

florins) of the small port of Talamone in the Maremma, near Orbetello, in the hope of converting it into a fine harbour and so making Siena a great commercial power, like Genoa. The port filled up with sand as fast as it was dredged, and the place was found to be malarial and uninhabitable. These projects were thus the contemporary equivalents of a South Sea Bubble, or a Ground-Nuts Scheme. Dante seldom loses an opportunity of twitting the Sieneſe for their vanity (cf. *Inf.* xxix. 122 *sqq.*).

l. 154: *the admirals*: either this is an ironical allusion to the ſhipping which the Sieneſe hoped to baſe upon the eluſive harbour (as who ſhould ſpeak of “the Swiſs Navy”), or, as others think, the word means the contractors or workers on the dredging ſcheme (cf. our “navvies” — navigators), who ſtand to loſe not only money and hope, but alſo their lives through ſiſkneſs.

Canto XIV



THE STORY. DANTE converſes with the ſpirits of two Romagnol noblemen, one of whom — Guido del Duca — ſpeaks bitterly of the various towns upon the banks of the Arno, and recounts the degeneracy that has overtaken the noble families of Romagna. Paſſing on, the Poets hear voices crying out examples of the ſin of Envy.

“Who’s this, that makes the circuit of our hill 1
Or ever death has freed his flight to go,
And ſhuts his eyes or opens them at will?”

“I don’t know who; he’s not alone, I know; 4
Thou’rt nearer to him — aſk him; greet him fair,
With words he will be glad to aſwer to.”

Thus, on my right, diſcuſſing me, a pair 7
Of ſpirits talked, leaning their heads together;
Then raiſed their chins and ſpoke for me to hear:

“O ſoul,” ſaid one, “ſtill in the body’s tether, 10
Yet journeying on to Heaven, pray comfort us,
And be ſo charitable altogether

As tell us whence and who thou art, becauſe 13
Thy meed of grace ſuch wonder doth inſtil
As ſuch a thing well may as never was.”

I ſaid: “In Falterona ſprings a rill 16
That flows on through the heart of Tuſcany,

Nor in a hundred miles has flowed its fill.

I've brought this body from its banks; let be ¹⁹
The rest — to tell you who I am were vain;
Not much is known yet of my name or me."

"If rightly," the first speaker said again, ²²
"Seizing the sense my wits have pierced the cloud,
Who says the Arno speaks thy meaning plain."

The other asked him: "Wherefore did he shroud ²⁵
That river's name as men do with a thing
Too horrid to be spoken of out loud?"

Whereon the shade whom he was questioning ²⁸
Gave judgement thus: "I know not; yet 'twere fit
The name should perish past remembering;

For in that valley, from the head of it ³¹
(A massy part, scarce rivalled on that score,
Of the high range from which Pelorus split)

To where it yields its increase to restore ³⁴
What from the sea is sucked up by the skies
And rolled back with the rivers to the shore,

Virtue's an enemy in all men's eyes, ³⁷
And chased out like a snake; the spot's accurst,
Or all its folk a prey to ingrained vice.

They've altered so from what they were at first, ⁴⁰
You'd think, to see the men of this vile valley,

Circe had pastured them and done her worst.

It starts to drive its puny little alley ⁴³
Past brutes who eat hike men but are such hogs,
Acorns, you'd think, would come more naturally.

Then down it goes and meets with snarling dogs ⁴⁶
More fierce than formidable, gives a twitch
And turns a scornful snout on them; then jogs

Down, always down; the more, with steepening pitch, ⁴⁹
It swells, the more it finds the dogs there growing
To wolves, this ill-starred, god-forsaken ditch.

Through many a deep-cut gorge it plunges, going ⁵²
Still down, and comes to foxes last, who fear
No trap that skill can set, they are so knowing.

Nor will I cease to speak, though this man hear; ⁵⁵
'Twere well indeed he mind the things I'm saying
Which a true spirit in my mouth makes clear.

I see thy grandson hunting out and slaying ⁵⁸
The wolves upon the banks of the fierce stream,
Striking them all with horrible dismaying.

He sells their living flesh, then slaughters them ⁶¹
Like worn-out cattle; wrecks a multitude
Of lives and wrecks himself in men's esteem.

He comes blood-boltered from the dreadful wood, ⁶⁴
Which in a thousand years shall not re-leaf

To its first growth nor make the damage good.”

As at the news of some appalling sheaf ⁶⁷
Of troubles, trouble clouds the hearer’s face,
From whence soever or whate’er the grief,

So when the other soul, that in its place ⁷⁰
Had turned to listen, let these tidings reach
Its mind, I saw it moved with sad amaze.

This one’s appearance and the other’s speech ⁷³
Made me so long to know their names, I pressed
My question, mingling it with prayers, on each.

“Nay,” said the shade by whom I’d been addressed ⁷⁶
At first, “must I oblige thee? wilt thou claim
From me what thou deniest to my request?”

Yet, since God wills to shine with such a flame ⁷⁹
Of grace in thee, I’ll not be niggard — learn,
Guido del Duca am I called by name;

And in my heart such envy used to burn, ⁸²
If I’d caught some one looking pleased with life,
Thou wouldst have seen how livid I could turn.

I reap the straw whose seed I sowed so rife; ⁸⁵
Why, why set heart on things which must forbid
All partnership, O human race at strife?

And this is Rinier, honour of his breed ⁸⁸
And glory of the House of Calboli,

Since whom, his worth finds no heir to succeed,

‘Twixt Po and peak, ‘twixt Reno and the sea, ⁹¹
Lost to his blood, nor to his blood alone,
Is all that makes true men live merrily;

For all within these marches is o’ergrown ⁹⁴
With poisonous weeds, and hardly shall the share
Uproot them, or the sour land be resown.

Guy of Carpigna, Harry Mainard, Pier ⁹⁷
Of Traversaro, Lizio great of note,
Where are they now, bastard Romagnols, where?

When in Bologna shall a Fabbro root ¹⁰⁰
Again, Faenza breed a Bernardine
Of Fosco, lowly plant but lordly shoot?

Marvel not, Tuscan, if I now begin ¹⁰³
To weep, remembering well how once with us
Lived Guy of Prata, Azzo’s Ugolin,

Frederick Tignoso’s goodly court, the House ¹⁰⁶
Of Traversaro, Anastagi’s line
(Both heirless now) and all those numerous

Ladies and knights; and how we joyed to shine ¹⁰⁹
In deeds and sports, when courtesy and love
Called us, where now men’s hearts grow so malign.

Why, Brettinoro, wilt thou not remove ¹¹²
And flee? Thy lords and many more have fled,

Shunning the crimes that thou art guilty of.

Well done, Bagnacaval, thou barren bed! 115
Right ill doth Castrocaro, and Conio worse,
Troubling to breed more counts like those they've bred.

When the Pagani rid them of their curse, 118
Their Demon, they'll do well; but on their fame
A stain will rest that nothing can disperse.

O Ugolin de' Fantolin, thy name m 121
Is safe; it cannot look for heirs again
To grow debased and blacken it with shame.

But go thy ways now, Tuscan; I am fain 124
Rather to weep than to find more to say;
Our talk has wrung my heart with so much pain."

We knew those dear souls heard us move away, 127
And in their silence we could well confide
For good assurance we were not astray.

As by ourselves we journeyed side by side, 130
There came a voice, like lightning suddenly
Cleaving the air, that smote on us and cried:

"Behold now, every one that findeth me 133
Shall slay me!" and passed us like the crackling lash
Of thunder when the cloud-burst sets it free.

Our ears had truce, when lo! with such a crash 136
And peal the second followed hard upon,

As when quick thunders chase down flash on flash:

"I am Aglauros that was turned to stone!" 139
And huddling to the poet in alarm
I took a step backward instead of on.

Then, when on every side the air was calm, 142
He said to me: "That was the iron bit,
Meant to keep man in bounds and out of harm;

But you gulp down the bait, the hook's in it, 145
The old foe winds you in upon the reel,
And lure nor bridle profits you one whit

The high heavens call you and about you wheel, 148
Showing eternal beauties to invite you;
But all you see's the earth beneath your heel,

And therefore doth the All-discerning smite you." 151

The Images.

Guido del Duca is the image of the grudging type of Envy, which resents joy in other people (ll. 82-4). To the penitent Guido, looking back upon his life, the gay companionship which in the old days filled him with envy and uncharitableness now appears a thing full of happiness, to be wistfully regretted.

Notes.

ll. 7-8: *a pair of spirits*: The first speaker is Guido del Duca of Bretinoro (now Bertinoro), belonging to the Onesti family of Ravenna. He was, from about 1202, a follower of the Ghibelline leader, Pier Traversaro (l. 97), who in 1218, with the help of the Mainardi (l. 97), drove out the

Guelfs from Ravenna. They in turn attacked Brettinoro and expelled Guido with the rest of Pier's adherents. Guido is last heard of in 1229 at Ravenna.

The second speaker is Rinieri de' Paolucci da Calboli, a very distinguished member of a Guelf family of Forli. He was podesta of Faenza (1247 and 1292), Parma (1252), and Ravenna (1265). In 1276 he, with other Guelfs including Lizio da Valbona (l. 98), attacked Forli, but was driven back to his own castle, where he surrendered to Guido da Montefeltro (whom we met *m Inf.* xxvii.). Guido spared his life, but burned the castle of Calbolito to the ground. In 1292, Rinier, together with Mainardo Pagano da Susinana, captain of Forli, marched against the Counts of Romagna (the three brothers mentioned in *Inf.* xxx. 77) and drove them out of Forli. The victorious Guelfs were expelled again in 1294, returned in 1296, and shortly after were finally driven out, Rinier being killed in this action.

l. 16: *in Falterona springs a rill*: the Arno takes its rise in Monte Falterona, on the borders of Romagna, flowing thence through the steep valleys of the Casentino; increased by the water of other streams, it runs past Arezzo into the plain of Florence, and so through Pisa, and finally into the Mediterranean.

l. 22: *if rightly*: The Tiber also rises in Mount Falterona; Guido seems to ponder which stream is meant, and then (guided partly perhaps by Dante's accent and partly by his own knowledge) decides for the Arno.

l. 33: *the high range from which Pelorus split*: the Apennines, of which Mount Pelorus (now Capo del Faro) in Sicily geologically forms part.

l. 42: *Circe*: the sorceress who turned men into swine (v. *Inf.* xxvi. 91 and note). The "hogs" are the inhabitants of the Casentino.

l. 46: *dogs*: these are the Aretines.

l. 48: *turns a scornful snout*: just above Arezzo the Arno makes a bend eastward, passing 3 miles to the N. of the city.

l. 51: *wolves*: the Florentines. Arezzo was a Ghibelline, Florence a Guelf, city: here as elsewhere (e.g. *Inf.* xxxiii. 28-33) Dante symbolizes the Ghibellines by dogs, the Guelfs by wolves.

l. 53: *foxes*: the Pisans; cf. *Inf.* xxvii. 74-5, where the Pisan captain, Guido da Montefeltro, calls his own behaviour "foxy".

l. 58: *thy grandson*: Fulcieri da Calboli, podesta of Florence in 1302. He was in the pay of the Black party, and committed many atrocities against both the Ghibellines and the White Guelfs remaining in the city.

l. 64: *the dreadful wood*: Florence.

l. 91: *'twixt Po and peak, 'twixt Reno and the sea*: the line defines the limits of Romagna (see map, *Inf.*); the *peak* denotes the Apennines; the *sea*, the Adriatic.

ll. 97-107: *Guy of Carpigna*, etc.: for these various Romagnol notables, see Glossary.

l. 115: *Bagnacaval*: Bagnacavallo is a town in the neighbourhood of Ravenna and Faenza; the line of its native nobility, having greatly degenerated, had recently become extinct.

l. 116: *Castrocaro and Conio*: the one near Forli and the other near Imola.

l. 118: *the Pagani*: Ghibellines of Faenza; their "Demon" is Mainardo Pagano (mentioned in *Inf.* xxvii. 50, as perpetually changing sides), so-called because of his cunning and cruelty.

l. 121: *Ugolin de' Fantolin(i)* of Faenza; called by the chroniclers a "brave, virtuous, and noble person". He died in 1282, leaving no surviving issue.

l. 131-9: *a voice*, etc.: these examples are the "bridle" of Envy; the one taken from the O.T., and the other from classical mythology.

l. 133-4: *every one that findeth me shall slay me*: this is the cry of Cain who for envy murdered his brother Abel (*Gen.* iv. 14).

l. 139: *I am Aglauros*: Cecrops, king of Athens, had three daughters, Pandrace, Aglauros, and Herse. Mercury bribed Aglauros to admit him to the presence of Herse, of whom he was enamoured; but she, seized with jealousy of her sister, denied him entrance and was turned to stone (*Ovid: Metam.* ii. 70&-832).

Canto XV



THE STORY. *THE Poets are met by the shining Angel of Generosity, who erases the second P from Dante's forehead and directs them to the Pass leading to the Third Cornice. While they are climbing the stair, Virgil delivers his First Discourse on Love. At the entrance to the Cornice, Dante is shown in a vision examples of the Virtue of Meekness; and after walking a little further they are met and enveloped by a cloud of thick Smoke rolling along the Cornice.*

As much as, 'twixt beginning of the day ¹
And third hour's end, shows of the restless sphere
That see-saws ever like a child at play,

So much by this time of the sun's career ⁴
Seemed left to run towards his Evening rest:
'Twas vesper-tide out yonder, midnight here.

And as we circled round the mountain's breast, ⁷
Right on our noses' bridge we caught the rays,
Being turned so far, that now we faced due west;

When lo! I felt the splendour and the blaze ¹⁰
With twofold weight my forehead overbear,
And this new portent filled me with amaze;

So, lifting up my hands, I held them square ¹³
Across my eyebrows, as one does to gain
A kind of awning when there's too much glare.