

Aught pleasing prompts her, soon as she is waked
 By pleasure into act. Of substance true
 Your apprehension¹ forms its counterfeit;
 And, in you the ideal shape presenting,
 Attract the soul's regard. If she, thus drawn,
 Incline toward it; love is that inclining,
 And a new nature knit by pleasure in ye.
 Then, as the fire points up, and mounting seeks
 His birth-place and his lasting seat, e'en thus
 Enters the captive soul into desire,
 Which is a spiritual motion, that ne'er rests
 Before enjoyment of the thing it loves.
 Enough to show thee, how the truth from those
 Is hidden, who aver all love a thing
 Praise-worthy in itself; although perhaps²
 Its matter seem still good. Yet if the wax
 Be good, it follows not the impression must."

"What love is," I return'd, "thy words, O guide!
 And my own docile mind, reveal. Yet thence
 New doubts have sprung. For, from without, if love
 Be offer'd to us, and the spirit knows
 No other footing; tend she right or wrong,
 Is no desert of hers." He answering thus:
 "What reason here discovers, I have power

¹ *Your apprehension*.—It is literally, "Your apprehensive faculty derives intension from a thing really existing, and displays that intension within you, so that it makes the soul turn to it." The commentators labour in explaining this; but whatever sense they have elicited, may, I think, be resolved into the words of the translation in the text.

² *Perhaps*.—"Our author," Venturi observes, "uses the language of the Peripatetics, which denominates the *kind* of things, as determinable by many differences, *matter*. Love then, in kind perhaps, appears good; and it is said *perhaps*, because, strictly speaking, *in kind* there is neither good nor bad, neither praiseworthy nor blameable." To this Lombardi adds, that what immediately follows—namely, that "every mark is not good although the wax be so," answers to this interpretation. For the

wax is precisely as the determinable matter, and the mark or impression as the determining form: and even as the wax, which is either good or at least not bad, may, by being imprinted by a bad figure, acquire the name of bad; so may love be said generally to be good or at least not bad, and acquire the name of bad by being determined to an unfit object. "As the wax takes all shapes, and yet is wax still at the bottom; the *τὸ ὑποκείμενον* still is wax; so the soul transported in so many several passions of joy, fear, hope, sorrow, anger, and the like, has for its general groundwork of all this, Love."—*Henry More*, Discourse xvi. This passage in the most philosophical of our theologians, may serve for an answer to the objection of those who blame Collins for not having brought in Love among the "Passions" in his exquisite ode.

To show thee: that which lies beyond, expect
 From Beatrice, faith not reason's task.
 Spirit,¹ substantial form, with matter join'd,
 Not in confusion mix'd, hath in itself
 Specific virtue of that union born,
 Which is not felt except it work, nor proved
 But through effect, as vegetable life
 By the green leaf. From whence his intellect
 Deduced its primal notices of things,
 Man therefore knows not, or his appetites
 Their first affections; such in you, as zeal
 In bees to gather honey; at the first,
 Volition, meriting nor blame nor praise.
 But o'er each lower faculty supreme,
 That, as she list, are summon'd to her bar,
 Ye have that virtue² in you, whose just voice
 Uttereth counsel, and whose word should keep
 The threshold of assent. Here is the source,
 Whence cause of merit in you is derived;
 E'en as the affections, good or ill, she takes,
 Or severs,³ winnow'd as the chaff. Those men,⁴
 Who, reasoning, went to depth profoundest, mark'd
 That innate freedom; and were thence induced
 To leave their moral teaching to the world.
 Grant then, that from necessity arise
 All love that glows within you; to dismiss
 Or harbour it, the power is in yourselves.
 Remember, Beatrice, in her style,
 Denominates free choice by eminence
 The noble virtue; if in talk with thee

¹ *Spirit*.—The human soul, which differs from that of brutes, inasmuch as though united with the body, it has a separate existence of its own.

² *That virtue*.—Reason.

³ *Or severs*.—Lest the reader of the original should be misled, it is right to warn him that the word "vigliare" must not be confounded with "vagliare"

to winnow, and strictly means "to separate from the straw what remains of the grain after the threshing." The process is distinctly described in the notes on the "Decameron," p. 77, ediz. Giunti, 1573, where this passage is referred to.

⁴ *Those men*.—The great moral philosophers among the heathens.

She touch upon that theme." The moon, well nigh
 To midnight hour belated, made the stars
 Appear to wink and fade; and her broad disk
 Seem'd like a crag¹ on fire, as up the vault²
 That course she journey'd, which the sun then warms;
 When they of Rome behold him at his set
 Betwixt Sardinia and the Corsic isle.
 And now the weight, that hung upon my thought,
 Was lighten'd by the aid of that clear spirit,
 Who raiseth Andes³ above Mantua's name.
 I therefore, when my questions had obtain'd
 Solution plain and ample, stood as one
 Musing in dreamy slumber; but not long
 Slumber'd; for suddenly a multitude,
 The steep already turning from behind,
 Rush'd on. With fury and like random rout,
 As echoing on their shores at midnight heard
 Ismenus and Asopus,⁴ for his Thebes
 If Bacchus' help were needed; so came these
 Tumultuous, curving each his rapid step,
 By eagerness impell'd of holy love.

Soon they o'ertook us; with such swiftness moved
 The mighty crowd. Two spirits at their head
 Cried, weeping, "Blessed Mary⁵ sought with haste

¹ *A crag*.—I have preferred the reading of Landino, *scheggion*, "crag," conceiving it to be more poetical than *secchion*, "bucket," which is the common reading. The same cause, the vapours, which the commentators say might give the appearance of increased magnitude to the moon, might also make her seem broken at her rise. Lombardi explains it differently. The moon being, as he says, in the fifth night of her wane, has exactly the figure of a brazen bucket, round at the bottom and open at top; and, if we suppose it to be all on fire, we shall have, besides the form of the moon, her colour also. There is a simile in one of Fielding's novels very like this, but so ludicrous that I am unwilling to disturb the reader's gravity by inserting it.

² *Up the vault*.—The moon passed with a motion opposite to that of the heavens, through the constellation of the Scorpion, in which the sun is, when to those who are in Rome he appears to set between the isles of Corsica and Sardinia.

³ *Andes*.—Andes, now Pietola, made more famous than Mantua, near which it is situated, by having been the birth-place of Virgil.

⁴ *At midnight heard Ismenus and Asopus*.—Rivers near Thebes.

⁵ *Mary*.—"And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill-country with haste, into a city of Judah; and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth."—Luke i. 39, 40.

The hilly region. Cæsar,¹ to subdue
 Herda, darted in Marseilles his sting,
 And flew to Spain."—"Oh, tarry not: away!"
 The others shouted; "let not time be lost
 Through slackness of affection. Hearty zeal
 To serve reanimates celestial grace."

"O ye! in whom intenser fervency
 Haply supplies, where lukewarm erst ye fail'd,
 Slow or neglectful, to absolve your part
 Of good and virtuous; this man, who yet lives
 (Credit my tale, though strange), desires to ascend,
 So morning rise to light us. Therefore say
 Which hand leads nearest to the rifted rock."

So spake my guide; to whom a shade return'd:
 "Come after us, and thou shalt find the cleft.
 We may not linger: such resistless will
 Speeds our unwearied course. Vouchsafe us then
 Thy pardon, if our duty seem to thee
 Discourteous rudeness. In Verona I
 Was abbot² of San Zeno, when the hand
 Of Barbarossa grasp'd Imperial sway,
 That name ne'er utter'd without tears in Milan.
 And there is he,³ hath one foot in his grave,
 Who for that monastery ere long shall weep,
 Ruining his power misused: for that his son,
 Of body ill compact, and worse in mind,
 And born in evil, he hath set in place
 Of its true pastor." Whether more he spake,
 Or here was mute, I know not: he had sped
 E'en now so far beyond us. Yet thus much
 I heard, and in remembrance treasured it.

¹ *Cæsar*.—See Lucan, "Pharsalia," lib. iii. and iv.; and Cæsar, "De Bello Civili," lib. i. Cæsar left Brutus to complete the siege of Marseilles, and hastened on to the attack of Afranius and Petreius, the generals of Pompey, at Herda (Lerida) in Spain.

² *Abbot*.—Alberto, abbot of San Zeno in Verona, when Frederick I. was emperor, by whom Milan was besieged and reduced to ashes, in 1162.

³ *There is he*.—Alberto della Scala, Lord of Verona, who had made his natural son abbot of San Zeno.

He then, who never fail'd me at my need,
 Cried, "Hither turn. Lo! two with sharp remorse
 Chiding their sin." In rear of all the troop
 These shouted: "First they died,¹ to whom the sea
 Open'd, or ever Jordan saw his heirs:
 And they,² who with Æneas to the end
 Endured not suffering, for their portion chose
 Life without glory." Soon as they had fled
 Past reach of sight, new thought within me rose
 By others follow'd fast, and each unlike
 Its fellow: till led on from thought to thought,
 And pleased with the fleeting train, mine eye
 Was closed, and meditation changed to dream.

¹ *First they died*.—The Israelites, who on account of their disobedience died before reaching the promised land.

² *And they*.—Those Trojans, who wearied with

their voyage, chose rather to remain in Sicily with Acestes, than accompany Æneas to Italy. Virgil, "Æneid," lib. v.