

GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO.

Something of the Life of the Great Italian Story Teller.

The question which most people will ask as they close "The Decameron" is: What manner of man was he who wrote it? Of outward events there is enough, thought not too much, to tell. Boccaccio was born in 1313, probably in Paris, of a French mother. He was taken in his infancy to Florence, but his father, a well-to-do banker, had married, and his childhood was unhappy. At ten, or not long after, he went to Naples to work in a merchant's office. As he neared the city the tired boy, stopping to rest, fell asleep and dreamed that he was passing through a street he had never seen before and that a lady in green came and kissed him. It was not till eight years later, when, sick of the office, he was learning canon law, that on a Holy Saturday, coming out of church, he first saw the real lady in her green robe, "all shining with gold"—his Flammetta, his love for whom remained with him all his life. From passion it cooled to a sentiment, almost—one may say—in to a literary sentiment. Had it been otherwise, it would surely have colored his conception of love and of women, which was remarkably low.

Flammetta's real name was Maria Aquino, and she was the illegitimate daughter of King Robert of Naples, a princess married to a noble. Boccaccio got to know her at once and became her devoted slave, serving her from 1331 till 1333, when he found out her infidelity. Not long after, his father's ruin called him back to Florence. But meanwhile he had been in worthier service than her's. In the cultured town of Naples he had found men of learning and of letters; he had been plunged in the study of the classics; he had read Virgil "in the shadow of the poet's tomb." And he had begun to write himself. The "Filocolo," the "Filostrato," the "Flammetta," and other works belong to his last years in Naples and his first in Florence. From that time onward he devoted himself to literature and to scholarship; the more so, perhaps, that Flammetta died of the plague in 1348.

It was not until 1350 that the greatest event in his life—his meeting with Petrarch—occurred; greatest, because most enduring, for it incited him to study Homer and to superintend the first translation in Italy of that poet into Latin. This he would have called the serious work of his life. He went on several embassies from Florence—first to take a purse to Dante's daughter, Beatrice, then in a commission at Ravenna; another to Pope Urban at Avignon, he held office in his native city, he lectured on Dante there; he wrote Dante's life. In 1351 he gave "The Decameron" to the public. But honors civic and literary counted little with Petrarch beside honor, and Boccaccio, as in most things, followed his judgment. Petrarch's death came in 1374, and that of Boccaccio one year later. He died poor, neglected and alone in his house at Certaldo.

The best part of Boccaccio was not his love, but his friendship. His intimacy with Petrarch was one of the great friendships in the annals of art—friendships such as have produced new movements; like that between Ronsard and Du Bellay, which gave us the poetry of the Pleiade, or the feeling between Coleridge and Wordsworth, or the bond that knit together the Pre-Raphaelites. The meeting between Petrarch and Boccaccio meant the dawn of the classical Renaissance, for though scholarship had revived before them, it was they who gave the impetus to the study of Greek, which had such far-reaching results. And it was a noble companionship. The passionate, vital, generous Boccaccio needed the harmonious suavity, the scholarly refinement, even the coolness of Petrarch. He had loved him from afar before he knew him. They did not see one another for eight years after their first coming together, but when they did it was with the same ardor.

"In days gone by," writes Petrarch to Boccaccio, "I was hurrying across Central Italy in midwinter; you hastened to greet me, not only with affection, the message of soul to soul, but in person, impelled by a wonderful desire to see one you had never yet beheld, but whom, nevertheless, you were minded to love."

"During many days," wrote Boccaccio, nearly twenty-five years later, after Petrarch's death, "I wept almost without ceasing. . . . and that is not wonderful, for no one in the world loved him more than I. . . . It is not Petrarch for whom I weep, for when I recall his integrity, his way of life, his youth, his old age, his innate piety, his love of God and of his neighbors, I feel sure that, delivered from the anguish of this life, he has flown to the heavenly Father. . . . It is for myself I weep, and for his friends left in this tempestuous world, like ships without rudders, driven by the winds and waves into the midst of rocks. . . . I see now by his deeds that his death, and, unless in a better life after this passage that we call death one loses one's friends, I think he will love me still."

Petrarch's bequest to Boccaccio was an epitome of his delicate friendship: Fifty florins "to buy a warm cloak to cover himself in the nights of study"—a symbol, as it were, of his love of the man and his love of learning. Boccaccio was inconsolable. His sorrowful letter, indeed, strikes a deeper note than any of his writings. Some years before the end he had undergone a kind of conversion, and was possessed by a conviction of sin and the certainty that he was about to die. A lofty and consuming letter from Petrarch renewed his courage, but inexperience deepened his nature, and so still more did the loss of his favorite little daughter, Violante, who had died, as her father said, "at an age when one goes straight to heaven." One of his most touching letters of Petrarch recalls her. He is visiting Petrarch's daughter-in-law:

"Suddenly little footsteps—and there came toward us tiny Eletta, my delight, who, without knowing who I was, looked at me smiling. I was not only delighted, I greedily took her in my arms, imagining that I held my little one that is lost to me. . . . Your little one has the same aspect that she had who was my Eletta, the same expression, the same light in the eyes, the same laughter there, the same gestures, the same way of walking, the same way of carrying all her little person: . . . Ah me! how many times when I have held thine in my arms listening to her prattle the memory of my baby stolen away from me has brought tears to my eyes—which I let no one see."

Tears which move us as well as him. For this is the letter of a man of human sympathies and no mere luxurious literary emotion. There is more heart in it, and so more poetry, than in the whole of "The Decameron."—London Times.

FAIL TO GET CHAIR CAR.

Atlantic Coast Line Refuses to Give Needed Accommodations.

J. W. Craig, passenger traffic manager of the A. C. L. has announced that it will be impracticable to put on the chair car on Nos. 52 and 53 between Greenville and Charleston because the connections west of Columbia cannot handle such a car. The matter is now being taken up with the Columbia, Newberry and Laurens and the Charleston and Western Carolina roads, to see if some arrangements cannot be made with them to handle the car. There is a great need for this service, and it would pay the roads to put it on, but they do not see it that way. The men who have the matter of securing the service are not easily discouraged and they will push the matter further.

BELIEVES IN DUELLING.

Major Lucas Openly Champions the Code Duello.

Columbia, June 17.—It is rather unusual in these days to find a man of substance and consequence upholding the code duello; but Major James Jonathan Lucas, capitalist, grape-growing expert and patron of art and education, who is here on a visit to his son, Dr. T. C. Lucas, openly champions the duelling system, believing that it tended to elevate the general tone of society.

Major Lucas says he accounts himself fortunate in having escaped the necessity of fighting a duel himself. He was, however, once a second in an "affair of honor."

Major Lucas is one of the oldest living alumni of the Citadel, from which he graduated in 1861. His command, the Lucas battery of heavy artillery, helped reduce Fort Sumter and had the distinction of saving Charleston from capture at the hands of Admiral Dahlgren. Major Lucas is a director of the Atlantic Coast Line. Since the end of the War Between the Sections he has made his home at Society Hill, where he lives in a handsome brick mansion full of rare and beautiful things.

What Everybody Ought to Know. That Foley Kidney Pills contain just the ingredients necessary to tone, strengthen and regulate the action of the kidneys and bladder. Sibert's Drug Store.

If Senators are to spend all their time investigating one another, what chance will they have to legislate?—Charleston News and Courier.

"If you are not satisfied after using according to directions two-thirds of a bottle of Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets, you can have your money back. The tablets cleanse and invigorate the stomach, improve the digestion, regulate the bowels. Give them a trial and get well. Sold by W. W. Sibert.

Thomas D. Dinkins, colored, was before the Mayor Friday morning for cruelly driving and non-sustenance of a horse, and fined \$5 or 10 days.

What a Summer Cold May Do. A summer cold if neglected is just as apt to develop into bronchitis or pneumonia as at any other season. Do not neglect it. Take Foley's Honey and Tar promptly. It loosens the cough, soothes and heals the inflamed air passages, and expels the cold from the system." Sibert's Drug Store.

COTTON PLATFORM SITUATION.

Action on Matter Deferred Till Tuesday 28th Inst.

The Board of County Commissioners met in extra session on Friday for the purpose of considering the cotton platform situation, the warehouse company having served notice that the present contract would no longer be acceptable to them.

Besides the County Commissioners, representatives of the warehouse, and the two weighers were present. Mr. Pitts stated the object of the meeting, and expressed the hope that nothing would be said or done that would injure in anyway the Sumter cotton market.

Mr. Manning spoke for warehouse Company and stated that the company had no intention of going back on the ten year agreement they have with the county, but desired a contract with the weighers that would be fair to all parties, and the matter should be gone into in a business-like way. He stated that complaints have come to the warehouse company from time to time that made matters very disagreeable and annoying, so last September notice was served upon the board that the present arrangement would have to be changed. One matter that had been brought to his attention was the excessive sampling of the cotton on the platform, after the cotton is weighed. This he stated came out of the producer, for the limits made for this place were based upon the shortage in weights at the other end.

The arrangement with the weighers about clerk hire is also unsatisfactory. When the contract was made there were three weighers, whereas there are only two now. The two weighers now get 50 per cent more than they did before the number was reduced.

There has been complaint on the part of farmers at not being able to find the weighers when they were wanted.

The contract with the weighers was what they wanted overhauled, and they wanted that done without friction. As it is there is no one responsible for lossage, and about \$1,000 to \$1,500 a year is lost in misplaced cotton.

He stated that the sale of samples every year amounted to a great deal; that the party who usually bought them told him it was a very large amount.

Messrs. O'Donnell and Levi both stated that the weighers sampled the cotton for the purpose of checking up the grades; that very often they could not personally see the bales and in such cases it was not unusual for the seller of the bale to use a sample from another bale. The ground was taken that the weigher had no authority to do such a thing, as his sphere was to decide a difference between the buyer and seller, and not to act as a detective.

The warehouse company submitted a contract that they wanted adopted requiring the weigher to check up and deliver to the warehouse company every night all cotton on the platform; it also left out the \$200 for clerk hire. Mr. Reid stated that he was willing to give up part of the \$200 if the other weigher would, but that it was not satisfactory to the other weigher.

Some confusion arose when the existing contracts with the warehouse company and with the weighers were read, and after a conference on the part of the warehouse men it was decided to defer action on the whole matter until the 28th inst., when committees from all the interested parties will meet and adjust the whole matter.

K. OF P. BASKET PICNIC.

Game Cock Lodge, Knights of Pythias, is planning to give an old time basket picnic at Pocalla Springs on July the 4th.

Every member is expected to attend and also to bring his family, but if it be so that he cannot bring his family he must bring his best girl or some one else's. The committee requests all that attend to bring a well filled picnic basket and also to throw off that tired look and try and make every one happy.

There will be lots of fun in store for all, such as the greasy pig race, bag race by ten men, little girls race, young ladies race, married ladies race, fat men's race, lean men's race, log-rolling race, and tug of war.

The pig will be the prize given for the winner of the greasy pig race, and suitable and excellent prizes will be given to the winners in the other races.

A special train will be operated on the Northwestern Railroad to accommodate the picnicers, but the hour for departure will have to be announced later.

Those intending to go will please notify the committee, W. B. Boyle, W. M. Clark, J. A. McKnight, or W. C. Towles, so as the railroad company can be notified as to how many to have coaches for.

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Yale has President Taft to take part in all its exercises now; Harvard had Mr. Roosevelt before; what college will have the next turn?—New York Press.

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Rochester, N. Y.

STATE OF NEW YORK,
County of Orleans, ss.

Stephen Bacon, being duly sworn, says that he has read the statement above annexed and that the contents of said statement are true.

STEPHEN BACON,
Sworn to before me this 31st day of July, 1902.

HENRY W. HALL,
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