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THE

DIVINA COMMEDIA

OF

DANTE ALIGHIERI.

VOL. II.
THE

DIVINA COMMEDIA

of

DANTE ALIGHIERI: 1266 - 1321

CONSISTING OF THE

INFERNO—PURGATORIO—AND PARADISO.

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE;
WITH PRELIMINARY ESSAYS, NOTES, AND ILLUSTRATIONS,

By the Rev. HENRY BOYD, A.M.
CHAPLAIN TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD VISCOUNT CHARLEVILLE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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PURGATORIO
OF
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VOL. II.  B
PRELIMINARY ESSAY

ON THE

PURGATORIO OF DANTE.

N. B. This Essay is an Abridgment of a larger Discourse, which the Translator intends, at some future time, to publish in a separate form.

WITH regard to the first part of this Poem, where Sinners are represented to us as subjected to the inevitable consequences of their corrupt habits, and reaping the fruits of their confirmed vices, it is not very material whether we suppose the descriptions of their punishments to be allegorical pictures of different species of confirmed depravity in this life, or exhibitions of their allotments in a state of retribution in the world to come.

To all who believe that the duration of future punishments are eternal, the difference of habitual turpitude in this life, and its consequences in the next, will probably be considered as having the same moral effect. The reasons which induce them to believe that...
these punishments are unlimited in their duration, have been detailed at some length in the Preliminary Essay to the Translation of the Inferno. The Commentators on Dante, who belonged, I believe, in general to the church of Rome, have descanted on the probationary scenes in the Purgatorio, under the idea of their being real representations of those sufferings, which Spirits, not entirely depraved, must undergo in some intermediate state, between their departure from this world and their admittance to the beatific vision. Whatever might have been their real opinion, to this tenet, I suppose, they looked upon themselves as obliged to adhere, as it is one article of their professed faith. A person, however, not under such restrictions, may, I hope, be allowed to differ from these authorities sometimes, however respectable they may appear to him in general. This may be more excusable, when it is considered that their explanations are not always strictly consistent with themselves, for they often represent the scenes in the Inferno as allegorical. It will therefore, I hope, not be thought too great a liberty, if I venture, in the first place, to adduce a few reasons which incline me to believe that the Poet has only intended to give in his Purgatorio an allegorical representation of the means used by Providence in this life to purify the mind by a variety of trials. Under the second head, I shall endeavour to shew, that his representations accord with the usual means employed by Providence for our reformation; not indeed the only means, but a sort of preparatory discipline, which, when suffered to have its due effect, opens the way for the
the operation of superior motives. It will appear in the third place, that this opinion may be illustrated by the moral state even of some of the most barbarous nations. This will still appear more evident when we come, in the fourth division, to enumerate the dogmas of the most eminent sects of philosophers; for they, however opposite to each other in many respects, yet will be found to agree in one remarkable point. In this particular, it will be seen that they have a great conformity in their tendency with the spirit of Christianit, which, in the fifth section, with a few inferences, will conclude the subject.

I.

To begin with the reasons which induce me to think that the representations in the Purgatorio are allegorical. In the first seven Cantos, the Poet gives various representations of the state of the Negligent. He describes them as confined in a region of the mountain, which may be considered as the suburbs of Purgatory. The captives here are sentenced to remain for a certain division of time, proportioned to that which they mispent, before they listened to the call of Grace. I will not here insist upon the important lesson given in these instances, as such observations, if necessary, will appear in a more proper place in the Notes. In the eighth Canto, a singular phenomenon is introduced, which is not easily accounted for, on
the idea that this is meant as a probationary scene of separate Spirits. After a choir of Ghosts had sung their midnight hymn, a Tempter appears among them in the form of a Serpent, but is soon detected and banished by their angelic guard. This is so natural a representation of the devotions of an evening, and the vigilance of Providence, which we implore to repel the phantasms of the night, which might allure to sin, or overwhelm with terror, that it appears somewhat like a presumptive evidence of the allegorical hypothesis. It is true, that in this and the subsequent parts of the Poem, we often meet with Spirits who address Dante, with a request that he would prevail on some of their relations on earth, or some persons eminent for piety, to pray for them. This, we allow, is not only consonant to the persuasion of the Roman church now, but is acknowledged to be an opinion held by some even in the three first ages of Christianity, who maintained that such intercessions were allowed for departed souls. It is not my intention to enter into the merits of this question, but to endeavour to shew, that even this un-toward-looking circumstance is no proof that Dante

* Milton seems to have had this passage in view in the fourth Book, where Satan is represented as couching at the ear of Eve in the shape of a toad, till he is detected by Ithuriel.

† This is further confirmed by the words of the Hymn, the first line of which is here introduced, c. viii. 21.

Procul recedant somnia,
Et noctium phantasmata,
Hortemque nostram comprime, &c.

‡ See Middleton's Free Inquiry, c. ii.
meant any thing here but an allegorical representation of our present state of moral improvement. This application for intercession will be, it is true, but coolly enjoyed by a protestant reader, who conceives it at first introduced as a lucrative branch of commerce by designing ecclesiastics. But even in this life, this earnest application by prayer, is justly considered as a symptom of commencing amendment; an aspiration after the Divine favour, which we are assured will not be in vain, and that an answer to such prayers will either be given mediately or immediately. It is at least a symptom of reformation, and more consonant to the Christian spirit, as it arises from a sense of the unworthines of the suppliant, and the necessity he feels for the Great Mediator. It appears, therefore, at least to me, that this oft-repeated application may as well accord with one hypothesis as the other.

Another argument for this opinion seems to arise from a circumstance mentioned in the twenty-fifth Canto of the Purgatorio and seventeenth stanza. Dante describes there, All the Spirits, on their separation from the body, as conducted either to the banks of the Styx, and consequently to eternal condemnation, or to a visionary harbour on the Tuscan shore, whither the souls of those are conducted who are designed for eternal happiness; who are all landed on another haven, near the base of the mountain of Purgatory. Yet he no-where asserts, in any part of his Poem, that the glorious assembly which he sees in Paradise, had passed through the seven lustralons; but
but they had all passed through the probations of this life, which I therefore suppose is all he meant by these expiatory scenes that he describes so much at length in the course of the succeeding work; at least it appears from him, that the probation of the Saints is entirely confined to this life.

II.

The strong analogy which appears between the real phenomena of this life, and Dante's exhibitions in this division of his Poem, appears the most convincing argument, that he means no more than an allegorical representation of that discipline which we undergo here. His penal inflictions, whether they are of the acute or chronic kind, (if we be allowed the expression,) whether they bind the Spirit down in a state of dead uniformity, or stimulate it to preternatural action, have all a natural tendency to produce mental exertion; in the former case indirectly, by making the patients feel, the sad reverse of its natural state; in the second, by bringing to its natural state of activity by direct incitements. This will be better understood when we consider in what the activity of the mind consists, and what are its real advantages in a moral view. The mind of man is always excited to action by some real or seeming good: this gives the general impulse; this desire of good seems the means, and mental activity the end. In other words, in our activity our happiness seems
seems to consist, at least when this exertion is subjected to due regulations; for the assertion of some philosophers, that this activity shall have an end, when we shall be absorbed and left in the enjoyment of the chief good, seems, in our present condition, inconceivable. The mind may then be said to be in its natural state, or in the condition for which it was originally designed, when its faculties are called into action, in subordination to the leading power of Reason. By this the desire of happiness is exalted and refined from a brute impulse to a rational motive; by this we are enabled to judge and to compare, to balance future advantage against present pleasure.

Instances, indeed, of unnatural activity often occur, when the Passions obtain an undue energy, and when sympathy, the spring of benevolence, is affected by different degrees of torpor. It is plain that the happiness of the mind must consist in, or depend on this species of activity, when the Passions are employed in due subjection to Reason; for if any of the faculties are inactive, it so far subtracts from our happiness; if they are mis-employed, or act contrary to Reason, the case becomes more deplorable; it gives that sort of sensation to the mind that arises from a consciousness of acting contrary to its destination, or the laws of its being. To the undue or ill-directed exertions of the lower faculties of the mind, the most acute miseries to which we are subjected, owe their origin. If, indeed, we could conceive happiness not to depend on this activity of the mind properly directed, it must owe its existence to what Epictetus justly calls, "Things not in our own power,"
POWER," contrary to the opinion of all the most eminent moralists. Considering our nature in this view, the dependence of morality on mental energy possesses this double advantage; when the reasoning powers and sympathetic affections preserve their due energy, the mind obtains an instantaneous and unclouded view of the consequences of moral actions both to itself and others. It must not only on this, but on all occasions, while in this desirable state, be able to perceive by intuition, or to calculate in a moment, whether it be progressive, stationary, or retrograde, in its pursuit of happiness, by Virtue; for it cannot but know in a moment, whether its mental faculties be active or not, whether they are employed in due subordination, whether any passion be out of its bounds, whether the selfish or social predominate, or whether its sympathetic powers be torpid, or in a state of vigilance.

A further proof that happiness consists in the activity of the mind under proper direction, is this, that when it is fixed on one object for too great length of time, it is always in a painful situation; which shews that it is employed contrary to its nature. Not to mention that the means whereby we expand our benevolence, necessarily improves our intellectual powers, and what contracts the one, degrades the other. For that habitual exercise of our mental powers, by which we judge of the wants and claims of others, must, in this view, be a very beneficial employment.

Besides, in every distress of mind we experience an instant relief by any avocation which is not attended with
with guilt, any engagement which excites the mind, without injuring any of its faculties, or deranging any of its movements. It is also worth observation, that by making happiness consist in well-regulated mental activity, it is so closely connected with virtue, and in a manner consubstantiated with it, that in such an improved state of the mind our reigning inclinations and true interests are made to coincide.

This hypothesis in some degree accounts for the permission of physical evil, at least. It is well known that a course of unruffled prosperity often renders the faculties torpid and inactive. Disappointments and difficulties are, in this light, highly consonant to the divine attributes of goodness and justice, as far as they tend to renovate the dormant powers of the soul. Thus sensual pursuits frequently lead their votaries into embarrassing situations. But this very circumstance often awakens reflection, and was certainly meant to produce a recovery of those mental energies which had been suffered to degenerate. Worldly pursuits end in disappointment and anxiety; that gloom of mind which is the concomitant of both, is designed by Providence to have the same effect.

The visitations of adversity, by the order of Providence, are often severe and lasting. One great law of our nature seems to be, that we should learn wisdom, not so constantly by precept, as by experience; precept only applies to the understanding, but experience calls in and excites the sympathetic powers. By this means more of our mental faculties are called into play; but they
they are still more vigorously employed by those who exert them by foresight. Their lessons are lessons of anticipation, and they avoid those severe rudiments, which others are taught by experience only; they have learned them, by the experience, and at the cost, of others. By this mode of being taught wisdom, our sympathy is strongly interested, as every lesson is enforced by the consideration of the sufferings of others: it puts the activity of our minds in a proper channel, and one best adapted to our moral improvement.

The more vicious a man is, the deeper generally is his misery; that is, the more incitements he feels to mental activity. Vice generally arises from pride and selfishness; and as true activity of mind produces or implies sympathy, from the comprehensive view it gives of the wants and claims of others, it has a tendency to produce general benevolence, which is the best remedy to selfishness and pride, as the latter are the sources of the most pernicious evils under which society groans.

The strength of those instincts and passions which are implanted in our nature, tends to illustrate this œconomy of Providence; for, by this very means, it gives the mind a greater degree of activity: that vigilance which reason must exert in attending to, and that energy which it must employ in combating, these passions and propensities that this dispensation of Providence was intended to produce, must contribute very largely to this noble and beneficial purpose.

In a selfish person, the ill-directed energy of the mind becomes a punishment, till he learns (if he will learn) to
to cure it by reflection. All his sensibility is centered in himself; whatever obstacle, or cross accident, therefore, he meets with, falls with double force upon his morbid state of perception, and sets his faculties to work with double force, though it is often long before they attain a proper direction, often they never do obtain it, but the design of this economy is no less conspicuous.

Mental pains, like bodily sufferings, are strong incentives to action; but the former seem more operative than the latter in some instances, particularly in the conduct of many of the ancient Philosophers. They being in the dark with respect to the sanctions of religion, and in the mean time in doubts about many of its most important doctrines, were impelled, by the pain of doubt and ignorance, to most vigorous efforts in search of truth, and to discover the nature of their duty, even in the dark recesses of the mind, as they were not blessed with the light of revelation. Hence their astonishing efforts to find out the nature of the soul. The Gospel-promises render this source of energy not so necessary in the Christian religion; but it possesses other and superior means to advance the activity of the mind, which will be mentioned when we come to compare its influence with that of the Pagan philosophy.

How much the happiness of the mind consists in its activity, may be further perceived, by considering what sort of metaphors and allusions afford us most pleasure in works of imagination, particularly in poetry. It is these which bring the most remote images together without
without incongruity, i.e. those which give the greatest scope to the mind in comparing them, and finding out their various relations. The cause also why scenes of great turbulence or deep tranquility have in poetry such an agreeable effect upon the mind, seems to be this, each of them gives a great and sudden alteration to the common flow of animal spirits, and thence furnish new complex ideas.

If we observe this mental propensity as it is affected by the various stations of life, we shall find, that those who fill the higher ranks of society, in order to balance the pernicious influence of pleasurable images, which of themselves render the mind passive, have an opportunity of a larger range of ideas in the acquisition of knowledge, which tends, by a sort of equipoise, to preserve their intellectual energy. Those in the lower stations have, in general, fewer opportunities of acquiring ideas; but they are obliged, by their situation, to employ their minds upon the stock they possess, with more constant exercise. To inquire whether the former classes always improve their opportunities to the highest possible degree, is not to my present purpose.

By a sort of instinct, we avert our minds from whatever would tend to destroy their activity: the idler has recourse to the sports of the field, the defonding lover hastens to risk his life in the field of battle. This shews that nature intended the soul for an active state; or, in

* His pain is easily accounted for, on the foregoing hypothesis. It arises from the mind being too intensely fixed upon one object; hence it loses its powers of balancing, comparing, and judging.
other words, that in action consists its happiness, which depends, besides, upon its being directed to right objects. They who have been improperly educated, and happen to have leisure on their hands, generally fly to active employments; they who have been racked by turbulent passions, or are harassed by worldly employments, where the subordinate powers of the mind have been impelled to an undue activity, seek for tranquillity; that is, for a more equable and legitimate exercise of their mental powers. Both are driven, by a sort of instinct, to that medium where the soul can exercise its powers as nature designed.

That taste for uniformity and regularity, of which every mind in its natural state is sensible in some degree, is necessary to produce Habit; but it is mixed, and made consistent with that desire of variety which is so necessary to the acquisition of knowledge. It seems also given us for an high moral purpose, viz. that the mind may not feel itself completely happy till all its active powers are put in full employment, and perform their offices in due subordination to the governing principle. When the lower powers of the mind act in opposition to its general moral conviction, it is in a neutral state, partly active, partly passive. This may be called a sort of mental palsy, than which nothing can be supposed more opposite to its nature, or a deeper source of misery.

To conclude; the excess of any of the Passions, when they are exerted in the utmost exacerbation, seems nothing else but the natural activity of the mind, struggling too late against a legion of invading foes, which, by its own
own passiveness and neglect, it had suffered to enclose it around. On the contrary, to a person who has always acted under a conviction that his happiness depends upon his mental exertions, according to the laws of his nature, even death itself cannot appear with an aspect so formidable as he assumes to others; for he considers it a liberation of the mind from those clogs and obstacles which prevent it from obtaining either complete happiness, or full perfection, as an active being, in its present state. How congruous the descriptions and opinions of Dante are to this hypothesis, will appear in the course of the work.

III.

When we consider the history of man, as collected into large societies, we may observe several means employed by Providence to preserve such a portion of this energy as is highly useful to moral purposes. This will appear, by comparing the state of some of the most polished nations, with some of those whom we seem willing to degrade into the lowest rank of barbarians. One of the most brilliant ages of antiquity, when what is called the Golden Times of Greece began with Cimon and ended with Alexander, considered in this view is highly instructive: that period, and that country, abounded with the most flagrant crimes, and the most astonishing exertion of intellect and fancy. It is not meant here to enter into political disquisitions, nor to attribute the former, exclusively;
clusively, to the forms of government which then prevailed. But this, at least, seems evident, that the contests of faction in the more celebrated democratical States, and the fanguinary measures pursued by each, in their turn, to remove their rivals, gave, as it has been often observed, a large field for talents of various kinds; nor were the moral discoveries resulting from the discussion of the duties and claims of man, in this turbulent æra, the least illustrious consequence of this state of society. Even scientific discoveries, which had been imported into Grecce from countries under a more settled form of government, when they came within this vortex of intellectual rivalry, were expanded by emulation to an extent which otherwise they never would have attained. These salutary efforts, at least in the political and moral departments, would probably not have been produced by a less momentum of moral and physical evil (as far as the one depends upon the other), than that to which this polished and fanguinary age gave birth. This observation will extend to the poetry and eloquence of those times, no less than to the admirable compositions on ethics, and the nature of government, which then originated; systems which, through a variety of channels, have operated for ages on the mind, and still continue their influence in various degrees.

But, lest this should be understood as in any degree an apology for moral evil, it may be necessary to observe, that though Providence educes good out of evil, yet to say that, for that reason, we may commit evil for the sake of the good to arise from it, is founded
on this evidently false supposition, that Providence has but one method of producing the desired good; that is, by our criminal agency.

We shall, in the next place, make a few observations on the state of some of the most savage tribes of mankind, and enquire what provisions have been made, to preserve the activity of their minds in their seemingly degraded situation.

The Kamschatkadales have but little employment; hence their wants are not numerous, and their wishes are few. It is, however, from our wants and wishes, that the principal part of our vice and misery takes its origin. If we are rightly informed, they think themselves the happiest people in the world; we are inclined to look upon them as the most miserable; they have few enjoyments, and few ideas. But, as was observed before, neither virtue nor happiness consists in the variety of enjoyments, where we are merely passive, nor even in the number and variety of ideas, but in the proper management of those which we possess. There are crimes among them, but fewer than amongst more polished tribes; and these, as with us, teach, at least, some degree of virtue, by informing the judgment experimentally of the consequences of vice; that is, these vices, combined with their wants, give a degree of activity to the mind. This is still more evident, when we descend to particulars: we often see a person who has only a few ideas, make a better use of them, than those who have acquired a much greater number; and from a sort of motives formed between instinct, or moral sense, and reason, often act better, than he who,
from the luxury of acquired knowledge, and the want of good moral principles instilled at first, has only, by the increase of his ideas, increased his rage for sensual enjoyment, and acquired a greater variety of means for its attainment.

The Japanese, on the contrary, acquire activity of mind by a method better adapted to their temperament. They are a people of an high, independent spirit, subject to strong passions, and uncommonly vindictive and ferocious. But when passions are thus lively, they are almost always found to counteract and restrain each other: hence their more vivid emotions are balanced by fear. Terror of invisible Powers, is a strong sanction to religion; and even, when in extreme, gives it a strong tincture of superstition. Hence the Japanese are a very religious people; and this balance of the passions, though in them it does not produce some of the noblest effects of mental activity, yet in a moral view it secures some of its most salutary advantages.

That particle of religion which is found in superstition, though much contaminated and perverted, is thus found to operate as a restriction on people of high passions. Those in whom these emotions are more moderate, have less superstition; hence, by superficial observers, they are often deemed to have less religion, though probably they possess a larger portion of the genuine species.

The same cast of superstition seems to have travelled from east to west. Prosperity begets depravity; the latter, by giving a loose to all the passions, consequentlv gives a more unbounded agency to fear, and this produces
duces superflition, which serves as a sort of check to
the more dangerous propensities, and keeps them in
order. From this probably arises the necessity of a
more rigorous government in the warmer climates;
nothing less seems to be sufficient to restrain the fer-
mentation of the passions in those regions. Amongst
us in Europe, ignorance has produced superflition,
and superflition has been the parent of irreligion. Be-
tween these extremes they will possibly vibrate for some
time, till at last they settle in a due medium, when
mankind shall be taught by experience the confe-
quences of irreligion; for by experience the deepest
impressions are always made, as it operates by means
of the passions, which are excited by human misery,
and thus the circulation of mental employment is pre-
served.

The Chinese are a people of very active minds: from
the advantages of their climate, they would be constantly
in danger of falling into the most irremediable corrup-
tion of manners; but from this they are preserved, in
a great measure, by their seclusion from commerce,
and the contamination of foreign manners. This in-
duces a love of uniformity and regularity, which keeps
them attached to their patriarchal institutions, pa-
rental authority, and their ancient mode of govern-
ment. This precludes much of their improvement in
science, but impels them to the practice of many
political and moral virtues, and secures that regulated
energy of mind which is not often found among
oriental nations, who may possibly be superior to them
in natural endowments.

IV. When
IV.

When we examine the moral opinions of the most eminent ancient philosophers, we shall find that all their precepts tended to preserve the activity of the mind. Among the maxims of Thales the Milesian, who first introduced philosophy and science among the Greeks, the following are recorded. Health of body, a competent fortune, and a cultivated mind, are the chief sources of happiness. Take more care to correct the blemishes of the mind, than those of the face. Stop the mouth of slander, by prudence. Be careful not to do that yourself, which you blame in others.—A discipline which required continual mental exertions.

Anaxagoras†, his pupil, asserted, in contradiction to the fatalists of his time, the distinction of mind from matter; that mind possesses within itself the united powers of thought and motion, and is the cause of whatever is fair or good.

It is scarcely necessary to expatiate on the philosophy of Socrates, his immediate successor. The first principles of virtuous conduct, which are common to all mankind, are, according to this excellent moralist, the laws of God; and the conclusive argument by which he supports this opinion, is, that no man departs from these principles with impunity. "It is frequently pos-

† Diog. Laert. p. 668.
fible," says he, "for men to screen themselves from the penalty of human laws, but no man can be unjust, or ungrateful, without suffering for his crime. Hence I conclude, that these laws must have proceeded from a more exalted lawgiver than man*." His opinion of happiness was, that it could not be attained by external possession, but from wisdom, that consists in the knowledge and practice of virtue: that the cultivation of virtuous manners is necessarily attended with pleasure as well as with profit: that the honest man alone is happy; and that it is absurd to separate things which are so closely united as virtue and interest.

Even Aristippus†, the founder of the Cyrenaic sect, was author of some maxims not unworthy of the Socratic school; for instance—"If there were no laws, a wise man would be a law to himself, and live honestly; the business of philosophy is to regulate the senses, so as to produce the most pleasure." But these, it is true, were blended with some others of a more dubious nature.

Plato‡ considers the soul as united to a material vehicle, and this relation which it bears to matter, he looks upon as the source of moral evil. Though he speaks obscurely on this subject, it may be collected from his writings, that he conceives the power of moving bodies, which belongs to the human soul, to be the effect of the material principle; and, consistently

* Xenoph. Mem. lib. iv.
† Diogen. Laert. in Aristip. p. 131. Enfield's Hist.
with this doctrine, this philosopher frequently speaks of
the soul of man as composed of three parts: the first,
the seat of intelligence; the second, of passion; and the
third, of appetite: the first is derived from heaven,
the two others from matter. The first is immortal, and
returns to the Gods. It existed before its immersion
into the body, and all its knowledge is only reminiscence
of its ideas in a former state; a process of improvement,
which implies a considerable degree of mental activity.

The highest good consists, according to him, in the
contemplation and knowledge of the first good; which
is Mind, or God. All those things which are called
good by man, are in reality such only so far as they
are derived from the first and highest good. The only
power in nature which can acquire a resemblance to
the supreme good, is Reason. The minds of philoso-
phers are fraught with valuable treasures, and after the
death of the body they shall be admitted to divine en-
tertainments; so that while with the Gods they are
employed in surveying the fields of truth, they will
look down with contempt on the folly of those who
are contented with earthly shadows. Goodness and
beauty consist in the knowledge of the first good, and
of the first fair. That only which is becoming, is
good; therefore virtue is to be pursued for its own
fake. He alone who has obtained the knowledge of
the first good, is happy; the end of this knowledge is
to render man as like God as the condition of human
nature will permit. This likeness consists in justice.

* Plat. Symposium.

C 4

prudence,
prudence, sanctity, temperance: in order to attain this state, it is necessary to be convinced, that the body is a prison, from which the soul must be released, before it can arrive at the knowledge of those things which are real and immutable. Virtue is the most perfect habit of the mind which adorns the man, and renders him firm, resolute, and consistent in action and speech, in solitude and society. The virtues are so nearly allied that they cannot be separated; they are perfect, and therefore neither capable of increase nor of diminution. The passions are motions of the soul, excited by some apparent good or evil; they originate in the irrational parts of the soul, and must be regulated and subdued by reason. Friendship is, strictly speaking, reciprocal benevolence; which inclines each party to be as solicitous for the other's interest, as for his own. This equality of affection is created and preferred by a similarity of disposition and manners. It is clear, how much the philosophical opinions of Plato depended on, and inculcated, mental exertion.

Carneades, an eminent follower of Plato, of that sect called the New Academy, held, that natural appearances were a sufficient guide. Probabilities he divided into three classes; simple, uncontradicted, and those confirmed by accurate examination. The highest degree of certainty, according to him, is produced, when, after an accurate examination of every circumstance, stance which might be supposed to create uncertainty,

* Plat. in Timaeus.  
† Ibid. Lacties.  
we are able to discover no fallacy. It is unnecessary to make any observation on the tendency of this system.

Moral felicity, according to Aristotle*, consists not in the contemplation of truth simply, but in the virtuous exercise of the mind. Virtue is either theoretical, or practical. Theoretical virtue consists in the due exercise of the understanding: Practical, in the pursuit of what is right and good. Practical virtue is acquired by habit and exercise. Virtue, as far as it respects ourselves and the government of our passions, consists in preserving that mean in all things which reason and prudence prescribe; it is the middle path between two extremes, the one is vicious through excess, the other by defect. Virtue is a spontaneous act, the effect of design and volition, and is completed by nature, habit, and reason. For instance, fortitude is the mean between timidity and rashness, temperance between excessive pursuit and neglect of pleasure; gentleness is the due government of the irascible passions, and preservative of a due mean between anger and insensibility: liberality is the mean between prodigality and avarice: modesty lies in the middle between impudence and bashfulness. Pleasures are essentially different in kind. Disgraceful pleasures are wholly unworthy of the name. The purest and noblest pleasure is that which a good man derives from a virtuous action. Happiness, which consists in a conduct conformable to virtue, is either contemplative or


active.
active. Contemplative happiness, which consists in the pursuit of knowledge and virtue, is superior to active happiness; because the understanding is the highest part of human nature, and the objects on which it is employed, are of the noblest kind.

It is well known, that the sole object of the Stoic philosophers was to subdue the passions, and to produce simplicity of manners. The rigours of their discipline, which was practised by the first of this sect, and which afterwards degenerated into such absurd severity, was at first adopted for the laudable purpose of exhibiting an example of moderation and self-command. Virtue of mind, and strength of body, says Diogenes*, are chiefly to be acquired by exercise and habit. Nothing can be accomplished without labour, mental or bodily; and every thing may be accomplished with it. Even the contempt of pleasure may by it become pleasant. The end of philosophy is to subdue the passions, and prepare men for every condition of life.

According to the Stoics, the first impressions on the mind produce an involuntary emotion; but a wise man afterwards deliberately examines them, that he may know whether they be true or false, and rejects or admits them, as the evidence which offers to his understanding appears sufficient or insufficient. This affent, or approbation, will indeed be necessarily given or withheld, according to the ultimate state of proofs that are adduced; as the scales of a balance will sink,

or rise, according to the weights that are placed upon them. But while the vulgar give immediate credit to the evidence of their senses, wise men suspend their judgment, till they have carefully examined the nature of things, and deliberately examined the weight of evidence. This process was accomplished by the subjugation of the inferior faculties of the soul to the ruling part, called by the Stoics τὸ ἡμερομικὸν. This they accounted a portion of the divinity—divina particular aura. In human life, they held that one ultimate end ought to be pursued, and that this is to live agreeably to nature and reason. Since man himself is a microcosm, composed, like the world, of matter and a rational principle, it becomes him to live as a part of the great whole; and to accommodate all his desires and pursuits to the general arrangement, conformably to nature, is the law of all living beings. Every one who has a discernment of what is good, will be chiefly concerned to conform to nature in all his pursuits. This is the origin of moral obligation. False conceptions of good, produce violent emotions of the mind; and these are passions, which it is the office of reason to prevent, or cure. Wisdom subjects the mind to the control of reason, and this produces a conformity to nature and virtue.

We come now to the doctrine of Epicurus, whose maxims, according to the vulgar opinion, supported by the writings of Athenæus, were ill-calculated for preserving the mind in a state of activity. Yet when impartially examined, even in this short sketch, it may be discovered that much of that relaxing character was
was unfounded *. "The end of living, according to him, or ultimate good, which is to be sought for its own sake, according to the universal opinion of mankind, is happiness. Yet men, for the most part, fail in the pursuit of this end; either because they do not make a right use of this happiness, or because they do not make use of proper means to acquire it. Since it is the interest of every person to be happy for the whole of life, it is the wisdom of every one to employ philosophy in the pursuit of happiness without delay; and there can be no greater folly, than to be always beginning to live. Of virtues, some are contemplative and some practical. They are all united together, and depend upon each other; virtue being a conformity to nature in itself; therefore virtue ought to be pursued for its own sake."

According to Pythagoras †, the great founder of the Italic school, the dependencies and ramifications of which sect were probably the most numerous of all, there are two branches of virtue, private and public. Private respects education, fortitude, prudence, and abstinence. The powers of the mind, are reason and passion. When the latter is preferred in subjection to the former, virtue is prevalent. Wisdom and virtue are our best defence. Sobriety is the strength of the soul, for it preserves its reason unclouded by passion. No man should be accounted free, who has not the perfect command of himself. That which is good and becoming, ought to be pursued, rather than that which

† Diog. Laert. p. 567.
is pleasant. It requires much wisdom to give right names to things.

Reason, according to Heraclitus, is the test of truth.

The happiness which belongs to man, is that state in which he enjoys as many of the good things, and suffers as few of the evils incident to human nature, as possible, passing his days in a state of permanent tranquillity. A wise man, though deprived of sight and hearing, may experience the enjoyment of the good things which yet remain; and when suffering torture, or labouring under some painful disease, can mitigate the anguish by patience, and can enjoy in his afflictions the consciousness of his own constancy. But it is impossible that perfect happiness can be enjoyed without freedom from pain, and the enjoyment of the good things of life. Pleasure is in its nature good; as pain is in its nature evil; and the one is therefore to be pursued, as the other is to be avoided, for its own sake. Pleasure or pain is not only good or evil in itself, but the measure of whatever is good or evil in every object of desire or aversion: for the ultimate reason why we pursue one thing, and avoid another, is, because we expect pleasure from the former, and apprehend pain from the latter. If sometimes we decline a pleasure, it is not because we are averse to pleasure, but because, in the present instance, we apprehend it will be necessarily connected with a greater pain. In like manner, if we sometimes voluntarily submit to a present pain, it is because we judge that it is necessarily
rily connected with a greater pleasure. Although all pleasure is essentially good, and all pain essentially evil, it doth not thence necessarily follow, that, in every single instance, the one ought to be pursued, and the other to be avoided: but reason is to be employed in distinguishing and comparing the different degrees of each, that the result may be, a wise choice of that which shall, upon the whole, appear to be good. That pleasure is the chief good, appears from the inclination which every animal from its first birth discovers, to pursue pleasure and to avoid pain, and is confirmed by the universal experience of mankind, who are incited to action by no other principle than the desire of avoiding pain, or obtaining pleasure.

There are two sorts of pleasure: one consisting in a state of rest, in which both body and mind are undisturbed by any kind of pain; the other, arising from an agreeable agitation of the senses, producing a correspondent emotion in the soul. It is upon the former of these that the happiness of life may be said chiefly to depend. Happiness, therefore, consists in bodily ease and mental tranquillity. When pleasure is ascribed to be the end of living, we are not then to understand that violent kind of delight, or joy, which arises from the gratification of the senses and passions; but merely that tranquil state of mind, which results from the absence of every cause of pain or uneasiness.

Those pleasures which arise from agitation, are not to be pursued as in themselves the end of living, but
as the means of arriving at that state of tranquillity in which true happiness consists. It is the office of reason to confine the pursuit of pleasure within the limit of nature, in order to the attainment of that happy state of body, wherein it is free from every kind of pain, and the mind from all perturbation. This state, however, must not be conceived to be perfect in proportion as it is inactive and torpid, but in proportion as all the functions of life are quietly and pleasantly performed. A happy life neither resembles a rapid torrent, nor a stagnant pool; but is like a gentle stream which glides smoothly and silently along. This happy state can only be attained by a prudent management of the body, and a steady government of the soul. The diseases of the body are to be prevented by temperance, to be cured by medicine, or rendered tolerable by patience. Against the diseases of the mind, philosophy provides sufficient antidotes. The instruments which it employs for this purpose, are the virtues, the root of which, whence all proceed, is prudence. This virtue comprehends the whole art of living discreetly, justly, honourably, and is in fact the same thing with wisdom. It instructs men to free their understanding from the clouds of prejudice, to exercise temperance and fortitude in the government of themselves, and to practise justice towards others. Although pleasure or happiness, which is the end of living, be superior to virtue, which is only the means, it is the interest of every one to practise all the virtues; for, in a happy life, pleasure can never be separated from virtue.
tue. A prudent man, in order to secure his tranquility, will consult his natural disposition in the choice of his plan of life. If, for example, he be persuaded that he should be happier in a state of marriage than in celibacy, he ought to marry; but if he be convinced that marriage would be an impediment to his happiness, he ought to remain single. In like manner, such persons as are active, enterprising, and ambitious, or such as by the condition of their birth are placed in the way of civil offices, should accommodate themselves to their nature and situation, by engaging in public affairs; while such as are from natural temper fond of leisure and retirement, or from experience or observation convinced that a life of public business would be inconsistent with their happiness, are unquestionably at liberty, unless where particular circumstances call them to the service of their country, to pass their lives in obscure repose. Temperance is that discreet regulation of the desires and passions, by which we are enabled to enjoy pleasures, without suffering any consequent inconvenience. They who maintain such a perfect self-command, as never to be incited by any prospect of self-indulgence, to do that which may be productive of evil, obtain the truest pleasure by denying pleasure. Since of desires some are natural and necessary, others natural but not necessary, and others neither natural nor necessary, but the offspring of false judgment, it must be the office of temperance to gratify the first class as far as nature requires; to restrain the second, within the bounds of moderation;
moderation; and, as to the third, resolutely oppose, if not totally repels them. Sobriety, as opposed to intemperance and gluttony, is of admirable use in teaching men that nature is satisfied with a little, and enabling them to be content with simple and frugal fare. Such a manner of living is conducive to the preservation of health, renders a man alert and active in all the offices of life, affords him an excellent relish of the occasional varieties of a plentiful board, and prepares him to meet every reverse of fortune without the fear of want.

Continence is a branch of temperance, which prevents the diseases, infamy, remorse, and punishment, to which those are exposed who indulge themselves in unlawful amours. Music and poetry, which are often employed as incentives to licentious pleasures, are to be cautiously and sparingly used.

Gentleness, as opposed to an irascible temper, greatly contributes to the tranquillity and happiness of human life, by preserving the mind from perturbation, and arming it against the assaults of calumny and malice. A wise man, who puts himself under the government of reason, will be able to receive an injury with calmness, and to treat the person who committed it with lenity; for he will rank injuries among the casual events of life, and will prudently reflect, that he can no more stopt the natural current of human passions, than he can curb the stormy winds. Refractory servants in a family should be punished, and disorderly members of a state should be chastised, without wrath.
Moderation, in the pursuit of honours or riches, is the only security against disappointment and vexation. A wise man, therefore, will prefer the simplicity of a rustic life to the magnificence of courts. Future events, a wise man will consider as uncertain; and will therefore neither suffer himself to be elated with confident expectation, nor to be depressed by doubt and despair, for both are equally destructive of tranquillity. It will contribute to the enjoyment of life, to consider death as the perfect termination of a happy life, which it becomes us to close, like satisfied guests, neither regretting the past, nor anxious for the future.

Fortitude, the virtue which enables us to endure pain, and to banish fear, is of great use in producing tranquillity. Philosophy instructs us to pay homage to the Gods, not through hope or fear, but from veneration of their superior nature. It, moreover, teaches us to conquer the fear of death, by shewing us that it is no proper object of terror; since, whilst we are, death is not; and when death arrives, we are not; so that death concerns neither the living nor the dead. The only evils to be apprehended, are bodily pain and distress of mind. Bodily pain, it becomes a wise man to endure with patience and firmness, because if it be flight, it may be easily borne; if intense, it cannot last long. Mental distress arises not from nature, but from opinion. A wise man, therefore, will arm himself against this kind of suffering, by reflecting that the gifts of fortune, the loss of which he may be inclined to deplore, were never his own, but depended upon circum-
circumstances which he could not command. If, therefore, they happen to leave him, he will endeavour, as soon as possible, to obliterate the remembrance of them, by occupying his mind in pleasant contemplation, and in agreeable avocations.

Justice respects man as living in society, and is the common bond without which no society can exist. This virtue, like the rest, derives its value from its tendency to promote the happiness of life. Not only is it never injurious to the man who practises it, but nourishes in his mind calm reflections and pleasant hopes; whereas, it is impossible that the mind in which injustice dwells, should not be full of disquietude; since it is impossible that iniquitous actions should promote the enjoyment of life, as much as remorse of conscience, legal penalties, and public disgrace must increase its troubles. Every one who follows the dictates of sound reason, will practise the virtues of justice, equity, and fidelity. In society, the necessity of the mutual exercise of justice, in order to the common enjoyment of the gifts of nature, is the ground of those laws by which it is prescribed. It is the interest of every individual in a state to conform to the laws of justice; for by injuring no one, and rendering to every man his due, he contributes his part to the preservation of that society, upon the preservation of which his own safety depends. Nor ought any one to think that he is at liberty to violate the rights of his fellow-citizens, provided he can do it securely; for he who has committed an unjust action, can never be certain it will not be discovered; and however
successfully he may conceal it from others, this will avail him little, since he cannot conceal it from himself.

In different communities different laws may be instituted, according to the circumstances of the people who compose them. Whatever is thus prescribed, may be considered as a rule of justice, so long as the society shall judge the observance of it to be for the benefit of the whole. But whenever any rule of conduct is found upon experience not to be conducive to the public good, being no longer useful, it should be no longer prescribed.

Nearly allied to justice, are the virtues of beneficence, compassion, gratitude, piety, and friendship. He who confers benefits upon others, procures to himself the satisfaction of seeing the stream of plenty spreading around him from the fountain of beneficence, at the same time he enjoys the pleasure of being esteemed by others. The exercise of gratitude, filial affection, and reverence for the Gods, is necessary, in order to avoid the hatred and contempt of all good men. Friendships are contracted for the sake of mutual benefit; but by degrees they ripen into such disinterested attachment, that they continue without any prospect of advantage. Between friends, there is a kind of mutual league, that each will love the other as himself. A true friend will partake of the wants and sorrows of his friend, as if they were his own; if he be in want, he will relieve him; if he be in prison, he will visit him; if he be sick, he will come to him; nay, situations may occur in which he would not
not scruple to die for him. It cannot then be doubted, that friendship is one of the best means of procuring a secure, tranquil, and happy life.

V.

In the method pursued in those several systems and collections for preserving the activity of the mind, according to the subordination of its powers, they have a surprising conformity to christianity. But in the motives which revelation supplies for this salutary purpose, the advantage is on the side of religion, to a degree which cannot be calculated. Immortality is pledged to us, and proposed as the prize of self-denial. The grafting of the christian graces of benevolence, meekness, and humility, are proposed as the qualifications for this happy state, in opposition to that gratification of the passions which uncultivated nature so much desires. For which purpose, we are directed to oppose our spiritual enemies by the aid of the Holy Spirit, which is promised to the sincere suppliant, and which has even been admitted to dwell with him. The bringing such motives to bear upon our animal propensities; the constant labour in cultivating such virtues as are most opposite to our natural bias; the laborious employment of bringing remote things which only have influence on our reflection into the balance, and making them preponderate against interests which have the advantage of a sensible and visible operation;
these objects give the mental energies full play, and keep them (if we may be allowed the expression) on the perpetual stretch, in full employment, and due subordination to the laws of nature.

This is not all—but it refines the passions, engages them on its side, and converts them to the cause of virtue. Our hopes and our fears, our sympathies and our aversions, are all directed to proper objects; while the common course of Providence, below the sharp lessons of adversity, and the shadowy enjoyments of prosperity, add their momentum to the progress of the mind, and give no small assistance both to intellectual and moral improvement. But here we are opposed by modern philosophers, who arrogate to themselves the privilege of dictating the means of moral improvement to all ages and conditions, to parents as well as to children. Contrary to the experience of all ages, they assert, that no degree of severity is necessary in educating the latter; and that, in general, honour and shame are the only legitimate sanctions of human actions. They allege, that these principles are to be found in all, in various degrees indeed; probably in some so faint as hardly to be distinguished; but in all, (if sufficiently developed) fully adequate to the production of every energy of character: that they are, especially in younger minds, the only motives which, by way of sanction, ought to be cultivated; and that due care will make them sufficiently vigorous to fulfil every exigence. And for an example of this, they allege devotion, which in every mind almost is languid
Tanguid at first, till by cultivation and constant habit it may be brought not only to a sufficient degree of strength, but even to a dangerous pitch of activity.

This opinion is plausible, and might be true, if man were a creature of greater perfection than he is, and if he did not require motives for action, not only powerful in their operation, but various in their kinds. That love for variety within certain bounds is common to all mankind, has been observed before. Its final cause has also been mentioned, and its utility, in giving a perpetual incitement to the pursuit of knowledge, and of every advantage belonging to our species, if properly directed. It is to be considered as a very kind provision of the Author of our nature to vary the motives to action, according to the variety of the tastes and characters which he has given us. The same kind of motives, if uniformly applied, would lose their effect, which must be always the consequence when the preceptive systems counteract the complicated scheme, by the operation of which it was designed, that we should arrive at the perfection of our nature, as far as it is necessary, in this state. The proportions in which these motives are blended, we must learn, not from some of our modern systems of education, but from the writings of the ancients, and the Great Exemplar of Life and Manners, from which they drew their documents.

Man, we find by some of the ancient philosophers, were divided into the active and contemplative. This distinction, though sufficiently accurate for the common purposes of life, is by no means a strictly logical division;
division; for thence it would follow, that one part of 
our species was designed for the cloister, and another 
for business. But these two characters are, in fact, 
combined in various proportions in all mankind; and 
the necessity for it, is obvious. Without something to 
excite his activity, the contemplatist would soon dege-
nerate into a visionary, or a fanatic. The man of bus-
iness, for want of moral principles, impressed by me-
ditation, would soon, by a very short process, be me-
tamorphosed into designing knave. In fact, we often 
see the mere literary man grow languid in his exer-
tions, and fastidious in his judgment; particularly if 
the necessity for exertion has ceased to operate. In 
such characters a morbid delicacy of taste is often ob-
servable, which deprives him of all relish for new com-
positions, even of genuine merit. He feels something 
alogous to that species of sensibility which renders 
the prosperous man tremulously alive all o'er; to the 
short distant approach of any thing disagreeable to his 
feelings, which are exasperated by the effect of what 
is commonly called worldly blessings. This is the case 
of the mere literary man. He too often ceases in 
those circumstances to be an active, and even a 
contemplative being. The mere man of business, on 
the other hand, who has not given himself either 
leisure or opportunity to profit by reflection, or the 
moral distinctions of things, and by whom the ideas of 
honour and shame are consequently annexed, not to 
virtue and vice, but to riches and poverty, is led, for 
that reason, by too great hurry to obtain opulence, 
to take every possible means for that purpose. If he 
has
has leisure, it is not filled up by rational pursuits, but
by sensual enjoyments. These encroaching on the time
allotted for his more serious occupations, he becomes,
by degrees, a bankrupt, and a prodigal. If we com-
pare an indolent and innocent Gentoo, who has, per-
haps, all the moral feelings in sufficient vigour, but
whose mental powers are almost annihilated by habi-
tual languor, with an active and enterprising European,
we will more clearly perceive the contrast; we shall
find, that a mixture of contemplation and activity are
necessary to bring our species to its full perfection:
these energies are, therefore, best brought out by a va-
riety of motives, resembling such as are met with in
common life, and represented by our Poet in his Pur-
qatorio, by many allegorical exhibitions. Conform-
ably to this account, we find this combination of ac-
tion and contemplation provided for in different pe-
riods of life. In youth, the mind is active; but the
necessary discipline of education renders it in some de-
gree contemplative. In the latter part of life, the mind
is inclined to be contemplative; but the affairs of the
world, in which it is necessarily involved, keep its ac-
ctivity from any danger of stagnation.

Where honour and shame are the only motives,
they are not sufficient to overcome the native in-
dolement of the human character. They, consequently,
who seldom feel the dread of pain, or of any inflic-
tion, generally sink into languor. This debilitated state
of their faculties is increased by the circumstance, that
all their wishes are within their reach, and therefore
speedily gratified. The ardour for enjoyment remains,
though the relish be gone, and the means exhausted. The mind then becomes a monstrous mixture of languid variety and restless craving. When fear is the only motive, its effects are similar; its preponderating weight destroys that balance of the passions, which produces vigour of action, and gradually debilitates the rational powers, reducing man to a machine, if a being actuated by a single motive deserve that name. This is the case in despotic governments, and confirms that observation of the Poet,—

For Heav'n ordains, that whatsoever day
Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.

Whereas, in mixed governments, where honour and shame preserve their influence, as well as hope and fear, the law of opinion preserves its weight, as well as the law of necessity; and all together, they preserve that activity, which is needful to give the human character its proper stamp of worth. On the contrary, when honour and shame are the only motive, they become too languid in their effect, somewhat like the faint operation of the same medicines too often repeated. The disciplinary part of life ought to be carefully modelled, as preparatory to that variety of motives that must give the impulse to it during the course of life. To every passion of our nature there ought to be proper application; for in the events of common life, all our passions are actuated in turns; our hopes, as well as our fears, our interest, no less than our honour; and as one often counteracts the other, thus at proper stages of education some of them ought to be strengthened, and others kept within due limits, according
cording to the variety of the human character, and the exigence of the case.

If we enquire why there are so many instances of eminent and respectable characters to be found in the middle ranks of life, and why their proportion exceeds that of the other stations, it will probably appear, that it is because they are not raised so high above the common mass of the people, as to leave them no motive of action, but honour and shame. They are, in a certain degree, under the salutary influence of necessity, so that the activity of their minds will not readily fall into a state of languor; and with them, the higher motives in which reputation is concerned have their due weight. Thus they are so far blessed with leisure for reflection, that the nobler faculties are in no danger of losing their energy for want of employment. In short, their moral and intellectual advantages arise from their happy central position, where all the motives that usually influence mankind meet, as it were, in a natural point of confluence; where they all have their happy effect by due complication; and where, consequently, none of them can preponderate. In their moral discipline, pain and pleasure are duly mixed by the wise hand of Providence; and we know that pain is a more vigorous motive to action, than pleasure. But when, by due culture, the mind comes to be properly invigorated, the influence of pain operates more (as the Schoolmen say) in Poffe, than in Effè; more by its expectation, than its real infliction. In the former case, it is in less danger of losing its effect, as it operates rather on the fancy than the feel-

ings.
ings, and produces effects analogous to those which arise from the salutary apprehension of distant dangers, either in this life, or that which is to come.

I shall close this subject with a few observations, which have a double relation both to the Inferno and Purgatorio, as they will shew how closely the two Parts of the Poem are connected, and render the one in some degree an illustration of the other. For this purpose, it will be necessary to advert to the opinions of some modern philosophers, who, under the idea that Virtue is its own Reward, have given a partial view of human nature, and deprived morality of many of its strongest sanctions.

Lord Shaftesbury, about the beginning of the last century, gave no small degree of celebrity to the idea, that rewards were derogatory to the notion of genuine goodness. He was a man of delicate feelings, and one on whom the sentiments of honour and shame made the deepest impressions. For this reason, judging of others by himself, he thought those motives quite sufficient for all the purposes of morality and virtue; and, without taking a general view of human nature, extended his reasoning from particulars to universals, without much regard either to logic or experience. "I have known a building," says he, "which, through the officiousness of the workmen, had been so shored and skrewed up on the side where they pretended that it had a leaning, that it has at last been
been turned to the contrary side and overthrown. There has something, perhaps, of this kind happened in morals. Men have not been content to shew the natural advantages of honesty and virtue; they have rather lessened those, the better, they think, to advance another foundation, viz. an orthodox Faith, on pain of Damnation. They have made virtue so mercenary a thing, and have talked so much of its rewards, that one cannot tell what there is in it, after all, which can be worth rewarding; for to be bribed only, or terrified into an honest practice, bespeaks little of real honesty or worth. We may make, it is true, whatever bargain we think fit, and may bestow our favours; but there is no excellence, or wisdom, in voluntarily rewarding what is neither estimable nor deserving; and if virtue be not truly estimable in itself, I can see nothing estimable in following it for the sake of a bargain.

"If the love of doing good be not in itself a right and good inclination, I know not how there possibly can be any such thing as goodness or virtue. If the inclination be right, it is a perverting of it to apply it solely to the reward, and make us conceive such wonders of the grace and favour which is to attend on virtue, when there is so little shewn of the intrinsic worth or value of the thing itself."

The same sentiments are rather more forcibly expressed by an *Eleve* of the same school, in these words:—

* Mt. David Williams. See his Discourses, vol. ii.*

"Moral
"Moral happiness, the highest object of the human wish, which not only renders our actual existence worth having, but inspires us with poetic frenzy, makes us create imaginary worlds, and extend our existence into Paradise, Elysium, or Heaven, to perpetuate our enjoyment. This universal idol, and universal motive to pursuit and action, wants only to be understood to be enjoyed. We do worse than lose our time, if we seek it at a distance, or in imaginary regions; for it is with us, and every moment is sacred to its pleasures. It is the effect of Order, Vigour, Activity, in the principles of our minds, which constitutes our virtue. It is the result of just and natural dispositions in men, and of principles in society (wonderful discovery!), which constitutes public virtue; and this result is the effect of causes, as regular, as certain, as necessary, as those which produce day and night, summer and winter. If all men were capable of comprehending the order of nature in the moral world, all men would be virtuous. Rewards and punishments are the expedients of ignorance and vice, and they will as soon produce day and night, summer and winter, as they will, true and genuine moral happiness, in any one instance. You will not wonder, when I tell you, that temperance and moderation are necessary to the right arrangement of all your affections; to that natural order of your principles, which makes you virtuous; to fit you for your proper station in society, where all the principles that unite you should be so restrained and tempered, as to harmonize, coalesce, and produce an effect,
effect, which alone is real happiness. You are not to be surprised, when I say this, that I should suppose myself to be entitled to your attention; for I hold before you the utmost attainment of man, in its proper and only place, where alone it is possible (for him) to attain it. Nay, I hold it before you, when your minds are calm; when reason, unmolested by hopes and fears, can most freely see and judge, and when alone the mind should choose and determine. The delirium of the passions, like intoxication from liquor, is unfriendly to the judgment; and those, who canvas for Heaven, merely by the hopes and fears of men worked into furies, are just such moralists, just such honest men, as those who intoxicate their followers, to enable them to make a right and proper choice of senators and legislators."

Whoever were the theologians alluded to in these passages, their ignorance, or want of feeling, is to be pitied, if they contented themselves with displaying only some of the functions of virtue, without giving any idea of its intrinsic beauty. I perfectly agree with the Authors cited above, that virtue only wants to be seen, in order to command our affectionate regard. The most abandoned of mankind often pay it this respect in the character of others, that it has lost its influence over their own. But, so far from inculcating virtue by mercenary considerations, our best divines join issue with the Deist, in allowing that virtue is its own reward—that our conversation here must qualify us for that blessed society which we expect to join hereafter.
hereafter. That purity of heart and life, and the sublime duties of a Christian, are necessary ingredients in our character, without which we would be utterly indisposed for the enjoyment of that bliss which chiefly consists in the love of order, in the exercise of the sublimer and more amiable faculties of the soul, and of the social virtues in their highest perfection, far beyond any thing we can at present imagine. They did not learn this sublime truth from the Deist—they and the Deist both learned it from him who assures us, that without holiness no one can see God: a truth, inculcated by our Poet in every page, and shadowed forth under all the various imagery of his visions.

With regard to the idea of future punishments, I believe no person acquainted with human nature will suppose, that the fear of punishment is a sufficient basis for the practice of genuine virtue. The principal effect it can have is, to restrain from vice; that, however, is, in our present state, a necessary restraint. But the idea of it did not originate with those wretched theologians alluded to above. It arose from no fordid or selfish idea, even when we confine ourselves to its proofs from reason. On the contrary, it can be traced to a much sublimer motive, to that moral sense of right and wrong*, that idea of justice which is almost instantaneously impressed upon us by our connexions with mankind. It is of the same date with our notion of the difference of good and evil, and our consciousness that we are accountable creatures. This has

* See Preliminary Essay to the Inferno.
been touched on before; and it was observed, that as this account is not regularly taken here, we therefore conclude, or rather we feel, from the suggestions of reason and conscience, that it must be given hereafter; but I was obliged, in the course of the enquiry, and to connect the plan of the different parts of the Poem, to revert to it again in this place. Such an internal argument as this, which springs up in the heart of every man, has a greater weight with it, than all the reasonings of philosophy put together; and is very improperly objected to, by those who reason, and often reason justly, from their internal feelings. Necessity, and the natural equity of man, induce him to strive to correct vice. By the interference of pain and the sanction of punishment, and when we despair of finding on earth any means sufficiently forcible to check the triumphs of injustice, we naturally appeal to Heaven.

From this natural notion of justice, we account for the univerality of this idea of future rewards and punishments, and not from any supposed influence of priestcraft. We nowhere can trace the notion of the soul's immortality, but we find evidence for the different conditions of men in another life. These two opinions being thus inseparably connected, it is easy to judge which is the natural and primary opinion, and which is the consequence deduced from it: it is not the expectation of living, that makes us infer a judgment to come; but the love of right, one of the noblest principles of our nature. The abhorrence of vice and injustice makes us see the necessity of posthumous re-

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tribution,
tribution, and thence we infer a state of posthumous consciousness, and see the necessity of a preparatory discipline in this life; which, if we suffer to have its due effect, will prevent our punishment in another.

But, to come closer to the point, we shall first enquire, how far sentiment alone would support the cause of morality and virtue, without any regard to the common sanctions, and on the supposition that no such considerations as rewards and punishments existed even in idea; taking at the same time the virtues and vices of mankind on an average, as we find them in the world, without representing them in a better or worse state than they really are? And next, we shall enquire how far the idea of rewards and punishments tends to lessen the moral dignity of human nature? We shall suppose a society of mankind, innocent at least from actual vice, thrown upon some desert island, under the necessity of forming some society together; with the seeds of all their natural passions and desires yet lying dormant, and what is commonly called the moral sense, or natural conscience, sublimated to that exalted degree in which it is generally found, or supposed, in the best characters; we must suppose them without the idea of a moral governor, that is without natural religion. The idea of a moral governor involves the notion of posthumous retribution, at least of sanctions; and we want to see what is the genuine momentum of moral sentiment, without any bias, or superadded force, from extraneous considerations. There are, we know, many propensities in human nature, innocent in themselves, and in a certain degree, but criminal and pernicious
cious when they pass it. Even what are called the so-
cial passions, come under this description. Why need
we instance the natural desire between the sexes? What
tragedies has it occasioned, when it has passed the
bounds of reason and justice? Benevolence, in this
situation, becomes prodigality; and a due sense of our
own dignity becomes intolerable pride, the source of
all the dissocial passions. Self-preservation, the first
law of nature, soon degenerates into selfishness, and
smothers all the virtues in their cradle. In this cata-
logue we do not know where to stop; and will senti-
ment alone shew us that nice point in which our na-
tural and original desires, implanted by the hand of
our Creator, degenerate into vice? Is the eye of the
mind so accurately steady, and so nicely discriminating,
as to perceive, in every instance, where the different
shades and lights melt into each other? Were we al-
ways subject to the unbiassed guidance of reason, some-
thing like this might be expected; but we are exposed
to seduction by two very powerful conductors, par-
tiality to ourselves, and the temptation arising from ex-
ternal objects. The dread of consequences to our-
selves, and the exigences of society, you will say, will
be sufficient restraints; but what shall restrain us from
secret and successful crimes, when we shall be tempted
to think the interests of society uninjured by us? Are
the interests of society the only consideration? Does
not the consciousness of our being accountable, point
out a moral governor? Dread of consequences, in any
respect, if admitted as a motive, shows the necessity of
some other sanction besides our own moral sentiments,
and is in reality giving up the question; for the necessity of sanctions being admitted in any stage of society, establishes the principle effectually. Besides, we must repeat an observation made before, that this moral sense is very weak in some stages of society; this is a fact known by experience, it improves in a direct proportion with the advancement of society. It is well known to have the greatest influence there, where the idea of penal sanctions have been the longest established. It is known to be posterior everywhere, in its progress, to the consideration of penal sanctions. Are we not to conclude from this, that the former is founded upon the latter? If not, we give up plain experiment for theory; the proofs from induction we postpone to the argument a priori, and pervert every rule of sound logic and sound reasoning.

Upon the whole we may observe, that to make sentiment the judge of sentiment, is to make the same faculties both party and judge; it renders us liable, where any passion is concerned, to overlook the mental extreme for the middle point, to forget the mental parallax. Our instincts are natural; that is, they are designed by nature to produce certain ends compatible with the dictates of reason and the calls of society. When they get beyond these bounds—listen how sophistically they plead for themselves. That they are parts of our nature, and only act according to her dictates! They will appeal, indeed, to their reason; and what is this when analysed? It is not (according to them) the consideration of our relations to society, or to a moral governor, according to Clarke; it is not utility, according to
to Hume; but it is to make our natural impulses the judges of our natural impulses. Thus they argue in a circle; and what the tendency of their arguments is, let the impartial reader judge from modern works of sentiment, where other sanctions are excluded.

Let it be observed once for all, that it is not meant to deny the efficacy of the moral sense; its dictates confirm with effect the lessons we learn from reason in society, nor does its impressions less inculcate on us the necessity of that retribution in future, which we see does not take place here.

We are next to examine the influence of the idea of posthumous compensation, exclusively considered, on our characters as rational agents. And here we shall previously observe, that if the moral sense were not liable to deviation from the infusions of passion and other extraneous causes; if its dictates were always infallible, always as powerful as it generally is found in the most exalted characters; would any one take upon him to say, that this solitary principle would be sufficient to overcome the habitual indolence of mankind in moral pursuits? Would it alone give him that vigorous activity which certainly was designed to be his character? Supposing he were possessed of this activity, would its dictates be sufficiently strong to keep his passions always within proper bounds, to say, "Hitherto thou shalt go, and no farther?" I fear not—at least it cannot be supposed, until we can assuredly say that the moral sense was the sole and single motive which always raised the sage, the saint, and the hero, to the exalted pitch of character which they attained. That the con-
Consideration of rewards and punishments is a motive less exalted than the moral sense, is not denied; at the same time, all the arguments urged by Shaftesbury and others, in favour of its exclusive title, would prove too much; for had it that imperial sovereignty which their arguments presume, we would no longer be voluntary but necessary agents; and as the law of England supposes of the king, we could do no wrong.

With a view to the influence on our intellectual faculties, the idea of posthumous retribution has an effect undeniably salutary. It preserves the mind in the habitual practice of studying relations, of comparing motives, of deducing consequences, and examining the alternate preponderancy of things present and of things to come; in weighing the different momenta of impulse and reason, and of judging according to their respective merits. Is not this the very mode of education which Providence seems to have adopted for our moral and intellectual improvement, with regard to the affairs of this world? Is there any of our intellectual faculties which is not improved and ameliorated by this procedure, to an high degree? If foresight be the sovereign ingredient in prudence, if prudence be the basis of all our virtues, nothing can be of more importance than the operation of distant objects on the human mind. In a moral view, these motives have this important effect, that they serve as a salutary check upon the wild excursions of that double-faced genius, known to moderns by the name of Sentiment, whose dictates are almost (such is the effect of uniting different ideas under the same terms) as ambiguous as the oracles.
oracles of old. In another view, the circumstance of those compensations being in that particular point of distance, has an effect of sovereign use. Were they nearer to us, and more subject to our contemplation, they would encroach upon our free agency; and even upon our province as free actors, in this sublunary world, the motives would overpower all others; were they at a greater distance than the general term of human life, they would probably have little or no influence on the general conduct. As it is, their effects are sufficiently moderate to leave us the consciousness of free agency, in weighing remote consequences against present impulses. These matters stand in the same position with respect to us, as the sun is observed to hold with regard to this planet: were it nearer to us, we should perish from the extreme of heat; a more distant situation would have a similar effect, from the rigours of extreme cold: his precise position is the source of life and vigour, as the distant views of future prospects are the noblest improvements of human reason, and the best security for the freedom of the will.
THE
PURGATORIO

OF
DANTE ALIGHIERI.
CANTO THE FIRST.

ARGUMENT.
The Poets re-ascent at the Foot of the Mountain of Probation, where they meet the Spirit of Cato of Utica, who informs them of the previous Ceremonies. They take their Journey to the Sea-shore, and prepare for their Entrance into the Regions of Lustration.

BUT now the barque, that wafts the Muse and me, Displays her canvas on the smoother sea, And leaves the horrible expanse behind: Scourged by the tempest of eternal wrath, It now is given to other climes to breathe, Where the pure Spirit soars, from sin refin'd.

II.
Purge off the Stygian gloom, forfake the dead, And o'er a milder Zone your pinions spread; Queen of immortal song! thy help I claim: That harmony inspire, whose powerful strain Struck mute the clamours of the hostile train, Whose overthrow enhanc'd the Muse's fame.

Stanza ii. line 6.—The Muse's fame.] Di cui le Piche miseri sentirò, &c.
The Contest of the Muses with the Daughters of Piblius of Pella, in Macedonia, (vide Ovid. Met. lib. vi) may be a

mytho-
III.

The Orient sapphire of the deep serene,
Spread her young glories o'er the op'ning scene,
Thro' all the vast sublunar vault afar:
How soft was then the Zephyran plume
Of morn! to me escap'd the Stygian gloom,
And damp'd with many a scene of deep despair.

IV.

Now, twinkling clear, the harbinger of day
Look'd from his shrine, and all the East was gay;

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mythological account of the Civilization of that Northern Tract, by a Colony from the South of Greece, which gradually introduced the Religion, the Sciences, and the Arts, which they had acquired from more polished Countries. The remote consequences of that event prepared the enlightened part of the Globe for the most important Political Changes, first under the auspices of the Macedonian Hero, and then under the Romans, who availed themselves of his Conquests. The mental Revolutions to which it gave occasion, were no less remarkable. By this means, Literature was disseminated to a greater extent than could have otherwise been expected. The transmission of Science was facilitated by the ready means of Communication through a great Empire, by a Language almost universal—and this constituted the great medium by which the Christian Religion was afterwards propagated.

It is remarkable, that the Conquest of this and the adjacent Countries, by a race of Scythians, in the 15th Century, should have diffused a taste for Literature and the Sciences over the West of Europe.—Such are the advantages of Geographical Situation, which often has a considerable share in forming the Human Character.

Her
Her rising beam the wat'ry sign conceal'd:
(Hid, by excess of light,) I look'd around,
And spy'd, within the pale nocturnal bound,
Four stars in Paradise alone beheld.

V.
Alas! how faintly gleams our Northern Pole,
Compar'd with these celestial orbs that roll
Their endless journey round the Southern sky!
Half dazzl'd with their beams, I turn'd again.
To spy the Northern Charioteer in vain,
The Pole, and flaming guards escap'd mine eye.

VI.
When, lo! before my wond'ring eyes appears,
In hoary majesty, a man of years,
On the world's verge; with holy rev'rence thrill'd;
I look'd; his locks were sprinkl'd o'er with gray,
His silver beard upon his bosom lay,
His mien august with awe my bosom fill'd.

VII.
Th' Antarctic light, wide hov'ring, seem'd to blend
Its living rays, and round his temples bend

St. iv. l. 6.—Four Stars.] Said by the Commentators to denote the four Cardinal Virtues—Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude:—distinctly seen, but at a distance, on the first entrance into a course of Reformation.

St. vi. l. 2.—A Man of Years.] Cato, of Utica, the great example of Self-denial; thence supposed to be a proper Guardian of the entrance to the Regions of Lustration.
A fiery diadem of various lights.
As half amaz'd, I met his scorching beam;
"Mortal!" he cry'd, "how did you stem the stream,
That rolls in thunder down the gulph of night?"

VIII.
"What guiding lamp, your direful progress led,
Thro' the pale mansions of the sentenc'd dead,
When darkness hides the vale with dragon plume?
Who dare infringe our everlasting laws?
What vent'rous hand, the sentenc'd sinner draws
To my dread lodge, from Hell's eternal gloom?"

IX.
Awe-struck, I stood; till many a signal, giv'n
By the harmonious messenger of Heav'n,
Taught me due homage to the hoary Sage.
Then answer'd he, "Not of myself I came;
A Saint, inspir'd by love's eternal flame,
This wand'rer gave in charge—a sacred pledge!

X.
"But since I now perceive a strong desire
In thee, his former fortunes to enquire,
No wish of thine, by me shall e'er be cross'd:
This mortal never took a last survey
Of the glad precincts of the cheerful day,
Tho' Frenzy drove him near to Charon's coast.

XI.
"A few short journeys of the circling Sun
Had nearly seen his race of folly run;
The mandate from above a Cherub gave:
I came, commission'd thro' the Stygian reign
To guide his steps, and shew the sentenced train,
No lighter means the wayward wretch could save.

XII.

"I shew'd the penal Bands in sad review,
And now must lead him to the nobler crew;
Who thrid the painful pass to life and light:
And shew between the living and the dead,
The toiling candidates of Heav'n, that tread
The steep ascent, thro' many a fearful rite.

XIII.

"Long were the labour, all his 'scapes to tell,
His dire encounters in the gulph of Hell;
But thro' the shadowy world, a mighty arm,
With giant wafture, bore deep to deep
His mortal weight, and up the thund'ring steep,
Thro' many a dreadful gloom, and fiery storm.

XIV.

"He came by instinct to this lonely shore,
Verging on Heav'n, to learn the genuine lore
Of Liberty, from him, who pour'd his blood
To ransom Rome from Caesar's regal yoke.
For her, from life's ignoble bonds you broke,
And to her sons the price of freedom shew'd.

St. xiv. l. 3.—Of Liberty.] The Liberty mentioned here is
Moral, or rather Christian Liberty. But why Dante puts this
apology for Suicide in the mouth of Virgil, is not easy to divine,
unless he makes him speak according to the ideas that prevailed too
much in some ages of Rome.
XV.

"The mail’d form, which then you flung away,
Shall brave the thunder of the doomful day;
    All radiant rising from the yawning tomb:
Lover of Justice! know that Heav’n’s decree
Was never yet infringing’d by him or me;
    Still cloth’d in dust, he waits the final doom.

XVI.

"I am a tenant of that lower Zone,
Where Marcia dwells, who claim’d thee for her own;
    With thee content the sad reverse to share:
When Rome and Freedom totter’d to their fall,
O think from us you hear her faintest call,
    And tend in gentler mood a suppliant pray’r.

XVII.

"Permit us to explore our toilsome way,
Thro’ the seven penal climes that own thy sway;
    Then I, retiring to my dark sojourn,
Will shew your Marcia in the fields of Fate,
The wonders of your Heav’n-appointed state,
    If Fame you seek beyond the Stygian bourne.

XVIII.

"Light of my eyes! while yet she liv’d,” he cry’d,
"No boon she crav’d in life, was e’er deny’d:
    But other laws departed Spirits know:
Nor must I listen to the fervent pray’r
    Of those, for ever sentenc’d to despair,
Whom Acheron’s dull current keeps below.
XIX.

"But should a messenger of Æther deign
To lead you, thro' the tenements of pain,
As you pretend; let no insidious note
By adulation breath'd, your accents tune.
Suffice it, Heaven command; I grant the boon—
And hail the favour'd Mortal's happy lot!

XX.

"Go then, and where yon' bank repels the wave,
A rushy girdle cull, and gently lave
His visage, with a wan eclipse o'ercast;
Then cleanse him from these deep Cimmerian stains,
Contracted in those Heav'n-abandon'd plains,
Left Heav'n's bright Minister his course arrest.

XXI.

"No vapour from the Stygian pool below
Must stain the pureness of that favour'd brow,
That hopes to pass his scrutinizing eye:
That sooth'd foil beneath is known to feed,
With genial sap, the low and flexile reed,
That cinctures still, for souls contrite, supply.

XXII.

"No shadowy forests here allure the sight,
No long, green alleys promise cool delight;

St. xix.] A very proper Reproof to Virgil, (see Stanza xiv,) intimating, that Cato knew he spoke like a Port in that extraordinary compliment—"the Character of Ancient Republican, is well preferred throughout."

St. xxii.] The necessity of Humility, and our resignation to the Divine Will, as the first step to Penitence, is here allegorically described.
Nor plant nor stem is here: of stubborn grain
The reed alone, that loves the wat'ry dale,
And bends with ev'ry motion of the gale,
Veils the low borders of the mystic plain.

XXIII.
"To this low strand, your footsteps turn no more;
The rising Sun, that soon will gild the shore,
Your passage up yon' eafy slope will guide."
Thus spoke the Sage, and instant disappear'd;
Slow rising from my knees, my looks I rear'd
To Mantua's Bard, for words were yet deny'd,

XXIV.
"Follow my steps," he cry'd, with mild command,
"Whirl'd the water shelves the lowly strand,
With gentle slope descending to the main."
He ceas'd, and pointed to the eastern sky;
The pale wave trembl'd, in the morning eye,
Shedding her long beams o'er the wat'ry plain.

XXV.
Silent, we measur'd down the deep descent,
Like men on some ambiguous mission bent;
That useless seems, till time its end display;
Now Sol's ascension beams the dews exhale;
I saw them mount upon the morning gale,
As if aspiring to eclipse the day.

XXVI.
"Come! ere the moment of luftation past,
Condemn our sloth," he cry'd, with pious haste;
And
And stoop'd, to sweep away the morning dew.
I guess'd his purpose soon, and bending low,
My pallid face suffus'd with drops of woe,
I felt him cleanse the deep Cimmerian hue.

XXVII.
Refresh'd, at length we reach the fatal strand,
No vent'rous sailor e'er return'd to land,
That in this water dip'd the parting oar:
The ready circiture there, my limbs embrac'd;
Yet when the desolating hand had pass'd,
Embattled soon they rose, and clad the shore.

St. xxvii. l. 6.—Embattled soon they rose.] Intended to illustrate
the productive nature of the Christian virtues, when duly culti-
vated—To him that hath, shall be given.

END OF THE FIRST CANTO.
CANTO THE SECOND.

ARGUMENT.
The Poets, arriving at the Shore, spy a Vessel steering to the Land; its manner of sailing, and its Passengers, described. Among these, Dante meets with the departed Spirit of Casella, an ancient Friend of his, with whom he enters into conversation, till they are interrupted by the Guardian of the Place.

NOW on Heav'n's verge arriv'd, the jocund Sun,
Who on old Zion's hallow'd hills at noon
Had look'd direc't, and gilt her glitt'ring fane;
Slow-handed Night revers'd his ebon car
O'er India, in her van appear'd the Star,
Whose radiant balance ne'er at rest remains.

II.

Aurora late had ris'n from Tithon's bed,
Her wan cheek turn'd at length to rosy red,
While far along the chiding beach we stray'd;
Slowly we march'd, but Fancy sped before,
And view'd our coming perils o'er and o'er,
Full on the tablet of the mind display'd.
III.
Soon, as the fiery eye of Mars afar,
Thro' the dim evening looks revenge and war,
O'er Ocean's brim, retiring to the west,
Seaward, a red wing'd meteor seem'd to sweep;
No waving plume, that skims the toiling deep,
Sped o'er the swelling flood with equal haste.

IV.
I turn'd to Mars, with an anxious eye,
And look'd again, along the morning sky;
The coming splendour seem'd to gild the flood
With brighter glance, and more diverging rays;
And now, discern'd amid the sunny blaze,
Its new-born beam a second glory show'd.

V.
Silent, my Guide observ'd the meteor wave;
But when th' expanding wing the signal gave,
The Pilot and the pinnacle both, he knew;
"This instant bend the suppliant knee," he cry'd;
"With lifted hands salute the Heavenly Guide;
Soon other forms like his, shall meet your view.

VI.
"See, what the reas'ning pride of man confounds!
No lab'ring oar divides those liquid bounds,
No shifting-canvas courts the hallow'd gale;
Yon' heav'nward-pointed plumes, from shore to shore,
The vessel urge, contemning fail and oar;
Sky-tinctur'd plumes, that never change, or fail."
VII.

The dazzling Vision now approach'd the coast;
My visual powers, that seem'd in glory loft,
Sunk at the splendour of the Seraph's look;
While the swift vessel, steer'd by art divine,
Scarce dip'd, but seem'd to skim, the level brine;
No billow on her sides, insulting, broke.

VIII.

The heavenly Pilot at the helm was seen,
A glimpse of glory lighten'd in his mien:
A ghostly squadron, rank'd in dim array,
Fill'd the long deck, twice fifty in a throng;
From stem to stern they rais'd a general song,
Of Israel's triumph, and the foe's dismay.

IX.

Soon as the sacred Psalmody had cease'd,
The welcome sign the ransom'd crew releas'd;

St. viii. 7. 6.] The first line of the 114th Psalm is given here in the original; and the whole is supposed to be sung by these Spirits: "When Israel came out of Egypt—the Sea saw it, and fled." It is explained by all Commentators, as describing prophetically the redemption of our nature from sin and misery, by the mediation of our Saviour. "If the divine presence had such an effect upon inanimate matter, how ought it to operate upon rational accountable beings? Let us be struck with a suitable awe at the presence of God in the world; by his providence, and by his Spirit in our consciences, that so we may have hope and courage in the day when he arises to shake terribly the earth; when every island shall fly away, and the mountains shall be no more found." Horne on the 114th Psalm.

While
While on the shore, the disembodied band,
New to their state, and wond'ring at the view,
Stood gazing, as the sacred barge withdrew,
With light wing steering from the level strand.

X.
O'er all the plain, the glitt'ring shafts of day
Fell thick, as verging from his lofty sway
Pale Capricorn forsook the point of prime:
The Bard, and me, at last the Phantoms spy'd,
And in a gen'r'al peal of prayer apply'd,
To learn the passage to the hill sublime.

XI.
"You think, perhaps," return'd the Mantuan Guide,
"Strangers in our experience may confide;
But we are strangers too: this hour beheld
Our painful journey from the Gulph below;
No sportive voyage, but protracted woe,
Whose varied plagues almost our manhood quell'd.

XII.
"Those Spirits, by my gross material breath,
Soon found, I ne'er had pass'd the gates of death,
And gather'd all around, with pale amaze;
As him whose hand the peaceful olive brings,
The thronging multitude surroud in rings,
And on each other tread, and jumfling, gaze."

XIII.
So gaz'd those wand'ring Shades, absorpt in thought,
In short oblivion of their dreadful lot,
6
And
And the fear'd scrutiny so soon to come;
When they were doom'd to rise, by pain refin'd,
From gross sublunar dregs, to perfect mind,
And wing their voyage to th' empyreal dome.

XIV.
But one I soon esp'y'd, with eager haste,
Flinging his shadowy arms around my waist;
I try'd to clap him trice, but strove in vain.
Features of air! how did you mock my flight!
My empty hands I view'd with pale affright,
As thro' his sides they pass'd, tho' seen so plain.

XV.
The Phantom smil'd, to see my pale surprize;
Gliding away, while with infatiate eyes
I follow'd, still resolv'd to clasp a Shade,
Till gently he advis'd me to forbear:
The voice I knew, once music to my ear,
And for a moment's conversation pray'd.

XVI.
"Ah, friend!" he cry'd; "that love, by Arno bred,
Still haunts this breast, and burns among the dead;
Nor time, nor fate, can damp that vestal flame:
That soul-connecting tie commands my stay.
But who conducts you up this lonely way,
When no embodied soul before you came?

XVII.
"Ah, my Case! a! tho' this mystic bourne
I reach again, I must to earth return:

St. xvii. l. i. —my Case! a] Case! a was an eminent Musician
of Florence, as much beloved by our Poet, as the famous Henry
Davet
[ 74 ]

But tell me, why you pass’d the Gulph so late?
Where have you linger’d, since you breath’d your last?
“O blame not him,” the Shade return’d in haste,
“Whose mandate caus’d me long behind to wait!

XVIII.

“Full three revolving moons their crescents clos’d,
Since that great barrier, which our flight oppos’d,
Across the midland Gulph, was swept away:
Now frighted Ghosts, in a festive shawl,
Are borne in triumph to the nether Pole,
Till the great Jubilee’s concluding day.

XIX.

“In that blest time, from earthly cares releas’d,
I stray’d, where Tyber sleeps on Neptune’s breast;
The heavenly Pilot saw, and call’d aboard:
There still he moors, and waits with lingering sail,
For all, but those who to the darksome vale
Of Acheron are doom’d, a race abhor’d!

Dawet was by Millen, who, in his Sonnet to his Musical Friend, mentions this interview of Dante with Casella:

——“whom he woo’d to sing,
Met in the milder Shades of Purgatory.”

St. xviii. l. 6.—great Jubilee’s] The Jubilee at Rome was supposed to be a time when a certain degree of favour was granted to departed Souls, as to the term of their probation. “At other times,” says Vellutello, “the disembodied Souls, designed for Purgatory, are obliged to wait the allotted hour of embarkation; but in the year of Jubilee, all who are selected for probation, are taken in promiscuously, and without delay.”
XX.

"If the dread laws of this mysterious reign
Permit you, still to swell the lofty strain;
Let that soft modulated voice once more
Relieve my soul beneath its mortal weight:
Half sunk, and struggling in the toils of Fate,
Ere yet allow'd to reach the happy shore."

XXI.

Thus pray'd I, and with descant soft and clear,
(Even yet it seems to vibrate on my ear!)

Of heav'nly love he sung, in such a strain,
That in rapt bands the squadrons of the dead
Attentive throng'd around the tuneful Shade,
And quite forgot their peril, and their pain.

XXII.

Even Maro's mighty mind confess'd the spell,
Far less could I the soft infection quell;
But soon a sterner found the music broke:
The trembling Shades recoil'd, when Cato came,
And soon dispell'd the charm with eyes of flame,
While his harsh mandate all th' assembly shook.

XXIII.

«Hence! hence, ye negligent! your toils begin!
How dare ye linger on the verge of Sin?

St. xxiii. 1.] The danger of relaxation, and being drawn aside
by alluring objects in the commencement of a religious course, is
here pointed out. Nothing fo relaxes the vigour of the mind, neces-
sary on this occasion, as pleasure. The intervention of Cato is
finely
Go! climb yon' airy steep, and purge away
That Stygian film, that clouds your mental sight,
And hides from you, in deep Cimmerian night,
The glorious prospect of eternal day!"

XXIV.
As when a flock of doves along the plain
Collect, with busy bills, the golden grain,
And leave their quarrels, and their loves, at rest:
If any foe the timorous flock surprize,
They leave th' unfinish'd feast, to seek the skies,
And find their appetite by fear suppress'd.

XXV.
Thus Cato's voice his airy band controls,
New to the habitudes of parted souls;
With whirlwind speed they leave th' unfinish'd song,
And to the hill in scatter'd bands repair,
As men at random run, unknowing where;
Nor on the sea-beat verge we linger'd long.

finely characteristic; we think we see the man who used λαχνως
το σώμα γαμματίνας ουρανος, ν. τ. ι. "It was his custom to render his
constitution hardy by the most severe exercise, and to bear the
extremes of heat, and the most rigorous storms of winter, with un-
covered head; in all seasons, he performed his journey on foot,
skipping the use of any vehicle." Plut. in Catone.

END OF THE SECOND CANTO.
CANTO THE THIRD.

ARGUMENT.
The Travellers prepare to ascend the Mountain, which they find more difficult to climb than they had imagined. They stand awhile in suspense, till some Spirits whom they meet, direct them to find the destined Path. Among these, they meet the Soul of MANFRED, who was killed in the battle of Cererano.

IN wide dispersion o'er the sacred field,
The crowd, by reason or remorse impell'd,
   Fled to the Mount; while I remain'd below,
Close to my faithful Guide: without his aid
How could my feet the dang'rous pass invade,
   Or how surmount the hill's majestic brow?

II.
Like one that waver'd on the verge of Fate,
I saw him stand, as if in deep debate,
   Or to renounce the labour, or begin:
All penitent, he seem'd to mourn his fault—
   O matchless dignity of stainless thought!
   Thus bitter seems to you the taste of Sin!
III.
While sense of deep decorum check'd his haste,
I found the moment of illusion past;
   My rapt soul, kindling at the awful call
Of our great mission, dar'd a bolder flight:
Anticipating that stupendous height,
   Whose summit seem'd to prop the heav'ly hall.

IV.
The Sun before me cast a flaring ray,
   My length'ning shadow seem'd to lead the way;
   No second Shade was seen: I turn'd with dread
   The Mantuan Guide to find; I deem'd him lost
Turning with mild regard, the gentle Ghost
   Reprov'd my causeless fears, by fancy bred.

V.
"Could you suppose me gone? What weak distrust!
Behold yon' Sun, this moment sees my dust
   By Naples rest, impearl'd by evening dew!
Which, while I liv'd, with its attendant Shade,
A breathing substance o'er Hesperia stray'd,
   By his bright splendours doub'ld to the view.

VI.
"But wonder not, if now expos'd to day,
My fine-spun fabric thus admits the ray;
   Like yon' æthereal vault, that bends around,
Where blending lights, with lights innumerous cros'd,
Meet unoppos'd, and not a beam is lost,
   For ever mingling in the blue profound.

St. v. 4, 6.—[his bright splendours] The Sun's.
VII.

"Why these sky-woven forms, that seem to fly
All mortal sense, can suffer and enjoy
Heav'n's bliss, and all th' extremes of fire and frost,
That Power that so decrees, can best explain:
Created plummet sounds that depth in vain,
In that, as in the Trinal Union, lost.

VIII.

"Too anxious mortals! learn to resign'd;
Could the deep secrets of th' Almighty mind
Be seen, nor Sin nor Saviour had been known:
Desire to know, without the means, is giv'n
To some, by the mysterious will of Heav'n,
Among the tortures of the nether zone.

IX.

"Great Stagirite! and there, Athenian Sage,
For this your sorrows flow from age to age,
Nor do you weep alone." He hung his head;
Alarm'd to see his sad dejected air,
I look'd, and saw the trace of wan despair
O'er his aërial lineaments display'd.

St. viii. l. 6. —nor Sin nor Saviour had been known] i. e. "If man
had known the real reason of the first prohibition, he would have
known that the Tempter deceived him, when he told him, that, by
eating the forbidden fruit, he should be as a God, knowing good
and evil; consequently, he would not have sinned, and the necessity
of a Saviour would have been superfluous." Landino Vellutello
lo Augellucci.
X.
On, by the mountain's hallow'd foot, we pass,
And to a frowning ridge we reach'd at last;
Far, far too steep for human foot to climb:
Those cloud-cap'd rocks, that seem to threat the skies,
Where Lerici's proud coast to Tarbia plies,
Seem'd humble mole-hills, to this rock sublime.

XI.
"Who knows," exclaim'd my Guide, confus'd and
"Where Fate allows a pass the hill to scale?" [pale,
Then, pondering, on the proud empanement gaz'd,
"To mount yon' cliffs an eagle's wing requires!"
Thus he, while meas'ring these tremendous spires,
On their dark misty brows I look'd amaz'd.

XII.
Scanning their mighty round, I spy'd below
A caravan of souls, advancing slow,
With soft pace, like the dial's moving shade:
By the tall rock they seem'd to sit along;
The Mantuan soon observ'd the shadowy throng,
Whose welcome prescence all his doubts allay'd.

XIII.
"Despond no more!" the friendly Spirit cry'd;
"Those Phantoms, if we fail, our steps will guide;
We'll intercept them soon, they march so slow."
I bow'd obedience: soon, with flying pace,
The third part of a league, or more, we trace,
And now could reach them with a bended bow,
XIV.

To the rude cliff, that, like the brow of night,
O'erlook'd the pafs, they clung with wild affright,
Perusing my strange form, with haggard eyes,
Confessing doubt and fear: but soon the Bard,
Hailing the dark brigade with mild regard
And friendly words, dispell'd their new surprife.

XV.

"Selected Tenants of the op'ning tomb,
Who here appointed to an happier doom,
Calmly await the formidable hand
That moulds your hearts anew, our suit befriend;
Shew, where with easier slope these mountains bend,
The mental progress ill can bear a stand."

XVI.

As Tenants of the fold in groupes advance,
And some strange form peruse with timid glance,
Each with uplifted head, and startled eye;
Thro' each the sympathy of wild amaze
Contagious runs, till all, attentive, gaze
On the new prodigy, they know not why.

XVII.

As they, obsequious to their trembling Guide,
Move, rally, stop, and shift from side and side;
So, in slow countermarch, from rear to van,
The ghostly files advance, with measuri'd pace;
A deep composure, and a manly grace,
Touch'd with æthereal charm, their features wan.

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XVIII.
But, when they spy'd the intercepted Light,
Where my long shadow mark'd the rocky height
    All to its base, with signs of dread, retir'd;
From rank to rank the pale infection flew,
And each advancing line as soon withdrew,
    Till my sage Guide new confidence inspir'd.

XIX.
"Before your question comes, I freely own
This Spirit bears a weight of blood and bone;
    And hence his moving shadow parts the day:
But think not ye, that no supernal call
Invites him here to climb the mundane wall,
    And find to other worlds his uncouth way."

XX.
Thus spoke the Bard, and thus the shadowy train
Reply'd, "Your footsteps you must trace again;
    Turn back with us, and try the right-hand path."
They ceased. A Spirit from the crowd began:
"Who'er thou art, high-favour'd Son of Man,
    Try, if you know your friend, disguis'd by death."

XXI.
I turn'd me round, and mark'd his noble air,
The gentle Vision wav'd his golden hair,
    And inborn dignity his features show'd,
As when the honours of the world he wore;
But half his manly face was steep'd in gore,
    Which from his wounded brow incessant flow'd,
XXII.
I try'd my recollective powers in vain;
Still memory seem'd no vestige to retain
Of such a form: at length his bosom, gor'd
By mortal steel, the mighty Phantom bar'd;
"See Manfred here! Sicilia's King declar'd,
Constantia's heir, dispatch'd by Anjou's sword!"

XXIII.
"Go, tell my Daughter, (if you find the way
Where yet she lingers in the light of Day,)
The tragic story of her Father's fate:
Pierc'd by two mortal wounds, I fell in fight;
But, to th' eternal Source of Life and Light,
Falling, I rais'd my soul, nor pray'd too late.

XXIV.
"Tho' deep in crimes, that all-embracing arm,
That savs the weeping penitent from harm,
If e'er, renew'd by grace, he turns to God,
Sav'd me: if proud Cozenza's lord had own'd
That truth, he had not cast, from hallow'd ground,
My bones, to blanch by Verdes' fatal flood.

XXV.
"Nor this suffic'd the malice of the Priest,
He curs'd me; but eternal love releas'd
The ransom'd soul; that hope but rarely dies
While the pulse plays: but he that holds in scorn
The gospel rites, must linger here forlorn,
Thrice ten, for every year he Heav'n defies."
XXVI.

"This stern decree, for ever fix'd, remains,
Unless prevailing prayers abridge his pains.
O bid my Daughter's vows improve my lot!
So may my wounded bosom know delight,
When I, with others, take my timely flight,
To purge my sin; for Time by pray'rs is bought."

From the tenor of the Poet's doctrine, from his rigid morality, and the reasons mentioned in the Preliminary Discourse, I can scarcely bring myself to suppose, that Dante, in this and other instances, meant to encourage hopes from a death-bed repentance, or a few pious thoughts on the article of death: but, if we take the allegorical sense, what he says of sudden repentance, before admission to the rules of lustration or penance, will apply to sudden conversion: instances of which, no doubt, have occurred in all ages; more rarely, however, among professed Christians. Even that expression, "There is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth," &c. denotes how seldom we may expect the occurrence of such examples. For the Story of Manfred, see the Historical Essay prefixed to the Inferno.

END OF THE THIRD CANTO.
CANTO THE FOURTH.

ARGUMENT.

Virgil and Dante leave the Society of Spirits, among whom they had met with Manfred; and ascending by a narrow pass up the Mountain, perceive a number of Souls who had delayed their Penitence; among whom they find the Spirit of Belacqua.

WHEN whelming sorrows plunge the soul in night,
Or joy diffuses round a golden light;
The mighty image all its power employs:
All other forms, by Passion's tyrant sway,
On the fine tablet of the Mind decay,
By anguish blotted, or exhal'd by joys.

II.

No second soul (as some too fondly deem)
In the fame bosphorus feels the fierce extreme
Of bless or torture, while its fellow strays;
And on the plume of Fancy rides sublime,
O'er many a moon-light scene and magic clime,
And no rude impulse from without, obeys.

St. i. l. 2.] The ancients divided the soul into the animal, the sensorive, and the rational. On the cultivation of the latter, they held that our moral improvement depended. See Preliminary Essay, sect. iv.
III.

This truth my Spirit seiz'd without control,
While fix'd on Manfred, my abstractive soul
Perceiv'd not, how the Day's ascending King,
Two shining decades of degrees had pass'd,
And more, since first above the wat'ry waste
He woke the hours, to dance their daily ring.

IV.

But soon my Fancy drop'd her vagrant plume,
When, close at hand, the Tenants of the tomb
Exclaim'd, "Behold the narrow pass you fought!"
But, such a pass! a peafant, with his prong,
That guards his viny colonnades from wrong,
Could, with a single faggot, close the grot.

V.

No gentle slope the mounting pathway show'd,
Leo's aèrial ridge, that fronts the flood;
Noli's ascent, Bismantua's cloudy height,
By human feet have oft been cross'd of yore:
But wings alone, methought, could waft us o'er
Those rocks, that seem'd to tower above the sight.

VI.

But strong desire to pierce the dark retreat,
Gave ready pinions to our flying feet,

St. v. 1. 2. Leo—] Sanleo, a city in the Duchy of Urbino.
1. 3. Noli—] A city between Finale and Savona in the territory of Genoa.
Bismantua—] A hill in Lombardy.

And
And Mars seem’d a walking lamp before:
A gloomy arch beneath the rock we pas’d,
Whose low-depending concave check’d our hast’e,
As low we crept along the stony floor.

VII.
We pas’d the cavern, and the ridge we climb;
With swimming eyes I view’d the height sublime,
And call’d in hast’e, “Ah! whither must we move?”
“Plant well your foot,” the cautious Bard reply’d:
“Destruction yawns below, if once you slide;
Another Guide will meet you soon above.”

VIII.
I look’d aloft, and spy’d a rocky mound,
Whose summit seem’d to pierce the blue profound:
From this stupendous wall the sight recoil’d.
Above th’ aërial Gulph, superb, and steep,
The barrier stood, and seem’d afar to keep,
All less than Angels, from its bar exil’d.

IX.
“O Father, stop!” I cry’d; “or here below
I must remain, a spectacle of woe!”
“Yet one exertion more,” the Poet cry’d,
And show’d a rocky ledge, abrupt and high,
That seem’d suspended in the middle sky,
Bordering all round the rocky circuit wide.

X.
Spurr’d by the high command, aloft I sprung,
And to the beetling rock, instinctive, clung;

G 4 
Till
Till that aëreal round I reach’d at last:
Beneath its solemn brow, in prospect, lay
The various world! above, the Lord of Day,
O’er land, and sea, a smile of radiance cast.

XI.
Eastward I look’d, and saw the Sun, dismay’d;
How to the right he cast my following Shade,
Kindling the northern sky with wheels of flame.
The Poet saw my doubts, and thus began:
"If now, between the Twins, yon’ chariot ran,
His beams would gild the Bear’s unwieldy frame.

XII.
"Such is his rule, unless th’ Almighty cause,
Would deign to change his long-establisht’d laws:
This truth is clear, if you recal to mind,
That holy Zion’s spires, on Asia’s coast,
Down to the Nadir point, while here oppos’d,
We leave her summit, half the world behind.

XIII.
"When morning on the verge of Heav’n appears
To us, revolving on th’ eternal spheres,
Fair Cynthia, with her stars, illumes their Pole;
That car, which Phaeton could ill command,
Thus runs, dispensing light from land to land,
Crosse the Line, and turns from goal to goal:

St. xi, xii, xiii.] By this periphrasis, the Poet means, that the
Sun’s course, to those in the Southern hemisphere, (where he now
was,) seemed to be directed through the Northern constellations.—
XIV.
"That Line, which Winter's rigid reign divides,
And that blest clime where Summer still presides,
Southward is seen from Palestine to run:
With us, it seems the Northern clime to bound;
Where Phoebus' wheels describe their flaming round,
And cold Arcturus darkens in the Sun."

XV.
Alarm'd, I cry'd, "O tell, distinguish'd friend!
How far we still are destin'd to ascend;
For still this mighty mound exceeds my sight!"
Mild he reply'd, "The nature of this hill
Is such, it seems to grow more easy still,
As upward we ascend its dizzy height.

XVI.
"Soon will you move along with equal ease,
As the light Brigantine before the breeze;
Then shall you soon forget your transient care:
Let this enliven hope—I dare no more."
"Yet here you may repose," a Voice before
Reply'd, soft whisp'ring thro' the stilly air.

The Sun was now in Aries; but had he been in Gemini, he would have appeared still nearer to the North Pole.
The Mountain of Probation (where they now were) is supposed to be in the Southern hemisphere, directly opposite to Jerusalem, in the North.

St. xiv. l. 1. That Line—] the Equator and Ecliptic; which passes through the torrid Zone and divides the temperate and frigid Zones; seems to those in the Northern hemisphere to run South, and to those in the Southern hemisphere it appears to the North. This is to be understood of those under an oblique sphere, in both situations.

St. xv. l. 5. Is such, it seems to grow more easy still,] Denoting the growing facility of virtuous habits.
XVII.
Quick turning round, at this mysterious call,
We saw a rock, projecting from the wall,
Which neither he nor I before had spy’d:
Beneath, a cohort of the dead were seen,
Sunk in its shade, as indolent of mien
As if no future cares their minds employ’d.

XVIII.
There One, that seem’d quite weary of his state,
With arms around his knees desponding fat,
And ’twixt his hands, his languid face reclin’d:
“O Maro! view that hapless man,” I said,
“Too indolent he seems, to seek for aid;
Sloth is his sister, or in wedlock join’d.”

XIX.
He had not power to lift his lumpish head,
But upward look’d askance, with eye of lead,
And view’d me, with a dull, malignant glare:
I knew him then; and, tho’ with labour spent,
Close to this Slave of Negligence I went,
While thus he spoke, with keen, ironic air:

XX.
“You travell’d far, to see the Lord of Day
Thus to the left pursue his wond’rous way.”

St. xx. l. 1.] The Poet proceeded westward, with the Mountain
on the right, consequently the Sun (in the North) appeared on the
left.

His
His speech laconic, and his lither look,
Provok'd my smile. "To meet you here," I cry'd,
"Affords me joy; but why thus unemploy'd?
How can Belacqua lurk beneath this rock?"

XXI.
"Why should I mount?" the languid Shade return'd,
When from yon' entrance of the cliff I'm spurn'd,
By the stern Marshal, who attends the gate:
The Sun as oft must run its annual round,
As erft I liv'd in Folly's fetters bound,
Ere to the welcome scourge I pass the Strait.

XXII.
"If interceding pray'rs avail me nought,
Sent from a foul, with heav'ly fervour fraught,
So long I here must watch the wheel of Time:
But vain and useless are the vows that rise;
(Tho' sent incessant to th' offended Skies,
From hearts polluted by the taint of crime)."

St. xxi. l. 3.] The confinement of the Negligent in the vestibule
of Purgatory, for a space proportioned to that which they had
abused, by delaying their penitence, i.e. since they had heard the
call of grace; points out the growing difficulties of the task, and
the danger of delay: as habits are daily acquiring strength, the in-
fluence of things present over things future, hourly extending, and
even the hope of future penitence contributing to continue the peri-
cious fallacy. That the Poet means here the probations of this
life, may be presumed, from what occurs in the Ninth Canto, where
those who look back, as they pass the gate, are mentioned as liable to
instant exclusion.
But now, the Poet brook'd no more delay:
"Come on," he cry'd; "behold the car of Day,
Marks the meridian line, with burning wheel:
While dim Night, moving from her eastern pale,
With moony diadem, and cloudy veil,
On Mauritania plants her shadowy heel."

END OF THE FOURTH CANTO.
CANTO THE FIFTH.

ARGUMENT.
The Travellers, in their Progress among the Tribes of the Negligent, meet with the Spirits of those who had been surprized by violent Death, before their Repentance was completed. Some of their Names, and Stories, are mentioned.

Now, onward, parting from this Shade, I pass'd
After the Bard, with renovated haste;
When near, a startling Voice was heard to cry:
"See, how that Spectre intercepts the light!
From him no shadow falls from left to right:
In earthly shape he seems the Pass to try."

II.
I turn'd me at the sound, and saw, amaz'd,
Where on the dark'ned wall more Spectres gaz'd:
"Why do you march so slow," exclaim'd my Guide;
"Can murmurs move you? Let them whisper on,
And bid your Reason firmly keep its throne,
And o'er the fortress of the Mind preside."
III.

"He, that permits his Fancy thus to stray,
With ev'ry lure, will rarely find his way
To that great end, to which his soul is bent:
For gath'ring fancies warp the steady light
Of Reason's beam, and leave her whelm'd in night,
For ever baffled of her first intent."

IV.

"Instant, I follow;" was my sole return,
With Shame's warm tint my cheek began to burn;
Claiming forgiveness, with a silent plea:
When, from the Coast averse, a plaintive strain
Was heard, harmonious, from a viewless train;
Who sung, "In Mercy, Heaven! remember me."

St. iii. l. 1. He, that permits—] "Reason, here personified by Virgil, shews the danger of loitering among the Negligent," say the Commentators. But the particular danger guarded against here, seems to be a desire of attracting particular notice in the beginning of Reformation; and a too minute and pragmatical attention to the moral state of others, instead of employing all our diligence upon our own concerns: both particularly noticed by our Saviour in his Sermon on the Mount, and censured on several occasions in the conduct of the Pharisees.

St. iv. l. 6.] Another presumption occurs here, that the probation of this life is only meant by the Poet. The Psalm, which these Spirits are described as singing, is the 51st, or first Penitential Psalm, where the Sinner prays for the mercy of God, by offering several pleas. His own misery, and the Divine compassion, which delights to relieve that misery; the sense of guilt, which can only be removed by the great propitiatory sacrifice, and the stain that it leaves, which only can be cleansed by the operation of the Holy Spirit. He does not palliate his fault,
V.
But when they saw my Shadow paint the ground,
They chang'd their Psalm to a discordant sound;
And two fleet Couriers, issuing from the van,
With eager looks approach'd the Mantuan Guide:
"O clear this doubt!" afar the Spectres cry'd;
"Is this a Phantom, or an earthly Man?"

VI.
The Bard reply'd, "Return from whence ye came;
Tell them, this soul inspires a mortal frame;
Whose walking Shadow caus'd their panic fear:
Let this suffice them, (if my words they trust,)
And welcome to your shores this breathing bust;
His Muse may much avail you, hence or here."

fault, (which is his second plea,) but acknowledges it in all its enormity, with the aggravation of Ingratitude to a good and gracious Father; and because God alone knows the sins of men, and he alone can dry up the source of corruption, which he laments as their cause, but does not plead as their excuse, his correction makes him perceive, in the most impressive manner, that God, not contented with superficial goodness, requires truth in the inward parts; and prays fervently for purification by the Holy Ghost, through the great propitiatory sacrifice. All this implies a state of improvement, yet in progression, and liable to lapse; otherwise this solemn Hymn, consisting of such earnest Petitions, would be inconsistent with the state of those who were certified of their final allotment. It is to be observed too, that they sing the Psalm throughout, a vera, a vera; though only the first line be given in the original: these, it is true, are described as having fallen in battle; but I am inclined to think, that the warfare meant here, is only
VII.
In Autumn's windy close, a shooting Star,
Glancing across pale Ev'n'ing's umbr'ed car,
Or the short glimpses of a Summer's Sun,
When 'gainst the driving rack he seems to ride,
Are dull and tardy to the living tide,
That round in gloomy bands were seen to run.

VIII.
Besieg'd we stood, by many a wond'ring soul;
Too eager far, they seem'd to bear control:
"Repres your fears," the gentle Poet said;
"They're suppliants all, nor mean you any harm:
Listen to what they say, without alarm;
Nor let your arduous journey be delay'd."

IX.
"O thou! that bear'st thy high-distingu'ish'd clay
(A guest stupendous) to the realms of day,
A moment check thy haste," they cry'd aloud:
"Mortal! contemplate those wan files, and try,
If any known resemblance meet thine eye,
Oh! stay, and gratify a suppliant crowd!

X.
"Behold those wounds! we all in battle fell;
In Sin we liv'd, and seem'd the heirs of Hell;

only spiritual, and that their case was like David's, who, by an heavy judgment, was recalled to a sense of his guilt, and the necessity of repentance. See Horne and Mudge on the 51st Psalm.
The Spirit who is introduced here, is Jacopo de Cassera, a Nobleman of Fano, who was assassinated by order of Azzo the Third, Duke of Ferrara, for having given his character too taunt.—Landino Vellutello, &c.
[ 97 ]

But Mercy found us in the latest hour:
At once Repentance all its task perform'd,
High Heav'n, with loud invading pray'rs, we storm'd,
And soon the Source of Love became our dower."

XI.
"I trace your looks," I cry'd, "with studious eye;
Yet no analogy I there can spy,
That speaks you known to me in former times;
And yet a noble semblance all display:
Explain your wish! I'll help you as I may;
So may I rest at length in heav'nly climes."

XII.
"No solemn oath we claim! your words suffice;"
A Shade return'd, "if Heav'n the power supplies:
Lift then to me, if e'er you tread the waste,
That, 'twixt Romagna and th' Apulian coast,
Extended lies; bid them who mourn me loft,
Pray for my passage to the Realms of Rest.

XIII.
"From Fano's distant land I drew my blood,
But met my fate, by Po's refounding flood;
And pour'd, thro' many a wound, my life away:
I thought to 'scape, and to the marshes fled;
The cruel hunt Ferrara's ruffians led,
And made my death a slignt offence repay.

XIV.
"Had Mira hid me in her friendly shade,
When tow'rd Oriaco by Fate convey'd,
The tide of life had still supply'd my veins:
I sought the fens, nor there a refuge found,
Entangl'd in the reeds, they hemm'd me round,
And life's warm current dy'd those fatal plains."

XV.
Another Ghost began: "If strong desire
Of Heav'n, has led you up yon' rocky spire,
O let your piety remember me!
I boast the blood of Montefeltro's line,
My spouse, my kindred, (ah! no longer mine,)
For me refuse to bend the suppliant knee.

XVI.
"For this, and my neglect, I wander still,
With down-cast eyes around this steepy Hill."
"What chance," I cry'd, "from Campaldino bore
Your corse, amid the slaughter sought in vain;
Fame told your fall on that enfanguin'd plain;
In vain your kindred search'd it o'er and o'er."

St. xvi. l. 4. Your corse—Buoncante di Montefeltro
was killed in battle against the Guelfs at Casentino. His
body not being found on the field of battle, and a great tem-
pest arising immediately after, gave occasion to the following fic-
tion. The treatment of his body by the Demon may denote, ac-
cording to the allegorical hypothesis, the stigmatic marks often
left upon the bodies of sinners, for a warning to others, even when
their minds are reformed.—See Villani, lib. vii. cap. 130.

St. Augustine's opinion of the power of Demons over natural
bodies, is thus expressed: "Omnis mutatio corporalium rerum qua
fieri potest per aliquem virtutem naturalen per Demonem fieri potest."
XVII.

"From Appenine," he said, "a stream descends,
By Camaldoli's walls its current bends,
Till in proud Arno's wave its name is lost:
There, o'er the bloody soil by terror chas'd,
I bore a shaft, that thro' my neck had pass'd,
And, 'rest of sight and speech, my limbs repos'd.

XVIII.

"In Mary's name, I breath'd my latest pray'r;
Releas'd, my soaring Spirit wing'd the air;
Aloft, an heav'nly Pursuivant was seen,
Commision'd from the sky: but soon below,
A swarthy Claimant, from the world of woe,
Rose, with funereal yell, and rush'd between."

XIX.

"How dare you seize my right?" aloud he cry'd;
"Is it because a tear was seen to glide
Down his wan cheek, before he breath'd his last?
Muft that an endless fount of bliss supply?—
Yet not in peace the Caitiff's corse shall lie,
If yet I rule the rude aérial blast.

XX.

"Those vapours that usurp the ambient skies,
Till to the frigid element they rise;
That checks their pride, and sends their liquid stores
In rainy deluges; the Demon caught,
And in long range his gloomy squadrons brought,
To pour their stormy rage on Arno's shore.

H 2
XXI.
"From Appenine the cloudy veil he drew,
Till Pratomagro's plains were lost to view;
While sullen Eve was seen, with dusky hand,
To add the texture of her Stygian loom;
The sky put on a formidable gloom,
And ruffling winds obey'd his stern command.

XXII.
"Down came the floods, with aggravated roar,
Each swimming fosse was fill'd from shore to shore,
And eager all to join th' imperial flood:
Proud, and majestic, like himself, they shew;
And, sweeping down the floated vallies, go,
Neither by dyke, nor shelving mound, withstood.

XXIII.
"Proud Archiano, rising in his wrath,
Bore my pale body from the field of Death;
Loosing the sacred knot my arms had made
Across my breast; there, long at random toss'd,
Now on the bank, and now in Arno loft;
Till on my limbs a mount of sand he laid."

XXIV.
Another Voice, in gentler tones, began:
"When you revisit earth, distinguish'd Man,

St. xxiii. l. 1. Proud Archiano—] Archiano, a river that runs into the Arno, near Casentino.

Remember
Remember me. Siena gave me birth.
Pia, my name. Maremma saw my doom.
My husband mark'd me for th' untimely tomb,
   Far from my kindred stem, and native earth."

St. xxiv. l. 4. Pia—] Pia, the wife of Signore Nello de la Pietra, of Siena, who, being jealous of his spouse, had her assassinated at Maremma.—Landino Vellutello, Volpi, &c.

END OF THE FIFTH CANTO.
CANTO THE SIXTH.

ARGUMENT.
Continuing still their Journey through the Region of the Negligent, they meet with the Spirit of Sordello, a Mantuan, who condoles with Virgil, on the Corruption of Manners in their native Country.

WHEN conquer'd in the long-revolving game,
The mournful Loser sits absorb'd in shame,
And slyly ponders on each doubtful cast:
The Victor, 'midst the crowd, triumphant goes,
Congratulating friends his passage close,
And high he seems, on Fortune's summit plac'd.

II.
To each in turn, a list'ning ear he lends,
And each in turn, a ready hand extends,
To share his spoils, and with the gift retires:
So I, beset by this unbody'd crowd,
To each in turn, some future service vow'd,
And won my passage thro' the shadowy choirs.

H.
There the sad Ghost of Benincasa stood,  
Whom Ghino's deadly hand baptiz'd in blood;

St. iii. I. — Ghost of Benincasa] Benincasa of Arezzo, a Magistrate of Siena, he having, in the course of his office, taken prisoner, and put to death, the Brother of Ghino de Tacco, a noted robber, in his way to Rome was intercepted and murdered by Ghino and his Gang. A remarkable Story is told of this Freebooter, in the Decamerone of Boccacio (Geor. x. Nov. 2.).

Having been driven from his country, he long infested the roads between Radicofani and Rome. An Abbot of Cligni, then resident at Rome, who had been long afflicted with a malady in his stomach, resolved to try the Waters of Radicofani, for his recovery. He accordingly repaired thither with a large retinue; but on the way he fell into an ambuscade prepared for him by Ghino, who had him and his train conducted into a strong Castle which he possessed, where he made his appearance to the Abbot, and, with great seeming humility, enquired the reason of his Journey. The Abbot was long silent; but when his indignation had a little subsided, he condescended to tell him, that the state of his health had occasioned this excursion. The robber took his leave, and gave orders that he should be confined in a room in which a large fire was lighted. There he was kept fasting for four and twenty hours, at the end of which he was very sparingly regaled with some dry toast and wine. This regimen was repeated once or twice, till the appetite of the Patient was so completely recovered, that he devoured some dry honeycomb, which he found in his room. Ghino then appeared to him, and apologized for his meagre fare; but assured him that he had proceeded in his cure entirely by medical rules which he had studied in his youth. He accounted for his way of life, by the perfecution of his enemies; invited the Abbot to a splendid entertainment; and, in fine, restored his retinue, his horses, and every thing of which he had deprived him. The Abbot was so grateful for his double deliverance, that he, on his return,
And he, whom erst his madding courser bore,
And plung'd in Arno, while he chac'd his foes:
Here, with lopp'd arms, Novella wail'd his woes,
With Farinata, fam'd on Pisa's shore.

return, obtained not only his pardon from the Pope, but the grant
of a large and well-endowed Priory, where this Ruffian ended his
days in peace and affluence. This Pope was the famous Boniface
the eighth.

St. iii. l. 3. And he—] Cione de Tarlati, in an en-
gagement with a tribe of the Bostoli, pursuing his enemies too
far, his horse took fright, and plunged with him into the Arno.

St. iii. l. 5.—Novella] Killed in battle with the Bostoli.

St. iii. l. 6.—Farinata] Farinata de Pisa, also slain by
one of the Bostoli. His father, Marzucco, was a Nobleman
of Pisa. A singular Story is told, of his entrance into one of the
Religious Orders. On his journey through a solitary place, he was
met by a Snake of an enormous size, by which he was so terrified,
that he made a vow on the spot, that, if he should escape, he
would renounce the world, and enter into a Monastery. His prayer
was heard, and the vow was punctually fulfilled. He became a
Friar Minor, and lived a most exemplary life. On hearing of
the death of his son, he bore it not only like a Philosopher, but like
a Christian. Not content, however, with passive fortitude, he took
an active part in reconciling his Family with that of the Bostoli,
by one of whom his Son had been killed. He prevailed upon the
two Families to consent to a public meeting, to which he repaired;
and after a pathetic harangue upon the evils of Discord, he so-
lemnly approached the Assasin of his Son, and kissed his hand be-
fore the whole Assembly. This had the desired effect; and there
was an end put to a bloody and inveterate feud, by a strange con-
currence of circumstances.

The Serpent who, by a fate very unusual in his species, had been
instrumental in propagating peace and harmony, did not (they say)
profit by the example; but, following his old course of depreda-
tion,
IV.
Thro' him, his Father's fame will still survive,
Lesson'd by Christian patience, to forgive
The bloody hand that laid his offspring low:
Pale Orso, with Another, stood behind,
Whose vital thread calumnious art untwin'd;
A slighted Queen procur'd his overthrow.

V.
But, penitent at last, she told her crime,
Elfe Heav'n had doom'd her to a lower clime,
In the black bands of perfidy enroll'd:
All these I pass'd; and all, with suppliant air,
Befought, with tears, an interceding pray'r,
To speed their passage to Emmanuell's fold.

tion, fell at last in unequal combat, and by ignoble foes. His chief
hostilities had been directed against the hog-flies, and the flesh of
young pigs was his favourite regale. The Peasants being much
annoyed by this formidable Plunderer, and not venturing to assail
him in person, contrived (as it is said) to collect the Mothers of the
Vilains around his principal haunt, with some of their young. The
Serpent, who, like Camilla in Virgil,

Praeda, et spoliorum ardebat amore,
was allured from his hiding-place, and too inconsiderately attacked
the troop, who affailed him in front and rear, and soon dispatched
him.—Landino Vellutello.

St. iv. l. 4. Pale Orso—] Orso, son to Count Napoleon

di Cervaia, killed by his Uncle; the cause unknown.

—with Another] Pier de Broccia, or de Brus, fa
vourite of Philip le Bel, King of France. The Nobles, it is
said, being jealous of his power with the King, incited the Queen
against him, who accused him of an attempt upon her chastity.
VI.
Perplex'd with doubts, I thus the Bard address'd:
"A diff'rent tenet erft your Muse profess'd; [cree:
That pray'r's were render'd vain, by Heav'n's de-
Yet those incessant pray to change their doom;
Can they prevail? Or, does the closing tomb
For ever interdict their fervent plea?"

VII.
"Have I misunderstood your ancient strain?"
The Mantuan quick reply'd: "My text is plain;
Yet on a solid base their hopes rely:
Eternal Justice still demands its due,
Tho' melting Mercy o'er the suppliant crew
Spreads her soft plumage, and unlocks the sky.

VIII.
"Love's intercession wipes the guilt away;
He brought a beam of everlasting day,
Long ere the promis'd dawn, to gild their gloom:
Those pray'r's I mention'd in my Epic strain,
To the bright throne of Mercy rose in vain,
When Justice had announc'd the Sinner's doom.

He was condemned, and put to death, without trial; but the King
finding out his innocence too late, sentenced his accuser to the
flames, although her remorse made her disclose the fatal secret.—
Landino Vellutello.
St. vii. l. 1.] The line of Virgil he alludes to here, is this:
Define fata Deum fleeti sperare precando.
But this is said by Virgil, in regard to eternal rewards and punish-
ments. In this life, at least, our own prayers, and if not, the prayers
of others, the intercession of a Mediator may prevail for us. Our
own certainly will, if accompanied with true penitence, while we
are in a state of probation.
IX.

"But tangle not yourself in doubts profound,
In time, they shall be clear'd, on heav'nly ground;
When Heav'n's fair Delegate shall pour the day
Of wisdom on your soul. Yon' lofty cone
She visits oft, and cheers the nether zone
With smiles, reflecting Heav'n's unclouded ray."

X.

"O gentle Mantuan! haste we hence," I cry'd;
"A moment's rest my members has suply'd
With vigour new, and southward falls the Shade,
Slow verging from the steady point of noon."
"Haste!" cry'd the Poet, "we'll o'ertake the Sun;
But long exertion still must first be made.

XI.

"Before your winding journey sees an end,
Yon' lamp, that now declines, must re-ascend;
And in the vaward of the Welkin glow:
As now he seems to quit his lofty post,
And leaves your Shade in deeper umbrage loth,
Where the tall Mountain bends its solemn brow."

XII.

"But who is he," I ask'd, "whose stedfast look
Observes our progress, from that craggy nook?

St. ix. l. 2. In time—] Denotes the time taken to form good habits, and the introduction to Sordello the Mantuan, (a Poet and Biographical Compiler of the Lives of illustrious Men,) shews the necessity of having recourse to great examples, to form good habits.—Vellutello.
Perhaps he'll deign to point th' ascending path."
In stern solemnity the Spirit stood,
An inborn dignity of soul he shew'd,
Yet unextinguish'd by the hand of Death.

XIII.
Askance; and, as a couchant lion eyes
His thoughtless victim, when he means surprize;
The Shade perus'd us: when, approaching near,
The gentle Bard enquir'd the ready way:
The Ghost demurr'd, but bade us first display,
What cause had led us from the nether Sphere.

XIV.
But when the name of Mantua first he heard,
The melancholy Shade his visage clear'd;
And, to the Bard, descending from his post,
With a faint gleam of nascent joy, he came,
And cry'd, "Our native country is the same;
I was Sordello once, on Mincio's coast."

XV.
Then, ah! how close these loving souls embrac'd;
Hear it, proud Latium! by thy Sons disgrac'd;
Unguided barque! the sport of ev'ry gale!
Sink of pollution from each neigh'ring clime!
O'er which thine ancient Sceptre wav'd sublime!
Mark what I faw, and blush to hear the tale!

St. xv. l. i.] From this Milton seems to have taken the hint of those lines in the Second Book of Paradise Lost:
O shame to Men! devil with devil damn'd,
Firm concord holds. Men only disagree.
XVI.

In those soul-harrowing climes, the very name
Of Italy awoke a sudden flame
Of concord, and of love; while all around
Wild Faction scourc your plains from sea to sea;
And Civil Rage, that scorns Religion's plea,
Rings round your shores, by lasting feuds renown'd!

XVII.

Search from thy midland hills to either main,
For them that foster Peace: you search in vain!—
—Ah! what avails that pure and equal law
Justian gave, if now the lineal Throne
No more its old imperial Lord will own,
To sanctity right, and hold your foes in awe?

XVIII.

His noble code is thy eternal shame:—
Some small indulgence yet thy Sins might claim,

---

Of creatures rational, tho' under hope
Of heav'nly grace, and God proclaiming Peace;
Yet live in battle, enmity, and strife,
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars;
Waiting the earth, each other to destroy;
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enew beside,
That day and night for his destruction wait!

St. xviii. l. 4.—the lineal throne, &c.] That Dante was attached to the Imperial Faction, appears from many parts of his writings.—For the reasons, see the History prefixed to the Inferno.—See also Giannone's History of Naples, for the 12th and 13th centuries, passim; and Fuller's History of the Holy War, Books I. and II.
Hadst thou to Cæsar giv’n the reins to hold;
And own’d the laws of Heav’n, or understood.—
Oh! royal German! see how wild and rude,
Your proud Steed scourst the champain uncontrol’d!

XIX.
He has not felt the spur for many a Moon;
A little discipline would tame him soon,
When once his wanton back sustains the load:
Oh! may the curse, the negligent deserve,
Follow all those, who thus supinely swerve
From duty’s honest call, and shame their blood!

XX.
What have you suffer’d, and your Father’s Ghost,
For having left your old and sacred post,
The Paradise of Empire, thus forlorn;
O’er bleak Germania’s Hills to spread your sway,
And leave your sweet Hesperian Vales a prey
To fierce domestic rage, and hostile scorn?—

XXI.
O, careles King! behold what ruthless rage,
Montecchi’s line, and Capulet engage;

St. xviii. l. 5. Ob! royal German!—] Albert of Austria,
who succeeded his father, Rodolph, in the Empire, anno 1298.
Augellucci.

St. xxi. l. 2.—Montecchi, Capeletti.] The Montagues
and Capulets of Shakespeare, in all probability; and their
feuds might have produced some such tragical event as that men-
tioned in the Drama. If this be so, it will confirm the observation
of Warton, “that genuine events are the foundation of all our
And Philippeschi, with Monaldi's race;
These driven to exile, those in deadly fear:
Behold, what dire extremes thy friends must bear!
See! what vile deeds thy Santafier disgrace!

XXII.
Hark, to the wailings of deserted Rome!
How, day and night, she mourns her hapless doom!
"Return, my Caesar!" is her constant cry:
"Come, and behold our loyalty and love!
Or, if compassion fail thy heart to move,
Let love of Fame at least its place supply!

XXIII.
"O, thou! that gav'lt thy blood for human crimes;
If we can venture, in those hapless times,
To ask thee, why thine eyes are turn'd away?—
Why, in th' abyss of thine eternal mind,
Do these prime benefits, for us design'd,
Such strange appearance shew to man's survey?

XXIV.
"Why sees thy realm, in each enchanting vale,
Some tyrant Lord, with bloody hand, affail
The Shrine of Peace; and, with his ruffian band,
Of Roman virtue make his impious boast,
Whene'er his legions defoliate the coast,
And send his name in curses round the land?—

beft Tragedies, and produce deeper impressions in general, than fictitious scenes of woe:” yet King Lear, Clarissa, and Clementina, are illustrious exceptions. See Warton's Essay on Pope.
XXV.

Hail, happy native land! behold how bright
My Florence shines, amid this moral Night!
Sages and Heroes, hail! Valdarno's pride!
Tongue-deep in Virtue, still you chant her name;
Upon your lips resides her hallow'd flame:
That flame, which others in their bosoms hide!

XXVI.

When other daftard Souls refuse the weight
Of public Functions, and the cares of State;
Your Sons with emulative ardour haste,
The glory and the danger both to share:
Hence your fair fields escape the scourge of war,
And hence your wealth, which Time can never waste.

XXVII.

Hence, 'mongst the wife, in wisdom you excel,
(My truth, or fiction, soon th' effect will tell;)
Athens, and Lacedemon, long renown'd
For firm, well-sanction'd laws, and arts of rule,
Might draw new light from thy egregious school,
For sapient maxims fam'd, and laws profound!

St. xxvii. l. 1. Hence, 'mongst the wife, &c.] The sarcasm of Dante against his native State, may be supposed not at all alleviated by the remembrance of his Exile; but the Historians of the Times give sufficient evidence that they were well-founded. They are, however, not to be attributed to any depravation of Morals from a general cause, but to the nature of their Government, which was continually vibrating between the extremes of Aristocracy and Democracy, which occasioned a corresponding rigour and relaxation in the Penal Laws, and the Authority of the Magistrate. If the History of Athens and Rome had been as familiar to Dante
Vol. II.
XXVIII.
Thy statutes, wisely fram'd, when Cynthia's light,
With her coy crescent decks the brow of Night,
Oft, like a fairy fabric, melt away,
Before she wanes. Your Offices and Coin
You stamp, and new-create, and then resign
To blank Oblivion, ere the Moon's decay!

XXIX.
If yet your wild delirium should retire,
Then keenly would you feel the fever's fire,
That burns your blood, and bids you shift your side
For momentary ease; but still in vain
Your posture alters: 'till your plagues remain,
By ev'ry change with vigour new supply'd.

as their Names, he could better have accounted for the political and moral state of his native Country. Such whimsical Revolutions as are mentioned here, were not uncommon in ancient Republics (see Thucyd. lib. viii. Dion. Halicarn. and Livy, passim); but they did not occur with so much frequency. For a Specimen of the savage manners of the Peasants about Florence in the beginning of the 15th century, see a curious Pastoral Poem, published by Mr. Roscoe, at the end of his excellent Life of Lorenzo de Medici; of which, and some other curious poetical Pieces, characteristic of that age, we are in hopes of being favoured with a Translation by him.

END OF THE SIXTH CANTO.
CANTO THE SEVENTH.

ARGUMENT.
The Poet describes the Situation of such as had deferred their Repentance on account of their great Political Occupations, and recounts many of their Names and Characters.

THE friendly Shades their welcome oft renew'd,
With kind salute. Sordello thus pursu'd
   His first enquiry. "Tell, if free to tell,
Your name." The gentle Mantuan thus reply'd:
   "Ere this tall Hill th' ascent to Heav'n supply'd
To ransom'd Souls, in Latian bounds I fell.

II.
   "Octavian gave my dust to endless fame;
Æneas' wand'ring and his wars proclaim
   My long renown at large, yet Heav'n I lost
For want of Faith:" involv'd in deep amaze,
As on some object fix'd with dubious gaze,
   Doubtful, if seen, so look'd the wond'ring Ghost.

1 2
III.

Then, with deep veneration, bending low,
He thus began: "How blest am I, to know
Manto, the pride of Mantua's happy shore:
Hail! great Refiner of the Latin tongue!—
What high prerogatives to me belong,
To meet my country's boast in days of yore!

IV.

"But tell, nor let it grieve your soul to tell,
If you are prison'd in the bounds of Hell,
What lot of all the shadowy realms below
Is witness to your doom?" The Bard rejoin'd:
"Fate fix'd me there, but Heav'n the task assign'd,
To lead this Stranger thro' the World of Woe.

V.

"For my omissions, not my flagrant crimes,
Am I condemn'd to view the nether climes,
And the fair vision of the blest'st forego:
Too late the beams of knowledge struck my soul,
Already sentenc'd to th' Eternal Goal,
And ne'er allow'd Redemption's bliss to know.

VI.

"Tho' darkness broods o'er all the nether Zone,
A place there is below, to pain unknown:
There no laments are heard, but frequent sighs
Around, like whispering winds incessant fleet:
There, with the guiltless throng, I find my seat,
Who died before a Saviour left the skies.

St. v. l. 1. For my omissions—] The Punishment (if it may be called so) of the virtuous Pagans, according to Dante, consisted in their being deprived of the Beatific Vision.
VII.

"With such as trust alone to Pagan worth,
In whom the Gospel graces ne'er had birth;
By Heav'n's award I range the World beneath;—
But tell us, if you know, th' ascending Strait,
That leads, where Heav'n's new Candidates await
The pangs, that save them from eternal wrath."

VIII.

He answer'd, "Leave is giv'n to range around,
Thro' all the wide probationary ground;
And gladly will I shew the winding way:
But yonder (see!) the Orb of Light declines!
No toils to Night's lone hours, kind Heav'n assigns:
Here you may rest, and wait the coming Day.

IX.

"A Choir of social Spirits watch at hand;
If you consent, we'll join the sacred Band:—
—Their names, their fates, and characters, to know,
Will this long darksome interval employ,
With grateful change, till o'er yon' eastern sky
Aurora's amber wheels are seen to glow."

St. viii. I. 5. No toils to Night's lone hours, &c.—] The too fervent desire of a rapid Spiritual Progress (often incited by a hidden vanity, and the hope of some peculiar influx of the Holy Spirit, not unusual in certain Religionists of a sanguine complexion,) has often, when denied, been the occasion of much dangerous Despondency; and, when supposed to be granted, of no less dangerous Enthusiasm. Our Saviour gives a much easier and safer Criterion of our Spiritual State, viz. Doing unto others, as we would they should do unto us. If this be attained, we need not be anxious about other more dubious symptoms of Regeneration.
X.
"But, what impedes?" return'd the Mantuan Ghost;
"Does heav'n's dread interdict, when light is lost,
   Forbid to climb? or, is it want of might?"
The Spirit in the dust describ'd a line:
"Even this would check you after Day's decline,
   Both impotent of limb, and short of sight.

XI.
"You yet may stray around the lofty brim,
Alike in deepest gloom, or twilight dim;
   But not a foot advance the Hill to scale."
"Then, since our progress is awhile deny'd,
Let us obey the Night," the Bard reply'd;
"And rest our limbs beneath the rocky pale."

XII.
By the last glimm'ring of retiring Day
Far seen, the Mountain seem'd to slope away,
   Where a deep-bottom'd Vale its sides conceal'd:
"Down thither lies our way," the Spectre said;
"Where yon' deep glen is hid in double shade,
   Till phosphor lifts his lamp, in heav'n reveal'd.

XIII.
A path between the Hill and Valley ran,
By the majestic verge, that here began

St. x. l. 2. —when light is lost] "The light without which they
   could not find their way, is (according to Vellutello) the light
of Divine Grace, without which we can do nothing;" and which,
we may add, is sometimes, in our state of probation, withdrawn, not
that we may work without it, but that we may feel the want of it,
and make better use of it when it returns.
With soft declivity to round away:
But, oh! what mingled charms assail'd our sight,
Thro' the thin curtain of approaching Night,
Matchless among the splendid births of Day!

XIV.
The funny glare of gold, the softer gleam
Of silver; purple mix'd with scarlet's beam,
And the rich emerald's deep internal green;
All fade before those amaranthine flowers,
Which here emparadis'd those blissful bowers,
That gaily smil'd these solemn Hills between.

XV.
Nor did the scene alone delight the view,
But wafted on the breeze, that gently blew;
Greeting our sense, a flagrant odour came,
A nameless essence of abstractive joy;
While, like sweet incense in an ev'n ing sky,
Soft Vesper songs the Virgin's praise proclaim.

XVI.
There many a gentle Ghost, on flowers reclin'd,
In full aëreal melody combin'd,
Beneath the long shade of the Hills, unseen:
"Come on," the Mantuan said, "ere Light retires,
Your eyes may yet survey these happy Choirs,
Rang'd in long prospect o'er the shadowy green.

St. xv. l. 6. —Vespers] The Ave-Maria.
XVII.

"From this declivity, you mark the show
With clearer ken, than in the Vale below:—
—Observe that Shade that first salutes the eye,
Plac’d on an eminence; he looks beneath,
Too negligent to lend his tuneful breath,
To swell the solemn Hymn that mounts the sky,

XVIII.

"This was Rodolpho, who refus’d his aid
To cure the wounds of many a ruthless blade,
By Latium felt, which caus’d her long decay:
Tho’ many a leach in vain his skill employs,
Yon’ Shade beside him, with consoling voice,
Strives his imperial forrows to allay,

XIX.

"Where Moldaw’s mingling wave in Elbe is lost,
And seeks with her the distant Baltic Coast,
He rul’d the realm, and found a fairer fame
Than his degenerate Son, for sloth renown’d;
In Luxury’s deep Gulph ignobly drown’d,
The blot and scandal of his Father’s name.

XX.

"See that majestic Form, that stands behind,
With one, whose mien bespeaks a gentler mind:

St. xviii. l. 1. This was Rodolpho—] The Emperor Rodolph, Father to Albert, mentioned in the last Canto. See Hist. Flor.
St. xviii. l. 5. —Yon’ Shade beside him,] Ottachero, Father to the Emperor Wenceslaus.
The first beheld his lilies droop forlorn;
By Aragon despoil’d, and breath’d his last
In Perpignan, from Catalonia chac’d,
Yet both their kindred’s crimes more deeply mourn.

XXI.

"A vile degenerate Son, they both deplore,
The royal Scourge of Gallia’s wasted shore;
Wafted from climes remote, his countless crimes,
Successive darken on each Parent’s soul:
For this their pious tears incessant roll
O’er the sad prospect of succeeding times.

XXII.

"See! where yon’ royal Father beats his breast,
The milder Monarch, by his woes oppress’d;
Reclines his wan cheek on his shadowy palm:
There! mark the Shade of Aragon the bold!
Proud of his port, and limbs of giant mould,
Chanting in manly tones, the choral Psalm!

St. xx. l. 4. By Aragon despoil’d—] Philip the Third, King of France, Father of Philip le Bel, in an expedition against the King of Aragon, lost his Fleet by the bravery of Doria, the Commander of the Aragonese Squadron, and his Army by Famine. He died in Perpignan. He, and Henry King of Navarre, Father-in-Law to Philip le Bel, are here introduced as lamenting his degeneracy, whom the Poet emphatically names the Scourge of France.—See Mazery, Villani, lib. vi.

St. xxii. l. 4.—Aragon the bold.] Peter, King of Aragon, the Conqueror of Sicily, as right Heir of the Suabian Family.—See Hist. Florent. Landino.
XXIII.

"Yon' eage aspec, seen amid the crowd,
Sicilia's Monarch marks, who carols loud
In unison with him, the Anthem clear:
Yon' Shade that with the Spaniard fits below,
Plac'd near his Sire, with melancholy brow,
If call'd to rule, had fill'd a nobler sphere.

XXIV.

"His elder Brother both the Sceptres fway'd,
But scarce one spark of lineal worth display'd;
For rarely from the parent stem arise
The sacred blossoms of primeval worth;
Celestial wisdom interdicts the birth,
Left we forget, that Heav'n the boon supplies.

XXV.

"Both Aragon and France this truth proclaim,
There, either Monarch blots his Father's name;
So much the parent stem excels the boughs:
Tho' fair Constantia of her Spouse may boast,
Beatrice, and sweet Margaret, to their coft,
Gave to degenerate Thrones their nuptial vows.

St. xxiii. l. 2. Sicilia's Monarch—] CHARLES the First, King
of Apulia, and Count of Provençé.—Landino.

St. xxiii. l. 4. —Yon' Shade] The fourth Son of Pedro of Aragon,
(mentioned above,) who died without attaining any Principality.—Landino.

St. xxv. l. 1. Both Aragon and France—] PHILIP LE BEL,
and Charles the Second of Sicily.

St. xxv. l. 4. —Constantia] Daughter of MANFRED, of
Apulia,
XXVI.

"See there, Plantagenet, an hallow'd Shade,
With all a Christian's ornaments array'd;
From stern Bellona's tribe sequester'd far:
There, like an Anchoret, he sits alone,
Pacific Father of a warlike Son,
To glory marshal'd by a fanguine Star!"

XXVII.

"Near, mighty Montserrat, with head declin'd,
Murmurs his anguish to the passing wind;
In Dungeon doom'd to breathe his soul away.
Yet fated in another world to hear,
What bloody ransom round his fun'ral bier,
His Alessandrian foes are forc'd to pay."

Apulia, (see Canto III. Purgatorio,) and Conforto to Pedro of Aragon. Hence his title to the Throne of Sicily.

St. xxv. l. 5. Beatrice, and sweet Margaret—] Margaret and Beatrice; the first the Wife of Frederic, King of Sicily; and the other of James, King of Aragon.—Landingo.

St. xxvi. l. 1.—Plantagenet] Henry the Third, King of England, Father to Edward the First. Un semplice uomo edì buon fede.—Villani, lib. v. 4.

St. xxvii. l. 1.—Montserrat] Giulelmo, Marquis of Montserrat, was taken and imprisoned by the People of Alessandria, and died in captivity. A cruel war ensued between his Sons and the Alessandrians.—Villani, lib. vii. 135.

END OF THE SEVENTH CANTO.
CANTO THE EIGHTH.

ARGUMENT.
The two Poets enter the Valley, which is guarded by two Angels; who, in their Nocturnal Watch, perceiving the approach of an Enemy, chace him away. In their Retreat, the Poet meets the Shade of NINO DI GALLURA, and CURRADO DI MARESPINA.

NOW Evening brought the solemn hour along,
When o'er the gliding prow, in anguish hung,
The Sailor calls to mind his last farewell:
And the lone Pilgrim, touch'd with tender woe,
Hears, o'er the long vale, chiming soft and slow,
The mournful tones of twilight's passing bell.

II.
And now the holy Anthem seem'd to rest,
In my charm'd ear the long vibration ceas'd;
When, lo! a beckoning Shadow, seen afar,
I mark'd, flow turning to the coast of Day;
With palms devoutly spread, he seem'd to say,
"Vain world, farewell! all hail, thou Morning Star!"
III.
Then in a strain, that seem'd my soul to thrill,
The Hymn of Dawn he rais'd with heav'nly skill;
Th' attentive audience swell'd the hallow'd sound:
In gen'r'al chorus, as with eyes uprais'd,
On Heav'n's eternal fires intent they gaz'd,
Circling in mystic dance, the blue profound.

IV.
Now ye, that 'tend my song, with sharpen'd sight,
Catch the quick beam of intellectual light;
Behind the mystic curtain half conceal'd!
Scarce had the Anthem ceas'd, when signs of fear
Pervaded the long files from van to rear,
Viewing, with eyes upturn'd, the heav'nly field.

V.
Soon two angelic Forms, on wings of flame,
Gliding along the dusky, like Meteors, came,
An half-extinguish'd beam of sanguine light:
In the right hand of each, was seen to burn,
And clad in emerald arms, the Sons of Morn
Parted with emerald plumes the robe of Night.

St. iv.] For some Observations on this Canto, see the Preliminary Essay to the Purgatorio, (Seft. i.) which need not be repeated here.

Another Argument of the allegorical Interpretation is suggested by Landino; who says, that by the beauteous but fading Ornaments of this Valley, is meant the "pride, pomp, and circum-
"stance," of the regal State and Imperial Employments; which must all vanish, "like the baseless Fabric of a Vision."
VI.

One overhead his radiant pinions shook,
One, on the Hill oppos'd, his station took;
The middle Vale the ghostly squadrons fill:
I saw their tresses wave a golden gleam,
But mortal eye could ill sustain the beam,
Sent in each glorious glance from Hill to Hill.

VII.

"Sent from the bowers of Bliss," Sordello cry'd:
"Those holy Guardians o'er the Vale preside,
To keep the invidious worm of Sin away,
That nightly steals along the tainted dew,
To spread pollution 'mongst the shadowy crew,
And damp their hopes of everlasting Day."

VIII.

Not knowing where the wily Snake might wind,
I tow'd the Mantuan drew, and slunk behind:
"Let us descend," the second Mantuan said,
"To hail those other Shades of old renown;
The condescension ev'ry Ghost will own,
And thanks, by many a Voice, will soon be paid."

IX.

Three scarce we pass'd, an airy Form below,
Seem'd to peruse me with a studious brow,
As if some ancient friend he met beneath:
The dusky medium of the ev'n'ing sky,
Yet gave permission to the heedful eye
To recognize them, tho' transform'd by Death.
X.
Approaching soon, we met; what glad surprise,
To find Gallura here, the learn'd, the wise;
Escap'd the terrors of the Stygian clime!
With oft repeated, kind salute, we greet:
Then He, "What led you to this dark retreat,
O'er the wide seas that lave yon' Hill sublime?"

XI.
I answer'd soon: "Not o'er the limpid wave,
But thro' the horrors of the central cave
Last night I came, encumber'd yet with clay:
Hence, thro' Probation's various pains impell'd,
I climb that summit, where to fight reveal'd,
Beams the long radiance of Eternal Day."

XII.
When this the Mantuan and Sardinian heard,
Signs of mute awe in either face appear'd,
And back the Ghosts recoil, with deep amaze:
One turn'd to Maro; one a Shade address'd,
That stood beside. "O, Malespina! haste,
And see the wonders of Eternal Grace!"

XIII.
Turning to me—"By all your hopes," he cries;
"By Him, that leads you to the op'ning skies;

St. x. l. 2.—To find Gallura] Nino di Gallura, Chief Magistrate of Sardinia, Nephew to Ugolino, Count of Pisa.
St. xii. l. 1.—The Mantuan and Sardinian.] Sordello and Nino.

Great
Great Cause of ev'ry cause, to all unknown:
When Heav'n allows to cross the mystic Main,
And visit sUBLumary Life again,
Bid my Joanna's prayers for me atone!

XIV.
"From her untainted lips orifons rife,
That find an easy passage to the Skies;
No other voice will pour the fervent plea:
Her Mother, since she flung her weeds aside,
Forgets her former love: unhappy Bride!
Her wrongs will teach her to remember me.

XV.
"Hence you may judge, what fuel feeds the flame
Of Woman's love! But, oh! injurious Dame!
My crested bird would stamp a nobler sign
Than that foul Form that Milan's ensigns wave,
Whose base viperious folds shall grace your grave,
Vile fav'rite of an heart that once was mine!"

XVI.
Thus, while he spoke, his features seem'd to shew
Displeasure, temper'd with Compassion's glow:
He turn'd away, while to the world above
I look'd, and saw the lucid orbs on high,
That seem'd around the axle of the Sky,
With solemn and delib'rate march, to move.

St. xiv. l. 4. Her Mother—] Beatrice, the Widow of
Nino, had married another Husband, whose Armorial Crest was
a Viper, whereas Gallura's had been a Cock. Some misfor-
tunes that happened to Galazzio, the second Husband, are
thought to have occasioned this Poetical Prophecy.

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XVII.

"What see'lt thou there?" enquir'd the Mantuan Guide:
"Yon' three conspicuous lamps of Light," I cry'd,
"Unmark'd before:" "Those Lights," the Bard rejoin'd,
"That circl'd Heav'n in bright quaternion round,
Have funk beneath the horizontal bound,
And to yon' nobler fires their place resign'd."

XVIII.

Just then Sordello, with a look of dread,
"Behold the Foe of Man," to Maro said;
And pointed, where we spy'd, with deep dismay,
A Serpent roll along with eyes of flame;
That peft, it seem'd, that caus'd our Mother's shame,
When Sin and Death to Eden found their way.

XIX.

Thro' rustling beds of amaranth it roll'd,
And rear'd with decent pride its crest of gold;
While still it smooth'd each undulating spire,
With the fine polish of its pliant tongue:
With gentle guise, to sooth the shadowy throng,
Soon led his speckled beauty to admire.

XX.

How the alarm was spread from Hill to Hill,
I mark'd not then; but thro' the ev'n'ning still
"Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,"
The Heav'nly Guard arose on emerald plume,
The Serpent flunk away, and fought the gloom,
And soon the Cherubs to their post repair.
XXI.

The wond’ring Shade that nigh Gallura stood,
Still kept his eye on me, in musing mood,
And spoke at length: "O may the lamp of Love
An holy unction in your bosom find,
To feed its flame, as round these Rocks you wind,
Till in the bowers of bliss you rest above!

XXII.

"Tell,—so may glorious crowns your labour pay,—
Is Valdimagra, once beneath my sway,
Calm, or by civil or by foreign arms
Disturb’d?—I boast the Malespinian name,
The latest branch; not he, of ancient fame:
Here Love, refin’d by Pain, my bosom warms."

XXIII.

"I never in those happy valleys stray’d,
Where your great ancestors the sceptre sway’d;"
Prompt, I reply’d: "But this may sooth your care;
Your nobly-earn’d renown thro’ Europe rings,
Of that the Sage harangues, the Poet sings,
And high and low the theme in common share.

St. xxii. l. 2. Is Valdimagra—] Of this district, the Family of Malespini were Marquisses. The Poet had received an hospitable welcome from Manuel Malespini, his Son, and thus repaid him in the lastling coin of Parnassus.

Valdimagra is a Valley through which the river Magra runs, and falls into the Sea near the Gulph of Spezzia.

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XXIV.
"Where your great actions never met the sight,
By fame diffus'd; their strong reflected light
Illumes the world, and warms it as it rolls:
So may I reach yon' Point that props the Skies;
As Malespina's vigour still supplies,
A noble Line of Heav'n-aspiring Souls.

XXV.
"Heav'n's Delegates, their hands disperse afar
The shower of Plenty, and the storm of War;
And steady on their track, they keep their way:
Still onward, up the long laborious Path,
Where Honour leads, contemning Toil and Death,
Nor Joy, nor Pain, can turn their steps astray."

XXVI.
Joyful, he cry'd, "Before the Solar Car
Meets, in its annual road, the fleecy Star
Seven times, wide circling yon' ethereal round,
The merits of my Line thy soul shall feel;
Stamp'd on thy mind, with more impressive seal,
If aught I spy beyond this gloomy bound."

END OF THE EIGHTH CANTO.
CANTO THE NINTH.

ARGUMENT.
Under the Imagery of a Dream, the Poet describes his Ascent to the Gate of Purgatory, and relates the Means by which he obtained Admittance.

AURORA, stealing from her Confort's arms,
Shew'd in the glimm'ring East her rising charms;
The Stars, that form'd the Scorpion's radiant train,
Gemm'd her pale brow; while Night's retiring shade,
Yet o'er the West a partial gloom display'd,
Measuring the downward Sky with tardy wane.

II.
Then ADAM's gift, my tenement of clay,
To my protracted toils at last gave way
In MORPHEUS' arms, on grassy couch reclin'd,
Amid my ghostly guard. The hour was come,
When gentle PROGNE mourns her ancient doom,
Her slaughter'd Infant, and her Spouse unkind.

St. ii. l. 5.—PROGNE] The Swallow. See Ovid. Met. lib. vi.
III.

But now, from Earth unmoor'd, the mounting Soul
Gave sorrow to the winds, and wing'd the Pole,
On things immortal, with immortal sight,
Gazing at will. Amid the ample Sky,
Methought an Eagle seem'd his wings to ply,
With golden gleam, across the fields of Light.

IV.

I seem'd to stand upon the Phrygian Plain,
Where Ganymede forsook his wond'ring train,
Wafted to Heav'n's Divan with whirlwind speed:
"Fate hovers here," I cry'd; 'tis hence alone,
The plumy Ranger of th' Olympian throne,
Bears off his favour'd prey of mortal breed.

V.

Not long he linger'd in his station high,
But, like the bolt that fires the angry Sky,
Sweeping along, he seiz'd me as I stood:
Thence, mounting, to the burning spheres we past,
Whose flames began our blended forms to waste,
And lap, with fiery tongues, our seething blood.

VI.

Starting in terror from my trance profound
I woke; such fright the young Achilles found.

St. iii. l. 5. Methought an Eagle—] By the Divine Eagle, say
the Commentators, is meant the Illumination, or Impulse, of Divine
Grace, necessary to raise us above Terrestrial Views.

Landino, Vellutello, &c.
When first he woke upon the Syrian coast:
When, from the Centaur's guard, his Mother bore
Her threaten'd Son, to that sequester'd shore,
Where soon the Greeks her expectation cross'd.

VII.
As the young Warrior woke with sudden start,
Thus fled my slumbers, while, with beating heart
And icy veins, I gaz'd, distracted round:
At length, I spy'd the faithful Mantuan near,
And now the burning Sun had climb'd the Sphere
Thrice ten degrees above the wat'ry bound.

VIII.
"Fear not," he cry'd, "the Point is gain'd at length;
Now, let your Spirit put forth all its strength,
Fir'd, and expanding to the moment's claim:
Probation's Porch is nigh.—Yon' breach behold,
That parts the mural Mound, in ruin roll'd,
Thither you mounted like ascending Flame.

IX.
"Just as the grey dawn usher'd in the Day,
When stretch'd on flow'ry couch, below you lay,
On fleet wing failing thro' the breaking gloom,
Onward, a Vilion came; with fervent plea,
It cry'd, "Resign that slumb'ring Man to me,
I'll teach his weight to mount on Eagle Plume."

X.
"We left the wond'ring Spectres far below,
And as the ruddy East began to glow

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With Orient beams, you rose upon the ray:
The Pageant up the Sky, with easy flight,
Infinitive I purfu'd, and saw you light
Where you' fall'n rampires shew the rifled way.

XI.
"She pointed to the pass, and upward soar'd;
The dream departed, and to light restor'd,
Instant you woke at this important post:"
Like one I stood, in Truth's uncertain light
And doubts involv'd, as Day contends with Night,
Till ev'ry fear in rising Hope was loft.

XII.
This change I felt; and, when I saw the Bard,
With cheerful look and angel-step prepar'd
The battlements to pass, I soon purfu'd:
Attend, ye Mortals, to the mystic lay,
The Song, ascending to the Source of Day,
Claims, from the daring Muse, a loftier mood.

XIII.
To the disparted Mound we came at last,
No ruin now it seem'd, but proudly grac'd
With a bright portal, and ascending stair:
A Guardian of the Pass was seen above,
With lips fast clos'd, that never seem'd to move;
Admittance we implor'd with rev'rent air.

XIV.
An heav'nly Minister appear'd within,
Too bright for mortal eye suffus'd with Sin
Undazzl'd to behold, a glancing blade,
Far waving in his dexter hand around,
With keen reflection seem'd my sense to wound,
By this ethereal Habitant dismay'd.

XV.

"Keep thy due distance, and declare," he cry'd;
"What heav'nly Delegate vouchsaf'd to guide
Your steps? be cautious, lest you meet with harm!"
"A Denizen of Heav'n," the Mantuan said,
"Told, where the Gate its shining valves display'd;
Soon the bright Sentry own'd the powerful sign."

XVI.

"Mount," he reply'd; "then, high distinguish'd soul!
May Saints conduct thee, to that higher goal,
Where those that pass the test, may claim the Sky:
Fear not to scale the stairs." We venture on;
The lowest step, like Parian marble shone,
And gave my Form reflected to the eye.

XVII.
The second seem'd of dark and fullen hue,
As if from Monzibel its birth it drew;
Its time-worn face was mark'd with many a scar:
Deep fissures ran along its inmost grain,
Crossing the masts in many a winding vein,
Like the deep marks of elemental war.

XVIII.
The third, a purple radiance flung around,
Like blood, fast spouting from a recent wound,

St. xvi, xvii, xviii.) This is an allegorical description of the
first step of Penitence, and the act of Confession. The first step of
The Seraph’s feet upon the sanguine floor
Appear’d: upon a throne he sate sublime,
Of chisel’d adamant, defying Time,
Full in the midst before the massy Door.

XIX.
“Your humble hands in supplication rear,”
Mars advis’d; “that, by your potent pray’r
Subdu’d, the Guardian may unlock the Gate.”
Beating my breast, my pliant knees I bent,
The favouring Spirit gave a kind consent,
But first prepar’d me for my mystic fate.

XX.
Seven deep distinguish’d marks his trenchant blade,
Upon my gore-distilling front pourtray’d;
“Enter!” he cry’d; “within the waters flow
That lave such wounds.” My trembling eyes beheld
The sober Vestment which his limbs conceal’d,
Of earthy hue, sad sign of guilt and woe!

XXI.
Then from beneath his Hermit Garb, he drew
A golden Key, and one of silver hue,

the probationary flairs means Reflection, or Self-knowledge; the second, Compunction, or Contrition; the third, Charity, or Love. The silver Key, signifies the judicial power in the Priest; and the golden, the power of Absolution.

Landino, Vellutello, Angelucci, Della Crusca.
And turn'd them both. "If one of these," he cry'd,
"In this laborious operation fail,
In vain the second wards the Gate assail,
Altho' by Man, or Angel's hand, apply'd.

XXII.
"The one appears of richer metal made,
More skill is in its fellow's frame display'd;
To these victorious wards the valves unclose:
From Peter's hands they came, a charge divine,
Who bade me ne'er to Pity's scale incline,
Unless her genuine fruit, Repentance shews."

XXIII.
With mighty impulse then, he push'd the Door;
"Enter," he said; "you see the Path before:
But, if you look behind, 'tis instant clos'd,
And entrance is deny'd." With sudden jar
The valves unclose, loud Echo sent afar
The doubling din, around the rugged Coast.

XXIV.
Such angry sounds the great Dictator heard:
So thunder'd the disparting valves, that clear'd
The hallow'd passage to his feet profane;
Where Rome her treasures shew'd, in rich display;
When daring hands the Tribune forc'd away,
Who strove his impious fury to restrain.

St. xxiv.] From Lucan:
Protinus abducat patuerunt templo Metello.
Tunc rupes Tarpeia sonat, magnoque reclusas
Testatur fridore foras.

Pharsal. lib. iii. 153.
XXV.
But these discordant strains were mingled soon
With Hallelujahs, whose harmonious tune
Mellow'd the movements of the harsher sound:
Confusion sweet! as when the Organ blows,
And choral warblings swell the solemn close,
The Poet's Art in Melody is drown'd.

End of the Ninth Canto.
PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

SCULPTURES described in the following CANTOS,

compared with the other Means of Probation, with

which they are combined.

THE following Exhibitions are a faithful representation of what is experienced by the generality of Men in Life. Our discipline consists of a combination of Precepts and Examples, addressed to the Understanding, and of Impressions upon the Senses, of various kinds. When we will not improve by the former, we are subjected to the sterner lessons of a more rigid tutor; and the medium of Pain is employed as a more powerful incentive, to restore the activity of the mental Powers, and direct them aright. For this purpose it is necessary that both the Body and the Mind should suffer, as such Impressions give the concomitant Precepts their due weight. Much has been written on the Benefits of Pain, and the Philosophical Considerations which render it tolerable; but, as far as I can find, due attention has not been paid to its physical Effects, which give direct efficacy to its moral Influence. As we are passive in receiving ideas
from external objects; as these form associations, such as happiness with riches, &c. and as habits spring from associations, the immediate effect of Pain, either bodily or mental, seems to be, that it decomposes, for a time, and deranges these pernicious combinations; particularly, when it becomes extreme: then, by divesting the Mind of its former ideas, and breaking the ligatures of habit, it leaves, as we may say, a void space in the Mind; it causes an interval of thought; it gives a liberty to the soul to recover its pristine and natural activity, which had been impaired by such associations, and to form new associations and new habits; a power which, if properly employed, leads to the highest moral Improvement. Then the Precepts of the wise, and the Examples of the good, once more have their due effect.

There are two sorts of Moralists, whose works have some analogy to the two species of Instruction exhibited here by Dante. The works of Juvenal and Swift are caustic, and give more pain to the guilty, than pleasure to the virtuous. They shew Vice in its most odious form.—The writings of Addison and Richardson exhibit virtue under its most amiable aspect, and fill the uncorrupted Mind with the warmest glow of emulation.
CANTO THE TENTH.

ARGUMENT.
The Gate of Purgatory is here described, and the Ascent to the first Stage, destined for the Purgation of Pride. Then the Subject of some Sculptures on the Face of the Rock are mentioned.

Now past the sacred valves, we found the place,
Where, purg'd from dregs terrene by heav'nly grace,
The dark affections, with sublunar flight,
No more in circles play, but upward soar:
Behind, the thunders of the closing Door
Were heard, and fill'd our inmost souls with fright.

II.
Had I then turn'd my eye, what guilt were mine!—
But onward, I pursu'd my Guide divine
Under a channel'd Rock, whose sides recede
And come, alternate, like the rolling wave. [Cave
"Observe," the Mantuan cry'd, "and thrid the
With care, where'er the doubtful windings lead."

St. ii. l. 1.] Difficulties of the first steps of amendment. The idea is taken from the Son of Sirach:

"Wisdom will first lead you through crooked ways, and bring fear and dread upon him—but, when she has tried your soul, then she will turn the right way unto you." Eccles. iv. 16.
III.

Thro' the long labyrinth, with toiling feet,
Our march we measure; while the rampires meet
And cross, at each advance, our tardy way:
Thrice ten degrees the pale nocturnal Car
Of CYNTHIA travell'd to the western bar,
    Ere the dark maze, expanding, show'd the Day.

IV.

Through the dolorous dell at last we wind,
Arriving where the rude Cliffs met behind,
    Fatigu'd, and each uncertain of his path;
The verge, on which we stood, above the Mound,
Lean'd in mid air, an horrible profound!—
    No mortal eye would dare to look beneath.

V.

And from the tall Rock's formidable van,
The platform spread, three measures of a man,
    Skirting the adamantine cliffs around,
Which shew'd their lofty pitch, superb and tall,
No human art could scale the lofty wall,
    While on the lower verge, Destruction frown'd.

VI.

But neither Granite mines, nor PARIAN stone,
Could match the beauties of that marble zone;
Nor human art, nor nature, here below,
With these high animated scenes could vie,
(Sketch'd by some winged artift of the Sky,)
Which deck'd the polish'd Cliff, a splendid show.

2
VII.

With that pacific pledge, so oft with pain
And sorrow fought around the world in vain,
   An Angel shoots across the rolling spheres,
While Heav'n above recall'd its martial guard,
And all at once, with gracious smile, unbarr'd
   Its rigid portal, shut for many years.

VIII.

His gentle aspect woke the Virgin's faith,
The Marble seem'd inspir'd with magic breath,
   Sweet on his lips the Ave seem'd to sound:
Humility and joy were seen to shine
In the meek aspect of the Maid divine;
   Her lifted eyes her deep devotion own'd.

IX.

The beauteous Form, with such consummate art
Answer'd the heavenly Type, it thrill'd my heart.
   "More scenes are yet to view," the Mantuan said,
As on my left he stood: my feet and eyes
At once I mov'd; and saw, with fresh surprize,
   New picture'd wonders on the rock display'd.

X.

Attentive, near my ghostly Guide I press'd,
And saw the tardy team, the sacred chest

Her Humility is the Example propos'd, and probably the Humiliation of her Son is also implied.
That would not bear the touch of hands profane:
The choral families, that sung before,
In seven fair squadrons walk'd the sacred floor,
And caught, from rank to rank, the hallow'd strain.

XI.
The pealing Anthem seem'd so loud and clear,
That Fancy's eye almost deceiv'd my ear;
The fumes of incense that appear'd to rise,
And in a fragrant cloud were seen to fail
Along the welkin, seem'd to scent the gale,
And fill the cheered sense with new surprisè.

XII.
The royal Psalmist led the dance and song,
Conspicuous by his joy amid the throng;
Less than a Monarch now he seem'd, yet more:
Forth from her casement look'd the haughty Queen,
Deep scorn and indignation mark'd her mien,
As her eyes mov'd the holy triumph o'er.

XIII.
Still on I pass'd, along the pictur'd wall,
Where now another Pageant seem'd to call,
From Israel's hallow'd scenes, my roving eye;
There Trajan rode, in all the pomp of war:
A wailing Widow stopp'd his trophied car,
And claim'd his mercy with a suppliant cry.

St. xii. 1. 5.—the haughty Queen] Example of the Pride of Michal, the Daughter of Saul; and her scorn of David's holy soul. 2 Sam. vi.
XIV.

Heedless of trampling hoofs, and clamours loud,
The rushing onset of the coming crowd,
The waving banner, and the golden wing
Of Rome's imperial bird, that gleam'd above,
She stood, and seem'd with melting words to move
The lift'ning Captains, and their martial King.

XV.

"Avenge me, for my Son!" she seem'd to say,
"By ruffians gor'd, he breath'd his soul away."
"Wait my return," the haughty Monarch said,
With pungent grief, that seem'd respect to wave.
She cry'd, "If you should fill th' untimely grave,
Then how shall mighty Trajan 'venge the dead?"

XVI.

Mild he reply'd, "Whoever fills my room,
Shall on the Murderer pass a righteous doom."
"Tell me," she answer'd, "do your hopes depend
On others merit, when your own you slight?"
"Be pacify'd," he said, "you claim your right!
Justice and Mercy both our haste suspend."

St. xvi. l. 1.—Whoever fills my room] On what ancient authority this is attributed to Trajan is not very clear; some authors ascribe it to Adrian. Landino records the legend of St. Gregory, who so much admired the instance of royal condescension and humility, that by his prayers he procured a release for the Emperor from the Limbus Patrum, and a translation into Paradise. Landino.

We learn from Landino, that the celebrated Giotto, the reformer of Painting in Italy, had treated these very subjects.
XVII.
That Potentate, to whose unbounded view
All things at once are present, old and new,
Thus made the animated Stone declaim,
With wond’rous organ, to the ravish’d ear,
Of things in this inferior Hemisphere,
By means unthought by Man, untold by Fame.

XVIII.
While on these Miracles of Skill I gaz’d
At the materials, and the hand, amaz’d,
Whose energy inspir’d the silent Stone,
The Mantuan cry’d, “Observe the coming Show!
—Yonder the Pageant moves, sedate and slow,
Ordain’d to guide you to a loftier Zone.”

XIX.
My eyes, to novelty attentive, still
On the deep basis of the rising Hill
Were fix’d. Now ye, that listen to the strain,
Let not the Sinner’s doom your mind dismay,
Think on their Crown, and not what price they pay,
To buy admittance to the heav’nly Train.

XX.
Time to an end the sharp infiction draws,
Hell gapes for them in vain; by milder laws
Bound here below to suffer, and to weep;
Till all sublunar things shall pass away,
And at the dawn of that decisive day
The Hierarch’s trump shall thunder thro’ the deep.
XXI.
With studious eye I watch'd the Mountain's van,
And to the gentle Roman thus began:

"Thofe are not human Forms, that move along
Like morning clouds, or dreams delude my sight:"
The Bard reply'd, "Their lamentable plight
Bend to the stony foil the sentenc'd throng.

XXII.
"Even me, the hideous Penance long deceiv'd;
Like you, I look'd, and scarce, at length believ'd;
But turn your eyes with sharpen'd sight below:
See! how they wind around that rocky base,
Each bent in different postures of disgrace,
And sunk in sad variety of woe."

St. xxii. l. 1.] The real distrefles occasioned by Pride in this
life, are aptly shadowed forth by the bearing of burdens, adapted
to the different degrees of this odious and unchristian vice. For
such fardels are, in reality, borne by every haughty man, accord-
ing to his degree of arrogance. His sensibility is increased to a
morbid degree; and in proportion to this, every cross or obstacle,
every real or imaginary affront, increaseth his pain, and his irrita-
tion.

"As Pride makes a man lift the head high," says Landino,
"it is but juft that it should be bent proportionably low; for
Aristotle observes, that to make a tree fiart which had been
bent, we muft bend it as far the contrary way."

Irritation from Pride, the proud man always feels; but when he
begins to be sensible of its inconvenience, when he feels it an in-
tolerable load, it begins to lead him to some degree of amendment;
particularly when it gives rise to such reflections, on his deserts
and his destiny, as are suggested by the Poet.
O, miserable Pride! of Blindness born!
Vile retrograde Ambition! theme of Scorn!
Can Reptiles in the dust, of dust be proud?
Boast of their meanness, falsify their end;
From their immortal hopes at once descend,
And let a dowerless Vice their prospects cloud?

As Reptiles, who their painted plumes display,
(Tho' crawling once in dust,) and wing their way
On Summer-buxom gales, and claim the Sky:
Thus were ye born, and thus you claim your flight
To the pure Precincts of celestial Light,
If on no spurious Pride your hopes rely.

In Imperfection form'd, sust'ain'd by Shame,
How can such Embryons of Creation claim
Praise for externals to vile dust ally'd?
O had you seen them how they lick'd the dust,
Press'd down, and doubled, like some bending dust
That props the festal board, or column's pride!

If ev'n those breathless Forms can touch the heart
With fancy'd pain, the fine effect of art,
How were we pain'd for ev'ry tortur'd spine,
That here with genuine pressure loaded deep,
'Pac'd with laborious march around the steep;
Mute and obsequious to the awful sign?
XXVII.
Stooping, or lowly bending down, or prone
With tardy limbs, long drawn, and many a groan,
As that o'er-weening Pest had fill'd their brain
With higher thoughts of self, they crawl'd along,
Whilst the most patient of the suffering Throng
Shew'd, by their art, they could no more sustain.

END OF THE TENTH CANTO.
CANTO THE ELEVENTH.

ARGUMENT.
This Canto begins with a general Prayer, offered up by the Victims of Pride: then, as they pass, Dante recognizes the Spirit of Oderisi Agobbio, a celebrated Painter, with whom he enters into Conversation.

"GREAT Father! whom the Universe obeys! Who, by thy boundless Love's transcendent rays, In purest light, the brightest virtue shows: Let all the orders of creation join In one deep plaudit to that Love divine, Which thro' the countless tribes of being glows.

II.
"Let thy celestial Grace, with heav'nly plume, Defend, where, plung'd in this terrestrial gloom, We ply our powers in vain, to seize the boon; And as the Powers above, that own thy sway, With joy the dictates of thy will obey, So may th' example spread beneath the Moon."
III.

"May thy unsparing hand, with daily food,
Supply our frailty; else, by Time subdu'd,
Our steps must falter in this vale of woe:
As other's faults we pass, do thou forgive!—
Let not our deep defects our souls deprive
Of thy supernal favours, bounteous flow!

IV.

"With thy protecting hand, O Saviour! shield
Our stag'ring virtue, in the dangerous field!
And keep at bay the sin-provoking Foe.
We pray not for ourselves, but those behind,
That, breathing still, their painful journey wind
Thro' the sublunar vale of crimes and woe."

V.

Thus, for themselves and us, each doleful Shade
In the deep horrors of humiliation pray'd—
Such load they bore, as when in direful dreams
Some Fiend's oppressive weight we seem to feel.
Thus round the Rock they toil, with tardy wheel,
Rising from Earth's Eclipse, thro' fierce extremities.

VI.

If their orisons thus ascend above
For us, what breast that feels paternal love
Could, for their suff'ring souls, refuse a pray'r?—
To wear the dark terrestrial gloom away,
To fledge their wings to mount the realms of Day,
And aid their passage thro' the vale of Care?—
VII.

"So may your painful task be ended soon,
And Mercy wing your flight beyond the Moon:
Spontaneous, as your thoughts, to Heav’n ascend,
As you direct me, where my feet may scale
The shortest passage from this irksome vale,
If different paths to yonder Summit tend.

VIII.

"Behold! my Comrade feels his load of clay
Retard his will, with earthy, dull delay,
And with a sleepy charm his spirits load."
Soon, in sad accents, from the ghostly ring,
The trembling Air an answer seem’d to bring;
Now know we whence the mournful Music flow’d.

IX.

"Haste! come with us along! you’ll find a path,
That, up the Mountain, from the Vale beneath,
A passage to a living man affords:
But for this weight that bends me to the earth,
Soon would I know what thing of mortal birth
Here walks along, so sparing of his words.

X.

"O, could I but one moment view the Skies;
Could I but lift aloft my straining eyes,
(Altho’ his name he deigns not to disclose,) I’d know, if e’er we met beyond the tomb,
I’d know, if Pity for my direful doom
One pray’r could gain, to soothe my countless woes."
XI.

"Fair Latium claim'd my birth, of Tuscan line;
Aldobrandesco's honours erst were mine,

(If e'er you heard that celebrated name).
My Sire's achievements, and their long renown,
So swell'd my Pride, I seem'd to live alone,

And more than mortal rights presum'd to claim.

XII.

"I held my Brethren of the Dust so low,
That whomso'er I met, I made a foe.—
The bloody sequel, let Campagna tell;
Where, for my arrogance, I paid with blood:
Nor is my Pride alone by Plagues purfu'd,

But numbers more the dire procession swell.

XIII.

"I scorn'd to lay a shoulder to the weight
Of human woes on earth. Impartial Fate,
An heavier load upon my loins beneath
Has laid; and doom'd me round the Rock to wind,
Till Heav'n, at last, pronounce my soul refin'd

From her deep scurf, amid the walks of Death."

St. xi. l. 2. Aldobrandesco—] Count of Santa Fiore in Siena. His arrogance was so unsufferable, and his selfishness and oppressions rendered him so odious, that the People of Siena rose against him in a body, and killed him. Similar instances often occurred in Ireland, some time before the late rebellion.

Aristotle justly observes, "That the contempt implied by Pride, is less readily forgiven, than even a real injury; as it implies a derogatory opinion of our understanding, and even our power to revenge; aggravated by the circumstance, that the proud man publicly shows that such is his opinion of us.—Contempt is hatred mixed with pride, and implies a design to offend without any cause but a will to give offence." Arist. Rhet. lib. i. cap. 2. sect. 4.
XIV.
I stoop’d my ear to this degraded Man,
When one, that seem’d to lead the groaning van,
Suddenly turn’d, with his enormous load;
With keen distorted look, and upward eyes:
He knew me soon, and mark’d with deep surprisè;
How bent I march’d along the peopled road.

XV.
I knew him, tho’ his lines I scarce could trace:
"O, tell!" I cry’d; "did that disfigur’d face
To Oderisi, once on earth, belong?
Let him declare, if I may trust my eyes:
Second to none beneath Etrurian skies,
His magic pencil charm’d the wond’ring Throng."

XVI.
"I thought so once," he said; "but now I know,
With richer tints my Franco’s tablets glow;
My Pupil erst, he more than shares my fame;
That truth, above, my selfish heart deny’d,
A rival in my Art, my wounded pride
Scorn’d to acknowledge, and suppress’d his claim.

XVII.
"But now my want of candour pays the fine,
A lot of deeper horror had been mine:
But to th’ atoning God, with timely haste,
I turn’d, and for assistance humbly pray’d,
While yet, my active thoughts the will obey’d,
Nor let th’ accepted moments run to waste.

St. XVI. 2.—my Franco] Franco Bolognese, a Painter,
pupil of Oderisi.
XVIII.

"The glory of a rising Art, how vain!
How soon eclips'd by the succeeding train!
O'erlook'd, unless an age of mental Night
Succeeds the splendours of the new-born Day,
Whose darkness gives the faint and dubious ray,
By her contrasted shades, the name of Light!

XIX.

"Thus Cimabue's glories find a wane,
And now Ghiootto shines without a stain,
While Cavalcante's hands the crown resign,
To deck another Guido's brow with bays:
A few revolving Moons, perhaps, may raise
A third, ascendant, as their Stars decline.

XX.

"The breath of Fame is but a fickle gale,
Whose veering blasts from every point prevail,
And every change bestows a different name:
Ah! where's your 'vantage, if you cast away,
In years, the muddy vesture of decay,
As when the fswathe involves your tender frame?

St. xix. l. i.—Thus Cimabue, A famous Florentine Painter,
taught by some Greek Exiles; the Tutor of Ghiootto, who far excelled him, being the first that forsook the stiff manner of the Greeks.—Gray's Chronological Tables, published by Mason.

Ghiootto was bred a Shepherd. His genius was found out by Cimabue, by seeing a Sketch he had made of a Flock of Sheep. From Vasari, in Mem. of the House of Medici, translated by Sir Richard Clayton.
"Can you suppose her long, sonorous blast, 
Thro' twice six thousand changing Moons, will last?
Yet, what is that to Heav'n's eternal year?
Lest, than the quick glance of human eye,
To that slow movement of the ample Sky,
That turns around the universal Sphere!

"Fame sung aloud of yonder hapless Man,
Slow moving with his burden in the van:
Now scarce Siena hears his whisper'd name,
Yet there he rul'd with undisputed sway,
When Florence bled in Montaperti's day;
Then, strown with Pride; but now, suffus'd with Shame.

St. xxii. l. 1. Fame sung aloud—] Provenzan Salvani, Prior of Florence, at the time of their misfortune at Montaperti, He exercised great tyranny over the Sienese, then allies of the Florentines; and, having delayed his Penitence too long, the Poet says, would have been condemned longer to the Anti-Purgatorio, but for an act of extreme humility and benevolence; by which he procured a ransom for his Friend, who had been taken Prisoner at the Battle of St. Valentine, by Charles of Anjou. The victor refused to release him, without an immoderate ransom—to levy which, he allotted only a certain short period; the forfeit was to be his Prisoner's life. Salvani repaired to the Market-place of Siena, and caused a carpet to be spread in the street, to receive the contributions of the citizens; for which he supplicated with all the humility of a mendicant, and succeeded beyond his expectation; a circumstance, at least, equally honourable to the people of Siena.

Dante takes care to mention his own cure of the mortal sin of Pride; else, according to the laws of Lufration, he must have remained there till it was purged away by Pain.
XXIII.

"What's Fame?—the tender bud, that springs in May,
Nurs'd by the beam that hastens its decay;
To sickly yellow chang'd, from vernal green!"
"O!" I reply'd; "I feel thy words expel
That Pride, that us'd my haughty heart to swell;
And Meekness spreads her sunshine o'er the scene.

XXIV.

"But tell his Title, tho' his Fame be loft."
"Salvagni,"—he return'd; "his Pride impos'd
On doom'd Siena's Tribes, an heavier load,
Than e'er of old that free-born people bore;
But now, his haughty Spirit, o'er and o'er,
The purchase pays below, in tears and blood.

XXV.

"But if the Moon as many circles fills,
As Sinners pass, ere Penitence distills
On their laps'd hearts the renovating tear;
(If to Life's latest ebb their grief delays,)
Ere they're allow'd these hallow'd bounds to trace;
What mighty Privilege has fix'd him here?

XXVI.

"Ev'n then, when Glory crown'd his haughty brow,"
He said, "his human feelings brought him low,
A ransom for his suffering Friend to pay;
An humble Suppliant to the abject Crowd,
Before his Slaves he trembled, and he bow'd,
From the fall'n Man to ward the fatal Day.
XXVII.

"A sterner Tutor soon shall make thee know
The sad complexion of a supplicant's woe,
When Florence shall dismiss thee from her Coast,
And send thee far in distant Climes to roam."—
Thus one benignant deed revers'd his doom,
And gave a passage to Lustration's post.

END OF THE ELEVENTH CANTO.
CANTO THE TWELFTH.

ARGUMENT.
The Poets proceed, and find many more Examples of Pride sculptured upon the Rock; which are described at length. They depart at last, and are directed to the second Stage.

LIKE patient Steers together thus we go,
While groaning underneath a weight of woe,
The Artist, thus pursu’d his mournful theme,
While Maro’s haste allow’d; at last he cry’d,
“Desist; for fail and oar must now be ply’d
To stem the current of no gentle stream.”

II.
Rising, I stood erect; but sunk and still
Each high presumptuous thought, that us’d to fill
My soul with tumult, and my heart with Pride,
In calm stagnation slept, by Wisdom laid;
Humbly I follow’d the conducting Shade,
And circled with quick step the Mountain’s side.

III.
When thus began the Mantuan: “Bend your eye
Downward, and mark what scenes beneath you lie.”

M 2 I look’d,
I look'd, and saw, where'er my footsteps pass'd,
Mosaic Images adorn the floor,
Superior far to those that keep secure
High names of old from Time's continual waste.

IV.
If lofty scenes of sublunary skill
The melting heart with Sympathy can fill,
Or bid the fires of Emulation glow
In earthly bosoms, what celestial fire
Must these ennobling Images inspire,
Rang'd on the Zone of adamant below?—

V.
There, I beheld the heav'nly rebel hurl'd,
Like flaming thunder-bolt, from world to world;

St. iii. l. 4. Mosaic images—] I have taken the liberty of altering
the Bas-reliefs of this stage to Mosaic; for though the word intagliato
be certainly used, the descriptions are more consonant to the latter
than the former, for instance, in these lines:
Qual di pennel fu Maestro, e di filè
Che ritraeffe l'ombre, e tratte; ch'ivi
Mirar faceva un' neggno fastile?  

Mosaic was certainly known in Italy before the time of Dante;
as some ancient monuments of it, executed as early as the twelfth
century, are mentioned in several publications; particularly some
at Pisa, from which the Moderns copied. See Encyclop. Britann. under the word Mosaic, From the description given
there of the manner of its execution, it appears that the term in-
tagliato is not misapplied.

St. v. l. 1. ] This image Milton seems to have borrowed:

——Him the Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong, flaming from th' ethereal height,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition,

Briareus.
Briareus there, in iron slumbers lay,
Pierc’d by celestial fires. Apollo nigh,
And Mars, and Pallas, in their Father’s eye;
Dismember their huge Foes in mortal fray.

VI.
Beneath the umbrage of his lofty Tower,
Nimrod, with indignation, seem’d to lour
On his long labours, and his baffled host:
O Niobe! what anguish fill’d my breast,
When I beheld thee fit, with grief opprest,
O’er thy dead children, once thy pride and boast!—

VII.
High-minded Saul!—Alas! how pale and wan
You seem’d to lie on Gilboa’s lonely van,
(Unvisited by rain, or kindly dew,
E’er since, as Rumour says,) Arachne nigh;
Half-woman, half a spider, seem’d to ply
His flimsy task, and Pallas’ rage to rue.

VIII.
Roboam there, above the flying wheel
That bore him from destruction, seem’d to feel

St. vi. l. 3. Briareus—] See Claudian Gigantomachia,
and Statius Theb. v. 593.
St. vi. l. 2. Nimrod—] Genesis, xi.

l. 4. Niobe—] See in Ovid. lib. vi. her defiance and
contempt of Apollo and Diana; and their destruction of her
fourteen children.
St. vii. l. 1. Saul—] 1 Samuel, xxx. xxxi. and 2 Samuel, i.
Elegy on Saul and Jonathan.
St. vii. l. 4. Arachne—] Her contest with Minerva is de-
scribed, Ovid. Met. lib. vi. and punishment.
St. viii. l. 1. Roboam—] Rehoboam, or Roboam, (as he is
called, Mat. i.) See 1 Kings, xiv.
His haughty Spirit sink, and, pale with dread,
The tempest of Sedition left behind:
Near, to ALCMAEON’s bloody hand resign’d,
His Mother for the fatal Necklace paid.

IX.
There, struggling with his Sons, the royal Sire
We saw before his sculptur’d God expire,
And the twin Parricides, with rival rage,
Inflicting wound on wound; THOMYRIS near,
Taunting the ghastly head with jeft severe,
"Now CYRUS! now thy thirst of blood assuage!"

X.
Then fled ASSYRIA thro’ the driving dust,
Leaving behind their Gen’ral’s bleeding bust,
While glad BETHULIA urg’d their overthrow:
There lay proud TROY, a monument of wrath,
Under the shadow of viciorous Death,
Victim of Pride, and Spectacle of Woe!

St. viii. l. 5. Near to ALCMAEON—] ALCMAEON, son of AMPHIARAEUS
and ERIPHYLE. His mother had betrayed his father (who had fore-
seen his destruction if he went to the siege of THEBES), for a pre-
sent of a Necklace. He fell there, and his son ALCMAEON revenged
his fate, by putting his mother to death. See Ovid. Met. lib. ix.

DANTE, like most of the writers of his time, is fond of collect-
ing examples, without much care in the seleétion, from the Sacred
Records, and Profane or Mythological History, as they happen to
occur to his memory; if he had confined himself to Scripture and
authentic Profane History, it might be said in his defence, that his
subject required Examples of both kinds, as Reason and Revelation
mutually support each other; and not only Precepts, but Examples,
drawn from either, may be successfully employed in a popular
work. St. PAUL seems to have availed himself of this mode of ad-
dress, in more instances than one.

St. ix. l. 1.—the royal Sire] Sennacherib. 2 Kings, xix.

St. x. l. 1. Then fled Assyria—] Death of HOLOFERNES.
Judith, c. iv. &c.
XI.

What high conception form'd the great design,
The deep perspective, and the groupes divine,
   Deck'd in the magic pomp of Light and Shade?
Instinct, with sacred fire, the living caught
Life's holy flame, and energy of thought,
   And Fate's GORGONIAN rigour froze the Dead.

XII.

Ev'n they, who saw these scenes of living strife,
Scarce view'd more genuine marks of Death and Life,
   Than from these magic mirrors met my sight,
In dread reflexion from the pictur'd floor,
As my transported Fancy wander'd o'er
   The figur'd Zone, and girt the Mountain's height.

XIII.

Now look aloft, ye haughty Sons of Eve!
And airy textures of Presumption weave,
   Where'er your glances roam around the Sky;
But never cast your humble eyes below,
Nor dwell upon the dark degrading show,
   Left Fancy learn an humbler pitch to fly!

XIV.

Thus, with the Sun, we measur'd round the Hill
Much further than we thought: Attentive still
   To that strange Zodiac which beneath us lay;
When MARO, heedful of our great design,
Exclaim'd: "No longer let your head decline,
   Superior objects claim your first survey.
M 4
XV.

"Cherubic pinions ruffle in the gale;
See, where an Angel comes, on easy sail!
And now, since Phosphor clos'd the gate of Night,
The sixth fair Handmaid of the Morn has spun
Her hourly task, her Sister has begun,
And catches from her hand the web of Light."

XVI.

Accustom'd to his monitory voice
By far too well, to need a warning twice,
I rais'd my head; when, lo! in heav'nly vest,
A shape was seen, with more than mortal charms,
And face like Phosphor, when from Thetis' arms
His twinkling Glory crowns the dawning East.

XVII.

With arms sublime, that floated on the air,
Wafted on level plume, the Vision fair
Came failing, and alighted where we stood:
"This is your way," he cry'd; "ascend this height!
It much will ease you, in your upward flight,
To leave your Pride behind, an hateful load.

XVIII.

"How few, alas! can find th' ascending way!—
Ye Souls for heav'n design'd! ye Sons of Day!
Why should a random breeze o'erlet your fail
When heav'n-ward bound?" He spoke, and onward led,
Where a rude op'ning in the rock display'd
Descending stairs, for favour'd feet to scale.
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XIX.

Ere I had time to touch the high Degrees,
O'er my face, like Ev'nig's gentle breeze,
    His spangl'd pinion pas'd, and swept away
One signature of Sin; then gave the sign
Of our admittance thro' the Pafs divine,
    Shew'd us the Path, and mingled with the Day.

XX.

Where Mericato's holy spire commands
That City, which by patriot Wisdom stands
    And love of right, a Mountain Path ascends
With easy slope, where Rubaconti strides
Across the tumult of the Tuscan tides,
    And o'er the flood his giant arch suspends.

XXI.

Like this, (no lonely path, in times of gold,
Ere right, in Florence, yet was bought and fold,
    And measures, weights, and records were secure;)
Seem'd that aerial Path to wind on high;
But gloomy rocks, that shaded half the Sky,
    On either hand the unfleds road immure.

XXII.

Yet, wafted on the dusky air, we heard
Celestial voices, tho' no Form appear'd:
    The happiness they sung of humble souls,
With hymns: we enter here. Ah! different far
From that fell concert, that ferocious jar
    Still raging, where the Stygian current rolls!
XXIII.

Up the ascending steps I seem'd to skim,
And found a pinion lifting ev'ry limb;
More lightly pois'd, than when I trod the plain.
"What load," I cry'd, "is lighten'd from my breast,
(Sage Master! tell,) that, negligent of rest,
Upward no more we seem with toil to strain?

XXIV.

"When those deep marks," he said, "that still remain,
Have left your face, like that ensanguin'd stain
Which late the pinions of the Saint dispell'd,
You'll feel a strong, regenerative spring
Buoy up your Soul, and all your Members wing,
That it will seem a pain to be withheld."

XXV.

As one, that some portentous stigma bears,
Tho' witness'd neither by his eyes nor ears,
Till in his Neighbour's eye he reads the jest,
And by his hand the scandal is explor'd
That 'scap'd the sight: thus, by the Angel's sword,
I found the letters on my face impresss.

END OF THE TWELFTH CANTO.
CANTO THE THIRTEENTH.

ARGUMENT.
The Poets arrive at the Stage of Envy.—Its Inhabitants.—Their Appearance and Mode of Penance described.—A Conversation with the Spirit Sapia, a noble Sirenese Lady.

AND now, we climb’d, with renovated powers,
Where, with contracted bounds, the Mountain tow’rs,
   And other Tribes refine in fiercer pains;
A lofty range of battlements surrounds,
With ftony circle, these eternal bounds,
   And other scenes of Penitence contains.

II.
Silence, and cheerless Solitude, alone
Reign’d o’er the surface of this rocky Zone;
   No shadow hover’d, nor a trace appear’d
Of living soul; a deep Cimmerian hue
Ting’d the rude floor, as far as eye could view;
   Where no fine sculptur’d forms the Pilgrim cheer’d.

III.
"If here you wait for words," the Mantuan said;
"I fear, the solemn silence of the Dead
Will tire your patience." Then, he turn'd away,
Quick wheeling to the left; and rais'd his eye,
In sudden rapture, to the vaulted Sky,
And thus began, in humble tone, to pray:

IV.
"O Thou! whose guiding lamp my feet has led
To this aerial Prison of the Dead,
On me your kind protection still bestow!
Instruct me how to pass this rocky round,
And gather Wisdom from the scenes around,
In this eternal tenement of woe.

V.
"Your plastic power the Universe informs,
And the wide bosom of Existence warms,
And still would lead to life the wand'ring Soul;
If Sin's eclipse would suffer thee to shine
On the benighted Man, with beams divine,
And the deep gloom of Hades to control."

VI.
A thousand paces now our flying feet
Had meafur'd soon, when on our march we meet
Thin passing Sounds, and airy Tongues above,
That seem'd, with soul-subduing voice, to call
Our charmed steps to some ideal Hall,
To share with them the genial feast of Love.

St. vi. l. 3. Thin passing Sounds—] The Poet judiciously varies his
Examples from the Sight to the Hearing, by substituting those short
and impressive admonitions miraculously conveyed to the Ear, instead
of the Sculptures represented above.
VII.

First, gliding by, we heard, in silver tone,
These words, "They have no wine;" and passing on,
Its gentle echo seem'd to haunt us still:
But, ere it pause'd, another Voice began:
"I am the Shade of Agamemnon's Son,
Who drank so deep of Friendship's purest rill."

VIII.

Still seem'd the Sound to vibrate in my ear:
"Glory of Rome," I cry'd; "these wonders clear."
But, ere he spoke, a third melodious chime
Floated in music by, and sweetly fung,
"Learn to love those, by whom you suffer wrong."—
Fond Echo still renew'd the hallow'd rhyme.

IX.

"Here Envy learns to moult his Stygian wing."
My Guide reply'd; "here Love applies the sling
To her dull feelings, in those heav'nly strains;
The hand of Charity the reins obey,
That turns her tardy feet the heav'n-ward way,
Where Sympathy's sweet balm allays her pain.

X.

"More you shall learn, before you gain the Pafs
Where Pain retires, and Mercy takes her place;
But now, with piercing eyes, yon' gloom explore.
See! yon' dark squadron by the umber'd wall,
In anguish lift'ning to the sainted call!
How sad they fit upon the dusky floor!"
XI.
I look'd, and saw below, a fallen crew,
Dimly perceiv'd, but terrible to view,
Half in the dark surrounding scenery lost;
A robe, like that the Queen of Hades wore,
Deep-colour'd like the rock, and lurid floor,
Involv'd in gloom each melancholy Ghost.

XII.
A little further still, we pass'd along: [Tongue
"Pray for us, spotless Maid!" from many a

St. xi.] Envy arises from Pride, as Pride takes its origin from Selfishness. From this appears the propriety of expelling the parent Vice, before its still more odious progeny be destroyed. The rites of Lustration are well adapted for this purpose; for as the eye is the instrument of Envy that is closed, and as Selfishness was the root of the evil, the attention of the envious person is forcibly retorted upon himself, and his idol is shewn in its proper deformity. Something analogous to this may occur in his progress through life. The envious person is dissatisfied with all around him, he sees every thing through a gloomy medium. This humour propagating itself, and his active powers improperly directed preying upon the Mind, this tormenting habitue grows, and he at last becomes dissatisfied with himself. By this species of mental pressure, his mental powers acquire new energy, and as (according to some Ethic Writers) the ruling passion only wants to be properly directed to become pernicious or salutary, his Envy, by a fortunate concurrence of circumstances, may become Emulation.—See in Charles Grandison, a masterly application to the ruling passion, in his conversation with Lady Beaumont.

A singular instance of Envy is mentioned by Quintilian, of a man who poisoned the flowers in his Garden, lest his Neighbour's Bees should extract honey from them. Declam. 13.
Was heard. "O Captain of the Hosts above,
And all ye Saints! for us, vouchsafe a Pray'r!
O may offended Justice learn to spare!—
Pray for us, all, ye Families of Love!"

XIII.

No sympathetic pulse was ever known
To vibrate in that fullen heart of stone,
Which would not feel for those, whom now I view'd
In order as I pass'd: approaching nigh,
Grief smote my heart, and tears suffus'd my eye,
When by the suffering Penitents I stood.

XIV.

With hair-cloth on their limbs, in vile array,
Near the dark basis of the rock they lay
In order close, together rudely press'd,
Propp'd by the formidable ridge behind,
As in the holy porch, the vagrant Blind
Begging a scanty dose, in tatter'd vest.

XV.

There lay these Souls, in miserable plight,
Equal annoyance to our ears and sight,
Lamenting deep their complicated woes;
And as the golden Sun to these is lost,
So those fast station'd at their gloomy post
Are doom'd on Day's fair beam their eyes to close.

XVI.

Of each, the ghaftly orbs of sight were lac'd
With burning wires, that thro' each eye-lid pass'd;
(The fiery falcon thus is tam’d below:)
I deem’d it harsh to look upon their shame,
And turn’d, the counsel of the Bard to claim,
But, ere I spoke, he seem’d my wish to know.

XVII.
He waited not to hear my warm request.
"Enquire," he cry’d; "but think, few words are best."
On the steep verge he stood; the Ghosts within,
And I, the shadowy Bands and him between,
Where the deep rock o’erhung the solemn scene,
Survey’d these sentenc’d Tribes that mourn’d their Sin.

XVIII.
Darkling they sat, and from each gory seam
That cross’d the visual orb, distill’d a stream
Of blood and tears, that bath’d each ghastly face.
"Blest souls," I cry’d; "you cheer your inward fight
With the pure image of that sacred Light,
Soon to revisit you with heav’nly rays.

XIX.
"So may you clear away the taint of Sin,
Till pure Contrition’s fountain spring within,
And, free-from stain, with limpid current flow:
Tell me, if any Soul of Latian race
'Mongst your benighted squadrons finds a place,
Both might be pleas’d each other here to know."

XX.
"Brother!" a voice reply’d; "your question means,
Here, (where no fabling colour intervenes
To hide the truth, what Soul of Latian race,  
From his dark pilgrimage beneath the Moon,  
Here, bent on home, expects the heav’ly boon;  
Our gen’ral slate a gen’ral Lord obeys.”

XXI.

Those accents, where I stood, methought I heard:  
Nearer I mov’d; the Speaker soom appear’d.  
A Ghost, whose beamless vifage seem’d to show  
An eager hope to hear; for raising high  
(As blind men use) a face, and stareless eye,  
And lift’ning ear, it fate, intent to know.

XXII.

“Spirit!” I cry’d; “who on this favour’d shore  
Moult your old plumes, ere higher flight to soar,  
If from your lips the solemn answer came,  
Disclose your former name, your native clime!”  
“While Day’s fair Sister measur’d out my time,”  
It cry’d, “I liv’d on earth, a Tuscan dame;

St. xxii. l. 6. —a Tuscan dame] Sapia, or Sophia, a Lady of Siena, who had, for some unknown crime, been banished and imprisoned in the castle of Colle. At that time, as often was the case,  
“The Florentines and Senois were by th’ ears;”  
Shakespeare’s All’s Well that Ends Well.

two hostile parties happened to meet near the castle of Colle,  
and when she saw them engaged, she prayed fervently for the defeat of her countrymen, which ensued with great slaughter. She was so elated with the success of her prayer, that she was heard (it is said) to utter that impious bravado in the text; or, according to Landino, she challenged the Almighty to do his worst; she defied him, as she had acquired the utmost of her wills. Landino Daniel by Augellocci.
xxiii.
"Siena claim’d my birth in happier years,
Tho’ now I count my gloomy hours by tears,
And pray’rs to Him, whose mighty hand can raise
The cloudy veil that hides his burning throne;
My name was Sophia, but the Power unknown
Whose image to the mind that name conveys.

xxiv.
"That you may know what madness once was mine,
When Prudence should have mark’d my year’s decline,
Listen, and if my blasted name I spare,
Believe me not;—but freely will I tell.—
Not small appears the comfort to reveal
My folly, since I ’scap’d the fatal snare.

xxv.
"In durance as I lay in Colle’s towers,
With Arno’s bands engag’d Siena’s powers,
And mutual slaughter dy’d the fields with gore;
Devoting to the Fiends my kindred bands,
To Heav’n I rais’d my supplicating hands:
"O, mark them for the tomb! I ask no more!"

xxvi.
"Heav’n heard my pray’r; Siena dy’d the ground
With streaming gore; Valdarno’s woods refound
With cries of conquest: such was Heav’n’s decree.
On the thick-falling files, with savage joy
I gaz’d; a banquet to my tearless eye:
Their overthrow was Victory to me.

St. xxxiii. l. 5. —Sophia] i.e. Wisdom; the meaning of the
Greek word Sophia; and the barbarous Latin, Sapia.
XXVII.

"Now I renounce you all, ye Powers above!
And scorn alike your terror and your love!"
Like a blaspheming Bacchanal, I said.
Quite brain-sick with a single beam of joy,
Like that fond bird that trusts the vernal sky,
By one short gleam to wintry blasts betray'd.

XXVIII.

"But my wak'd soul, before I breath'd my last,
A look imploring to my Saviour cast,
And pardon crav'd! an unavailing prayer,
Unless sage Pettignano's holy breath
Had turn'd away the flaming shaft of wrath;
He pitied me, and Heav'n repaid his care.

XXIX.

"But who permits thee thro' our ranks to run,
With eyes that still survey the golden Sun?
And still, it seems, with modulated breath,
From mortal lungs you hail our dark'ned hof,
Contemplating our state, from coast to coast—
Who leads your wand'ring's thro' the walks of Death?"

XXX.

"I too, like you," I answer'd, "ought to feel
The penal points my orbs of vision seal;
But Envy's stain will quit my bosom soon:
A deeper lot than yours I dreaded more,
Where Pride's fallen bands, around the groaning shore,
Measure the circles of the waning Moon."

N 2
XXXI.

"But who can lead you thro' Luftreation's gate,
If your return to Life be fix'd by Fate?"

Thus spoke the sightless Shade; and I reply'd,
"Tho' mute, my sage Conductor here attends,
An helping hand the friendly Phantom lends,
To Heav'n my faltering steps again to guide.

XXXII.

"And if, when next I see your native plain,
You need my help, you shall not ask in vain;
If aught my voluntary toils can aid [she cry'd,
Your cause, command me."—"Strange, it seems;"
"That Heav'n a breathing Man should hither guide:
Heav'n favours you; your pray'rs may help the Dead.

XXXIII.

"But, if thro' Tuscan Vales you chance to stray,
To my sad Friends my better hopes display;
Among those vain expensive Tribes they dwell,
Who delve the soil, to lead the dubious tide,
And by their Haven hope at length to guide
Italia's Trade,—its fortune, Time will tell."

St. xxxi, xxxii, xxxiii.] Most of the speeches of the several Characters exhibit some tinctures of the Passion or Vice for which they are afflicted. Thus in Soph'ia, we find the traces of Envy; as in Aldobrandesco's account of himself, there appeared strong symptoms of Pride.

END OF THE THIRTEENTH CANTO.
CANTO THE FOURTEENTH.

ARGUMENT.
The same Subject continued.—A Conversation with Guido di Brettinoro, and Rinieri di Calboli.

"But who is he, that circles round the height,
Ere Fate has wing'd his disembodied flight,
And, at his pleasure, sees, or shuts his eyes?"—
"I know him not; but other Phantoms here
Attend his steps. As you are station'd near,
Enquire; but question with a gentle voice.”

II.
From two pale Spectres, which at hand appear'd,
Reclining sad, these hasty words I heard,
As tow'rd me they turn'd their dark'ned eyes,
In lift'ning posture. Thus the first began:
"In pity tell, high-favour'd Son of Man!
Why thus, in dust enshrin'd, to Heav'n you haste?"

St. ii. l. 2. —hasty words.] This Conversation is supposed to pass between the Spirits of two noble Florentines, Guido di Brettinoro and Rinieri di Calboli, who had heard the conference with Sophia.
III.
"We feel such wonder at your upward flight,
As at a prodigy, by human sight
Unseen before:—O tell your name, and race!"
Then I—"My parents quaff’d an humble rill,
That winding flows by Falterona’s Hill;
Thence thirty leagues it guides its liquid maze.

IV.
"From that dire soil I drew my vest of clay:
To tell my name, your labour scarce would pay;
Alike unknown to Fortune and to Fame."
"Sure, if I guess aright," the first rejoind’d;
"Thence Arno’s waters rise, and thus they wind."
"Why," cry’d his neighbour; "why conceal its name?

V.
"Say, have its syllables a magic sound,
That strikes the human ear with mortal wound?"
"The first reply’d: "Its good or evil fame
This is no place to weigh; but well I know,
The flood of Lethe o’er its bounds shall go,
And Desolation hide the Valley’s shame.

VI.
"From that paternal Hill, whose cloudy crest,
High swelling to the Moon, surmounts the rest
Of that long range from which Pelorus fell,
To that low point where Arno meets the main,
And, what the Sun exhales, restores again,
No place is giv’n for Truth or Worth to dwell.

St. vi. l. 3. Of that long range—] The Apennines, which run the whole length of Italy to the southern extremity, and exhibit an appearance as if they had been separated from Pelorus in Sicily by some convulsion of Nature.
VII.

"Virtue is hunted, like a noxious pest,
Thro' all the Tuscan bounds, from East to West;
Whether long-foster'd habitues of ill,
Or Heavn's judicial doom their hate inflame,
Each monstrous vice, of every form and name,
The Fugitive pursues from Hill to Hill.

VIII.

"One horrible resemblance covers all,
Where Arno springs: like tenants of the stall,
Prone be your forms (your minds were prone before).
Go, turn the soil, and glean along the wood
Acorns, and mast, a more congenial food
Than Pales' or Pomona's fragrant store.

IX.

"Next thro' a race of carping curs he flows,
Malignity in ev'ry eye-ball glows,
But Impotence and Fear confine their spite.
Down thence with foaming wave, and thund'ring sway,
The swelling flood indignant darts away,
Till ancient Fæsula appears in sight.

X.

"There dogged spleen ferments to wolvi'll rage,
In fell rapacious feuds her tribes engage,
He leaves them, and another clan surveys,
Kin to the wily fox, with fraud replete,
Who fear not deepest guile with guile to meet,
Long us'd to wind thro' many a subtle maze.
"No truth will I conceal from Tuscan ear,
To none so needful, if he deigns to hear
This message, from an heav'n-illumin'd soul:
The glories of your Grandson rise to view,
On these dire wolves he takes the vengeance due,
Till red with gore the waves of Arno roll.

"I see him barter their base lives for gold,
I see the living flames of bought and sold,
Just like their branded fellows of the fall.
By human groans, his coffers thus he fills;
But Fame's dark urn upon his name distills
Her venom, and the Fates ordain his fall.

"I see him, from the defoliated wood,
With gory spoils return, begrim'd with blood:

St. xii. l. 1. I see him barter—]
Fulcieri di Calboli, grandson of Rinieri; he was Podesta, or chief executive Magistrate in Florence, in the year 1302; and persecuted the White Faction with great rigour. He seized many of those in the city; and, accusing them of corresponding with the White Emigrants, he caused them to be put to the torture: many of them, in the extremity of pain, confessed the fact, and were executed. The Poet insinuates, that he was bribed to this procedure by the Black Faction. Such was the state of Republics in former ages, always (at the best of times, and in their most prosperous state) exposed to foreign influence, by means of domestic faction; to guard against which, the governing party had often recourse to the dreadful measures recorded above. Compare the state of Athens, as described by Thucydides, with the history of Florence at this period, and apply both to more recent occurrences.

O ne'er
O. ne'er again may such a brood be found
On Arno's banks!—at least till yonder Sun
Twelve hundred journies thro' the Sky has run,
From Capricorn to Cancer's flaming bound."

XIV.
As when some Prophet lifts the mystic veil
That hides the coming plague, the face grows pale;
And, on the coming ill, with ghastly glare,
The trembling eye-ball turns; the lift'ning Shade,
O'er his aërial lineaments, display'd
The baleful marks of anguish and despair.

XV.
One Spectre's prophecy, his neighbour's woe,
Awoke a strong desire their names to know,
And with intreaties join'd my earnest plea:
Humbly I urg'd: then soon the first that spoke,
At my request, the awful silence broke:
"You ask," he said, "what you deny'd to me.

XVI.
"But, since the radiant beams of Grace divine,
On thee, as on a moving mirror, shine,
Reflected full, and lift thee to the Sky;
I grant thy boon: thou talk'lt to Guido's Ghost,
Whose eye no smiling image ever crost;
But Envy seem'd my fever'd blood to fry.

XVII.
"Her canker'd hue my scowling visage show'd;
But the full ransom, in this dark abode,
By long and painful penitence I pay:
But tell me, why, deluded Mortals! tell,
Such evanescent things your passions swell,
Where some must share, and some resign the prey?

XVIII.

"Here Calboli's proud boast, Rinieri pays,
In tears, the forfeit of his tainted race:
Nor need he mourn a solitary fall;
For, from the bounds of cloudy Appennine,
Round by the Tuscan sea, the Po, and Rhine,
One race of pois'nous plants o'ershadows all.

XIX.

"Late times (if ever), with incessant toil,
Shall see them bless the cultivated soil
With richer items, and fruits of nobler gust!—
But where is Guido? where Carpigna's fame?
And where the influence of Manardi's name,
And ancient Traversaro?—Sunk to dust!—

XX.

"O spurious brood! Romagna's lasting fame;
Mechanic hands have seiz'd the wreath of Fame
In far Bologna, while Faenza's walls
Ring with the name of Bernardin the bold,
Who springs aloft, with vigour uncontrol'd,
From a base root, and haughty Thrones appalls.

St. xx. l. 4.—Bernardin the bold.] LambertiaRCio, from
a mean origin, acquired such great influence in Bologna, that he
almost commanded the state. Bernardin di Fosco arose from
a similar condition to the sovereignty of Faenza.
XXI.
"Wonder not, TUSCAN, to behold me mourn,
For GUIDO's times; ah! never to return!
And UGOLIN of AZZO's golden days,
Which shed ELYSIUM o'er sweet ARNO's Vale.
Alas! the SONS of TRAVERSARO fail,
And ANASTAGIO pants no more for praise.

XXII.
"Their deeds of Arms, their feftal pomp is o'er,
Vice fills the seats, where Honour sat before;
The Knights and lovely Dames in dust repose,
Who rul'd the tourney, or who led the dance,
Where val'rous acts, or love's restless glance,
Alternate trophies won from friends and foes.

XXIII.
"Why do the towers of BRETTINORO stand,
Where lawles's rage expell'd her gallant band,
Because the vicious taint they held in scorn?
Happy the times for BAGNACAVAL's bowers,
That Fate has palfy'd Nature's genial powers,
And there no infant despot now is born!

I have not an opportunity here of consulting the Genealogies of BOLOGNA and FRENZA; but I suspect, that from these two Adventurers, sprung the Herb and Heroine of a very tragical story, which may be found in Mr. ROSCOE's Life of Lorenzo de Medici, vol. ii. p. 168: first edition. See LANDINO.

ST. XXI. L. 5. TRAVERSARO—] of RAVENNA. A STEPHEN, King of HUNGARY, is said to have taken a spouse from this family,
"Shame to the Cenian race! and shame to thee,
Vile Castrocaro! what insidious plea
Canst thou invent, thy black renown to hide?
Thy ancient rulers, with a noxious brood,
Pollute the land, infecting field and flood,
And Vice inglorious reigns, where Virtue dy'd.

XXV.
"Faenza's masters now contrasted stand
With him, who seem'd, from some Demonian band,
A delegate on Latian plains; but soon
Fate shall dismiss him to the world below,
And Hell's deep charactes shall mark the brow
Of his remaining Kin, for many a Moon.

XXVI.
"But Ugoline of Fantolin alone,
Shall for the crimes of all his race atone;
His genial hopes are blasted in the birth.
No Son shall rise to taint his Father's name,
No Daughter tinge his cheek with glowing shame;
Still unobscur'd shall live his taintless worth.

St. xxiv. l. 1, 2. Cenio, Castrocaro—] Ancient families of
the Romagna; of whom the Commentators record nothing re-
markable.

St. xxv. l. 2. With him—] Manardo Pagani (of Faenza)
was surnamed the Devil; but why, is not known. Possibly for
withstanding ecclesiastical oppression.

St. xxvi. l. 1. Ugoline of Fantolin—] Alfo of Faenza;
celebrated here for not having it in his power to continue the Family.
Of the other Families mentioned here, nothing very remarkable is
recorded.
XXVII.

"But go, sad Florentine! around the steep
Pursee thy way, and leave me here to weep;
Those scenes thy presence to my mind recalls."
And now the Ghosts, admonish'd by the ear,
In silence mark'd our steps; we ceas'd to fear
That we had mis'd our way amid those walls.

XXVIII.

Still as we coasted round these seats of woe,
A solemn found, like thunder, muttering low,
Glanc'd on our ears, and shot along the gloom:
"Whoever meets me, as I stray forlorn,
Hell's Stigmatic, and mark'd with shame and scorn,
Shall instant seize, and mark me for the Tomb."

XXIX.

Those awful murmurs ran upon the blast,
And, far away, in hollow whirlwinds past;
As when dark clouds decamp before the light:
But soon again was heard a second peal,
As when the red bolt, thro' the dusky veil,
Gleams horrible, and seems to blast the sight.

XXX.

"I am AGLAURUS, now transform'd to stone:"
These accents, in a loud tremendous groan,

St. xxviii. l. 5. Hell's Stigmatic—] CAIN, the first Victim of Envy.

St. xxx. l. 1. AGLAURUS—] Daughter of CECROPS, King of ATHENS, according to fabulous history. See her Transformation by Envy, Ovid Metam. l. ii. ad fin.

I heard
I heard, and trembling, to the Mantuan fled,
Resolv'd to venture from his side no more:
Again, deep Silence reign'd along the shore,
And Mardo soon those mystic signs display'd.

XXXI.
"These monitory sounds, that ever fleet,
In awful warning, round this dark retreat,
Are the celestial stearing of the Soul,
That ever in the track of Safety keep
Her voyage, thro' the dark, tempestuous deep,
Till her arrival, where no storms control.

XXXII.
"But ye, infernal minds! immers'd in clay,
Altho' you see the subtle Demon play
His baits before you, gorge with heedless haste
The Soul's swift poison, nor attend the check
Of Conscience, nor the Voice that calls you back,
Yet ere the season of your cure be pass'd.

XXXIII.
"Heav'n spreads her gorgeous canopy on high,
Her glories lighten all the vaulted Sky,
To lure the heart of man to heav'nly charms;
But your benighted eyes survey the clod,
With reverence prone, and soon forget your God,
Till Heav'n with penal bolts his right hand arms."

* Aristotle remarks, that those who are most subject to Envy, are precisely those whom we would least suspect of such malignant passions; viz. Friends and Equals, people of the same family and profession.
profession, where one would expect more amity and cordiality. This may be designed by Providence to preserve the activity of the mind, which, even in its lowest stage, and least commendable exertion, produces a certain degree of useful emulation; and may even be beneficial to mental exertion in another view, as it is often necessary for this purpose, that there should be some inordinate passion, against which our vigilance is to be kept in constant employ, as the best means of acquiring an habit of self-government.

Among other persons who are most exposed to this passion, the great Philosopher mentions those who have undertaken and succeeded in some great enterprise; and having arrived at high stations, imagine that they are entitled to still higher. This is so exactly what Shakespeare has delineated in the character of Macbeth, that, as it is certain Shakespeare never read Aristotle's Rhetoric, we might almost suppose them both to have read this character in that all-representing Mirror described in the Paradiso.

It appears to me, that Aristotle has here exactly drawn the character of the Caledonian Tyrant; for his first enmity against Duncan seems to be exasperated, if not conceived, by the King's declaration, that he would make his Son, Prince of Cumberland; a rank which Macbeth deemed his due. In the same Chapter may be found the causes of the variance between Beaufort and Humphrey, Hotspur and Henry, and some other of Shakespeare's heroes. Those, also, who affect to excel in any thing, are envious of those who have similar pretences, and all those who are of a base and low mind, as to them things really little and of small esteem seem great.—Arist. Rhet. l. ii. cap. 10. p. 669. Edit. Noviure.

It is the most deformed and detestable of all passions. A good man may be angry or ashamed, may love or fear; but a good man cannot envy: for all other passions seek good, but Envy evil. All other passions propose advantages to themselves; Envy seeks the detriment of others. They therefore are human. This is diabolical. Anger seeks vengeance for an injury; an injury in fortune, or person, or honour: but Envy pretends no injuries; and yet has an appetite for vengeance. Love seeks the possession of good, Fear the flight of evil, but Envy neither; all her good is the disadven-
tage of another. Hence it is most detestable; and because most detestable, therefore, secondly,

Most deformed. For it is the most detestable, because the least natural; or what is least natural, works in us the most disadvantageous and deforming effects. We must sometimes be angry, we must sometimes love and fear and be ashamed, by the necessity of our nature; and there are just occasions for them all. But no necessity of our nature obliges us to envy, nor is there any just occasion for it. For all men are unhappy; only we know where their uneasiness lies: therefore, there is no natural occasion for Envy; and, that there should be a moral one, is a contradiction; for the happier others are, the more we should rejoice.

As, therefore, neither our nature, nor reason, requires Envy, it is properly unnatural; and because unnatural, it works such terrible effects in us. How pale, keen, inhuman, and emaciated are its looks, if the undeserved indulgence of constitution gets not the better of these effects? Now all these are demonstrations of its extreme pain.

Dublin edit.

END OF THE FOURTEENTH CANTO.
CANTO THE FIFTEENTH.

ARGUMENT.
The Poets, being directed by an Angel to the ascent which leads to the STAGE OF ANGER, on their arrival there are involved in a thick Vapour, which prevents them, at first, from seeing the Objects around them.

SUCH space the Wheels of Day had now to run,
As from the Point, where Night's descending cone
Three hours from midnight marks, to Morning's Children of Time, that pace, with flying heel, [bound,
The circle of the mighty Mundane wheel,
And, hand in hand, for ever dance around.

II.
Now Eve's pale Harbinger, in pensive mood,
On the horizon, like an Hermit, stood;
While, o'er VALDARNO's woods, the Queen of Night Climb'd, in her silver car, the Point of Noon;
And westward as he pass'd, the parting Sun,
In faded glory, shot a sanguine light.

St. i. l. 4. Children of Time,—] viz. the Hours.
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III.

But now, a more opprobrious splendour came,
Than ever issu’d from the solar flame:

With whelming light my brain began to swim,
And many a floating form was seen to glide

Before my eyes, till, with my hand, I try’d
To ward the flash, that made my optics dim.

IV.

As the slant sun-beam, from the waters clear
Reflex, or from a mirror’s splendid sphere,

With equal slope, as from the orb of Day
It comes, salutes the eye: an object bright,

Fronting my path, sent back the shaft of Light,
And turn’d the visual organ dark away.

V.

"Son of the Song," I cry’d; "what glorious stream
Of light salutes me, with opprobrious beam?

Nearer it seems to come!" The Bard reply’d:

"Be not afraid! refin’d by habit, soon
Your eagle-eye shall meet Empyreal Noon;

Nor from the radiant image turn aside.

VI.

"You see an Envoy from the fields of Light;
Soon shall you kindle at the glorious sight,

When the Sons of Æther cross your view;
When habitude your nature shall sublime,

To the dread Pageants of the heav’nly clime,
And open inlets to perceptions new."
VII.
Onward, by heav’nlly instinct mov’d, we press’d,
When, in the cheerful accents of the blest’d,
The Angel cry’d: “The pass you soon shall find,
More gently sloping than the former scale.”—
With flying steps we pass’d the rocky pale,
And leave pale Envy’s darksome bounds behind.

VIII.
Soon a sweet symphony was heard beneath,
And these soft accents rose on magic breath:
“O happy ye, whom Pity warms below!”—
“Rejoice, thou heav’nly Militant! rejoice!”
Responsive echo’d thro’ the bending skies,
And round the verge the gentle accents flow.

IX.
We climb’d the steep; our heav’nly Guide was gone;
The Bard of Mantua now was left alone
To guide my steps: I meant, on themes profound
Conversing, much to learn; and ask’d my Guide,
“What that mysterious loss and gain imply’d,
Foretold so late by Guido’s Ghost renown’d?”

X.
“That plague, beneath whose scourge he pin’d before,
Long must his soul in darkness now deplore.”
My Guide reply’d: “’Tis hence, amid the gloom,
His solemn voice is heard so loud to found
In self-reproach, along the rocky mound,
These willing toils assuage his woes to come.

XI.
"Low Passion fixes oft on things terrene,
Where oft contending Claimants rush between
And snatch a portion, or usurp the whole.
Pale Envy thence sublimes her raging fires,
Man's tainted breath in burning fights expires,
Thick fuming from the deep fermenting soul.

XII.
"But, if our Love can turn its eagle-flight
To the primæval Source of Life and Light,
Above the reach of this contagious pest,
In the pure fields of Sympathy on high;
Your neighbour's transport will augment your joy,
By the reflex of social bliss increas'd."

XIII.
"Oft, as I drink of that celestial rill,"
I cry'd, "I find my thirst increasing still;
Its copious draughts but more inflame my soul
In search of heav'nly truth. One doubt remains:—
Must not that good, a multitude obtains,
Be less, than if a few possefs'd the whole?"

XIV.
Then he,—"Because you bend your eyes below,
On the dark theatre of human woe,
Its dimness hovers o'er your mental sight;
But that unbounded source of bliss above,
Salutes the soul, that burns with heav'nly love,
Like sun-beams falling on a mirror bright."
XV.

"Thus, glancing on the heart, the ray divine
Bids the rapt soul with double glory shine,
Where'er it finds the seeds of heav'ly fire.
Hence, multiply'd, they send, with keener glance,
Their coruscations thro' the vast expanse;
Love kindling love around the general choir.

XVI.

"From circling mirrors, thus, with brisk rebound,
Quick thwarting glories fire the vast profound,
Till, in a flood of Light, the scene is lost.
If more you want to know, the heav'ly Maid
Shall clear away each dim remaining shade,
When you arrive on Eden's happy coast.

XVII.

"But, haste we hence; for, of your sevenfold scar,
Five yet remain of long Satanic war,
To last, till deep Contrition cures the wound.''
I was prepar'd to say: "My doubts are clear;"
When landing sudden on a loftier sphere,
I gaz'd in mute astonishment around.

St. xv, xvi.) In answer to the Poet's question, Whether good
possessed by a few, be not greater than the same quantity possessed by a
greater number? Virgil shews, by a splendid image, that, in the
evaluation of right reason, good communicated reflects itself upon
the communicator; and thence, the more it is diffused, the more it
is increased; and that general benevolence and general happiness
mutually produce each other.

This question we may suppose to arise from some small residue
of Envy lurking in the Poet's mind, which, by the answer of Vir-
gil, is understood to be completely cured.
XVIII.

Thence, in a sudden Vision, wrapt away,
I saw a Temple its huge dome display
Above, slow rising thro' the shades of Night:
The crowded Courts a mingled throng display'd;
A lovely Matron there was seen to shed,
The mingled dew of anguish and delight.

XIX.

In transport, as she clasp'd a blooming Boy,
Smiling thro' tears, she cry'd; "O tell me, why
You caus'd such sorrow to your Sire and me?"
In search of you, we trac'd a length of way!"
That instant, like a dream at op'ning day,
The Temple vanish'd, ere I heard his plea.

XX.

Another Form, with features discompos'd,
But lovely still, my sphere of Vision cross'd;
A trace of falling tears her face confess'd;
But indignation sparkled in her eye,
Which quickly seem'd the briny dew to dry;
And thus she seem'd to ease her swelling breast:

St. xvii, xviii, xix.] Examples of forbearance and moderation are
here given in a series of visions, which form a beautiful contrast to the
sculptures and other representations mentioned in the foregoing
Cantos. The first is the address of the Virgin Mary to her Son in
the Temple, after the alarm and anxiety his absence had occasioned.
See Luke, ii. 43.

St. xx. l. 1. Another Form—] The wife of PISO.

ATHENS. The provocation given was, that a stranger embraced
her daughter in the street. See VALERIUS MAXIMUS, lib. v. 1.
XXI.

"Are you the Sovereign of this mighty State,
Those sacred towers, whose title caus'd debate
Among the Gods? whence Science boasts her rise?—
Vengeance on him! who dar'd, before my face,
To clasph my Daughter in his rude embrace,
And fill her heart with anger and surprize!"

XXII.

The Rev'rend Sire, with answer soft and slow,
Clear'd the dark tempest on the Matron's brow,
As with a drop from Mercy's holy spring:
"What must our Enemies expect," he cry'd;
"If pity to our Friends be thus deny'd!"—
His words the Vision seem'd away to wing.

XXIII.

Another prospect shew'd a furious throng,
Hailing the victim of their rage along:
"Kill, kill! dispatch!" the stern assassins cry:
Supine he lay in blood, expiring, pale
Yet still his eyes, thro' Death's surrounding vale,
Seem'd, with keen glance, to pierce the ambient sky.

XXIV.

'Midst the dire tempest of descending blows,
His deprecations for the ruffians rofe;
And on his dying visage yet was seen
That lambent glory, which compassion wears,
Thro' a soul-moving mask of blood and tears,
Clouding, with deep disguise, his angel mien.

St. xxiv. l. 2. His deprecations for the ruffians—] Stephen's forgiveness of his enemies. Acts, vii. 60.
Wafted to visionary worlds no more,
Fancy return'd to Reason's sober shore,
And the surrounding scenery now impressed its image on my eye; the Mantuan Ghost
Saw my 'maz'd faculties in stupor lost,
And frighted, wake, as by a dream distress'd.

XXVI.
"Where have you left behind your self-command?"
Cry'd Maro: "Half a league, along the sand,
With random step, and fix'd, unconscious glare;
Onward you came, as one by Frenzy caught,
Or deeply drench'd by Circe's magic draught,
Intent on fleeting images of air."

XXVII.
I answer'd: "What I saw, I mean to tell,
When first my senses bade the world farewell,
And my lax nerves their wonted help withdrew."
"Altho' an hundred marks your face conceal'd,
To me," he said, "each image is reveal'd,
That thro' your Fancy moves in dark review.

XXVIII.
"Those scenes were sent, that you might learn the art,
Which, when the wrathful Demon fires the heart,
Freely admits the cooling, heav'nly rill,
That from th' unsailing spring, in quiet flow,
Laves, with Elysian streams, the world below,
And bids the tempest of the mind be still."
XXIX.

"I question'd not, as one, whose visual ray
Draws the dim portion of its scanty Day,
From rising Sol, or Cynthia's silver Light,
Expiring when the mortal organs fail.
I look within, and pierce the carnal veil,
With the keen radiance of resifless Light.

XXX.

"This last demand was meant, your mind to goad,
Left it should slumber on the heav'ly road,
And lose the meaning of the mystic show:
For soon Oblivion on the soul returns,
Unless the lamp of Meditation burns,
To light your passage thro' the Vale of Woe."

XXXI.

Now, at the bound of Light, the sinking Sun,
His utmost journey to the West had run;
Still hasten on, we ey'd his parting light:
But soon we saw a shadowy Vapour come,
On dragon wing, its deep nocturnal gloom
Sail'd round the vanish'd Hill, and rest our sight.

"It is a truth as clear and evident as possible to Physiologists and the Enquirers into Nature, that in Love, Deire, Hope, Joy, (but more especially when these Passions are exercised about a great good,) that the motion of the blood and heart, so necessary to animal life, is greatly helped and promoted; insomuch that the arteries and veins are furnished with a much more complacent, and yet with a much quicker flow of blood: the animal spirits are enlivened,
Evened, the whole circulations of the several juices also, (and, of consequence, of the offices in the animal economy,) must be much more readily performed.

"The cultivation of the social affections, therefore, (when kept under the government of Reason,) are remarkably serviceable to the grand article of self-preservation; and then, the natural consequence is, the reward that is by Nature annexed to these Affections.

"On the contrary, in Hatred, Envy, Fear, Sorrow, the motion of the blood is obstructed, the heart is so contracted and pressed, that the systole of it, with great difficulty, drives the blood forward; from whence the human countenance turns not only pale, but innumerable other disorders also follow; particularly in the offices of the brain, nerves, and animal spirits. Such disorders as are common to splenetic and melancholy persons." Cumberlånd de legibus Nature, part i. chap. ii. sect. 19.

The Author proceeds to give an account from Harvey's Anatomical Excitations, which illustrates the doctrine he has laid down. I shall insert the account in the words of the Translator, Dr. Zachary Wood: "I knew a stout man, who did so boil with rage, because he had suffered an injury, and received an affront from one much more powerful than himself, that his anger and hatred being increased every day, (by reason he could not be revenged,) and discovering the passion of his mind to nobody, which was so exulcerated within him, he at last fell into a strange sort of disease, and was tortured and miserably tormented with great oppression and pain in his heart and breast; so that the most skilful Physicians' prescriptions doing him no good, he became a victim to a scorbutic disease, pined away, and died. He only found ease as often as his breast was pressed and beaten down by a strong man; as they do when they mould bread. His friends thought he was bewitched, or possessed by the Devil. He likewise had his jugular arteries distended about the thickness of a man's thumb, as if either of them had been the sort itself, or the Arteria magna in its descent; and were to the view like two long aneurisms, or preternatural tumours, or dilatations of the arterial vessels. Upon opening the body, the heart and great artery were so distended and crammed with blood, that the size of the heart, and the expansion of the ventricles, equalled.
equalled those of an ox. This extraordinary phenomenon was owing to the frequent succession of two mischievous passions, Anger and Grief. Anger, on account of the injury done him; and Grief, for his inability to redress it.

"In Anger, the motion of the heart is hurried; the blood boils; the brain is crowded; thoughts, words, and actions, are confused; and if any noxious thing lurk in the body or mind, it is set to work."—This confusion of the perceptions and actions, possibly the Poet meant to represent by the darkness which he describes as prevailing in this Region.

"Grief produces the reverse in every respect; the systole of the heart is impeded, the outlets from it are contracted, and the motion of the blood languishes; the visage drops, the voice trembles, and the limbs fail. As the changes were made from the one extreme to the other, and each violent and often returning, either some of the vessels must have burst, or an accumulation of blood, and an aneurism, must have succeeded."

Notes to Tower's Translation of Cumberland's Laws of Nature, ubi supra.
CANTO THE SIXTEENTH.

ARGUMENT.
The Punishment of the Wrathful described at large. In this Stage the Poets meet the Spirit of MARCO LOMBARDO, who confutes the Opinion of those who deem our Actions are directed by the Influence of the Heavenly Bodies.

NOR STYGIAN gloom, nor driving fogs that fly
Across the concave of a midnight sky,
Unvisited by moon-beam, or by star,
Draws o'er the face of things so dense a veil,
As that dun smoke, that round the rocky pale,
Came failing on, and fill'd the lurid air.

II.
Wounding the nerves of Sight, the pungent fume
My eye-lids clos'd, and wrapt in double gloom;
The Poet lent his hand, to guide me on:
And, as a Man, bereft of fight, proceeds,
Cautious of harm, I went: the Phantom leads,
With careful steps, along the gloomy Zone.
III.
Thus, stemming the dark tide, we pass’d along;
The Bard advis’d, as on his hand I hung,
To hold my Pilot, left my feet should stray:
When many a supplicating Voice around,
Hymning the Lamb of God, with various sound,
For Mercy and for Peace, was heard to pray.

Stanza iii.] To the concluding Note on the fifteenth Canto, some Observations may be added on the properties peculiar to Human Bodies, which seem more nearly to concern the regulation and management of the Affections and Passions, and the wonderful contrivances for the purpose in the Structure of the Human Body. One of these is what Anatomists call the plexus nervorum, or Plication of the Nerves, delineated in Willis’s Anatomy of the Human Brain, ch. xxvi.—"It is situated in the middle of the neck, at the base of the intercostal nerve, transmits fibres into the vasa sanguisera and oesophagus, and surculi into the trunk of the diaphragmatic nerve, and the par vagum. It transmits these surculi also into the recurrent nerve; and this plexus does moreover send out two branches towards the heart: the one of these branches taking its rife a little lower down, pursues these nerves close, and then these nerves altogether, in conjunction with several blood-vessels on the opposite side, at last form the plexus cardiacus. From hence arise the nerves spread over the region of the heart, and those nervous loops that surround both the pneumonic vein and pneumonic artery, which vein and artery are the principal channels of that blood from whence these spirits, which are the animal principles of the Affections, grow warm, effervescence, and boil. This intercostal nerve also braces the subclavian artery in its next course, even before the vertebral arteries, leading to the brain, spring and take their rife.

"The intercostal nerve," says Dr. Willis, "through these smaller branches, performs the office of an especial corresponding messenger, moving, as it were, backwards and forwards, on purpose
pose to keep up a perpetual intercourse between the sensations of the brain and the heart, and to regulate the latter by the former.

"From hence the conceptions of the brain affect the heart. The motions of the systole and diastole may be altered and changed. The state and condition of the animal spirits, which are generated from the blood, suffer new impulses, or are restrained from time to time. The thoughts employed about the acts of appetite and judgment, have Due scope and room for employment; in which thoughts the efficacies and workings of wisdom, and the virtues, are plainly discerned. The flowings of the blood in the chest are hereby restrained. The irregular throbings of the heart itself are moderated, as it were, by bit and bridle; and from hence it must happen that those irregular throbings are easily composed and settled into regular motions."—I may add, if these irregular motions have not been habitually indulged; and thence the muscles that are subservient to them are more easily excited, while those employed for the purposes of restraint become less active from diffuse, this must render self-government much more difficult.

"There are two or three nerves," says Dr. Willis, "dispatched from this plexus nervosus into the nerve of the diaphragm; from which, and the foregoing observation, it follows, that (these particular phenomena not being observable in the brute species) such affections as with more than ordinary vehemence increase or retard the heart's motion, affect the heart more vehemently in man
V.

"But who is he that wades along the Gloom?"
A Voice began, as from an hollow tomb:

"He seem, as if he meafur'd by the Moon,
In other Worlds, the stealing step of Time."—
"Tell what he asks," return'd the Bard, sublime;
"And then, enquire the Pafs." I answer'd soon,

VI.

"Fav'rite of Heav'n! who try'ft to purge away
That drofs terrene that dims the heav'nly Ray,
Soon to rekindle in the Walks of Light;
Tho' hasting to ELYSIAN Climes ye go,
Yet listen to my words, ye soon shall know
Wonders unheard, amid this noifome Night."

man than in brutes; and such Affections are more sensibly and weightily felt by man, than they possibly can be by the inferior species, whose hearts do not correspond by so many communications with their bowels and inward parts. Of what weighty consequence, therefore, it must be to our present well-being, to observe those admonitions arising from our very frame and make, concerning that indispensible necessity we are always under of regulating, with all possible care, our Appetites and Passions, as they are in so many ways the sources not only of mental but of bodily disorders; a lesson which they can best understand, who will seriously weigh this important consideration, that the whole substantial essence of all virtue, of that whole obedience which is consequently due to the Laws of Nature, is comprehended under the regulation of those Affections and Passions, which are usually employed either in settling, or preserving, when once settled, distinct properties and separate possessions, distributed and divided among all."—CUMBERLAND, de Leg. Nat. Part i. ch. ii. sect. 27.
VII.

"I'll follow, as I can," the Ghost reply'd;
"And, if the consolation be deny'd
To see you, yet your Words can reach my Ear."
I thus renew'd the theme: "A Veil of Clay
I wear, tho' doom'd to view the Empyrean Day,
And in my way I pass'd the Stygian Sphere.

VIII.

"If gracious Heav'n, by this unusual boon,
Distinguish'd me, to climb beyond the Moon,
And reach the Courts of Heav'n, an earthly sky;
Disdain not then, thy former Name to shew,
Ere thou waft destin'd to this scene of woe,
And tell us, if th' ascending Path be nigh."

IX.

"I was a Lombard, Marco was my Name,
To earthly scenes attach'd, I toil'd for Fame;
A candidate for what the World admires.
Your way to Light directly onward lies;—
And, oh! if e'er you see the Latian skies,
Pray for my Freedom from those doleful Choirs."

St. ix. l. 1. I was a Lombard—] Marco Lombardo, a
noble Venetian, and friend of the Author.

With regard to the castigation to which the irascible Tribe are
here subjected, the idea of the Poet seems to be, that, whereas he
had represented the consequences of universal Benevolence under the
Image of Light, increased by Diffusion, the integrity of meta-
phor required that he should represent the effects of Choler by the
Vol. II. P similitude
X.

Instant I said, "My solemn Faith I pledge;
But still some doubts my anxious Mind engage;
Slender at first, but by your words increas'd:
One mournful truth too manifest appears,
Our World no more the Voice of Conscience hears,
Nor Virtue there can find a place of rest.

XI.

"Inform me, whence the tide of Sin below,
That I to erring Man the Truth may shew;

The similitude of Darkness. It is in fact a classical idea; for Homele says of the anger of Agamemnon,

Ἀχριστος ἡμιχρήστης,

it increased like smoke—spreading over the Mind from a trifling cause, like smoke or vapour, from a small beginning, over the face of the country. But considering the Darkness here, according to our Poet's idea, it must be understood as the means of Reformation; and in that light, I am inclined to think it means the melancholy state the choleric man finds himself in, when he perceives that his turbulent passions have left him in solitude; that by those with whom he has any connexion, the social affections (the Light of the Mind) are withdrawn; that clouds and darkness attend his progress, which, wherever he turns his eye, spread over the countenances of all with whom he wishes to hold communication; and are not only visible, but palpable to his feeling, in the signs of general aversion, which he sees in the aspects of all who are not afraid to shew it; so that, fear or abhorrence communicate their sombrous shades to the universal picture of social nature, as it appears to him. In the mean time, he is stung by his own reflections, or kept in a state of continual irritation by real or imagined acts of hostility. This uneasiness is the first step to a cure, which may be completed by the Mind's recovering its activity; of which this reflection is a promising symptom, and the assistance of Divine grace, expressed here by the examples represented in Visions.
For some the influence of their guiding Star
Accuse, and some from wayward WILL derive
That strong propensity, that seems to drive
The Sons of Eve to the destructive Snare.”

XII.
The Phantom seem'd to heave a long-drawn sigh,
And thus, in accents, to a wailful cry
Attun'd, he said: "O blind, among the blind!
What World you came from, by your words you shew;
All means you try, the blame on Heav'n to throw,
And lay on Fate the bias of the Mind!

XIII.
"If that were true, say, would you feel within,
The Power to follow, or escape from Sin?
Say, would your Hearts your virtuous Deeds repay,
With the deep-swelling Tide of conscious Joy?
Or Guilt the sunshine of the Soul destroy,
Whene'er your Feet forfake the heav'nly way?

XIV.
"All Images that play before the sense,
Their motions from the fount of Light commence,
Which all that energy we feel, inspires:
From Heav'n, the motive and the movements flow:
Not all,—tho', that suppos'd, we find below
Reason's bright Lamp, the Guide of wild Desire.

XV.
"This shews the light and shade of Right and Wrong,
And free-born Will, if, to the deadly throng
Of Vices, still an hostile front she shews,
And strikes them to the ground, without remorse:
Exertion gives her more than mortal force;
And Conquest follows her resolute blows!

XVI.
"Would you be free?—with firm resolve, obey
Your nobler Nature, where it points the way.
Celestial Guide! it warms the active soul:
Not, like the gross material fires above,
That thro' the boundless realms of Ether move,
Still navigating round th' eternal goal.

XVII.
"If, by the Syren world allure'd, you run
Aftrey, and follow what you ought to shun;
The Mirror of the Mind the cause will shew:
That Mind, which, issuing from the plastic hand,
The great Creator view'd, with aspect bland,
And sent, an Image of himself below.

XVIII.
"With rapture, like a simple Child, it views
Each gaudy Form; and what it sees, pursues,
(By each fine Pageant, in its turn, beguil'd,) With unreflecting speed; and learns, at last,
The need of mental curbs to check its haste;
Wand'ring at large thro' this terrestrial wild.

XIX.
"But Laws, without a strong conducting hand
To give them sanction, and a due command,
From One, that points a keen and stedfast eye,
On the clear Mirror of eternal Right,
Are, like the Cobweb's texture, far too slight
To check the progress of the roving Fly.

XX.
"But, what are Laws, when He, whose strong control
Ought, with that wholesome tie, to bind the Soul,
Withdraws his Rule, and from the task retires?—
While He, whose Hand should only point the way,
No more contented with the Crozier's sway,
To seize the strong Imperial rod, aspires!

XXI.
"The People, when they see their sacred Guide
Renouncing Heav'n, a Slave to worldly Pride!
To worldly things, by his example taught,
Point their pursuit. From this your ills arise,
More than from Destiny's eternal ties,
Or Adam's crime at Sin's primæval blot.

XXII.
"Two radiant Suns adorn'd the Latian sky,
While Man obey'd Religion's holy tie;
One shew'd the heav'nly Path: his Partner's ray
Directed thro' the mundane Maze below:
Now one is sunk; the other seems to glow.
With noxious light, and fires the fervid Day.

St. xxii. l. 1. Two radiant Suns—] The contest between the Papal and Imperial interests, and its consequence to religion and morality, are here allegorically described. See Flor. Hist.
XXIII.

"Such ills, the Sceptre with the Crozier join'd, 
Inflict on earth, and warp the public mind:
Now Force must gain, what filial Love before
Gave with good-will. But now their union dire
Engenders civil hate, and scatters fire.—
To know the seed, observe the ripen'd store!

XXIV.

"In Frederick's days, the roving Mufe could find
The ripen'd treasures of the cultur'd Mind,
'Twixt Athesis, and Po's romantic bound:
But now, the Ribald's eye, that turns aside
From worth, may roam o'er hill and champaign wide,
And never meet a sight his shame to wound.

XXV.

"Three Veterans still, in that devoted Plain,
Like monuments of better times, remain;
Conrad, Gerardo, and that rev'rend Sage
Guido, whose name refounds to Gallia's coast,
The virtuous Lombard call'd, the pride and boast
Of his fall'n Country, and degenerate Age.

XXVI.

"Judge, when that miscreated Monster soars
Above your champaign, with discordant pow'rs,
If such unequal plumes his weight will bear:
Time sees, or soon will see, his pond'rous fall
Like a disabled Tenant of the Stall,
Roll'd ignominious in his fordid Lair."
XXVII.

"Ah! now I see, with pleasure," I reply'd;
"Why Levi's Sons were sentenced to provide
    For Heav'n alone, exempt from worldly cares.—
But, who is He, whose celebrated name
You lately told, his country's pride and shame,
    Gerard the Sage, his rank and name declare."

XXVIII.

"Is Gerard's name to Tuscan ears unknown?—
You mock me, sure; he wears that name alone:
    His Daughter's fame, perhaps, may cast a light
On this distinguished Man.—He's Caia's Sire.—
But now, farewell!—the parting Shades retire:
    A ruddy lustre paints the gloom of Night.

XXIX.

"An heav'ly Envoy sends the welcome ray;
It seems an earnest of celestial Day,
    Tho' scarce the woven gloom admits the beam:"
Thus spoke the pensive Lombard, as in haste,
And thro' the parting Shadow look'd his last,
    Then plung'd his pale head in the milky stream.

END OF THE SIXTEENTH CANTO.

P 4
CANTO THE SEVENTEENTH.

ARGUMENT.
The Poets emerge from the Darkness into open Day.—Examples of the effects of Anger, shewn to Dante in a Vision.—He is conducted to the fourth Stage, where Selfishness is corrected.

I

If thou that hearest my Song hast ever stray'd
Where Alpine heights extend their giant shade
O'er many a Realm; where fogs obscure the sky,
Which, like the Mole's dim curtain, blots the sight;
Thou saw'st, how, thro' the gloom, the Orb of Light
With faded splendour meets the Pilgrim's eye.

II.

So let Imagination paint with me,
How, in slow motion, like an ebbing sea,
Gradual, the dark Eclipse from Phoebus drew,
As Maro I pursu'd, with haasty pace,
When, at the close of his diurnal Race,
His slant beam on the rock Hyperion threw.

III.

Now twilight hover'd o'er the dusky plain—
What Power, O Fancy! rules the seething brain,
And slings the whole material world in shades?
What hand the auditory porch can bar,
Against the stern, sonorous blast of war,
When thy all-conq’ring spell the Mind invades?

IV.
What leads thy wand’rings thro’ the vasty deep,
When all the organs of Sensation sleep?—
Hail, holy Light! that visits from above,
(Spontaneous, or by some celestial brought.)
And peoples all the spacious realms of thought,
With various shapes of enmity or love!

V.
Quick thro’ my fancy came, with meteor speed,
The bloody image of the ruthless deed
Of Her, whose hands the screaming Infant tore:
Now, clad in plumes, she soothes her lasting woe
All night, with music’s melancholy flow,
And sings her lonely vesper o’er and o’er.

VI.
Again I lost the present, and the past;
A dread vacuity! but not to last;
For, like th’ explosion of a summer cloud,
Down came a bloody Cross, and ghastly Man,
Despite and rage possess’d his features wan,
Writhing in torture, round the fatal wood.

St. v. l. 3. Of Her, &c.—] Progne, who massacred her infant Son, to revenge herself of her Husband’s infidelity.—See Ovid. Metam. lib. vi,
St. vi. l. 4.—bloody Cross, and ghastly Man,] Story of Haman.
and Mordecai.—See Esther, v, vi, vii.

Dr.
VII.
A King, his Consort, and a Rev'rend Sage,
Watch'd from below the dying Felon's rage;
Then, as a bubble on the rolling wave,
Swells to a lucid orb, and bursts away;
So fled at once the horrible display
Of Haman's doom, to dark Oblivion's Cave.

VIII.
And, as a second, when the first subsides,
In sparkling haste along the current glides,
Another scene of horror swell'd within:
Frantic with woe, I saw a Virgin fair,
Wringing her hands, with wild distracted air;
And loud she seem'd to mourn a murder'd Queen.

Dr. Blair, in his Observations on the inveterate Malice of Haman against Mordecai, makes the following apposite Reflections upon the Misery of indulging this or any other Passion: "Assemble all the Evils which Poverty, Disease, or Malice can inflict, and their stings will be found by far less pungent than those which such guilty Passions dart into the heart. Amidst the ordinary calamities of the world, the Mind can exert its powers, and suggest relief, and the Mind is properly the Man. The sufferer and his sufferings can be distinguished. But these disorders of Passions, by feizing directly on the Mind, attack human nature in its strong hold, and cut off its last resource. They penetrate to the very seat of Sensation, and convert all the powers of the Mind into instruments of Torture."


St. viii. l. 6.—mourn a murder'd Queen.] Death of Amata, the Queen of Latinus, whose relentless rage against Æneas is represented as the cause of the War, described in the last Six Books of the Æneid.
IX.

"Ah! why, for ever lost; for ever dear,
Would you resign your Life, to keep me here?
Yet I am cast by cruel Fate away!
And only live to wait another’s doom!
Soon, soon like thee, to fill the yawning tomb,
Your fall, and his, your Daughter’s hopes betray."

X.

As from the Mind the parting Vision flies,
When first the dawn of Morning strikes the eyes;
Yet, ere the Pageant fits away entire,
It sinks in wide misrule; each Image reels,
While Light, with gradual beam, the eye unseals,
And the lax nerves their former tone acquire.

XI.

Thus fled the visionary scenes away,
When, brighter than the gleam of rising Day,
A level line of light salutes my eye:
Around I turn’d, and heard, with new surprise,
Just at my hand, a gentle warning voice,
Which said, "Observe, and stop, the Pafs is nigh."

XII.

And now my bosom felt no other care,
Than, with rapt gaze, to view that Vision fair;

When we consider, that generally they who commit an injury,
do not positively intend by it evil to others, but are solely impelled
by the desire of some imaginary good to themselves, it will, when
made the subject of calm meditation, have possibly some effect in
taking off the edge of our resentment, and assist to enter into the
spirit of that sublime Prayer of our Saviour:—"FATHER FOR
GIVE THEM; FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO."
But, when it met me, like the eye of Noon,
It drown'd, with heav'ly gleam, my mortal pow'rs;
"Behold the Guide to yon' celestial Bow'rs,"
The Bard exclam'd: "he opes the Portal soon.

XIII.
"Wrapt in a veil of Light, he fits sublime,
Nor lets the fervent Suppliant waste his time
In tardy prayer; but, as the winged Will
Spontaneous moves the mortal frame beneath,
So he, spontaneous to the wish of Faith,
Guides our Migrations up the holy Hill.

XIV.
"He is not one, who waits till pray'rs arise,
Whose dull delay, whate'er he gives, denies;
Let us obey his summons, ere the Night
O'ertake us, with its shade; for, else below
We here must wait, till, round yon' Eastern brow,
Ascending Phoebus points his circling Light."

XV.
Thus spoke the Mantuan, as our steps we turn'd
To a steep Pafs, with rising stairs adorn'd;
When a soft breeze, as from an heav'nly wing,
Sudden upon my Visage seem'd to play,
Attended by a sweet, and gentle lay,
That warbled softly to the trembling string.

XVI.
"Blest is the Man, in whose pacific Breast,
No angry Passion lurks, a Demon Guest;"
So chim'd the viewless Choirs, while now the Sun
Flecker'd the western clouds with fainter ray,
And the pale rear of the declining Day
Retreated slowly, as the Night came on.

XVII.
And now, Heav'n's everlasting Lamps we spy,
Successive kindling o'er the vaulted Sky;
I felt my pow'rs relax'd, and inly mourn'd
To feel the stern arrest, that fix'd my feet,
The topmost scale allow'd a lofty seat.
Commanding Heav'n's wide Dome, with light adorn'd.

XVIII.
Moor'd, like a tempest-beaten barque, within
The Haven's Mound, I view'd the glorious scene
At ease, still lift'ning, if a casual sound
The Tenants of this upper Zone betray'd;
Then, turning round, the Mantuan Bard I pray'd
To tell, what Souls possest this rocky Mound.

XIX.
"Altho' our feet are fix'd, to move no more
Till Day-light springs, yet Reason still may soar,
And Fancy wing thr'o' worlds her devious way:
Say, what Offence, beneath the penal rod,
Here feels the dread, correcting hand of God."
Thus I, and thus the Master of the Lay:

XX.
"Here, when the glow of Charity decays,
Nor to laps'd Souls Philanthropy conveys
Her mental Beam, a new supply they find,
Within the verge of this tremendous Mound;
And hence, with falls new-bent, the vast profound
They sweep along, till SELF is left behind.

XXI.
"Now listen, while the Heav'n-devoted crew,
With steady pace, their hallow'd Guide pursue,
And reap some profit from our short delay:
O'er ev'ry being in the general scale,
The potent energies of Love prevail,
SELFISH, or SOCIAL, with despotic sway.

XXII.
"Self-Love, without mistake, instinctive warms:
The other wanders, lur'd by SYREN charms
Seductive, from the gen'r'al source of good;
It courts its object with too fierce a flame,
Or lets cold apathy its vigour tame,
Still varying with inconstant ebb and flood.

XXIII.
"Whilst upward to the PRIMAL GOOD it soars
On steady wing, and by their bounded pow'rs
And genuine worth, material objects weighs:
Or by the claims of SYMPATHY decides
On others' wants, and for their need provides,
The Mind on no forbidden charm delays.

St. xxiii. 1. 1. Whilst upward—] i.e. While the Mind retains its due activity, with its powers fully employed, and in that sub-ordination to Reason for which they were designed, and which all the precepts of Religion and all the lessons of Experience are calculated to direct or restore.
XXIV.
"But, when Temptation leads its devious flight,
Or, when its fury leaps the bounds of Right,
Or falls ignobly short, the Soul rebels
'Gainst the primæval Law, by Heav'n impos'd;
By Love the Crown is gain'd, by Love 'tis lost,
As false, or genuine Good the Soul impels.

XXV.
"That Love, for want of fuel, ne'er may fail,
But mount for ever on th' ascending scale
Of Beings, as they rise, kind Heav'n ordains,
That, on the point of Self, with central poise,
Its pow'rs should rest, and reach the ambient Skies,
Tho' bound below by Fate's resiftless chain.

XXVI.
"None on themselves depend, and all must know,
That all their feelings and perceptions flow
From one supernal, all-supporting Hand:
None can detest the cause by which they breathe,
Nor by Self-hated sink so far beneath
A due regard to Nature's prime command.

XXVII.
"If Reason right pursues the arduous road,
Not that Affection which we feel for God,

St. xxvii. l. 1. *If Reason right pursues—* i. e. If we reason right, we will perceive that the social Affections are the principal means of corruption; that is, from their excess or defect, as appears from the following Detail, and also from Canto xviii.
Nor for ourselves, but social Love alone,
Admits the taint from which most evil springs;
In the Tartarean Pool she dips her wings,
And flings th' infection round from Zone to Zone.

XXVIII.
"Those first the taints, that to their Neighbours' fall
Trust for distinction on this Earthly Ball,
In talents, wealth, or fame, and feed their pride
By the sad sight of others' hopes depress'd,
And o'er their ruin lift a lofty crest,
With Venom from the fount of Good supply'd.

XXIX.
"The next that feel this fullen Stygian flame,
Are those, that fear to lose their wealth or fame,
Or any gift, by bounteous Heav'n assign'd;
And long possess'd of Fortune's turning wheel,
In its ascent another name reveal,
That threats to leave them, and their hopes behind.

XXX.
Another evil thus becomes their good,
And feeds their black desires with Demon food.—
The third are they, who, with the sense of
wrong,
Burn inward, or with fell, vindictive Wrath
Pursue their brethren to the Cave of Death,
By love of Pelf, or fiend-like Frenzy stung.

XXXI.
"This triple fury of the madding Mind,
Ranges the triple Zone we left behind,
Till sharp Affliction brews the faintly tear.—
But now, another Squadron waits your view,
Who, in a lawless track, their good pursue,
Our feet already touch their lofty Sphere.

XXXI.
"All follow good; but with uncertain aim,
At once it kindles, and it soothes their flame;
But if dull Apathy should quench her fire,
Those penal rites its energy renew;
For oft, what Men, with headlong haste, pursue
For Happiness, deceives their warm desire.

XXXIII.
"A Syren Form is she, in tinsel dress'd,
Like Happiness, in stature, shape, and vest;
A Phantom, for the Life within is lost;
Here, her three Choirs of Votaries above
Bewail the wand'ring of perverted Love,
In gradual stages round the lofty Coast."

END OF THE SEVENTEENTH CANTO.
CANTO THE EIGHTEENTH.

ARGUMENT.
The Nature of Social Love, or Sympathy, further explained.—
Description of the Means by which the contrary Vice, of Apathy, or Selfishness, is corrected, which gives rise to another Conversation.

THE Poet paus'd, and with attentive eye
My looks perus'd, if there he could esp'y
My doubts dissolv'd; but still my eager Mind
For deeper draughts of Knowledge seem'd to long,
Tho' reverential Silence bound my tongue,
And silent still I stood, but not resign'd.

II.
"My words may cause disgust," within I said;
But He the motions of my Mind survey'd,
And soon he gave the confidential Sign:
With Hope renew'd, "Celestial Guide!" I cry'd;
"Your hand the heav'nly Prospect opens wide,
And clears the mental View with skill divine.
III.
"But the Desire remains unsated still,
To know the Source of Love; \textit{from whence} the will
\hspace{1em} \textit{Draws wholesome draughts, or drugs the magic Bowl}
\hspace{1em} \textit{With bitter juice.}" \textquote{Your reason,} he reply'd,
"With keeneft beam, must now pursue its Guide,
\hspace{1em} \textit{To learn how Error's fogs obscure the Soul.}\n
IV.
"The Soul of Man, instinct with warm Desire
Of gen'ral good, pursues with vagrant fire,
\hspace{1em} \textit{All pleasing objects as before his eyes;}
They rise in turn, and wave the gaudy wing,
\hspace{1em} \textit{While kindling Fancy, with elastic spring,}
The active powers with energy supplies.\n
V.
"The \textit{Apprehension} first surveys the form,
The \textit{Semblance} fires the Will with potent charm,
\hspace{1em} \textit{Inspir'd by genuine or apparent good:}
Instant, the Spell possesseth all the Soul,
\hspace{1em} \textit{And turns, as to an Heav'n-appointed goal,}
The captivated Mind, by Love subdu'd.\n
VI.
"Love, \textit{in this golden Zodiac}, likes to run,
\hspace{1em} \textit{With course as constant as the circling Sun;}\n\hspace{1em} \textit{St. vi. l. 1. Love, \textit{in this golden Zodiac, --]} Love, which
\hspace{1em} \textit{may be called the operation of God on us,} always carries us to-
\hspace{1em} \textit{wards universal good. It is not the intention of our Creator, that we}
To PLEASURE link'd, it holds, in constant chase,
The rising forms of Joy; while young Desire
Points to one object, like ascending Fire,
That mounts instinctive, thro' unbounded Space.

VII.
"And, as the spreading flame pursues its food
Till feasted full, so, sir'd by forms of good,
The kindling Mind by fatal impulse glows
Till by Enjoyment check'd. You hence may learn
Their hapless lot, who wait not to discern
Love's genuine objects, from unreal shows.

VIII.
"Love's vestal Fire, and spurious Flame, they praise
Alike, and hail its name with lasting Lays;
For tho' all objects, made by Heav'n, display
The universal stamp of Good and Fair;
Passion may fire, or Apathy impair
Our Love, and lead it far from Nature's way."

we should stop at particular things, but make them steps or degrees
to raise our Affections to that which may be called the means of
giving us such enjoyment as is fitted to fill all the capacities of the
Mind. REASON is given us, to enable us to balance one good with
another; to deliberate on our choice, and to make the future pre-
dominate over the present. If we abuse this faculty, if we fall short
of the supreme good to which we are impelled by a sort of in-
stinct, or go astray after other objects, we are guilty of opposing
the design of Him, who has given us this instinct to impel, and
reason to give its impulses due direction.—See Preliminary Essay.
See also Platonis Symposium, Oratio Socratis.

Q 3
IX.
"Your words, immortal Bard," I straight reply'd,
"Illume my Soul, which else had wander'd wide;
Blind to Love's nature, yet some doubts remain.—
If still external objects wake the flame,
Can wand'ring Fancy merit praise or blame,
Following each Image, as it fires the Brain?"

X.
Thus he return'd: "What Reason can descry,
That I can tell. But, in the realms of Joy,
Beatrice will dispel, by purer light,
Your doubts, o'ercome by Faith's celestial aid;
To us, confin'd in Death's eternal shade,
Few beams of Truth dispart the gloom of Night.

XI.
"All forms below, even of material mould,
Within a stimulative Power enfold,
Which on the organs of Sensation plays,
And stamps its Image on th' awaken'd Mind;
Th' effect we know, but to the cause are blind,
Of what the Ear admits, or Eye surveys.

XII.
"Hence, Flora courts the smell, and breathes perfume!
We see the Flow'rets cloth'd in vernal bloom;
But that fine Spirit, which resides within,
That breathes Elysium, or invests the Grove
With the green Livery of Delight and Love,
To us, in its effects, is only seen.
XIII.
"But whence, or how, these mingling Forms unite,
And the first movements of the Will excite,
We know no more, than how the frugal Bee,
By instinct urg'd, the flow'ry fields explores,
And from the meads collects her golden stores,
The impulse giv'n, from Praise or Blame is free.

XIV.
"But, paramount above the busy train
Of various Forms, still fleeting in the brain,
Reason surveys the Visionary Band,
Selects, rejects, deliberates, decides,
And Praise and Blame with equal poise divides,
As Love's excess or want requires his hand.

XV.
"Our Freedom here the ancient Sages place,
And hence they build upon a moral base
The commonwealth of Man; for Nature still,
Tho' the perceptions at her bidding move,
And the first impulse feel of Hate or Love,
'To her assigns the freedom of the Will.

XVI.
"Hence, Love from strong Necessity derives
Her being, and within the bosom lives;

St. xiii. l. 6. *The impulse giv'n—* We are passive in receiving the ideas of external things; but when we have received them, the operation of Reason commences (Stanza xiv.), or ought to commence.

Q. 4
'Tis yours to fan her never-dying blaze:
That Virtue, which Beatrice hymns above,
Is Freedom of the Will, sublim'd by Love:
Learn then the song, with heart and voice to raise.

XVII.
"And now, below, the Moon in crimson dy'd,
Lifted her waning brow with fullen pride;
The twinkling Stars appear'd around her throne
In dim and scatter'd files, with splendour wan,
Against the current of the Skies she ran,
Where Sol in Scorpio mark'd the radiant goal,

XVIII.
"Now, 'twixt Old Cyrrus and Sardinia's brim,
Where Roman eye beholds her chariot swim
In Ocean, ere she sets, her floping team
Diana drew; while o'er the theme profound,
By Maro partly clear'd, in torpor bound,
I must'd, as waken'd from a painful dream,

XIX.
"But soon the museful Mood was swept away,
By flying crowds that came in long array,
And, like a whirling wind, my station pass'd;
No madding Females, by Ismenos' flood,
When sir'd to Frenzy by the coming God,
Circled the holy Hill with equal haste.

XX.
"Thus, thick and fast the Squadrons pour'd along,
Circling the stony Steep, an eager throng,
By all the active energies inhal'd
That true Devotion breeds, or Love to Man.—
Like flying Vapours, stretching from the Van,
Two herald Ghosts their ancient sloth bewail'd.

XXI.
"O, MARY! to that sacred Hill," they cry'd;
"How fast your eager feet the journey ply'd,
To hail your pregnant Friend, and Cæsar flew,
To scourge the Pride of Spain; and, as he pas'd,
Marsilia felt him, like the thunder-blast,
Yet scarce had time the flying War to view."

St. xxi. l. 1. O, MARY—] The visit of the Virgin MARY to Elizabeth, Luke, i. The avidity of Cæsar to complete the object of his ambition, is here contrasted with the languor which obstructs the course of moral improvement in those who are under the influence of the selfish Passions. The appearance of those who are represented here, as being cured of apathy, and restored to their moral feelings, has a good poetical effect; but, at first sight, no adequate cause for their conversion is given, either expressely or allegorically, as in the other instances of castigation and conversion: but we shall be able, in some measure, to solve this difficulty, by attending to the previous conversations of the two Poets. The arguments for Philanthropy, there introduced, from considering the nature of the chief good, and the causes of the right direction and deviation of the selfish and social Passions, must be supposed to be by some means still more forcibly impressed upon the Minds of those who are here introduced as under discipline. It must likewise be remembered, that the great obstacle to the activity of the Mind, and the exertion of Reason and the social Affections, is its long passive habits, and the dangerous association of ideas it has formed during these habits. As these Spirits are supposed to be liberated from the dominion of Pride, and all the Vices which proceed from it, in the lower regions of castigation, its effects may be easily supposed to
XXII.

Urgent, and loud behind, "Away, away!"
The Squadron cry'd, "the coming Lamp of Day
Upbraids the Lamp of Love, that burns so dim:
Active Benevolence alone renewes
The growth of Grace, like Heav'n's descending dews."—
The distant Rear return'd the solemn Hymn:

XXIII.

"O ye! that for your lukewarm Life atone,
And feel eternal Love impel you on;

to be removed of course. The principal of these, is selfishness, and ungovernable Rage. The latter is described as already subdued; the former we may suppose to expire, in a great measure, with its cause. Reason is then allowed to exert its native energy, by the assistance of Divine grace. The sympathetic or social affections of course revive, and, by proper cultivation, are directed to their proper objects; but as in them further deviations may ensue, there is a necessity for still new improvements, and new exertions, as described in the following Cantos.

A general means of moral improvement to all the candidates in the several regions, seems to be signified by the concussion of the Mountain, mentioned in the 20th Canto. This seems to mean the powerful operation of Divine grace on those who have made a conscientious use of the active powers of their Minds. This concussion is described as caused by the ascent of a Spirit to Paradise, from the regions of Purification, to denote the strong effect which the prospect of heavenly bliss may be supposed to have on them, whose efforts have been strenuous in the progress of moral improvement.
This mortal Man, (nor think I cheat your Eyes,)  
A passage to the next Ascent implores;  
O tell, where he may find the op’ning Doors,  
And teach him, with the coming Sun, to rise!"

XXIV.
So pray’d the Mantuan Bard. A gentle Voice  
Reply’d, "The ready Path not distant lies.  
Follow; but if ye loiter, we are gone! —  
So keen the spur of Love impels our flight,  
We burn, we burn, to match the race of Light,  
By Justice hurried round the circling Zone.

XXV.
"You see the Abbot of Saint Zeno’s Towers,—  
When Barbarossa rul’d the German Powers;  
Whose rigour long Milan is doom’d to mourn:  
Just plunging in the Grave a foot, I see,  
Of one, that o’er the holy Family  
Dar’d to advance his Son, in Scandal born.

XXVI.
"Condemn’d to join a dark Demonian crew,  
That Prince his arrogance shall quickly rue,

St. xxv. l. 1. Abbot of Saint Zeno—] His name was Alberto, noted for his apathy and neglect of duty.—Landino.

St. xxv. l. 4. Just plunging in the Grave—] By the person soon destined to fill the grave, he means Alberto della Scala, Lord of Verona, who made his spurious and profligate Son Abbot of Saint Zeno.
Who rais’d a Stigmatic, of spurious birth:
Mark’d for the Fiends, in body and in soul,
To rule the rev’rend Choir, with proud control,
When their more worthy Pastor left the Earth.”

XXVII.
I know not, if he still purfu’d the theme,
So quick he vanish’d like a Morning Dream,
And, with the kindling Van, before us flew:
But those sad accents I remember well,
Accents, that on my Mem’ry long shall dwell,
When, lo! another Voice my notice drew.

XXVIII.
“Attend,” the Mantuan cry’d; “those sounds that come
So deep and hollow thro’ the midnight gloom,
Convey a charm to brace the nervelesf hand
Of Negligence.” “O base, ignoble Crowd!”
The foremost cry’d; “you pass’d the parting flood,
Yet to your Heirs resign’d old Jordan’s Strand!”

XXIX.
“O, lost to endless Fame!” another cry’d;
“Who, with Æneas, plough’d the stormy tide;

St. xxviii. l. 6. Jordan’s Strand—] The degeneracy of the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, who, not choosing to pass Jordan, had their inheritance allotted to them on the other side of the river. Numb. xxxii.

St. xxix. l. 2. Who with Æneas—] The Multitude of the Trojans who were left by Æneas in Sicily, when he failed to Italy. Virg. Æn. v. ad fin.
[237]

Yet, recreant to the cause, your Guide forsook."
These awful Syllables that pass'd along,
(The modulations of an airy tongue,)
Upon my startled Ear alternate broke.

XXX.
Thick-coming Fancies, in an endless train,
And thoughts, engend'ring thoughts around my brain,
Ran in a maze of Meditation deep:
My Lids I clos'd, to aid my mental View,
And Morpheus soon his Veil Cimmerian drew,
O'er my drown'd Sense, and whelm'd my Eyes in Sleep.

END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CANTO.
CANTO THE NINETEENTH.

ARGUMENT.

Dante is conveyed in a Vision to the Fourth Stage, or the Region of Avarice, where he meets the Spirit of Pope Adrian the Fourth.

Now came the chilling Hours before the Dawn,
When all the Day’s precedent heat withdrawn
Forsook the air, and Saturn’s full’en sway,
Augmented by the Earth’s projecting shade
Above, a leaden league with Cynthia made,
And every genial influence chas’d away.

II.

Now draws the Geomant his magic ring
On the dark ground, and, ere the tardy Spring

* "Hitherto," the Commentators say, "the more spiritual or diabolical Vices have been exposed; viz. Malice, and its offspring, Pride, Envy, and Selfishness. The Poet now proceeds to those Vices, which arise from the indulgence of the Senses; and which may be called, more properly, Corporeal; viz. Avarice, Intemperance, and Concupiscence.—Landino, &c.

St. ii. 1. i. the Geomant—] Geomancy is a species of divination, derived from certain figures drawn on the earth, at a certain hour before the dawn.
Of Day, faint glimmering, breaks the fullen gloom;
In the receding Stars his fortune views,
When Sleep, descending, with the Morning dews,
My languid Sense obscur'd with drowsy fume.

III.
Nor pass'd in solitude my torpid trance,
For soon a Female, with distorted glance,
Short of her hands, with members out of place,
With pale, sepulchral hue, before me stood;
And as the bright Sun warms the frozen blood,
She seem'd to feel my eyes' enliv'ning rays.

IV.
Speech was permitted first, and soon began
Love's purple hue to tinge his vifage wan:
Before my eyes an Angel seem'd to swim,
Then, with a melody so sweet and clear,
The lovely Stranger charm'd my ravish'd ear,
My Spirits danc'd respondent to the hymn.

V.

"I am that Syren Form, that led away
The vent'rous Greeks to my pacific Bay,
In Pleasure's track, the Path that Man pursues;
Even sage Ulysses, captive to my song,
Obey'd my call, the foremost of the throng;
A call, my happy Vassals ne'er refuse."

St. iii. l. 2.—For soon a Female,] Vision of Worldly Pleasure, whose false pretences are detected by the Genius of true Enjoyment, previous to the contemplation of the sensuous Vices, and their correctives, given in the ensuing Cantos.
VI.

The warbling scarce was o'er; a saintly Dame
Came on, with flying feet, and eyes of flame:
"O, holy Mantuan! who is this?" she said:
Abash'd, he seem'd to hear, and rent away
From that deluding Fair; her rich array,
And all, the foulness of the Fiend display'd.

VII.

My sense, offended by the foul perfume,
Issuing from that detected Monster's womb,
Soon rous'd, and swept the fleeting dream away.
To gentle Maro, then, I turn'd my eyes:
"Thrice have I call'd," he cry'd; "at length arise,
And gain the Passes with the op'ning Day!"

VIII.

O'er Ocean's brim the Wheels of Phoebus roll'd,
And touch'd the shadowy Mound with fluid gold,
That girt the Mountain with a spiral Zone;
Westward we journey'd, with the Sun behind,
My bending body shew'd a lab'ring mind,
When soon a Voice was heard, that call'd us on.

IX.

Near was the sound; and, more than mortal sweet,
Aloft, incumbent o'er the dark retreat,
The Speaker we beheld; his snowy wing
My vifage fann'd, with ventilation soft.
"Happy are they that mourn!" aloud, and oft,
A viewless Choir above, were heard to sing.
X.

"Happy are they that mourn the bonds of Sin;
Celestial Freedom soon shall break the gin,
And o'er their souls unusual comfort shed."

Quick were the sounds I heard; but still my Mind
I felt to Darkness and to Doubt resign'd.

"Why art thou thus deprest?" the Mantuan said.

XI.

"That Vision of the Morn," I quick reply'd,
"From each surrounding object turns aside
My thoughts, still harass'd with that uncouth Sight."

"That Beldam was the Witch of Worldly Joy,"
The Bard return'd; "her mourning Tribes on high
Possess three Stages of the Mountain's height.

XII.

"You saw how Reason tore, with eagle-grasp,
The fine disguise of that envenom'd Asp;
Let that suffice: and now pursue your way,
Till her great Victress you behold above,
Waving the Banner of eternal Love,
Round the wide circuit of empyreal Day."

XIII.

As the tir'd Falcon, ere on Earth the light,
Turns to the well-known lure, and speeds her flight,
Where her glad Lord prepares the favoury feast;
Thus eagerly I pass'd the rocky strait,
So ply'd my feet to find the op'ning Gate,
Till on the rocky verge, at last we rest.
XIV.
There, all extended on the rugged stones,
Victims I saw, that, with repeated groans,
Made the long vallies of Lustration ring:
"O cruel Bondage of the soaring Soul,"
They sung; "our Spirits, wing'd to mount the Pole,
To this dire Adamant in torture cling."

XV.
The interrupting sob, with frequent swell,
Scarcely allow'd their deep distress to tell:
"Chozen of Heav'n!" I cry'd; "whose pond'rous
Conscience, and rising Hope, may render light;
Tell, where we may ascend the rocky Height,
To view the Regions of superior Pains."

XVI.
"If you along the verge, unhackled go,
And wish to climb the Hill's projecting Brow,
Turn to the left;" a Voice, in plaintive strain,
Reply'd. I knew, that an unbodied Shade
I seem'd to him, and to the Bard convey'd
My meaning in a glance, nor ask'd in vain.

XVII.
The gentle Poet soon my search allow'd,
To find the Speaker in the prostrate crowd;
And, bending o'er him, as entranc'd he lay,
I cry'd, "Oh, Spirit! whom your woes prepare,
An earthly guest, to breath empyreal air;
One moment, at my suit, your task delay.
R 2
XVIII.

"Tell, who you are, and why thus prone you lie,
Forbid to view the Glories of the Sky;
And say, if aught, my case in other climes
Can shorten your distress; when I return
To that base world, where yet I'm doom'd to mourn,
On that disaft'rous Stage of woes and crimes."

XIX.

"Soon shall you know," the Spirit made reply;
"Why darkling here, like Aliens of the Sky,

St. xviii. Tell, who you are, &c.] The correction of Avarice is described with a due attention to the manner in which that vice acquires its dominion over the Mind. As the eye, when too often fixed upon the Sun, retains a dusky image of that luminary, which it reflects, for a time, upon all external objects on which it happens to turn its attention; so the eye of the Mind, by being too intensely directed upon the means of worldly prosperity as the chief good, contracts a similar disorder, which tinges all its moral views, and preffents all other objects to it in colours derived from this attractive idol. This disorder increases, till, like the jaundiced eye, it sees every thing through this medium, and weighs the respective value of every pursuit by this balance: then the deception is gradually communicated to all the feelings, till, as in the case with Midas, not only every thing seen, but the objects of all the senses, are associated with this predominant impression, and all the active powers of the Mind operate under this determination. This is figured here, by the Man being gradually bent down to the earth, excluded from all communication with external objects, and confined to that alone in which he placed his chief felicity. This being a state so contrary to Man's original destination, and to the natural habitudes of the mental powers, must be attended with that degree of mental anxiety mentioned here, which is meant by Providence as the first step to moral convalescence, affliated by the operations of Grace, represented here by the concussions of the mountain, as observed above.
[ 245 ]

We thus salute the soil; but, if my Name
You choose to learn, and to repeat on Earth,
I fill'd Saint Peter's Chair, and drew my birth
From an old Lineage not unknown to Fame.

XX,

"Between Siestra and Chaviera flows
A gentle river, which its name bestows
(Far fam'd Lavagna) on my lineal Sires:
One Moon I bore the Pontiff's Robe of State,
Ah! light as down, is every other weight
To him, who, still to keep it clean, aspires.

XXI.

"Till then, I liv'd a forlorn slave to gain,
My Name was ever first in Mammon's train;
But, seated now aloft, I saw my Sin:
Rais'd to my wish, no more my soul could crave,
Suspended now betwixt the Throne and Grave,
I found a dread vacuity within.

XXII.

"Startled to feel my unallay'd desire,
I bade the sublunar World retire,
A juster end of Love resolv'd to find:
My soul, that labour'd in the mines below
Till then, was sentenc'd here to penal woe,
Till from the Dust I rose, by Pain refin'd.

XXIII.

"Here, dust of gold deplores the dreadful doom;
Here, chain'd a season to its marble tomb,
R 3
“Tell me more:
A vengeful sound,
A terrible woe.

But it’s clear, it’s clear,
To me and you,
To all we own,
To all we know and feel.

And I think
As I recline
On the firmest stone,
Or on the zone,
And I say, “Fearful Fall.””
To all Emmanuel's Servants is the same.
Farewell, ye Pageants of this earthly Ball;
One rank beyond the Grave has levell'd all,
Unless superior worth distinction claim.

XXVIII.
"If right you understood what Heav'n declares,
That no connubial rite the Race repairs,
No human compact in the Skies are known,
You had not vex'd my ears with titles vain;
Pursue your way nor longer here remain,
Your presence checks the penitential groan.

XXIX.
"No longer thus disturb my holy task,
But, if a favour such as I may ask,
I have one nephew, (if Lavagna's Line
Have spread no taint thro' his degen'rate blood,)
He well may yet deserve the name of Good,
Bid him remember me.—All joy be thine!"

END OF THE NINETEENTH CANTO.
CANTO THE TWENTIETH.

ARGUMENT.
The Poets meet with the Spirit of Hugh Capet, who recites many Examples of Poverty, Liberality, and Avarice.—An Earthquake ensues, which is succeeded by a general Act of Devotion.

AGAINST the Prelate's high resolves, in vain My wishes strove, a short delay to gain, And thirsting, from the pure instructive rill I was compell'd to part: the Mantuan Sage Led me, reluctant, to the rocky ledge, Whose double cinchure bound the lofty Hill.

II.
With cautious feet the outmost verge we trace; The prostrate Sinners fill'd the inward space, Who, on the rugged pavement, wept away, The captive Mind's eclipse, that journeys on After Hyperion's wheels from Zone to Zone, And rules the World with universal sway.

III.
Curfe on this wolvish Fiend's infatiate maw, More victims feel thy unrelissted paw,
Than any other beast of prey devours:
All powerful breath! whose Spirit can refine
To purest gold the Soul's degenerate mine,
When wilt thou visit those devoted Towers?

IV.
With slow, deliber rate feet we trac'd the Path,
And heard the captive Crew lament beneath;
Whence soon these mournful accents caught my ear,
As of a Soul by sharpest pains oppress'd:
"O Poverty! you were a welcome guest
To sainted Mary, while she sojourn'd here.

V.
"Witness the manger, where her pious care
Shielded her Infant from the wint'ry air."
"Pride of the Roman World!" another cry'd;
"In honourable want your days you past,
And deem'd the Man by opulence disgrac'd,
Who by dishonest means his stores supply'd!"

VI.
More welcome than the Pæan's lofty sound,
My soul, with full accord, these accents own'd,
And much I long'd, amid the prostrate Dead,
To find this humble Minstrel of the Poor:
Long, long I search'd around the rugged shore,
And scrutiniz'd their files with cautious tread.

St. v. l. 3. Pride of the Roman World—] Fabriicus, who refused the bribes of Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, to betray his country. See Plut. in Vit. Pyrrhi.
Sage Nicolaus next he gave to Fame,
Who fav'd the gentle Sisterhood from shame,
When their fresh blooming charms their Father fold
For proffer'd coin; a portion he supply'd:
Taught them in Heav'n's protection to confide,
And brought from Satan to Emmanuel's fold.

"Sweet Minstrel! tell thy former Name," I said;
Who, warm'd by Virtue, in this chilling shade,
Extol'd the Dead, with solitary song,
And not in vain; when to the nether clime
I go, to measure out my term with Time."—
Thus soon he answer'd from the prostrate throng:

No pois'nous stem, with more malignant dew,
Infests the Christian world, than that which drew
From me, the venom of its spreading boughs:
Bruges and Douay, Ghent and Lisle, could shew
(Had they but power) what gratitude they owe
To us; and to their doom I join my vows.

Hugh Capet was I call'd; the double Name,
Louis and Philip (both consign'd to shame),

St. K. L. I. Hugh Capet—] Was not the son of a butcher of
Paris, according to the vulgar story here adopted by the Poet, whose
animosity was inflamed against the whole Capetine family, on ac-
count of the part taken by Charles of Anjou, and De Valois,
From me deriv'd, the Gallic sceptre sway'd;  
The shambles of Lutetia gave me birth,  
When Charlemagne's proud Line was sunk to Earth,  
Except one youth, in holy weeds array'd.

XI.
"For him I held the reins, and found my pow'r  
In vassals, and in wealth, from hour to hour  
Increas'd; till, to the Crown, with easy hand,  
My Son I led; from him the royal Crew,  
From age to age their humble lineage drew,  
Who stretch'd their sceptre o'er the Celtic Strand.

XII.
"While to the Southern district yet confin'd,  
Their low condition curb'd their mounting Mind;  
But when the Norman plains, and Ponthieu fell,  
With Guienne's vineyards, to their lucky lot,  
By fraud and force of gold; our Race forgot  
Their source, and soon began with pride to swell.

in the affairs of Italy. He was the son of Hugh Count of Paris,  
grandson of Robert Duke of Aquitain, and having been made  
Mayor of the Palace to Louis the Fourth, of the Carlovingian  
Line, succeeded that King, who died childless. But he himself had  
a sort of title to the Crown, being descended, by the female line,  
from Charlemagne. The ninth Stanza alludes to the Invasion of  
Flanders by Philip le Bel, one of his descendants. He con-  
quered the whole country, and deposed its rightful Sovereign; but  
was deprived of his ill-gotten spoil, by an insurrection of the inhabi-  
tants. For an account of his disputes with Boniface the Eighth,  
alluded to here, see Flor. Hist. His perdition of the Knights  
Templars, is well known. See Mezeray. See also Villani,  
lib. viii. c. 53."
XIII.

"Like a foul Demon, on the tainted gales,
Palermo's tyrant, o'er the Latian vales
Malignant hung, and quaff'd Imperial gore;
When Conrade fell: but more infernal joy
He felt, when sage Aquinas fought the Sky,
Dismiss'd by poison from his native Shore.

XIV.

* Another carnal Fiend, that wears his Name,
(Alike in birth, in fortune, and in fame,)
The pregnant round of fated Time shall bring,
In peaceful garb. I see him item the tide!—
I see him thro' the Tuscan squadrons ride,
And, with Iscariot's weapon, clear the ring.

XV.

"No sceptre shall he gain; but black renown,
With all her snakes, his Gorgon head shall crown:
Far, far in Hades, shall the Miscreant weep,
And heavy shall he feel the hand of God!—
He laugh'd at Tuscan woes, and drank their blood,
Till Justice waken'd from her iron sleep.

XVI.

"Another yet I see, with recreant breath,
(From his dismafted Pinnacle drag'd to Death,)

St. xiv. l. 1. Another carnal Fiend—] Charles de Valois.
See Flor. Hist.

St. xvi. l. 1. Another yet I see—] Charles de Valois, Son to Charles I. of Anjou, King of Naples, and Commander of the Angevin fleet in the bay of Naples. He was challenged by Doria,
For his ignoble ransom fell his child,
His Daughter, barter'd for a grasp of ore!—
Pale Av'rice boast your old renown no more!—
A Father's love is by your arts exil'd.

XVII.

"But, to eclipse all other crimes, behold
Where fell SCIARRA storms ANAGNIA's hold,
And drags the Vicar of his Lord away:
Behold the rev'rend Sire expos'd to scorn,
And captive by the Tribe of VALOIS borne,
Till from their bondage Death redeems their prey.

XVIII.

"I see the Temple, by that Judge profane,
Raz'd to the ground; and to th' ignoble chain
Its Guardian doom'd. O Ruler of the Skies!
When shall I see his deadly deeds recoil
On his own head, and when refund his spoil?
Tardy thy Judgments seem; but thou are wise!

XIX.

"Accept this answer to your first demand;
This to your next: when at your sacred stand

DORIA, the famous Admiral of ARAGON; whose invitation to an engagement he rashly accepted. DORIA having given previous orders to some of his Captains, to bend all their attacks against the Imperial galley where VALOIS commanded, he was quickly overpowered and taken prisoner; nor would his life have been spared, but for the interference of CONSTANTIA, wife to Peter of ARAGON. By this CONSTANTIA, came his title to NAPLES and SICILY. See Flor. Hist.
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The Hymn to Mary's Name you heard us raise:
Know, scorn of worldly things our song supplies
With daily themes: when Night invests the Skies,
Then selfish deeds we mourn in hoarser lays.

XX.

"Then dark Pygmalion's bloody hand we sing,
Who sheath'd his blade (impell'd by Mammon's sting),
By night, in mild Sichæus' holy side;
And Midas, by his lust of gold distress'd,
For ever hungry at a splendid feast,
A theme of scorn for disappointed Pride."

XXI.

"Then Achan's deed the changing Choirs proclaim,
Who stole the spoil, and fullied Judah's name;
And Joshua's just award concludes the strain.
Then loud we chant Sapphira, with her Spouse;
To Heliodorus next, the measure flows,
Spurn'd by a shadowy steed in Salem's fane.

XXII.

"The Name of him, who slaughter'd Polydore,
The general chorus sends around the shore;
And Crassus, who the taste of gold was taught,
Thus in loud notes the pausing numbers swell;
Then in low murmurs run along the vale,
As Passion's varied tones inspire the thought.

XXIII.

"Not I alone, recumbent in the dust,
Extol the bright examples of the just;"
But, in a pause of music, chanc’d to raise
A solitary note.” He spoke no more;
We journey on along the stony floor,
And to the portal press, with hasty pace.

XXIV.
When, lo! at once the Mountain seem’d to move
With all its nodding battlements above,
High over head the reeling fabric frown’d,
A death-like cold pervaded every nerve:
Ægean Delos thus was found to swerve,
Ere an Asylum there Latona found.

XXV.
Thus ere the radiant Twins that rule the Sky,
And Earth’s revolving Zones alternate eye,
Were born, it totter’d oft, tho’ now secure;
But soon loud anthems, with respondent lay,
From our transported Fancies charm’d away
The billowy heavings of the rocking floor.

XXVI.
"Fear not," the Mantuan cry’d, and held me fast;
"Till this explosion of their Zeal be past,
My hand shall guide you.” Soon a second peal
Of full Hosannas, from the gen’ral Hoit,
Sounded so loud, the words almost were lost,
. Or on my ears but indistinctly fell.

XXVII.
Not the Judæan Shepherds on the lawn,
That heard it first before the springing dawn,

St. xxiv. 1. 5. Ægean Delos—] See Ovid. Metam. Lib. vi.
With such amazement listen'd to the song:
At once the penitential strain was still;
The deep vibrations of the holy Hill
Came to a pause, and quick we sped along.

XXVIII.
Still thro' the fetter'd Squadrons we pursu'd
Our way; the prostrate files their plaints renew'd:
Soon were their momentary raptures past.
Its cause, with fervour, never known before,
I long to learn; but round the rocky shore
The Mantuan urg'd me with angelic haste.

END OF THE TWENTIETH CANTO.
CANTO THE TWENTY-FIRST.

ARGUMENT.
Dante meets with the Spirit of Statius the Poet, on his Progress to Paradise, after having undergone due Lustration.—He explains to him the Cause of the Earthquake.

THAT intellectual thirst, (by nought allay'd
But that still stream from Paradise convey'd,)
Felt by Samaria's Dame, my heart affai'd;
But toil and haste, along th' encumber'd road,
No leisure then to quench my flame bestow'd,
And much my fellow Sinners I bewail'd,

II.
Then, as the mournful Pair our Saviour cross'd,
When sent again from Hades' gloomy coast,
To visit Earth; victorious from the tomb:
Thus, close behind, a disembodied Soul,
Thro' the long files, entranc'd, in silence stole,
Viewing, with pitying eye, the Sinners' doom.

St. i. l. 3. Felt by Samaria's Dame—] See Gospel of John, chap. iv.

S 2
Sudden, the gentle Shade the Bard address'd:
"May Heav'n afford the boon of endless rest."
Soon Maro turn'd, and gave the friendly sign:
"May you the transports of the blest enjoy,
Within th' eternal Palace of the Sky,
Tho' I must never share the Gift divine!

IV.
"Who then, to this dread Stage of Penance led
Your daring feet, if Heav'n forbids to tread
The shining Scale that lifts you to the Skies?"
Thus he. The Bard return'd, "If right you view
Those marks, that on his face an Angel drew,
You'll know what pow'r our confidence supplies.

V.
"But since the thread that Lachesis begins
At birth, and Night and Day incessant spins;
Still on this Mortal's favour'd spindle plays:
His soul, enclos'd in tenement of Earth,
(Altho', like our's, it boast's an heav'nly birth,)
Unguided, ne'er would pass this wond'rous Maze,

VI.
"Far other Images, than we behold,
To his benighted eyes those scenes unfold;
Hence, thro' these visionary walks to lead
His soul, was I commission'd from below,
From the first squadrons of the Sons of Woe,
His tendant, to a certain point, decreed.
VII.

"But tell, (if you can tell,) what mighty cause
Suspended Gravity's eternal laws,
And made the Mountain from its summit nod,
And tremble downward to its solid base;
Whereon the founding Strand, incessant, plays,
The stormy onset of the briny flood?"

VIII.

Benign, with sapient words, the gentle Shade
My intellectual thirst at once allay'd:
"This mystic Mount, by Heav'n's eternal Will,
Thus quakes: no prison'd wind its bowels rends,
No subterranean influence here extends;
But Heav'n's own Laws their stated round fulfil.

IX.

"Heav'n sent the cause, and Heav'n resorbs again
That Power, which moves, thro' all their wide domain,
The Tribes of Penitence; for here above
No falling shower is brew'd, no vapours skim,
No drifted snows the wide horizon dim,
Nor rattling hail assaults the wint'ry grove.

X.

"To the tall Point, thro' three degrees of pain,
The blended Elements in concord reign;
No clouds obscure the welkin, dense or rare;
No winged light'nings fire the vaulted Sky;
No bending Iris, with her gorgeous dye,
Paints the thin curtain of the humid air.
XI.

"Embowl'd winds, below the pass of Pain,
May rage, and revel thro' their dark domain;
Yet, these supernal feet they ne'er invade.
But, when some ransom'd Ghost ascends the Sky,
Trembling in air, these Rocks attest their joy,
And general anthems hail the parting Shade.

XII.

"A fiery instinct marks the time to soar,
Not like that groveling will, that, long before,
Against the scourge rebels, till Heav'n's control
The eddy current bends, with mighty sway,
And bears the Soul on wings of Love away
(Improv'd by Pain) to Heav'n's eternal Goal.

XIII.

"I in the furnace of Affliction lay,
Till five long centuries had roll'd away,
Ere my long wand'rering will the bias found
That Heav'n approves; before it wing'd its flight
To the pure regions of Elysian Light,
From those high battlements' eternal Mound.

XIV.

"To me, with dumb salute, the Mountain bow'd;
To me, the general Pæan, long and loud,
Arose; when from my foul the viewless chain,
Tho' strong as adamant, spontaneous fell."
Thus the new ransom'd Ghost was heard to tell
The steps that led him thro' this dark domain.
V.
His accents sweet, the mental thirst assuaged,
That deep, before, within my vitals rag'd;
Then Maro thus: "The bondage and release
Which Spirits feel in this mysterious maze,
In such clear view your lofty speech displays,
That every step Imagination sees.

VI.
"Now tell me, who thou art, and why so long
Thou lay'st in dust among the mournful throng?"
Thus Maro spoke, and thus the gentle Ghost:
"When Titus, for Emmanuel's sacred blood
Sold by Iscariot, seiz'd the penal rod,
By Heav'n's command; I liv'd on Latium's coast:

VII.
"I was a Poet, not unknown to Fame,
Tho' alien to the Gospel's holy claim:
Rome call'd me from Tolosa's lov'd retreat,
And bound my temples with immortal bays;
Thebes' and Achilles' deeds inspir'd my lays,
But Clotho left my labours incomplete.

VIII.
"The kindred seeds of fire my bosom warm'd,
Which twice five hundred Sons of Song have charm'd,
Scatter'd around by Maro's tuneful breath:
The Muse from him her inspiration drew,
Foster'd by him the hopeful infant grew,
Else doom'd to linger in the Shades of Death.

St. xvi. l. 4. When Titus—] Statius lived in the reigns of Titus and Domitian. His Thebaid he wrote expressly on the model of the Aeneid. Of his Achilleis, only the two first Books were finished.
"Once to have seen him, ere my eyes were clos'd,
I would have borne whate'er the Fates impos'd;
Another journey of the rolling year."
A sign of secrecy, the Mantuan gave
To me, and stood as silent as the Grave;
The injunction scarce my eager mind could bear.

As each alternate Passion leaves a trace
On the still-varying muscles of the face,
Fictitious oft; but, by the candid mind,
Conceal'd with pain, the dawn of dubious joy
My features wore; to his enquiring eye
Gave wonder new; and thus the Ghost rejoin'd:

"If Heav'n approve your persevering toil,
Why wear your features that ambiguous smile?"
Perplex'd I stood, while Silence one impos'd,
And one an answer crav'd. With heaving sighs
Awhile I bore their contradicting eyes,
Till gently thus began the Mantuan Ghost:

"Relieve his doubts at once, and frankly tell
That mystery, that seems thy breast to swell:"
I heard, and thus address'd his brother Shade:
"You wonder'd at my smile; but new surprize
Will warm your breast, and kindle in your eyes,
When they perceive the mighty truth display'd."
XXIII.

"That Spirit who directs my eyes above
To the bright beam of sempiternal Love,
Is that prime Poet, from whose lofty lays
You learn'd to climb the high celestial Road;
And many an Hero, and descending God,
Fix'd in the Fane of everlasting Praise.

XXIV.

"If any other cause you deem, but this,
Provok'd me late to smile, you think amiss;
Your grateful homage to the Bard unknown,
In such deep reverential words express'd,
With new sensations fill'd my throbbing breast,
Tho' scarce permitted yet the truth to own."

XXV.

Already had he bent at Maro's feet,
When thus the Mantuan: "Think not here to meet
Aught, but a picture of impassive air;
A Shade no rev'rence to a Shade can pay."
"O strange effect of Love's unbounded sway,"
He cry'd; "to think that you th' embrace could bear!"

END OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CANTO.
CANTO THE TWENTY-SECOND.

ARGUMENT.
The three Poets arrive at the Stage of Intemperance; where they see a miraculous Tree, the Counter-part of the Tree of Knowledge; from whence they hear certain monitory Sounds, adapted to the Place and Audience.

LIKE Light, receding from th' incumbent gloom, Heav'n's Envoy pass'd behind, whose waving plume Had wafted from my unabened face One mark of Sin: when, rising on the breeze, A gentle concert swell'd by soft degrees, And thus, responsive rose the dulcet lays:

II.

"Happy are they that hunger for the food Of Righteousness, and thirst for Eden's flood."
Another Voice reply'd, accordant soon:
"When will its streams my fervent heat allay?"
Then the soft accents seem'd to die away, Tho' Echo still return'd the heav'nly tune.
III.
Still something of my mortal load behind
I left, where'er the circling bound disjoin'd
Gave a new passage to another Sphere.
Light, up the rugged scale I trip'd along,
With the two Masters of the Roman song;
Nor seem'd my limbs their usual weight to bear.

IV.
"Where Love is kindled by congenial fire,"
My sapient Guide observ'd, "the strong desire
By its external signs is quickly known,
Since Juvenal in Limbo's chains was bound;
By his discourse your love to me I found,
Which warm'd my breast in that ungenial Zone.

V.
"How easy seems my toil with such a Friend,
Up those eternal rampires to ascend,
With gentle slope, they seem to court our feet;
But tell (if Amity's strict laws allow
Me to enquire, and you the cause to show)
How Avrice in that breast could find a seat!

VI.
"Could fordiq! Love of Gold a lodging find
Within the limits of that mighty Mind,
That o'er the fields of Nature lov'd to stray,
And knew to touch the springs of Grief and Joy." He spoke; and thus I heard his Friend's reply,
"Your friendship glows in ev'ry word you say."
VII.

"By its effect, the Fancy seems to find
The cause, that often lies in shades behind;
You thought me bound beneath, in Mammon's
Far different was the crime I wash'd away [chain:
With briny tears, while Cynthia's gentle ray
A thousand times was seen to wax and wane.

VIII.

"In that dire conflict, on the Stygian shore
I had been doom'd to toil for evermore,
But that a gleam of heav'nly Grace impress'd
The meaning of your lofty song so clear,
When Lust of Gold you blame, with tone severe,
It quickly chas'd away the latent pest.

IX.

"Nigh one extreme, the other soon appear'd,
Still changing as th' opponent Passion veer'd,
And turn'd the fickle Mind's alternate scale:
With cautious care to squander or to hoard,
I shun'd alike, and thus my soul reftor'd;
Else I had sunk to the Tartarian Vale.

X.

"Alas! how many, in the Day of Doom,
With horrent hair, shall quit the yawning Tomb,
Condemn'd for want of thought! What countless
Profusion breeds; and how it lures along, [harms
With soft assuasive voice, the willing throng:
A subtle Demon, deck'd in Angel charms!

St. x. l. 1. Alas! how many,—] See Inferno, Canto vii.
XI.
"But crimes oppos'd, a like degree of pain
Are doom'd to suffer in Lustration's Reign.
Thus I, a Prodigal among the brood
Of Misers, mingled in the dust, bewail'd
Our common crimes, in that vile durance held,
Till Time and Penitence the Soul renew'd."

XII.
Then thus to him that sung Jocasta's pain,
Began the Master of the rural strain:
"Still some remaining doubts my soul affray;
Your song no vestige of Emmanuel shows,
No sudden spark of pure devotion glows,
Nor faith, by which our deeds alone avail.

XIII.
"What beam of Noon, or Spirit of the Night,
Illum'd your darkenss with celestial Light,
What Lamp ætherial led your favour'd prow
Cross the pure waters by the Father plough'd?"
The Bard reply'd, "You both the gifts bestow'd,
And with the palm and laurel deck'd my brow.

XIV.
"Like one, that bears a shaded lamp, you threw
A beamy light behind, unseen by you;

St. xii. l. 1. —him that sung Jocasta's pain.] Statius. See his Thebaid.
St. xiv. l. 1. Like one that bears a shaded lamp—] This simile of Virgil, bearing a light of what he himself was unconscious, applied to the Lines in his Pollio supposed to be prophetical of the Messiah, is well conceived.
And with benighted feet your Pupil led,
By the long radiance streaming from your hand,
To the blest entrance of the promis'd Land,
And to its blooming bounds my journey sped.

XV.

"When first you sung the Golden Times' return,
And a new Progeny from Æther born,
To bless the world, with Justice by his side;
I caught at once, from your immortal lyre,
The flame of Salem, and the Poet's fire,
And seiz'd the deathless boon, to you deny'd.

XVI.

"But if you wish my words should paint at large
The means that led to Eden's happy verge,
Attend, and hear the process of my fate:
The world, now pregnant with celestial seed,
Scatter'd from Zone to Zone, with Angel's speed
Deliver'd to the Sun her heav'nly freight."

XVII.

"This Miracle, with the respondent Sign,
Of old, deliver'd in thy strain divine,
I ponder'd in the balance of the Mind,
And found the Gospel Proclamation chime
In such full concert with thy note sublime,
That scarce a trace of doubt was left behind.

XVIII.

"In holy converse with the Saints I pass'd
My hours; but, when the wolvish Tyrant chac'd
These Lambs to death, yet still aloof I stood,
Till, with all other sects, their lives compar'd,
Made me all other doctrines disregard,
And ev'ry scruple of the heart subdu'd.

XIX.
"Long ere my Muse had led the Grecian Band
To the dire conflict on Ismeno's Strand,
In other streams the pure baptismal rite
I shar'd; but still conceal'd my nascent faith.
Heav'n I provok'd, to shun a Mortal's wrath,
And worship'd Hades, and eternal Night.

XX.
"For this, while Phoebus journey'd round the Year
Four hundred times, I cours'd, in full career,
Round yon' low rampires, with the frigid train;
Who, dead to Charity's celestial glow,
Run at full speed, and kindle as they go,
Till Love has wing'd them for the bless'd domain.

XXI.
"But, oh! bless'd Poet! whose propitious hand
Drew the dark veil, and bade my views expand,
Till earthly Dread in heav'nly Hope was lost,
Tell, where is Terence? in what distant bound
Cæcilius lives, or Plautus' Shade renown'd?
Is Heav'n their lot, or Hades' gloomy coast?

St. xx. l. 2. Four hundred times] This accounts for most of the
time of the Luithration of Statius, till the time of Dante; viz.
four hundred years in the Regions of Apathy, and five hundred
in the Stage of Prodigality and Avarice.
St. xxi. l. 4, 5. Terence, Cæcilius, Plautus] Celebrated
Roman Poets.
"Say, in what limits do they dwell below?
Are they ordain'd to bliss, or endless woe?"
"With Persius," I reply'd; "and many more,
Led by that Greek who sung the toils of war;
Nurs'd by the Muses with peculiar care,
In lighter Bands they range the nether Shore.

XXIII.
"There oft we celebrate the Muses' Hill,
Where led, in turn, we quaff'd th' inspiring rill,
With Pella's graver tones; the lighter key
Of blythe Anacreon there in concert joins;
With Agathon, Simonides combines,
And all the Tribes of Attic Harmony.

XXIV.
"Antigone, Deiphile, is there,
And sad Ismone, with dishevel'd hair,
As when her brother fell; Argia too,
Hypsipyle, and Manto, join the throng,
And Deidamia, with her Sifters young,
All fam'd in ancient times, and sung by you."

XXV.
Now either Poet, wrapt in thought profound,
In silence stood, to view the prospect round,

St. xxiii. 1. 3. With Pella's graver tones—] Euripides.
5. With Agathon—] A Poet, mentioned by Aristotle, in his Poetics, as the Author of a Poem called Anthus, or The Flower.
Now landed near the first ascending stair;
Four Handmaids of the Sun their task had clos'd;
The fifth was ready at her radiant post,
And took her turn to guide the glowing Car.

XXVI.
Then thus the gentle Guide: "If right I deem,
Still to the right hand, round the Hill's extreme,
Our way conducts us, if we still pursue
Our former custom in the climes of Death."
His brother Bard, that wore the Theban wreath,
With his kind vote confirm'd our hopes anew.

XXVII.
The Phantoms sped before, while I, behind,
Glean'd from their talk the treasures of the Mind,
And learn'd new lessons of poetic skill:
But a strange Sight the conversation clos'd;
A tree, with fruitage hung, our way oppos'd,
Full in the Pafs that led us up the Hill.

XXVIII.
And as the Pine-tree points her boughs on high,
So this, directed to the nether Sky,
That none may climb the dole, suspends its sprays;
Thus spreading far, it seem'd to guard the Hill,
And streaming from its leaves, a limpid rill
Down the rude barrier spread a liquid maze.

XXIX.
The brother Bards, approaching to the bough,
Heard a deep Voice within, in murmurs low:
"Touch not the fruit! be Appetite suppress'd!
'Twas not the fragrant fume of rosy wine
That Mary long'd for, when the Maid divine
Sought a supply for Cana's nuptial feast.

XXX.
"The taste of wine, no Roman Matron knew;
Young Daniel from th' inviting feast withdrew,
And dreams divine his continence repaid:
To acorns hunger gave a savoury taste,
And limpid rills the thirsty fervour chaz'd,
When its glad scenes the Golden Age display'd.

XXXI.
"The Locust, and the wandering Bee, supply'd
The holy Baptist, in the defart wide,
With food; and hence his glory spreads around
The peopled world, where'er the truth is known,
Where'er Emmanuel's sway the Nations own,
And still shall spread, to future times renown'd."

END OF THE TWENTY-SECOND CANTO.
CANTO THE TWENTY-THIRD.

ARGUMENT.
The Poets, among other Inhabitants of this Region, meet with the Spirit of Forese, a noble Florentine; who takes an opportunity of uttering a long and severe Inveotive against the Luxury of the Florentine Women.

WHILE on the waving boughs with stedfast gaze I look'd, like one that spends his barren days Some plummy warbler of the woods to find, With more than father's care, the Bard began: "We better must employ this narrow span, For nobler tasks by Providence assign'd."

II.
My willing eyes and feet his word obey'd; Then, close behind, I follow'd either Shade, And new instruction from their converse caught: When, rising from below, a plaintive Psalm, With holy chanting, broke th' Elysian calm, Inspiring joy by turns, and painful thought.

III.
"Open our lips, O Lord! thy name to sing, And lift our fancies on celestial wing."

T 3
Thus they their proem tun'd. "O, Father! tell, What means this heav'ny melody?" I said. He answer'd mild, "A Squadron of the Dead Thus the long doleful strain of Penance swell."

IV.
As holy Pilgrims, passing on their way, Observe whate'er they meet, but shun delay, And turn their eyes, but still their track pursue: Devout, and silent, thus a numerous Band Of Spectres ey'd me, as they pass'd our stand, But seem'd content to take a transient view.

V.
What a foul-moving Pageant met our sight!— Their wasted eyes, with scant and dismal light, Far, far within each gloomy socket roll'd; With hollow cheek, and ghastly features wan, Each shew'd the semblance of a famish'd Man, Where every bone its place distinctly told.

VI.
Not Erisichthon shew'd such hideous grace, As seem'd reflect'd from each Gorgon face, When Fear and Famine both his features wrung. "These must be they, whom raging Hunger spent," I cry'd; "when Heaven its wrath on Salem bent, And Dames turn'd cannibals, by Fury stung."

5. On Salem bent] The famous siege of Jerusalem by Titus; where a tragical incident is told, of the unnatural means by which a woman supported herself for some time. See Joseph. De Bello Judaico, lib. vii. See also Deut. xxviii.
VII.

"Ah! who would think Pomona could inspire
The longing Soul with such intense desire;
Or, that a purling rill could raise a flame,
That all the bowels scorch'd, and like a blast,
O'er the shrunk skin, and withering features, past,
Leaving a faded Form, without a name?—"

VIII.

Then, deep within a bald and hollow scull,
Two beamless Orbs on me direct'd full,
Gleam'd horrible; and, with a dismal groan,
The Ghost began: "What unexpected Grace!"
Familiar was his voice; his alter'd face
Still kept the shadowy Skeleton unknown.

IX.

But when he spoke, my Fancy soon began
To trace the semblance of the alter'd Man,
And soon Forese's features were confess'd.
Ah, how unlike to him! "No more!" he said;
"Let this Gorgonian mask a Spirit Shade,
Erst, at the festive board a welcome guest;

St. ix. l. 3. Forese] A noble Florentine, Companion of
Dante, in their youth.

Very little need be said, to illustrate that species of pro-
bation which is inflicted on the delinquents here. According to
the Allegorical Theory, the consumptive appearance of their aërial
Bodies, denotes the subjugation of Appetite by Reason and Grace,
and the subjection of the Sensual to the Spiritual Principle.

An argument drawn from medical experiment may possibly have
some weight with those who are inclined to indulge in the pleasures

T 4
X.
"Tell, why you wander here, and who are those
Who thus conduct you thro' the World of Woes?
Delay not long my mental thirst to suage."
"With tears that hallow'd Corse I bath'd below,"
I cry'd; "but here I spy, with deeper woe,
Your features chang'd by some Demonian rage.

XI.
"In Heav'n's blest'd Name, disclose, what direful charm
Has spent you thus, and only left the Form
Of what Forsake was: nor let my Mind
From vain conjecture seek a poor relief;
For me to guess, would but augment my grief,
To the deep secrets of Immortals blind."

XII.
Then he, "The plastic Pow'rs above infill
Such virtue in this fruit and purling rill,
That their attractive force my limbs consume:
A tempest of Desire, which nought can lay,
For ever riles from that cooling spray,
And those delicious apples' sweet perfume.

of the Table. Such excesses are known to impair, not only the action of the larger vessels, but much more those minute and delicate organs of conveyance, by which the nervous fluid is propelled to the brain. Hence proceeds the whole train of nervous disorders; spasms, vertigoes, numbeds in the extremities, the symptom of nervous obstructions in the head, paralytic affections, and apoplexies.
—See Cullen's Practice of Physic.
XIII.

"The Squadrons, hence, that sing with plaintive cry,
Still on the fruitage bend a burning eye,
Till Thirst and Hunger's scourge their Souls refine;
One dismal circle of corroding woe
Suffices not, but round and round we go,
Till our warp'd Passions gain a bent divine.

XIV.

"At length, that Love, which to the fatal wood
Emmanuel led, to this ideal food
Wakes our devotion; as we march around,
We hail it, as it wings our strong Desire
(Even in our Prison) with celestial fire,
Upward to mount, and spurn the sordid ground."

XV.

Soon I return'd: "Forese! from the day
That you forsook your tenement of clay,
Hyperion scarce his annual round has run
Five times complete; if Sin in you expir'd
Ere Heav'n the gust of Penitence inspir'd,
Why is the healing course so soon begun?

XVI.

"I thought to find you in the Bounds below,
Where throngs besiege the Gate that opens slow
To those who late their Penitence delay;
And ling'ring Years for ev'ry wasted Hour
Must pass, before they feel the blessed Pow'r,
Whose scourge prepares them for the Walks of Day."
XVII.

Forese thus: "My Confort's pious pray'r
Brought me thus soon the bitter bowl to share,
That gives a longing for celestial food:
Her meek oraisons, and her falling tears,
Have sped my passage thro' the nether Spheres,
And open'd the portal, which my hopes withstood.

XVIII.

"Such gracious boon, such unexpected gains,
From Heav'n, my Nella's matchless worth obtains;
So much the more, as, 'midst the female crew,
Her solitary Virtue shines afar;
As, in a night of clouds, a single Star;
Its radiance gives the gloom a deeper hue.

XIX.

"Sardinia's frontless Matrons far excel
In modesty, the Maids of Arno's Vale!—
O, Brother! shall I tell, or hide my thought?
The horrible display that Fancy views,
Which soon the pregnant moments will produce,
And Impudence and Pride's disgraceful lot.

XX.

"Soon a stern Voice will teach the shameless kind
A decent covering, as they may, to find,
Their naked shoulders from the Sun to hide!
Was it amongst Barbarians ever known,
That nought but threats can bind the modest Zone,
On the young Virgin and the plighted Bride?
XXI.

"But if these dainty Dames could read the Skies,
And spy the slumb'ring tempest soon to rise,
Those lips that whisper Love, would shriek Despair:
If aught of future times to me is known,
The winged Fury comes in horror down,
Before the Infant's cheek is cloth'd with hair.

XXII.

"Now, Brother, hide no longer who thou art,
To ease the doubts of those who stand apart,
And wonder to behold thy stretching Shade,
With mimic motion every step pursue."
"Past times," I cry'd, "and Pleasures gone, renew,
A Name far better in oblivion laid.

XXIII.

"What moments in the world we past, and how,
Your Conscience tells, I need not ask it now.—
This friendly Spectre led me up the Steep
Last Evening, when the Sister of the Day,
In full reflection to the setting ray,
Her moving Mirror shew'd above the deep.

XXIV.

"He from the dark profundity beneath
Led me, thro' those that wail the second Death,
And mann'd my mortal Pow'rs to mount the Hill,
And climb with painful step the spiral way,
Where Penance points to Heav'n with Sovereign sway,
The strange distortions of the wav'ring will.
XXV.

"I claim his guidance to the favour'd Post,
Where fair Beatrice shall dismiss his Ghost,
And light my footsteps with a purer flame.
Behold the mighty Bard, Ausonia's pride!"
Thus to the haggard Band that stood beside,
Mero I shew'd, and held him up to Fame.

XXVI.

"This Phantom," I rejoin'd, "whose lofty lays
Exalt his Name to secondary praise,
Is he, who lately broke the galling chain,
And bent his footsteps to the realms of Grace;
When the tall Mountain, trembling to its base,
Dismiss'd the Poet from his dark Domain."

END OF THE TWENTY-THIRD CANTO.
CANTO THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

ARGUMENT.
The Poets arrive at another Tree, surrounded by Spirits under Discipline, where they hear many Examples of Intemperance recited. Thence they are conducted to the seventh and last Stage, the Region of Concupiscence.

Our converse nought delay'd our swift ascent,
Nor seem'd our haste our converse to prevent;
The Body's progress, and the mounting Mind,
Together kept their way, with equal pace;
As a light Brigantine pursues its race,
Driv'n onward by the steady Gale behind.

II.
The visionary Men, with pale surprize,
Seem'd to behold our progress, without Eyes;
With beamless sockets o'er my breathing Form,
Looking intent; while to my Friend I said,
"Observe! Papinius loiters in the Shade,
Still lift'ning to the deep Maronian charm.

St. ii. l. 5. Papinius—] Statius.
III.
"But tell (if thou canst tell) thy Sister's doom,
And, if among those Tenants of the Tomb
One macerated Form I knew of yore."
"My Sister," he reply'd, "that matchless Fair,
The triple Foe that led the Stygian War,
Subdu'd, and triumphs now, where Sin's no more."

IV.
He pause'd, and thus again his Speech began:
"To name the famish'd Squadrons, Man by Man,
Is here allow'd. Want has worn away,
With long corrosion, ev'ry former trace,
That gives distinction 'midst the mortal Race,
Ere Heav'n disrob'd them of their Vests of Clay.

V.
"See Buonagiunta there, from Lucca's Plains,
And yon' pale Skeleton, with waisted veins,
By hollow Hunger wafted to a Shade,
Surname'd from Tours, the Papal Chair posse'sd;
Bolsona's Eels supply'd his cruel feast,
For the vile Glutton's board, like Martyrs, fray'd.

VI.
"Then many a spectral Form, in ghastly file,
Each heard his story, with a meagre smile,

St. v. l. 1. See Buonagiunta—] Buonagiunta del Or- bicani, a Poet and Companion of Dante.—Some of his Can- zoni are published in most of the Editions of Petrarch.
St. v. l. 2. And yon' pale Skeleton—] Torsio, Martin the IVth, Pope of that name.—Some Commentators assert that he suffo- rated his eels in sweet wine.
Owing his name, and seem'd with joy to hear
The slender breath of sublunary fame:
No Spirit there, exemption seem'd to claim,
Tho' wasted to a Shade, by want severe.

VII.
There, UBALDIN of PISA, in despair,
Snatching, with eager jaws, the empty air,
And gorging down his visionary feast,
With BONIFACE the thin repast enjoy'd;
Once fill'd with dainties, now an empty void,
Their rich regales were shar'd with many a guest.

VIII.
"Marchese, too, of Bacchanalian fame,
I saw, condemn'd to feel a fiercer flame,
Than ere above in brimming bowls he drown'd:
In FORLI, when he lav'd his longing Soul
With copious draughts from Circe's charmed bowl,
But here fever heat the drunkard found.

IX.
Like one, selecting from a mingled train,
For converse, him, whom others with in vain;

St. vii. l. 1. There, UBALDIN—] UBALDINO of PISA, a famous Bon vivant of the Times, who was Father to BONIFACE, Bishop of RAVENNA.

St. viii. l. 1. Marchese, too,—] Marchese, a Native of FIRLE, near FLORENCE, of Bacchanalian memory; who, being told by his Butler, that his Neighbours said "He was always drinking?"—"And you may tell them," said he, "that I am always thirsty."
Nearer I drew to Buonagiunta's Ghost:
When one, that seem'd my Form to recognize,
And, gazing on my face, with hollow eyes,
Spoke; but his words in murmurs half were lost.

X.
At length, with care, Gentucca's Name I caught,
In torture, issuing from his lab'ring throat,
That scarcely breath'd. "O, who art thou," I said,
"That seems so anxious to converse with me,
With your intent your organs ill agree;
But speak, if speak you can?" The Ghost obey'd.

XI.
"A Maid is born, whose yet unripen'd charms
Shall bid a Poet glow with soft alarms;
Tho' to an hated Clime her birth she owes;
Giv'n in his Verses to sinister fame.—
—If still you guesst, but with a fruitless aim,
My clearer meaning, Time will soon disclose.

XII.
"But tell, if thou be he, so fam'd above,
Whose Mute disclos'd the Mystery of Love,
In Tuscan Rhymes." "You see the Man," I cry'd;
"What Love inspires, in Tuscan Rhymes I sing;
Willing to soar, but with unborrow'd wing,
Nor deck my rustic Mute in Roman pride."

St. x. l. 1. Gentucca's Name I caught,—] Gentucca, a
Friend of the Poet.
XIII.

"Brother," he answer'd, "now the cause I find,
That left Guittone, and myself, behind
So far, with Alanten, tho' fam'd in song:
The flying Chords with master-hand you move,
And trace, with eagle eye, the course of Love,
Far, far beyond our antiquated throng.

XIV.

"He that would hope in Poetry to rise
By other methods, or affects the Skies,
When Love conceals his torch, attempts in vain
To win the plaudit of the few refin'd;
Discordant Maxims darken all the Mind,
And breed confusion in the motley strain."

XV.

He ceas'd, and seem'd content with second Fame;
While the pale Squadron, which behind him came,
Advance, with sober pace; then hurry on,
Like Cranes, that first in groser phalanx fly,
Then flecker, in long lines, the ample Sky,
Winging their voyage to a warmer Zone.

XVI.

Thus, light as winnow'd chaff, by Famine worn,
And urg'd by penal wrath, the Race forlorn.

St. xiii. l. 3. So far, with Alanten,—] Alanten and
Guido of Arezzo, or Guittone, as called here, were cele-
brated Poets of this age. Some Poems of the latter are printed in
many Editions of Petrarch.
Skimm'd, like a sweeping mist, the Mountain's side;
But, as a weary Racer, fallen behind,
With palpitating lungs collecting wind,
Forese loiter'd with the Mantuan Guide.

XVII.
Behind the rear, the Spec'are whisper'd low,
"O, when will you forsake that World of Woe?"
"I know not," I reply'd, "what vital term
Is granted me above;—but this I feel,
That flowly, flowly now, the mundane Wheel
Will seem to move, before I break the charm.

XVIII.
"My soaring Spirit, on instinctive wing,
Fancy, before my fall, shall hither bring,
Join'd with abhorrence of my native Clime:
Still deeper plunge'd in Sin's encroaching gloom,
To ruin prone, and verging to the Tomb,
By Vice more wasted than the Scythe of Time.

XIX.
"But, oh, avenging Heav'n! what scenes succeed!
I see the Felon by his frightened Steed

St. xix. I. 2. I see the Felon,—] The Death of Corso Do-
mati is here described. He was an inveterate enemy to Dante,
and the chief instigator of his exile. He lost his life with those
circumstances mentioned here, in an insurrection of the People,
who suspected him of a design against their liberties. He de-
sounded his house, with some adherents, a whole day, and, at last,
finding it untenable, he fought his way through his enemies on
horseback, and would probably have escaped, had not his horse
taken fright and thrown him. He was dragged a considerable way
with his foot in the flirrup, when he was overtaken by his enemies,
who dispatched him with every instance of cruelty. Landino.
(He that contriv’d her ruin) dragg’d along;
As by some Demon sir’d, she speeds away
With his poor mangled Tenement of Clay,
Pursu’d still onward by an hostile Throng!

XX.
"Hell waits, Heav’n dooms, and Man directs the blow,
That sends the Miserant to the depths below,
Not many circles," (then he turn’d his eyes
Aloft,) "yon burning Wheels shall mark above,
Around the Signs, till dreadful Deeds shall prove
That awful Truth, which now in Darkness lies.

XXI.
"Stay you behind, nor intercept my haste,
Too precious are the moments now to waste
In converse, while the doomful Scourge impends."
Then, as a Steed his Fellows leaves behind,
And o’er the champaign skims on feet of wind,
So the light Spirit flew to join his Friends.

XXII.
When naught but Fancy now his flight pursu’d,
By mem’ry only, like his words, renew’d,
As with the Lords of Helicon I stay’d;
Another Image to my view arose,
A fair autumnal Tree, with loaded boughs,
That o’er the Path-way hung, a tempting shade.

XXIII.
With lifted hands below, a mingled Crowd
Sung round the stem, an anthem long and loud;
U 2
[ 292 ]

Like Infants, eager for the luscious Prize,
That offer senseless Pray’rs, without return;
Yet still they feel their rais’d affections burn,
And view the Object with infatiate eyes.

XXIV.
Thus long they seem’d to breathe a fruitless Pray’r,
Then pass’d away, with disappointed air,
And we approach’d the tantalizing Wood:
Those awful whispers seem’d its boughs to move,
"Pass on, and touch us not; go, seek above,
The willing Plant that gave your Mother food.

XXV.
"Transplanted here, from that paternal Root,
This waving Tree displays her golden Fruit,
And fans the kindling spark of young Desire."
Thus sung the Voice its Zephyrian Hymn,
While, ’twixt the bending Plant, and Mountain’s brim,
We pass’d, attentive to the viewless Choir.

XXVI.
Again the warning Voice renew’d the Song:
"Remember, Man, the cloud-engender’d Throng,
Commixt of Man and Beast, whose drunken rage
Encounter’d Theseus, with infuriate brawl;
Till, drunk with slaughter, swam the nuptial Hall,
And floods of gore the flames of Lust assuage!

St. xxvi. l. 2. Remember, Man—] See the History of Gibson,
XXVII.

"Remember them, who ran, with headlong haste,
To drink, while the decisive moments pass'd,
Consign'd to glory, and with conquest crown'd:
When JeruBAAL against Arabia's Host,
With his thin Squadron kept the bloody Post,
And ting'd, with Heathen gore, the blushing ground."

XXVIII.

Thus, as we pass'd the winding Rock along,
A following Voice those dread examples sung,
Of foul Intem'rance, doom'd to end in shame;
Then spread, with ampler verge, a lonely road:
Silent, along we pass'd, in mournful mood,
Watching whate'er our notice best might claim.

XXIX.

“How are your thoughts employ'd?” a Voice began;
Sudden I started back, with terror wan,
Like tim'rous Doe, that spies the moving snare,
And look'd aloft, to see what caus'd the sound:
Soon a fierce splendour seem'd my eyes to wound,
Like molten glass, or metal's fiery glare.

XXX.

"Behold!" it seem'd to say, "the Pass is here
That leads you upward to a loftier Sphere,

St. xxvii. l. 1. Remember them, &c.,] Battle of the Centaurs
and Lapithæ, at a Marriage-feast. Ovid. Metam. lib. xii.

U 3
To Peace eternal this conducts your feet."
Blind with the sudden blaze, I turn'd aside,
And instant shrunk behind my Mantuan Guide,
Too weak the bright ætherial Flash to meet.

XXXI.
As the soft Breeze, the harbinger of May,
Spreads her light Plumes before the rising Day,
And wakes the World with aromatic Gales;
So seem'd a Wind along my face to move,
Soft as the whispers of inviting Love,
As the bright Envoy wav'd his splendid sails.

XXXII.
"Thrice happy they," the Spirit sung again,
"Who, with a temper'd bound, their gust restrain;
Grace warms their breasts, and not the fiery fume
That fevers all the blood, and leads astray
The staggar'ring feet from Reason's hallow'd way;
Obedient still, they own her rightful doom."

END OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH CANTO.
CANTO THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

ARGUMENT.
The Poets ascend to the last Stage, where the Vices of Concupiscence are under Correction.—In a Conversation with Statius, Dante is informed of some Secrets of the intermediate State.—Some Examples of Chastity are afterwards given.

Now was no time to linger; for the Sun
In Taurus had resign’d his noon-tide throne,
And flaming Scorpio, to the World beneath
Pointed his midnight beam. With eager haste,
Like those whom Sloth allures in vain to waste
The precious hours, we climb’d the narrow Path.

II.
The narrow Path a niggard entry show’d,
Room for a single Man it scarce allow’d
To pass; while, like a Falcon o’er her nest,
That flies and sets by turns, a strong Desire
To clear some doubts, like intermitting fire,
Inflam’d my heart, and funk by turns to rest.

U 4
III.

The Question, oft arising to my tongue,
Upon my lips, in short suspension, hung;
My Reafon falter'd, but my feet pursu'd
My journey on, with unremitting speed,
But Maro mark'd me with attentive heed,
And thus began the Bard in gentlest mood;

IV.

"I see your mental pow'rs upon the wing,
The shaft is drawn; relax the tardy string,
But let your Friends your speculations hear."
Encourag'd by his words, I thus began;
"How can this empty Hope consume the Man?
Can love of needle's food be thus severe?"

V.

"Recal to mind," return'd the Mantuan Shade,
"How Meleager's vital Pow'rs decay'd;
Consuming, as the brand amid the blaze:
It soon will clear your doubts; or, when you spy
Your Image in the Mirror's polish'd eye,
That ev'ry motion, ev'ry look, obeys,

VI.

"The fruit of Knowledge, which appear'd so crude,
Will feed your Reafon with ambrosial food;

St. v. l. 5. Your Image, &c.] i.e. The aërial Body sympathizes with the Spirit, as much as our gross Bodies of terrestrial matter; or as the Image reflected in a Mirror, with the Substance which it reflects. Landino,
- Your Friend, Papinius, will the balm apply,
  To heal the wound." "Forgive me," Statius
  said,
  "If I divulge the secrets of the Dead,
  And shew Heav’n’s doom beneath my Master’s eye."

VII.
Then thus to me: "If you receive, my Son,
My words aright, like yonder beam of Noon
  The darkness from your mind it soon shall chace;
The vital flood, from ev’ry dros offin’d,
No longer nourish’d by the veins that wind
  Back to the heart, the plastic hand obeys.

VIII.
"From ev’ry Organ, all the active Pow’rs
Assemble there; by Time’s maturing course,
The infant Model of the Parent-form,
A Tabernacle for the deathless Mind
Becomes, tho’ yet of Vegetable kind;
  Like the dull Plant, by Nature foster’d warm.

IX.
"In a few Moons, the vegetative Soul,
In ev’ry Plant, must reach its final goal;
  With that it grows, and, as it fades, decays:
But here, progressive, by the boon of Heav’n,
Life’s holy Flame, and piercing Sense, is giv’n,
  Which, in the future birth, its pow’r displays.

St. vii. l. 1. — If you receive, &c.] Statius here enters
into a physical account of the formation of Man, in which I have
taken the liberty to disguise one or two very indelicate images.
X.

"Tho' Time its gen'r al faculties unfold,
And with fine hand the future Members mould;
Yet this nice bound, where Reason's heav'nly ray
With animation blends, no mortal eye
(Not yours with mine combin'd) can hope to spy;
'Tis past the power of language to display.

XI.

"He, that suppos'd an universal Mind,
Distinct in thought, in energy combin'd,
The secret guide of ev'ry human Soul;
Because the viewless Prompter seem'd to sway
No single part of Man's organic clay;
Errs from the truth, as far as Pole from Pole.

XII.

"Open your breast my Lessons to contain:—
Now, when the textile fabric of the brain,
With each dark maze, and all its rooms complete,
Is form'd, th' admitted Mind, with glad surprize,
Gazing around, the magic Palace eyes,
And takes possession of her regal Seat.

XIII.

"Thro' each fine Cell its energy inspires
Progressive Life, and warms with genial fires.

St. xi. l. 1. He, that suppos'd, &c.] Alludes to the opinion of
some of the ancient Philosophers; and, among the moderns, Cud-
worth, who supposed all the functions of Nature to be performed
by an Animadmundi, or Plastic Power; subordinate to the Deity,
according to some; but, according to others, the Sole Agent.
Communicated thro' the crescent Frame,
Which ev'ry impulse of the Will obeys;
Flash'd, instantaneous, thro' the nervous maze,
Quick, as the glance of Heav'n's descending Flame.

XIV.

"Nor wonder, Tuscan, at the art divine:
See! how the solar heat exalts the Vine,
And gives its flavour to the magic Bowl,
Where sparkling Pleasure dances o'er the brim;
With chemic art sublim'd; thus ev'ry limb
Harmonious moves to the commanding Soul.

XV.

"But, when the weary Fates no more can spin,
Its shatter'd Tenement it leaves, unseen,
But carries still its plastic powers along:
Still Intellect maintains its ancient sway,
Still Mem'ry ranks her thoughts in long array,
And Will remains, the source of right and wrong.

XVI.

"Yet dormant in the parted Soul they lie,
Like lightning, flumb'ring in a lurid sky,
Without exertion, but by Heav'n refin'd:
Above whatever Mortal felt below,
And ready still, like smother'd fire, to glow,
When with material organs new combin'd.

St. xv. l. 1. But, when the weary Fates, &c.] At the hour of Death, according to Dante, the Soul retains all its powers, but excerts none of them, till it be united with another vehicle.
XVII.

"Wing'd by the breath of Heav'n, the Spirit soars,
And lights, instinctive, where, with lifted oars,
The bark of Charon, or the heav'nly Guide,
That to Probation's port his vessel steers,
Wait at their sev'ral posts; there first it hears
The Sovereign Judge its future doom decide.

XVIII.

"Her voyage done, the last allotment giv'n,
The future Denizen of Hell or Heav'n,
At once, its ancient habitudes renew;
Its plastic pow'rs, with quick diverging beams
New organs form, as Sol's productive gleams
Ferment, in vernal Tribes, the genial juice.

XIX.

"And, as the Air, suffus'd with vapours damp,
Reflects, with varied hues, the moving Lamp
Of Sol, when on its gloomy bosom fall
His flanting rays, and deck the dewy cloud;
So here the Spirit weaves its subtile shroud,
And o'er its essence draws an airy pall.

XX.

"With undulating flame, the running blaze
Pursues the torch, where'er the Bearer strays;
So the fine body of organic air
Clings to the Spirit, wherefo'er it steers,
Its thin dimensions to the light appears,
Which every vital function seems to share.
XXI.

"Their air-form'd orbs of light the Spectres roll,
That seem to speak the motions of the Soul,
And hence they modulate that thrilling sound
That startles human ears; and hence we trace
Dark woe, or dawning joy, on ev'ry face
Starting to fight in Hades' ample bound.

XXII.

"Hence falling tears on shadowy cheeks are seen,
And dolorous groans, with many a pause between,
Those echoes double; while intense Desire
Yon meagre Spectres seem to waste away,
As waxen Forms, by magic spells decay.—
This solves your doubts, nor need you more enquire."

XXIII.

And now the high concluding Stage we gain,
Observant of the Proselytes of Pain;
But other cares our contemplation quell'd:
From all the thund'ring Hill, Flames thick and fast
O'er-crimson'd Heav'n; but still, the pow'rful blast
Back to the Hill the spiery blaze repell'd.

XXIV.

Close to the Hill no longer could we go,
Nor to the utmost verge, for there below
Instant destruction, from the cloudy steep
Wide yawning, seem'd to wait our giddy fall.
But Maro thus behind was heard to call:
"Watch! or you plunge in Ruin's boundless deep!"
XXV.

Imploring Mercy in the bick'ring flame,
We heard a captive Crew their pangs proclaim;
Their piercing cries, with strong attraction, drew
To that Vulcanian scene my trembling feet,
Tho' kept at distance by the scorching heat,
Where, by short glimpse, I spy'd the sentenc'd Crew.

XXVI.

In flaming Files I saw the carnal Race,
(A dreadful Pageant!) in the ruddy blaze,
Watching with pain their footsteps and my own:
When to the end of their lamenting Song
They came, I heard the universal Throng
Chant Mary's words, with many a doleful groan.

XXVII.

Again the Choir began, in murmurs low,
Till the deep melody was heard to flow
Thro' all the train; while, with attentive heed,
We caught these words: "The huntress Queen expell'd
Sad Helice, when Time her shame reveal'd,
Unworthy now the Virgin choirs to lead."

St. xxvi. l. 6. Chant Mary's words—] See Luke, i. 34.
St. xxvii. l. 5. Sad Helice—] Another name for Calisto,
banned by Diana for her incontinence, and changed into a Bear; which Jupiter is said to have translated to the Skies,
where it forms the great Northern Constellation of that name. Ovid. Metam. lib. ii.
XXVIII.

Again I heard the holy Hymn begin,
Loud chanting many a Name, unmark’d with Sin,
    Husbands, and Dames, that holy spoufals kept:
This tenour, while the burning seem’d to last,
The Sinners kept, by fiery whirlwinds chac’d,
    Till every stain was purg’d, and Vengeance slept.

END OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH CANTO.
CANTO THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

ARGUMENT:
The same Subject continued.—Several Characters introduced, and Punishments described.

WHILE round the Borders, in a file, we pass'd,
The friendly Mantuan thus restrain'd my haste:
"Observe the Band; and tread with cautious care."
Now Sol, upon the right, his radiance threw,
Veiling, with splendid veil, the welkin blue,
And smote, with level ray, the colour'd air.

II.
My falling Shadow ting'd the rising blaze:
Emerging from the flame, with fix'd amaze,
The Ghosts, in throngs, this strange appearance view'd.
This first their notice drew: surpris'd they said,
"No air-form'd limbs invests that wand'ring Shade;"
Then nearer drew, and gaz'd in pensive mood.

Vol. II.
III.
Yet, tho' they wonder'd, none, with heedless haste,
The limits of the conflagration pass'd,
    But staid obdurate, in the fiery Zone;
Then one began: "O, you! that march so slow,
Perhaps, in rev'rence to our penal woe,
    Tell, why you wander thus thro' climes unknown?"

IV.
"Pity our anguish, and with speed reply;
For, ah! we burn to know, tho' doom'd to fry
    In flames, and fervent thirst, which not the flood
Of Ister, Nile, and Ganges, could assuage:
Tell, why your Shade obscures this burning stage;
    As if the paths of Fate you ne'er had trod?"

V.
I would have answer'd; but another Sight
My notice drew, amid the fuming light,
    That round the Hill, in fiery tempest flew;
A swarthy Squadron came, with flying feet,
Who seem'd the first, in counter-march, to meet,
    And all embrace, and all their speed renew.

VI.
Thus, in the Dog-Star's reign, I oft have seen
Two Bands of Ants, encoun'tring on the green,
    And, after short salute, as if to hear,
And tell, whate'er concern'd their puny state,
Then onward pass: so these, along the Strait
    Ran diverse, urg'd along by Doom severe.
Old Sodom's fiery fall, the Foremost sung;
Then, with Gomorrah's Name, the welkin rung
In loud response: With more discordant strain
The passing Squadron chant the Cretan Queen;
Then crost'd, like singing Cranes, that leave the scene
Of Northern cold, or Libya's scorching plain?

Parting, at last the music dy'd away;
Till, circling the tall Hill in long array,
Again they meet, they mingle, and they sing
Their baleful anthem, with convulsive cries
Loud interchang'd, that shake the vaulted Skies,
Still, as they course around the flaming Ring.

St. vii. l. 5. like singing Cranes—] i. e. Like Cranes that meet
in the air, as one party comes from the warm Latitudes, and the
other from the Northern Regions.—See Note upon the Effects of
Pain, Canto X.

The peculiar restraints from the indulgence of this species of
sensual indulgence, are here represented in an easy Allegory, out-
ward Ignominity, and inward Shame; and the manifold sufferings
annexed to it, in the wisdom of Providence, to counteract and pre-
vent its direful effects on Society, and the perversion of the facul-
ties. By the afflictions they are represented as suffering here, it
probably meant, in part, the difficulties that attend the first Stages
of Self-government, in those who, without being compelled to it,
attend to the dictates of Reason and the calls of Grace. It may,
besides, mean the personal chastisements of Disdafe, which, some-
times, are found necessary to operate upon the depraved feelings of
the more hardened Criminal.
IX.

They, who address'd me first, remain'd behind,
Still eager, as before, the cause to find
That led me here alone. Their wish to know
I satisfy'd at large, and thus began:
"You see not here the Shadow of a Man
Whose dust is mould'ring in the Tomb below;"

X.

"My Corse I left not on the worldly stage,
In vernal bloom resign'd, or ripen'd age;
But here I carry still a load of clay,
The life-warm blood still wanders in my veins,
Still ev'ry joint its flexile pow'r retains;
Eclips'd I journey, but with hopes of Day.

XI.

"To me an elder Denizen of Heav'n,
Gain'd by her pray'rs, this wond'rous Pow'r has giv'n,
In mortal vest your mystic world to roam;
But tell me (Jo may Heav'n her Gate unclose
Soon to your pray'rs, and Mercy end your woes)
Your Names, and why you feel this dreadful Doom.

XII.

"And, if you wish your Fame in after-times
Again to live, and visit other climes,
Tell, who are they, that, with a whirlwind speed,
Still cross you thus, amid the bick'ring flame;
Divulge their characters, and tell their shame,
If time be giv'n my longing wish to feed?"
XIII.

As from his native Hills, the rural Swain,
When first he views the City's polish'd Train;
So on my form intent, with deep amaze,
The Spectres stood; but soon their wonder ceased,
(A short-liv'd Passion in the noble Breast,)
And thus the first renew'd his mournful lays:

XIV.

"O, happy Man! allow'd our state to view,
And shun the crimes that led the sentenc'd Crew
To various dungeons, fraught with various pain:
These meeting Squadrons, on each other cling
The dire reproach; and, with alternate cling,
In keen Iambics chant th' opprobrious stain.

XV.

"Our brutal bias, and portentous shame,
As if, in mockery, the surrounding flame
Paints on each hideous face, in crimson glow;
But, from what pedigrees and climes we come,
Our various fortunes, and what caus'd our Doom,
 Stern Vengeance suffers not at large to show.

XVI.

"To satisfy, in part, your keen Desire,
Know, I am Guinicelli, doom'd in fire

St. xvi. 1. 2. Guinicelli—] A celebrated Poet of that age.
See some of his Poems, published at the end of Petrarch.
[310]

To purge my Shame, before I mount above.
As when the Lemnian Twins their Mother found,
When sad Lycurgus mourn’d Ophelte’s wound,
So strong I felt the bond of ancient Love.

XVII.
They clasp’d, with strenuous arms, the weeping Dame;
But driv’n at distance, by the bursting flame,
I kept at bay, and shun’d the dire embrace:
With joy, the Father of the amorous lay
I heard a catalogue of Names display,
For Cyprian Ditties crown’d with lasting praise.

XVIII.
In contemplation of that rev’rend Bard,
Silent, I pass’d along, with fix’d regard,
Still dwelling on that Form, so far renown’d;
Tho’ by the fiery tempest kept aloof,
I long’d to give him some substantial proof,
What ties of deep respect his Pupil bound.

St. xvi. l. 4. Lemnian Twins—] Sons of Hypsipyle, by Jason. The Story here alluded to, is told in the 4th and 5th Books of Statius. Hypsipyle, after various misfortunes, brought on by her unhappy credulity with regard to Jason, was reduced to slavery; and being appointed to take care of a Child belonging to Lycurgus, Chief of a district near Nemea in Peloponnesus, by her inattention, it was destroyed by a Serpent, while she was employed in conducting the Argive Leaders to a Spring, as their army was in danger of perishing by thirst. She was condemned to death, but saved, through the intervention of her two Sons, by Jason, who had been long in search of her, assisted by the mediation of Adrastus, the Argive commander.
XIX.

"Your love to me has left a trace," he cry'd,
"That not the lapse of Time, nor Lethe's tide,
Shall e'er expel from my retentive Mind;
But why (if truth you tell) this deep regard
To me, in Tuscan rhymes, a rival Bard?
Why is the laureat wreath to me resign'd?"

XX.

"Your merit," I reply'd, "ordain'd to last
As long as Tuscan rhymes, and Tuscan taste;
So long your Madrigals shall bear away
The palm."—"Observe that Shade," the Bard rejoin'd,
And pointed to a Spectre far behind;
"He better knew to raise the lofty lay.

XXI.

"His fine romantic vein, in prose and rhyme,
Far, far excels the Poets of his time:
Blind are the Critics that pretend to raise
The Minstrel of Limoges to his Throne;
Rumour they follow, and each rule disown
That Truth and Nature to the Mind displays.

St. xx. l. 4. Observe that Shade—] Arnauld Daniel, a noted Troubadour of Provence. His Sonnets, like Petrarch's, were laid to be addressed to the Wife of a Gascon Gentleman, but without any effect. They, however, obtained him the name of the first Poet of his time.
XXII.

"Our Fathers thus, when elder Guindo sung,
Were led by Fame to join the votive Throng;
But, at the dawn of Truth, the Phantom fled;
But, oh! if such a privilege be thine,
To enter Heav'n in this terrestrial shrine,
Let not my voice in vain for Friendship plead!

XXIII.

"If e'er you reach that Family of Love,
Where he, who dy'd below, commands above,
With one oraison flake the greedy flame:
Nor need you now against temptation pray;
By fire expell'd those mental flames decay,
And lead no longer to the paths of Shame."

XXIV.

Then, as he meant to give another, place,
He disappare'd, amid the mounting blaze,
Just as a scaly tenant of the tide
That plunges in the wave, and shoots away,
Nor stood his flaming Follow'r long at bay;
My pray'r he heard, nor was my suit deny'd.

XXV.

Courteous, tho' wrapt in flames, the Ghost began:
"So potent are thy Pray'rs, Heav'n-favour'd Man,
Nor Will, nor Power, is left my Shame to veil;
Arnauld you see, of late renown'd in song,
Wading in fire, amid the sentenc'd Throng,
With many a doleful dirge my fate I wail."
XXVI.

"I hope at last the glorious time will come
Which shall release me from this fiery Doom;
   By that dread Pow'r, which guides you up the Steep,
O, gentle Florentine! one Pray'r afford
To ease my pain!"—With the concluding word
   The Minstrel plung'd amid the blazing Deep.

END OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH CANTO.
CANTO THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

ARGUMENT.

Dante describes a Vision which he saw, and its Consequences.—Virgil leaves him for the future to the direction of his own Reason, now properly informed and fortified; and gives him an intimation of a Guide of a superior Order, to whom he is soon to render up his Charge.

AND now the rising Sun on Cedron's flood
Look'd, where the great Redeemer shed his blood,
And Ebro's stream with midnight murmurs ran:
The eye of Noon on Ganges look'd sublime,
While parting from Probation's happy clime,
His last rays glimmer'd on the Mountain's van.

II.

But, as his chariot funk, another Light,
Beyond the burning verge, appear'd in sight;
A glorious Shape! and thus the Seraph fung,
"Blest'd are the pure in heart;" so soft and clear
That still his accents vibrate in my ear;
But soon he check'd our haste with sterner tongue.

St. i. l. 1. And now the rising Sun, &c.] i. e. It was Sun-rise at Jerusalem, Mid-day in India, Mid-night in Portugal, and Sun-set where the Poets now were.
III.

"This fiery blast must shrivel up your veins,
Before you reach the blest'd Elysian plains;
Enter, and mark the Voice that deigns to guide
Your painful march around the burning Coast."
Struck with his tone, I seem'd already lost,
And Hades seem'd before me op'ning wide.

IV.

To shade my sight, my trembling hands I rais'd,
And on the ruddy gleam with horror gaz'd,
In contemplation of the hideous pain,
That fries the marrow, and consumes the blood:
In fancy now, amid the flames I stood,
When gently thus began the Mantuan Swain:

V.

"The pain you dread, is but the pain of Sense;
Consider, Son! that Death is banish'd hence:
Let Mem'ry tell, how, in the Gulph beneath,
On Gerioneo's wing you rode sublime,
And, by my guidance, cross'd the Stygian clime;
Then think who leads you up this heav'nly Path.

VI.

"Altho' you felt the fiery tempest beat
For twice twelve thousand circling Moons complete,
These flames could scarcely finge a single hair:
Believe not me, but, with undaunted breast,
Hold to the blaze the border of your vest,
Ev'n your fine robes the guiltless flame will spare.
VII.

"Resolve, my Friend! and bid your fears subside:
Come on! plunge boldly in the fiery tide;
Soon will you reach, unharmed, the further Coast."
Obdurate still I stood, by Terror bound:
"O think," at last he cried, "this flaming Mound
Keeps her you love, in its dread limit clos'd."

VIII.

Then, as at Thisbe's name, the trembling eyes
Of her fallen Lover open'd to the Skies,
And saw his Mistress, ere he sunk to Night,
Whose blood with his the fatal berries dy'd:
So, to that sovereign Name my heart reply'd,
That Name, for ever heard with new delight.

IX.

Then to my Guide I turn'd. "How long," he said,
"Must this important voyage be delay'd?"
And look'd benignant, as the Sire, who gains
With gifts his angry Child. Without delay
I plung'd; and call'd to Statius, far away,
With cheering voice to soothe my coming pains.

X.

Now deep I walter'd in the fiery wave.—
O! then the pangs that fus'ing metal gave,
Or molten glass, would seem a cool relief,
To swage my dreadful pains. The Mantuan Sire,
Still cry'd, "I see, amid the heav'nly Choir,
Those sparkling eyes, that soon will soothe your grief."

St. vii. l. 6. —in its dread limit clos'd.] i.e. You will certainly meet Beatrice on the other side, if you have the resolution to pass the fiery trial.
XI.
Still as we waded thro' the billowy blaze,
A Voice before me, sung in cheerful lays:
"O come, ye blessed of my Father! come."
At length, emerging from the fiery storm,
The Songster we beheld, an heav'nly Form,
Whose brightness clos'd my eyes in sudden gloom.

XII.
"The Sun goes down, and Ev'ning comes," he said;
"Let not your speed a moment be delay'd,
Soon Night her solemn shade will cast around."
Eastward, I climb'd the Steep; the setting Sun,
Which now its utmost longitude had run,
My giant Shadow stretch'd along the ground.

XIII.
As we advanc'd, the long projecting Shade
In slow gradation seem'd away to fade,
And to the eye was lost, when Phoebus fled;
And, ere the skirts of Heav'n were colour'd round,
With Night's deep pencil, on the rocky Mound
Each for himself selects a lofty bed.

XIV.
For now the steep ascent, and darksome hour,
(Altho' the wish remain'd) deny'd the pow'r
To climb; like wanton goats, that browse at will,
And spring, from Rock to Rock, with pliant feet,
While Morn ascends; but seek a cool retreat
When Sol's meridian glories scorch the Hill.
Then, 'till his orb declines, beneath the shade,
At ease, the Wanderers ruminate, survey'd
By their kind Guardian, on his staff reclin'd;
Or, as a flock, by Shepherds watch'd at night,
From wily fraud secur'd, or lawless might,
My weary limbs I thus to rest resign'd.

XVI.
Meanwhile, the social Bards, on either Steep
Their station took, the silent watch to keep;
And, where the grotto gave a bounded view,
I mark'd the orbs that circled round the Sky,
A flood of Glory seem'd to strike the eye
As if Heav'n fill'd their urns with splendour new.

XVII.
Thus as I lay, and view'd the lucid Plain,
At last I slumber'd; when a fairy Train
Of dreams before me pass'd (of scenes to come,
The shadowy type), at that sweet hour of prime
When smiling Venus, from her Lamp sublime,
With am'rous twinkle gilds the parting gloom.

XVIII.
Methought I saw a Damself, fresh and gay,
As ever trac'd the genial dews of May,

St. xviii. l. 1.—a Damself, fresh and gay.] The Genius of active Life, represented under the person of Leah, the wife of the Patriarch Jacob, as by Rachel is meant the Faculty of Contemplation. Under this allegory, Man is described as having now arrived at that desirable state, where his active Powers are in full vigour,
Culling sweet flowers along a pansied plain;
Softly her gentle accents seem'd to flow:
"If any with my Name and Task to know,
I'm Leah, thus employ'd my Love to gain.

XIX.
"This wreath I gather for my flowing hairs,
And from the Mirror catch these angel airs
That please my Lord; but Rachel keeps her eyes
For ever fix'd on that majestic Face,
Smit with the beam of more than mortal grace,
While care to deck my charms my time employs.

XX.
"For Contemplation in the silent shade
Her Pow'r's were form'd, but mine for action made."
She seem'd to cease; for now the glimmering Dawn
Roses in the East, as when her welcome ray
With more delight the Pilgrim's eyes survey,
As nearer home he treads the dewy Lawn.

XXI.
The visionary scene with darkness fled,
And Light around the wide horizon spread

vigour, performing their functions under the conduct of enlightened
Reason, and ready to receive the assistance of divine Grace, to raise
the thoughts by Contemplation to the Supreme Good.

The employment of the active Genius is described under a
beautiful rural Image of a young Bride, gathering flowers to adorn
herself, in order to gain the affections of her Spouse. Thus, by
conscientiously performing the duties of an active Life, the re-
ligious man acquires those Christian Graces that render him ac-
ceptable to Heaven.
A vernal smile, when on my feet I sprung:
With joy the brother Bards beheld me rise,
When thus, with meaning glance, and gentle voice,
Began the Master of the Roman Song:

XXII.
"Those golden fruits, by mortals sought so long,
Are now within your reach, inviting, hung;
Their juice your mental hunger soon will 'twage."
No more he utter'd; but the heav'nly strain
Pour'd new delight thro' every tingling vein,
Transport unknown on this terrestrial Stage!

XXIII.
I long'd before, but now, a new desire
Rais'd my first instinct on a wing of fire
To mount the Hill, and gain the prize in view;
Quickly, the short remaining scale we climb,
And on the breezy summit trod sublime,
When Maro's words once more attention drew.

XXIV.
"Thro' everlasting Flames you found your way,
And those that on the Souls of Sinners prey,
Till from the fiery test they rise refin'd;
But now your feet have reach'd the happy Shore,
Where my benighted orbs can see no more,
And you, without my aid, your way must find.

XXV.
"Hither, by Reason's Lamp, your steps were led;
Now follow your own Light, devoid of dread;
Vol. II.
Th' embattled Mounds, and toilsome paths are past:
Here Phoebus shines direct, with cloudless ray,
Elysium spreads beneath the Eye of Day,
With woods and flowery lawns profusely grac'd.

XXVI.

"Here you may rest secure, or rove at will,
Till she arrives upon the holy Hill,
Whose lamentation drew me from the Deep,
Your lonely feet to guide; you need no more:
Now range, secure and free, the happy Shore,
Due Care, with Grace conjoin'd, your steps will keep."

END OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH CANTO.
CANTO THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

ARGUMENT.
The Poet, arriving at the Earthly Paradise, is stopped, in his Progress through the Forest, by a River; on the Banks of which he sees a Nymph, with whom he enters into Conversation.

EAGER to plunge amid the Sylvan scene,
Where bow’ry walks of amaranthine green
Each deep Recess in solemn light disclos’d:
Thro' whisp’ring Arbours, where the temper’d Ray,
Shed o’er each winding Path a chequer’d Day,
I hafted onward, from the shelving Coast.

II.
Breathing, with soft salute, the coming Breeze,
My Sense regal’d, low whisp’ring thro’ the trees;
For, ever here, the soft aerial Tide
Pursues the setting Sun with even flow,
That scarcely rock’d the Warblers on each bough,
To whose sweet Madrigals the Woods reply’d.

III.
With soft and solemn bafe, the Summer wind
Its hollow murmur thro’ the Shades combin’d,
With the loud Descant of the feather'd Throng:
Thus EURUS, from the deep AEOLIAN Caves
Dismiśd, the tow'ring Shades of CHIESSI waves,
And pipes, at Ev'ning fall, his mournful Song.

IV.
While this sweet harmony my Senses caught,
I wander'd thro' the Wood, enwrapt in thought,
Unconscious of my Path; but soon delay'd
By a translucent Stream, that stole away,
And, thro' the pendent Bowers, in gentle play,
With mazy dance, and tuneful murmur, stray'd.

V.
How feculent and soul our Springs below
Seem'd to this gentle Fount's chrystalline flow,
That sped along, as clear as Summer Noon,
And to the view disclos'd its pearly bed,
Tho' with dim Canopy, the winding Shade
The liquid Mirror hid from Sun or Moon.

VI.
Upon the Bank, with ravish'd eyes, I stood,
And saw, deep waving o'er the winding flood,
The varied blossoms of eternal M Av:
When, like a Vision starting to the sight,
That sudden puts all other thoughts to flight,
A Nymph was seen to trace its borders gay.

_St. vi. l. 6. A Nymph was seen—] Called, a little below, Matildæ; but the Commentators are much at a loss to determine whom the Poet means by this ideal Personage. Some think it is the Genius of active Life, as some of their attributes agree.
VII.
Culling the painted Flowers, she pass'd along,
And sweet and simple was her rural Song;
"Fair Vot'ress of eternal Love!" I cry'd:
"(As your sweet sparkling eyes and gestures tell,)
Come nearer, and that heav'nly Descant swell
Across that envious Space, but half enjoy'd.

VIII.
"Like Proserpine, you seem, in Enna's Bowers,
Gathering, from May's soft lap, ambrosial Flowers,
Ere Ceres, and the World, she left behind."
As skilful Maidens in the festive dance
Swim smoothly round, and turn, with quick advance,
Onward she came, with modest look declin'd.

IX.
Oft bending as she came, she crop'd at large
Her vernal Treasures from the flowing Verge,
And at the Bank renew'd her pausing Note,
So musically sweet, it 'rest my sense,
My Bosom seem'd to swell with joy intense,
Which wrapt my Soul in ecstacy of thought.

agree. Others think, it is the great Countess Matilda di Este,
the great Patroness of the Church. I rather suppose it some
Hierophant, or Priestess, raised up by the magic Pen of the
Poet, merely to introduce and explain the following Spectacles:
but that there might have been a Compliment intended to the Countess Matilda, is not at all improbable; as she, according to the ideas of the times, was a great Benefactress to Ecclesiastics; and it is probable this part of the Poem, and the whole Paradiso, were written in a Monastery.
X.

But all those Joys were lost in transport new,
When to the River's Brim she nearer drew,
   And first I felt the magic of her Eyes:
Not Venus, when she felt the shaft of Fire,
Such raptures kindled thro' the heav'nly Choir,
   As her bright Smile inflam'd the kindling Skies.

XI.

Thus, from the further Bank, she look'd serene,
And stooping, oft despoil'd the velvet green
   Of various Flowers. Three paces scarce she stood
From the deep Stream, that, like the invidious Tide
Which kept Leander from his Sestian Bride,
   With deep divorce my eager step withstood.

XII.

"You're strangers here," she cry'd; "and think I
To see you try the Ford with fruitless toil
   That laves these Bowers where Adam walk'd with
God:
But, quickly would you learn, that Joys above
Have kindled in my face those signs of Love,
   If you my sacred Anthem understood.

XIII.

"And thou, that lead'st the Van, whose fervent
Pray'r
Prolong'd the strain, your further wish declare,
And loftier Hymns shall soon your Ears regale."
"The Stream's deep Murmur, and the passing Wind
That shakes these Groves," I cry'd, "perplex my
Mind,
Which thought that, here, eternal calms prevail."

XIV.
Quick she return'd, "When vers'd in Eden's laws,
And taught by me, you shall divine the cause
Of these strange Movements, all your Doubts shall
cease.
Th' eternal Being, in himself complete,
Made Man for bliss, and gave this hallow'd feat,
A grateful earnest of Eternal Peace.

XV.
"By his default, not long he sojourn'd here,
But chang'd for Anguish, and the bitter Tear,
The Soul's calm Sunshine, and the heart-felt Joy:
For this, the Mountain lifts its awful Brow,
And leaves the fiery Steam and Fogs below
That brew Commotion in the nether Sky.

XVI.
"From this aërial turbulence to free
(While free from Sin) his new-born Family,
He rais'd this Summit, pointing to the Stars:
The Motion, by the Mover, first impress'd,
This Air retains, and flows from East to West,
Unless some cause below its course impairs.
Y 4
XVII.
"For this perennial Breeze that waves the woods,
And soothes with murmurs deep the passing floods,
Where-e'er it blows with no malignant breath;
Visits the haunts of Man, but wafts away
Some vital essence from each Plant and Spray,
And sow's the bounty o'er the World beneath.

XVIII.
"Whene'er it falls beneath a genial Sky,
Or finds a fruitful Soil, the rich Supply
With pregnant blessings clothes the smiling Plain;
'Then wonder not such Virtues to behold,
Spontaneous springing from an Earthly Mould,
Beyond the culture of an Earthly Swain.

XIX.
"For this Elysian Soil that spreads around,
Fosters profusely in its pregnant ground
Primaeval Vegetation's kindly stores:
Far, far unlike the puny Tribes below,
No Fumes by heat exhal'd, nor melted snow,
Supply the streams that warble thro' those Bow'rs.

XX.
"Fed by a limpid Spring, the living Tide
Swells up and pours along, by Heav'n supply'd,

St. xvii. l. 1. For this perennial Breeze, &c.] A moral Benefit is here represented under a physical idea, the propagation of revealed Religion from East to West, and the blessings conveyed in its Precepts, as by the qualifications they enjoin we only can be fit to enjoy its Promises.
In two main streams; the nearer sweeps away
All blot and record of our former Sin;
The other Lymph, when drank, renews within
Our virtuous deeds, and shews in bright array.

XXI.
"At hand, the silent Tide of Lethe rolls;
Beyond, soft Eunoë to departed Souls
Her Mirror holds, and wakes the dormant train
Of Mem'ry, laid asleep by lapse of Time:
Both you must taste; but one, with gust sublime,
All beverage far excels, to cheer the Brain.

XXII.
"And now, methinks, if I no more should tell,
What I have said, might every doubt expel;
But more I will disclose, than you can claim
From Promise made before. The times of Gold,
And all their joys, by Poets sung of old,
From some faint Vision of this Mountain came.

XXIII.
"Here Innocence inspir'd the sense of Joy;
Here everlasting Spring regal'd the Eye

St. xxi. l. 1, 2. Lethe—Eunoë.] The participation of
the waters of these two Streams by the initiated, signifies
the advantages of active Benevolence, in banishing the very images
of our former lawless gratifications from the memory, figured here
by the use of the Waters of Lethe. While virtuous conduct, becom-
ing habitual, gives a fore-taste of joys to come in a sense of the
heavenly favour, which is represented here under the figure of drink-
ing the Waters of Eunoë.—See Note at the end of the Poem.
With fruits and flowers, unknown to other Climes:
Here that perennial Stream of Nectar flow'd,
Which cheer'd of old the Heart of Man and God,
By ancient Poets sung in deathless rhymes.

XXXIV.
Sudden I turn'd me round; the tuneful Pair
Benignly smil'd to hear the Nymph declare
The sacred truth, in fiction long conceal'd:
Again, on her I fix'd my wond'ring Eyes,
Onward she led me thro' Elysian Joys,
When the fair Bank its flow'ry Path reveal'd.

END OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CANTO.
CANTO THE TWENTY-NINTH.

ARGUMENT.
The Poet and Matilda continue their Conversation by the Bank of the River, till they are interrupted by a new and extraordinary Phenomenon.

HER Voice continu’d still the pow’rful Charm,
(Her Eye-beam kindling with Affection warm,) Chanting the Blessings of the pardon’d Soul:
Now, thro’ umbrageous Vistas, half unseen,
And now, with Nymph-like step, along the green Thro’ light and shade the fairy Vision stole.

II.
Nor lonely did she go; with equal speed
Onward I follow’d, as she seem’d to tread,
The Bank oppos’d, with motion swift or slow; An hundred paces scarce we distant stood,
Where eastward turn’d the deep Elysian flood,
When cross the stream her accents seem’d to flow.
III.

"My Friend, observe! with heedful eye and ear!"—
Deep thro' the green Grove, luminous and clear,
Something that seem'd a second Morn was seen,
Bright as the Bolt of Heaven: but Lightning soon
Flames, and is lost; while, like the waxing Moon,
This wider spread the bow'ry walks between.

IV.

"What means this glorious sight?" my ardent thought:
Enquir'd: when, swelling with the distant Note,
Quick to my trembling ear the Zephyrs bore
Celestial harmony, that run along
The lighten'd air. Oh! how my heart was wrung,
To think how first we lost this happy Shore!

V.

Unhappy Mother! by your fault we fell,
Tho' new to life, th' imaginary veil
Of Ignorance you scorn'd, and long'd to know
What Heav'n forbade! If you had still obey'd,
Still had you witness'd in this happy Shade,
Such joys as never must be felt below!

VI.

While musing thus, I walk'd the blissful Strand,
And felt my Soul to transport new expand;
The Air before me seem'd with golden gleam
To glister, as I gaz'd beneath the trees;
While the sweet Descant, wafted on the breeze,
Now heard distinctly, charm'd the lift'ning Stream.
VII.
Ο, sacred Nine! if my devoted Soul
Has felt for you the rigours of the Pole,
    The damp nocturnal, and the sultry Star,
That scatters Plagues and Death, my Pow'rs restore,
That with no middle flight aspires to soar
    High on the pinions of celestial Air!

VIII.
Urania! come, unlock your holy Springs!
While with your Choirs yon' azure Concave rings,
    Deep Themes I meditate, to heav'nly strains
Attemper'd sole. Amid the op'ning Shades [play'd,
What seem'd seven golden Trees, their Boughs dif-
    At hand they seem'd, tho' on a distant Plain.

IX.
But when, advancing thro' the bosom'd Wood,
I reach'd the splendid Pageant where it stood,
    I found them each with beamy Lampllets crown'd,
That o'er the Forest, and each flow'ry Lawn,
Shed a pure light, as when (her Veil withdrawn)
    The midnight Moon surveys her Empire round.

X.
My brother Bard and I, with deep amaze,
Stood for a moment, fix'd in torpid gaze;
    But soon, like Meteors in a troubled Sky,
Slow, as the modest Maid to Hymen's Fane,
They seem'd to move. Our sight pursu'd with pain
    An object strange, and new to mortal eye.
XI.

"Why thus," the Virgin cry'd, "with childish sight
Pursue the long career of running light,
Regardless of the mere majestic Shew
That comes behind?" A Train advancing soon
He saw, with garments brighter than the Moon,
Or aught this Sin-worn Mould can boast below.

XII.

And now they reach'd the flood, advancing on;
Beneath, in bright reflex, the Waters shone,
As the Procession on its Mirror play'd
A quiv'ring light; I saw, distinct and clear,
My Shadow in the wat'ry glass appear,
As from the left its holom I survey'd.

XIII.

And now the lengthen'd Phalanx reach'd the brim,
The moving Files, reflected, seem'd to swim
On the calm surface of the glassy Tide:
With step suspend'd on the nearer Shore
I stood, and saw the Lamplights march before,
Painting, with fiery streams, the welkin wide.

XIV.

Each glorious track, that mark'd the colour'd air,
Seem'd like the Halo round the Cynthian Star,
Or the long radiance of the heav'nly Bow,
Tow'ring to Heav'n; we saw beyond the tide,
The light-supporting shafts the Clouds divide,
And each, ten paces distant, march'd below.
XV.
Beneath the lucid Canopy along,
Came, hand in hand, a venerable Throng,
With lilies from the Vales of Eden crown'd:
In twelve distinguis'h'd Pairs the Seniors came.
"Blessed art thou," they sung, "distinguis'h'd Dame,
Whose Virtues from thy God such favour found!"

XVI.
But when the glorious Retinue, at last,
Like a bright Cloud, along the green had pass'd;
As other Constellations seem to rise,
And, mounting in its radiant course, pursu'd
The western fires, descending from the view,
A second Train awoke a new surprize.

XVII.
Another Caravan appear'd behind,
The Team was drawn by four, who saw'd the Wind;
Each with fix wings, that, waving, seem'd to glare
With dreadful Optics, like those Orbs that roll'd
In Argus' front, till Hermes clos'd of old
Those jealous Eyes that watch'd the wand'ren'g Fair.

XVIII.
To tell their Forms I need not seek the Spring
Of Helicon, for, to a louder string

*St. xv. 1. 2.—a venerable Throng,] The four-and-twenty Elders mentioned in the Revelations. Some of the Commentators say, that it means the four-and-twenty Penmen of the Books of the Old Testament.—Landino, &c.*

*St. xvii. 1. 2. by four,—] The four Evangelists.—Landino, &c.*
Of old, the glories of the heav'n'ly Car
Ezekiel sung, when, from the frozen Pole,
He saw its whirling wheels in tempest roll,
Amid the shock of elemental War.

XIX.
Such as He sung, were these, but plumes they wore,
Like those in Patmos seen by John of yore,
Between them a triumphal seat appear'd:
On lofty wheels elate a Form was seen,
Whose awful movements o'er the ample Green,
With high control the gay Procession steer'd.

XX.
On either side he spread his Pinions light,
And kept the mid-line of these Meteors bright,
That o'er the Sky in splendour seem'd to sweep:
And tho' their umbrage spread afar below,
The blended radiance of the sevenfold Bow,
Still uneclips'd, its colours seem'd to keep.

XXI.
The wond'rous Form a two-fold nature shew'd,
The royal Bird in golden plumage glow'd

S. xvi. 1. 4. Ezekiel sung.—] This Vision, intended to
represent the state of the visible Church in the fourteenth Century
and some time before, is borrowed partly from Ezekiel, (see c. i.)
and partly from the Revelations of St. John, from whom is de-
river the idea of the Seven Golden Lamps, or antecedent Lights,
which are represented as preparing the way for the ensuing Pro-
cession. (See Rev. c. i. and ii.) —Landino, &c.

St. xxi. 1. i. —a two-fold nature shew'd] By this strange two-
fold appearance, the Commentators say, is meant the second Per-
son of the Trinity.—Landino, Vellutello, Augelucci.
Above: A Lion’s form conceal’d the rest,
Of dazzling white, commixt with sanguine stain,
It seem’d; not Scipio’s Host, nor Cæsar’s Train,
Such triumph witness’d over East or West.

XXII.

Dim was the splendour of Hyperion’s Throne
To this; even then, when his presumptuous Son
Rode there sublime above a burning world;
Till, blasted by the mighty Mother’s pray’r,
He fell from Æther, thro’ the kindling air,
From the deserted wheels by thunder hurl’d.

XXIII.

Three Nymphs upon the right, in mystic dance,
Seem’d o’er the green-fward carpet to advance:
One clad in green; a suit of sanguine hue
The second wore. Her Sister’s robe excell’d
The drifted snow, that clothes the wint’ry field,
As thro’ the mazes of the dance she flew.

XXIV.

And now the cheerful green her Comrades led,
And now, in crimson deck’d, the martial Maid
Glow’d in the front; and now the vestal Dame,
Foremost of all, display’d her snowy Stole;
While, tripping on the left, another School
Of jocund Nymphs, in mystic measure came.

St. xxiii. l. 1. Three Nymphs—] The theological Virtues;
Faith, distinguished by a white vest; Hope, dress’d in green; and
Charity, in red, to denote her fervour.
XXV.
Long purple robes of state, like Queens, they wore,
Three eyes their Leader had, that march’d before;
Two rev’rend Seniors clos’d the festive Train,
In garb as diff’rent, as alike in mien:
For here the Soul’s Physician first was seen,
Taught by his Lord to soothe internal pain.

XXVI.
The Second, not like one that lov’d to spare,
With brandish’d weapon seem’d to threaten War,
And glitt’ring falchion fill’d his better hand:
His martial port, nor less his mien severe,
Struck me, across the flood, with chilling fear,
Still as he wav’d aloft his angry brand.

XXVII.
Four Swains afar I saw, in rustic weed,
To this strange pomp of Paradise succeed;
And, cloe behind, a visionary Man
With eyes fast clos’d; yet, tho’ bereft of Day,
The rev’rend Pilgrim seem’d, with keen survey,
The Secrets of another World to scan.

St. xxv. l. 1. Long purple robes of state, &c.] The four Cardinal Virtues. Prudence is painted with three eyes, as observing the present, the past, and the future.

St. xxv. l. 5. For here the Soul’s Physician—] St. Luke, designated here as the Author of the Acts of the Apostles.

St. xxvi. l. 1. The second—] St. Paul, armed with the sword of the word, mighty to divide the Soul and the Spirit—Landino.

St. xxvii. l. 1. Four Swains—] The four Epistolary inspired Writers; viz. James, John, Peter, and Jude.—Rosa Morando, Augelloucci.

St. xxvii. l. 3.—a visionary Man] St. John the Divine, Author of the Book of Revelations.—Id. ibid.
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XXVIII.
Solemn they march'd, and all the liv'ry wore
Of that sage Retinue that walk'd before:
The Lily crown'd the Van; but those behind,
On ev'ry front the blushing Rose display'd;
Fresh woven chaplets seem'd their brows to shade,
In seemly wreaths around their temples twin'd.

XXIX.
Now, full oppos'd, appear'd the lofty Car,
Loud Thunder rais'd its awful voice afar,
That pass'd in horror o'er the trembling flood:
Check'd by the sound, the rolling Orbs stood still,
As if obedient to th' instinctive Will
That mov'd the wheels, and all the Convoy stood.

* * * This allegorical representation of the Fortunes of the Church, as it gives a view of its Writers, implies much of its evidence resulting from their union in one great scheme, and the completion of ancient Prophecies, by later miracles, and other distinguished events; it is therefore very properly introduced as making part of the scheme of Conversion of Dante, as the external evidence has a remarkable tendency to confirm the internal, to which, without the former, every Enthusiast would make pretence, and claim for his particular Dogmas, the inward evidence of the Spirit.

END OF THE TWENTY-NINTH CANTO.

Z 2
CANTO THE THIRTIETH.

ARGUMENT.

Descent of Beatrice, or Heavenly Wisdom.—Her Address to Dante, and recital of the Reason of her extraordinary Conduct, with respect to him.

Thus stood these Lights that guide the wand'ring Soul;
For, as the Stars, that circle round the Pole,
Conduct the Keel, remote from East and West;
So these supply the never-setting Beam:
Sin only can obscure the golden gleam
That points the Passage to eternal Rest.

II.

And now the Bands, that march'd in order bright
'Twixt the triumphal Wheels and seven-fold Light,
Fac'd to the winged Car in full parade;
While kindling rapture beam'd from ev'ry eye,
Fix'd on the Pledge of everlasting Joy,
While thus a silver Voice the Song essay'd;

III.

"Descend from Lebanon, celestial Spouse!
Thy Comfort waits thee, to receive thy Vows!"—
Three heav'nly Echoes to the Song reply'd; 
Thrice the loud Chorus fill'd the Concave round; 
Thrice Eden's Vales return'd the joyous sound, 
To Æther wafted on th' aerial Tide.

IV.
Then, as th' Elected at the Trump of Doom
Shall burst their ceamments and forfake the tomb,
   In glory clad, and wing'd to mount the Sky;
So at the word uprose a living Cloud;
So seem'd their wings the starry wheels to shrowd,
   Waiting the heav'nly Messenger on high.

V.
"Bless'd is the happy Soul, to Heav'n restor'd;"
They sung; while ev'ry hand profusely pour'd
   The rifled sweets of Paradise around,
O'er the glad soil, and thro' the scented air:
"Hither, ye Denizens of Heav'n! repair,"
'They cry'd; "and hide with flowers th' enamell'd
ground."

VI.
While Earth was clad with Flora's spoils below,
Sudden the East, with corresponding glow,
   Seem'd to reflect the blushing tint afar:
So have I seen, o'er Ocean's wavy bed,
The Sun ascend, celestial rosy red,
   When Autumn's vapours paint his flaming Car.

VII.
Ruddy as Phoebus, in Aurora's Bower,
A radiance, veil'd amid the fragrant shower
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Of falling roes, seem'd, with umber'd glance,
To rival Day's fair Lord; and soon display'd
Thro' the deep cloud of sweets, a matchless Maid
Seem'd thro' the plavive Squadrons to advance.

VIII.
A snowy veil she wore; with olive bound,
A green stole far behind her, swept the ground;
Beneath, a tunic like Aurora's vest
Her decent limbs embrac'd with cincture bright:
'Twas my first Love! but still my mortal fight
Not yet the Mistress of my Fate confess'd.

IX.
My heart, of old familiar to her charms,
No rapture felt at first, no new alarms;
As had I known the Fair, my soul had thrill'd:
Yet from the Nymph unknown a transient glow,
Thro' ev'ry nerve instinctive, seem'd to flow,
Which, as I gaz'd, my heaving Bosom fill'd.

X.
Yet, when that Eye-beam on my Optics play'd,
Which first my fancy to Elysium led,
Ere yet the Down proclaim'd my spring of Youth;
With love and fear, conflicting in my breast,
Like a fond weeping Child I stood distrest,
Who longs its angry Mother's wrath to soothe.

XI.
I turn'd me to the Bard, and meant to say,
"O, MANTUAN! plead for me!"—With deep dismay

Z 4
I felt my life-blood freeze—my Friend was gone!—
Ah, Virgil! ah, my Friend! how hard thy lot,
To be expell'd from this delightful spot,
Who ledst my steps thro' many a burning Zone!

XII.
Not all the blissful scenes that Eve had lost,
Not all the charms of that enchanting coast,
Could check the briny tear, by grief supply'd.
"Weep not for him, but for thyself, my Friend,
Tho' here thou feel'st thine ancient compact end,
Another cause may swell the briny Tide."

XIII.
Thus, as the Master of the Bark, who cheers
His toiling Crew, amid their hopes and fears,
And now the Stern surveys, and now the Prow,
Breathing his spirit thro' the gallant band,
Seem'd the fair Vestal on her lofty stand,
When from her lips I heard these accents flow.

XIV.
The same her port appear'd, her garb the same,
As when, like Morn's emerging dawn, she came
From the deep bosom of the falling shower;
Save that her op'ning Veil, in part, display'd
The peerless features of the heav'nly Maid:
Even cross the winding flood I felt their power.

XV.
At me she cast a look, severely sweet:
Ah! how I fear'd her angel eye to meet,
Where dignity, with keen resentment, join'd!
Calmly she spoke, but seem'd to keep at bay
The tempest of her wrath, with cool delay,
And such a look, as threaten'd worse behind.

XVI.
"Yes—I am she!—Behold me well,"—she cry'd;
"Did you vouchsafe to climb the rugged side
Of this steep Hill at last?—Tremendous toil!—
Did you not know that Blifs was centered here?
Unhappy Man!"—I met her look severe,
And seem'd, ev'n to myself, despis'd and vile.

XVII.
I spy'd my Image in the passing wave,
So true a picture of a rated Slave,
With shame-depicted front: I turn'd away,
Loathing my Likeness; while the haughty Maid
Maternal anger in her look display'd,
Nor soften'd with a smile my deep dismay.

XVIII.
While thus I drain'd Resentment's bitter Bowl
Even to the dregs, and Shame depress'd my Soul:
Sudden, prolong'd with many an heav'nly Note,
A Concert of the Gods I seem'd to hear,
Jesuíp's song of Hope regal'd mine Ear;
Yet my rapt Mem'ry but a fragment caught.

XIX.
"In thee, O Lord! we put our trust;" they cry'd.
"Our Limits are enlarg'd," a Voice reply'd.

St. xix. l. 1. "In thee, O Lord, &c.] This introduction of
the 31st Psalm, sung by all the Choirs of Patriarchs, Prophets,
Apostles,
The rest I lost. A cold, like Alpine snow
Deep frozen by the rude Slavonian blast,
Through my trembling bones and marrow past'd,
When first I heard the awful Dacnt flow.

XX.

But, as the Gale, from Africa's burning Sky,
Where Sol looks down direct with lordly eye,
Chacing the Shadows from the servd Line,
Sends downwards from those everlasting Hills,
The Winter's shining hoard, in countless rills;
So fled my terror by the Song divine.

XXI.

At once, the tempest of my Sighs asleep
Were laid; my charmed Eyes forgot to weep:

Apostles, and Angels, is finely introduced to elevate the sinking spirits of the Candidate for Heaven, under a sense of some remaining displeasure of the Divinity.

The 7th Verse particularly is fitted to his case, "I will be glad, and rejoice in thy Mercy." The considerations that make the Soul cheerful in the midst of Affliction are, "that God is merciful; that, as He is not ignorant, so neither is He unmindful of our troubles; that He is a friend, who knows us in adversity, no less than in prosperity; that He hath not subjected us to the necessity of being overcome by our Spiritual Enemies, but has, with the temptation, also made us a way to escape. We are to consider Him as our God and Saviour; that the times of prosperity and adversity are both in His hand; and therefore on Him we are to wait, till the day of mercy shall dawn, and the shadows flee away."

——Home on the 31st Psalm.
When the full Chorus, who for ever chime
To the deep movement of the Mundane round,
With melting Airs assuag'd my smarting wound,
With heav'nly-wasted Notes and Airs sublime.

XXII.

How Mem'ry lov'd upon each Note to dwell,
When Pity seem'd in ev'ry strain to swell,
While ev'ry close that charm'd the lift'ning Sky
Seem'd modulated to my ravish'd Ear
In these soft strains. "Ah! why this look severe?
Why wound his Heart? Beatrice, tell me why?"

XXIII.

Ah! then the Frost, that seem'd my heart to load
In sighs transpir'd, in briny current flow'd;
And, from my lips and eyes, in anguish broke:
When by the dexter wheel her lofty stand
She took, and answer'd thus their loud Demand
With matchless dignity of voice and look.

XXIV.

"High spher'd above the world, your wide survey
Sees all his secrets in empyreal Day;
Nor cloud, nor slumber, can deceive your sight:
But, for his face alone, distinct and clear,
His faults I mean to tell, that he may hear
And pay the debt of penitential woe.

XXV.

"Not from th' eternal Sphere that rolls above,
Not from yon' everlasting Fires that move
Each in its fated round, he gain'd the boon
Of heav'ly Grace; but from an higher Pow'r,
That sends abroad the fructifying shower
From sources far above the Sun or Moon.

XXVI.
“Such genuine worth adorn'd his early days,
That each prolific stem of heav'ly Grace
In that rich Mould a genuine footing found:
But, oh! the rankest soil but serves to feed
The plant of juice malign, and noxious weed,
If Culture's hand neglect the hapless ground.

XXVII.
“At first, by ev'ry soft, endearing art,
I clos'd the dang'rous Passes to his Heart,
While from my Eyes he drank celestial Light:
’Twas Heav'n, by me, dispens'd the glad some Ray
That led him on in Virtue’s rugged way,
By the pure Canon of eternal Right.

XXVIII.
“But soon, when Life had reach'd a nobler stage,
To heav'ly cares I gave my riper age,
The World forgetting, and by Love forgot:
For now, my Lover broke his easy chain;
His homage scorn'd, and fought the World again,
By transient charms, and fading phantoms caught.”

XXIX.
Exalted now, and half to Soul refin'd,
The lucid Mirror of the sainted Mind
From fair Religion caught the genuine glow:
Yet, as the Woman to an Angel grew,
Still less and less he bore the dazzling view,
But left the lofty Height, and fix'd below.

XXX.
In vain the wand'ring Lover to reclaim,
Won by my Pray'rs, the nightly Vision came;
In vain the pious Thought arose by day:
Still more entangl'd in the fatal snare,
He mock'd my nightly toil, my daily care,
And fondly flung his bitter hopes away.

XXXI.
"A sure, but dreadful remedy was left,
To shew the sentence Dead, of bliss bereft;
Dauntless, for this I shot the Gulf of Death;
For this, my solemn adjurations drew
The Soul of Maro from the prizon'd Crew,
To shew the Secrets of the World beneath.

XXXII.
"Scarce would the Sinner Heav'n's Decree fulfil,
Were he admitted to th' oblivious Rill;

St. xxxii. 1. — Heav'n's Decree fulfil,] The Poet here intimates the wisdom of this temporary withdrawing of Spiritual Consolations, as an exercise of Faith and Hope, and a salutary expedient to make us know the value of Heavenly Blessings. He means also to show how essential a part Humiliation must constitute in genuine Repentance; a Virtue, which, when we are persuaded that our Sins are forgiven, we are apt to forget; and pronounce upon
Or that delicious fruit that loads the Tree
Of Life, before he felt the bitter throes
Of Penitence, whose keen salubrious Woes
The purged Soul from Sin's contagion free."

upon our own state, from a comparison with others. The censo-
rious spirit of certain Enthusiasts, who pride themselves on their
fancied privileges, are an evidence of this.—See Extract from
Ramsay, 13 Paradiso, sect. iv.

END OF THE THIRTIETH CANTO.
CANTO THE THIRTY-FIRST.

ARGUMENT.
The Confeffion of the Poet, his Absolution, and Immerfion in the River Lethe.

"Say, thou that droop'ft beyond the sacred flood,"
The Holy Virgin thus her theme purfu'd,
    But with a folemn brow, and piercing tone,
"Have I spoke truth? the fanction of thy voice
Must clear my charge, and vindicate the Skies;
    Thy innocence, or guilt, muft now be fhown."

I.
My faculties I felt fo much confus'd,
My organs falter'd, as to speech difus'd,
    Tho' oft I try'd to anfwer to the charge:
Awhile she ftood; then, with indignant look,
She cry'd, "You have not drunk of Lethe's brook,
    Your Mem'ry yet displays your deeds at large."
Slow from my lips the sad confession flow'd,
More to the Eye than Ear their movement show'd
    My deep contrition for my early fault;
As when the Bowman's hand o'er-strains the string,
Wide flies the fluttering shaft on languid wing;
    Thus fail'd my words to paint my guilty thought.

Deep groans and tears the pow'rs of speech suppress'd,
The deep concealment labour'd in my breast;
    Too big for ut'trance, while she thus declaim'd:
"I wing'd thy Soul to that empyreal Height,
Where the Chief Good, the Source of true Delight,
    Thy nascent Faith with heav'nly Hope inflam'd."

"What deep Gulph, or insuperable Mound,
Cross'd thy plain path? declare what Magic bound.
    Thy fal't'ring progress in Circæan chains;
What spell could bid the beam of Hope delay,
Before its light was lost in heav'nly Day;
    Why was her beamy torch illum'd in vain?"

"What charms could those unreal Phantoms show,
Which fill you' deep nocturnal Vale of Woe
    With orgies foul, or fix in torpid trance
The sleepy Soul, that you should leave the Streams
Of Life, to follow to the Land of Dreams
    The fairy meaures of their moonlight dance?"
VII.
In bitterness of soul, I heav'd a sigh,
And with low voice effay'd a faint reply;
Scarce could my lab'ring lips the accents mould,
As with warm tears I thus confess'd my fault:
"Their well-feign'd looks of Love my Fancy caught,
When you were summon'd to Emmanuel's Fold."

VIII.
"Even were you silent, or your fault deny'd,
No leas it would be known," the Saint reply'd,
"To the Heart-Searcher, on his awful Throne;
But Mercy turns reverse the gridding wheel,
She takes the keen edge from the lifted steel,
When Penitence is heard its guilt to own.

IX.
"Thus, let my words rebate the temper'd edge
Of thy compunctions, and thy pangs assuage;
Less will those Syrens charm when next you meet,
If from my lips you learn, what fruits of Faith
You might have reap'd from my untimely death,
When my cold clay posses'd its last retreat.

X.
"Never did Nature's hand, with Art combin'd,
Weave such a charm to captivate the Mind,
As my frail Form, now wafted far away
To the dark world, on Dissolution's wing:
Why then, ah! why should any mortal thing,
After my parting, lead your thoughts astray?

 Vol. II. A a
ⅩⅠ.
"When her first shaft the hand of Fortune fix'd
In your full heart, and first the beverage mix'd
Of bitterness, it should have wing'd your Soul
To leave fallacious things, and try your flight
(Marshall'd by me) to yonder fields of Light,
Where neither chance nor change our joys control.

ⅩⅡ.
"No second Mistrefs, then, had damp'd your wing,
Tho' like Heav'n's Choiristers she seem'd to sing;
Nor had you waited for a second wound,
To stimulate your flumb'ring Soul again:
What torments had you shun'd! what needless pain!
If you had fled, ere Ruin clos'd you round?

ⅩⅢ.
"In vain you spread the same insidious snare,
For the full-plum'd Inhabitants of Air;
The unfledg'd bird may twice or thrice be caught."
Like a corrected Child, in sorrow drown'd,
I stood, with sad looks, fix'd upon the ground,
Nor dar'd to meet her eyes, with anger fraught.

ⅩⅣ.
Again she spoke: "My converse pains your ear!
Since then I find you thus averfe to hear,
Indulge your eye, and let me view your face:
There I behold with joy the manly sign
That marks the time of life, when thoughts divine
Should lift thy Soul from her Circean maze."
XV.

The cerrial oaks with less resistance bend,
When loud Norwegian storms, or Libyan, rend

The groaning grove, than I uprais’d my head,
Struck with her tone sarcastic, when she prais’d

Those marks of age mature, by Sloth debas’d,

While deep confusion o’er my village spread.

XVI.

I saw the living cloud that lately hung
Above the Car, with loud triumphal song
Dispers’d, and all its radiant frame reveal’d;
My eyes were dazzled with the prospect bright,
Yet still, methought, in that Abyss of Light,
Mine eyes the Maid’s ethereal shape beheld.

XVII.

Rapt in the vision of that heav’nly Form,
Whose double nature, with mysterious charm,

Had caught her sight, the holy Vestal stood,
Like a young Cherub, on the water’s brim;
Heav’n in her eye, and Grace in ev’ry limb,

Tho’ still she seem’d the same, that sir’d my blood.

XVIII.

Yet, lighted up by Heav’n, her kindling charms
Caught with strange fire, and fill’d with new alarms
My breast; and open’d all my wounds again:
Her former self, the Tenant of the Skies,
As far excell’d, as when, in dim disguise

Of dust, she far outshone the female Train.
XIX.

'Woke by her smile, my aggravated Sin
In dark Gorgonean horror frown'd within;
And these seductive scenes that led astray
My heart from her, grew hideous to my sight:
Remorse involv'd my Soul in sudden Night,
And fainting, lifeles, on the Bank I lay.

XX.

What pass'd, I knew not, till my swoon was o'er;
She best can tell—but soon I felt my pow'r
Of intellect and limb return again.
That Nymph, whom on the shore I first beheld,
Rais'd me, half-stumbling, from the verdant field:
"Hold fast," she cry'd; and led me o'er the Plain.

XXI.

Down the slope Bank, and thro' the limpid wave
She led me, till I found its waters lave
My panting fides, and o'er my shoulders climb;
While, like a light skiff from the wat'ry verge,
She skim'd the wave, nor yet forsook her charge,
Steering me thro' the flood with hand sublime.

XXII.

Emerging now appear'd the further brim,
When, like the prelude of an holy hymn,
The full-ton'd Carol of Lufration soon
Chim'd on my ear; my Guide the signal took,
And instant plung'd me in the swelling brook:
The booming billows check'd the solemn tune.
XXIII.
O'erwhelm'd, a space I lay, and quaff'd at large
The copious wave; but soon, her dripping Charge
The Nymph recover'd from the limpid wave:
She bade me o'er the velvet green advance,
Where the four SISTERS wove the mystic dance,
And each a kind embrace alternate gave.

XXIV.
"Here," they exclaim'd, "by Day the dance we lead;
But when the rising Moon along the mead
The signal sends, we join the virgin Band,
And mount the winged Winds to join her Car:
Kindling we mount, till each becomes a Star,
And circle Heav'n beneath our Queen's command.

XXV.
"Before your MISTRESSES lost her robe of clay,
We were dismiss'd from yonder milky way,
To tend her steps below, and fire her Mind
With heav'nly vigour for her upward flight;
Our SISTERS three, that boast a purer Light,
Will shew the wonders that remain behind."

St. xxiii. l. i. O'erwhelm'd, &c.] The rebuke of Beatrice may
seem too severe; but it only means to shew the deep Self-abasement,
even Self-abhorrence, in some sense, that must attend true
Penitence, when the Sin has been deliberate, and against repeated
warnings and convictions; as was the case here, according to the
account given by her. The plunging in Lethe, and the embrace of
the four SISTERS, reprent a more truly absolution, than that Passage
cited for the purpose in the tenth Canto.
XXVI.
Thus, singing, they advanc'd, and led me on,
Where, in the vaward of the moving throne,

The two-fold mystic Being met my sight:
Again the Maids that charm the nightly Pole
Exclaim'd, "Indulge thy view, without control,
And catch new transports from thy first delight."

XXVII.
Soon kindling at the view, the Flame began,
And thro' my shivering nerves, like lightning, ran,

As those bright eyes that open'd Heav'n, I view'd
Those star-like eyes! oh! how they seem'd to gaze,
(Like double Mirrors, on the solar rays)

On that bright Form that on the Chariot stood.

XXVIII.
Seen in the moving tablet of her eyes,
Pencil'd by Light, the Tenant of the Skies,

In a clear focus of abstracted Day,
The wonders of his changing Form display'd;
Which, as the tints his sovereign will obey'd,
'Twixt mortal and immortal seem'd to play.

XXIX.
Yet, thron'd upon the Car's majestic frame,
'The awful Prototype appear'd the same:

Oh! how I wonder'd at the heav'nly spell,
While at this Banquet of the Soul I stood,
Where Transport fed Desire with hallow'd Food!
Still on the scene Remembrance loves to dwell.
XXX.
Now the fair Sistres took their turn to sing,
Who sweep the heav'ny Spheres on bolder wing,
Still measuring to the Dance their Descent sweet:
"O turn to thy first Love! celestial Maid!—
From clime to clime, and thro' th' infernal Shade
Long has he trac'd thy steps with weary feet!

XXXI.
"Withdraw that envious cloud that hangs between!
Give him thy cloudless charms, as thou art seen,
When on the Blest they shed celestial Day!
Shine out at full, and faze his longing Soul!—
Grant him that Light, that beams above the Pole,
Nor let him linger thus in fond delay.

XXXII.
"Seraphic Vision! ne'er in Pindus' Vale,
The gifted Bard, with holy musing pale,
Who quaffs th' inspiring fount that wings the Soul,
Thy over-whelming Glories could recite,
When the blest'd Squadron, in a flood of Light,
Sung thy disclosure to the ringing Pole!

END OF THE THIRTY-FIRST CANTO.
CANTO THE THIRTY-SECOND.

ARGUMENT.
The Description of the Procession continued.—The Poet arrives at the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.—Its Appearance described, and the Consequences of his Arrival there.

THE tardy Season, spent on stubborn Troy,
Had pass'd, since I perceiv'd the taste of joy:
Oh! how my eager Soul, when bliss return'd,
Look'd thro' my eyes!—The glorious scenes, in vain,
That fill'd the concave Sky, and thronging Plain,
Led them from her, whose absence long I mourn'd.

II.
While on the Saint's transporting form I hung,
I heard, in whispers, from the holy Throng,
"His mortal Sense will never bear the view."
Instant the glowing circles seem'd to run
Across my sight, like one that eyes the Sun,
Whelming my sense, and prov'd the warning true.
III.

But, when the visual nerves resum’d their tone,
I saw (tho’ half their energy was gone)
   The heav’ly Squadron, ranging to the right,
In glorious march, with Sol’s ascending rays
Westward they wheel’d, reflecting blaze on blaze,
   While still before them fail’d the seven-fold Light.

IV.

As flying Squadrons shun the storm of War,
With fluctuating shields, that gleam afar,
   And waving banners spread; the Blest were seen
In mighty circuit verging to the West,
Till they beheld the winged Team arrest,
   And turn its Pole upon the velvet green.

V.

Close by the fervid wheels, by left and right,
The Vestals march’d along; a Bevy bright
   Still following, as their Master mov’d along,
Sweeping the ample Sky, with steady wing,
While the who wash’d me in OBLIVION’s spring,
   With STATIUS, and with me, purfu’d the Throng.

VI.

Behind the wheel, which mark’d with narrower sweep
The dexter path, along the forest deep,
   Conceal’d in solitary gloom, we pass’d;
Mute were these Bowers where Angels fung of old,
(Ere Eve her bliss for empty prospects fold,)
   And heav’nyly Echoes cheer’d the blooming waste.
VII.
Thrice had the winged arrow's founding flight
Our journey meafur'd, when, as swift as Light,
Beatrice left the Car: a fullen sound
Slow wafted to my ear our Father's Name,
Chanting the woful caufe of Sin and Shame
In dol'rous accents, thro' the woods profound.

VIII.
Round a lone Tree, amid a solemn glade,
The radiant Team a mighty circuit made;
By Winter fcah'd, and mark'd with Thunder's scar
It fcah'd: no leaves it shrow'd, nor fcented bloom;
Its long, funereal arms, in awful gloom
Extended o'er the blasted heath afar.

IX.
Yet, not like other Trees its branches spread;
With ampler sweep, as nearer to the head,
The wide diverging boughs portentious wave
High o'er the racking clouds, of giant size,
Above those groves that shade the southern Skies,
And tempest, flood, and fire, alternate brave.

X.
"O happy thou, who, while engrin'd in dust,
Never allure'd by thy degener'ate gust,
Or tempting fruit thy bright reverfion fold,
When Appetite rebell'd." Around the Tree
Thus sung the Saints in heav'nly harmony,
As to the trunk the hallow'd Chariot roll'd.
XI.
Then he, whose skill renew'd, by Heav'n's behest,
The failing Race, by deadly Plagues oppr'rest,
Led on the team, and fix'd the radiant Pole,
To the large Trunk, with art celestial bound
To the paternal Stem, where first it found
Its birth ere sever'd from the mighty bole.

XII.
As when with kindling wheels the Lord of Day
Illumes the fleecy Star with genial ray,
All Nature wakens from her torpid trance;
While, slowly rising from the wint'ry Tomb,
In ev'ry swelling bud the nascent bloom,
Springing to Life, renews the vernal dance.

XIII.
Ere thro' the second Sign his chariot speeds,
Young April's tender hues adorn the meads;
Thus, like the blushes of a vernal Sky,
Where the fair Violet and full-blown Rose,
Seem'd their sweet mingling colours to disclose,
The wither'd Plant reviv'd, with signs of joy.

St. xi. l. 6. Its birth—] How this Chariot, which means the visible Church, drew its being from the Tree of Knowledge, seems rather a strained allegory; but it means, that the peculiar blessings of Redemption were the consequences of the Fall, by the operation of Him who alone can bring Good out of Evil.—There is no satisfactory light thrown on it by the Commentators which I had an opportunity of consulting. Vellutello says, it signifies, the perfect obedience of Christ annexed to the imperfect obedience of Man.
XIV.
But never could Imagination scan
The peal of heav’nly praiie, unmatch’d by Man,
   That, like a sudden Pæan, rung around
From the deep thronging Theatre of Souls,
Who sung their ranfom to the lift’nig Poles;
   The potent charm my slumb’ring Senses bound.

XV.
Could I recal the sweet oblivious strain,
That o’er the eyeballs of the watchful Swain
   A deep eclipse, with tuneful magic, drew;
Then would I, with a master-hand, display
My feelings, when the Soul’s departing ray
   Sunk in a cloud of deep Cimmerian hue.

XVI.
Let others chuse the task, who wish to sing,
How, in a coming trance, the mental Spring
   Gradual resigns her recollective might;
Thro’ the dark Medium loves the Mufe to run,
To the warm precints of the golden Sun,
   When my recovering optics hail’d the Light.

XVII.
As, overwhelm’d by Light, with swimming eyes,
Upon that fragrant Plant, which still supplies
   Angelic Food; while round the heav’nly Hall,
The never-ending Hymeneals ring,
The Galileans gaz’d, till from their King
   That Voice they heard that rends the funeral pall.

St. xvii. l. 2. As, overwhelm’d by Light,—] Comparison drawn from the effect of the Transfiguration on the Apostles PaTes, James, and John. Mat. xvii.
XVIII.

As they, on waking, saw the heav'nly Pair,
Like Morning's muffled glories, lost in air,
And their Great Master, late in radiance clad,
Like Sol, divested of his Robes of Light,
Or, as the dark'ned Moon salutes the Night,
Dimly perceiv'd, with half his splendours fled.

XIX.

So wonder'd I to see the changing scene,
For none was left on all the shady Green,
But that fair Nymph that plung'd me in the Flood.
"Where is Beatrice?" in amaze I cry'd.
"Seated beneath yon' Tree!" the Nymph reply'd;
"Her seven Attendants range the neighb'ring wood.

XX.

"The rest arose upon the wafting gale,
Up to the Zenith on triumphant sail,
Their great Conductor glittering in the van:
Sweet was the air, and solemn was the hymn
They fung, as o'er the clouds I saw them skim,
While round the cope of Heav'n the concert ran."

XXI.

Here ceas'd the Nymph, or I the rest forgot,
For now my Empress my attention caught;
Where, by the Tree, amid her vestal choir
She sat, as Guardian of the sacred Team:
The seven Lamps cast around a golden gleam,
Scorning the Boreal gale, or Auster's ire.
XXII.

"A Forester," she cry'd, "you here must stay,
Till the Metropolis her gates display;
You may expect the mighty Sov'reign soon,
To give th' adopting Sign: But, ere you go,
Your Care a friendly warning must be shown
On Sin's devoted Slaves beneath the Moon.

XXIII.

"Observe yon' mystic Sign;" I turn'd my eye
Obedient to the Mandate of the Sky;
When, swifter than the blasting bolt of Jove,
From the disparting Clouds an Eagle came,
And thro' the foliage shot like running flame,
Rending those boughs, the Pride of all the Grove.

XXIV.

Then the proud Chariot, with impetuous flight
The Bird assail'd; it swerv'd beneath his might,
Like a tall Frigate by a furious storm
Compell'd to reel; while, on its rocking seat,
A fly Fox clamber'd with polluted feet:
Consuming want had pin'd his meagre form.

St. xxiii. l. 4. —an Eagle came,] By the Eagle is meant the Power of the Roman Empire; first inimical, and then friendly, to the Church; covering it with new spoils, and supporting it with its influence.—See St. xxviii.

St. xxiv. l. 5. A fly Fox—] By the Fox is meant, the various Heresies of the first Ages, suppressed by Beatrice, or true Theology.—Landino, &c.
XXV.
But the fair Vestal, with a stern regard,
His wiles detected, and his entrance barr'd,
And sent the fell Anatomy away,
Just as his waisted bones could bear his weight;
Then Jove's proud Bird, above the Car of State,
His ample pinions spread in large display.

XXVI.
All sudden, I beheld the moving Throne
Before, behind, with moulded plumage strown,
Then loud laments along the welkin roll'd,
As of a Spirit, who in anguish hung
O'er the sad scene: "Ill-fated Ship, how long
Shall that sad burden fill your sacred hold!"

XXVII.
These mournful accents in an Earthquake ceas'd,
And instant, from the rocking ground releas'd,
Between the wheels a scaly Serpent drew
His fatal spires, and spread his Dragon wing,
Then struck the sacred Seat with deadly sting,
And soon the sacred Seat in fragments flew.

XXVIII.
The ruin'd remnant, like an hearse, was clad
With waving plumes, that all around it spread;

_St. xxvii. l. 3. —a scaly Serpent] By the Serpent is meant
Mahomet; and his Destruction of the Imperial Seat, means
the loss of Jerusalem.—Landino, &c._
Unhappy boon; though giv'n without deceit,
Concealing from the view (as o'er the foil
Summer her liv'ry spreads with cheerful smile)
The shatter'd fellies and the broken feat.

XXIX.

When, io! a breathing time was scarce allow'd,
When, like pale Spectres, from the fun'ral shroud,
At ev'ry corner of that umber'd Car,
An hideous face, with giant features, frown'd;
Three perch'd upon the Pole, twice two around
With baleful accents breath'd revenge and war.

St. xxix. l. 5. Three perch'd upon the Pole— It is quite amu-
ling to see the pains taken by the Italian Commentators to ex-
plain these seven heads and ten horns, in a different sense from
what they are held to typify in their original place in the Revela-
tions. Landino and the rest make the ten horns to signify the
Ten Commandments, and seven heads the Seven Sacraments.
Daniello supposes they mean the Seven Electors of the Empire;
and honest Vellutello, who is somewhat nearer to the mark, ima-
gines they signify the seven deadly Sins. Landino is obliged to
have recourse to the above-mentioned expedient, as he finds the Heads
and Horns so attached to the Chariot, or Church, that they must
stand or fall together. But other Interpreters give these types a
different meaning. Even Landino is obliged to confess, that by
the gigantic Lover is meant Philip le Bel of France; by the
Adulterers, Pope Boniface the Eighth, or Clement the Fifth,
whose intrigues with this Monarch, and alliances formed against him,
occaisioned much mischief to the Papal interest. See Hist. Flor.
and Notes upon the twenty-eighth Canto of the Inferno. See Sir
Isaac Newton on Daniel; and Hurd, Bagot, Halifax, and
Keet on the Prophecies.
XXX.
Their fronts were doubly arm'd, like Ammon's God,
The deadly four, that round the Chariot stood,
Each with a solitary horn was seen;
No shapes so miscreated and uncouth,
Yet ever rais'd their heads, from North to South,
To scare the Nations with Gorgonian mien.

XXXI.
Firm as a rock, that scorns the lapse of Time,
A loose Adult's res, on the seat sublime,
Allur'd the crowd with loud Circæan look;
New wonders still the plastic pow'r employ'd,
An hideous Confort, seated by her side,
Low bending seem'd to Love's imperious yoke.

XXXII.
But, when the Lover mark'd her wand'ring eye,
Caught by each transient Form that fleeted by,
By jealous heat inflam'd, his cruel hand
Scourg'd her without remorse; then, fir'd by rage,
He drew the Chariot from its verdant stage,
And dragg'd it on in triumph o'er the land.

END OF THE THIRTY-SECOND CANTO.
CANTO THE THIRTY-THIRD.

ARGUMENT.
The Poet arrives, under the guidance of Matilda, at the River Eunoë, of which he is made to drink; and concludes the Canto with a general Description of its Effects upon him.

THE Wood conceal'd the Plund'rer and his Prey;
But soon a soft and melancholy Lay
Was heard, arising from the Vestal Train:
"O God! the Heathen spoil thy sacred Shrine."
While the pale aspect of the Maid divine,
With sudden change bespoke her inward pain.

II.
Not deeper woe the Virgin's look confess'd,
When the torn limbs the struggling Soul releas'd,
Convuls'd, and trembling on the fatal Wood;
But Hope's soft colour, like the flush of Morn,
Seem'd o'er her kindling aspect to return,
And thus she answer'd, in triumphant mood:
III.

"A little time will see me pass away;
But soon, returning, like the Orb of Day,
My beams shall cheer your flight, celestial Maids!"
Then, moving to the Trent, Matilda's name
She call'd, and him whom Thebes confign'd to fame
With me, to join her in the sacred shades.

IV.

Three paces scarce had mark'd the hallow'd Soil,
When thus to me, with a benignant smile,
She spoke: "Approach, my Friend! but come alone;
Dread nought, but listen with attention deep,
And what I say, with due observance keep:
Thus for your former negligence atone." —

V.

Nearer I came, when thus the Maid divine:
"Why are you silent, when the Fates affign
The ready means your former doubts to clear?"
Like one, who meets a Sage with rev'rend awe,
And from his sacred Lips expects the Law,
In silence long I stood, intent to hear.

VI.

At length, I thus began with falter'ing breath,
Scarce audible, "The longing Eye of Faith
On your deep counsels all its pow'r employs;
Assist my failing strength!" "Attend," she cry'd;
"Nor let your Heav'n-born faculties subside,
Like one who in the arms of Morpheus lies."
VII.

"That hallow'd Ark, that mourns the Dragon's ire,
No longer boasts its heav'ny frame entire;
But vengeance flames, and scorns the trivial Spell
Employ'd by mortal Men to quench its rage:
They whose vile arts profan'd the sacred Pledge,
No shield will find, its flaming shaft to quell.

VIII.

"That Bird, whose moulted plumes the chariot clad,
Shall see a regal Heir his pinions spread,
And drive these hideous Spectres far away,
That o'er the sacred wheels portentous frown;
And to compensate for her old renown,
Make her at once a Monster and a Prey.

IX.

"No Pow'r of Earth or Hell, with hostile bar,
Can stop the course of his ascending Star.
I see, in burning characters above
Display'd, the mystic number of his Name:
\Y'on' frontless Woman, and the Son of Shame,
Beneath his rage shall mourn their lawless Love.

St. viii. l. 1. *That Bird, &c.*] Some Commentators explain this Prophecy by the accession of the Emperor Henry the Seventh, who renewed the hopes of the Ghibelline Faction in Italy; while others imagine that the Poet's Patron, Cano Della Scala, Lord of Verona, from whom he expected a restoration to his Country, and the suppression of the opposite Faction, is meant in this Stanza.
X.

"Obscure, perhaps, as Oracles of old,
A mystic veil my warning words infold;
As hallow'd Themis, or the Monster's ire
That menace'd Thebes; but soon a Nymph shall come
Whose sacred Voice shall solve the Victim's doom,
Nor need the help of Famine, Sword, or Fire.

XI.

"Mark thou my Words, and let thy Brethren hear,
That hurry to the Tomb in swift career,
Thro' that dim twilight of the slumb'ring Soul
Which they call Life; nor be the Plant forgot,
By Foes twice plunder'd on this fatal Spot,
Whose daring hands have spoil'd the sacred Bole,

XII.

"Celestial Anger still indignant glows,
Gainst them who spoil or break the waving Boughs;
That spring for hallow'd purposes alone;
The Man, who robb'd it first with hand profane,
Five thousand years in Penitence and Pain,
Waited the hand that could his Deeds atone.

XIII.

"Thy Genius slumbers, if it fails to see,
Why, waving o'er the clouds, that wond'rous Tree

St. x. 1. 3,—the Monster's ire] The Sphinx, who defoliated Thebes, because its Inhabitants could not explain her Enigma; this being effected by Ædipus, occasioned her death. See Statius Theb. 1, 2, 3. Eurip. Phænix. Soph. Ædip. Tyrana.
As it ascends a broader umbrage throws;
Like Elsa's wint'ry wave, thy thoughts congeal;
Or, as the blood that stain'd pale ThIsbe's Steel,
A Stygian tint on ev'ry theme bestows.

XIV.
"Eh! had your Soul enjoy'd, with deeper guift,
The Truth, and seen how glorious, good, and just,
The Pow'r, that guards the interdicted Tree;
And tho' your Mind be wrapt in Stygian fume,
That Heav'n's bleft beam can scarce pervade the gloom,
Truth's powerful hand the Captive soon shall free.

XV.
"No Pilgrim from the brink of Jordan's flood,
That homeward brings the palm-encircled wood,
Shall bear such reliques of the Holy Land,
As you, when to the nether World you go."
"I feel," I cry'd, "I feel the Pictures glow
Trac'd by the magic of thy mighty hand.

XVI.
"But, ah! your mystic meaning soars so high
Above my labouring Mind's benighted Eye,
That half is lost, while I the rest attend.
So thick and fast the coming glories fall,
No mortal Mind can recognize them all,
Nor the whole scheme of wonders comprehend."

XVII.
"That style I chose for you, Heav'n-favour'd Man,
That you the diff'rence of these Truths may scan,
From those vain shadows which the world below
For substance hold. But, far as Heav'n's career
Exceeds in swiftness this sublunar Sphere,
My heav'nly truths their idle dreams out-go."

XVIII.
"I cannot tax my mem'ry," I reply'd,
"When from thy sacred Love I turn'd aside:
No deep remorse recalls the mental wound."
"You drank of Lethe's stream," the Virgin said;
"The hidden flame is by the smoke betray'd;
In your oblivion, your defect is found,

XIX.
"But now the Truth, conceal'd beneath a Cloud,
To your dim eyes its splendour shall unshrowd,
And to your rude perception condescend."
Now, on the point of Prime, the Orb of Light
Survey'd the nether World, intenfely bright;
But flower seem'd his radiant course to bend,

XX.
As couriers, sent before a mighty Host,
Stop suddenly, by some adventure crost,
Thus, all at once, the Vestals in the Van
Stood still beneath a shade, whose solemn brow
Spread its dark umbrage o'er the shade below;
Like those tall woods that Alpine breezes fan.

XXI.
Two Rivers parted thence, with even flow;
They seem'd like two reluctant Friends that go,
Sever'd
Sever'd by rigid Fate, a different way.
"O Light and Glory of our mortal Race!
What floods are these that lead their liquid Maze,
From one deep source, and yet so widely stray?"

XXII.
"Be that Matilda's task," the Maid reply'd,
Like one that seems to fling the blame aside,
"Unjustly fix'd. Matilda soon rejoin'd:
Both this and other things so clear I taught,
That Lethe scare not the graven stamp could blot,
If some strange Spell had not bewitch'd his Mind."

XXIII.
Her Friend reply'd: "Some more important care
Has from his fancy swept that Image fair,
And his Mind's eye eclips'd with sudden night:
But Eunoe wanders near, your victim lead
To her blest waters o'er the flow'ry mead,
And let him try the final cleansing rite."

XXIV.
"The Lamp of better Life, by holy dew
Besprent, its former Lucre shall renew:
Now faintly glimm'ring in his languid breast,
Like one that only waits to learn the will
Of his superior, to the heav'nly Rill
Matilda brought me, at my Love's request."

St. xxiii. l. 4. But Eunoe wunders—] See Note at the end of
the Canto.
XXV.

As o'er the soft Lawn, to the water'd Shore,
The hallow'd Maid her mortal burden bore,
With looks of innate dignity she cry'd
To Statius, "Follow to the sacred Spring!"—
But now the Muse must drop her weary wing,
For longer pow'r to mount is now deny'd.—

XXVI.

If breath and vigour, by indulgent Heav'n,
To sing this bev'rage of the Gods were giv'n,
What holy rapture would exalt my Song!
To tell the unexhausted sweets that flow
From that blest Fountain o'er the Vale below,
And warm, with new desire, the votive Throng!

XXVII.

But now the Muse has run her fatal round,
And mark'd her Circle to the second Bound;
This only, and no more, remains to sing:
From that pure fount, with renovated pow'r
I rofe, prepar'd to leave that happy Shore,
And mount among the Stars, on ardent wing.

END OF THE PURGATORIO.
Comparing what the Poet says of his bathing in Lethre, and drinking of the River Eunoe, and considering his bias to the mysticism of the Times, there seems to me very little doubt that by this latter species of Luflration he means the attainment of the pure Love of God, after having been liberated from earthly propensities and their deislement by a Lethean ablation. But as he makes both the Rivers separate from the same fountain, we may suppose that he represents both the Stages of Moral Improvement, as closely connected as Cause and Effect. That our Poet believed human Nature could be raised to such a state of perfection even in this World, our Author firmly believed. Our own knowledge of early Ecclesiastical History, and even our improved knowledge of human Nature, leaves us little room to doubt of its reality. He could have accounted for several facts, and supported several of his opinions, otherwise than he has done, if he had been acquainted with some later systems of pneumatology, or even with the Greek Philosophers. The Doctrine of the Association of Ideas, to which Locke first gave a certain degree of celebrity, and Hartley improved, affords a considerable illustration to this allegorical description of Dante, which has so much the air of a Vision in the style of our modern Mystics; who, joining the pure love of God, with what they call self-annihilation, and not supporting their affections with solid proofs, have given the whole a chimerical appearance. But when we compare what the Poet has said of self-love, in the 17th and 18th Canto, and of Avarice and its means of Purgation, in the 19th and 20th, we shall be able, by the affluence of the doctrine of Association, to show how the pure love of God can be formed in the Mind, not by fanatical infusions, but by a rational progress.

All our inclinations and exertions begin with Self-regard, almost as soon as we are conscious of our identity. When we can once perceive the difference between pleasing and unpleasing impressions, we long for the return of the former, and dread the recurrence of the latter. While these ideas are confined to Sense alone, they create what may be called a sensual Self-interest: when, in like manner, we become acquainted with higher and nobler pleasures, we desire a repetition of these
these pleasures; this constitutes a more refined Self-interest; which, by a sort of Lethean process, if properly cultivated till it forms an habit, obliterates gradually our taste for those less refined enjoyments, or makes us relish them in an inferior degree. Even of this refined enjoyment it is allowed that Self is the medium, or at least the primary motive; but if an object occur, which pleases of itself, or for its own sake, the desire arising from thence is disinterested, i.e. when it is not the means of pleasure, but when its possession alone is an immediate satisfaction to us, without procuring any gratification, either sensual or rational. Of this kind is the love of money, which a Miser long collects as the means of procuring various gratifications; but by degrees his relish for these enjoyments becomes languid, while his attachment to the means of procuring them grows more intense, till his passion for his idol becomes quite disinterested; i.e. he loves money for its own sake, without a view to any possible gratification it can obtain for him. The same may be observed of the attachment of a Mother to her Child, which she first loves merely by instinct, and as a part of herself; as we may say; but soon, by a continuation of tender offices and endearing sympathies, arrives at such a pitch of disinterested affection, that she would not scruple to hazard even her life for the object of her Love.

This, on the doctrine of association, is easily accounted for. Desire is associated first with an object by means of some pleasure or self-satisfaction that it procures. The object remaining the same, affords us variety of pleasures. Thus the desire comes to be united with the object in such a manner, that, after repeated associations, the intervention of the idea of pleasure that made the object desirable, becomes (as in the case of the Miser) less and less necessary to produce the desire, in time superfluous, and finally unheeded; so that in many cases it is no longer perceived, or supposed to be the medium that connects the desire with the object. Thus, when the self-interested man first thinks of any gratification, the idea of money always accompanies it as the means of satisfying his desires. Those desires are various, but the idea of money uniform. Its constant recurrence gives it additional force, till habit in a manner engraves it upon the mind. He loves it as a good, without any distinct view of the advantages it may procure him, and it becomes the predominant object of his affection. See Canto xx.
This will give a clear conception in which way self-interested desire may become disinterested. When one idea comprises several others in itself, always accompanies them, and is frequently associated with each as its cause, its source, or effective means; that one idea gradually obscures the others, and ultimately so far suppresses them, that we are no longer conscious of their intervention, but immediately attend to that single one. Thus habits are formed, and the completion of wishes, first attended with pleasure, becomes by degrees the prime object, when the idea of pleasure is either obliterated or overlooked.

All our desires are originally selfish, but may become disinterested. In this sense they are right who assert, that all the inclinations of human nature are self-interested; but when they maintain that this retrospect to self must always be present to the mind, they contradict all experience, and the most accurate observance of the human intellect. Our first desires arise from a bodily want, and are involuntary; the pleasure arising from their gratification renders them voluntary. When the object gives us frequent pleasure, we become fond of it on its own account, (as a person will of an aged tree, which has given him pleasure from having often seen it dressed with foliage in Spring, and often reposèd under its shade in Summer,) then the inclination for it again becomes so far habitual, or voluntary, that it arises without the idea of the pleasure which it hath procured us. This disinterested love a man may feel, not only for what is good, but for what is bad. If a man has long accustomed himself to associate his pleasure and satisfaction with the miscarriage of others, and his unhappiness with their success; here, in like manner, the connecting link is unheeded: their unhappiness is pleasing to him, as their happiness is painful in itself, and for its own sake; and a pure hatred, and disinterested malice, take root in his heart. This is well exemplified in Richardson’s James Harlowe, who might have had all his avaricious views gratified, but he was besides impelled to the most violent measures, by hatred to Lovelace, which by degrees he transferred to his sister. Thus murder, from being considered by Domitian at first as a means of his safety, gradually became a necessary amusement; and he was compelled to employ his leisure in killing flies for want of other victims.
It is easy to apply this to the pure love of God, as he is the fountain of all good, and is, or ought to be associated in our Minds with every perception of it; that is, with every pleasing sensation. Hence it follows, that the idea of God, and the ways by which his goodness and bliss are revealed, will ultimately predominate over all others, and become at last so combined with them, that he will become, in the Scripture language, All in All. We, indeed, allow God to be the Fountain of all Good; but we do not, properly speaking, acknowledge him as such, till we admit, on the consideration of all the operations of Providence, what he himself pronounced at the Creation, that all is good; and this, with him whose view is not confined to a single point, but embraces all infinity, applies both to the present times and to eternity. Thus, whatever God has ordained or permitted, we must acknowledge to be good; what seems evil, would cease to appear so if our views were enlarged, and its connexions and effects laid open to our eyes. This unexpected light would perfectly tranquillize the soul. Every doubt in our Minds would be solved in a manner worthy of the goodness and wisdom of the Creator. We would then see why we were suffered to continue in perplexity so long; and this view, and the conviction of the universality of God’s influence and his goodness, would not only promote the pure love of God, but occasion something analogous to what the Mystics call self-annihilation. But this latter idea, in their sense, has rather a pernicious tendency, as they often associate it with the most rigorous notion of absolute predestination. But, without going such lengths, could we bring ourselves to conceive and think of nothing good but in connexion with God, and associated with the idea of him; were we to conceive of every thing presented to our Minds as his Work, and as an instance and manifestation of his goodness; though his methods would often appear obscure, it seems an unavoidable consequence, that the idea of God, and the proofs of his goodness, would, if not suppress and exclude, at least combine with every other idea. Those emanations of bounty are various, but the source always remains the same, and his idea becomes associated with every thing that is good, beautiful, or excellent: hence the connecting chain of ideas is overlooked, and God becomes immediately pleasing to us; “displaying
playing himself to us in a beauty,” to use the language of some of the Mystics, “that unites in itself the splendour of all the various goods and pleasures for which we are indebted to him. Thus he becomes the immediate object of our satisfaction, love, and joy.”

Indeed it appears probable, that, if from the known laws of association, this is the case with the Miser and his money; must not this grand idea, recurring with every enjoyment, and absorbing every excellence, become by degrees so intimately united with all the pleasures of the Mind, as to model all its powers and faculties?

Whether this be the meaning of St. Paul’s expression, 1 Cor. xv. 28, that “God shall be all in all,” may be a matter of some ambiguity? This, at least, seems evident that the subjection mentioned there does not appear to be any thing compulsory over unamended hearts; a subjection, in which the power, not the goodness, of the Sovereign would be displayed. Such a dominion would be contradictory to the nature of the kingdom of Christ; who, as he himself declares, reigns through Truth over the hearts of willing subjects. All Men are subject to his power; and certainly something more must be meant than that Jesus would bring his former enemies under in that sense. This, in itself, would never render them worthy to be put under the immediate dominion of God; but, compared with Phil. ii. 9—11, the meaning of God’s being all in all is, that he will bless, by his influence, all that Jesus Christ has rendered worthy of being put under his dominion; he will be their supreme and only good, their All.

It is to be feared that, in this life, the number of those who follow this refined self-interest, and gain a pure relief for the pleasures of sympathy, theopathy, and the moral sense, is comparatively small; yet to give up a gross self-interest to a more noble and refined one, we should imagine a sacrifice not so very difficult to rational beings; especially when we consider that godliness has the promise, not only of the life to come, but of this life *. In this world our love to God cannot wholly cast out fear, which must always associate itself with our ideas of him, from a sense of our own weakness and wants. From this, however, we shall be able to liberate ourselves more and more, by employing the means appointed by religion; the chief of these is prayer, by which a lively

* See Barrow’s Sermon on this subject.
Idea of the invisible God is kept present, and frequently recalled to our Minds; and we are led to a frequent contemplation of his Ways, his Word, and his Works. Hence we acquire a disposition to perceive God in all things, and to see and feel how kind and benevolent he is on every occasion, and take pleasure in loving moral good, and hating moral evil, for his sake.

Indeed, to attempt what the Mystics understand by self-annihilation, and to endeavour after such a pure love of God as excludes all self-interest, even that refined and rational kind mentioned above, might lead to religious frenzy, or the most dangerous fanaticism.

An approximation, however, to the pure love of God, is an approximation to the highest perfection and happiness of rational beings: to this point, they that follow nature must ever approach in a variety of gradations; to this they tend, as the proper object of their active powers. As we aim at this object, and in proportion as we approach it, we strive after the proper perfection of our Nature; and the nearer we are to it, the greater is our perfection. We love the Father of Light, in whom there is no vice; light and darkness. His good is unbounded, and his happiness is uncreated; thus the good we expect in him is not, like all other things, defective, insufficient, or limited; but ever new, uncreated and unclowing, for he is infinite. We shew our love to him by loving his creatures, the chief of which, here, is Man; and thus, according to the Poet’s idea, the waters of Eunoe bring with them a taste for unfading pleasures, of which they give a most refreshing anticipation, instead of those faint and transitory images, and empty, though fascinating, illusions, which had been swept away in the ablations of Lethe.

* See Preliminary Essay, Sect. 2.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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