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## VILLANI'S CHRONICLE

Ditemi dell' ovil di San Giovanni  
Quanto era allora, e chi eran le genti  
Tra esso degne di più alti scanni



# VILLANI'S CHRONICLE

BEING SELECTIONS  
FROM THE FIRST NINE BOOKS OF THE  
CRONICHE FIORENTINE OF  
GIOVANNI VILLANI

TRANSLATED BY  
ROSE E SELFE  
AND EDITED BY  
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LONDON  
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CAREFULLY REVISED

## PREFATORY NOTE

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THE Editor is responsible for the selection of the passages translated, and for the Introduction. He has also compared the translation with the original text, has satisfied himself of its general accuracy, and has made numerous suggestions.

The Translator is responsible for the fidelity of the translation in detail, and for its general tone and style. She has also drawn up the Indexes, and seen the work through the press.

For the selection of marginal references to the works of Dante the Editor and Translator are jointly responsible.

Both Translator and Editor desire to express their obligations to Mr. A. J. Butler, who has given them his ungrudging assistance in every difficulty, and whose learning and judgment have been invaluable.

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## INTRODUCTION

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### § 1. *The Text.*

THIS book of selections is not intended as a contribution to the study of Villani, but as an aid to the study of Dante. The text of Villani is well known to be in a very unsatisfactory condition, and no attempt at a critical treatment of it has been made. The Florence edition of 1823, in eight volumes, has been almost invariably followed. Here and there the Editor has silently adopted an emendation that obviously gives the sense intended, and on p. 277 has inserted in brackets an acute suggestion made by Mr. A. J. Butler. In a few cases, by far the most important of which occurs on p. 450, passages which appear in some but not in all of the MSS. and editions of Villani are inserted in square brackets.

### § 2. *The References.*

It is probable that many more references to Dante's works might advantageously have been inserted in the margin had they occurred to our minds; and we shall be glad to have our attention called to any important omissions.

As a rule we have aimed at giving a reference to any passage in Dante's works on which the text has a direct bearing, or towards the discussion of which it furnishes materials, without intending thereby necessarily to commit

ourselves to any special interpretation of the passage in Dante referred to.

But in some instances such a reference would, in our opinion, distinctly tend to the perpetuation of error. In such cases we have purposely abstained from appearing to bring a passage of Villani into relation with a passage of Dante with which we believe it to have no connection. For instance, to have given a reference to the *Vita Nuova* § 41, 1-11, on p. 320 would have appeared to us so distinct and dangerous a *suggestio falsi* that we have felt compelled to abstain from it even at the risk of being charged with a *suppressio veri* by those who do not agree with us.

### § 3. *The Principle of Selection.*

Our aim has been to translate all the passages from the first nine books of Villani's Chronicles which are likely to be of direct interest and value to the student of Dante.<sup>1</sup> A few chapters have been inserted not for their own sakes but because they are necessary for the understanding of other chapters that bear directly on Dante. When a chapter contains anything to our purpose, we have usually translated the whole of it. Where this is not the case the omissions are invariably indicated by stars \* \* \* \* \*. We have given the headings of all the chapters we have not translated, so that the reader may have in his hand the continuous thread of Villani's narrative, and may have some idea of the character of the omitted portions. By these means we hope we have

<sup>1</sup> The complex and miserable history of Ugolino and Nino we have given only in its most essential portions. Even its connection with one of the most terrible and widely known passages in the *Inferno* cannot make it other than dreary, sordid, and unilluminating.

minimised, though we do not flatter ourselves that we have removed, the objections which are legitimately urged against volumes of selections.

The nature of the interest which the Dante student will find in these selections will vary as he goes through the volume.

The early portions, up to the end of Book III., are interesting not so much for the direct elucidation of special passages in Dante as for the assistance they give us in realizing the atmosphere through which he and his contemporaries regarded their own past; and their habitual confusion of legend and history.

From Book IV. on into Book VIII. our interest centres more and more on the specific contents of Villani's Chronicle. Here he becomes the best of all commentators upon one phase of Dante's many-sided genius; for he gives us the material upon which Dante's judgments are passed, and enables us to know the men and see the events he judges as he himself knew and saw them. Chapter after chapter reads like a continuous commentary on *Purg.* vi. 127-151; and there is hardly a sentence that does not lighten and is not lightened by some passage in the *Comedy*. Readers who have been accustomed to weary themselves in attempts to digest and remember historical notes (into which extracts from Villani, torn from their native haunts, have been driven up for instant slaughter, as in battue shooting) will find it a relief to have the story of the battles and revolutions of Florence, as Dante saw and felt it, continuously set before them—even though it be, for the present, in the partial and therefore mutilated form of "selections."

When we come to the later portions of Book VIII. and

the first part of Book IX. the interest again changes. To the events after 1300 Dante's chief work contains comparatively few and scattered allusions; but as the direct connection with his writings becomes less marked the connection with his biography becomes more intimate. As we study the tangled period of Florentine politics that coincides with Dante's active political life (about 1300 A.D.), the ill-concerted and feeble attempts of the exiles to regain a footing in their city, and later on the splendid but futile enterprise of Henry, we seem to find the very fibres of Dante's life woven into the texture of the history. The dream of the *De Monarchia* was dreamed by Henry as well as by Dante; but as we read the detail of his failure it is borne in upon us that he not only did fail but must fail, for his ideal was incapable of realization. Italy was not ready for him, and had she been ready she would not have needed him.

Finally, the last pages of our volume, which cover selections from the portion of Book IX., extending from the death of Henry to the death of Dante himself, are for the most part inserted for a very special reason, as to which some little detail is necessary. Strangely enough they derive their importance not from any interest Dante may have taken in the events they record, but from the fact that he did not take enough interest in them to satisfy one of his most ardent admirers. The editions of Dante's collected works include a correspondence in Latin hexameters between Johannes de Virgilio and Dante. Now in the poem that opens this correspondence Johannes refers to Statius and to Lethe in a manner that proves beyond all doubt that the whole of the *Purgatorio* as well as the *Inferno* was in his hands. But he alludes to the *Paradiso*—the

poem of the "super-solar" realms which is to complete the record of the "lower" ones—as not yet having appeared. It therefore becomes a matter of extreme interest to the Dante student to learn the date of this poem. Now one of the considerations that led Johannes to address Dante was the hope of inducing him to choose a contemporary subject for a Latin poem and so write something worthy of himself and of studious readers! With this object he suggests a number of subjects :—

"Dic age quo petiit Jovis armiger astra volatu :  
Dic age quos flores, quæ lilia fregit arator :  
Dic Phrygias damas laceratos dente molosso :  
Dic Ligurum montes, et classes Parthenopæas."

"Come! tell thou of the flight by which Jove's armour-bearer (the Imperial Eagle=Henry VII.) sought the stars. Come! tell thou of the flowers and lilies (of Florence) crushed by the ploughman (Uguccione da Fagghiola). Tell of the Phrygian does (the Paduans) torn by the mastiff's (Can Grande's) tooth. Tell of the Ligurian mountains (the Genoese) and the Parthenopæan fleets (of Robert of Naples)."

The correctness and security of the interpretation of this passage will not be doubted by any one accustomed to the pedantic allusiveness of the age; and it is moreover guaranteed by the annotator of the Laurentian MS., thought by many to be Boccaccio himself. It will be seen, therefore, from the study of the concluding pages of this volume, that when Johannes addressed Dante (after the appearance of the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio*, but before that of the *Paradiso*) Henry VII. had died (A.D. 1313), Can Grande had defeated the Paduans (A.D. 1314 and 1317), Uguccione had defeated the Florentines (A.D. 1315), and Robert had collected his fleet to relieve Genoa (February, 1319). It also seems highly probable that Can Grande had not yet suffered his reverses at the siege of Padua (August, 1320). This

is perhaps the one unassailable datum for the chronology of Dante's works, and we have therefore included in our selections so much as was needed to establish it. Our readers will perhaps forgive us for having then left the fate of Genoa hanging in the balance, for as Villani says: "Who could write the unbroken history of the dire siege of Genoa, and the marvellous exploits achieved by the exiles and their allies? Verily, it is the opinion of the wise that the siege of Troy itself, in comparison therewith, shewed no greater and more continuous battling, both by sea and land."

§ 4. *The Historical Value of Villani's Chronicle.*

An adequate edition of Villani would have to examine his statements in detail, and, where necessary, to correct them. Such a task, however, would be alike beyond our powers, and foreign to our immediate purpose. These selections are intended to illustrate the text of Dante; and for that purpose it is of more consequence to know what were the "horrible crimes" of which Dante supposed Manfred to be guilty, than to enquire whether or no he was really guilty of them. To know whether Constance was fifty-two, or only thirty, when she married Henry VI., and whether he took her from a convent or a palace is of less immediate consequence to the student of Dante than to be acquainted with the Guelf tradition as to these circumstances.

At the same time, the reader may reasonably ask for some guidance as to the point at which the authentic history of Florence disengages itself from the legend, and, further, as to the general degree of reliance he is justified in placing on the details supplied by Villani.

On the first point very few words will suffice. There

was probably a Fiesolan mart on the site now occupied by Florence from very remote times ; but the form of the "ancient circle" carries us back to a Roman camp and a military colony as the origin of the regular city. Beyond this meagre basis the whole story of "Troy, and of Fiesole and Rome," in connection with Florence must be pronounced a myth. The notices of Florence before the opening of the twelfth century are few and meagre, but they suffice to prove that the story of its destruction by Totila, and rebuilding by Charlemagne, is without foundation ; and of all the reported conquests of Fiesole that of 1125 is the first that we can regard as historical.

The history of Florence is almost a blank until about 1115 A.D., the date of the death of the Countess Matilda.

With respect to the second point, it is impossible to give so brief or conclusive an answer. Villani is as valuable to the historian as he is delightful to the general reader. He is a keen observer, and has a quick eye for the salient and essential features of what he observes. When dealing with his own times, and with events immediately connected with Florence, he is a trustworthy witness, but minute accuracy is never his strong point ; and in dealing with distant times and places he is hopelessly unreliable.

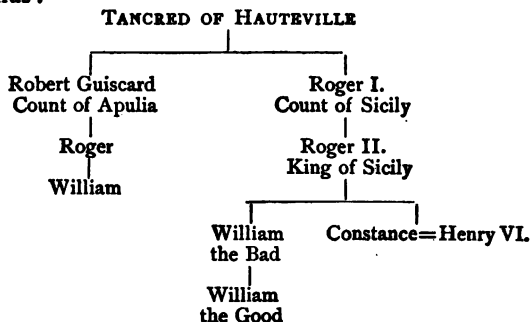
The English reader will readily detect his confusions in Book VII., § 39, where at one time Richard of Cornwall, and at another Henry III., is called king of England ; and Henry of Cornwall and Edward I. are regarded indifferently as sons of Richard or sons of Henry III., but are always said to be brothers instead of cousins.

Here there is little danger of the reader being misled, but it is otherwise in such a case as that of Robert

Guiscard and the house of Tancred in Book IV., § 19. By way of putting the reader on his guard, we will go into this exceptionally bad, but by no means solitary, instance of Villani's inaccuracies.

Tancred, of the castle of Hauteville (near Coutances, in Normandy), had twelve sons, ten of whom sought their fortunes in southern Italy and Sicily. Four of these were successively Counts of Apulia, the last of the four being Robert Guiscard. He was followed by his son Roger, and his grandson William, who died childless. Another of the sons of Tancred was Roger, who became Count of Sicily. He was succeeded by his son Roger II., who possessed himself of the Apulian domains of his relative William, on the decease of the latter. Roger now had himself proclaimed King of Sicily by the anti-pope Anaclete, and united Sicily and Naples under his sway. He was followed by his son William (the Bad), and his grandson William (the Good), on whose death, without issue, Henry VI., who married Roger's daughter Constance, claimed the succession in the right of his wife. (*L'Art de Vérifier les Dates.*)

The most important of these relations may be set forth thus :



Let the reader construct the family tree from the data in Villani, and compare it with the one given above. He will find that Villani, to begin with, makes Robert Guiscard a younger son of the Duke of Normandy, then makes his younger brother, Roger I., into his son (occasionally confounding him with Roger II.); and, finally, ignores William the Bad, and makes William the Good the brother of Constance. His details as to the pretender Tancred are equally inaccurate. These must suffice as specimens; but they are specimens not only of a special class of mistake, but of a style of work against which the reader must be constantly on his guard if he intends to make use of any detailed dates or relations, or even if he wishes to make sure that the Pope or other actor named in any connection is really the right one.

So, too, even well within historical times, Villani is prone to the epic simplification of events. His account of the negotiations of Farinata with Manfred, and of the battle of Montaperti for instance, represents the Florentine legend or tradition rather than the history of the events. These events are conceived with the vividness, simplicity and picturesque preponderance of personality which make them easy to see, but impossible to reconstruct in a rationally convincing form.

To enter into further detail under this head would be to transgress the limits we have set ourselves.

### § 5. *The Rationale of the Revolutions of Florence.*<sup>1</sup>

The settled conviction of both Villani and Dante that

<sup>1</sup> The substance of this § is entirely drawn from Prof. Villari's recent work on Early Florentine History. "I Primi due Secoli della Storia di Firenze, Ricerche di Pasquale Villari." 2 vols.,

a difference of race underlay the civil wars of Florence, rests upon a truth obscurely though powerfully felt by them.

We have seen that the legend of Fiesole and Florence, upon which they rest their case, is without historical foundation ; but the conflict of races was there none the less. And as it is here that modern historians find the key to the history of Florence, our readers will probably be glad to have set before them a brief account of the general conceptions in the light of which modern scholars would have us read the naïve and ingenuous records of Villani.

The numerous Teutonic invasions and incursions which had swept over northern and central Italy, from Odoacer to Charlemagne, had established a powerful territorial nobility. They constituted a dominating class, military in their habits, accustomed to the exercise and the abuse of the simpler functions of government, accepting certain feudal traditions, but owing no practical allegiance to any power that was not in a position instantly to enforce it. Their effective organization was based on the clan system, and the informal family council was omnipotent within the limits of the clan. They were without capacity or desire for any large and enduring social organization. Their combinations were temporary, and for military purposes ; and internecine family

**Florence, 1893, 1894. Price 8 fr. English translation by Madame Villari. "The Two First Centuries of Florentine History." Fisher Unwin. Price 2s. 6d. This work should be carefully studied in its entirety by all who desire to understand the constitutional history of Florence. N.B.—Some of our readers may be glad of the information that the modern scholar is Pasquale Villari (with short ã), and the mediæval chronicler Giovanni Villani (with a long ã).**

feuds were a permanent factor in their lives. Their laws were based on the "Barbarian" codes, but the influence of Roman law was increasingly felt by them.

In the cities it is probable that the old municipal organization had never wholly died out, though it had no formal recognition. The citizens were sometimes allowed to live "under their own law," and sometimes not ; but the tradition of the Roman law was never lost. Nominally the cities were under the jurisdiction of some territorial magnate, or a nominee of the Emperor, but practically they enjoyed various degrees of independence. Their effective organization would depend upon their special circumstances, but in such a case as that of Florence would be based on the trade guilds.

In Florence a number of the Teutonic nobles had settled in the city ; but it owed its importance to its trade. The city-dwelling nobles kept up their clan life, and fortified their houses ; but in other respects they had become partially assimilated in feeling, and even in habits and occupations, to the mercantile community in which they lived. They filled the posts of military and civil administration, and were conscious of a strong unity of interest with the people.

Under the vigorous and beneficent rule in Tuscany of the great Countess Matilda (1076-1115) Florence was able quietly to consolidate and extend her power without raising any thorny questions of formal jurisdiction. But on the death of Matilda, when the Church and the Empire equally claimed the succession and were equally unable efficiently to assert their claims, it was inevitable that an attempt should be made to establish the *de facto* supremacy of Florence over Fiesole and the whole outlying district upon a firmer and more formal basis. It

was equally inevitable that the attempt should be resisted.

Within Florence, as we have seen, there was a heterogeneous, but as yet fairly united citizenship. The germs of organization consisted on the side of the nobles in the clans and the Tower-clubs, and on the side of the people in the Trade-guilds. The Tower-clubs were associations each of which possessed a fortified tower in the city, which was maintained at the common expense of the associates, and with which their houses communicated. Of the Trade-guilds we shall speak briefly hereafter.

In the surrounding country the territorial nobility watched the growing power and prosperity of Florence with jealousy, stoutly resisted her claims to jurisdiction over them and their demesnes, and made use of their command of the great commercial highways to exact regular or irregular tolls, even when they did not frankly plunder the merchants.

Obviously two struggles must result from this situation. The city as a whole was vitally concerned in clearing the commercial routes and rendering the territorial nobility harmless; but within the city two parties, who may almost be regarded as two nations, contended for the mastery.

With respect to the collective struggle of Florence against her foes, which entered on its active phase early in the twelfth century, on the death of Matilda in 1115, it may be said in brief that it was carried on with a vigour and success, subject only to brief and few reverses, during the whole period with which we are concerned. But this very success in external enterprises emphasized and embittered the internal factions. These had been serious

from the first. The Uberti and other ruling families resisted the growing influence of the people ; and the vicissitudes of the struggle may be traced at the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries in the alternation of the various forms of the supreme magistracy. But it was part of the policy of the victorious Florentines to compel the nobles they had reduced to submission to live at least for a part of the year in the city ; and thus while the merchant people of Florence was increasing in wealth and power, the nobles in the city were in their turn constantly recruited by rich and turbulent members of their own caste, who were ready to support them in their attempt to retain the government in their hands. Thus the more successful Florence was in her external undertakings the greater was the tension within.

The forces arrayed against each other gradually assumed a provisional organization in ever-increasing independence of each other. The old senate or council and the popular assembly of all the citizens were transformed or sank into the background, and the Podestà, or foreign magistrate appointed for a year, with his lesser and greater council of citizens, was the supreme authority from 1207 onwards. This marked a momentary triumph of the nobles. But the people asserted themselves once again, and elected a Captain of the People, also a foreigner, with a lesser and greater council of citizens, who did not dispute the formal and representative supremacy of the Podestà, but was in reality coordinate with him. On this the Podestà naturally became the head of the nobles as the Captain was head of the people ; and there rose that spectacle, so strange to us but so familiar to mediæval Italy, of two bodies of

citizens, each with its own constitution and magistracy, encamped within the same walls. The Podestà was the head of the "Commonwealth," and the Captain the head of the "People." There was, it is true, for the most part a show of some central and coordinating power, nominally supreme over these independent and often hostile magistrates, such as the body of Ancients. But this central government had little effective power.

To understand the course of Florentine history, however, we must turn back for a moment to the informal internal organization of the two bodies thus opposed to each other. The struggle is between the military and territorial aristocracy on the one hand, and the mercantile democracy of the city on the other; and we have seen that the clan system and the Tower-clubs were the germ cells of the one order, and the Craft-guilds those of the other. Now the Craft-guilds were obviously capable of supporting a higher form of political development than could ever come out of the rival system. The officers of the Florentine Crafts were compelled to exercise all the higher functions of government. They preserved a strict discipline within their own jurisdiction—(and the aggregation of the trades in certain streets and districts made that jurisdiction roughly correspond to local divisions)—they had to coordinate their industries one with another, and regulate their complicated relations one with another, and they sent their representatives to all the great trading cities of the world, where they had to conduct such delicate and important negotiations that they became the most skilful diplomatists in Italy. Indeed, the training of ambassadors may almost be considered as a Florentine industry! Add to this the vast financial concerns which they had to conduct, and it will readily

be seen that as statesmen the merchants of Florence must eventually prove more than a match for their military rivals and opponents. The merchant people was the progressive and constructive element in Florentine society.

Accordingly the constitutional history of Florence resolves itself into a progressive, though chequered, advance of the people against the nobles (or, as they were afterwards called, the magnates) along two lines. In the first place, they had to make the *de facto* trade organization of the city into its *de jure* constitution—a movement which culminated in 1282 in the formal recognition of the Priors of the Crafts as the supreme magistrates of Florence. And, in the second place, they must attempt to bring the magnates effectively within the control of the laws and constitution of the mercantile community, which they systematically and recklessly defied as long as they were in a position to do so. The magnates behaved like brigands, and the people replied by practically making them outlaws. They gradually excluded them from all share of the government, they endeavoured to make the Podestà personally responsible for keeping them in order, they organized a militia of trade bands that could fly to arms and barricade the streets, or lay siege to the fortified houses of the magnates at a moment's notice; and finally, in 1293, they passed the celebrated "Ordinances of Justice" connected with the name of Giano della Bella, by which when a magnate murdered a popolano his whole clan was held directly responsible (the presumption being that the murder had been ordered in a family council), and "public report" vouched for by two witnesses was sufficient evidence for a conviction.

It is this struggle for the supremacy of the mercantile democracy and the Roman Law over the military aristocracy with its "barbarian" traditions, that lies at the back of the Guelph and Ghibelline troubles of the thirteenth century. The papal and imperial principles that are usually associated with the names enter only in a very secondary way into the conflict. In truth neither the popes nor the emperors had any sympathy with the real objects of either party, though they were ready enough to seek their advantage in alliances with them. And in their turn the magnates and merchants of Florence were equally determined to be practically independent of Pope and Emperor alike. Nevertheless the magnates could look nowhere else than to the Emperor when they wanted material support or moral sanction for their claims to power; and it was only in the magnates that the Emperor in his turn could hope to find instruments or allies in his attempt to assert his power over the cities. In like manner the Pope, naturally jealous of a strong territorial power, encouraged and fostered the cities in their resistance to imperial pretensions, while he and the merchant bankers of Florence were indispensable to each other in the way of business.

We have now some insight into the essential motives of Florentine history in the thirteenth century. But another step is needed before we can understand the form which the factions took. It would be a fatal error to suppose that the Ghibellines were soldiers and the Guelphs merchants, and that as each faction triumphed in turn Florence expelled her merchants and became a military encampment, or expelled her soldiers and became a commercial emporium. Such a course of events would be absolutely impossible. The truth is, that the

main part of the faction fighting and banishing was done on both sides by the magnates themselves. The industrial community went on its way, sometimes under grievous exactions, sometimes under a friendly Government, always subject to the insolence and violence of the magnates, though in varying degree, but always there, and always pursuing its business occupations. It came about thus. We have seen that in the twelfth century the nobles within Florence were on the whole fairly conscious of having common cause with the merchants, but that the very success of her external undertakings brought into the city a more turbulent and hostile order of nobility. On the other side, rich and powerful merchants pushed their way up into recognition as magnates, while retaining their pecuniary interest in commerce. Thus in the thirteenth century the body of magnates itself became divided, not only into clans, but into factions. It always seemed worth while for some of them to strengthen their alliances with the territorial magnates, the open foes of the city, in order to strengthen their hold on the city itself; and it always seemed worth while for others to identify themselves more or less sincerely with the demands of the people in order to have their support in wrenching from their fellow magnates a larger share of the common spoil. It was here that the absence of any uniting principle or constructive purpose amongst the magnates told with fatal effect. Indeed their house was so divided against itself that the people would probably have had little difficulty in getting rid of them altogether, had they not been conscious of requiring a body of fighting men for service in their constant wars. The knights were at a certain disadvantage in a street fight in Florence, but the merchant

statesmen knew well enough that they could not do without them on a battle-field.

We can now understand the Guelph and Ghibelline struggles of the thirteenth century. The Buondelmonte incident of 1215, which both Dante and Villani regard as the cause of these conflicts, was of course only their occasion. The conclusive victory of one party could only mean the reappearance within its ranks of the old factions under new names. For if the faction opposed to the people won a temporary victory, they would be unable to hold their own permanently against the superior discipline, wealth, and constructive genius of their subjects; whereas if it was the champions of the people who had expelled their rivals and seized the plunder, they would be in no hurry to give up to the merchants the power they had won in their name. They would regard themselves as entitled to a gratitude not distinguishable from submission, and would have their own definition of the degree of influence and power which was now their due. Thus what had been the people's party among the magnates would aspire, when victorious, to be the masters of the people, and gradually another people's party would form itself within their ranks. The wonder is not that no reconciliations were permanent, but that Cardinal Latino's reconciliation of 1279 lasted, at least ostensibly, so long as till 1300.

Obviously, if no new forces came upon the field, the only issue from this general situation must be in the conclusive triumph, not of the people's faction amongst the magnates, but of the attempt to break down the opposition of all the magnates to the citizen law, and the successful absorption of them into the commercial community. In the "Ordinances of Justice" and the

further measures contemplated by Giano della Bella the requirements of this solution were formulated. Had they been successfully carried out, the magnates as an independent order would have been extinguished. Accordingly from 1293 onwards the fight raged round the Ordinances of Justice. No party, even among the magnates, dared openly to seek their repeal ; but while some supported them in their integrity with more or less loyalty, others desired to modify them, or attempted to disembowel them by manipulating the elections and securing magistrates who would not carry them out. This was the origin of the Black and White factions. The Blacks were for circumventing the Ordinances, while the Whites were for carrying them out and extending their principles.

It will be seen at once how false an impression is given when it is said that the Whites were moderate Guelfs, inclining to Ghibellinism, and the Blacks extreme Guelfs. The truth is that the terms of Ghibelline and Guelf had by this time lost all real political meaning, but in so far as Guelfism in Florence had ever represented a principle it was the Whites and not the Blacks that were its heirs. But the magnates of Florence at the beginning of the fourteenth century administered large funds that had accrued from the confiscation of Ghibelline estates ; they had fought against the Ghibellines at the Battle of Campaldino in 1289, and they made a boast of being Guelf of the Guelfs. Whatever party of them was in the supremacy, therefore, was prone to accuse those in opposition of Ghibellinism simply because they were in opposition. This was what the victorious Blacks did. Their alliance with Pope Boniface VIII., who wished to make use

of them for his ambitious purposes, lent some colour to their claim. Moreover, the remnants of the old Ghibelline party in the city or its territory naturally sought the alliance of the Whites as soon as they were in pronounced hostility to the ruling Guelfs. Thus arose the confusion that has perpetuated itself in the current conception of the Whites as "moderates," or Ghibellinizing Guelfs, a conception which stands in plain contradiction with the most significant facts of the case.

During the closing period of Dante's life the politics of Florence became more tangled than ever. Every vestige of principle seems to disappear, and personal ambitions and hatreds to become more unbridled than ever. The active interference of the Pope and the Royal house of France, followed by the withdrawal of the Papal Court to Avignon, the invasion of Italy by Henry VII., and the rise of such leaders as Can Grande, Uguccone da Faggiuola, and Castruccio, introduced new forces. We dimly perceive, too, that the mercantile democracy of Florence is becoming a mercantile aristocracy with elements of disturbance beneath it in the excluded or oppressed minor arts. In a word, just before the movement that has been steadily proceeding from 1115 to 1300 reaches its natural goal, the conditions of the problem change, the history enters upon a new phase, the far-off preparation for the Medici begins, and the problem ceases to have any direct and intimate connection with the study of Dante.

#### § 6. *Dante's Politics.*

Enough has been said to show the reader how very imperfect an idea is given of Dante's politics when it is

said that he was at first a Guelf but became a Ghibelline.

We have seen that the political party, for his connection with which he was exiled, was heir to the best Guelf traditions. His own writings show that the maintenance of peace was his idea of the supreme function of Government. The extreme severity of his judgments upon thieving and upon false coining is characteristic of the citizen of the greatest commercial city of the world. In all this, if we must use the misleading words, he is more Guelf than Ghibelline. It is true that he constantly opposed the influence of Boniface VIII. in the affairs of Florence, but Boniface was a disturbing and reactionary force that opposed the legitimate development of the Guelf policy of the Florentine democracy. It is true that he is a passionate advocate of an ideal Empire, and that he looks to the Emperor to heal the wounds of Italy, but the more carefully his writings are studied the more clear does it become that what he seeks in the Emperor is not a champion of Teutonic feudalism and supporter of the territorial nobility, but a power that will make Roman Law run all through Italy, and will hold the turbulent nobles in check. The Empire and the Emperor mean to Dante justice and peace secured by the enforcement of Roman Law. Whatever this is, it is not the Ghibellinism of Farinata or the Ubaldini. It is true, however—and here if anywhere Dante is open to the charge of temporary desertion of his principles—that after his exile he, together with other Whites, entered into a league with the Ubaldini, the most obstinate of the traditional foes of the commercial community of Florence. This was a desperate act, which, however reprehensible or deplorable, cannot be taken as indicating the deliber-

ate adoption of a policy in contradiction to the whole tenor of his life and thought. We may well suppose that the sense of the hollow and indeed dishonourable nature of such an alliance was one of the considerations that induced him to sever himself from the exiles and "make a party for himself."

Lastly, he was an enthusiastic admirer of Henry VII., and he even goaded him on to the attack of Florence. But Henry himself, who came to Italy with the sanction of the Pope, came with the earnest desire to heal and soothe. The Ghibellines proper felt that they had more to fear than to hope from him.

We cannot say, then, that Dante's politics changed. Nor can we define his position by calling him a Guelf or a Ghibelline, or both. His political ideals were his own. They were the outcome of his life and thought, intensely personal, as was all else about him. They cannot be labelled, but must be studied in his life and in his works.

If we are to use the current terms at all, we shall perhaps come nearest to the truth by saying that Dante was a Guelf in his aims, but that he approximated to the traditions if not to the practices of the Ghibellines in the means by which he hoped to see them realized.

**SELECTIONS FROM THE  
CHRONICLES OF VILLANI**

## NOTES AND WARNINGS

The marginal references are to the divisions and lines of Moore's "Oxford Dante."

\* \* \* \* indicates a passage omitted in the translation ; . . . indicates a hiatus in the Italian text.

Villani makes the year begin on March 25th. Thus 1300 is still running till March 25th, 1301. For instance, Bk. VII., § 9, gives the last day of February, 1265, as the date of the Battle of Benevento. By our reckoning this is the February of 1266. So too the Reconciliation of the Florentines by the Cardinal Latino, Bk. VII., § 56, took place by our reckoning in February, 1279, and the death of Charles of Anjou, Bk. VII., § 95, on January 7th, 1285, etc.

The Kingdom	= The Kingdom of Apulia.
The Duchy	= The Duchy of Spoleto.
The March	= The March of Ancona.
The Principality	= [?] The Principality of Tarento.
San Miniato	= San Miniato al Tedesco, in the Arno Valley, West of Empoli.

Nocera	= Nocera of the Saracens near Naples, not the Nocera of <i>Paradiso</i> xi. 48.
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The Duomo or Cathedral = What is now known as the Baptistery.  
Master, M., Messer, all represent the Italian Messer.

"Popolo" is translated "people" except where it means "the Democracy" as a form of government. It is there given untranslated. [If this rule is ever departed from, it is through inadvertency.]

The "popolari" or "popolani" are members of the "popolo" or people, sometimes opposed to the "Nobili," or old Nobility of birth, and sometimes to the "Grandi," or Magnates, the new nobility of wealth and status.

To be "placed under bounds" appears to mean banishment or confinement, under the form of a prohibition to cross certain stated "bounds."

The "Black" Cerchi are merely a branch of the Cerchi family : they were "Whites" politically.

Villani was well acquainted with Dante's works, and evidently regarded him as an authority. Therefore it must not be taken for granted, without further thought, that in every case of agreement Villani's testimony is an *independent* confirmation of Dante.

Purg. xvii. 34-39. the virgin Camilla, who was marvellous in arms. In the  
 Inf. i. 108. end, Æneas, being victor in the last battle, and Turnus  
 Par. vi. 3. being slain by his hand, took Lavinia to wife, who  
 De loved Æneas much, and Æneas her; and he had the  
 Monarchia ii. 3: 108- half of the kingdom of King Latinus. And, after the  
 117. death of King Latinus, who lived but a short time  
 longer, Æneas was lord over all.

§ 24.—*How Julius Ascanius, son of Æneas, was king after him, and of the kings and lords who descended from him.* § 25.—*How Silvius, second son of Æneas, was king after Ascanius, and how from him descended the kings of the Latins, of Alba, and of Rome.* § 26.—*How Romulus and Remus founded the city of Rome.* § 27.—*How Numa Pompilius was king of the Romans after the death of Romulus.* § 28.—*How there were in Rome seven kings one after the other down to Tarquin, and how in his time they lost the lordship.*

Inf. ii. 13.  
  
 Par. vi. 40-42.  
 Convivio iv. 5: 80-97.

§ 29.—*How Rome was ruled for a long time by the government of the consuls and senators, until Julius Cæsar became Emperor.*

After that the kings had been driven out, and the government of Rome was left to the consuls and senators, the said King Tarquin and his son, with the aid of King Porsenna of Tuscany, who reigned in the city of Chiusi [Clusium], made great war upon the Romans, but in the end the victory remained with the Romans. And afterwards the Republic of Rome was ruled and governed for 450 years by consuls and senators, and at times by dictators, whose authority endured for five years; and they were, so to speak, emperors, for that which they commanded must of necessity be done; and other

divers offices, such as tribunes of the people, and prætors, and censors, and chiliarchs. And in this time there were in Rome many changes, and wars, and battles, not only with their neighbours, but with all the nations of the world ; the which Romans by force of arms, and virtue and the wisdom of good citizens, ruled over well-nigh all the provinces and realms and dominions in the world, and gained sovereignty over them, and made them tributary, with the greatest battles, and with slaughter of many nations of the world, and of the Romans themselves, in divers times, well-nigh innumerable to relate. And also among the citizens themselves, by reason of envy against the rulers, and strifes between magnates and them of the people ; and on the cessation of foreign wars, there arose much fighting and slaughter oftentimes among the citizens ; and, in addition to this, from time to time intolerable pestilences arose among the Romans. And this government endured until the great battles of Julius Cæsar against Pompey, and then against his sons, in which Cæsar was victorious ; then the said Cæsar did away with the office of consuls and of dictators, and he first was called Emperor. And after him Octavianus Augustus, who ruled in peace, after many battles, over the whole world, at the time of the birth of Jesus Christ, 700 years after the foundation of Rome ; and thus it is seen that Rome was governed by kings for 254 years, and by consuls 450 years, as we have aforesaid, and it is told more at length by Titus Livius and many other authors. But note that the great power of the Romans was not alone in themselves, save in so far that they were at the head and leaders ; but first all the Tuscans and then all the Italians followed them in their wars and in their battles, and were

Par. vi.  
79-81.  
Convivio  
iv. 5 : 16-  
29. De  
Monarchia  
ii. 9 :  
99-105 ;  
and ii 12.  
Epist. vii.  
(3) 64-73.

all called Romans. But we will now leave the order of the history of the Romans and of the Emperors, save in so far as it shall pertain to our matter, returning to our subject of the building of Florence, which we promised to narrate. And we have made this long exordium, forasmuch as it was necessary to show how the origin of the Roman builders of Florence (as hereafter will be narrated) was derived from the noble Trojans; and the origin and beginning of the Trojans was from Dardanus, son of Atlas, of the city of Fiesole, as we have briefly recounted; and afterwards from the descendants of the noble Romans, and of the Fiesolans, by the force of the Romans a people was founded called Florentines.

§ 30.—*How a conspiracy was formed in Rome by Catiline and his followers.*

680 A. U. C.

At the time when Rome was still ruled by the government of consuls, in the year 680 from the foundation of the said city, Mark Tully Cicero and Caius Antony being consuls, and Rome in great and happy state and lordship, Catiline, a very noble citizen, descended by birth from the royal house of Tarquin, being a man of dissolute life but brave and daring in arms and a fine orator, but not wise, being envious of the good and rich and wise men who ruled the city, their lordship not being pleasing to him, formed a conspiracy with many other nobles and other followers disposed to evil-doing, and purposed to slay the consuls and part of the senators, and to destroy their office, and to overrun the city, robbing and setting fire to many parts thereof, and to make himself ruler thereof; and this he would have done had it not been warded off by the wit and foresight of the wise consul, Mark Tully. So he de-

fended the city from such ruin, and found out the said conspiracy and treason ; but because of the greatness and power of the said Catiline, and because Tully was a new citizen in Rome, his father having come from Capua or from some other town of the Campagna, he did not dare to have Catiline seized or to bring him to justice, as his misdeeds required ; but by his great wit and fine speech he caused him to depart from the city ; but many of his fellow-conspirators and companions, from among the greatest citizens, and even of the order of senators, who abode still in Rome after Catiline's departure, he caused to be seized, and to be strangled in prison, so that they died, as the great scholar, Sallust, relates in due order.

Convivio  
iv. 5:  
172-176.

§ 31.—*How Catiline caused the city of Fiesole to rebel against the city of Rome.*

Catiline having departed from Rome, with part of his followers came into Tuscany, where Manlius, one of his principal fellow-conspirators, who was captain, had gathered his people in the ancient city of Fiesole, and Catiline being come thither, he caused the said city to rebel against the lordship of the Romans, assembling all the rebels and exiles from Rome and from many other provinces, with lewd folk disposed for war and for ill-doing, and he began fierce war with the Romans. The Romans, hearing this, decreed that Caius Antony, the consul, and Publius Petreius, with an army of horse and many foot, should march into Tuscany against the city of Fiesole and against Catiline ; and they sent by them letters and messengers to Quintus Metellus, who was returning from France with a great host of the Romans, that he should likewise come with his force

from the other side to the siege of Fiesole, and to pursue Catiline and his followers.

§ 32.—*How Catiline and his followers were discomfited by the Romans in the plain of Piceno.*

Now when Catiline heard that the Romans were coming to besiege him in the city of Fiesole, and that Antony and Petreius were already with their host in the plain of Fiesole, upon the bank of the river Arno, and how that Metellus was already in Lombardy with his host of three legions which were coming from France, and the succour which he was expecting from his allies which had remained in Rome had failed him, he took counsel not to shut himself up in the city of Fiesole, but to go into France; and therefore he departed from that city with his people and with a lord of Fiesole who was called Fiesolanus, and he had his horses' shoes reversed, to the end that when they departed the hoof-prints of the horses might show as if folk had entered into Fiesole, and not sallied forth thence, to cause the Romans to tarry near the city, that he might depart thence the more safely. And having departed by night, to avoid Metellus, he did not hold the direct road through the mountains which we call the Alps of Bologna, but took the plain by the side of the mountains, and came where to-day is the city of Pistoia, in the place called Campo Piceno, that was below where to-day is the fortress of Piteccio, purposing to cross the Apennine mountains by that way, and descend thence into Lombardy; but Antony and Petreius, hearing of his departure, straightway followed after him with their host along the plain, so that they overtook him in the said place, and Metellus, on the other side, set guards

at the passes of the mountains, to the end he might not pass thereby. Catiline, seeing himself to be thus straitened, and that he could not avoid the battle, gave himself and his followers to the chances of combat with great courage and boldness, in the which battle there was great slaughter of Romans from the city and of rebel Romans and of Fiesolans; at the end of which fierce battle Catiline was defeated and slain in that place of Piceno with all his followers; and the field remained to the Romans, but with such dolorous victory that the said two consuls, with twenty horse, who alone escaped, did not care to return to Rome. The which thing could not gain credence with the Romans till the senators sent thither to learn the truth; and, this known, there was the greatest sorrow thereat in Rome. And he who desires to see this history more fully, let him read the book of Sallust called *Catilinarius*. The injured and wounded of Catiline's people who had escaped death in the battle, albeit they were but few, withdrew where is to-day the city of Pistoia, and there in vile habitations became the first inhabitants thereof, whilst their wounds were healing. And afterwards, by reason of the good situation and fruitful soil, the inhabitants thereof increased, which afterwards built the city of Pistoia, and by reason of the great mortality and pestilence which was near that place, both of their people and of the Romans, they gave it the name of Pistoia; and therefore it is not to be marvelled at if the Pistoians have been and are a fierce and cruel people in war among themselves and against others, being descended from the race of Catiline and from the remnants of such people as his, discomfited and wounded in battle.

§ 33.—*How Metellus with his troops made war upon the Fiesolans.*

After that Metellus, who was in Lombardy near the mountains of the Apennine Alps in the country of Modena, heard of the defeat and death of Catiline, straightway he came with his host to the place where the battle had been, and having seen the slain, through amazement at the strange and great mortality he was afeared, marvelling within himself as at a thing impossible. But afterwards he and his followers equally despoiled the camp of the Romans from the city and that of the enemy, seizing that which they found there; and this done he came towards Fiesole to besiege the city. The Fiesolans vigorously took to arms, and sallied forth from the city to the plain, fighting with Metellus and with his host, and by force thrust him back, and drove him to the other side of the Arno with great hurt to his people, who with his followers encamped upon the hills, or upon the banks of the river; the Fiesolans with their host drew off from the other bank of the river Arno towards Fiesole.

§ 34.—*How Metellus and Fiorinus discomfited the Fiesolans.*

The night following, Metellus ordered and commanded that part of his host should pass the river Arno, at a distance from the host of the Fiesolans, and should place themselves in ambush between the city of Fiesole and the host of the Fiesolans, and of that company he made captain Fiorinus, a noble citizen of Rome of the race of the Fracchi or Floracchi, who was his prætor, which is as much as to say marshal of his host; and Fiorinus, as he was commanded by the consul, so

he did. In the morning, at the break of day, Metellus armed with all his people passing over the river Arno, began the battle against the Fiesolans, and the Fiesolans, vigorously defending the ford of the river, sustained the battle in the river Arno. Fiorinus, who was with his people in ambush, when he saw the battle begun, sallied forth boldly in the rear of the Fiesolans, who were fighting in the river against Metellus. The Fiesolans, surprised by the ambush, seeing themselves suddenly assailed by Fiorinus in the rear and by Metellus in front, put to confusion, threw down their arms and fled discomfited towards the city of Fiesole, wherefore many of them were slain and taken.

§ 35.—*How the Romans besieged Fiesole the first time, and how Fiorinus was slain.*

The Fiesolans being discomfited and driven back from the shores of Arno, Fiorinus the prætor, with the host of the Romans, encamped beyond the river Arno towards Fiesole, where were two little villages, one of which was called Villa Arnina, and the other Camarte [Casa Martis], that is campo or *Domus Martis*, where the Fiesolans on a certain day in the week held a market in all commodities for their towns and the region round about. The consul made a decree with Fiorinus that no one should sell or buy bread or wine or other things which might be of use to the troops save in the field where Fiorinus was stationed. After this the consul Quintus Metellus sent incontinent to Rome that they should send him men-at-arms to besiege the city of Fiesole, for the which cause the senators made a decree that Julius Cæsar, and Cicero, and Macrinus, with several legions of soldiers, should come to the siege and de-

struction of Fiesole ; which, being come, besieged the said city. Cæsar encamped on the hill which rose above the city ; Macrinus on the next hill or mountain, and Cicero on the other side ; and thus they remained for six years besieging the said city, having through long siege and through hunger almost destroyed it. And likewise those in the host, by reason of the long sojourn and their many privations being diminished and enfeebled, departed from the siege, and returned to Rome, save Fiorinus, who remained at the siege with his followers in the plain where he had at first encamped, and surrounded himself with moats and palisades, after the manner of ramparts, or fortifications, and kept the Fiesolans in great straits ; and thus he warred upon them long time, till his folk felt secure, and held their foes for nought. Then the Fiesolans having recovered breath somewhat, and mindful of the ill which Fiorinus had done and was doing to them, suddenly, and as if in despair, advanced by night with ladders and with engines to attack the camp or fortification of Fiorinus, and he and his people with but few guards and while they slept, not being on their guard against the Fiesolans, were surprised ; and Fiorinus and his wife and his children were slain, and all his host in that place well-nigh destroyed, for few thereof escaped ; and the said fortress and ramparts were destroyed, and burnt and done away with by the Fiesolans.

§ 36.—*How, because of the death of Fiorinus, the Romans returned to the siege of Fiesole.*

When the news was known at Rome, the consuls and senators and all the commonwealth being grieved at the misadventure which had befallen the good leader

Fiorinus, straightway took counsel that this should be avenged, and that a very great host should return once more to destroy the city of Fiesole, for the which were chosen these leaders: Count Rainaldus, Cicero, Teberinus, Macrinus, Albinus, Gneus Pompey, Cæsar, and Camertino Sezio, Conte Tudedino, that is Count of Todi, which was with Julius Cæsar, and of his chivalry. This man pitched his camp near to Camarti, nearly where to-day is Florence; Cæsar pitched his camp upon the hill which rose above the city, which is to-day called Mount Cecero, but formerly was called Mount Cæsar, after his name, or after the name of Cicero; but rather it is held to be after Cæsar, inasmuch as he was the greatest leader in the host. Rainaldus pitched his camp upon the hill over against the city on the other side of the Mugnone, and after his name it is so called until this day; Macrinus encamped on the hill still called after him; Camertinus in the region which is still called Camerata after his name. And all the other aforesaid lords, each one for himself pitched his camp around the city, some on the hills and some in the plain; but no other than these aforesaid have left their names to be a memorial of them. These lords, with their followers in great numbers, both horse and foot, besieging the city, arrayed and prepared themselves to make yet greater war upon the city than at the first; but by reason of the strength of the city the Romans wrought in vain, and many of them being dead by reason of the long siege and excessive toil, those great lords and consuls and senators well-nigh all returned to Rome; only Cæsar with his followers abode still at the siege. And during that sojourn he commanded his soldiers to go to the village of Camarti, nigh

to the river Arno, and there to build a council house wherein he might hold his council, and might leave it for a memorial of himself. This building in our vernacular we have named Parlagio [Parliament house]. And it was round and was right marvellously vaulted, and had an open space in the midst; and then began seats in steps all around; and from step to step, built upon, vaulting, they rose, widening up to the very top, and the height thereof was more than sixty cubits, and it had two doors; and therein assembled the people to hold council, and from grade to grade the folk were seated, the most noble above, and then descending according to the dignity of the people; and it was so fashioned that all in the Parliament might see one another by face, and that all might hear distinctly that which one was saying; and it held commodiously an infinite multitude of people, and its name, rightly speaking, was Parlatorio [speaking place]. This was afterwards destroyed in the time of Totila, but in our days the foundations may yet be seen, and part of the vaulting near to the church of S. Simone in Florence, and reaching to the beginning of the square of Santa Croce; and part of the palaces of the Peruzzi are built thereupon, and the street which is called Anguillaia, which goes to Santa Croce, goes almost through the midst of the said Parliament house.

§ 37.—*How the city of Fiesole surrendered itself to the Romans and was destroyed and laid waste.*

Circ. 72  
B.C.

Fiesole having been besieged as aforesaid the second time, and the city being much wasted and afflicted both by reason of hunger and also because their aqueducts had been cut off and destroyed, the city surrendered to Cæsar and to the Romans at the end of two years and

four months and six days (for so long had the siege lasted), on condition that any which desired to leave the city might go in safety. The city was taken by the Romans, and despoiled of all its wealth, and was destroyed by Cæsar, and laid waste to the foundations; and this was about seventy-two years before the birth of Christ.

Par. vi.

53. 54.

xv.

124-126.

§ 38.—*How the city of Florence was first built*

After the city of Fiesole was destroyed, Cæsar with his armies descended to the plain on the banks of the river Arno, where Fiorinus and his followers had been slain by the Fiesolans, and in this place began to build a city, in order that Fiesole should never be rebuilt; and he dismissed the Latin horsemen whom he had with him, enriched with the spoils of Fiesole; and these Latins were called Tudertines. Cæsar, then, having fixed the boundaries of the city, and included two places called Camarti and Villa Arnina [of the Arno], purposed to call it Cæsaræa from his own name. But when the Roman senate heard this, they would not suffer Cæsar to call it after his name, but they made a decree and order that the other chief noble Romans who had taken part in the siege of Fiesole should go and build the new city together with Cæsar, and afterwards populate it; and that whichever of the builders had first completed his share of the work should call it after his own name, or howso else it pleased him.

Then Macrinus, Albinus, Gneus Pompey, and Marcius, furnished with materials and workmen, came from Rome to the city which Cæsar was building, and agreed with Cæsar to divide the work after this manner: that Albinus undertook to pave all the city, which was a

noble work and gave beauty and charm to the city, and to this day fragments of the work are found, in digging, especially in the sesto of Santo Piero Scheraggio, and in Porta San Piero, and in Porta del Duomo, where it shows that the ancient city was. Macrinus caused the water to be brought in conduits and aqueducts, bringing it from a distance of seven miles from the city, to the end the city might have abundance of good water to drink and to cleanse the city; and this conduit was carried from the river called Marina at the foot of Montemorello, gathering to itself all the springs above Sesto and Quinto and Colonnata. And in Florence the said springs came to a head at a great palace which was called "caput aquæ," but afterwards in our speech it was called Capaccia, and the remains can be seen in the Terma until this day. And note that the ancients, for health's sake, used to drink spring waters brought in by conduits, forasmuch as they were purer and more wholesome than water from wells; seeing that few, indeed very few, drank wine, but the most part water from conduits, but not from wells; and as yet there were very few vines. Gneus Pompey caused the walls of the city to be built of burnt bricks, and upon the walls of the city he built many round towers, and the space between one tower and the other was twenty cubits, and it was so that the towers were of great beauty and strength. Concerning the size and circuit of the city we can find no chronicle which makes mention thereof; save that when Totila, the scourge of God, destroyed it, history records that it was very great. Marcius, the other Roman lord, caused the Capitol to be built after the fashion of Rome, that is to say the palace, or master fortress of the city, and this was

of marvellous beauty; into which the water of the river Arno came by a hollowed and vaulted passage, and returned into the Arno underground; and the city, at every festival, was cleansed by the outpouring of this duct. This Capitol stood where to-day is the piazza which is called the Mercato Vecchio, over against the church which is called S. Maria, in Campidoglio. This seems to be the best supported opinion; but some say that it was where the place is now called the Guardingo [citadel]; beside the Piazza di Popolo (so called from the Priors' Palace), which was another fortress. Guardingo was the name afterwards given to the remains of the walls and arches after the destruction by Totila, where the bad quarter was. And the said lords each strove to be in advance of the work of the others. And at one same time the whole was completed, so that to none of them was the favour granted of naming the city according to his desire, but by many it was at first called "Little Rome." Others called it Floria, because Fiorinus, who was the first builder in that spot, had there died, he being the *flore* [flower] of warlike deeds and of chivalry, and because in the country and fields around where the city was built there always grew flowers and lilies. Afterwards the greater part of the inhabitants consented to call it Floria, as being built among flowers, that is, amongst many delights. And of a surety it was, inasmuch as it was peopled by the best of Rome, and the most capable, sent by the senate in due proportion from each division of Rome, chosen by lot from the inhabitants; and they admitted among their number those Fiesolans which desired there to dwell and abide. But afterwards it was, through long use of the vulgar tongue, called Fiorenza, that is "flowery sword." And we find that it was built in the year 682,

Inf. xxiii.  
107, 108.

70 B.C.

Inf. xv.  
73-78.  
Par. xv.  
124-126.

after the building of Rome and seventy years before the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. And note that it is not to be wondered at that the Florentines are always at war and strife among themselves, being born and descended from two peoples so contrary and hostile and different in habits as were the noble Romans in their virtue and the rude Fiesolans fierce in war.

§ 39.—*How Cæsar departed from Florence, and went to Rome, and was made consul to go against the French.*

After that the city of Florence was built and peopled, Julius Cæsar being angered because he, having been the first builder thereof, and having had the victory over the city of Fiesole, had nevertheless not been permitted to call the city after his name, departed therefrom and returned to Rome, and for his zeal and valour was elected consul and sent against the French, where he abode ten years whilst he was conquering France and England and Germany; and when he returned victorious to Rome his triumph was refused him, because he had transgressed the decree (made by Pompey the consul, and by the senate, through envy, under colour of virtue), that no one was to continue in any command for more than five years. The which Cæsar returning with his army of French and Germans from beyond the Alps, Italians, Pisans, Pirates, Pistoians, and also Florentines, his fellow-citizens, brought footmen and horsemen and slingers with him to begin a civil war, because his triumph had been refused him, but moreover that he might be lord of Rome as he had desired long time. So he fought against Pompey and the senate of Rome. And after the great battle between Cæsar and Pompey, well-nigh all the combatants were slain in Emathia, to wit Thes-

Par. vi.65.  
Epist. v.  
(3) 47-49.

saly in Greece, as may fully be read in Lucan the poet, by whoso desires to know the history. And after that Cæsar had gained the victory over Pompey, and over many kings and peoples who were helping those Romans who were his enemies, he returned to Rome, and so became the first Emperor of Rome, which is as much as to say commander over all. And after him came Octavianus Augustus, his nephew and adopted son, who was reigning when Christ was born, and after many victories ruled over all the world in peace; and thenceforward Rome was under imperial government, and held under its jurisdiction and that of the Empire all the whole world.

Par. vi.  
73-81.  
Convivio  
iv. 5:  
16-79.  
De Mon.  
ii. 9:  
99-105;  
and ii. 12.  
Epist. vii.  
(3) 64-73.

§ 40.—*Of the ensign of the Romans and of the Emperors, and how from them it came to the city of Florence and other cities.*

In the time of Numa Pompilius by a divine miracle there fell from heaven into Rome a vermillion-coloured shield, for the which cause and augury the Romans took that ensign for their arms, and afterwards added S.P.Q.R. in letters of gold, signifying Senate of the People of Rome; the same ensign they gave to all the cities which they built, to wit, vermillion. Thus did they to Perugia, and to Florence, and to Pisa; but the Florentines, because of the name of Fiorinus and of the city, charged it with the white lily; and the Perugians sometimes with the white griffin; and Viterbo kept the red field, and the Orvietans charged it with the white eagle. It is true that the Roman lords, consuls and dictators, after that the eagle appeared as an augury over the Tarpeian rock, to wit, over the treasure chamber of the Capitol, as Titus Livius makes mention, added the eagle

De Mon.  
ii. 4:  
30-41.

Par. xix.  
101, 102.

De Mon.  
ii. 11 : 23.  
Purg. x. 80.  
Par. vi. 32,  
100.

to their arms on the ensign ; and we find that the consul Marius in the battle of the Cimbri had on his ensigns the silver eagle, and a similar ensign was borne by Catiline when he was defeated by Antonius in the parts about Pistoia, as Sallust relates. And the great Pompey bore the azure field and silver eagle, and Julius Cæsar bore the vermilion field and golden eagle, as Lucan makes mention in verse, saying,

*Signa pares aquilas, et pila minantia pilis.*

Par. xx. 8,  
31, 32.  
Inf. iv.  
95, 96.  
Purg. ix.  
30.

Ep. vi.  
(3) 79-85.

But afterwards Octavianus Augustus, his nephew and successor, changed it, and bore the golden field and the eagle natural, to wit, in black colour, signifying the supremacy of the Empire, for like as the eagle surpasses every other bird, and sees more clearly than any other creature, and flies as high as the heaven of the hemisphere of fire, so the Empire ought to be above every other temporal sovereignty. And after Octavianus all the Roman emperors have borne it in like manner ; but Constantine, and after him all the other Greek emperors, retained the ensign of Julius Cæsar, to wit, the vermilion field and golden eagle, but with two heads. We will leave speaking of the ensigns of the Roman commonwealth and of the Emperors, and we will return to our subject concerning the doings of the city of Florence.

§ 41.—*How the city of Florence became the Treasure-House of the Romans and the Empire.*

§ 42.—*How the Temple of Mars, which is now called the Duomo of S. Giovanni, was built in Florence.*

After that Cæsar and Pompey, and Macrinus and Albinus and Marcius, Roman nobles and builders of the