

Nor spread Arachne o'er her curious loom.
On the rim that fenced the sand with rock,
Sat perched the fiend of evil. In the void
Glancing his tail upturned its venomous fork,
With sting like scorpion's armed." (c. xvii.)

There is a remarkable difference between the abode of the violent and that of the fraudulent. The former are on a wide plain, the latter in deep trenches, the deeper trenches for the craftier. Here, too, the holes are hewn in rocks hard as iron, showing that a more hardened heart is needed for fraud than for violence, and there are other noteworthy differences of this form of evil; there are no fewer than ten varieties enclosed in ten circular and concentric trenches.

The first is peopled by the seducers of women and panderers, who, as they march along, are scourged and lashed by horned demons. Next come the flatterers, who, as they had licked filth, are here buried to the mouth in horrid filth. In the third trench are the Simoniacs, the followers of Simon Magus,—

"who the things of God
Which should be wedded unto goodness, these
Rapacious as ye are do prostitute
For gold and silver." (c. xix.)

These sinners are plunged head foremost into burning holes, their feet projecting. Dante regarded their punishment with great satisfaction.

In the fourth trench are found soothsayers and those who by unlawful means seek to predict the future. They are punished by having their heads twisted round, so that they are forced to walk backwards. In the fifth are corrupt officials and public speculators whose punishment is to be plunged in a lake of boiling pitch. We have a horrid picture of one of Santa Zita's (Lucca's) elders (aldermen) carried on the shoulders of a black devil, and cast into the lake. In the sixth trench (we are still in the 8th circle,) are the hypocrites wearing hoods that fall low before their eyes and with copes which are gold outside and inside lead. In the seventh are thieves, "with serpents were their hands behind their bound," (xxiv.) In the eighth are evil counsellors, men who have put their talents to evil purpose in misleading others by their advice. They are hidden in flames of fire from which their voices issue. The ninth contains sowers of schism and strife, children of the devil, as the peacemakers are "called the children of God." A demon hews their bodies asunder and cuts off their tongues and hands. In the last trench are forgers and coiners, liars and calumniators and impersonators of others. Coiners are in the last agonies of dropsy. Calumniators are in burning fever, abusing and striking one another.

In the ninth and last circle we are still among the fraudulent, but of a deeper die. These are traitors, gians in sin, as they are represented. They are confined in four chasms. (1) In Caria are the betrayers of relations; (2) In Antenora, traitors of country; (3) In Ptolomea, deceivers under the form of kindness; (4) In Guidecca, betrayers of benefactors with Lucifer in the midst. These are imprisoned in the frozen river Cocytus, in masses of ice, the most terrible of penalties, suited to their cold and selfish natures, and they regard each other with mutual rage and hate. Here Satan is imprisoned at the centre of the earth wedged in everlasting ice, his legs protruding towards the Southern Hemisphere. He has three faces representing the

three forms of sin. In each of his three mouths he champs a sinner: In the middle one, Judas, he the betrayer of Christ; in the two others Brutus and Cassius, the murderers of Caesar. To Dante the Emperor was sacred; and Julius, was regarded as the first. The travellers have now reached the depth of hell, and return to the world on the other side.

It will always need spiritual discernment to interpret the meaning of this great poem; yet many of its lessons lie on the surface, and other and deeper ones will yield themselves to patient and devout study. We shall learn from it more of the reality and vileness of moral evil, be more convinced of the triumph of divine justice. Each of the three parts of the *Commedia* ends with the Stars:

"By that hidden way
My guide and I did enter, to return
To the fair world; and heedless of repose
We climbed, he first, I following his steps,
Till our view the beauteous lights of heaven
Dawned through a circular opening in the
cave.

Thence issuing we again beheld the stars."

WILLIAM CLARK.

PARIS LETTER.

"If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work."

The Russians must, by this, be of Shakespeare's opinion. What constitutions the Russian admirals must possess, for they stand the whole brunt of the receptions and gastronomic firings. The subordinate officers are relieved by detachments from Toulon. Their captains must envy them, for it is the pace that kills. To prolong the festivals would justify the Czar in demanding an account from France for killing his officers. The visitors must be astounded, as are the impartial lookers-on. When the fever calms down, the French will be able to take in all they have gone through.

The two marked features of the rejoicings continued to the close to be the influx of provincials—they submerged orthodox residents—and the indulging in flag decorations. Monday last was the popular fête, when the visitors became the guests of Parisians; the Government had nothing to do with that twenty-four hours' rejoicings; they were only guests like the Muscovites. The streets became the abode of millions; the weather was fine, and to remain within doors would be as unpatriotic as to abstain from displaying some kind of alliance bunting or Siamese symbol. Country cousins did invest liberally in all these colored and expressive bric-bracs. The *carrousel*, or tournament, was very brilliant and the machinery hall of the 1889 Exhibition never witnessed a more attractive spectacle. In the matter of fireworks, economy was undoubtedly indulged in; why should private people light up when the public edifices remained dark? The night Venetian regatta, or rather aqueous promenade, was a toy affair. The Trocadero seemed to embody a festival of lanterns, only it was monotonous, because all the paper bladders seemed to be orange. Now, there are thirty John Chinamen in Paris that could have executed the lantern show better.

The close of the welcome was unquestionably the popular banquet; 3,600 persons—no ladies—sat down to a dinner very fairly served. Of course there were a few hitches, but as everyone was prepared to make allowance for these, and good humor was the password, all

went off well. The best rule on these occasions is to take what the waiters offer; if you wait for the presentation of dishes in the order chronicled on the bill of fare, you will miss the flowing tide. The commencement of the dinner was slow, but soon everybody warmed to work. The champagne was abundant, and of the "Clicquot" brand. I raise my hat to the memory of the widow, and if she be not favored to a rapid exit out of purgatory, theologians deserve never to be allowed to cut one of the cork strings of her best brand. Her firm presented 2,000 bottles as a patriotic gift. The organization of the tables was excellent: the table of honor ran across the ex-Exhibition gallery of thirty metres; branching from this head centre, ran tables the whole length of the vast hall, each displaying a letter of the alphabet; then every long table was divided into sections of twelve, and 15 guests on each side of a section; the odd numbers on one side, and the even on the other. Hence, there was no difficulty in reaching your seat. The space for a guest was close, but stout people had only to sit anglewise to be comfortable. After the ceremonial airs, selections from Guonod's velvety music predominated. In point of food supplies, the banquet did not come up to the miracle dinner given during the 1889 Exhibition to the mayors of France; but it was the Government who met the dinner bill, and France is ever rich enough to pay for her glory. To reach the grounds, and see the fireworks, a few Press men took a short cut across the temporary kitchen. The army of cooks was a sight. I counted ten in a comatose state, wholly exhausted.

It has been estimated that between 1½ to 2 millions visitors arrived in Paris daily to witness the fêtes. This influx was due to the railway companies starting excursion trains early in the morning from the provinces, and returning at midnight. Often a railway terminus was dense with arrivals, expecting to obtain vehicles, and the cabmen never were more civil. But people who are coining are generally of a sunny disposition. Many of the excursionists had brought their provisions with them, and all inns and taverns being full, they philosophically sat down under the trees of the Boulevards and enjoyed their picnic. On such occasions the French surpass all other people, if not in "rising" to the occasion, at least in sitting down to it. But where the genius of French ingenuity displays itself is in the dressing out of the fête, especially where a "stroke of business" can be united to patriotism. One silk mercer had the celebrated Blazenny Russian cathedral, with all its onion domes and roof celestial strings, executed in a mosaic of colored tissues. Another sold pocket-handkerchiefs, or *pochettes*, for four sous; at one of the corners was displayed the alliance flags, that part was to peep from the pocket. There were two toy allied sailors with arms upon one another's shoulders, and jointly puffing a calumet of peace. A tradesman in front of his shop, had a balloon, called the "F.-R. Alliance"; the car had the inevitable two sailors toasting international love; the guide rope was composed of a row of Russian leather purses—the sale goods he dealt in. A Russian officer is presenting a lady with a Cronstadt biscuit—price and name of manufacturer given—while the lady holds a cup of caravan tea, made from Moscow importations. Anchors are worked up into every suggestive