

"Read me two Dreams that linger long,
Dim as returns of old-time song
That flicker about the mind.

I dreamed (how deep in mortal sleep!)
I struck thee dead, then stood above,
With tears that none but dreamers weep";
"Dreams," quoth Love:

"In dreams, again, I plucked a flower
That clung with pain and stung with power—
Yea, nettled me, body and mind."

"'Twas the nettle of sin, 'twas medicine;
No need nor seed of it here Above;
In dreams of hate true loves begin."
"True," quoth Love.

"Now strange," quoth Sense, and "Strange," quoth Mind,
"We saw it, and yet 'tis hard to find,—
But we saw it," quoth Sense and Mind.
Stretched on the ground, beautiful-crowned
Of the piteous willow that wreathed above,
—"But I cannot find where ye have found
Hell," quoth Love.

Sidney Lanier.

NOTES ON THE EXILE OF DANTE.*

FROM HIS SENTENCE OF BANISHMENT WHILE IN ROME, 1302, TO HIS DEATH IN RAVENNA, 1321.

TO THE lovers of Italy and Italian literature more about Dante can never be unwelcome. There has been a gradual accumulation of evidence concerning the course and chronology of his wanderings in exile, ever since Boccaccio gave to the world the first biography of this great poet, who died early in the fourteenth century. Villani and other historians add something to this knowledge. Tradition has preserved a record of his presence in many places not mentioned by the historians, and the verses of the poet show a wide acquaintance with his own and foreign countries. The name of Dante is known and his memory loved and honored throughout Italy, even by the ignorant. In this nineteenth century, Italy is so much like what it was in the fourteenth, that it is not difficult to find the course of Dante's wanderings and the places where he rested. The castles where he visited his political friends are still to be found, some in ruins, one, at least, inhabited. The cities of Italy maintain very much the relative importance that they held in the time of Dante. There are convents, castles, town-halls, and houses bearing marble tablets that record his visit to the place on some public errand as ambassador from Florence before his exile, or show that here he met his friends in council, or that there he found a friendly refuge and a temporary rest from his weary and lonely travels.

It is well known that sentence of exile was passed upon Dante at the very time when he was acting as ambassador, in the service of Florence, to Pope Boniface VIII., in Rome. That pope was himself in league with the enemies of Dante in Florence, and detained him in Rome on various pretexts till their treacherous purpose could be accomplished. Learning in Rome that something of this kind was preparing against him, he with some difficulty detached himself from the Papal court, and, proceeding to Siena, he there learned that sentence of exile had been passed against him in company with a crowd of inferior persons, and that he was promised a cruel death by fire should he return to his home without permission. This occurred in 1302, and Dante never again saw Florence during the remaining nineteen years of his sad life. Born in 1265, he was at the date of his exile thirty-seven years of age.

Dante had been dead about fifty years when Boccaccio recorded, in a short biography, such fragments of his personal history as could then be collected. Troya says that Boccaccio's father was in Paris when Dante was there, and suggests that probably some particulars of the poet's history came to the son through the father's acquaintance with him. Other information has been gathered from the writings of Villani, Dino Campagni, and other historians of those times. Later

* THESE notes with pen and pencil were made to commemorate a pilgrimage of the author to the cities, convents, and castles that gave Dante refuge in exile, and to some other places known to have been visited by the poet, or that are mentioned in his verses. The order of his wanderings has been kept as nearly as possible, but the notes are necessarily incomplete.—S. F. C.

The illustrations are nearly all from Miss Clarke's drawings, which have been redrawn for engraving by Mr. Harry Fenn.—ED.

scholars have carefully collated these passages, and much critical writing has been expended in proving or disproving their truth; and it is not probable that much more will be known on this point than is known already. Don Carlo Troya, in his "Veltro allegorico di Dante," published in Florence in 1826, brings together much of this desired information; and Fraticelli, Dante's latest biographer, gives the mature result of the researches of Dantean scholars on the course and events of his exile.

Dante was a great traveler—not, indeed, like Christopher Columbus or Marco Polo; but, though he neither circumnavigated the globe, nor discovered a continent, he visited all parts of Italy; he penetrated the passes of the Tyrol; he passed along the border of the Mediterranean Sea from Spezia to Nice, and thence to Paris. Returning, he came, it is believed, by way of Milan. In Tuscany he visited the Casentino, where in his youth he had fought in the battle of Campaldino as a soldier of Florence. Again in the north of Italy, he visited Can Grande at Verona, and thence went to Ravenna, where he died. These journeys were probably made on foot. To-day a circular ticket takes one through the peninsula with little expense of time or money, and perhaps with even less advantage. Not such were the travels of Dante. In his day there were no carriages and no public conveyances; all journeys were performed either on foot or on horseback. Dante was equally poor and proud, and, though he speaks of himself as being during his exile a beggar, it is not likely that he accepted anything but the necessities of life, even from those friends who delighted to serve him. He might figuratively call himself a beggar, because he received those absolute necessities, food and shelter, as gifts; but it was not in pity, but in honor, that they were accorded to him. While still a chief citizen of Florence, rich in esteem and love there, as elsewhere, he was many times sent as ambassador to other cities and powers, and then, no doubt, he traveled on horseback and with attendants. But when he had, by his banishment, been deprived of all personal possessions, it is unlikely that his proud spirit would allow him to travel at the expense of his friends. There is also much evidence of these lonely walks in the "Divina Commedia," which is enriched with so many passages where the coolness and tranquillity of nature break in as relief upon the horrors and severities of the terrible under-world. The "Paradiso" is full of distance and atmosphere, as well as of light, tenderness, happiness, and beauty. Everywhere in the poem is seen familiarity with

Nature in all her moods and forms, with sunrises and storms, with starry nights and shining days, with her mountains, her skies, seas, shores, valleys, forests, and rocky solitudes. In the course of these pages I shall have occasion to quote many passages in illustration of what I am now saying.

According to Fraticelli, Dante must have passed the first three years of his exile in or near Tuscany. This is opposed to the belief, founded on some verses in the "Paradiso," that he first visited Verona as the guest of the Scaligeri. These verses are:

"Thine earliest refuge and thine earliest inn
Shall be the mighty Lombard's courtesy,
Who on the ladder bears the holy bird."
Longfellow Tr. "Par.," xvii. 71.

The great Lombard here spoken of is supposed to be Can Grande, but it was his brother Bartolommeo who was chief in 1303, and it was in 1317 that Dante was visiting Can Grande in Verona. To remove this difficulty, Fraticelli suggests that Dante must have meant that this refuge was first in its great kindness, and not in the order of time. He says that *primo* in this place signifies principal or greatest, as we say of Dante that he is the *primo poeta del mondo*, the first of poets,—not the earliest, but the first in the character of his poetry. Brunni says that Dante passed from Rome to Siena, from Siena to Gargonza, and thence to Arezzo, where, between hope and despair, he remained till 1304. If this be so, he cannot have made Verona his first refuge.

ROME.

DANTE was in Rome as ambassador from Florence to Pope Boniface VIII. in 1302, and at the same time the intrigues against him were perfected, and that sentence procured which made him a perpetual exile. What object in this most wonderful of cities shall we select as illustrative of the visit of the greatest Italian poet? Three things in Rome he speaks of: the church of St. John Lateran, the bridge of St. Peter, which is now the bridge of St. Angelo, and the Pine Cone of the Vatican. The first is slightly alluded to, "Inferno," xxviii., verse 86, where, in speaking of a war between the Pope and the Colonnas, it is called *the War of the Lateran*. Again, in the "Paradiso," the bridge of St. Peter is spoken of as bearing the multitudes which thronged it on the occasion of the jubilee at the completion of the thirteenth century. This bridge is much changed since that time, and as the Pigna or Pine Cone remains as it was when Dante saw and used it as an illustration, though it was then in another place, I

have chosen it for my first sketch. This great pine cone is of bronze, and at first adorned the crown of Hadrian's tomb. Later it was placed in front of the old church of St. Peter, where it stood in Dante's time, and is now seen in the vast niche of Bramante, in the Vatican Gardens, where it is flanked by two bronze peacocks. It is mentioned in the following lines describing the giant Nimrod in the "Inferno":

"His face appeared to me as long and large
As is at Rome the pine cone of St. Peter's,
And in proportion were the other bones."
Longfellow Tr. "Inf.," xxxi. 58.

Dante, having imagined this wonderful giant, now gives circumstantial evidence. As the pine cone measures eleven feet in length, the giant, whose face is as long and as large, must be about seventy feet high, or even more, were he a well-proportioned giant.

It is to be noticed that, in the great poem, none of the wonderful monuments of ancient Rome are mentioned. The Coliseum, the aqueducts, the baths, the temples, the palaces of imperial Rome, Dante never speaks of. It is as if he had never seen them, and yet, eyes were never used to better purpose than the eyes of Dante. It would seem that these grand desolations must have appealed with especial force to this somber and poetic spirit, and that the sight of them would have borne fruit in his verses. It is true that much of what is now seen of these grand remains was in the fourteenth century still buried in the earth, but the Coliseum and the aqueducts can never have been hidden.

It is believed that Dante twice visited Naples as ambassador, and yet he never mentions Vesuvius. Yet who, that has walked at night on that mountain during an eruption, and has passed over the black lava fields lighted with flashes from subterranean fires, has seen the moon and stars blotted with masses of black smoke, and noticed the thronging, shadowy forms circling in these weird places, but must have perceived that here was presented the whole scenery of the "Inferno."

The Basilica of St. John Lateran was begun by Constantine, who, it is said, labored at the foundations with his own hands. It was consecrated 324 A. D., in 896 was overthrown by an earthquake, and rebuilt 904, and at that time consecrated to John the Baptist. This second basilica, to which Dante alludes, was almost entirely destroyed by fire in 1308. It was rebuilt and again burned in 1360, and remained four years in ruins. It was restored the third time in 1364, and the oldest remaining part that we see now is the transept which opens on the piazza and looks north. It is more picturesque on that side

than on that of the façade, and more ecclesiastical with its two pointed towers. It has gravity, antiquity, and dignity in its aspect; and when in the long summer afternoons the sun shines in at the north-western arches on the transept's end, and breaks up the numerous openings into light and shade, the old structure is brought to life and much beautified.

SIENA.

RETURNING from Rome to Florence, as he believed, Dante paused at Siena, and there he first learned the full particulars of the calamity that had befallen him. Up to that period Dante was of the Guelf or Papal party; but the Guelfs themselves were divided into Bianchi and Neri, and it was to that division of the Guelf party called Bianchi that he belonged. These factions were full of bitterness against each other, and it was to his enemies the Neri that Dante owed his banishment. The Bianchi were nearer in their wishes and their policy to the Ghibellines, and about this period, from the pressure of circumstances, became nearly identified with them. Thus, it was not so much that Dante changed his party, as that he changed with his party. It must have been here that his mind was preparing itself for the change. At Siena we find the old Palazzo Tolomeo in extremely good condition. I have learned that it continues at this time to be inhabited by a member of the Pia family. The well-known story of Pia di Tolomeo is alluded to in the "Purgatory":

"After the second followed the third spirit,
Do thou remember me who am la Pia;
Siena made me, unmade me Maremma;
He knoweth it, who had encircled first,
Espousing me, my finger with his gem."
Longfellow Tr. "Purg.," v. 133.

The door of this old palace is drawn as it stands now in the Piazza Tolomeo, and near it the pillar on which is seen the wolf of the Capitol nursing Romulus and Remus. This group is more frequently seen at Siena than even at Rome. Dante speaks of the Campo, the grand square:

"'Where he in greatest splendor lived,' said he,
'Freely upon the Campo of Siena,
All shame being laid aside, he placed himself,'"
"Purg.," xi. 133—

alluding to Provenzano Salvani, who, when his friend was taken prisoner by Charles of Anjou, King of Sicily, and was condemned to lose his head unless redeemed by an enormous ransom, went into the Campo di Siena, and sat there begging in his friend's cause till the necessary sum was raised. This humility and generosity saved him in purgatory much of the suffering deserved for his sins.

Siena is again alluded to in the "Inferno":

"And to the Poet said I, 'Now was ever
So vain a people as the Sienese?
Not, for a certainty, the French by far.'
Longfellow Tr. "Inf.," xxix. 121.

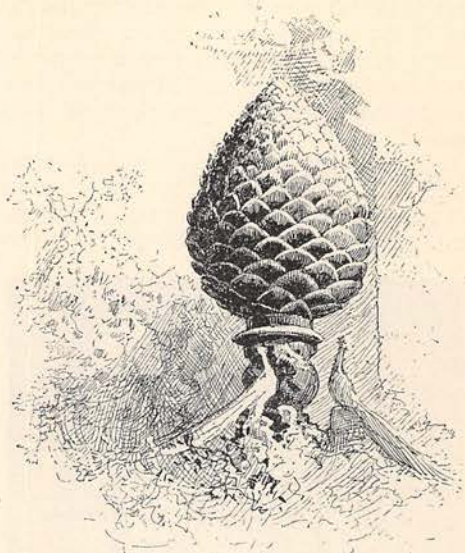
The story of Pia di Tolomeo is this: Her husband, thinking he had reason to suspect her fidelity, took her from this palace in Siena, which was their home, and conveyed her to his castle in the Maremma with the deliberate purpose of destroying her life by the malaria. And in this he was successful.

GARGONZA — 1302-3.

WE now come to Gargonza, which is about half way between Siena and Arezzo. Dante must have gone there on leaving Siena, as it is well known that he met a number of Ghibelline leaders in that place. Finding it more convenient to reach it from Arezzo, I there took a little carriage one fine day in September to drive the twenty-four miles. Distances are not carefully measured in Italy, and this drive was, I think, less than the number of miles named. The way led along the Val di Chiana, a plain that in the time of Dante was pestilential, being rendered swampy from the overflow of the Chiana. This he mentions thus:

"What pain would be, if from the hospitals
Of Val di Chiana, 'twixt July and September,
And of Maremma and Sardinia,
All the diseases in one moat were gathered.
Such was it here."

Longfellow Tr. "Inf.," xxix. 47.



THE PINE CONE OF THE VATICAN.

The whole valley is now a healthy and fertile district, as may be seen in the multitudes of gay, happy-looking people, and the abundant harvest of maize spread upon the rooftops and hung in festooned bunches on the walls to dry in the sun, and the same grain hung in the olive trees, thus making a bizarre arrangement of color, the strong yellow of the corn shining among the silvery grays of the olive. The vines well loaded with healthy-looking fruit, vegetable gardens in good condition, and other signs of rural prosperity, all speak of the present happy condition of things in this valley.

After crossing these pleasant plains we begin to ascend the hills that lie between Siena and Arezzo, on the heights of which is situated the Castle of Gargonza. At Monte San Savino we take another horse in front, and after a few miles of ascent reach the top of the hill, where, on the right side of the road, a few straggling cypress trees indicate the place of an old gate-way. A wild road among the trees soon brings us to a turn, from which we see at a short distance below the old tower of Gargonza. This is no ruin, and to it is joined a piece of the old castle wall. Some small houses cluster about these remains of the mediæval castle, in one of which my driver tells me is living the proprietor of the tower, making his villeggiatura. As I find myself here well situated for making my sketch, I unpack my easel, and, selecting a convenient point, am soon at work.

The driver goes on to a neighboring farmhouse, where he can rest and feed his horse. He is directed to go to the tower and ask if



OLD PART OF THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN LATERAN, ROME.

it can be seen; also, if there are any indications of Dante's visit to the place. Soon appears a liveried servant bearing a courteous note from the Marchese and Marchesa Corsi-Salviati, inviting me to join them at their *déjeuner*.

This is a kindly and unexpected hospitality, as they know nothing of me but that I am an artist, and think I may be in need of refreshment. I am obliged, unwillingly, to refuse



TOWER CHAMBER AT
GARGONZA.

this kind invitation, as the sun will not stand still, and I must finish the sketch before

going to look at the tower. After having worked about two hours I find I can do no more, since the light has so much changed. Descending the hill, the path turns and leads up to the tower. The driver guides me, and at the door of a house the Marchese receives me with much courtesy, and he and the Marchesa make me kindly welcome. After learning what he can tell me of the history of the castle, some items of which he writes out for me, I am conducted into the old tower, and into the very chamber in which, according to family tradition, Dante lived some months. I looked with the deepest interest on this little stone chamber, as here he passed through the great crisis of his life, and from a Guelf

became a Ghibelline. As the tower is of stone, and in good preservation, it is really very much what it must have been at the time when its walls witnessed the struggles of this great soul with fate. Fraticelli says:

"While Dante, seeing how inefficacious was his embassy to Pope Bonifacio, remained in Rome, uncertain how he ought to act, he received news of the ruin of his country, and a little later of his own misfortunes. Freeing himself, then, from the Pontifical court, and cursing in his heart its duplicity and perfidy, he hastened into Tuscany and arrived at Siena, where he heard the particulars of these melancholy facts. He well saw, and all the other banished men saw, that there was no mode of reducing their adversaries to milder measures; wherefore they took counsel to unite themselves together, and their first reunion was at Gargonza, a castle of the Ubertini family, standing half way between Siena and Arezzo, and here they decided to act with the Ghibellines of Tuscany and of Romagna, and to establish their head-quarters at Arezzo. The change of Dante from the Bianchi of the Guelfs to the party of the Ghibellines dates only from this time—that is, from February or March of 1302; and whoever has said differently has not well studied these historical facts, their causes and their consequences. In Arezzo, then, they assembled, and here organized their forces, taking for their captain Count Alessandro da Romena, and naming twelve councilors to stand by him; one of these was Dante."

Thus it appears that the decision to join the Ghibellines must have been reached at Gargonza. The tradition of the place is that Dante passed some months in this stone chamber, and that he wrote some part of the "Inferno" here. The room occupies the whole body of the tower; it is entered by a ladder from below through a trap in the floor, and the same sort of passage leads to the room above, and another ladder to the roof. There are two small windows; one is tall and reaches nearly to the floor, the other small and high and is reached by a few steps worked in the thickness of the wall. This ladder stair-way, the Marchese assured me, was the same that had always been used; the same arrangement is seen in Galileo's tower, near Florence. Villani says: "The Castle of Gargonza is celebrated for the congress, in 1304, of the Ghibellines of Florence and of Arezzo, among whom was found the exiled poet, Dante Alighieri."

I climbed to the top of the tower, whose high battlements seemed still to wall me in; but the view across the Val di Chiana to the hills where Arezzo stands is full of airy sunshine, is Italian and intoxicating. In other countries one may look on a wide and beautiful view with a certain coolness; one criticises its features and finds it better or poorer than other views; but in Italy, though it be but a level plain, the transparent curtain of the air, traversed by threads of golden light, makes an enchanted veil in which the specta-

tor is caught and held as in a net. He cannot criticise or compare; he can only yield to the magic spell.

Returning to Arezzo, the road passes Pieve al Intoppo, the site of a battle between Guelfs and Ghibelines.

SAN GEMIGNANO—1299.

NEAR Siena is San Gemignano, an old town on a hill, and so full of towers that from a distance it seems composed of them, and to be a fortress. In the middle ages every city had many towers erected by the great chieftains, whose families took refuge in such high and safe places during the wars that were incessantly raging between these jealous neighbors. They also served for a point of attack. A walled city kept off enemies from other cities and powers, but within its shelter almost every man of importance was the enemy of his neighbor, and fighting without end was the consequence. If Romeo fancied Juliet, the lives of both families were put in danger; or if a drunken brawl occurred among the followers, and any violence was done, war was declared immediately, and the ensuing fights often involved whole neighborhoods, and a tumult of violence would fill the great city. Vendetta was declared and peace forever driven away. In the town-hall of this place is a tablet recording the historical fact that Dante came here as ambassador from the Florentines, to make an alliance with the San Gemignanese. This old town is full of picturesque treasures, and has charming views from its gates and from the tops of its towers.

MONTE REGGIONE.

THIS little town is indeed a crown of towers. ("Monte Reggione di torre si corona."—"Inf.," cant. xxxi., ver. 41.) About twenty houses are inclosed within a circular wall which has towers at short intervals. It is, in fact, a fortress. The gates now stand open, the walls are crumbled, the towers fast losing their shape, but the houses within are inhabited. It is a miniature town, a happy inclosure, and a pleasant and fruitful resort for a sketcher. When I visited the place in company with a friend, who gave me the delightful drive from Siena, it was a gray soft day when all was in harmony with the vena-



SAN GEMIGNANO.

ble time-stained ruin; a day without peculiar splendors, yet one of those on which memory sets a seal that it may be never forgotten.

CASENTINO— 1303-1311.

WE come now to the Casentino, which is rich in traces of Dante. This valley lies east of Florence, and is inclosed by the three mountains on which are seated the convents of Vallombrosa, Camaldoli, and Alvernia. It is a favorite performance of the faithful to visit these three important sanctuaries. The valley is a little world within itself. It is from twenty to thirty miles across, and contains within its mountain boundaries hills, rivers, cities, castles, and convents, besides farms and villages. It was on a delightful day in June when a party of friends prepared to explore the Casentino, and to find the castles visited by Dante. We took the railway to Pontassieve, which is about ten miles from Florence, and at that place engaged a carriage for the next four or five days. We drove first to Pelago, where we were to take horses for Vallombrosa, at the top of the mountain, and there pass the first night. It was arranged that our carriage should meet us the next morning at Consuma on the other side of the mountain. At Pelago occurred an instance of faithlessness to a well-understood contract, such as one seldom meets in Italy. The people will overcharge you with the greatest



MONTE REGGIONE.

readiness; but when they have made a contract, written or unwritten, they are usually faithful to it. To-day, we had a new experience. The padrona at the little locanda at Pelago furnishes horses and guides for the mountain of Vallombrosa. We engaged two horses and two guides for L—— and myself, the third of our party, Mr. C——, preferring to walk. The padrona, supported by Franceschino, who, I suppose, was her son, now said that we must take a third man to carry our bags and shawls. We knew the night at Vallombrosa would be cold, and had therefore taken many wraps; but though the luggage was considerable, I thought the two men could easily carry it; and as we could

also take something on our horses, the third man appeared unnecessary. But the padrona insisted, saying the road was so bad that it would require all the attention of the two men to guide the horses. So we agreed to the third man and started, Franceschino proving to be that third. Mr. C—— had walked on before while we were getting mounted, and was already out of sight. The day was delightful, and the horses stepped out bravely. After we had made about a mile, and had not yet begun the ascent, Franceschino stopped the horses, and, coming to me, said:

“*Bon voyage*, madame,” the Italians who consider themselves superior preferring to speak French to strangers.

“But where are you going?”

“To Florence, madame.”

“How is that, when you have engaged to go with us?”

“Oh,” said this traitor, “there is no need of a third man to go up the mountain.”

“But your padrona insisted that we should take you on account of the badness of the road.”

“Pardon, madame, the road is excellent. The horses would take you up without guides; they know the road perfectly.”

“Very well,” said I; “then, of course, I do not pay for three men.”

“Oh, yes, madame, you will fulfill your contract.”

“What! and you tell me that you are going to break yours?”

“You understand, madame, that you

agreed to pay the padrona so much, and she will expect you to send her that sum."

"No, indeed; if you do not go, I do not pay you."

I could not understand such barefaced assurance. Finding I would not yield, Franceschino said he would take his horses back, and approaching L——, said: "Please to dismount, mademoiselle."

L—— looked at me, and I said: "Yes, he may take his horses, and we will walk up the mountain."

So we dismounted, to the surprise of Franceschino, who, when he realized the situation, said to the men, "Put down the *roba*." They laid the bags and shawls on the road, and led away the horses.

Now, here we were left, in a glorious sea of afternoon sunshine, but with a heavy weight of luggage to carry up the mountain. I thought we could walk up very well, but to carry such a burden was impossible. I called a man at work in the field, and told him I would pay him if he would take our bags and go up the mountain with us. He replied that he could not leave his work. I noticed that the cavalcade, having reached the angle of the road on the way back to Pelago, was concealed by a house, and that it remained concealed a suspiciously long time. I thought I understood the policy of Franceschino. I took out my books and began a sketch. L—— laughed and I laughed, hoping it would end in laughter, of which I did not feel quite sure. Soon Franceschino re-appeared, sauntering leisurely, and smoking a cigar. As he approached, I said:

"What do you want?"

"I want to speak to my friend who is working in the field yonder."

"Do you know," said I, borrowing the Englishman's weapon, "that I am going to England and shall tell Mr. Murray what sort of people you at Pelago are, so that foreigners may not trust you?"

"I am well known to foreigners," said he, with a grand air, "and I do not care what you say to Mr. Murray."

After this he spoke to the man in the field, and then returned to the place where he had left the horses. Immediately the procession re-appeared and approached us. Franceschino led his horse to L—— and begged her to mount, as who should say, "Let there be an end of this fooling."

My man brought my horse, and I too mounted; the men gathered up our effects. Franceschino again wished us *bon voyage*, and without further words we went on. I had felt sure that he would not wish to lose the hire of the horses and men, and so our war,

like many greater wars, ended, leaving things just as they were before it began. Franceschino had his way in leaving us, and I had my way in not paying him.

Presently we saw Mr. C—— returning in great haste to find us. Greatly alarmed at our non-appearance, he feared we had met with brigands, or had fallen from our horses. We had lost more time than we could well spare, and now pushed on briskly. The road proved perfectly good. We mounted and mounted till we came to a forest, or rather a plantation of fir-trees. In their native forests firs are grand and beautiful, and in a shrubbery, mixed with other trees and well grown, they have beauty; but there is a hopeless look about a plantation of firs that is fatiguing. The air grew colder, wild hawks flew screaming above our heads. It seemed as if we had left Italy, for warmth and beauty had both passed away. Only when through the firs we gained a glimpse of the world below and of the valley of the Arno could we keep up our spirits. That beguiling line of Milton—

"Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
In Vallombrosa"—

had prepared us for delightful deciduous forests in all their glory, and a perfectly straight paved road through the fir woods was a disappointment, and, as yet, there was no convent in sight. The sun was near its setting, the wind howling. At last, something like a church appeared at the end of the avenue. When we reached the gate of the convent it was nearly dark, or appeared so. Still, after ordering our supper from a host who lived outside the convent, we decided to climb to the Paradisino, a small edifice on the top of the rocks behind the church and convent; and as some rays of the setting sun still illuminated it, we were encouraged to go up to see the view. Truly, it was immense and superb; and when we had arrived on its terrace, the sun again rose for us and lighted up a wonderful world below. As twilight darkened the scene, we descended, were shown the great chambers, and were desired to choose for ourselves which we would have. This convent is disestablished, but the guest-chambers still do service, and some of the brothers remain to take care of the conventual buildings. In the morning we visited the church, and then took the other road down the mountain. This road wound agreeably through chestnut woods, and brought us to Consuma.

It was here that we found our carriage and dismissed our guides. They had been very civil, and we gladly gave them a little more than was promised, and charged them to keep it for themselves. We were now in a new

stage of our journey. Consuma is so called to commemorate the fact of a man's having been burned there in punishment for coining. This again brings us into the train of Dantesque associations, for this was Adam of Brescia, met by Dante in the "Inferno," and who says to him:

"There is Romena, where I counterfeited
The currency imprinted with the Baptist,
For which I left my body burned above.
But if I here could see the trustful soul
Of Guido, or Alessandro, or their brother,
For Branda's fount I would not give the sight."
Longfellow Tr. "Inf.," xxx. 71.

These lords of Romena, whose tool this poor fellow was, were Dante's friends, and had their castle in this neighborhood. The little way-side fountain called Fonte Branda is also near at hand. Until lately it was supposed that Master Adam alluded to the great Fonte Branda at Siena, but later scholars have decided that he would more naturally be thinking of the Fonte Branda in the vicinity of Romena.

I must also quote what Ampère says about these lines, which refer to the waters of Casentino:

"The rivulets that from the verdant hills
Of Casentin descend down into Arno,
Making their channels to be cold and moist."
Longfellow Tr. "Inf.," xxx. 64.

"In these untranslatable verses there is a feeling of humid freshness, which almost makes one shudder. I owe it to truth to say that the Casentin was a great deal less fresh and less verdant in reality than in the poetry of Dante, and that in the midst of the aridity that surrounded me, this poetry by its very perfection made one feel something of the punishment of Master Adam."
Ampère, Voyage Dantesque.

Consuma is a wretched hamlet, though seen from the hill above it is not unpicturesque. An American wonders how it could remain more than five hundred years the same poor little place, neither improving nor disappearing; so unlike our own villages, which in the newer settlements if they cannot grow are abandoned, and if they do grow become cities in a very short time. All things in this valley of the Casentino, should it continue without railroads, may remain as they are another five hundred years. Nowhere can there be a more peaceful seclusion.

On the road leading to Bibbiena, where we propose to pass the night, we come in sight of a majestic cliff, abruptly rising from the plain, with a city and a castle on its top. This is Poppi, and is one of the places visited by Dante after his return from Paris. Here he was a guest of the Contessa Battifolli in the castle. Poppi is on the right bank of the Arno. We did not stop to climb to this castle, for the day was hot and the way was steep. It was left for a later visit, when I ob-

tained a drawing of the castle court, extremely mediæval and picturesque. It is said to have been the model of the Bargello at Florence. At the foot of this hill is the plain where once raged the battle of Campaldino. It now grows wheat, mulberry trees, and grapes. Having passed Poppi, the mountains drew nearer, and one blue peak showed something that looked like a dark forest among the light tints about its head. This proved to be Alvernia, which is to be visited to-morrow. We reached Bibbiena a little before sunset, and found a comfortable inn. We engaged horses and guides to take us to Alvernia the next day, and sunk to sleep in our rustling beds of gran-turco leaves, better known in my country as corn shucks.

The next morning we started early, for it is a good day's work to visit Alvernia. We soon crossed the Corsalone torrent, as every swift and intermittent river is called in Italy. There had been a bridge, now broken; the river was broad and full of rocks, and we had to cross by wading our horses. But this inconvenience was repaid by the new and more picturesque view we had of the river and the mountains seen from its bed. Soon we began the ascent and struck a path leading up to the convent, still hidden from us by the mountain shoulders. The lower part of the road is a long ridge scattered with boulders of large size and strange forms. Deep twisted cavities in these rocks tell of water and pebbles at work, churning holes perhaps during thousands of long-past years. It was noon when we reached the convent, the last part of the road being too steep for the horses. There we came up a little stair-way to a spacious terrace on which the buildings stand. This convent has been spared, owing to some protection it holds from the municipality of Florence. The Franciscan friars are brown-robed, barefooted, with each a cord about the waist. Here was the earliest foundation of St. Francis, unless we count the tiny convent near Assisi, called the Carcere di San Francesco. The place is properly called Alvernia or winter, from its perpetual cold. Even on this June day we perceived an icy quality in the air. Here are wonderful rocks and caves,—rocks which by some earthquake shock have fallen across other rocks and so made caves. The friars tell us that these rocks were rent when Jesus Christ was crucified. One cave overhung with a great rock which had apparently no support, they told us, was the favorite resort of St. Francis, who chose to lie in it as an exercise of faith. They show the little chapel, hewn out of the rock, where he received the stigmata. The spot where he was kneeling at the moment

is covered with an iron grate. We are now three thousand seven hundred and twenty feet above the sea. Above the convent buildings rises more forest, and through this delightful wilderness we climb perpetually, till at the top they tell us that we are now one thousand one hundred and fifty feet above the convent itself. A young friar went with us up the forest-path. He was a gay creature, full of cheerfulness and laughter. There seemed no mortification about him. Dante speaks of this mountain :

“ On the rude rock 'twixt Tiber and the Arno,
From Christ did he receive the final seal
Which during two whole years his members bore.”
Long fellow Tr. “Par.,” xi. 106.

These hospitable monks gave us a fast-day dinner which seemed to us to want nothing. It was served with exquisite neatness—the knives bright and sharp as daggers, as if they had been scoured hundreds of years and kept most carefully. For this dinner of soup made of fish and vegetables, pickled tunny fish, an omelette, good bread and cheese, and excellent coffee, they refused payment, and only accepted what we offered when we begged them to keep it for the use of the convent.

Again at Bibbiena, where we spent the night. Next day we crossed the Arno, left Poppi behind, and came upon the battle-field of Campaldino, where Dante, then twenty-four years of age, fought in the Florentine cavalry, and led a charge. A letter remains in which he describes the battle, and his fears lest his side should be defeated. And now I wish some brave sculptor would take a hint from this bit of history, and make an effigy of this solemn, this terrible poet, not like an old woman, in robes and lappets, but as in his youth he fought at the battle of Campaldino. Make him, O sculptor,

“ Helmed and mailed,
With sweet, stern face unveiled.”

He would seem more at home than in the better known costume. I have been told that those white, three-cornered lappets were worn to protect the face and ears from the rubbing of the helmet. And why were they not laid aside with the helmet, instead of being worn when helmets were no longer in question? Flaxman has imparted such dignity to the robe and lappets that it now appears to be a law of representation that Dante should be allowed no other dress; but



COURT OF POPPI CASTLE.

rebellion against this law is worth trying. I made a sketch of the battle-field, with Poppi in the background. After this we began to inquire for Fonte Branda. Our driver knew nothing of such a place, but the first peasant we met guided us to it. It is a little way-side fountain, flowing within a recess in the wall of brick-work, and from that reservoir trickles a tiny thread of water into a stone basin where cattle may drink. This fountain is not much changed since the time of Dante. About half a mile on the same road comes a little town where Landino, Dante's first commentator, was born and died. His remains are mummified, and are shown on festa days as those of a saint. Next we passed the castle of Romena, where the poet visited his friend Count Alessandro da Romena. It is now a picturesque ruin. A few miles further is the Castle of Porciano, which he also visited, and from which is dated an important letter, thus, “Scritta in Toscana sotto le fonte d'Arno, 16 Avriile, 1311,” and addressed to the Florentines. This letter is full of political fury because the Florentines resist the Emperor. This fixes a date, and shows that his second visit to the Casentino was after his return from Paris. The 29th of June, the same year, the Emperor Henry was crowned in Rome, in the Basilica of St. John Lateran.

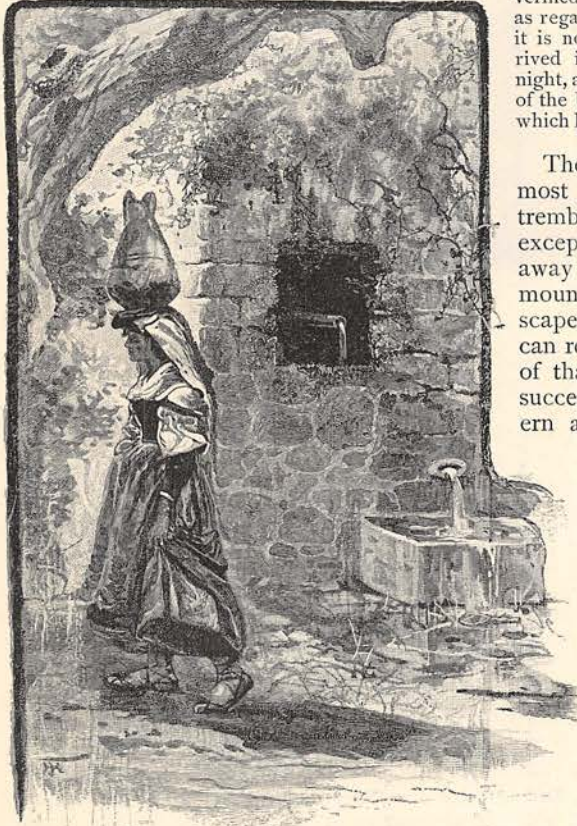
PERUGIA — 1303.

DANTE'S visit to Perugia was probably made when he was so near to it. Perugia

is alluded to in the verses where Assisi is spoken of:

“Between Tupino and the stream that falls
Down from the hill elect of blessed Ubald,
A fertile slope of lofty mountain hangs
From which Perugia feels the cold and heat
Through Porta Sole.”
Longfellow Tr. “Par.,” xi. 43.

The drawing that I made at Perugia is of something so old that Dante must have seen it. It is called the Augusta Gate, as Augustus on taking Perugia, after failing in



FONTE BRANDA.

the attempt to burn the gate, had his name inscribed upon it, “*Augusta Perusia.*”

This has been considered an Etruscan work, but the later archæologists deny this early origin, and point out in the tower and supporting stones of the arch certain fragments of Etruscan inscriptions which are put in, not horizontally, as if meant to be read, but diagonally or perpendicularly, as if the builders had made use of old Etruscan stones, without regard to the inscriptions. But the design is more Etruscan than Roman, the grand and massive arch being surmounted

by a row of blank disks such as one sees on Etruscan tombs, and which seem to hint at the mysteries of that occult and inscrutable religion or literature.

Ampère, in his “*Voyage Dantesque,*” says:

“Having been twice at Perugia, I have experienced the double effect of Monte Ubald, which the poet says makes the city feel the cold and heat—

‘Onde Perugia sente freddo e caldo’
 (“Par.,” xi. 46);

that is, which by turns reflects upon it the rays of the sun and sends it icy winds. I have but too well verified the justice of Dante’s observation, particularly as regards the cold temperature which Perugia, when it is not burning hot, owes to Monte Ubald. I arrived in front of this city on a brilliant autumnal night, and had time to comment at leisure on the winds of the Ubald, as I slowly climbed the winding road which leads to the gates of the city, fortified by a Pope.”

The views from every part of Perugia are most enchanting. A sea of mountains of trembling azure rolls below on every side, except on the east, where vast plains stretch away toward the still more distant and vapory mountains of Umbria. It is a heavenly landscape. Perugia has many quite visible Etruscan remains. A curious architectural custom of that old people is perpetuated by their successors in some of the houses in the northern and oldest part of the town. In many houses a narrow door is still to be seen beside the principal house door. This narrow door was built to carry out the dead, as it was believed that to pass the corpse through the door used by the living would bring ill luck. In some cases the narrow door is still open, but more frequently it is walled up, though plainly visible as a blind arch in the wall, and always close to the principal house door.

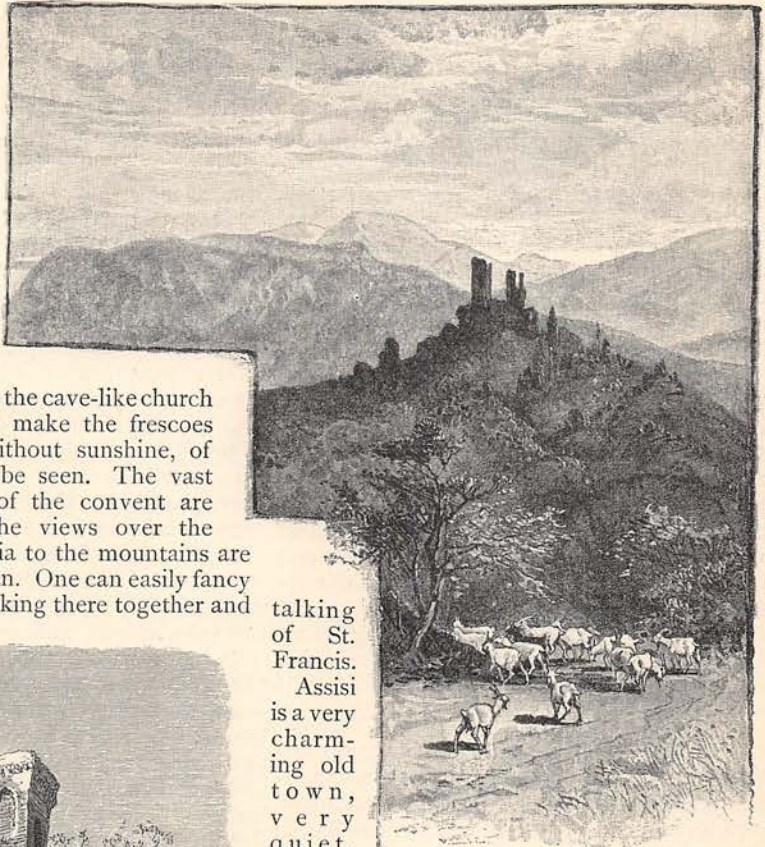
ASSISI.

THAT Dante visited his friend Giotto while he was engaged in painting the church of St. Francis at Assisi is conceded. He alludes in the “*Paradiso*” quite distinctly to the fresco of the marriage of St. Francis with poverty:

“For he in youth his father’s wrath incurred
For certain Dame, to whom, as unto death,
The gate of pleasure no one doth unlock;
And was before his spiritual court
Et coram patre unto her united;
Then day by day more fervently he loved her.
She, reft of her first husband, scorned, obscure,
One thousand and one hundred years and more,
Waited without a suitor till he came.”
Longfellow Tr. “Par.,” xi. 58.

The fresco represents a woman in rags and standing with bare feet among thorns, in

the act of being married to St. Francis, who looks very comfortable in his brown hood and robes. This fresco has been well preserved, but it is only between two and four p. m. that anything of the paintings can be seen in that dark, underground church. At that time the sun streams in at certain small windows and fills the cave-like church with light enough to make the frescoes visible. In a day without sunshine, of course, nothing can be seen. The vast cloisters or galleries of the convent are most interesting. The views over the great plains of Umbria to the mountains are like an enchanted ocean. One can easily fancy Dante and Giotto walking there together and



CASTLE OF ROMENA.

talking of St. Francis. Assisi is a very charming old town, very quiet, full of

mediaeval architecture, showing very little that is modern, and streets unusually clean. The families, as in all the Italian towns, pass the summer afternoons in the street; the women spinning with the distaff or sewing, babies sprawling and rolling on the pavement, boys and girls playing, all evidencing a tranquil and happy existence. Santa Chiara is here the other great saint, and her mummy is preserved in her church, and shown to the faithful and also to the curious.

A long and difficult path leads up and around the mountain, and brings one to a tiny convent called *Carcere di San Francesco*. Here are shown recesses in the rock where the saint imprisoned himself, so narrow that, being within, he could not turn himself. A bridge across the ravine leads to the wood where, by some rude steps, one descends to a very picturesque grotto in which the saint is said to have passed much time in prayer. Returning through the little convent, we stopped in the tiny court-yard and drank of the cool pure water of St. Francis's well. A white dove washed himself fluttering in a stone basin; a fresco of the Annunciation glimmered under the little arcade; the tiny con-



AUGUSTA GATE.

vent bell hung in the narrow arched entrance, black against the shining trees on the other side of the ravine; all was cool and silent. One can, for the moment, envy the peace of the conventual life in these green retreats; no busy bustling days, no care but to follow the routine prescribed, no responsibility but that of obedience, and, it cannot be denied, much stagnation. Though courteous and hospitable, these monks can seldom answer the simplest question about their own order. Questions are not considered by their minds; routine occupies the time or kills it, and that is sufficient.

Returning to Assisi, we took our last look at the lower church of St. Francis. As the upper church rests upon this, its weight is sustained upon low Gothic arches which are distributed throughout the interior, and determine its architecture. When the great doors are open at noon, the church is filled with reflected light which, echoing through these arched spaces and searching their receding depths, produces the loveliest effects, the mosaics and frescoes enriching every space and border with a soft glimmer of color.

BOLOGNA.

THE Torre di Garisenda at Bologna, mentioned by Dante, and used by him as an illustration in describing the giant Antæus, still inclines as when he looked up at its dangerous tilting, so many years ago.

"As seems the Carisenda, to behold
Beneath the leaning side, when goes a cloud
Above it, so that opposite it hangs;
Such did Antæus seem to me, who stood
Watching to see him stoop, and then it was
I could have wished to go some other way.
But lightly in the abyss, which swallows up
Judas with Lucifer, he put us down;
Nor, thus bowed downward, made he there delay,
But, as a mast does in a ship, uprose."
Longfellow Tr. "Inf.," xxxi. 136.

It is believed that Dante in his youth studied at the University of Bologna. Fraticelli thinks there is no evidence of this, but that he went there during his exile.

GARGNANO—VERONA.

NEAR Verona is the villa at Gargnano, a possession which Dante acquired while at the court of Can Grande. This place is about twelve miles distant from Verona. It must have been at the time of his second residence at Verona that Dante became possessed of this retreat, to which, no doubt, he was glad to escape from the noisy court, and where he must have written many of his verses. The place is still in possession of his descendants. The granddaughter of Dante was the Con-

tessa Sarego, and the villa is still owned and inhabited by the Sarego family. It is a pleasant drive from Verona to the villa, first passing along the banks of the Adige, and then turning off among the hills, the road becoming more and more secluded. Stopping at the iron gate of a modern-looking villa, our driver informed us that this was the Villa Sarego. We inquired if it could be seen, and were invited to enter. Coming to the door of the house, a modern structure, a servant met us and said that the Contessa being ill could not receive us, but made us welcome to look about the place. He took us first into a ground-floor saloon to show us what he called "*i cocchi antichi.*" These he showed us, hanging from the beams in the ceiling. They were simply the frames and ribs of two small coaches, without wheels. They were painted in black and gold. These, the servant told us, had been the property of the first Contessa Sarego, who was the granddaughter of Dante. After we had stared respectfully at these relics he asked us to go into the garden and see a "*sasso.*" Supposing that we were about to see a stone that Dante loved to sit upon, we gladly followed him, and, when we were presented to the stone, found it to be a monument inscribed with verses addressed to Dante by the poet Monti. There were also three young laurels in front of the stone, and these were planted by the three poets, Monti, Pindamonte, and Da Lorenzo, on the occasion of the sixcentennial celebration of the birth of Dante. The garden was a pleasant, shaded place, not filled with fruit and flowers, but with ilex trees. From an opening in the trees could be seen, on a neighboring hill, an old Roman tower. Since Dante must often have looked at it, I chose it for my sketch. While I was drawing, a young gentleman came into the garden, and, advancing with a courteous gesture, asked if he could do anything for us. My niece, to whom he addressed himself, told him what I was doing, and then he came to me and asked if I wanted anything. I said to him, "Is it true that this place is in possession of the descendants of Dante?" "*Sì, signora,*" replied he, "*ed io mi chiamo Dante.*" Surprised, I asked him to explain this, and he told me that his ancestress, the Contessa Sarego, left this little place by will to belong always to the eldest son of the Sarego family, with request that he should take the name of Dante. He then presented me with his card, on which was engraved

"*Dante di Sarego Alighieri.*"

"Then the place really belonged to Dante at first?" "Oh, yes," he said, "and this is



TORRE DI GARISENDA.

proved by the title-deed." All this was very interesting to me, and so were other things that he told me. Among other anecdotes was this one. His family being invited to be present at the sixcentennial celebration at Ravenna, his uncle, a physician, was chosen as one of the Royal Commissioners appointed to examine the newly found skeleton of Dante, and to decide on its genuineness. These gentlemen having decided that the skeleton was that of a man of the same age and size as is recorded of Dante, and that the skull answered to the same description in its proportions, the sepulcher was opened and found to be empty, excepting that some phalanges of the fingers, wanting in the newly found skeleton, were lying in the place where the bones should have been. These were found to complete the skeleton, and it was replaced in the sepulcher, and closed securely. There was also some dust found lying with the small bones, and this gentleman, as one of the poet's family, thought he might gather a little of this precious dust in a paper, and preserve it as a relic. He did so, but the same evening many persons came about the house where the commissioners were lodged, saying that they had learned that a portion of the remains had been removed, and that such a thing could not be permitted. The uncle explained that it was but a trifle of the dust of his honored relative

that he had ventured to appropriate, and showed it to the assembled crowd; but they would not be satisfied till he had replaced it with the skeleton. Such jealousy still exists in the city of Ravennâ concerning the possession of the poet's remains. The whole story of the discovery of this skeleton will be given in the chapter on Ravenna.

Having finished my sketch of the Roman tower, we prepared to take leave of our young host. While doing so, the old gardener appeared, bearing bouquets of hot-house flowers for the ladies, which we received from the hands of the young Dante, with his kind wishes that we might come again and see his mother; but we could not at this time hope to do so, as we were leaving Verona the next day. It was while making a second visit to Verona that I obtained a sketch of the old staircase in the court-yard of one of the Scaligeri palaces, which is now a prison. The stairs are of rose-colored Verona marble, with traces of twisted columns and marble canopy. In the hall above, to which they lead, there is a richly carved door, which might have been the entrance to a grand reception-room; and Dante, jostled by the crowd of rude courtiers on the stairs, might here have produced the sad, immortal lines,

"Tu proverai sì come sa di sale
Lo pane altrui, e com' è duro calle
Lo scendere e 'l salir per l' altrui scale."
"Par.," xvii. 58.

"Thou shalt have proof how savoreth of salt
The bread of others, and how hard a road
The going down and up another's stairs."
Longfellow.

It was at Verona, in the church of Santa Elena, that Dante, at the request of Can Grande, gave a lecture to the clero Veronese, a philosophic thesis on water and earth.

ROVEREDO — SLOVINO DI MARCO — 1303.

THAT striking passage in the "Inferno," where the land-slide of Roveredo called the Slovino di Marco is described, shows that Dante had seen it himself, and that it impressed his imagination deeply:

"Such as that ruin is, which in the flank
Smote, on this side of Trent, the Adige,
Either by earthquake or by failing stay.
For, from the mountain's top from which it moved,
Unto the plain, the cliff is shattered so,
Some path 'twould give to him who was above;
Even such was the descent of that ravine."
Longfellow Tr. "Inf.," xii. 4.

Dante may have made his excursion into the Italian Tyrol during his first visit to Verona. So Troya believes, and I will place this illustration next in order.

The place is strange, wild, and desolate now, as on the day when Dante looked upon it. The railway of the Brenner Pass runs close beside it, so that something of its strangeness may be seen by the traveler from the train. The scientific study of geology being unknown in 1303, such a guess as Dante made at the cause of this to him unintelligible stretch of scattered stones was all that was possible in that early time. I was fortunate in meeting the geological professor in the Institute at Roveredo, a native of the place. He kindly went over the

flint-stones found in the glacier track. They are cone-shaped, three-sided, worked to a point at one end, the angles rounded, and the whole very smooth. They are sometimes found six inches long, and one of the three sides is always a little more flattened than the others. It is supposed that they have been worn to this shape by attrition and the long-continued grinding force and weight of the glacier, and that the flattened side, being the lowest, had more abrasion to endure. I might also here take exception to what Mr. Ruskin says of Dante being "notably a bad



LAND-SLIDE AT ROVEREDO.

ground with me, and pointed out the course of the land-slide or fall of rocks from the sides of the valley, when the strata were undermined by some flood. He also showed me the stones of an old moraine, which are confused and masked by the stones of the land-slide. This shows that the phrase Dante uses of the *scarco* or *scarico* of stones, signifying an unloading, is precise. Mr. Ruskin thinks it not an elevated or enthusiastic expression, and especially objects to the word *scarco*; but if Dante had witnessed the course of the great prehistoric glacier when it passed that valley, dropping the boulders of its moraine as it slowly melted, and moved on still more slowly, he could not have chosen a better word to describe its action. It was, in fact, a great unloading of stones. Also, when he hazards the guess, "*o per sostegno manco*," or by deficient prop, he is not less happy in his interpretation of appearances, since a part of this strange chaos comes from that very cause. Professor Cobelli, who has made a life study of this phenomenon, showed me also the *triquetri*, or long

climber," and that "he was fond of sitting in the sun, looking at his fair Baptistery, or walking in a dignified manner on flat pavements, in a long robe, and it put him seriously out of his way when he has to take to his hands and knees or look to his feet." When Mr. Ruskin so speaks, he has not considered Dante's long journeys in wild places, mostly if not entirely made on foot, when he traversed Italy from Rome to Siena, Perugia, Assisi, Bologna, Verona, Venice, into the Tyrol to Roveredo, again back to the Gulf of Spezia, along the Cornice road through France to Paris, then to Milan, to the Casentino in Tuscany, to Gubbio, to Avellana, which lies among the steepest mountains of Umbria, and where from Catria, the giant of



the Apennines, you can behold the Adriatic Sea on the one hand, and the Mediterranean on the other; to Urbino and to the castle of Faggiuola, near San Leo; again to Mantua and Verona; to Duino, on the sea near Trieste; into the Austrian Tyrol to Tolmino and the castle of Pagano della Torre; to Rimini and Ravenna, where his wanderings ended. On many hundreds of miles of these journeys no flat pavement was to be found, the roads naturally being rough before any but cart roads had been made, and we may safely believe that the long trailing robes with which painters love to invest Dante were not worn by him as a traveling dress. The castle of Lizzana is near this spot, and is mentioned by the guide-books as a castle visited by Dante. I asked the landlord of the hotel to call a carriage, and said I wished to be taken to the castle of Lizzana. He replied that he knew no such place, and that it could not be at or near Roveredo. While I was explaining to him my reasons for believing that it must be in that vicinity, a man who

had been sitting half asleep near by roused himself and said: "The castle of Lizzana!"

STAIR-WAY AT VERONA.

why, don't you know it? That is the old castle where Dante passed a night!" This, then, was the local tradition. The man was a common man, ignorant, but knowing the traditions of his native place, and this point of circumstance—the *one night*—delighted me. This tradition had been preserved ever since Dante passed a night with his friend, the lord of this castle, when no doubt he strolled out in the morning to look at the wonderful *slovino* which lies under the castle cliff, and stretches miles along the valley. The sole remains of the castle are a pile of stones and rubbish, which, with a bit of wall, show where the tower once stood.

URBINO — 1304.

ONE of the castles where Dante was entertained was that of la Faggiuola, the lord of which was his friend Uggucione. I was glad to visit Urbino, the birth-place of Raphael. From here I hoped to reach the castle, which is said to be five leagues west from Urbino, and half-way between Macerata and San Leo, near the source of the river Conca. This direction was sufficiently clear, but inquiries at Urbino produced the information that the mountain-road in that direction was considered impassable on account of recent floods. I was advised to try the road from Rimini, and thus was induced to postpone the excursion. A few days were pleasantly passed in the old town of Urbino, which is high on the mountains, the road being a continual ascent from the coast. The air is excellent, the views superb, and the place full of historical memories. The house of Raphael has, largely by Mr. Morris Moore's exertions, been purchased and made the foundation of a museum and school of art. At present it is adorned with engravings and photographs from the great works of the master. It is well that this beginning is made, as the house will now be securely held to the memory of Raphael and the service of the fine arts. The street in which this house stands goes steeply up the hill to the terrace of the old fortress. From this esplanade we overlook the city on the east, and looking westward we see five ranges of Apennines, separated from each other by the golden haze of afternoon sunshine, and I pleased myself with the thought that Dante must have observed the same effect. I give a sketch of one of the steep, crowded streets, with the palace in the background.

In the "Inferno" Dante meets Guido di Montefeltro, who inquires of him whether, when he left that sweet Latin land, he left peace or war behind him.

"If thou art newly fallen to breathe the air
Of this blind world, from Latium's pleasant land,
Whence all the burden of my sins I bear,
Tell me if now Romagna's tribes remain
At peace or war; for I was of the hills,
Betwixt Urbino and the mountain chain
Whence Tiber first unlocks his infant rills."
T. W. Parsons Tr. "Inf.," xxvii. 25.

PADUA — 1306.

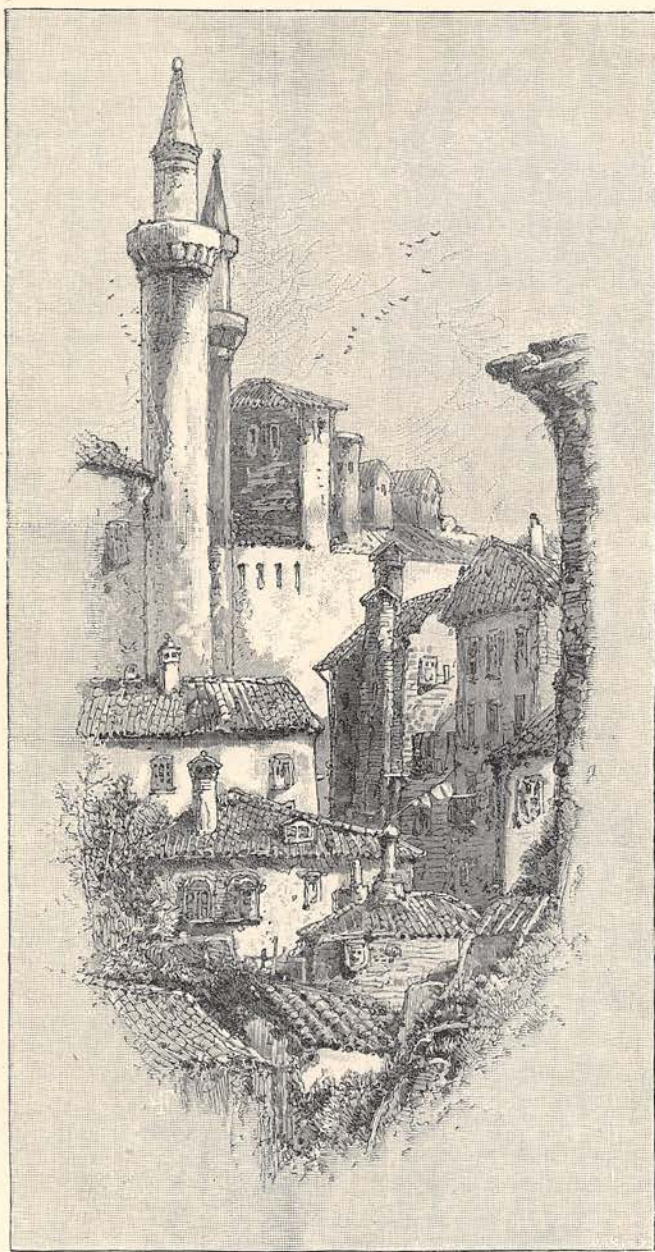
AT Padua exists one of the most precious of all the trecento monuments. This is the Arena Chapel. The place, as its name indicates, was a Roman theater. In 1303 Enrico Scrovigno, to whom it belonged, built within its precincts the chapel commonly called Santa Maria dell' Arena. It is not known whether it was intended for a domestic chapel, or for the use of the order of the Cavalieri di Santa Maria. Scrovigno employed Giotto, then in his youth, working at Padua, to build and decorate it. The chapel consists of a single aisle with a tribune at its end. The few architectural lines are of the simplest Gothic. It is, in fact, a hall, lined with pictures of the life of the Virgin. The chapel is concealed in a garden crowded with vines and vegetables, and is delightfully withdrawn from the streets. A pomegranate tree was by its door in full flower. These works are a most interesting study, but to describe them all would be too long. When I first visited this chapel in 1850, I was especially struck with the figure of the angel of the Resurrection; and returning after many years, the same figure seems the most beautiful of all.

When we remember that Giotto and Dante passed many hours together in this chapel, we do not require much power of imagination to repeople the place. I spent some time here alone, trying to copy the beautiful angel, but the light was insufficient, and the picture too high on the wall for me. I even procured a permission to put up a scaffold, meaning to spend some days there in copying; but the weather changed, the chapel became too dark for work, and as the rain continued, I gave up my plan.

There is a record of Dante's presence in Padua, being his name as witness to a contract drawn in the house of Donna Amata Papafava. This document is preserved by the Marchese Papafava.

RIMINI — 1307.

FROM Urbino I passed to Rimini, a few hours by diligence. The road is a descent till it reaches the sea. I was prepared to find in Rimini the most antique, the moldi-



IN URBINO.

est, most deserted, ivy-grown city that Italy could show — and never was I more mistaken. I had hoped to find some castle or palace where I could be assured that the sad Francesca had lived, and where the bitter, bloody tragedy of her fate was acted. Inquiring at once for the house of Francesca, I was shown a row of new houses in the busiest part of the city, and told that the house of Francesca

had once stood there! Near by is the cathedral devoted to the memory of Sigismund Malatesta and his wife Isotta, whose ciphers are united with the rose and elephant in a frieze border which surrounds the church. I took a little carriage and desired the driver to take me to the oldest part of the city, hoping to find something of the trecento date; but the driver thought best to take me to the



MALATESTA FORTRESS.

Casino, by the sea, and thus showed me the Rimini that I desired to find, replaced by a noisy resort for summer visitors,—gay

music and bathing-houses, and everywhere the vulgar efflorescence that belongs to such places. I despaired of finding anything of old Rimini till I came to the fortress, which is, no doubt, partly at least of the old time. It is now a soldiers' barrack, and new roofs have been added to the old towers to make them habitable; but certain parts of the structure have the look of past ages hanging about them and the colors of sunset and twilight, and the open country beyond, gave dignity to the modernized pile. Though I could not find the house of Francesca, I must give a few of the immortal lines in which she tells the sad story to Dante :

“The land where I was born sits by the sea,
Upon that shore to which the Po descends,
With all his followers, in search of peace.
Love, which the gentle heart soon apprehends,
Seized him for the fair person that was ta'en
From me, and me even yet the mode offends.
Love, who to none beloved to love again
Remits, seized me with wish to please so strong
That, as thou seest, yet it doth remain.
Love to one death conducted us along,
But Caïna waits for him our life who ended.”
Lord Byron Tr. “Inf.,” v. 97.

(Concluded in our next.)

VISIONS.

LATELY I drew my little skiff
To the edge of a lovely ocean isle,
And over the tall and wind-swept cliff,
A wanderer, climbed and strayed awhile.
Hither and thither I turned amid
The gray, old groves of beech and birch,
Saw where the brood of the partridge hid,
And startled the gray owl from his perch.
Deeper, anon, in my vagrant mood,
I sought the elder and alder brush,
And followed the rivulet where it wooed,
In its pretty manner, the reed and rush.
The small birds flitting from top to top,
Bowed the heads of the rushes low.
'Mid knotted hemlocks, drop by drop,
I saw the amber distilling slow.

Into a thicket dark I bent,
Chasing the rivulet as it wound,
With little to mark the way it went,
Save under the ferns its own sweet sound.
There, of a sudden, betwixt the boughs,
Out in the open, full and clear,
I saw, as it stood with lifted brows,
Half turned to listen, an antlered deer.
It gazed with its great brown girlish eyes,
Till in the thicket they fell on me ;
Then, with a look of wild surprise,
It tossed its antlers and turned to flee.
So have I followed a thousand ways,
In cities, some pleasing, idle din,
And then for a moment felt the gaze
Of one I would give the world to win.

Only a moment—a look askance,
The far-off gleam of a beautiful face,
No more than a maiden's one coy glance—
And then forever an empty place.

James Herbert Morse.





NOTES ON THE EXILE OF DANTE.*

FROM HIS SENTENCE OF BANISHMENT WHILE IN ROME, 1302, TO HIS DEATH IN RAVENNA, 1321.

II.

CONVENT OF SANTA CROCE DI CORVO—1309.

TO VISIT this ruined convent, which is situated on the promontory that bounds the Gulf of Spezia on the east, the best way is to get a carriage at Sarzana and drive to a point on the river Magra where a boat can be taken to its mouth. I had a little basket-carriage, rough and strong, and a sturdy pony which suited the tangled and marshy road. The white and not carefully groomed pony was called Nina, and she was perpetually appealed to by her driver, with every modulation of which the Italian voice is capable. He never struck Nina, but he spoke to her often, putting into her name encouragement, reproof, coaxing, comforting, stimulating, warning,—all expressed in the one word Nina. It really appeared as if Nina paid very little attention to the voice of her mentor, so incessantly heard, but jogged on at the pace she liked best. The drive must have been three or four miles from Sarzana to the Magra, and then, following the wooded bank half a mile farther, we came upon a boat which appeared to be waiting for us, for up started from the bushes two boatmen, and much noisy talk ensued. Meantime I settled myself in the boat, and was pleased to find the driver was to go with us, leaving a boy in charge of the carriage. Two miles of rowing brought us to the place where the river opens into the sea, and we soon were on the little path leading up, under ilex trees, to the convent ter-

race. Of the building only a piece of the cloister wall remains. The terrace is a vineyard with fig-trees, children playing, and clothes hung to dry; for, built into the ruin is an apartment where the guardians of this interesting place have shelter. From here came the letter known to Dantean scholars as the Ilarian letter. In 1759 there was discovered and published a part of a letter from Fra Ilario, who was prior of this convent in the time of Dante. It was addressed to the friend of the poet, Ugucione da Faggiuola. It describes the visit of Dante to this place in 1308, and relates that he had consigned the completed manuscript of the "Inferno" to the prior, with direction that he should read it, and, after making such notes as should occur to him, that he should send it to Ugucione. The translation of this letter is here given as it is found in the Illustrations to Longfellow's translation of the "Divina Commedia." It is taken from Arrivabene, "Comento Storico," p. 379:

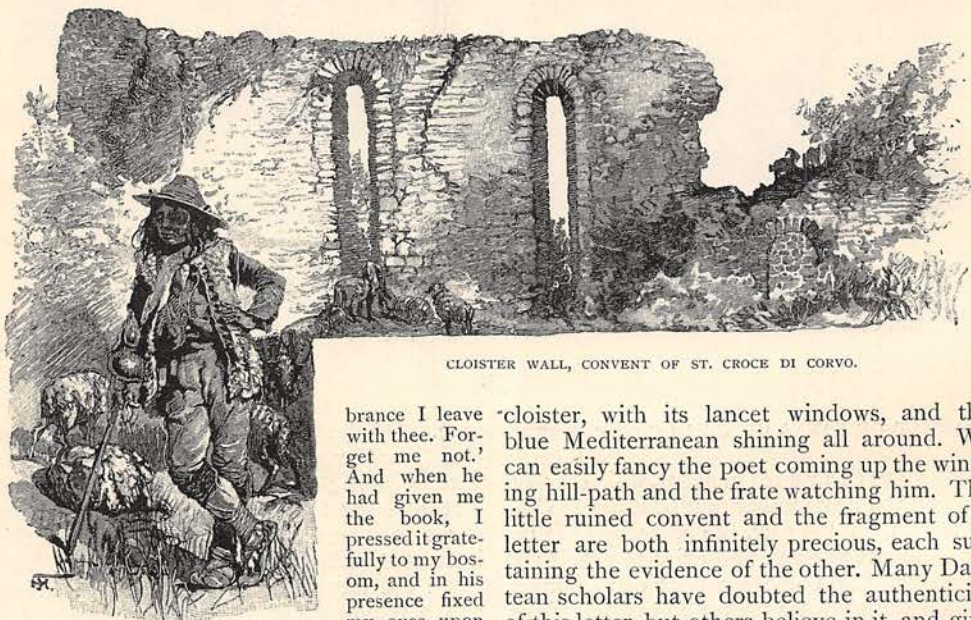
"Hither he came, passing through the diocese of Luni, moved either by the religion of the place, or by some other feeling, and seeing him, as yet unknown to me and to all my brethren, I questioned him of his wishings and his seekings there. He moved not, but stood silently contemplating the columns and arches of the cloister, and again I asked him what he wished and whom he sought. Then, slowly turning his head, and looking at the friars and me, he answered: 'Peace!' Thence, kindling more and more the wish to know him and who he might be, I led him aside somewhat, and having spoken a few words with him I knew him; for although I had never seen him till

* THESE notes with pen and pencil were made to commemorate a pilgrimage of the author to the cities, convents, and castles that gave Dante refuge in exile, and to some other places known to have been visited by the poet, or that are mentioned in his verses. The order of his wanderings has been kept as nearly as possible, but the notes are necessarily incomplete.—S. F. C.

The illustrations are nearly all from Miss Clarke's drawings, which have been redrawn for engraving by Mr. Harry Fenn.—Ed.

that hour, his fame had long since reached me; and when he saw that I hung upon his countenance, and listened to him with strange affection, he drew from his bosom a book, did gently open it, and offered it to me, saying: 'Sir Friar, here is a portion of my work, which peradventure thou hast not seen. This remem-

This letter opens a glimpse into the life of Dante, delightfully picturesque and dramatic. We have here the scene almost as it existed more than five hundred and fifty years ago: the little terrace, the broken wall of the



CLOISTER WALL, CONVENT OF ST. CROCE DI CORVO.

brance I leave with thee. Forget me not.' And when he had given me the book, I pressed it gratefully to my bosom, and in his presence fixed my eyes upon it with great love. But I, beholding there the vulgar tongue, and showing by the fashion of my countenance my wonderment thereat, he asked the reason of the same. I answered that I marveled that he should sing in that language; for it seemed a difficult thing, nay, incredible that those most high conceptions could be expressed in common language; nor did it seem to me right that such and so worthy a science should be clothed in such plebeian garments. 'You think aright,' he said, 'and I myself have thought so; and when at first the seeds of these matters, perhaps inspired by Heaven, began to bud, I chose that language which was most worthy of them; and not alone chose it, but began forthwith to poetize therein after this wise:

"Ultime regna canam fluido contermina mundo,
Spiritus quæ lata patent; quæ præmia solvunt
Pro meritis cuicumque suis."

But when I recalled the condition of the present age, and saw the songs of the illustrious poets esteemed almost as naught, and knew that the generous men for whom in better days these things were written had abandoned, ah, me! the liberal arts into vulgar hands, I threw aside the delicate lyre which had armed my flank, and attuned another more befitting the ear of moderns; for the food that is hard, we hold in vain to the mouths of sucklings.' Having said this, he added with emotion that, if the occasion served, I should make some brief annotations upon the work, and thus appareled should forward it to you. Which task, in truth, although I may not have extracted all the marrow of his words, I have, nevertheless, performed with fidelity, and the work required of me I frankly send you, as was enjoined upon me by that most friendly man; in which work, if it appear that any ambiguity still remains, you must impute it to my insufficiency, for there is no doubt that the text is perfect in all points."

cloister, with its lancet windows, and the blue Mediterranean shining all around. We can easily fancy the poet coming up the winding hill-path and the frate watching him. The little ruined convent and the fragment of a letter are both infinitely precious, each sustaining the evidence of the other. Many Dantean scholars have doubted the authenticity of this letter, but others believe in it, and give perhaps as good reasons for doing so as those which are brought against it.

CORNICE ROAD—1309.

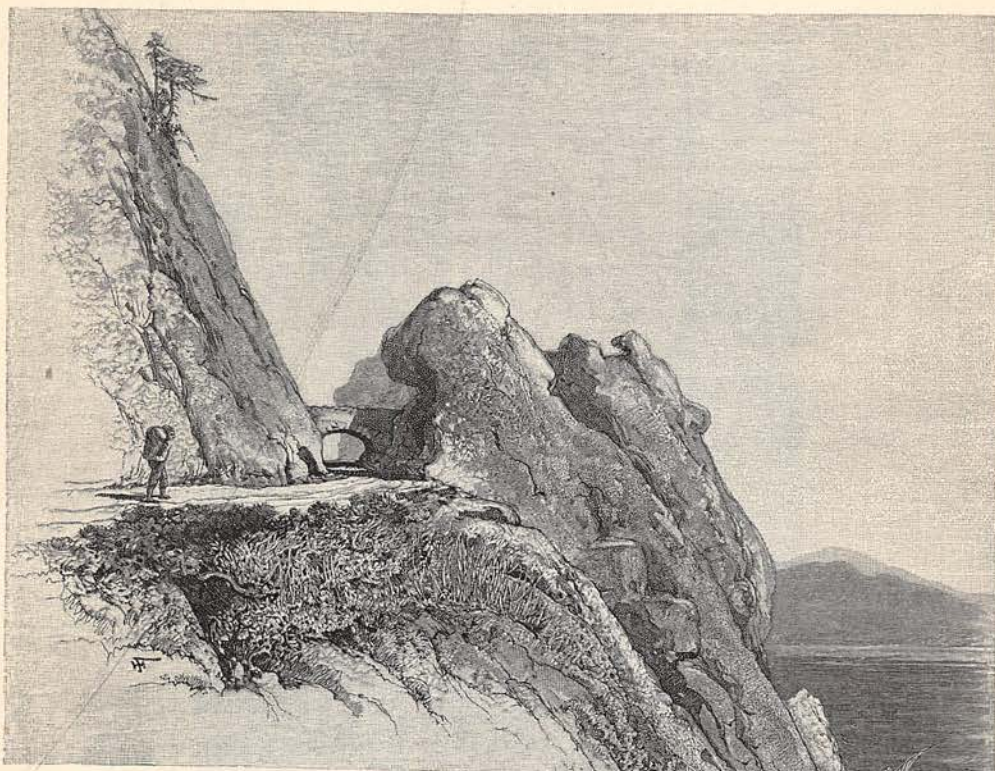
"Twixt Lerici and Turbia the most desert,
The most secluded pathway is a stair,
Easy and open when compared to this."
Longfellow Tr. "Purg.," cant. iii. ver. 50.

It appears not unlikely that Dante passed along the Cornice road on his way to Paris. This was at that time the most practicable road, and when he speaks of the way between Lerici and Turbia as being rough and lonely, he speaks as one who knows the whole road between the two places. The "Purgatory" may have been partly written in Paris, and certain beautiful passages in the beginning of that part of the poem show that his mind was full of the scenery and images of the sea:

"The dawn had chased the matin hour of prime
Which fled before it, so that from afar
I spied the trembling of the ocean stream."
Cary Tr.

And the exquisitely touched sketch of a boat, a few lines further:

—"and he came to shore
With a small vessel very swift and light,
So that the water swallowed naught thereof."
Longfellow Tr.



ON THE CORNICE ROAD.

Then when an angel comes, it is like the sun's light shining on the water and refracted into one's eyes. Finding himself dazzled, he raises his hands to screen his eyes:

Whereat toward the summit of my brow
I raised my hands, and made myself the visor
Which the excessive glare diminishes;
As when, from off the water or a mirror,
The sunbeam leaps unto the opposite side,
Ascending upward in the self-same measure
That it descends, and deviates as far
From falling of a stone in line direct
(As demonstrate experiment and art).

Longfellow Tr.

Here is a morning scene:

"When I, who something had of Adam in me,
Vanquished by sleep, upon the grass reclined
There where all five* of us already sat,
Just at the hour when her sad lay begins
The little swallow, near unto the morning,
Perchance in memory of her former woes."

Longfellow Tr.

And what a morning picture in few words is this:

"I rose; and full already of high day
Were all the circles of the sacred mountain,
And with the new sun at our back we went!"

Longfellow Tr.

THROUGH
FRANCE TO
PARIS—1309.

It may be that there are many traces of this journey through France. A friend sends me an extract from Frédéric Mistral about the grottoes near Arles, called L'Enfer, which place is supposed to have suggested to Dante the wild scenery described in the "Inferno."

It may easily have been that Dante looked on these weird rocks, and they would natu-

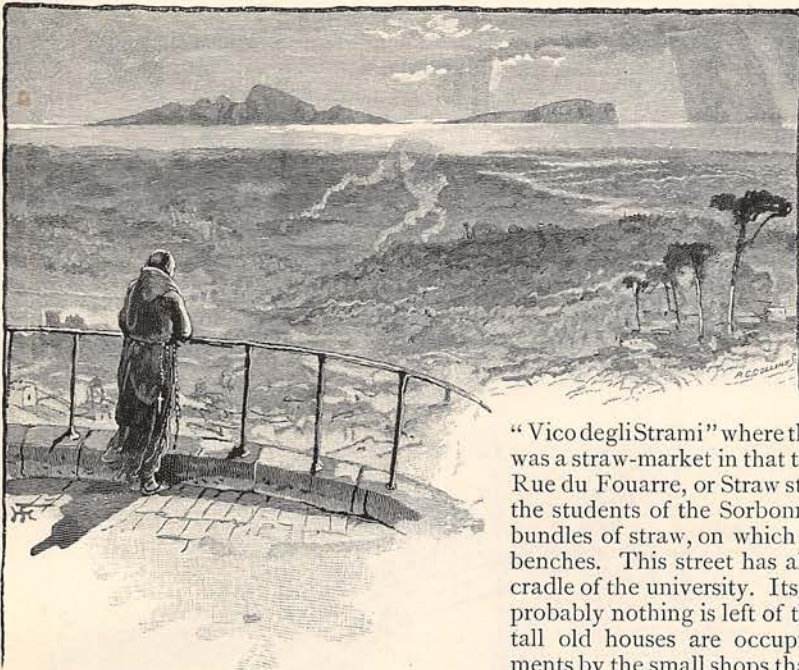
* "Virgil, Sordello, Dante, Nino, and Conrad. And here Dante falls upon the grass, and sleeps till dawn. There is a long pause of rest and sleep between this line and the next, which makes the whole passage doubly beautiful. The narrative recommences like the twitter of early birds just beginning to stir in the woods." From *Longfellow, Translator's Notes.*



RUE DU FOUARRE, PARIS.

rally fascinate his somber imagination ; but, as the "Inferno" was completed before he made the journey through France, it could not be that he then and there conceived and realized the idea and plan of the "Inferno." Indeed, there is scarcely a wild, rocky gorge, or chaos of rocks, that is not called in its neighborhood by some name that fixes its proprie-

torship on his Satanic Majesty. The devil's footstep, the devil's punch-bowl, his garden, his throne, his bridge, his castle are a few of these tributes to his power. Many such places have the credit of having suggested to Dante the form and character of his "Inferno." But these conjectures are idle. The poet's mind is a laboratory where all material is melted in



CAPRAIA AND GORGONA, FROM THE LEANING TOWER OF PISA.

the crucible of imagination, in which it crystallizes into new and more imposing shapes, and is charged with a new vitality from having passed through his mind. It should be said that Dante does, however, mention the tombs at Arles, "Inf.," ix., 112.

PARIS—1309.

"It is the light eternal of Sigieri,
Who, reading lectures in the street of straw,
Did syllogize invidious verities."*
Longfellow Tr. "Par.," cant. x. ver. 136.

It was much to be feared that the little old street would have been Haussmanized or Prussianized out of existence before one could reach Paris and make a sketch of it, but I found it quite uninjured. One can stand at one end and see Notre Dame and its

* Or, as we moderns say, declared unpopular truths.

"Vico degli Strami" where they were held. This was a straw-market in that time, and was called Rue du Fouarre, or Straw street. It is said that the students of the Sorbonne used to buy here bundles of straw, on which they sat for lack of benches. This street has also been called the cradle of the university. Its houses are old, but probably nothing is left of the year 1309. The tall old houses are occupied in their basements by the small shops that fill up the narrow streets and passages of Paris. I sat in the little carriage, looking through the dark tunnel of the street to Notre Dame in the light beyond, and made my sketch undisturbed. Dante, so far away from Italy, and coming here like a modern student for the advantage of the lectures, seemed even nearer than in Italy, where he stands like an ever-repeated figure woven into the ideal memorial tapestry that hangs about that land. Boccaccio seems to have been of opinion that Dante went also to England.

PISA—1317.

"Let the Capraia and Gorgona move,
And make a hedge across the mouth of Arno,
That every person in thee it may drown."
Longfellow Tr. "Inferno," xxxiii. v. 82.

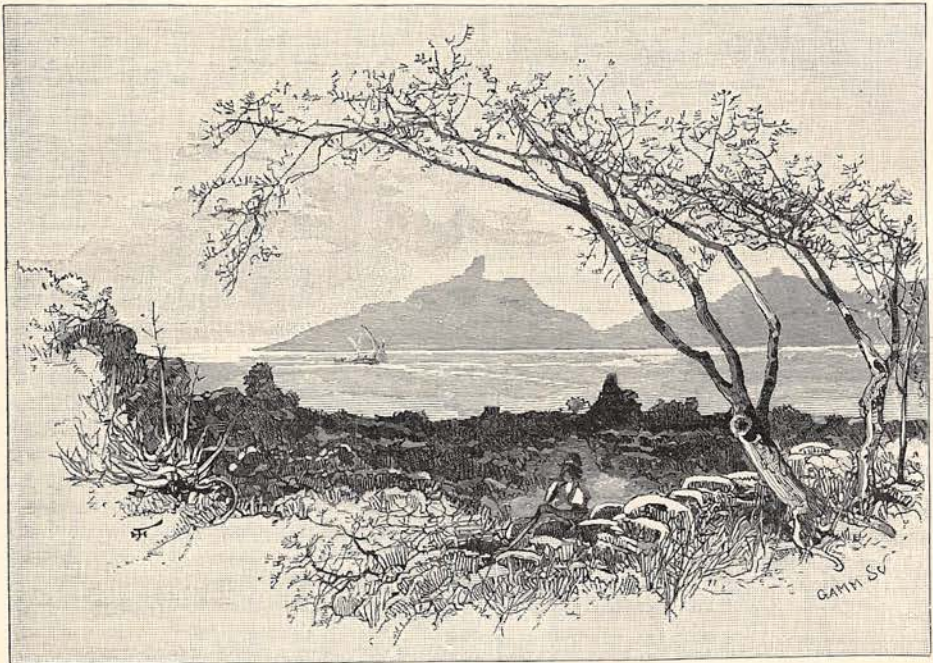
WISHING to get a sketch of the two islands from the top of the leaning tower of Pisa, from which they may easily be seen in fair



THE RAMPARTS OF LUCCA.

weather, and from which point they appear nearly close together, opposite "the mouth of Arno," I went from Florence for that special purpose. On that day, however, there was no admittance to the tower. As this exclusion occurs only twice in a year, on the occasion of certain church festas, I was much annoyed. Again I went by the road that passes Pisa on my way to Rome, and on this second occasion an envious mist overspread the landscape and the sea, and I saw nothing. Only on the third attempt, six months later, was I successful; and even on that day there was a little mistiness in the usually clear atmosphere. But I succeeded in getting

THE railway from Leghorn to Rome passes Talamone, the ancient Telamon, where Marius landed on his return from Africa. It is on the coast and two miles from the station, where are no houses. The first time I passed the spot, and heard the guard call out Talamone, what a picture lay before me! It was just after sunset, and, breaking the shoreline, there were the old towers and walls of Telamon. The burning sky behind darkened the towers till they stood against it in beautiful relief. The train stopped two minutes, and if I had been prepared I might have got an outline. The next year, returning to Rome by the same road, and at nearly the



TALAMONE.

the outline that I wanted; yet he must have seen the islands from some other tower, since from the leaning tower they do not appear near enough to each other to suggest the fancy of bringing them quite together, closing up the river and driving the waters back to destroy the city. This burst of wrath was excited by the cruel treatment of Ugolino and his innocent grandchildren. At that time Pisa bristled with towers, now mostly removed.

TALAMONE.

"Them wilt thou see among that people vain,
Who hope in Talamone, and will lose there
More hope than in discovering the Diana;
But there still more the admirals will lose."
"Purg.," cant. xiii. ver. 152.

same date, I took the same train, hoping to reach Talamone at sunset, and having pencil and sketch-book ready to secure my prize. All happened as I had arranged. The train stopped as before, just where I caught the old town against the sunset sky, and, before it moved on, the outline was secured, and the gradations of light noted. The station was but a grassy track, so that I could not have stopped longer there, yet I had obtained all I wanted.

LUCCA—1317.

FROM Paris Dante returned to Italy, it is believed, by way of Milan. He made another visit in the Casentino, and then it is probable that he remained a long time with Can

Grande at Verona. He is thought to have been at Lucca between 1314 and 1317.

"This one appeared to me as lord and master,
Hunting the wolf and whelps upon the mountain
For which the Pisans Lucca cannot see."
Longfellow Tr. "Inf.," xxxiii. ver. 28.

Amphère says :

"To go from Pisa to Lucca you must pass the foot of Mount St. Julien, that mountain which prevents the two cities from seeing each other.

'Perchè il Pisan veder Lucca non ponno,'

as Dante said with his accustomed geographical precision. Lucca is placed in the center of a delicious country. There is nothing fresher, nothing more gracious than the environs of Lucca. It is a lake of verdure incased in admirable mountains. The city rises in the midst. The ancient ramparts have been changed into a promenade that completely surrounds it, and commands the elegant landscape.

"Lucca was not so gracious in the time of Dante. When his protector and friend Uguccone della Faggiola, to whom he wished to dedicate the 'Inferno,' after having oppressed Lucca, was driven from it by Castracani, that Thrasybulus of the middle ages of whom Macchiavelli was the Plutarch, its fields were not so well cultivated as they are to-day, the vine did not suspend its verdant draperies along both sides of a road which resembles the avenue of a villa. This now tranquil promenade was a high wall crowned with towers and flanked with bastions. However, at this epoch the industry of Lucca was, I believe, more flourishing than in our century. The industrial activity of this so stormy middle age is a remarkable fact. The trades were pursued in the midst of assaults and civil wars. During the residence of Dante there were three thousand weavers at Lucca, and about the same epoch the wool merchants of Florence raised at their own expense the cathedral that Michel Angelo emulated.

"It was probably here that Dante wrote his noble answer to the offer that was made him in 1317 of returning to his country, which he saw in his dreams, if he would submit to a sort of *amende honorable* that custom sanctioned, but to which the lofty soul of the poet could not bend."

Amphère, "Voyage Dantesque."

The following is the letter refusing amnesty on the terms proposed :

"In the latter part of the year 1316 Florence offered conditions of pardon and restoration to the exiles and banished men. The conditions were these: To pay a certain sum of money, and then, humbled and abased, with paper miters on their heads (a sign of infamy) and holding a wax torch, they should walk in procession behind the car of the mint to the Church of San Giovanni, and here make the offering to the saint in expiation of their crimes. It was an ancient custom of Florence to pardon certain malefactors, offering them to the saint, their patron; but to subject the political exiles to conditions, which put them on a level with robbers and homicides, was making them pay too dearly for a pardon. Notwithstanding this, many of Dante's companions in exile, such as the Tosenghi, the Rinucci, the Manelli, submitted to these humiliating conditions, and at the Feast of St. John (June 24th, 1317) received their

enfranchisement. But not so those who prized their own self-respect, that is to say, Dante; and to a friar, his relative, who sent him notice of the decree, begging him at the same time to return, he nobly answered as follows :

"From your letter, received by me with reverence and affectionate thanks, I have with careful consideration and a grateful spirit learned how much you desire my return to my country; for this I am so much the more obliged to you that it rarely happens to exiles to find friends.

"And if my answer cannot be such as the pusillanimity of some might wish, I beg of you affectionately that, before condemning, you will maturely consider it. Behold, then, that which through the letters of your and my nephew, besides those of other friends, is made known to me; namely, the decree lately issued in Florence concerning the pardon offered to the banished citizens: that if I will pay a certain quantity of money and suffer public shame, I may be absolved and presently return. In which, O father, to speak plainly, there are two ridiculous and ill-considered things. I mean ill-considered by those who so expressed themselves, since your letter, more discreetly and wisely conceived, contained nothing of the sort.

"Is this, then, the glorious mode by which Dante Alighieri is recalled to his country after the anguish of an exile of nearly three lusters? Does his innocence, well known to all, merit this? Is this the fruit of toil and sweat and fatigue in the hardest studies? Far from a man familiar with philosophy be this baseness of a heart of mud that he, like a certain Ciolo and other men of ill fame, should suffer himself, like a criminal in chains, to be offered for ransom!

"Far be it from the man known as a proclaimer of justice, that he, the injured one, should pay tribute to his injurers, as if they were his benefactors!

"Not this the way to return to my country, O father; but if another, through you or through others, can be found, whereby the fame and honor of Dante be not tarnished, I will promptly set out upon it. But if through an honorable road I cannot enter Florence, then I will never enter there. And why? Can I not from any corner of the earth behold the sun and stars? Can I not under any region of the sky speculate on sweetest truth, without first showing myself as a man deprived of glory and ignominious before the people and the city of Florence? Nor will bread, I trust, fail me.

Fratellini's Life of Dante, cap. 7.

The date of Dante's visit to Lucca being known, Pisa and Talamone may be placed next in order. When at Lucca, being near the coast, he probably took that time to visit those old cities.

GUBBIO — 1318.

FROM Perugia is but five hours to Gubbio, and with a party of friends I made the excursion, engaging a carriage for a week. We began immediately to ascend and wind among the mountains where Gubbio is hidden. At Fratta, where we stopped to rest the horses and dine, we found a cattle fair, and such a show of the beautiful Umbrian oxen was well worth taking the journey to see. These cattle are white, short-horned, compact, and symmetrical. They are like the oxen in the

Greek sculptures, and a thousand times more beautiful than the long-horned, exaggerated creatures of the Roman Campagna. The younger ones, hardly as yet full grown, show their pink skin under the white hair as they move. They are beautifully proportioned, they move gracefully, and their large and liquid eyes recall and justify the Greek epithet, "ox-eyed Juno." It was a great pleasure to see so many of them together, and of

Higher on the hill we come to a terrace, where stands the wonderful town-hall on one side, on the other the library. This Palazzo Pubblico is a most picturesque building, but seems now to be unused. The grand hall of entrance is dusty and desolate, and the streams of sunshine that found their way through the side windows made a ghostly glimmer on the clouds of dust that our footsteps raised. We went up the grand stair-



THE TOWN-HALL OF GUBBIO.

the large number that filled the great square every one was white.

By the rugged mountain road we reached Gubbio some time after dark. We had wasted time in the morning, as our driver was late; we had wasted time at Fratta among the white oxen; and we had stopped along the road to sketch, for the mountain views and blue distances were enticing, and we arrived late. The town, like so many others, hangs on the side of a steep hill; but we did not climb it to-night, for our hotel was found in the large Piazza di San Francesco, near the gate. There is a desolation and slovenliness about these old Italian cities rather depressing to the traveler, but with a party of gay friends one soon laughs off the feeling. In the morning we began at once to climb the steep streets and seek for traces of Dante's residence. A street bears his name, and on a house is a tablet with this inscription:

HIC MANSIT
DANTES ALEGHIERIUS POETA,
Et carmina scripsit
Federicus Falcutius
Virtuti et Poster. P.

case, as invited, and looked over the city from a Gothic loggia. There is something everywhere in this old city, in its silent streets, its few inhabitants, and those few looking like strayed specters of the past, that is inexpressibly desolate. It has more remains of Etruscan walls than even Perugia. It seems like a corpse of the old time, just stirring, but neither alive nor yet quite dead.

We crossed the square and knocked at the door of the library, which was opened for us. This library is of some importance, especially as containing a piece asserted to be of Dante's handwriting. This is a sonnet addressed to his friend Bosone, the lord of Gubbio. This treasure is thoroughly believed in by those who guard it, the librarian and his assistant. It is framed and under glass. The writing is quite legible, and the sonnet is usually found in the collections of Dante's minor poems. Scholars do not believe in it, nor do they believe that any autograph of the poet exists. Ampère, in his "Voyage Dantesque," scoffs at its pretensions, as it is headed in this way:

DANTI ALIGHIERI A BOSONE D'AGOBIO.



THE CASTLE OF COLMOLLARO.

This critic says: "It may be supposed that Dante knew how to write his own name." Perhaps he did, and perhaps we do not. This does not seem a sufficient reason against the authenticity of the document. We know that Shakspeare wrote his name in three different ways in his own will. Fraticelli gives authorities for twenty-two different ways of writing the name of Dante, one of which is *Danti Alegerii*. All these different spellings are derived from old documents referring to the poet. The sonnet came into possession of the library from the family of Bosone d'Agobbio, to whom it was addressed. With the exception of one or two signatures, this sonnet is the only autograph known remaining of the man who wrote so much. Asking the librarian where the Castle of Colmollaro, mentioned as one of the refuges of Dante, might be found, to my joy he told me it was the castle of this very Bosone, and only seven miles away. The next day we visited Colmollaro. After a drive of four miles we reached a farm-house, and here the carriage road ended, and we took an ox-cart to go through the woods to the castle. This was not unwellcome. We liked the cart, which was painted with Etruscan figures, and we liked the beautiful white oxen, their heads decorated with scarlet tassels, which were to draw us. The forest was like the beautiful oak openings of

Wisconsin, the trees with plenty of space for air and sunshine to play among them. It was like America and like Greece. After three miles of this Arcadian progress, we came to the edge of a ravine, into which the road sank and rose again, to reach the castle. It is much ruined, and is used as a farm-house. The strong ivy-clad tower still stands; the court is entire; hay-ricks are planted about the castle, and pigs and chickens dispute the way. The farm wife was civil, and took us up the broken stairs to see the old rooms. It is all confused and infirm, but it is a veritable Dantean castle, and holds by its traditions. Beyond this ridge flows the river Linci, and that and the wooded hills both appear in the sonnet. It seems that the author had been engaged in teaching the son of Bosone Greek and French, and in the verses predicts that his pupil will become distinguished.

DANTE TO BOSONE D'AGOBPIO.

TRANSLATION, BY CHARLES LYELL, OF SONNET IN THE LIBRARY OF GUBBIO.

O thou who tread'st the cool and shady hill
Skirting the river which so softly glides,
That gentle Linceus 'tis by natives called,
In its Italian, not its German name,

Contented sit thee down at morn and eve,
 For thy beloved child already bears
 The fruit desired, and his march hath been
 Rapid in Grecian and in Gallic lore.

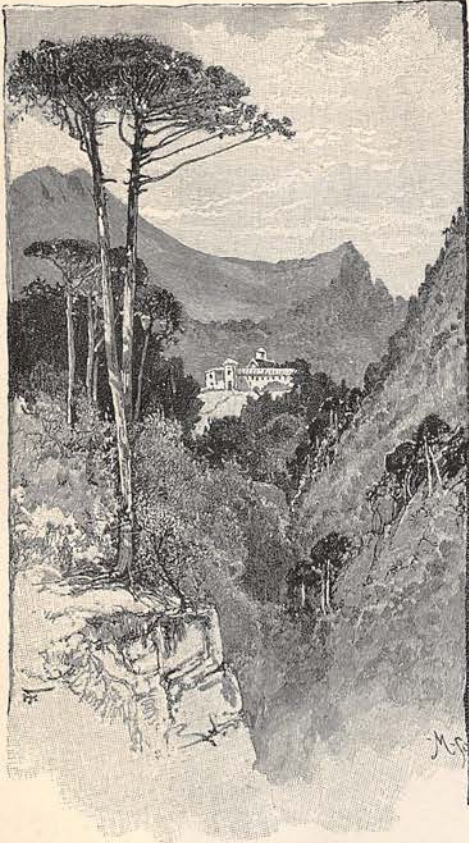
Genius, alas! no longer holds her throne
 In that Hespera, now the abode of woe,
 Whose gardens once such noble promise gave.

None fairer than thy Raphael; then rejoice,
 For thou shalt see him float amid the learned,
 Admired as a galliot on the wave.

AVELLANA — 1318.

FINDING that the convent of Avellana, where Dante passed several months, and within whose shelter he is supposed to have written much of the latter portion of his great work, could be conveniently visited from Gubbio, I persuaded one of my friends to accompany me on this rather difficult excursion. The carriage conveyed us early in the morning to a certain village, where we were to take asses and guides to help us to penetrate still deeper into the passes of the Apennines. This village had points of interest which we could not stop to enjoy, for the five hours' ride before us must be performed before sunset in the shortening September day; we must allow a little time for resting the asses and for possible delays, and our guides were impatient and spoke much of the accidents that might befall us *on such a road*. This was alarming, but our hearts were firmly fixed on the adventure; and we sent back the carriage with messages to our friends, and gave orders that it should meet us the next day in the afternoon at the same place, and then plunged into the wilderness. On these excursions much trust is required. The guides might be brigands, or the allies of brigands, for aught we knew; but we hoped they were honest men, seeking only the price of the two days' work. Soon the wild beauty of the road occupied our attention, and we put away our doubts and fears. We passed through two or three mountain villages, and saw beautiful women and still more beautiful children, who came out to look at the travelers. One boy, holding up a huge bunch of grapes, I shall never forget—he was of such superb beauty, a dark infant Bacchus. After an hour we came upon the path which leads along the edge of a deep ravine all the rest of the way. Charcoal-burners were at work far below us; and if we had fallen, we should have rolled into their fires, for the descent was perpendicular. We met vast flocks of pretty white goats, which were scrambling along the rocks below; and inquiring of our guides where such multitudes of *capretti* could be found, we were answered that they were all going to Rome. About half way we

found it convenient to dismount and walk awhile, and then had our lunch on the grass, making a party with our guides, and found much refreshment in a few minutes' rest. The guides would not allow us much time, since it was necessary to reach the convent before dark, the last part of the road being *stupendo*. We remounted unwillingly, and about half an hour before sunset came to the end of the long ravine, and reached a plateau, from which we saw the convent, superbly seated among the mountains, whose lower slopes, hitherto bare, were suddenly clothed with large trees, oaks and chestnuts. There was just time for a very hasty sketch from this point. We had now to descend a zigzag path through the woods to the bottom of another ravine, where a small stream was tumbling noisily along; and then to cross it and climb the opposite steep, where, on a mountain terrace, stood the immense pile of conventual buildings. As we mounted and came toward the level of the terrace, we saw something white moving among the bushes. "It is Fra Ubaldo trying to catch a chicken for your supper," cried the guide with much interest. The white-robed figure came forth, but without the chicken, and went toward the arched entrance to receive us. He was quite alone in the vast convent, which was dismantled, and had but two monks left to take care of the buildings. One of these had gone away on some business, and Fra Ubaldo was left to do the best he could for us, without assistance. The sun had now set, and he took us immediately to see the cell once occupied by Dante. I looked with deep interest on this little stone room where Dante lived seven months, and in which it is believed that he wrote much of his poem. From the little window are seen only mountain tops, now darkening in the twilight. Unfortunately the room, vaulted in stone, like all the rooms of this well-built convent, has been daubed with coarse fresco decorations, making it look like a fifth-rate *caffè*. Fra Ubaldo simply said that this had been done because so many people came to see it! I made a sketch from the window through which the poet must so often have looked, and near which he must have sat to write. We saw the library, but the books had all been removed, and it had been modernized with new shelves. They have here a marble bust of Dante, and a tablet recording his visit. As it was now nearly dark, Fra Ubaldo invited us into the refectory to partake of soup and pigeons. These birds had not, like the chickens, been able to avoid their fate. We ate from the long and broad carved oaken tables, sitting on the heavy oaken benches, and



CONVENT OF AVELLANA

wondered to find ourselves here. Then the good friar took the lamp, and proposed to show us to our bedroom. Passing through corridors heaped with grain, spread to dry, he showed us to a tiny cell which looked very clean and comfortable; and bidding us knock on the wall if we should want anything, he vanished. The strangeness of our situation in that vast, lonely convent, and the memories and almost the presence of Dante, made sleep nearly impossible. At day-break, Fra Ubaldo knocked and told us we would find a cup of coffee in the refectory. We hastily dressed, and already felt much invigorated by the keen and sweet mountain air. This convent stands on very high ground, and from the neighboring peak of Monte Catria you may discern the sea on both sides of Italy. I desired to see the outside of Dante's window, and went by a back door to that end of the convent just on the verge of the ravine. I had difficulty in finding a spot far enough from the wall to make a tiny sketch, so closely did the ravine crowd the convent; but at last found a projection that supported me. We now bade good-bye to our kind host, and had some difficulty in

persuading him to accept a trifle "for the use of the convent." This man was very kindly and very modest. He could not answer our many questions about the convent, even did not know its age, and lamented that he was not *capace* for those things, and that the other brother was not at home, who might have satisfied us. The morning was brilliant, the air so sweet and pure that we wished only to stay longer and enjoy it. The situation of this convent is magnificent, and sheltered on the east, north, and west by mountains; it is only open on the south. It was a delight, this early ride, climbing and scrambling through the forest; and when we had passed down to the bed of the stream, and climbed the opposite bank, and wound through the forest pathways till we came to the place where we must lose sight of this wonderful old building, we could hardly persuade ourselves to leave it. Some part of the building is very old; all the rooms are of stone and vaulted; no plaster or other inferior material is seen. There is no carriage-road leading to it. There are but three paths by which you can reach Avellana, and one of these, the best, is a rough cart-road. I give the passage in the "Paradiso" where Dante speaks of this retreat:

"Betwixt two shores of Italy rise cliffs,
And not far distant from thy native place,
So high the thunders far below them sound,
And form a ridge that Catria is called,
'Neath which is consecrate a hermitage,
Wont to be dedicate to worship only."

Longfellow Tr. "Par.," cant. xxi. 106-111.

DUINO CASTLE—1319.

It has been believed by some that in this old castle, on the Adriatic Sea, Dante was the guest of Ugone, Conte di Duino. This place is not far from the Venice and Trieste Railway, and Monfalcone is the station where one must descend to reach it. I came to it from Görz the day after leaving Tolmino. As it rained when I left Görz early in the morning, I put my luggage in for Trieste, and gave up my intention of visiting Duino that day. But, being arrived at Monfalcone, I found the sun shining, and again I changed my plans and descended. I found at the station one carriage, old and dusty, a wretched horse, and a ragamuffin driver. This man said that Duino Castle was eight miles away, and that he could bring me there in half an hour. We started and dragged over a dreary country, very ridgy and stony, and without any vegetation. Had it been more level, the sea would have been visible, for it was all around us; but the rough face of the country impeded the view everywhere. The driver

vexed me by perpetually teasing his wretched horse with the whip; I assured him I was in no haste, but he only laughed stupidly, as if he thought I must be joking. Finding he gave no heed to what I said, I remarked:

side of which was a wall, pierced with arched openings, with vines and pots of flowers decorating them, and showing the sea very near. Surprised, I said to the driver, "But this castle is inhabited! Who lives here?"



WINDOW OF THE CELL OCCUPIED BY DANTE IN THE CONVENT OF AVELLANA.

"Take care, or some fine morning you will wake and find yourself a horse! How would you like that? Even the Madonna could not help you then." He looked rather scared, laughed uneasily, used the whip less frequently, and now and then he glanced furtively at me, as if to see if I looked like a sorceress, of which I fear he found no signs. After four or five miles we came to a rather poor-looking village, beyond which was a large and high wall without windows, over which peeped a tower. This, the driver said, was Duino Castle, and asked, "did I want to go up to it?" Of course I did, both to see the ruin, and to find a good spot for sketching it. Now the guide-book says there is Duino Castle by the sea, and near it a modern *château*. We had already passed a smart-looking villa, which I supposed was the *château* referred to, and drew up to the high wall I have spoken of. As we turned the end of the wall we came into an avenue, one

"The Princess H." Then I stopped the carriage and walked into the court of the castle, where I found flower-beds, vines, and sculpture, and an old Roman tower rising out of a bed of ivy. I looked for a servant, and one presently appeared who would not take my message, but went for another, who also declined to receive it and called a third, the lady's maid. She took my message to her mistress, asking permission for me to make a drawing of the old tower, and adding that it was because Dante had been there that I wished to do it. The woman returned immediately with a cordial answer. The Princess begged me to draw what I pleased, and said a lady who spoke English would come down immediately. Just as I had fixed my seat for making a sketch of the tower, Madame de W., the English governess, accompanied by her pupil, the young Princess, came to me. They were full of kindness and interest, and presently the lady of the

castle herself appeared. She was very courteous, and thought it a charming work in which I was engaged, and inquired in perfectly good English how I came to think of anything so delightful. I explained that my interest in Dante, my interest in Italy, and my love of drawing had made it quite natural for me to undertake this enterprise, and that I found the quest more and more interesting. After a little conversation, she reminded me that there was no train to Trieste till evening, and invited me very cordially to dine and pass the day. I then remembered, with dismay, my dusty traveling dress, which I had thought quite suitable to meet the owls and bats of a ruined castle, and that I had no means to make a decent toilet for the dinner-table. But the lady would not admit my excuses, but would have me as I was, saying that she lived without ceremony, dining at one o'clock, and that she wished to show me her castle, Dante's balcony, Palladio's staircase, the picture gallery, and Paul Veronese's dome, and kindly adding, "I am sure you will enjoy this more than sitting at the station all day. You must remain." And I was easily conquered by such sweet and cordial kindness. The governess and her charge had returned to

Indians, and whether they were not very beautiful and very good. I could only say that they were sometimes so considered, remembering our own young enthusiasms. I ought to have had my friend H. H. by my side to describe their virtues and their wrongs; she would have found a willing listener. I was then asked to name a book that would tell all about these Indians. I could only think of Catlin's work on this subject; but, of course, it could not be procured at Duino. But there was a book that I was sure might be found there, and mentioned Longfellow's "Hiawatha," though fearing it might be somewhat too mythical food to offer to a young mind hungry for facts. The young lady declared that she would read it before to-morrow. "And why such haste? Why before to-morrow?" "Oh, because my brothers are coming home to-morrow, and I want to tell them all about the Indians." My young lady was a charming enthusiast of sixteen, as fair and fresh as a wild rose, and full of life, impatience, and gayety.

After dinner I was shown the castle. The young lady led me through the darkened library, and pushed open the shutters of a window which disclosed a wide stone balcony,



DOUBLE CAVE AT TOLMINO.

their studies, and when my sketch was finished the Princess came again, and herself walked with me through the castle, explaining its points of interest, and left me at the room where I was to make myself comfortable. Presently came Madame de W., who assisted me to prepare for dinner. We were here joined by the French governess and went together to the dining-room. The young Princess placed herself next to me, and asked many questions about the forests that she imagined still surrounded New York, about the poet Longfellow, and about the American

still called Dante's. From it is seen a most enchanting sea view. Something white glitters in the blue distance; that is Trieste. Nearer, a point is shown as Miramar. A line of cliffs, beginning near the castle, marks the shore till it is lost in the airy line of distance. The sea had that wonderful glitter, like blue diamonds, that it often has in hot and breezy weather; and if Dante saw it softened by a silvery mist, as it was to-day, it must have chased away even his gloom. Then came the interior of the castle, Palladio's circular staircase, and a fresco by Paul Veronese in

the dome above it. After this the picture gallery, where were many good Venetian pictures, and among them a very precious portrait by Vandyke. This gallery is very rich in good pictures for a private collection. I was then shown the state apartments and the chapel, and, lastly, the boudoir of the Princess, with all her favorite souvenirs, and a loggia filled with flowers and overlooking the beautiful Adriatic. There is a ruin on the shore, but it is of a much older castle than this one, and it must have been a hopeless ruin even in the time of Dante. This princess is the last of that Della Torre family to which Dante's hosts belonged, and I think the old Roman tower in the court-yard must have given the name to this family; but this is my own conjecture.

After this we came into the castle court and had coffee under the arcade, and one more pleasant hour was passed before leaving Duino; and, with many hopes of meeting again, I parted from these kind hosts, and ended a day which seemed as if I had passed it with old friends. On turning to take one last look at the castle, I noticed that it was almost immediately hidden behind the high wall, above which only the Roman tower now showed its head. This screen is on the north side of the castle, as the sea is on its south. I have no doubt that it was built as a protection against the bitter and furious north wind which sometimes sweeps that region. It is called the Bora, and must come from the Tyrolese Alps, being drawn over the Adriatic as through a tunnel. The head of the sea is much exposed to its fury. It is said that it can overthrow loaded wagons, and that even a railroad train has been upset by it. In Trieste some streets are supplied with ropes, by means of which pedestrians are glad to save themselves from being blown away. At Duino Castle the tutor and governess pleased themselves with the notion that Dante studied the horrible cries of the "Inferno" from the sounds the winter winds made in roaring through its passages. They, at least, thought no sounds could be more infernal.

VENICE — 1320 — TOLMINO.

THERE does not remain much in the old arsenal of that which kindled Dante's imagination — the boiling pitch, the black smoke, the laboring artisans. It is now a museum of curiosities, illustrating the naval achievements of Venice when she was a great power on the sea.

"As in the Arsenal of the Venetians
Boils in the winter the tenacious pitch
To smear their unsound vessels o'er again :

For sail they cannot; and instead thereof
One makes his vessel new, and one recalls
The ribs of that which many a voyage has made;
One hammers at the prow, one at the stern,
This one makes oars, and that one cordage twists,
Another mends the mainsail and the mizzen."
Longfellow Tr. "Inf.," cant. xxi. ver. 7.

Tolmino, where Dante is said to have visited Pagano della Torre, is in the Austrian Tyrol, thirty miles north of the Venice and Trieste Railway. At Görz I took the Austrian mail-coach for Vienna, which passes through Tolmino. At a quarter to four A.M. I was at the coach office, where all was still darkness and silence. The coach was hauled out, the horses attached, the driver mounted, and the guard, helmeted and trumpeted, placed himself on the coach. Then at last the door was unlocked and the passengers permitted to enter. Now there appeared nothing to detain us, but still there was no movement; five minutes passed in darkness and silence. Then the clock struck four, and at the fourth stroke the horses moved. All this system and discipline was Austrian, in sharp contrast to the Italian way of doing things, not many feet away on the southern side of the same railway. We moved on in the darkness. Soon a streak of dawn gave a glimpse of the river by which the road passes. This is the Isonzo. In the dusky morning it could be seen rolling far below us, and the mountains rising high in air beyond it, shutting off the eastern sky. The impression was mysterious and lonely; but as the



DANTE'S TOMB AT RAVENNA.

light stole softly into this darkness, the world began to awake and every object to be touched with a strange, fresh beauty. I have often had occasion to observe the charm that comes from a partial privation of light. As Corot said of his morning wanderings in the mist, "You can see nothing, but everything is there; when the sun comes up, you can see everything, and nothing remains." That is to say, the imagination has no more interest in the scene. But here, only when the sky became full of light could be seen the wonderful beauty of this little river. It rolls in its rocky bed like a shining green serpent, and its curves and its surprises are endless. The color, a milky green, contrasts with the deep shadowy tints of the forest that clothes the mountains above it.

At Canale we had a cup of coffee, and the other passengers left the coach. Here the conductor entered and took a seat. He seemed to be a person of a certain importance. He had seen from the way-bill that I was American, and had many questions to ask about my country. He was very curious. After a short silence, he would break out with something like this: "In America people can buy land, I have heard. Is it so, madame?" "Oh, yes, as much as they can pay for." "But you must pay much for such rich, good land, is it not so?" "On the contrary, very little. And you can take some of the best land and not pay for it till it is offered for sale by the Government, so that you can have it two or three years literally for nothing, while you live upon it and improve it; this gives you the first title to buy it. The price is fixed, and so low that I do not know how to say it in your currency; but if the settler has the money ready, he, and no one else, can buy it." "And you say he can buy as much as he can pay for!" This was what astonished the friendly conductor, who looked as if he could hardly believe me. He was accustomed to see the forests and large tracts of lands owned by the crown and the nobles, and no poor man allowed to buy more than a small holding. "In America, I have heard that every man votes. Is that so, madame?" "Oh, yes; that requires neither money nor wisdom." "Is it possible!" The man seemed to have no thought of going to this wonderful country—it seemed to him so far off, so mythical. It was evident that he but half believed my assertions regarding the privileges enjoyed by our citizens. He had friends who had gone to America, and he had heard of them no more; and when he mentioned their names to me, an American, and recently arrived from that country, I could not say that I had ever heard of them. He was unsur-

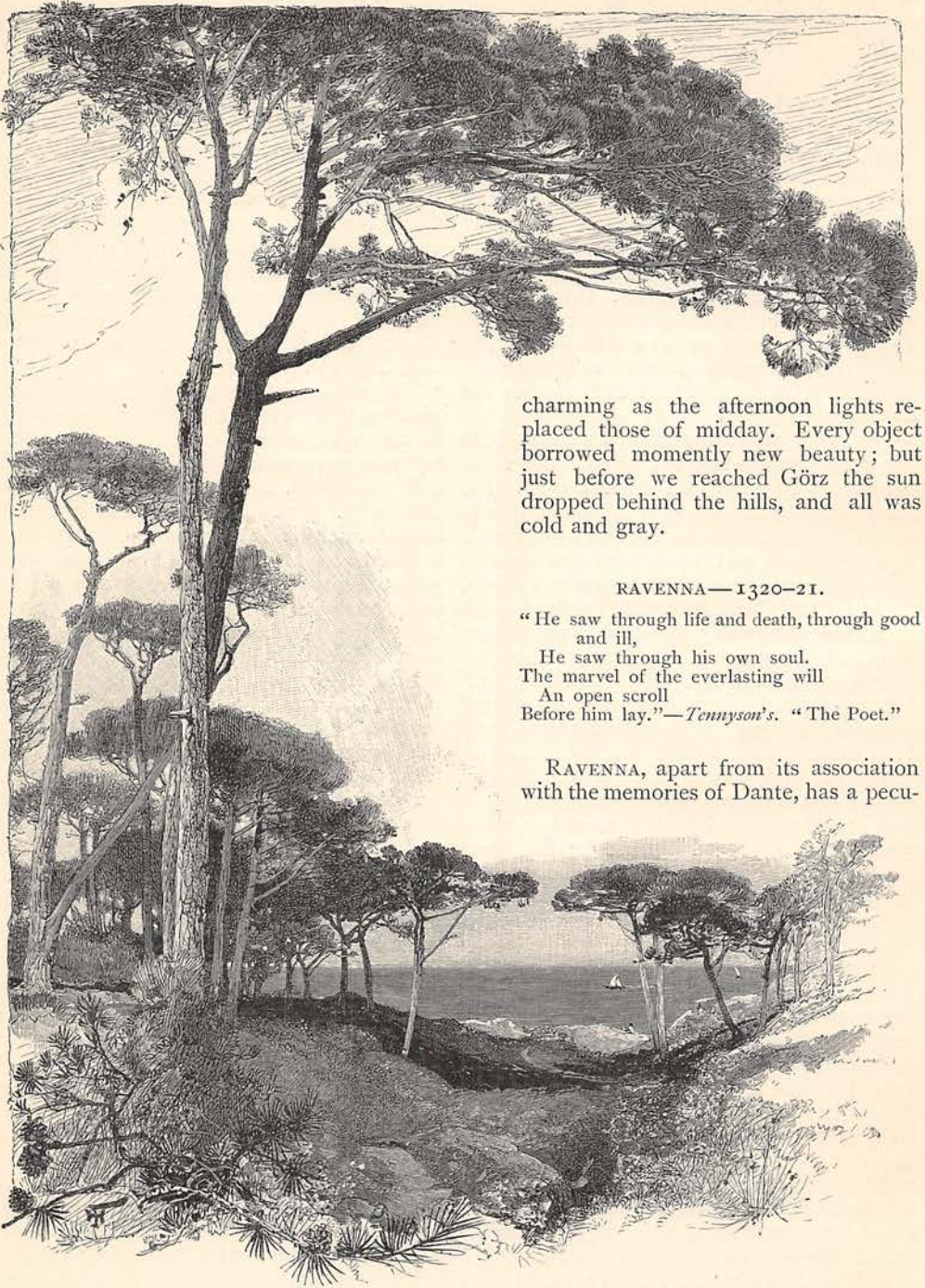
prised at this, not because America is a vast country, and I could not be expected to know every one there, but because it confirmed his skepticism about a land where such impossible advantages are promised to any poor man.

The last half of the way was charming—always the same wild beauty, and the serpent river ever more fantastic. At eleven we arrived at Tolmino. Here I must remain till the same time to-morrow, when the return coach would take me back to Görz. I found a guide who spoke a little Italian, and ascended the sugar-loaf shaped mountain, where at the very top may be seen the foundations of Pagano della Torre's castle, where he entertained Dante.

This mountain is covered with trees, and a pleasant path winds round and round it, till in about an hour we reach the top. Here one sees some walls and one or two chambers still remaining, and bits of pavement here and there. One chamber has in it a hole, down which it is supposed prisoners were lowered in the olden time. I suppose that a gentleman who owned a castle and a wine-cellar also provided himself with a private dungeon where he could place such unwelcome guests as he did not choose to invite to his table. From this terrace, raised so high above the world, all the lower landscape seemed of ideal beauty, and I thought of the poor prisoner in that dungeon, away from the glimpses of the beautiful world, and kept there at the pleasure of his tyrant, who, even were he the Patriarch of Aquileja and the friend of Dante, might be remorselessly cruel even as he was irresponsibly powerful.

Looking north-east from the mountain, my guide pointed out to me a distant spot, where he said was a cave frequented by Dante. There was not time to go to it and return to-day, but I arranged with the guide to come for me early in the morning, that I might visit that point also. The morning proved fine, and I had a delightful walk on the banks of the river in a path used by the country people, winding up and down, and avoiding all tameness.

Near the foot of the mountain, in the side of which is the cave, the path sinks into a rocky gorge, crosses the stream by a foot-bridge, and then begins to wind up to the cave. It is the tradition of the place that Dante loved this walk, and that he came every day from the castle to sit in the cave. The rock appears to be of limestone, which is so often hollowed into caves, and this one is double, one cave within another, so that, being in the first, you look on one side into a still darker cavern, and from the other hand you see through the mouth of the cave the world of light and sunshine.



charming as the afternoon lights replaced those of midday. Every object borrowed momentarily new beauty; but just before we reached Görz the sun dropped behind the hills, and all was cold and gray.

RAVENNA—1320-21.

“He saw through life and death, through good and ill,
He saw through his own soul.
The marvel of the everlasting will
An open scroll
Before him lay.”—*Tennyson's*. “The Poet.”

RAVENNA, apart from its association with the memories of Dante, has a pecu-

PINES OF RAVENNA.

From here you see the sugar-loaf mountain where the castle stood, as well as the valley and range of mountains. Here I rejoiced in seeing what Dante loved to look upon, and in treading the pretty path he daily trod. The drive to Görz became

liar gloom ever hanging over it, that distinguishes it even in that historic land where each old city has an individual character, a character stamped at its origin, and that has shaped its growth. Ravenna, with its magnificent Byzantine monuments, and its ancient and poet-

haunted pine forest by the sea, is quite unlike any other city, and was a fit surrounding for the closing scene of a tragic and stormy life. And here the most Italian of poets came to rest and to die. He, more than others, was

“Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
The love of love.”

He, more than others, was capable of joy and sorrow, of tender, ideal love and of bitter hatred, of haughtiest pride, and most abased humility. His fervidly religious soul was free from the bonds of superstition and bigotry; superstition, indeed, he detested with a cordial hatred. In this fiery nature were bound together all the elements that make a man great. But in him these elements were warring energies which the struggling soul must by self-government fuse into harmony. Only thus could the great work of life go on, only thus could the sad soul be saved from despair. His burning, baffled patriotism must have consumed his life, had it not concentrated and kindled it into poetry.

The forest begins not far from Ravenna, and follows the sea for many miles along the southern shore. It is gloomy and wild where the sea-winds have tortured the trees. There are desolate ravines formed by the long-continued throwing up of sand by the sea, and these are often found filled with a growth of enormous pines, forming most inaccessible solitudes. Farther inland, the wood is full of beauty and tender grace. Dante often alludes to this wood. From the “Purgatory” I take the following beautiful lines:

“A softly breathing air, that no mutation
Had in itself, upon the forehead smote me
No heavier blow than of a gentle wind.
Whereat the branches, lightly tremulous,
Did all of them bow downward toward that side
Where its first shadow casts the holy mountain;
Yet not from their upright direction swayed,
So that the little birds upon their tops
Should leave the practice of each art of theirs;
But with full raving of the hours of prime,
Singing, received they in the midst of leaves,
That ever bore a burden to their rhymes,
Such as from branch to branch goes gathering on
Through the pine forest on the shore of Chiassi,
When Eolus unlooses the Scirocco.
Already my slow steps had carried me
Into the ancient wood so far, that I
Could not perceive where I had entered it.”
Longfellow Tr.

The “Divina Commedia,” though begun in Florence before his banishment, had been almost forgotten by Dante, or perhaps it was only that he had abandoned the hope of seeing it again, when, being in exile, he received the manuscript from Madonna Gemma, his wife, who had found it while searching a chest for some necessary law papers. He

then resumed the work, and, through all the weary vicissitudes of his wandering years, he continued to write, and finished the “Paradiso” in his last days at Ravenna.

And here we may fitly conclude with the story, related by Boccaccio, of the finding of the last cantos after the death of Dante:

“And those friends he left behind him, his sons and disciples, having searched at many times and for several months everything of his writing to see whether he had left any conclusion to his work, could find in no wise any of the remaining cantos; his friends generally being much mortified that God had not at least lent him so long to the world that he might have been able to complete the small remaining part of his work; and having sought so long and never found it, they remained in despair. Jacopo and Piero were sons of Dante, and, each of them being rhymers, they were induced by the persuasions of their friends to endeavor to complete, as far as they were able, their father’s work, in order that it should not remain imperfect; when to Jacopo, who was more eager about it than his brother, there appeared a wonderful vision which not only induced him to abandon such presumptuous folly, but showed him where the thirteen cantos were which were wanting to the ‘Divina Commedia,’ and which they had not been able to find. . .

“A worthy man of Ravenna, whose name was Pier Giardino, and who had long been Dante’s disciple, grave in his manner and worthy of credit, relates that, on the eighth month after his master’s death, there came to his house before dawn Jacopo di Dante, who told him that that night, while he was asleep, his father Dante had appeared to him, clothed in the whitest garments, and his face resplendent with an extraordinary light; that he, Jacopo, asked him if he lived, and that Dante replied, ‘Yes, but in the true life, not our life.’ Then he, Jacopo, asked him if he had completed his work before passing into the true life, and, if he had done so, what had become of that part of it which was missing, which they none of them had been able to find. To this Dante seemed to answer, ‘Yes, I finished it,’ and then took him, Jacopo, by the hand, and led him into that chamber in which he, Dante, had been accustomed to sleep when he lived in this life, and, touching one of the walls, he said: ‘What you have sought for so much is here;’ and at these words both Dante and sleep fled from Jacopo at once. For which reason Jacopo said he could not rest without coming to explain what he had seen to Pier Giardino, in order that they should go together and search out the place thus pointed out to him, which he had retained excellently in his memory, and to see whether this had been pointed out by a true spirit or a false delusion. For which purpose, although it was still far in the night, they set off together, and went to the house in which Dante resided at the time of his death. Having called up its present owner, he admitted them, and they went to the place thus pointed out; there they found a blind fixed to the wall, as they had always been used to see it in past days; they lifted it gently up, when they found a little window in the wall, never before seen by any of them, nor did they even know it was there. In it they found several writings, all moldy from the dampness of the walls, and, had they remained there longer, in a little while they would have crumbled away. Having thoroughly cleared away the mold, they found them to be the thirteen cantos that had been wanting to complete the ‘Commedia.’” *

Sarah Freeman Clarke.

* From Ballo’s Life of Dante, Mrs. Bunbury’s translation. See Longfellow’s notes.