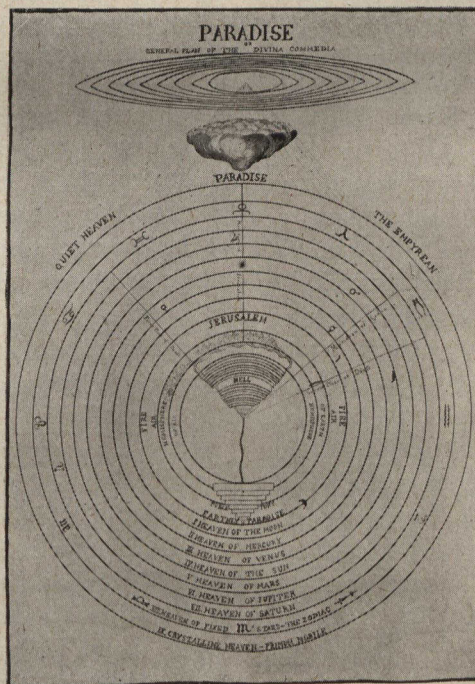


In Mercury are the men who are active for good, the eloquent. In Venus are those who have conquered the passion of Love. In the sun are the learned doctors, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Francis of Assisi, etc. In Mars are the martyrs, in Jupiter the righteous, the just ones. In Saturn are those who have led contemplative lives. Thence Dante passes to the Star-

but one vision of splendour, with mystic figures of eagles, crosses, and the celestial rose of Paradise, culminating in the last sphere where St. Bernard, who for the last two or three circles have been his guide, shows Dante the Holy Virgin sitting in glory, surrounded by the holiest women of antiquity, amongst whom Dante sees Beatrice. She bestows one smile on



ry Heavens, the abode of the great Apostles, and from here looking back he beholds the Universe and "smiles to see its low estate." Last of all he enters the Crystalline Heavens, where in reality the souls of the Blessed all have their place, though they are manifested to Dante in each sphere according to their predominant virtues. There are degrees of blessedness, but the whole company of the Redeemed is but one. The passage through the celestial region is

her faithful lover before she turns once more to the eternal fountain of life. In the last canto St. Bernard, in a hymn of exquisite beauty, beseeches the Mother of God to grant to Dante a sight of God, who with all his saints is here enthroned in unspeakable splendour. She consents, and for a brief space he gazes on the Trinity and the infinite glory of the Heaven of Heavens. With the splendour of this manifestation ends the Vision.