

"Hear now, and wonder at, what next I tell.
 After with Titus it was sent to wreak
 Vengeance for vengeance of the ancient sin.
 And, when the Lombard tooth, with fang impure,
 Did gore the bosom of the holy church,
 Under its wings, victorious Charlemain²
 Sped to her rescue. Judge then for thyself
 Of those, whom I erewhile accused to thee,
 What they are, and how grievous their offending,
 Who are the cause of all your ills. The one³
 Against the universal ensign rears
 The yellow lilies;⁴ and with partial aim,
 That, to himself, the other⁵ arrogates:
 So that 'tis hard to see who most offends.
 Be yours, ye Ghibellines,⁶ to veil your hearts

¹ *Vengeance for vengeance.*—This will be afterwards explained by the poet himself. See next canto, v. 47, and note.

² *Charlemain.*—Dante could not be ignorant that the reign of Justinian was long prior to that of Charlemain; but the spirit of the former emperor is represented, both in this instance and in what follows, as conscious of the events that had taken place after his own time.

³ *The one.*—The Guelph party.

⁴ *The yellow lilies.*—The French ensign.

⁵ *The other.*—The Ghibelline party.

⁶ *Ye Ghibellines.*—"Authors differ much as to the beginning of these factions, and the origin of the names by which they were distinguished. Some say that they began in Italy as early as the time of the Emperor Frederick I. in his well known disputes with Pope Alexander III. about the year 1160. Others make them more ancient, dating them from the reign of the Emperor Henry IV., who died in 1125. But the most common opinion is that they arose in the contests between the Emperor Frederick II. and Pope Gregory IX., and that this Emperor, wishing to ascertain who were his own adherents, and who those of the Pope, caused the former to be marked by the appellation of Ghibellines, and the latter by that of Guelphs. It is more probable, however, that the factions were at this time either renewed or diffused more widely, and that their origin was of an earlier date, since it is certain that G. Villani, b. v., c. xxxvii., Ricordano Malaspina, c. civ., and Pietro

Buoninsegni, b. i., of their histories of Florence, are agreed, that even from 1215—that is, long before Frederick had succeeded to the Empire, and Gregory to the Pontificate, by the death of Buondelmonte Buondelmonti, one of the chief gentlemen in Florence (see 'Paradise,' canto xvi., v. 139)—the factions of the Guelph and Ghibellini were introduced into that city."—*A. G. Artegiani*, Annot. on the "Quadreregio," p. 180. "The same variety of opinion prevails with regard to the origin of the names. Some deduce them from two brothers, who were Germans, the one called Guelph and the other Gibel, who, being the partisans of two powerful families in Pistoia, the Panciatichi and the Cancellieri, then at enmity with each other, were the first occasion of these titles having been given to the two discordant factions. Others, with more probability, derive them from Guelph or Guefone, Duke of Bavaria, and Gibello, a castle where his antagonist, the Emperor Conrad III., was born; in consequence of a battle between Guelph and Henry the son of Conrad, which was fought (according to Mini, in his 'Defence of Florence,' p. 48) A.D. 1138. Others assign to them an origin yet more ancient; asserting that at the election of Frederick I. to the Empire, the Electors concurred in choosing him, in order to extinguish the inveterate discords between the Guelphs and Ghibellines, that prince being descended by the paternal line from the Ghibellines, and by the maternal from the Guelphs. Bartolo, however, in his tractate 'De Guelphis et Gibellinis,' gives an intrin-

Beneath another standard: ill is this
 Follow'd of him, who severs it and justice:
 And let not with his Guelphs the new-crown'd Charles¹
 Assail it; but those talons hold in dread,
 Which from a lion of more lofty port
 Have rent the casing. Many a time ere now
 The sons have for the sire's transgression wail'd:
 Nor let him trust the fond belief, that heaven
 Will truck its armour for his lilies shield.

"This little star is furnish'd with good spirits,
 Whose mortal lives were busied to that end,
 That honour and renown might wait on them:
 And, when desires² thus err in their intention,
 True love must needs ascend with slacker beam.
 But it is part of our delight, to measure
 Our wages with the merit; and admire
 The close proportion. Hence doth heavenly justice
 Temper so evenly affection in us,
 It ne'er can warp to any wrongfulness.
 Of diverse voices is sweet music made:
 So in our life the different degrees
 Render sweet harmony among these wheels.
 "Within the pearl, that now encloseth us,
 Shines Romeo's light,³ whose goodly deed and fair

sic meaning to these names from certain passages in Scripture: 'Sicut Gibellus interpretatur locus fortitudinis, ita Gibellini appellantur confidentes in fortitudine militum et armorum, et sicut Guelpha interpretatur os loquens, ita Guelphi interpretantur confidentes in orationibus et in divinis.' What value is to be put on this interpretation, which well accords with the genius of those times, when it was perhaps esteemed a marvellous mystery, we leave it to others to decide."—*Ibid.*

¹ *Charles.*—The commentators explain this to mean Charles II., King of Naples and Sicily. Is it not more likely to allude to Charles of Valois, son of Philip III. of France, who was sent for, about this time, into Italy by Pope Boniface, with the promise of being made emperor? See G. Villani, lib. viii., cap. xlii.

² *When desires.*—When honour and fame are the chief motives to action, that love, which has heaven for its object, must necessarily become less fervent.

³ *Romeo's light.*—The story of Romeo is involved in some uncertainty. The name of Romeo signified, as we have seen in the note "Purgatory," canto xxxiii., v. 78, one who went on a pilgrimage to Rome. The French writers assert the continuance of his ministerial office even after the decease of his sovereign, Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence; and they rest this assertion chiefly on the fact of a certain Romieu de Villeneuve, who was the contemporary of that prince, having left large possessions behind him, as appears by his will preserved in the archives of the bishopric of Vence. That they are right as to the name at least would appear from the following marginal note on the Monte Casino MS.:

Met ill acceptance. But the Provençals,
That were his foes, have little cause for mirth.
Ill shapes that man his course, who makes his wrong
Of other's worth. Four daughters¹ were there born
To Raymond Berenger;² and every one
Became a queen: and this for him did Romeo,
Though of mean state and from a foreign land.
Yet envious tongues incited him to ask
A reckoning of that just one, who return'd
Twelve fold to him for ten. Aged and poor
He parted thence: and if the world did know
The heart he had, begging his life by morsels,
'Twould deem the praise it yields him scanty dealt."

"Romeo de Villanova districtus civitatis Ventie de Provincia olim administratoris Raymundi Belingerj Comitiss de Provincia—ivit peregrinando contemplatione ad Deum." Yet it is improbable, on the other hand, that the Italians, who lived so near the time, should be misinformed in an occurrence of such notoriety. According to them, after he had long been a faithful steward to Raymond, when an account was required from him of the revenues which he had carefully husbanded, and his master as lavishly disbursed, "he demanded the little mule, the staff, and the scrip, with which he had first entered into the Count's service, a stranger pilgrim from the shrine of St. James, in Galicia, and parted as he came; nor was it ever known whence he was, or whither he went."—*G. Villani*, lib. vi., c. xcii. The same incidents are told of him at the conclusion of

cap. xxviii., lib. ii., of Fazio degli Uberti's "Dittamondo."

¹ *Four daughters*.—Of the four daughters of Raymond Berenger, Margaret, the eldest, was married to Louis IX. of France; Eleanor, the next, to Henry III. of England; Sancha, the third, to Richard, Henry's brother, and King of the Romans; and the youngest, Beatrix, to Charles I., King of Naples and Sicily, and brother to Louis.

² *Raymond Berenger*.—This prince, the last of the house of Barcelona, who was Count of Provence, died in 1245. He is in the list of Provençal poets. See Millot, "Hist. Littéraire des Troubadours," tom. ii., p. 212. But M. Raynouard could find no manuscript of his works. See "Choix des Poésies des Troubadours," tom. v., p. vii.

CANTO VII.

ARGUMENT.

In consequence of what had been said by Justinian, who together with the other spirits have now disappeared, some doubts arise in the mind of Dante respecting the human redemption. These difficulties are fully explained by Beatrice.

"**H**OSANNA¹ Sanctus Deus Sabaoth,
Superillustrans claritate tua
Felices ignes horum malahoth."²
Thus chanting saw I turn that substance bright,³
With fourfold lustre to its orb again,
Revolving; and the rest, unto their dance,
With it, moved also; and, like swiftest sparks,
In sudden distance from my sight were veil'd.
Me doubt possess'd; and "Speak," it whisper'd me,
"Speak, speak unto thy lady; that she quench
Thy thirst with drops of sweetness." Yet blank awe,
Which lords it o'er me, even at the sound
Of Beatrice's name, did bow me down
As one in slumber held. Not long that mood
Beatrice suffer'd: she, with such a smile,
As might have made one blest amid the flames,³
Beaming upon me, thus her words began:
"Thou in thy thought art pondering (as I deem,
And what I deem is truth) how just revenge
Could be with justice punish'd: from which doubt
I soon will free thee; so thou mark my words;

¹ *Hosanna*.—"Hosanna holy God of Sabaoth, abundantly illumining with thy brightness the blessed fires of these kingdoms."

² *That substance bright*.—Justinian.

³ *As might have made one blest amid the flames*.—So Giusto de' Conti, "Bella Mano," "Qua. salamandra."

"Che puommi nelle fiamme far beato."