaccio and the anonymous Florentine edited by Fanfani.

murdered with him by her husband during the lifetime of Dante (1289). When he saw her he was moved to tears, and when he heard her delicate and touching tale of her temptation by reading a romantic love story, he "for pity swooned away as if he had been dying, and fell, even as a dead body falls."¹ He would have sent the guilty couple to Purgatory if they had had time to repent of their illicit love. But it was too late, too late! And so they have to feel that "there is no greater sorrow than to be mindful of the happy time in misery." Poor Francesca is the only Christian woman whom he branded; the other females whom he locates in the same region of despair, are all heathen—Semiramis, Dido, Helen, and "the voluptuous Cleopatra;"² and so are the women located in the eighth circle of Hell.³ It would have been far more consistent with justice if he had substituted for the relation of his patron those infamous Roman amazons—Marozia and Theodora—who during the period of the papal "pornocracy" placed their paramours and bastards on the throne of St. Peter and dragged the papacy down to the lowest depth of depravity. But they are ignored.

THE NINE CIRCLES OF HELL.

Let us briefly survey the nine circles of Dante's *Inferno*.⁴

1. The first circle is the moderate hell for the least guilty class of sinners who were ignorant of Christianity and deprived of the benefit of baptism, yet are included among the lost in consequence of Adam's fall.⁵ It is the border region or *Limbo*, which was formerly divided into the *Limbus Infantum* for unbaptized infants whose sighs cause the air to tremble, and the *Limbus Patrum*, the temporary prison of the pious souls from Adam to John the Baptist, who died in the hope of the coming Saviour, but were transferred to Paradise when Christ descended

¹ *Ibid.* v., 140-142.

² *Ibid.* v., 58 sqq.

³ Thais, the famous courtesan of Athens, *Inf.*, xviii., 130 sqq.; Hecuba, Polyxena, and "the nefarious Myrrha who became, beyond all rightful love, her father's lover," *ibid.* xxx., 16 sqq.; 38 sqq.

⁴ A minute description with suitable illustrations would require a volume. I may refer to the works of Professor Botta, Francesca Rossetti, and Dr. Hettinger, who give large extracts from the poem itself. See *Lit.*, p. 333, 335.

⁵ See p. 375 sq.

and proclaimed to them the accomplished redemption. Their place is occupied by the great poets, sages, statesmen, and heroes of ancient Greece and Rome who lived up to the dim light of natural reason and conscience. The wicked heathen are distributed among the impenitent Christians.

The Limbo is not a place of actual suffering, but rather corresponds to the Pagan Elysium. The distinguished heathen lead there a dreamy life of longing and desire, without hope, vainly groping in the dark after the unknown God. They still move in the element of worldly ambition, according to the maxim of Cicero: "*Optimus quisque maxime gloria ducitur.*" They seek honor and take honor, and constantly compliment each other. They look grave with an air of great authority, but speak seldom and with gentle voices. Dante was seized with grief to see among them persons of great worth; but the orthodox theology did not allow him to entertain any hope of their ultimate deliverance. "*Lasciate ogni speranza!*"

2. The Second Circle is the proper commencement of Hell; and Minos, the infernal Judge, watches at the entrance. It contains the souls of carnal sinners who are driven by fierce winds in total darkness. Here are the adulterous and voluptuous women, from Semiramis and Cleopatra to Francesca da Rimini among the poet's contemporaries. Canto v.¹

3. The Third Circle is inhabited by epicures and gluttons, whose god is their belly. They are lying on the ground exposed to a constant shower of hail, foul water or snow, and to the barking of the three-headed monster Cerberus. Canto vi.

On the brink of the next Circle the poets find Plutus, the god of riches, who swells with rage when he sees strangers invade his realm, but is sharply reproved by Virgil.

4. The Fourth Circle is intended for the prodigal and avaricious doomed to roll large dead weights forwards and backwards. Among them are many popes and tonsured clergymen. Canto vii.

¹ This canto is the most popular in the whole poem and has often been separately translated. R. Köhler published twenty-two German translations from 1763-1863. See Lit., p. 334, and p. 383 sq.

5. The Fifth Circle is approached by a broad marsh and contains the filthy spirits of brutal arrogance and wrath. Dante recognizes among them Filippo Argenti, a worthless man of irascible temper, Herculean strength and immense wealth, whose riding horse was shod with silver (*argento*). He was of the Neri faction in Florence, and seems to have provoked the animosity of Dante, who belonged to the Bianchi. Canto VIII.

The first five Circles constitute the Upper Hell of Incontinence. We descend now to the Lower Hell of Malice.

6. The Sixth Circle is the dreary City of Dis or Lucifer, full of burning sepulchres open on the top. Here heretics and infidels are punished. Cantos VIII, 76 sqq.—XI. Among them are very distinguished persons, the valiant Ghibelline chief, Farinata of Florence, Cavalcante de' Cavalcanti (Farinata's son-in-law, and father of Dante's most intimate friend, Guido Cavalcanti), the Ghibelline Cardinal Ottaviano degli Ubaldini, of Florence, who said, "if there be any soul, I have lost mine for the Ghibellines," and the liberal and accomplished Hohenstaufen Emperor Frederick II., to whom was ascribed the fabulous book on The Three Impostors (Moses, Jesus, Mohammed).¹ It is strange that Dante omits the far more notorious arch-heretics of the ancient church, as Marcion, Manichæus, Arius, Nestorius, Pelagius, etc. But he wished to strike with his lightning the summits of Italian history still within the memory of his generation.

To them he adds a supreme pontiff. On the edge of a rocky precipice between the Sixth and Seventh Circle he found a large monument with an inscription: "Anastasius I hold whom Photinus drew from the straight way."² He means Anastasius II., an obscure pope, who ruled only two years (496—498), and is reported to have received the monophysitic deacon, Photinus of Thessalonica, into church communion. For this he was himself branded as a heretic in the famous *Decretum Gratiani*, and so

¹ Comp. above p. 307. In his book *De Vulg. Eloquio*, I., 12, Dante speaks highly of Frederick's literary merits.

² *Inf.*, XI., 8, 9:

"Anastasio papa guardo,
Lo qual trasse Fotin della via dritta."

considered in the Church down to the sixteenth century.¹ He died suddenly, and this was construed as a divine judgment.

Dante no doubt followed the authority of Gratian, the great teacher of the canon law at Bologna. He might have selected clearer and stronger examples of heretical popes, as Liberius (352–366), who was charged with Arianism, and Honorius 1 (625–638), who was condemned by œcumenical councils and by his own successors as a Monothelite. The case of Honorius figured most prominently in the Vatican Council of 1870, and was the chief argument of the anti-infallibilists.²

7. The Seventh Circle (Cantos XII.–XIV.), in three divisions, is the abode of murderers, suicides and blasphemers, and is surrounded by a river of blood. The way to it leads through a wild chasm of shattered rocks. It is guarded by the Minotaur, the horror of Crete and emblem of bloodthirsty violence and brutality. Among the murderers are mentioned Alexander the Great, the tyrant Dionysius of Sicily, Guy de Montfort, who during mass stabbed Prince Henry from revenge, and Attila, the King of the Huns, who called himself the Scourge of God.

Among the suicides, naked and torn, is Pietro delle Vigne (de Vineis), the famous secretary and chancellor of the Emperor Frederick II., otherwise a noble-hearted man, who was charged with treason and was unwilling to outlive his honor.

The small class of blasphemers against God are lying supine upon a plain of burning sand. They are more severely punished than their neighbors, by a slow and constant shower of flakes of fire, which fall upon them like flakes of snow in the Alps; yet they continue to blaspheme with their old fury. (Canto XIV.) Their representative is Capeneus, one of the seven kings who besieged Thebes. He was struck by Jupiter with his thunder.

“Not any torment, saving thine own rage,
Would be unto thy fury pain complete.”³

Cantos xv. and xvi. describe the punishment of violence against nature. Here Dante does not spare his own teacher and

¹ See a full account of this case in Döllinger's *Papstfabeln des Mittelalters*, p. 124 sqq.; Eng. transl. 210 sqq.

² Schaff, *Creeeds of Christendom*, I., 178 sqq.; *Church History*, IV., 500 sqq.

³ *Inf.*, XIV., 65, 66.

friend, Brunetto Latini (xv., 30 sqq.), but he speaks to his baked and withered figure with great respect and affection.

Canto xvii. describes the punishment of usurers who do violence to nature and to art.

We now descend to the sins of bestiality.

8. The Eighth Circle, called the Malebolge¹ or Evil-budgets, consists of ten concentric ditches or pits for the following sinners: (1) Seducers, (2) Flatterers, (3) Simoniacs, (4) Soothsayers, (5) Barrators, (6) Hypocrites, (7) Thieves, (8) Evil Counselors, (9) Schismatics, (10) Falsifiers. Cantos xviii.—xxxI.

Dante is especially severe, in Canto xix., against the Simoniacs or Simonists, that is, the wretched followers of the arch-heretic and arch-hypocrite, Simon Magus, who prostitute for gold and silver the things of God, and turn his temple into a den of thieves. They are fixed one by one in narrow round holes along the sides of the rock, with the head downwards, with the feet and part of the legs standing out and tormented with flames.

At the bottom of the chasm are three popes, Nicholas III. (d. 1281), who enriched all his nephews by open simony; Boniface VIII., who “seized the comely Lady (the Church) and then made havoc of her” (d. 1303), and Clement V. (d. 1314), “the lawless shepherd from the west” (who was made pope under shameful conditions by the influence of Philip the Fair, of France). The last two Dante condemns by prophetic anticipation before their death (as the *Inferno* was begun in 1300). Such false shepherds St. John had in view when he saw the Roman harlot committing fornication with the kings. (Rev. xvii: 1–15.)

“Ye have made yourselves a god of gold and silver;
And from the idolater wherein do ye differ,
Save that he worships one, and ye a hundred?”³

Then follows the famous passage of Constantine and his reputed donation of the temporal power to the pope.

This fearful severity does not make Dante an enemy of the papacy. On the contrary, he says that his reverence for the lofty keys prevented him from using still greater severity.²

¹ *Bolgia* (Lat. *bulga*, Fr. *bouge*) means a bag, budget, and in a wider sense any dark hole or gulf.

² *Inf.*, xix., 112–114.

³ *Ibid.* xix., 100 sq.

Even Thomas Aquinas, his theological master, says that the pope, like any other mortal, may fall into the vice of simony, and his guilt is all the greater, the higher his position as the supreme disposer, not possessor, of the property of the Church.¹

Among the sowers of scandal and schism are Mohammed and Ali, fearfully mutilated, and

“Cleft in the face from forelock unto chin.”²

9. The Ninth and last Circle is the abode of traitors, furthest removed from the source of all light and heat, the frozen lake of Cocytus. Cantos xxxii.—xxxiv. Cold is expressive of the heartless selfishness of treason, and to a southern imagination, like Dante's, as severe a punishment as a burning furnace would be to a Scandinavian poet. He divides the circle into four concentric rings or belts, corresponding to four classes of traitors: (1) Caina for traitors to blood relations, called after Cain who murdered his brother. (2) Antenora for the traitors to their country, from Antenor who betrayed his native Troy. (3) Ptolemæa for the traitors to confidants, either from Ptolemy the Egyptian king who betrayed Pompey when he fled to him for protection, or, more probably, from Ptolemy who treacherously slew Simon, the high priest, and his two sons at a feast, 1 Macc., xvi. : 15–17. (4) Judecca for traitors to their benefactors, called after Judas Iscariot.

Dante finds many Florentines in the first two rings, both Guelfs and Ghibellines. He especially detests Bocca degli Abati, who by his treachery caused the slaughter of the Guelfs at the battle of Monte Aperto, in 1260, and threw every family of Florence into mourning.

But the most horrible scene in the Antenora, and the whole poem, is the punishment of Count Ugolino, Podestà of Pisa and chief of the Guelfs, and Archbishop Ruggieri, chief of the Ghibellines.³ The count betrayed the Ghibellines in 1284, and united with the archbishop in 1288 in betraying Judge Nino, his own grandson, but was betrayed in turn by the archbishop, thrown into prison with two innocent sons and two

¹ *Summa*, II., II., q. 100, a. 1 a. 2, quoted by Hettinger, p. 166, 191.

² *Ibid.* xxviii., 33.

³ *Inf.*, xxxii., 124; xxxiii., 75.

grandsons and starved to death in a tower at Pisa, called ever since "the Tower of Famine." The two traitors "are frozen together in one hole so closely that one head was a cap to the other; and as bread is chewed for hunger, so the uppermost put his teeth into the other where the brain joins with the nape." Dante saw Ugolino as he raised "his mouth from the fell repast and wiped it on the hair of the head he had laid waste behind." The count tells the poet his last sufferings in the prison when he bit both his hands for grief, and his sons, thinking that he did it from hunger, said to him :

"Father, much less pain 't will give us
If thou do eat of us; thyself didst clothe us
With this poor flesh, and do thou strip it off."

This tragedy, immortalized by Dante and Chaucer, gives a frightful picture of the ambition, treachery, cruelty and ferocity of the Middle Ages, and illustrates the law, that sin is its own worst punishment.

The thirty-fourth and last Canto of the *Inferno* opens with

"*Vexilla Regis prodeunt Inferni!*"
"The banners of the King of Hell come forth."

A parody of the hymn of triumph on the mystery of the cross by Fortunatus.¹ It is a startling introduction into the Judecca, the circle of the arch-traitor to God, the traitor to our Saviour, and the traitors to Cæsar.

Lucifer, "the Emperor of the dolorous Realm,"² is described as a hideous monster, immersed in the icy lake up to his breast. He had three faces, the counterpart of the Holy Trinity, the one fiery red in front, the others pale and black on the side. The three colors may symbolize the three continents then known over which his dominion extends. Under each face issued forth two mighty wings broader than sea-sails, in form and texture like a bat's; and he was flapping them so that three winds went forth

¹ "*Vexilla Regis prodeunt,
Fulget crucis mysterium,
Quo carne carnis conditor,
Suspensus est patibulo.*"

² "*Lo Imperador del doloroso regno.*" XXXIV., 28.

from him. With six eyes he wept, and down three chins gushed tears and bloody foam. In every mouth he champed a sinner with his teeth, like a brake, so that he thus kept three of them in torment. The worst of these three sinners, who suffers greatest punishment, is Judas Iscariot. He is suspended from the front mouth of Satan and has his head within, his feet outside. The other two, with their heads beneath, are Brutus, who "utters not a word," and Cassius, "who seems so stark of limb."

Shakespeare differs with Dante in the judgment of Brutus, "the noblest Roman of them all," who loved his country and the freedom of the Republic more than his benefactor. But Dante saw in the murder of Cæsar an assault upon the divinely constituted Roman empire, which was the type of the holy Roman empire, and the words of the dying Cæsar to Brutus: "Even thou, my child" (*καὶ σὺ, τέκνον*), may have reminded him of our Saviour's word to Judas: "Friend, do that for which thou art come" (*ἑταῖρε, ἐφ' ὃ πάρει*, Matt. 26 : 50). Here is the culmination of Dante's view of Church and State as developed in his book *De Monarchia*. Judas sinned against the Divine Head of the Church, Brutus and Cassius sinned against the temporal head of the Imperial State, all sinned against God and humanity.

The triple-headed Satan with three sinners in his mouth corresponds to the grotesque demons in mediæval art. He is absolutely hideous, without one noble feature remaining. He thus differs widely from Milton's "archangel ruined," "in shape and gesture proudly eminent," whose "form had not yet lost all his original brightness."¹ Goethe abstains from a description of the outward form of Mephistopheles, but describes his character in words and actions more philosophically than Dante or Milton:

*"Ich bin ein Theil von jener Kraft,
Die stets das Böse will und stets das Gute schafft;
Ich bin der Geist der stets verneint."*

Having reached the lowest depth of Hell, Virgil, bearing Dante, slides down the shaggy sides of Beelzebub between the tangled hair and frozen crusts, and passing through a cavern, the poets ascend to the opposite side of the earth, in the South Pacific Ocean.

"Thence we came forth to rebehold the stars."

¹ Comp. *Parad. Lost*, I., 192, 589; II., 636; IV., 985.

THE PURGATORIO.

What a change from the region of eternal darkness to the sight of the sun and starry firmament, and from the despair of the lost to the hope of the saved! Purgatory is the temporary abode of the penitent who died in the grace of God, and look for that perfect peace which awaits them after completing the process of sanctification.¹ Still it is a place of suffering, and so far of dread. All pious Catholics expect to go there, with mingled fears and hopes, and none considers himself fit for the company of saints in light. Even popes are not exempt; their title "Holiness" applies only to their official character; personally they may be very unholy. Pope Pius IX., by an inscription on his coffin, requested the faithful to pray for his soul (*Orate pro me*). The suffering church in Purgatory is in constant contact with the militant church on earth by prayers and masses for the dead.

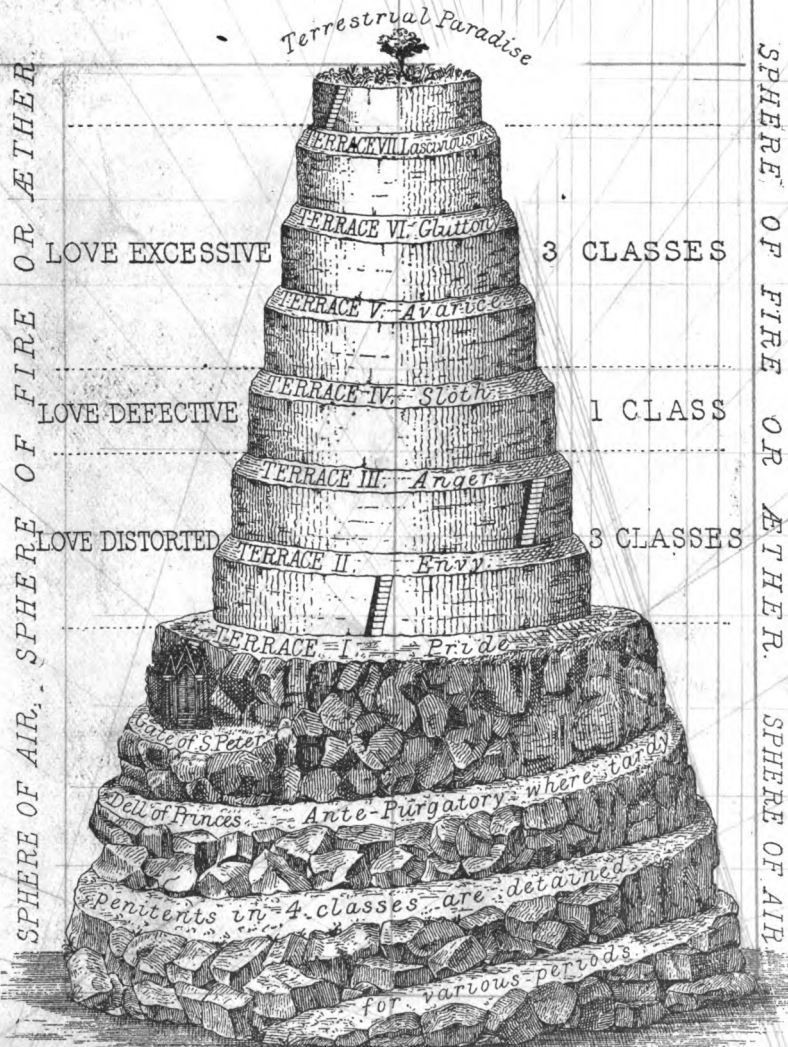
In Purgatory all is human, and appeals to our sympathy: a mingling of weakness and sorrow with virtue and hope, of the tears of repentance with the joys of forgiveness, of prayers and supplications with hymns of praise, of constant effort with the brightening prospect of ultimate purity and deliverance.

Dante's Purgatory is a steep, spherical mountain in the Western Hemisphere, which, according to the original plan of Providence was to have been the abode of the human race. It is the highest mountain in the world. Its summit is crowned with the terrestrial Paradise, out of which Adam was thrust on account of his transgression. It is the direct antipode of Sion, the mountain of salvation, on the inhabited hemisphere, and at the same time the threshold of Heaven. Both mountains rise, in a direct line, above the middle point of Hell. Christ, the second Adam, has again recovered, by his death upon Golgotha, the Paradise which was lost by the sin of the first Adam. But the way now leads through Purgatory, *i. e.*, through the deep knowledge of sin, and the purifying pains of penitence.

At the foot of the mountain of purification Dante meets Cato of Utica, the Stoic friend of liberty, who committed

¹ *Purg.*, III., 73 sqq.

THE PURGATORY.



suicide that he might not survive the Roman Republic. He is described as a solitary old man with a venerable aspect, long gray beard and double lock. He is the guardian of Purgatory, and the only heathen who escaped the eternal prison, except the Emperor Trajan.¹ He wonders at the appearance of Virgil, who assures him that he came not of his own accord, but at the behest of Beatrice. By his direction, Virgil must first wash from Dante's face the filth of Hell, and gird him with a smooth rush (the symbol of humility). Then an angel, the direct reverse of the dreadful Charon, who conducted the dead across Acheron, brings them in a light bark to the opposite shore.

Purgatory has, like Hell, a vestibule where all those are required to tarry, who have postponed repentance while upon earth to the last moment. An angel escorts the wanderers over three stairs, which represent the three stages of penitence (*contritio*, *confessio*, and *satisfactio*), through the gate of absolution, and, in order that he may think upon the seven mortal sins, cuts the letter P (*peccata*) seven times upon his forehead with his sword.²

The mountain itself has seven broad terraces cut into its sides, and on these dwell the penitent. The different penances correspond with the punishments of Hell, in inverted order. In Hell Dante descended from the lesser to the greater transgressions; in Purgatory he leads us from the greater sins and penances upward to those of less enormity. The sins for which penance is done here, are the same which are punished there; but with this difference, that there we have to do with obdurate and impenitent sinners, here with contrite souls. As in Hell, sin and punishment, so in Purgatory, sin and penance, stand in a causal relation toward one another; but the relation here is one of opposition, sin being destroyed, since the will is brought to break and yield, in direct contrariety to what it was before.

The proud, who fill the first and lowest terrace, are compelled to totter under huge weights, in order that they may learn humility. The indolent in the fourth terrace are constantly and rapidly walking. In the fifth, the avaricious and prodigal, their hands and feet tied together, lie with their faces in the dust, weeping and wailing. In the sixth, the gluttons must, like Tantalus,

¹ See above, p. 349.

² *Purg.*, IX., 93 sqq.; 102 sqq.

suffer hunger and thirst, in sight of a tree richly laden with fruits, and of a fresh flowing fountain, until they have learned moderation. In the seventh, the licentious wander about in flames, that their sensual passions may be purged from them by fire.

At the entrance into every circle the angel who conducts them obliterates one of the P's upon the forehead of the poet. In the same measure also his ascent becomes easier at every terrace. In place of the fearful darkness of the *Inferno* he is here lighted on his way by the three stars of the theological virtues, Faith, Hope, and Love. In place of the heart-rending lamentations of the damned, he hears the Lord's Prayer, the prayers to the saints and the ever sweeter sounding hymns of Salvation, as sung by the souls which are longingly gazing toward Paradise, and step by step approach nearer to its confines. At the beginning of the eleventh Canto we hear a most beautiful paraphrase of the Pater Noster from the mouth of the proud who have to become as little children of the Father in heaven before they can enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt. xviii., 3).¹ Whenever a soul has completed its purification a trembling of the whole mountain announces its entrance into heaven.²

Having reached the Terrestrial Paradise on the summit of the mountain, Dante sees in a great vision the Church triumphant, under the image of a triumphal car drawn by a griffin, a fabulous animal, half eagle, half lion, which symbolizes the double nature of Christ, the Head of the Church. The mystery of the incarnation and the cross had been explained to him previously by Beatrice (in Canto VII., 19 sqq.).

Beatrice now descends from Heaven and appears to Dante in the triumphal car. She takes the place of Virgil, who is not permitted to tread the Courts of Heaven. She rebukes Dante in strong language for his sins, and exhorts him to bathe in the

¹ " *O Padre nostro, che ne'cieli stai,
Non circoscritto, ma per più amore,
Che ai primi effetti di lassù tu hai,*" etc.

² *Purg.*, XXI., 58 sqq.

"It trembles here, whenever any soul
Feels itself pure, so that it soars, or moves
To mount aloft, and such a cry attends it." (Luke xv., 10.)

brook Lethe, that he may forget all evil and all past afflictions. A second vision displays to him the corruption of the Church. Beatrice prophesies its restoration, and causes him to drink conversion from the brook Eunoe, whereby he becomes capable of rising upward to Heaven.

THE PARADISO.

Lightly now, as upon the wings of light, Dante flies upward through the different spheres of the Celestial Paradise, and marks his progress only by the higher glory of his exalted companion.¹

Since very few Christians, according to Catholic theology, die in a state sufficiently mature for the company of the saints in light, Dante could not people Paradise with contemporaries or persons recently deceased, and confined himself to canonized saints and the great lights of the Church, who are the common property of mankind. He stretched, however, a point in favor of his ancestor Cacciaguida, who in the heaven of Mars praises the virtues of the great Florentines of former times, and prophesies Dante's banishment,² and in favor of two of his personal acquaintances, namely Piccarda (a sister of Forese and Corso Donati and of his wife Gemma Donati), who was a saintly nun of Santa Clara,³ and Charles Martel of Hungary, his friend and benefactor, who married the beautiful daughter of Emperor Rudolph of Habsburg and died at the age of twenty-three (1295).⁴ In the cases of those eminent schoolmen, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventura, and Albert the Great, who died during Dante's youth, he anticipated the judgment of the Church which canonized them.

High up in Dante's Paradise are the Apostles and Evangelists, and the redeemed of the Old Dispensation from Adam down to John the Baptist. Then we meet in different stars, according to merit and station, Christian emperors and kings, as Constantine the Great, Justinian, Charlemagne, William the Good (King of Apulia and Sicily), and the Roman emperor Trajan (whom he believed to have been saved by the intercession of

¹ *Par.*, XXI., 7 sqq.

³ *Par.*, III., 49 sqq.

² *Ibid.*, Cantos XV.-XVII.

⁴ *Par.*, VIII., 49 sqq.

Pope Gregory I.,¹ the great doctors of the Church, as Augustin, Chrysostom, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus, Bonaventura; holy monks, as St. Bernard, St. Dominic, Joachim de Flore, and St. Francis of Assisi. Dante mentions also a few pious popes, as Gregory I., and Agapetus, but only casually in a word, and ignores the great missionaries who converted the northern and western barbarians. But who can make even a limited selection of the cloud of witnesses from all nations and kindreds and tongues? No mortal man, not even the saints in heaven know the number of God's elect.

“O thou predestination, how remote
 Thy root is from the aspect of all those
 Who the First Cause do not behold entire!
 And you, O mortals! hold yourselves restrained
 In judging; for ourselves, who look on God,
 We do not know as yet all the elect:
 And sweet to us is such a deprivation,
 Because our good in this good is made perfect,
 That whatsoever God wills, we also will.”²

The spirits of the saints show themselves to Dante in different planets to indicate the different stages of perfection and glory which they enjoy, and the planetary influences under which they were while living on earth. But their proper common abode is the Empyrean, as explained in the fourth Canto:³

“He of the Seraphim most absorbed in God,
 Moses, and Samuel, and whichever John
 Thou mayst select, I say, and even Mary,
 Have not in any other heaven their seats,
 Than have those spirits that just appeared to thee,
 Nor of existence more or fewer years;
 But all make beautiful the primal circle,
 And have sweet life in different degrees,
 By feeling more or less the eternal breath.
 They showed themselves here, not because allotted
 This sphere has been to them, but to give sign
 Of the celestial which is least exalted.
 To speak thus is adapted to your mind,
 Since only through the sense it apprehendeth
 What then it worthy makes of intellect.”

¹ See above, p. 349. ² *Par.*, xx., 130-138. ³ *Par.*, iv., 28-42.

Paradise is a region of pure light, and offers no such variety of definite localities and physical sensations as Hell and Purgatory. Hence it is less picturesque, but all the more spiritual and musical.

It is located according to the Ptolemaic system, in and beyond the heavenly bodies known at that time, and viewed as transparent spheres that roll around the stationary earth with different degrees of velocity, so that those which are nearest move slowest, while the most distant revolve with greatest rapidity. Dante gives us his astronomical theory in the second Book of the *Convivio* as follows¹:

“The order of position [of the heavens] is this, that the first one enumerated is that where the Moon is; the second that where Mercury is; the third that where Venus is; the fourth that where the Sun is; the fifth that where Mars is; the sixth that where Jupiter is; the seventh that where Saturn is; the eighth that where the Fixed Stars are; the ninth is that which is not perceptible to sense (except by the motion spoken of above), and which is called by many the Crystalline, that is, the diaphanous, or wholly transparent. However, beyond all these, the Catholics place the Empyrean Heaven, which is as much as to say the Heaven of *Flame* or *Luminous* Heaven; and they hold it to be immovable, because it has within itself, in every part, that which its matter demands. And this is the reason that the *Primum Mobile* moves with immense velocity; because the fervent longing of all its parts to be united to those of this [tenth and] most divine and quiet heaven, makes it revolve with so much desire that its velocity is almost incomprehensible. And this quiet and peaceful heaven is the abode of that Supreme Deity who alone doth perfectly behold Himself. This is the abode of the beatified spirits, according to the holy Church, who cannot lie; and Aristotle also seems to think so, if rightly understood, in the first of The Heavens and Earth. This is the supreme edifice of the universe, in which all the world is included, and beyond which is nothing; and it is not in space, but was formed solely in the Primal Mind, which the Greeks call *Protonoe*. This is that magnificence of which the Psalmist spake, when he says to God, ‘Thy magnificence is exalted above the heavens.’ And thus, summing up what has here been discussed, it seems that there are ten heavens, of which that of Venus is the third; and this will be spoken of in the place where I intend to explain it.”

In the same work he gives the symbolic significance of these heavenly bodies.²

¹ Bk. II., Ch. 4. In K. Hillard's translation, p. 64 sqq.

² Bk. II., Ch. 14, pp. 104-107, K. Hillard's translation.

1. "To see what is meant by the third heaven, we must first see what I mean by the single word 'heaven;' and then we shall see how and why this third heaven was necessary to us. I say that by *heaven* I mean science, and by *heavens* the sciences, because of three resemblances which the heavens bear to the sciences, above all in order and number, which seem to correspond in them; as will be seen in treating of this word 'third.'

2. "The first resemblance is the revolution of each around its immovable [centre]. Because each movable heaven revolves around its centre, which, however forcible that motion may be, remains immovable; and so each science revolves around its subject, which is not moved by it, because science demonstrates its own subject, but presupposes it.

3. "The second resemblance is in their power of illumination. For as each heaven illuminates visible things, so each science illuminates those that are intelligible.

4. "And the third resemblance is in their [the heavens] conducting towards perfection of things disposed thereto. Of which influence, in so far as it concerns the primal perfection, that is, material generation, all philosophers are agreed that the heavens are the cause, although they state it in different ways; some that it comes from the motive Powers, like Plato, Avicenna, and Algazel; some, from the stars (especially in the case of human souls), like Socrates, and also Plato, and Dionysius the Academician; and some from the celestial virtue which is in the natural heat of the seed, like Aristotle and the other Peripatetics.

5. "And thus the sciences are the causes that bring about our second perfection; for through their means we can speculate on truth, which is our ultimate perfection, as the Philosopher has said in the sixth of the *Ethics*, when he says that the true is the good of the intellect. For these, as well as for many other resemblances, we may call science *heaven*.

6. "Now we must see why we say *third* heaven. Here we must reflect upon a comparison between the order of the heavens and that of the sciences. For, as has been said above, the seven heavens nearest to us are those of the planets; then there are two heavens above these, movable, and one over all the rest, motionless. To the first seven correspond the seven sciences of the *Trivium* and *Quadrivium*, that is, Grammar, Dialectics, Rhetoric, Arithmetic, Music, Geometry, and Astrology. To the eighth sphere, that is, to the Starry Heaven, correspond Natural Science, called *Physics*, and the first of sciences, called *Metaphysics*; to the ninth sphere corresponds *Moral Science*; and to the Quiet Heaven corresponds Divine Science, which is called *Theology*. And the reason of all this may be briefly seen."

He then goes on to explain the reasons of these symbolic references, which are very fanciful.

Between the different spheres and their inhabitants, and the grades of their felicity, there is an intimate correspondence.

Paradise consists of three chief regions, the Star Heaven, the Crystal Heaven, and the Empyrean. With the seven subdivisions of the first, it comprehends ten places of abode for the blessed, whereby is indicated the fullness and perfection of Paradise. ✓

All Paradise resounds with the praise of the Triune God.

“Glory be to the Father, to the Son,
 And Holy Ghost!’ all Paradise began,
 So that the melody inebriate made me.
 What I beheld seemed unto me a smile
 Of the universe; for my inebriation
 Found entrance through the hearing and the sight.
 O joy! O gladness inexpressible!
 O perfect life of love and peacefulness!
 O riches, without hankering secure!”¹

Let us now briefly survey the different spheres of the celestial world of Dante.

1. The Moon. It was reached by Dante, after passing through the region of air and fire. Here are the souls of those who did not quite fulfill their spiritual vows or were forced to violate them. (Canto II.—IV.)

2. Mercury. Here dwell the souls of those who, although virtuous, yet strove in their bodily life after earthly fame. (V.—VII.)

3. Venus contains those spirits that in their pious strivings were not sufficiently free from earthly love. (VIII.—IX.)

4. The Sun holds a middle position among the stars, sending forth his rays equally in all directions, and is the clearest

¹ *Par.*, xxvii., 1-9. Here, as in the inscription on the gate of Hell, no translation comes up to the beauty and melody of the original.

“Al Padre, al Figlio, allo Spirito Santo
 Cominciò Gloria tutto il Paradiso,
 Sì che m'incbbriava il dolce canto.
 Cid ch'io vedeva, mi semiava un riso
 Dell' universo; perchè mia ebbrezza
 Entrava per l' udire e per lo viso.
 O gioja! O ineffabile allegrezza!
 O vita intera d' amore e di pace!
 O senza brama sicura ricchezza!”

mirror of God for the inhabitants of the earth. Here reside the most worthy theologians and doctors of the Church; for "the wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."¹ Here we meet Albertus Magnus, the Universal Doctor; Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor; Bonaventura, the Seraphic Doctor; Peter the Lombard, the Master of Sentences; Gratian, the great authority on canon law; King Solomon; Dionysius the Areopagite, the mystic philosopher; Boethius, the senator and philosopher in the days of Theodoric the Goth; St. Isidore of Seville; the venerable Bede of the Anglo-Saxon Church; Richard of St. Victor of Paris, and "Master Sigier," who lectured on Logic in Paris, but is known only in the verse of Dante and his commentators. Hugo of St. Victor, John Chrysostom, Anselm of Canterbury, Rabanus Maurus, the Calabrian Abbot Joachim are also mentioned in irregular order. Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventura, and Francis of Assisi instruct the poet in the mysteries of salvation, and the depths of Divinity. (x.-xiii.)

5. Mars is the abode of the blessed martyrs, crusaders and other heroes who have fought for the true faith. These shine as stars, and are arranged in the form of a bright cross, from the midst of which beams forth the form of Christ. (xiv.-xvii.)

6. Jupiter is the star of Justice ("*a Jove justitia*"), and holds the souls of just and righteous princes. These are arranged first in letters so as to express the words "*Diligite justitiam, qui judicatis terram,*" afterwards in the form of an eagle as the symbol of the German Roman empire, in which Dante saw the concentration of secular power according to divine institution. (xviii.-xx.)

7. Saturn. Here reside the pious hermits and contemplative mystics who, like flames, are constantly ascending and descending a ladder. St. Benedict laments over the corruptions of the monks. (xxi. and xxii.)

8. Dante reaches now the Fixed-Star Heaven. Here, in a vision, he sees the triumph of Christ and the Virgin Mary, and

¹ Comp. Dan. xii., 3; Matt. xiii., 43.

is instructed in the nature of Faith by the Apostle Peter, in the nature of Hope by James, and in the nature of Love by John. Love is that which gives Heaven its peace—the Alpha and Omega of the Holy Scriptures. It arises from a knowledge of God, who is Love itself. It is with transport that Dante becomes aware of being in possession of the true Apostolic Faith, over which Heaven exults, and the blessed spirits shout for joy. The Apostle Paul, who is emphatically the Apostle of Faith, is not mentioned here, but elsewhere called “the mighty Vessel of the Holy Spirit.”¹ I find in the whole *Commedia* 25 references to Peter, 8 to John, 7 to Paul, 4 to James. Peter reproves the bad popes. (XXIII.—XXVI.)

9. In the ninth sphere, the Crystal Heaven or *Primum Mobile*, Dante sees the eternal hierarchy of angels who rule the nine heavenly spheres, and move in nine concentric circles around a bright, light-giving, central point—the Deity. Beatrice instructs him on the creation of Angels, the fall of Lucifer, and reproves the ignorance and avarice of preachers and the sale of indulgences. (XXVII.—XXIX.)

10. Now Dante nears the pinnacle of Glory and Blessedness, the Empyrean, to which the last four cantos are devoted.² It is in itself immovable, and yet the original cause of all movement. For God is without longing for anything that is out of him, but yet gives forth all life out of himself. The poet here sees all those blessed spirits, which, like innumerable leaves, form a boundless snow-white rose that spreads and multiplies and breathes an odor of praise throughout the heavens, and whose cup is a lake of light.

¹ *Par.*, XXI., 127 sq. ; also XXIV., 63–65 ; XXVIII., 138, and other places.

² Empyrean or Emphyreal (from πῦρ, *fire*, ἐμψυρος, *in or by the fire*) is the highest heaven formed of pure fire or light, the seat of the Deity. Milton, *Par. Lost*, III., 56 :

“Now had the Almighty Father from above,
From the pure Emphyreal where he sits
High throned above all height, bent down his eye,
His own works and their works at once to view.
About Him all the sanctities of heaven
Stood thick as stars, and from His sight received
Beatitude past utterance.”

“In fashion then of a snow-white rose
 Displayed itself to me the saintly host
 Whom Christ in his own blood had made his bride.”¹

This beautiful imagery was probably an original creation of Dante's genius, or suggested by the rose windows of Gothic cathedrals. Others connect it with the golden rose which the popes present from time to time to royal personages as a mark of special favor.²

Here Beatrice leaves her friend, as Virgil had left him in Purgatory, and resumes her place among the blessed in the third circle at the side of the contemplative Rachel, just below the seat of Eve and the throne of the Blessed Virgin. The last words of Beatrice, strange to say, were words of condemnation of the corrupt papacy and the prediction that God would cast the pope (Clement V.) down to the place of Simon Magus and his followers, in the eighth circle of the *Inferno*.³ We should rather expect from the guardian angel of his youth and manhood some sweet parting words of love and wisdom. Dante is at first not aware of her departure, and looking for her, he sees a fatherly old man, clothed in light, with a look of mild benignity, who informed him that he was sent by Beatrice. It was St. Bernard of Clairvaux, the godly mystic, “the honey-flowing doctor,” the singer of the sweetest hymn of the Middle Ages. He is the master of hearts, as Thomas Aquinas is the master of

¹ *Par.*, XXXI., 1-3 :

“*In forma dunque di candida rosa
 Mi si mostrava la milizia santa,
 Che nel suo sanguine Cristo fece sposa.*”

² Pope Innocent III. in blessing a rose (1206) : “*Hæc tria designantur in tribus proprietatibus hujus floris, quem vobis visibiliter præsentamus: caritas, in colore; jucunditas, in odore; satiætas, in sapore; rosa quippe præ cæteris floribus colore delectat, odore recreat, sapore confortat; delectat in visu, recreat in olfactu, confortat in gustu.*” Then follow Scripture quotations. See the whole passage in Scartazzini's *Com.*, III., 821.

³ Canto xxx., 145-148. Beatrice must mean either Clement V., who ruled at Avignon, 1303-'14, or John XXII., 1316-'34, but more probably the former, since the prediction of the fate of the pope follows immediately after the prophecy concerning the Emperor Henry VII., whose failure was caused by the double dealing of that pope. Boniface VIII. and Clement V. died before the *Paradiso* was finished, but Dante always prophesies from 1300.

intellects; he represents the theology of love, as the latter represents the theology of faith. The intuition of mysticism rises higher than the reflexion and speculation of scholasticism, and attains to the beatific vision.

Dante looked up once more thankfully to Beatrice crowned with glory, and thanked her for delivering him from the slavery of sin unto the freedom of the sons of God. She cast on him a loving smile from her distant height, and then turned again to the eternal fountain of light and love.¹

St. Bernard now takes charge of Dante on this last stage of his pilgrimage. He explains to him (in Canto XXXII.) the Rose of the Blessed, and points out the seats of the saints. Around the cup of the Rose or the lake of light are the innocent children, with their childlike faces and voices. The saints in heaven retain their ages in which they died; while according to Thomas Aquinas they all shall rise in the unfading bloom of youth. The Rose is divided into two semicircles, the left for the saints who were saved before Christ's coming, the right for the saints after Christ's coming. The seats of the former are filled; in the latter there are still vacant seats for the elect of the church militant below. In the middle of the top tier of the Rose is enthroned the Blessed Virgin Mother, surrounded by an army of angels. She looks most like Christ, and sends from her smiling countenance joy and peace to all the saints who delight in gazing at her. To her left is Adam, the first of sinners and the first of the redeemed, and Moses, the lawgiver; to her right St. Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and St. John the beloved disciple. Opposite the Virgin and on the same level is John the Baptist, with St. Anna on the left and St. Lucia on the right, and next to him St. Francis, St. Benedict, and St. Augustin, the three teachers who, next to the Apostles, exerted the greatest influence on the Church.

The poet now approaches the highest bliss of saints and angels—the beatific vision. St. Bernard prepares him for

¹ XXXI., 92, 93 :

*“ ed ella si lontana,
Come pareva, sorrise e riguardommi ;
Poi si tornò all' eterna fontana.”*

it by a prayer of unrivaled fervor and beauty to the Virgin Mother.¹

Beatrice and many a saint join with the venerable Bernard in this prayer for the vision of glory and its ennobling and sanctifying effect upon the after-life of the pilgrim. It is granted. Dante is permitted to gaze upon the Holy Trinity. It is but one moment of intuition, but eternity is condensed in that moment. He beholds three circles of equal circumference, but of threefold color; one of them exhibiting the divine-human countenance of the incarnate Son of God and Saviour of the world.

“O Light Eterne, sole in Thyself that dwellest,
Sole knowest Thyself, and, known unto Thyself,
And knowing, lovest and smilest on Thyself.”

The pen refuses its office; the mind of the poet is, as it were, electrified by a sudden shock; power fails to his lofty fancy, and he is inexpressibly happy in the surrender of his will to the love of God, which illumines the Sun and all the Stars, gives Heaven and Earth their motions, fills time and eternity, and draws from the choir of the Blessed an endless song of praise.

Thus ends this “deep unfathomable song.”

If we cast a glance once more at the mutual relation of the separate parts, we shall be struck with the profound truth of the hint given by Schelling, that the first is sculptural, the second picturesque, and the third musical, in accordance with the subjects therein treated. The *Inferno* is an immense group of sharply-defined statues, of dusky shadow-forms, fearful monuments of Divine justice, illumined by the touch of poetry. The *Purga-*

¹ Canto xxxiii., 1-39 :

“*Vergine Madre, figlia del tuo Figlio,
Umile ed alta più che creatura,
Termine fesso d'eterno consiglio,*” etc.

Dante must have been very familiar with St. Bernard's Homilies on the Song of Solomon, and *De Laudibus Virginis Matris*. St. Bernard was a devout worshiper of the Virgin, and contributed very much to the spread of that worship; but he opposed the dogma of her immaculate conception as being contrary to Catholic tradition and derogatory to the dignity of Christ, the only sinless being. We may infer, therefore, that Dante did not share this belief. The immaculate conception remained an open and disputed question till 1854, when Pope Pius IX. proclaimed it an article of the Catholic faith. On the history of this dogma, see Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. I., 108-128.

torio is a gallery of variegated pictures, opening, in an endless perspective, into Heaven. The *Paradiso* is a harmonious unison of the music of spheres with the praises of the blessed rational creation; here all swims in light; here all is feeling, sound, Hallelujah. The poem opens with the cry of despair; it flows through the sadness of longing; it closes with the jubilee of bliss.

Beyond Dante's description of the beatific vision there can be nothing more beautiful, sublime and enrapturing, than the beatific vision itself.¹

THE THEOLOGY OF DANTE.

Dante is the theologian among poets, and the poet among theologians. As he stands between Homer and Virgil on the Parnassus, so also between St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventura before the altar of the holy mystery. His theology and his relation to modern Christianity and civilization have been the subject of considerable dispute. Three views may be distinguished.

1. He was an orthodox Catholic. This is held by the great majority of Dante-scholars, especially Giuliani, Ozanam, Artaud de Montor, Boissard, Philalethes, Wegele, Gietmann, Hettinger.² But the most orthodox Catholics cannot deny Dante's fearless opposition to the popes of his age, nor can they accept his politics.

2. He was a forerunner of Protestantism. Matthias Flacius, the first Lutheran church historian,³ numbers him among his

¹ "*Post Paradisum Dantis nihil est nisi visio Dei.*" With these words Cardinal Manning recommends Father Bowden's translation of Hettinger, *Dante's Göttlich Komödie*, to English readers.

² See their works quoted in Literature, pp. 331 and 333. Hettinger gives, as far as I know, the fullest exposition of Dante's theology, from scholastic sources and the Catholic standpoint, in his *Die göttl. Kommödie*, etc., pp. 331-510, and of his politics (in which he differs from Dante), pp. 511-578. He approvingly quotes (p. 578) a passage from Scartazzini, that burning coffins would be ready in the sixth circle of Dante's poetic Hell for Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, Calvin and the other Reformers; but this is not the personal view of Scartazzini, who is a Protestant minister at Soglio in the Grisons, Switzerland. Ozanam puts Luther on a par with Fra Dolcino, who was burned alive at Vercelli in 1307, and is assigned to the eighth circle of the *Inferno* (xxviii., 55) among the schismatics and disturbers of the peace.

³ Originator and chief editor of the "Magdeburg Centuries," so called, an anti-papal Church History of the first thirteen centuries, Basle, 1560-'74, 13 vols. fol. He was a fierce Lutheran polemic who outluthered Luther in his

420 "Witnesses of the Evangelical Truth" in the Dark Ages, *i. e.*, among the Lutherans before Luther, as he regarded them, and quotes in proof some passages in the *Commedia* and *De Monarchia* which bear on the corruptions of the Roman Church.¹ Thirty years afterwards a French nobleman, François Perot de Mezières, endeavored to gain the Italians for the Reformation by means of the *Commedia*.² Another Frenchman, Philippe de Mornay du Plessy Marly, the most accomplished and influential controversialist and diplomat among the Huguenots of his age, led Dante into the field against popery.³ The controversy has been renewed in our century by Goeschel and Karl Graul, who claim Dante as a Reformer before the Reformation.⁴

3. He was a heretic in disguise, and even a revolutionist and socialist, in league with wide-spread anti-papal and anti-catholic societies for the overthrow of Church and State. He was a master of the symbolic language of the Templars, used for their destructive aims, a friend of the Albigenes, a Provençal zeal for orthodoxy, but a remarkable man of vast learning and indomitable perseverance and industry. See W. Preger, *Matthias Flacius Illyricus und seine Zeit*, Erlangen, 1859-'61, 2 vols.

¹ *Catalogus Testium Veritatis Evangelicæ*, Basle, 1556. In the same Protestant city appeared a German translation of Dante's *De Monarchia* by Heroldt in 1559, before any edition of it had been published in Italy. Some have gone so far as to attribute to Dante a direct prophecy of Luther, by discovering his very name, anagrammatically, in *Veltro*, *i. e.*, *Lutero* (see above p. 312), and the approximate date of his birth (Nov. 10, 1483), in the calculation of Landino, the Florentine commentator of the *Commedia* (1481), that Dante's reformer would be born Nov. 15, 1484, according to *Purg.* xxx., 31. This is the opposite extreme to Ozanam's view of Fra Dolcino as a forerunner of Luther.

² *Avviso piacevole dato alla bella Italia da un nobile giovane Francese*, 1586. Bellarmin, the great Roman controversialist, takes great pains to refute this anonymous book, in his *Appendix ad Libros de Summo Pontifice* (in *Disputat. de controversiis Christ. Fidei*, etc., Roman ed. 1832, Tom. i., 851 sqq.).

³ *Mysterium iniquitatis s. Historia papatus*, or *Le Mystère d'iniquité ou Histoire de la papauté*, 1611. He finds in the name of the reigning pope (Paul V) the apocalyptic number of the beast (666)! See the article of Gaufrés in Lichtenberger's "Encyclopédie," Tom. ix. 440.

⁴ Goeschel, in his Dante writings, quoted p. 333; Graul, in the Introduction to his translation of the *Inferno*, 1843 (LV sqq.). Giambattista Giuliani, a distinguished Dante scholar, wrote a discourse against Graul in 1844, to silence the attempts of the followers of the "insolent Luther" (*insolente Lutero*) to claim the first Christian poet for their heretical opinions.

mocker, a worshiper of classical heathenism, a pantheist, an infidel. This strange theory was first proposed by Gabriele Rossetti, an Italian patriot, in an anti-catholic spirit, 1832,¹ and afterwards (1854) in a modified form by Aroux, an orthodox Catholic, and a translator of the *Commedia*.²

The third theory must be dismissed as a radical misunderstanding and ingenious absurdity. The first is essentially correct, but there is also an element of truth in the second theory. Dante was a sincere and earnest Catholic of the mediæval, but not of the modern ultramontane type. He belonged to the party of progress which demanded a reformation of the Church, especially of the papacy; and in this respect we may regard him as a prophet of a purer form of Christianity.

We can, of course, only judge from what he actually believed and taught, not from what he might have believed in another age and under other conditions. But judging him from the spirit of his works he would have advocated the cause of truth and righteousness, of progress and moral reform in any subsequent age.

He would have thoroughly sympathized with Savonarola, the stern monk, prophet and reform preacher, in opposition to the frivolity of Florence and the wickedness of Pope Alexander VI., who demanded his execution at the stake. He would have gone half way with Luther, in his war against the shameful traffic in indulgences, and the corruptions of the papacy, but no further. In the year 1870 he would have opposed, with the Old Catholics, the two Vatican dogmas of papal infallibility and papal absolutism. In politics he, the Italian of Italians, and the

¹ Gabriele Rossetti (1783-1854) wrote *Commento analitico sulla Divina Commedia* (1826-'27); *Sullo spirito anti-papale che produsse la Riforma* (1832); *Il mistero dell' amor Platonico del medio evo, derivato da' misteri antichi* (1840), and *La Beatrice del Dante* (1842). He tries to show that Dante and his contemporaries adopted a peculiar idiom to veil their aversion to the papacy, and introduced a woman as the special object of their adoration, to symbolize true Christianity. He was a political exile from his native Italy and settled in England, 1824. He is the father of a distinguished family of artists, poets, and Dante-scholars. See p. 335. For a critical examination of his theory compare K. Witte, *Rossetti's Dante-Erklärung*, in his *Dante-Forschungen*, I., 96-139.

² Quoted in Literature on p. 332. Add to it his work *L'herésie de Dante démontrée par Francesca da Rimini, devenue un moyen de propagande Vaudoise*, 1857. Aroux was refuted by Boissard, also by Witte, *l. c.*, pp. 109 sqq., 131 sqq.

idol of Italian patriots, would have hailed the union and independence of Italy, the destruction of the temporal power of the papacy, and the separation of Church and State.

But we must not identify him with Protestantism in any of its systems of doctrine or church polity. He probably even to-day would look forward to an ideal Catholicism of the future and prophesy the coming of another *Veltro* and *Dux*, who would restore a universal church and a universal empire in friendly independence and confederation for the spiritual and temporal welfare of mankind.

We cannot find in his writings any distinctively Protestant principles, either the supremacy of the Scriptures over traditions, or justification by faith alone, or the general priesthood of the laity. He is full of Scripture facts and Scripture doctrines, but throughout assumes that the teaching of the Church is in harmony with them; he believes in salvation by the grace of God and the atoning sacrifice of Christ, but demands good works and crowns them with reward; he teaches the divine origin and independence of the State, but expects the German emperor to be in communion with the Roman Church. In all essential doctrines which distinguish the Protestant from the Roman Catholic system he stands on the Roman Catholic side.¹

¹ The eminent Dante-scholar, Karl Witte, expresses substantially the same view, in his revision of Goeschel's article in the second ed. of Herzog, III., 491 sqq., and at the close of the Introduction to his German version of the *Commedia*, p. 39 sq., where he says:

“Er ist Katholik im schönsten Sinne, welcher das allgemein Christliche bezeichnet; denn auch den frommen Protestanten werden Dante's Verse tief ergreifen, ja sicherlich mehr erbauen, als die beiden christlichen Epopöen des englischen und des deutschen protestantischen Dichters der beiden letzten Jahrhunderte. Aber auch in dem Sinne ist er katholisch, dass wo einmal Unterscheidungslehren zur Sprache kommen, wie z. B. Paradies XXV., 69, sein Bekenntniss allerdings nicht auf Seiten der evangelischen Kirche steht. Mit gerechtem Bewusstseyn ist es also, dass der Dichter, nachdem er seinen Glauben bekannt hat, vom Apostel Petrus, als dem Felsen, auf den die katholische Kirche sich gründet, zum Zeichen seiner Rechtgläubigkeit sich segnen und umkränzen lässt. Führt ihn doch lehrend und ausdeutend die verklärte Beatrice, dies Sinnbild der vollen Erkenntniss rechtgläubig religiöser Wahrheit, von einer Himmelsphäre zur anderen. Und so hält aller Zorn gegen das Papstthum seiner Zeit den Dichter nicht ab, dem Nachfolger Petri als solehem, ja selbst seinem bitteren Feinde Bonifaz VIII., die Ehrerbietung eines gläubigen Katholiken zu beweisen. (Hölle XIX., 100; Fegefeuer XIX., 127; XX., 87).”

The same may be said of Savonarola, who has so often been misrepresented as a forerunner of Luther.

Dante is the poet of mediæval Catholicism. His poetry reflects the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bernard, that is, orthodox scholasticism and orthodox mysticism combined. The *Commedia* is a poetic transfiguration of mediæval theology and piety. He worked into it all the subtleties of scholastic speculation and all the warmth of mystic devotion to the very height of the beatific vision. He is a strong believer in the fundamental doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation and all the articles of the œcumenical faith from creation to life everlasting. He clothes these truths in the shining garb of poetic beauty, and impresses them all the more deeply on the mind and heart. To a devout student the *Divina Commedia* is a powerful sermon accompanied by solemn organ music. Neither Milton, nor Klopstock, nor any other poet, Catholic or Protestant, can equal him in the poetic vindication and glorification of our common Christian faith.

In connection with this faith Dante held also those mediæval doctrines which the Protestant Reformers, wisely or unwisely, rejected on account of their abuse, as the doctrines of Purgatory, the worship of saints, and the divine foundation of the papacy. Purgatory with its expiatory penances is one of the three divisions of his poem. The intercession of the saints in behalf of the living and the petitions of the living for that intercession run through the whole, and culminate in that wonderful prayer of St. Bernard to the holy Virgin Mother who is enthroned in Paradise as the Queen of Saints. He assumes throughout the closest communion between the militant and triumphant church. Beatrice, Lucia, and Matilda are interested in his salvation and act under the inspiration of Mary. But as a follower of St. Bernard, he must have disapproved of the belief in her immaculate conception which then began to be advocated in the form of a special festival in France. He peoples heaven with orthodox saints, and excludes from it all impurity and heresy, and even all the unbaptized. He puts heretics in the sixth circle of the *Inferno*. He believes in the supremacy of Peter as the prince of the Apostles and founder of the Roman Church,

who "keeps the keys," and examines and instructs him in the faith. He regards the pope as Peter's successor and as the vicar of Christ. He knows only one Church, and condemns schism even more than heresy.

But here his connection with the Roman Catholic Church stops. It remains for us to consider his reformatory or Protestant element, if we may so call it.

DANTE'S RELATION TO THE PAPACY AND THE REFORMATION.

Dante is a most earnest and consistent advocate of a moral (not doctrinal) reformation in Church and State, especially of the papacy. He urges and predicts such a reformation in the head and the members again and again, in all parts of his poem and in a variety of images.¹ The very last words of his beloved Beatrice in Paradise are a condemnation of the popes Boniface VIII. and Clement V., who shall be thrust down

"Where Simon Magus is for his deserts."

The key to his position is his prediction of the Greyhound (*Veltro*) and Leader (*Dux*), who should bring about such a reformation, and the political theory of his book on the Empire (*De Monarchia*), which was condemned by the Council of Trent.²

He treats the popes with the same stern impartiality as emperors, kings and private persons, according to their moral merits. He respects the office, but condemns those who disgraced it, in such a fearless manner as would not be tolerated in the Roman Church of the present day. He mentions indeed several popes and cardinals among the blessed in heaven, as Gregory I. and Agapetus, but none of them is assigned so high a position as the great doctors of the church and founders of monastic orders. He ignores Gregory VII., the greatest of the

¹ Comp. *Inf.* I., 101-111; *Purg.* VI., 97-125; XX., 10-15; 94-96; XXXIII., 34-60; *Par.* XVII., 76-99; XXI., 118-120; XXII., 14-18; 90-96; XXVII., 40-66; 142-148.

² Comp. the previous discussion on pp. 308-312; 320-322.

popes, probably because of his quarrel with the emperor.¹ Innocent III. is barely mentioned.² He met two popes among the penitents in Purgatory, namely, Adrian V. who sits among the avaricious in the fifth circle, but was pope only thirty-nine days (d. 1276), and Martin IV., who suffers among the gluttons, because his fondness for eels from the lake of Bolsena in the Papal States, and the vernaccia wine brought his life to a sudden close (1285).³ He saw a multitude of avaricious popes and cardinals in the fourth circle of Hell, which is guarded by Plutus as their jailer.⁴ He condemns a heretical pope, Anastasius II. (496).⁵ He is most severe on the simoniacal popes who are already, or will soon be tormented in the eighth circle, notably Nicholas III. (d. 1281), Boniface VIII. (d. 1303), and Clement V. (d. 1314). The last two were still living when the *Commedia* was begun (1300), but Nicholas, with the foresight of disembodied spirits, knew that they were coming, and wondered only that they should come so soon and not tarry longer with their golden idols on earth.⁶

¹ For this reason I cannot identify the Matilda of the Purgatory who carries Dante over the river Lethe to Beatrice (xxviii., 40 sqq.; xxxi., 92; xxxii., 28, 82; xxxiii., 119, 121), with the Countess Matilda of Tuscany who protected Gregory at Canossa and bequeathed to the papal see a large amount of her possessions, thus increasing the evil of the fatal gift of Constantine. Nearly all the older commentators, as also Ruskin and Longfellow, identify the two Matildas; others think of Matilda, wife of Emperor Henry the Fowler, distinguished for goodness and beauty, or Matilda of Hackenborn, a saintly Benedictine nun, or Matilda of Magdeburg, or a friend of Beatrice whose death is mentioned in the *Vita Nuova*. See the notes of Scartazzini and Plumptre (I., 337 sq.); Witte's *Dante-Forschungen*, II., 311 sqq., and Preger, *Dante's Matelda*, München, 1873.

² *Par.* xi., 92.

³ *Purg.* xix., 99; xxiv., 22.

⁴ *Inf.* vii., 44-48.

⁵ *Inf.* xi., 8, 9. See above p. 386.

⁶ Nicholas III., of the Orsini (Bear) family of Rome, "the son of the she-bear (*orsa*), so eager to advance the cubs (*orsatti*)" (*Inf.* xix., 70 sq.), first mistook Dante for Boniface VIII. (xix., 52 sqq.):

"And he cried out: Dost thou stand there already,

Dost thou stand there already, Boniface?

By many years the record lied to me.

Art thou so early satiate with that wealth

For which thou didst not fear to take by fraud

The beautiful Lady [the Church] and then work her woe?"

. In *Par.* xxx., 145 sqq., Boniface is supposed to be already with Simon Magus, and to be followed soon by Clement.

The pope whom he most severely condemns and pursues a dozen times in all parts of his poem with fiery indignation and almost personal animosity, is Pope Boniface VIII. He regarded him as the chief author of his exile and all his misfortune, and as the worst of Simoniacs.

Boniface was a man of great learning, ability and energy, but violent, cruel, ambitious, avaricious and utterly unscrupulous. He scared the humble Cœlestin V. into a resignation, which was never before heard of in the history of the papacy, shut him up in a castle, bought the papal crown, created two of his very young nephews cardinals, appointed twenty bishops and archbishops from among his relatives and friends, and left them enormous sums of money. He made war upon the powerful family of the Colonnas and confiscated their vast possessions. He introduced the first papal jubilee with its abuses, in the very year in which Dante began the *Commedia*. He carried the system of papal absolutism to the utmost extreme of audacity and pretension, and claimed in the bulla *Unam Sanctam* (1302) the highest temporal as well as ecclesiastical power on earth. A commission of investigation after his death, composed of Italians and Frenchmen well acquainted with him, charged him with the worst of crimes and even with infidelity. His haughty reign ended in humiliation, insult and grief—the very opposite of the scene at Canossa. The public opinion of his contemporaries is expressed in the sentence: “He entered like a fox, he reigned like a lion, he died like a dog.”

Dante and Boniface were political, ecclesiastical and moral antipodes, but the poor exile triumphed over the mighty pope in the judgment of posterity. Dante called his antagonist the prince of modern Pharisees, a usurper of the papal chair, who bought and then abused the church, and turned the cemetery of St. Peter, the Vatican hill, into a common sewer of corruption.¹

Nevertheless he justly condemns with the same impartiality Philip the Fair, of France, that “modern Pilate,” for his cruel treatment of the aged pope at Anagni.² He distinguished

¹ See the passages quoted on p. 364, note 2.

² *Purg.* xx., 87 sqq.

between the chair of Peter and "him who sits there and degenerates."¹

Dante was an ideal imperialist in direct opposition to the papal absolutism of Boniface. He believed in the unity of empire with two independent heads in amicable relation: the Roman pope as the spiritual ruler, the German Roman emperor as the secular ruler. Church and State are both divine institutions, the one for the eternal, the other for the temporal welfare of mankind. He borrowed his theory from the ante-Nicene period, but substituted a Christian for a heathen emperor. We may say, that he anticipated the American theory of a friendly separation of Church and State; yet with this important difference that he had in mind one Catholic Church instead of a number of denominations, and one Roman Empire instead of a federal Republic. The two powers should remain separate and distinct. A mixture of the two and a supremacy of one over the other (either in the form of the papal theocracy, or in the form of Cæsaropapacy) is a source of evil, of friction and war. There are two suns which give light to the world, the pope and the emperor. The State must not be degraded to a mere moon that borrows her light from the one sun, as is done in the Hildebrandian system.

"Rome, that reformed the world, accustomed was
Two suns to have, which one road and the other,
Of God and of the world, made manifest.
One has the other quenched, and to the crosier
The sword is joined, and ill beseemeth it
That by main force one with the other go,
Because, being joined, one feareth not the other."²

Dante derived, with the common opinion of the Middle Ages, the temporal power of the pope from the fictitious donation of Constantine to Sylvester I., and repeatedly alludes to this fatal gift which was well meant but "bore bad fruit."³

¹ *Par.* XII., 89, 90.

² *Purg.* XVI., 106-112.

³ *Purg.* XXXII., 125; *Par.* XX., 55, and in the third book of his treatise *De Monarchia*. Constantine, on account of his good intention and ignorance of the ill effects of his donation, is pardoned and placed in the sixth heaven among the righteous kings.

“ Ah, Constantine ! of how much woe was mother,
 Not thy conversion, but that marriage-dower
 Which the first wealthy Father took from thee ! ”¹

He believed that the gift, if ever made, was unlawful, although it is incorporated in the canon law (the *Decretum Gratiani*). How would he have rejoiced if he could have seen the book of the Roman critic and humanist Laurentius Valla (Lorenzo della Valle, d. 1457) who proved beyond contradiction that the donation of Constantine was nothing but a hierarchical fable.²

The principal evil which resulted from the temporal power of the pope and his connection with all the political quarrels and intrigues of the age, was Simony, or the sin of Simon Magus, who wished to buy the Holy Ghost for lucrative purposes and incurred the fearful rebuke of St. Peter. “ Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter : for thy heart is not right before God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee. For I see that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity ” (Acts viii : 20–23). This passage is the text of Dante’s invectives against the popes who

¹ *Inf.* XIX., 115–118 :

“ *Ahi, Constantin, di quanto mal fu madre,
 Non la tua conversion, ma quella dote
 Che da te prese il primo ricco padre !* ”

In Milton’s translation :

“ Ah Constantine ! of how much ill was cause,
 Not thy conversion, but those rich domains
 That the first wealthy pope received of thee ! ”

² *Declamatio de falso credita et ementita Constantini donatione*. It was written about 1440, while the author was in the service of the liberal-minded Alfonso V., King of Arragon, and republished by Ulrich von Hutten, with an ironical dedication to Pope Leo X., in 1517. It had a great influence upon Luther, who received a copy through a friend in February, 1520. See Strauss, *Ulrich von Hutten*, p. 211 sqq. (4th ed. 1878) ; Köstlin, *M. Luther*, I., 324 sq. Constantine’s donation is admitted to be a forgery, as well as the pseudo-Isidorian Decretals, by all historical scholars of repute. See e. g. Streber in the new ed. of Wetzer and Welte’s *Kirchenlexikon*, vol. III., 979–985, and J. Friedrich, *Die Konstantinische Schenkung*, München, 1889.

made themselves guilty of the same sin and incurred double guilt on account of their exalted position as successors of St. Peter, and the incalculable influence of their bad example upon clergy, monks and laity. It is notorious that many popes made merchandise of holy things, bought the papal crown, sold cardinals' hats and bishops' mitres, and perverted the property of the church for the enrichment of their nephews and other members of their families. Nearly all the rich palaces of Roman nobles with their picture galleries and treasures of art owe their origin to papal nepotism. The worst period of the papacy was that of the so-called pornocracy in the tenth and eleventh centuries, which cannot be mentioned without humiliation and shame. It was then that the German emperors had to interfere and to depose those wicked popes, the paramours and bastards of some bold, bad Roman women. Henry VII., at the synod of Sutri (1046), deposed three rival popes, all Simonists, and elected the worthy bishop Bruno of Toul in their place (1048), as Leo IX., the first reforming pope under the direction of Hildebrand, who himself succeeded to the papal chair as Gregory VII. (1073) and made war upon simony, but as well also upon sacerdotal marriage, and the power of the emperor. With all his zeal against Simony, Gregory could not prevent his successors from relapsing into the same sin.

Dante condemns the Simonists to the eighth circle of Hell, where they are turned upside down with their heads in a narrow hole and their feet and legs standing out and burning—a fit punishment for perverting the proper order of things by putting the material above the spiritual, and money above religion. The greatest sufferers in this pit are the simoniacal popes. The corruption of the Roman court contaminated the higher and lower clergy and the whole church.

Dante looked to Germany for a reformation of the Church and a restoration of the Empire, but he was doomed to disappointment in the hope he set on Henry VII., and his vicar in Lombardy. In the meantime after the death of Boniface, the papacy had been transferred to Avignon, and became subservient to the French monarchs. Then followed the scandalous papal schism, the reformatory councils, the restoration and renewed corruption

of the papal power. At last the reformation came from Germany, but not from an emperor, and in a much more radical form than the poet dreamed of.

In another sense, however, he proved a true prophet; for it was by the aid of Germany, in the wars of 1866 and 1870, that Italy achieved her political unity and independence.

DANTE AND THE JOACHIMITES.

Dante stood not alone in his attitude to the papacy. There runs through all the Middle Ages a protest against the abuses in the Church and a desire for a reformation which grew stronger and stronger and ultimately culminated in the mighty religious revolution of the sixteenth century.

Before him and during his lifetime there was a considerable commotion in the Franciscan order with which he was in sympathy. Tradition connects him with this order.¹ He was buried in the Franciscan church at Ravenna. His daughter Beatrice was a nun in a Franciscan convent of that city. He fully appreciated the monastic principle of apostolic poverty, and considered wealth and temporal power a curse to the clergy. He puts into the mouth of Thomas Aquinas, who was a Dominican, a high eulogy of St. Francis of Assisi; while Bonaventura, a Franciscan, in the spirit of true brotherhood, without envy and jealousy, celebrates the life and deeds of St. Dominic.² He assigns one of the uppermost places in the Rose of the Blessed to St. Francis, the most childlike, the most amiable, and the most poetic monk of the Middle Ages, the sympathizing friend of all God's creatures, whose highest aim and crowning glory was transformation into the image of the Saviour, who married Christ's poverty and dying left the care of this his "lady-love" (*la sua donna più cara*) to every one of his disciples. Dante, who was probably familiar with Bonaventura's life of the saint, thus tersely describes his character:

¹ He joined the lay-brethren of the Franciscan Order, according to the testimony of Francesco da Buti, one of his earliest commentators, who wrote about 1385.

² *Par.* XI., 40 sqq.; XII., 31 sqq.

“On the rough rock ’twixt Tiber’s and Arno’s plain,
From Christ received he the last seal’s impress,
Which he two years did in his limbs sustain.

When it pleased Him, who chose him thus to bless,
To lead him up the high reward to share
Which he had merited by lowliness,

Then to his brothers, each as rightful heir,
He gave in charge his lady-love most dear,
And bade them love her with a steadfast care.”¹

At the same time he complains of the departure of the Franciscans from the apostolic simplicity of their founder, and makes like complaint of the degeneracy of the Dominican order. He was in sympathy with the puritanical or spiritual party of the Joachimites, and the reform movement which agitated the Franciscan order from the middle of the thirteenth century. He esteemed Joachim of Flore, who gave the first impulse to the movement, as a true prophet and assigned him a high place in Paradise with Rabanus Maurus, Dominic, Bonaventura, Chrysostom, and Anselm.

“Here is Rabanus, and beside me here
Shines the Calabrian Abbot Joachim,
He with the spirit of prophecy endowed.”

Joachim was a prophet in the same sense as Dante was a

¹ *Par.* XI., 106–114, Plumptre’s translation. The final seal (*l’ultimo sigillo*, line 107) of Francis and his Order is the miracle of stigmatization or the impression of the five wounds of the crucifixion. It was reported by his biographers that St. Francis after long and intense meditation on the sufferings of the Saviour, received in 1224, on the rocky Mount Alvernia, in the Apennines, while absorbed in prayer, on his hands and feet and side the wounds of the nails and the spear, and bore them two years till his death (1226). The place is still shown near the monastery which the saint founded. Thomas a Celano, the author of the *Dies Iræ*, was his intimate friend and first biographer. On St. Francis, see above p. 146 and 193 sqq.

² *Par.* XII., 139–141 :

“*Il Calavrese [Calabrese] abate Gioacchino
Di spirito profetico dotato.*”

His Latin name was *Johannes Joachimus de Flore* (or *de Floris, de Floribus*); his Italian name was *Giovanni Gioacchino di Fiore* (or *del Fiore, Santa Fiora*). His convent was called *monasterium Florense (de Flore, de Floribus)*. See Scartazzini, Tom. III., 333.

prophet. He roused the conscience, he reproved wickedness, he predicted a better future, like the Hebrew prophets. A brief notice of this remarkable man and his school may not be out of place here.¹

Joachim was abbot of a Cistercian convent at Flore or Fiore in Calabria, an older contemporary of St. Francis (Renan calls him his Baptist), and like him an enthusiast for entire conformity to Christ in spirit and outward condition. He made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, fasted forty days on Mount Sinai, led a life of self-denial and devotion to his fellow-men, studied with special zeal the prophetic portions of the Scriptures, opposed the worldliness and earthly possessions, the simony, nepotism and avarice of the clergy, and predicted a reformation. He died about 1202. He was revered by the people as a wonder-working prophet and saint. Neander says of him: "Grief over the corruption of the Church, longing desire for better times, profound Christian feeling, a meditative mind, and a glowing

¹ The Literature on this chapter of mediæval church history is quite extensive, although several points need to be cleared up. The *Acta Sanctorum* for May 29th give many documents. Wadding, the historian of the Franciscan Order, treats the history of the Spiritual party with sympathy, *Annales Ordinis Min.* IV., 6 sqq. Maurique, *Annales Cistercienses*, Regensburg, 1741. Gervaise, *Histoire de l'Abbé Joachim*, Paris, 1745, v. vol. * Engelhardt, in his "Kirchengeschichtliche Abhandlungen," Erlangen, 1832 pp. 1-150; 265-291. * Hahn, *Geschichte des Ketzer im Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1850), vol. II. 69-175. * Neander, *Church History*, IV. 220-232 (Torrey's translation). * Döllinger, *Pope Fables and Prophecies of the Middle Ages*, Eng. transl. by Plummer, Am. ed. by H. B. Smith, N. York, 1872, pp. 364 391; and his *Akad. Vorträge*, 1888, I., 95 sqq. Rousselot, *Histoire de l'évangile éternel*, Paris, 1861, I. Renan, *Joachim de Flore et l'évangile éternel*, in the "Revue des deux mondes," July, 1866 (the same somewhat enlarged in his "Nouvelles études d'histoire religieuse," Paris, 1884). Preger, *Das Evangelium æternum und Joachim von Floris*, in the "Abhandlungen der Königl. Bayerischen Akademie der Wiss.," München 1874. * Reuter, *Gesch. der Aufklärung im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1875), vol. II., 191-218. Möller in Schaff-Herzog, sub "Joachim von Floris." Tocco, *L'eresia nel medio evo*, Firenze, 1884. P. Heinrich Denifle, *Das Evangelium æternum und die Commission zu Anagni*, with the *Protocoll der Commission zu Anagni*, in the "Archiv für Literatur- und Kirchengeschichte des Mittelalters" ed. by Denifle and Ehrle, vol. I. (1885), pp. 49-142. Franz Ehrle, *Die Spiritualen, im Verhältniss zum Franciscaner Orden und zu den Fraticellen*, *ibid.* pp. 509-570. The last two treatises publish important documents.

imagination, such are the peculiar characteristics of his spirit and of his writings."¹

Joachim wrote three works: The Harmony of the Old and New Testament; Exposition of the Apocalypse; Psalter of Ten Chords. To the last are attached two hymns of Paradise, the second of which was, as Renan conjectures, one of the sources of Dante's *Commedia*. Several other works of uncertain authorship, especially commentaries on Isaiah and Jeremiah, were also ascribed to him.²

He wished to be orthodox and remained in the communion of the Catholic Church, but his apocalyptic opinions could easily lead astray and be utilized for heretical purposes. After his death he was condemned by the fourth Lateran Council (1215) for tritheism.³ He gave great offence by his attacks on the papacy and his prediction of the Eternal Gospel.

An older contemporary, St. Hildegard, abbess of the Rupert convent near Bingen on the Rhine (b. 1098, d. 1197), took a similar position on the church question, and was generally revered as a prophetess. Pope Eugene III. and St. Bernard of Clairvaux, while preaching the second crusade in Germany, recognized her divine mission, and persons of all ranks flocked to her for advice, intercession, consolation, and light on the future.⁴

Joachim attacked as severely as Dante the corruption of the papacy, although it was better represented in the early than in the latter part of the thirteenth century. He, too, traced the decay of morals and discipline to the temporal power and the love of money, which is "a root of all kinds of evil." (1 Tim. vi. 10.) He complains of the exactions of the Roman curia.

¹ *Church History*, IV., 220 (Am. ed.).

² On his works, see Engelhardt, *l. c.*; Hahn, *l. c.* III., 84; Neander, IV., 221; Reuter, II., 356; and Denifle, 91.

³ He wished to escape the inference, from the unity of essence, that the incarnation of the Son would imply an incarnation of the Father and Spirit as well. It is uncertain whether he wrote a special book against Peter the Lombard, or whether his views on the Trinity were simply gathered from his *Psalterium decem chordarum*. See Hahn, *l. c.* p. 87 sqq., and Hefele, *Concilien-gesch.* v., 180 (second ed. by Knöpfler). The Synod of Arles, 1260, condemned the *doctrina Joachimitica* of the three ages.

⁴ See Neander, IV., 217 sqq.

“The whole world is polluted with this evil. There is no city nor village where the church does not push her benefices, collect her revenues. Everywhere she will have prebends, endless incomes. O God, how long doest thou delay to avenge the blood of the innocent which cries to thee from beneath the altar of the (Roman) capitol!”¹ He condemns indulgences dispensed from Rome, and rebukes the proud and carnal cardinals and bishops who seek their own instead of the things of Christ. He often compares the Roman Church with the Babylon and the harlot of the Apocalypse, who commits fornication with the kings of the earth, and he predicts that the last and worst Antichrist will sit in the temple of God and the chair of Peter, and exalt himself above all that is called God. He agreed with Hildegard in announcing a terrible judgment and consequent purification and transformation of the Church and the papacy.

He divided the history of the world into three periods, which correspond to the persons of the Holy Trinity, the three leading Apostles—Peter, Paul, and John, and the three Christian graces—faith, hope, love. The period of the Father extends from the creation to the incarnation; the period of the Son to the year 1260; the period of the Holy Spirit to the end of the world. The first period is the period of the laity, the second that of the clergy, the third that of the spiritual monks under a *papa angelicus*. The first was ruled by the letter of the Old Testament; the second by the letter of the New Testament; the third will be ruled by the spirit of the New Testament, *i. e.*, the spiritual understanding of the Gospel of Christ (*spirituale evangelium Christi, spiritualis intelligentia Novi Testamenti*). This is “the Everlasting Gospel,” to be proclaimed by the angel in the Apocalypse (Rev. xiv. 6). It is not a written book, but a *donum Spiritus Sancti*, a *donum contemplationis*, and the order which is to proclaim it, is an *ecclesia contemplativa, a populus spiritualis*.²

The last period is the period of love represented by the be-

¹ See Neander, iv., 222.

² A distinction should be made between the unwritten Gospel of Joachim and the written Gospel of the Joachimites. He was too modest to identify the Everlasting Gospel with his own writings. Comp. Hahn, *l. c.* p. 158, sqq.; Denifle, *l. c.* p. 56.

loved disciple, the period of peace, the Sabbath which remains for the people of God. It will be preceded by a terrible conflict with the concentrated power of Antichrist in its last and most powerful form. Then will be fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah (xiii.; 9 sqq.), "when the day of Jehovah cometh with wrath and fierce anger to make the land a desolation and to destroy the sinners thereof, when the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not shine."

The three periods are also subdivided into seven sub-periods, corresponding to the days of creation and the Sabbath of rest.

These prophecies are more fully developed in the doubtful, than in the three genuine, writings of Joachim, and are involved in mystical fog.

The views of Joachim were adopted, enlarged and exaggerated after his death by the Joachimites, a branch of the Franciscans who opposed the prevailing laxity which had crept into the order, and who insisted on the severe rule of the founder. They were called Spirituales (*Spirituales, Zelatores, Fraticelli*). They indulged in ascetic extravagances and apocalyptic fancies, vehemently opposed the worldliness of the clergy and monks, and became more and more antipapal and antichurchly. Their war cry was "*the Everlasting Gospel,*" which created a great sensation about the middle of the thirteenth century.¹

¹ Franz Ehrle (a Jesuit scholar and co-editor of the *Archiv für Literatur- und Kirchengesch. des Mittelalters*) thus estimates the importance of this movement (l. c. p. 509) :—

"Sowohl für die kirchliche als für die politische Geschichte des 13. und 14. Jhs. hatte die im Franciscanerorden erstandene Bewegung, welche wir gewöhnlich an die Namen der Spirituellen und Fraticellen zu knüpfen pflegen, eine nicht zu unterschätzende Bedeutung. Dieselbe war zunächst im 13. Jh. von grösster Tragweite für die Entwicklung des auf das kirchliche, ja auch auf das bürgerliche und politische Leben mächtig einwirkenden Ordens. Sodann ist die Geschichte der Spirituellen eng verbunden mit dem bedeutungsvollen Wechsel, welcher sich auf dem Stuhle Petri durch die Abdankung Cölestins⁵, die Erwählung und kirchlich-politische Richtung Bonifaz VIII. vollzog; sie spielt in die gewaltigen Kämpfe hinein, welche dieser letzere Papst mit den Colonnas und noch unvergleichlich mehr mit deren Beschützer Philipp dem Schönen zu bestehen hatte. Ohne ein genaues Verständniss dieser Streitigkeiten sind mehrere der wichtigsten Decrete des Vienners Concils unverständlich. Allbekannt ist ferner die massgebende Rolle, welche die Fraticellen in dem so hartnäckigen, für Kirche und Reich gleich verderblichen Zwiste zwischen Johann XXII. und Ludwig dem Bayern spielten.

Gerard, or Gherardino, of Borgo-San-Donnino, a Franciscan monk, published at Paris, in 1254, a popular epitome of Joachim's prophetic and apocalyptic writings, with an Introduction (*Introductorius*), under the title, "The Everlasting Gospel," and announced the near advent of the Era of the Holy Spirit, which would abrogate the economy of the Son or the New Testament, as the economy of the Son had abrogated the economy of the Father or the Old Testament. By the Everlasting Gospel he meant the three chief works of Joachim, which were to take the place of the New Testament, and to be the canon of the dispensation of the Holy Spirit.¹

The publication excited a great commotion in the University of Paris and throughout the Church. Pope Alexander IV. appointed a Commission of investigation at Anagni, where he then resided. The result was the condemnation of "The Everlasting Gospel" in 1255.² Gherardino refused to recant, and was condemned to prison for life. He died there after eighteen years. The failure of the prophecy destroyed its effect after 1260 more effectually than the papal anathema. The expectations of the people were raised to the highest pitch in November of that year by a procession of the Flagellants of Perugia through Italy, but the year passed without ushering in the new era.

But the spirit of Joachim and Gerard revived in the party of the Spirituals and their successors, the Fraticelli. Their prophecies were renewed in modified forms, especially by Peter John de Oliva, who was styled Dr. Columbinus (the *columba*, or dove, being the symbol of the party, and of the Holy Spirit), and were published in a mystic commentary on the mysteries of the Apocalypse about 1290. History was now divided into seven periods. The sixth period was dated from St. Francis of Assisi

Wer endlich ein Gegenstück zu dem Ideenkreis und der Litteratur unserer deutschen Mystiker und, der sogenannten 'Gottesfreunde' sucht, wird in der Geschichte, den Schriften und Anschauungen der Spiritualen manche frappante Vergleichspunkte finden.'

¹ The *Introductorius in Evangelium Aeternum* is lost, with the exception of some extracts preserved by Eymerich from the Roman Acts. See Hahn, *l. c.* p. 164-174.

² The report of the Commission was published from MSS., by Denifle, in 1885, *l. c.* p. 97-145.

(b. 1182), and extended to the time when the temporal power of the papacy, and with it the general corruption of the world, would reach its height and hasten the Divine judgment on the carnal Church. Then would appear the true spiritual Church of the Holy Spirit, free from the poison of earthly possessions, and would convert the Jews and Gentiles.

From year to year the Spirituals waited for the advent of the seventh period, but waited in vain. They led a pure and austere life, according to the strict rule of their founder. They declined to recognize any pope since John XXII. (1316–1324), and were fearfully persecuted for more than a hundred years. The bones of de Oliva were dug up and burnt, and his writings were prohibited until Sixtus IV. (1471–1484), himself a Minorite, ordered a new investigation, which declared them orthodox.

The persecutions heightened the anti-papal spirit of the party and matured the opinion that the papal chair was or might become for a season the very seat of Antichrist in the temple of God. This opinion was confirmed under Boniface VIII. by his audacious claim of supremacy over the whole world, his tyranny and immorality. It found expression in the writings of Giacomone da Todi, of the order of the Minorites, the author of the *Stabat Mater*, and in the *Commedia* of Dante, his younger contemporary. Giacomone was excommunicated and imprisoned by Boniface, but pronounced blessed by posterity.¹ Dante was exiled by the Guelf government of Florence under the influence of the same pope, but his exile gave the world the *Divina Commedia*.

Dante kept aloof from the ascetic extravagancies and apocalyptic fancies of the Joachimites and Spirituals. He had too much respect for Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventura, too much knowledge of theology, and too much taste for art to fall into such extremes. Besides, he had political aspirations which

¹ See p. 197. Hase thus admirably characterizes him (*Kirchengesch.*, p. 309 sq., 11th ed.): “*Giacomone da Todi* († 1306) hat das höchste Glück und tiefste Leid der jungfräulichen Mutter besungen, die Wonneshauer himmlischer Liebe und das Vergehn des Menschenherzens in Gott; er war aus glänzender Weltstellung durch Schmerz und Wahnsinn hindurchgegangen, ist vom Papste gebannt und wie ein wildes Thier gefangen gehalten, aber vom Volke, in dessen Mund- und Denkart er auch gedichtet hat, selig gesprochen worden.”

looked towards the restoration of the German Roman empire. But he agreed with the Joachimites in their warfare against the corrupt papacy of Boniface VIII., which he calls "a shameless whore firm as a rock seated on a mountain high,"¹ and in their zeal for a reformation of the church in the head and members.

DANTE AND SCHELLING. THE THREE AGES OF CHURCH HISTORY.

In the confused rubbish of the prophetic and pseudo-prophetic writings of Joachim of Flore, there are not a few grains of gold and fruitful germs of truth. His division of three ages of history corresponding to the three persons of the Trinity, and the three leading Apostles, is one of these fruitful germs.

A modern German philosopher, who was a profound student of Dante,² has independently arrived at a somewhat similar, though far superior construction of the history of Christianity.

Schelling starts from the fact that Christ elected three favorite disciples—Peter, James, and John—to whom he gave new names (Rock, and Sons of Thunder), and whom he made sole witnesses of some of the most important events in his life. They correspond to Moses, the lawgiver, Elijah, the fiery prophet, and John the Baptist, who concluded the Jewish dispensation by pointing to Christ.

Peter is the fundamental Apostle, the rock on which the Church was built, the Apostle of the Father, the Apostle of authority, the Apostle of law and stability, the type of Catholicism.

But the foundation of a building is only the beginning, and is followed by a succession, by a middle and end. These are represented by James and John, or rather by Paul and John. James died early, before he could fully develop his mission, and his place was filled by Paul, whom the Lord had called before

² *Purg.* xxxii., 148-150 :—

*"Sicura, quasi rocca in alto monte,
Seder sopr' esso una puttana sciolta
M'apparve, con le ciglia intorno pronte."*

¹ See above, p. 353, 403.

the martyrdom of James, and who is in the earliest seals of the popes associated with Peter as joint founders of the Roman Church.

Paul is the Elijah of the Church,¹ who burst forth like a fire, and whose word burns like a torch. He is the Apostle of God the Son. He built on the foundation of Peter, yet independently, and even in opposition to him; for it is by contrasts (*δι' ἐναντιῶν*), not by uniformity, that the Spirit of God brings about the greatest things. He insists (in the Galatians) on his direct call by Christ, not by or through men, and at Antioch he openly withstood Peter and the Jewish pillar-apostles (*οἱ δοκοῦντες στυλοὶ εἶναι*) when they demanded the circumcision of the Gentile Christians, and their subjection to the bondage of the law.² Paul represents the principle of independence, motion, development and freedom; he is the type of the Protestant Reformation, that revolt long prepared against the exclusive and tyrannical authority of Peter.³

Whatever may be said against the Roman Church is foreshadowed in Peter, and is not concealed in the Gospels, least in that of Mark (which is Peter's Gospel). He, and he alone among the Apostles, took the sword, which is inseparable from an earthly kingdom, and the Roman Church wielded the sword, especially in the thirteenth century, against the heretics so-called, not only the New-Manichæans and Albigenses, but also against the

¹ Melancthon called Luther an Elijah and the true successor of St. Paul.

² Peter may have had especially in mind the Epistle to the Galatians when he says that in the Epistles of Paul there "are some things hard to be understood" (*δυσνόητά τινα*, 2 Pet. iii. 16). The Papal Encyclical of May 8th, 1844, against the Bible Societies, makes use of this passage to prove the danger of an indiscriminate reading of the Scriptures: "*Sed vos quidem minime latet, Venerabiles Fratres, quorsum hæc societatum biblicarum molimina pertineant. Probe enim nostis consignatum in sacris ipsis literis monitum Petri, Apostolorum Principis, qui post laudatas Pauli epistolas esse, ait, in illis quædam difficultia intellectu, quæ indocti et instabiles depravant, sicut et ceteras Scripturas ad suam ipsorum perditionem, statimque adjicit: Vos igitur fratres præscientes custodite, ne insipientium errore traducti excidatis a propria firmitate.*"

³ "Ist derjenige ein Protestant," says Schelling (l. c. p. 310), "der ausser der auf die Auktorität Petri gegründeten Kirche, unabhängig von ihr sich hält, so ist der Apostel Paulus der erste Protestant, und die älteste Urkunde, die der Protestantismus für sich aufzuweisen hat, die Magna Charta desselben, ist das zweite Kapitel des Briefs an die Galater."

Spirituals among the Franciscans, who perished in the flames of the stake by the thousands, and could find refuge only with the German emperor, Louis the Bavarian. It was among these sects that the opinion first arose that the pope was the veritable Antichrist and the beast of the Apocalypse. The same Peter who was called the Rock of the Church, was soon afterwards called a Satan by our Saviour when he presumed to turn his Master away from the path of the cross. In the former character he was to be guided by Divine wisdom and power, in the latter he followed the instinct of worldly prudence. But Christ says: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke ix., 23.) The threefold denial of Peter has likewise a typical significance. The Roman Church has denied Christ in three ways: first, by striving after political power; then by using the political power as executioner of her bloody decrees, and last by yielding herself as an instrument to the secular arm. But as Christ intrusted the same Peter who had thrice denied him, thrice with the feeding of his flock, so the Roman Church, in whose bosom so many holy members have uttered sighs and complaints over her corruptions, has not ceased to be a Church of Christ, and to hold fast to the foundation of the faith. Perhaps the time is not far distant when she will, with Peter, weep bitterly over her denial.

John is the Apostle of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle of the future, the Apostle of love, and represents the New Jerusalem from heaven, the truly catholic, ideal Church of the union of Catholicism and Protestantism. He alone speaks of the Spirit whom the Son will send from the Father, who proceeds from the Father, and who will guide the Church into the whole and perfect truth. His position is indicated in the mysterious prediction of Christ to Peter concerning John: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" (John xxi., 22.) This was at an early time misunderstood to indicate that John was not to die, but the real meaning is that his mission would begin with the second advent, that is, in the last age of the Church. It has no reference to the existence of John, but to his work, which can only be accomplished after the exclusiveness of Peter

is done away with, and the Church arrives at the unity of the one flock and one Shepherd. (John x., 16.)

The Church of St. Lateran in Rome has the first rank in the Catholic world, as the Latin inscription says: "*Sacrosancta Lateranensis ecclesia, omnium urbis et orbis ecclesiarum mater et caput.*" The splendid temple of St. Peter, which was the next occasion for the Reformation, stands in the centre of the city of Rome. The Church of St. Paul, which burned down under Pius VII., and is not yet quite rebuilt, is outside of the walls. At some future time a church will be built for all three Apostles—a true pantheon of Church History.¹

This is a summary of Schelling's philosophy of Church History. It is, like all philosophical constructions which anticipate the future known only to God, more or less fanciful; but it is certainly grand and ingenious and involves a truth, which illuminates the past and casts light on the future. It impresses itself indelibly upon the mind. I have it from the lips of such historians as the evangelical Neander and the catholic Döllinger, that they were in sympathy with it.² The three chief Apostles

¹ See the two concluding lectures of Schelling's *Philosophie der Offenbarung* in *Sämmtliche Werke, Zweite Abtheilung*, vol. IV (1858), pp. 294-332. He claims originality for his view, but says expressly (p. 298) that he found it confirmed, even in most of the details, by the writings of Joachim of Floris as presented in the fifth volume of Neander's *Church History*, which appeared in 1841 (in the American edition it is vol. IV). I heard Schelling's lectures in 1842 at the University of Berlin and reported his views of the three ages of Church History in 1844 (14 years before their publication) at the close of my Inaugural Address, *The Principle of Protestantism*, pp. 174-176. I saw Schelling for the last time at Ragatz, in Switzerland (where he is buried), a few days before his death (Aug. 20, 1854), when he told me that he still held fast to this idea and derived much comfort from it, but would supplement it by making room for James, as the typical Apostle of the Greek Church.

² Neander expressed a similar view at the close of the third edition of his *History of the Planting and Training of the Christian Church*. He dedicated the first volume of the revised edition of his *Church History* to Schelling in the same year in which the latter delivered his lectures on the Philosophy of Revelation (1842). He says in the dedication: "In what you publicly expressed respecting the *stadia* in the development of the Christian Church, how much there was which struck in harmony with my own views!" I might also refer for similar statements to Steffens, Schmieder, Lange, Ullmann.

and their work, the Jewish Christianity of Peter, the Gentile Christianity of Paul, the temporary collision of the two, and the final consolidation of both branches by John—anticipate and foreshadow the past and future development of Christ's kingdom on earth.

Dante likewise recognizes three typical Apostles who represent the three Christian graces, but he adheres to the original trio of Christ's first selection, and omits the Apostle Paul. He regards Peter as the Apostle of Faith, James the Elder (John's brother) as the Apostle of Hope,¹ and John as the Apostle of Love. In Paradise he places Peter, as the keeper of the keys of the glorified Church, and John, as the seer of "the beautiful bride who with the spear and with the nails was won," next to the Queen of Paradise in the mystic Rose of the Blessed.² He sees John (with an allusion to the legend of his sleep till the second advent) in the chariot of the Church triumphant as

" An aged man alone
Walking in sleep with countenance acute."

The difference as well as the harmony in the Catholic and Protestant estimate of the Apostles is characteristic. A Protestant would subordinate James to Paul, and coördinate Peter and Paul as Apostles of Faith, and joint Founders of the Church, the one among the Jews, the other among the Gentiles. Paul was not one of the Twelve, and does not fit into the regular succession, but he is of equal power and authority with them, and as to the abundance of labors he surpassed them all. He was soon thrown into the background in the early Church, as a sort of holy outsider and dangerous innovator, and was never thoroughly appreciated till the time of the Reformation. Even such fathers as Origen, Chrysostom and Jerome could not conceive it possible that he should have so boldly and sharply rebuked the older Apostle Peter at Antioch, and hence they perverted the scene into a theatrical farce or substituted an imaginary Peter for the historical Peter. Nor does

¹ Dante seems to have confounded him with the writer of the Epistle of James, which emphasizes good works. He believed in the impossible Spanish legend of Campestello. *Par.* xxv., 17, 18.

² *Par.* xxxii., 124-129. *Purg.* xxix., 143 sq.; comp. *Par.* xxv., 112-126.

the papal Church, in her official denunciations of Bible Societies, forget to quote Peter's words about the difficult matters in Paul's Epistles, and about the danger of "private interpretation" of the Scriptures.

But Joachim, Dante, and Schelling, agree in the hopeful outlook toward a higher and purer age of the Church, and connect it with the name of the beloved Disciple, the bosom friend of Jesus, the seer of the new heavens and the new earth, the apostolic forerunner of an age of love, concord and peace.

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