

That forth from France invites another Charles¹
 To make himself and kindred better known.
 Unarm'd he issues, saving with that lance,
 Which the arch-traitor tilted with;² and that
 He carries with so home a thrust, as rives
 The bowels of poor Florence. No increase
 Of territory hence, but sin and shame
 Shall be his guerdon; and so much the more
 As he more lightly deems of such foul wrong.
 I see the other³ (who a prisoner late
 Had stept on shore) exposing to the mart
 His daughter, whom he bargains for, as do
 The Corsairs for their slaves. O avarice!
 What canst thou more, who hast subdued our blood
 So wholly to thyself, they feel no care
 Of their own flesh? To hide with direr guilt
 Past ill and future, lo! the flower-de-luce⁴
 Enters Alagna; in his Vicar Christ
 Himself a captive, and his mockery
 Acted again. Lo! to his holy lip

¹ *Another Charles.*—Charles of Valois, brother of Philip IV., was sent by Pope Boniface VIII. to settle the disturbed state of Florence. In consequence of the measures he adopted for that purpose, our poet and his friends were condemned to exile and death. See G. Villani, lib. viii., c. xlviii.

² *With that lance, which the arch-traitor tilted with.*—

“Con la lancia
 Con la qual giostrò Giuda.”

If I remember right, in one of the old romances, Judas is represented tilting with our Saviour.

³ *The other.*—Charles, King of Naples, the eldest son of Charles of Anjou, having, contrary to the directions of his father, engaged with Ruggier de Lauria, the admiral of Peter of Arragon, was made prisoner, and carried into Sicily, June, 1284. He afterwards, in consideration of a large sum of money, married his daughter to Azzo VIII., Marquis of Ferrara. I take Lauria to be the hero meant by Petrarch in his Triumph of Fame:

“Quel di Luria seguiva il Saladino.”
 Cap. ii., v. 151.

Of whom Biagioli says in a note, “Non so chi sia, e non trovo nè vivo nè morto chi mel dica,” “I know not who he is, and I find no one alive or dead to tell me.” Mariana, lib. xiv., cap. 10, calls Lauria “a brave captain, signalised by his former victories.” See also the seventh book of G. Villani's history, and Boccaccio's “Decameron,” Giorn. 5, Nov. 6; where he is named Ruggieri dell' Oria.

⁴ *The flower-de-luce.*—Boniface VIII. was seized at Alagna in Campagna, by the order of Philip IV., in the year 1303, and soon after died of grief. G. Villani, lib. viii., cap. lxiii. “As it pleased God, the heart of Boniface being petrified with grief, through the injury he had sustained, when he came to Rome, he fell into a strange malady, for he gnawed himself as one frantic, and in this state expired.” His character is strongly drawn by the analyst in the next chapter. Thus, says Landino, was verified the prophecy of Celestine respecting him, that he should enter on the popedom like a fox, reign like a lion, and die like a dog.

The vinegar and gall once more applied;
 And he 'twixt living robbers doom'd to bleed.
 Lo! the new Pilate, of whose cruelty
 Such violence cannot fill the measure up,
 With no decree to sanction, pushes on
 Into the temple his yet eager sails.¹

“O sovrán Master!² when shall I rejoice
 To see the vengeance, which thy wrath, well-pleased,
 In secret silence broods?—While daylight lasts,
 So long what thou didst hear³ of her, sole spouse
 Of the Great Spirit, and on which thou turn'dst
 To me for comment, is the general theme
 Of all our prayers: but, when it darkens, then
 A different strain we utter; then record
 Pygmalion,⁴ whom his gluttonous thirst of gold
 Made traitor, robber, parricide: the woes
 Of Midas, which his greedy wish ensued,
 Mark'd for derision to all future times:
 And the fond Achan,⁵ how he stole the prey,
 That yet he seems by Joshua's ire pursued.
 Sapphira with her husband next we blame;
 And praise the forefeet, that with furious ramp
 Spurn'd Heliodorus.⁶ All the mountain round
 Rings with the infamy of Thracia's king;⁷
 Who slew his Phrygian charge: and last a shout

¹ *Into the temple his yet eager sails.*—It is uncertain whether our poet alludes still to the event mentioned in the preceding note, or to the destruction of the order of the Templars in 1310, but the latter appears more probable.

² *O sovrán Master.*—Lombardi, who rightly corrects Venturi's explanation of this passage, with which I will not trouble the reader, should have acknowledged, if he was conscious of it, that his own interpretation of it was the same as that before given by Vellutello: “When, O Lord, shall I behold that vengeance accomplished, which being already determined in thy secret judgment, thy retributive justice even now contemplates with delight?”

³ *While daylight lasts, so long what thou didst hear.*—See ver. 21.

⁴ *Pygmalion.*—

“Ille Sychæum
 Impius ante aras, atque auri cæcus amore,
 Clam ferro incautum superat.”

Virgil, *Æneid*, l. 1, 350.

⁵ *Achan.*—Joshua vii.

⁶ *Heliodorus.*—“For there appeared unto them an horse, with a terrible rider upon him, and adorned with a very fair covering, and he ran fiercely and smote at Heliodorus with his fore feet.”—2 Maccabees iii. 25.

⁷ *Thracia's king.*—Polymnestor, the murderer of Polydorus. “Hell,” canto xxx. 19.

Ascends: 'Declare, O Crassus!¹ for thou know'st,
The flavour of thy gold.' The voice of each
Now high, now low, as each his impulse prompts,
Is led through many a pitch, acute or grave.
Therefore, not singly, I erewhile rehearsed
That blessedness we tell of in the day:
But near me, none, beside, his accent raised."

From him we now had parted, and essay'd
With utmost efforts to surmount the way;
When I did feel, as nodding to its fall,
The mountain tremble; whence an icy chill
Seized on me, as on one to death convey'd.
So shook not Delos, when Latona there
Couch'd to bring forth the twin-born eyes of heaven.

Forthwith from every side a shout arose
So vehement, that suddenly my guide
Drew near, and cried: "Doubt not, while I conduct thee."
"Glory!" all shouted (such the sounds mine ear
Gather'd from those, who near me swell'd the sounds),
"Glory in the highest be to God." We stood
Immovably suspended, like to those,
The shepherds, who first heard in Bethlehem's field
That song: till ceased the trembling, and the song
Was ended: then our hallow'd path resumed,
Eying the prostrate shadows, who renew'd
Their custom'd mourning. Never in my breast
Did ignorance so struggle with desire
Of knowledge, if my memory do not err,
As in that moment; nor through haste dared I
To question, nor myself could aught discern.
So on I fared, in thoughtfulness and dread.

¹ *Crassus*.—Marcus Crassus, who fell miserably in the Parthian war. See Appian, "Parthica."

"E vidi Ciro più di sangue avaro,

Che Crasso d'oro, e l'uno e l'altro n'ebbe
Tanto, che parve a ciascheduno amaro."

Petrarca.

CANTO XXI.

ARGUMENT.

The two Poets are overtaken by the spirit of Statius, who, being cleansed, is on his way to Paradise, and who explains the cause of the mountain shaking, and of the hymn; his joy at beholding Virgil.

THE natural thirst, ne'er quench'd but from the well¹

Whereof the woman of Samaria craved
Excited; haste, along the cumber'd path,
After my guide, impell'd; and pity moved
My bosom for the 'vengeful doom though just.
When lo! even as Luke² relates, that Christ
Appear'd unto the two upon their way,
New-risen from his vaulted grave; to us
A shade appear'd, and after us approach'd,
Contemplating the crowd beneath its feet.
We were not ware of it; so first it spake,
Saying, "God give you peace, my brethren!" then
Sudden we turn'd: and Virgil such salute,
As fitted that kind greeting, gave; and cried:
"Peace in the blessed council be thy lot,
Awarded by that righteous court which me
To everlasting banishment exiles."

"How!" he exclaim'd, nor from his speed meanwhile
Desisting;³ "If that ye be spirits whom God
Vouchsafes not room above; who up the height
Has been thus far your guide?" To whom the bard:

¹ *The well*.—"The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not."—John iv. 15.

² *Luke*.—Chapter xxiv. 13.

³ *Nor from his speed meanwhile desisting*.—The unintelligible reading of almost all the editions here

(but not of all, as Lombardi would lead us to suppose, except his favourite Nidobeatina) is

"E perchè andate forte?"

Vellutello has also that which is no doubt the right:

"E parte andava forte."