

ing, by fire, by horrible transformations, and other torments, in many cases strangely appropriate to the crime, as when the schismatics and sowers of discord are cleft in twain, and the hypocrites are dressed as monks with gilded cowls of lead of overwhelming weight.

We next come to the chasm where dwell all the giants of antiquity, their feet resting on the ice where are fixed the traitors. The circle of the traitors is subdivided into three rounds, thus:

- 1st. Traitors to their kindred.
- 2nd. Traitors to their country.
- 3rd. Traitors to their benefactors.

These are embedded in ice, in positions more or less cruel according to the measure of their crime, Dante esteeming the first form of treachery the lightest, and the last the worst. Here Lucifer is fixed exactly in the centre of the earth, a monstrous three-headed figure, forever championing the three arch traitors, Judas having the greatest torture.

Now, with infinite labour, Dante and his companion climb down, clinging to the monster, turning as they pass the centre of the earth, and shortly after emerge, black with smoke, and pale with agony of mind to behold once more the stars and to breathe again the pure air. They find themselves at the base of the Mount of Purgatory. Here all is calm and peaceful, once more they see the star of hope. Purgatory, though a place of suffering, is not a place of unhappiness, for all know that their pains are purifying. As in Hell, there is an antichamber, where those who have deferred repentance in this life are condemned to linger a given time before beginning their purification.

Cato, the keeper of Purgatory, meets them on the threshold and bids Dante bathe his face in the dew to remove the grime of Hell, and gird himself with a reed as a sign of humility. They mount through waiting souls, guarded at night by angels from attacking serpents, to the portal of Purgatory. Here an angel with a sword meets them, who graves seven P's on the brow of Dante. There are seven circles, representing the seven deadly sins (see chart), and as Dante passes through each one a P is effaced from his brow.

The entrance to Purgatory is gained by three steps, the first of white marble, representing sincerity of conscience; the second black stone, contrition; the third flaming porphyry, redemption by the atonement.

In the first circle the spirits are purified from Pride, being bowed down by great weights, as they take their painful way. In the second circle the sin of Envy is purified: here the eyes of the penitents are sewn together with iron threads. In the third circle the sin of Anger is punished by thick smoke. In the fourth the Slothful ones heal their sluggish souls by violent running. In the fifth circle we find those guilty of Avarice cleaving to the pavement, unable to lift their eyes to higher things. In the sixth circle those who had given way to Intemperance wander under trees of living fruit, while suffering from hunger and thirst. And in the last circle the sin of Incontinence is purged by purifying fire.

In Hell only the guilty act is punished, in Purgatory the evil disposition of mind is eradicated.

Do not too hastily form an opinion of Dante from the descriptions of ter-