

Life of Dante

Giovanni Boccaccio

Translated by Philip H. Wicksteed
and edited by William Chamberlain



ONEWORLD
CLASSICS

ONEWORLD CLASSICS LTD
London House
243-253 Lower Mortlake Road
Richmond
Surrey TW9 2LL
United Kingdom
www.oneworldclassics.com

Life of Dante first published in this translation in 1904
This revised edition first published by Oneworld Classics Limited in 2009
Reprinted August 2009
Revised English translation © Oneworld Classics Ltd, 2009
Edited text, notes and extra material © Oneworld Classics Ltd, 2009

Printed in Great Britain by CPI Antony Rowe

ISBN: 978-1-84749-091-9

All the pictures in this volume are reprinted with permission or presumed to be in the public domain. Every effort has been made to ascertain and acknowledge their copyright status, but should there have been any unwitting oversight on our part, we would be happy to rectify the error in subsequent printings.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise), without the prior written permission of the publisher. This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be resold, lent, hired out or otherwise circulated without the express prior consent of the publisher.

Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Life of Dante | 1 |
| <i>Note on the Text</i> | 73 |
| <i>Notes</i> | 73 |
| | |
| Extra Material | 77 |
| <i>Giovanni Boccaccio's Life</i> | 79 |
| | |
| Appendices | |
| Life of Dante by <i>Leonardo Bruni</i> | 87 |
| <i>Extract from Giovanni Villani's</i> | 101 |
| Florentine Chronicle | |
| <i>Extract from Filippo Villani's Life of Dante</i> | 103 |
| <i>in his De Origine Civitatis Florentiae et</i> | |
| <i>ejusdem Famosis Civibus</i> | |
| <i>A Document Preserved in</i> | 105 |
| <i>a Manuscript of Boccaccio's</i> | |



Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–75)

Life of Dante

1

Proem

SOME CLAIM THAT SOLON,* whose breast was believed to be a human temple of divine wisdom, and whose sacred laws still stand as an illustrious witness of ancient justice to the people of today, was in the habit of saying that every republic must walk and stand upon two feet, as we do ourselves. With mature wisdom, he declared the right foot to stand for allowing no offence to go unpunished, and the left to stand for rewarding every good deed. He added that if either of the two feet were withdrawn by vice or negligence, or were less than well preserved, that republic would without doubt come to a halt; and if by bad luck it should be faulty in both, it is most certain that it would have no power to stand up in any way.

Moved then by this praiseworthy and clearly true opinion, many excellent and ancient peoples honoured worthy men: sometimes by deifying them, sometimes with marble statues, often with illustrious funerals, sometimes by a triumphal arch or by a laurel crown, as they deserved. The penalties inflicted on the guilty, on the other hand, I do not wish to list. Because of these honours and punishments, Assyria, Macedonia, Greece and lastly the Roman Republic reached the ends of the earth with their achievements and the stars with their fame. But the footprints which were left by such lofty examples have not only been poorly followed by their successors in the present day, and most of all by my own Florentines, but have been departed from to such an extent that ambition has got hold of every reward that belongs to virtue. Therefore I, and anyone else who looks upon all this with the eye of reason, may perceive, not without great mental anguish, evil and perverse men rewarded and exalted to high places and supreme offices, and the good exiled, crushed and humiliated. Let those who steer this ship consider what judgement God may have in store for such practices, for we, the humbler throng, are tossed on the stormy tide, but have no share in the offence. And although

what I have said above might be demonstrated by countless instances of ingratitude or of decadent clemency, obvious to everyone, one example will be enough to expose our faults and come to my main point. This example will not be small or insignificant, for I am to record the exile of that distinguished man, Dante Alighieri. How much good this ancient citizen, who was not born of humble parents, had deserved by his virtue, knowledge and good deeds is shown and shall be shown sufficiently by his actions. Had these actions been performed in a just city, they would certainly have prepared him for the most distinguished rewards.

Oh, such an infamous thought, such a shameful deed, such a miserable example, such clear proof of future ruin! Instead of these rewards, he was made to suffer an unjust and furious judgement, perpetual exile, alienation from his family wealth and, if it had been possible, the tainting of his most glorious name by false accusations. These things are, in some part, still shown by the fresh footprints of his flight, his bones being buried in another city and his children being scattered among other houses. If all the other wrongs Florence has perpetrated could be hidden from the all-seeing eyes of God, would not this one suffice to call down his wrath upon her? Yes, indeed! Of those who have, on the other hand, been exalted, I think it is appropriate to remain silent.

If we look carefully, then, not only has the present world departed from the path of the former, which I was speaking about just now, but it has utterly turned its feet the other way. Therefore it is plain enough that if, despite the opinion of Solon described above, we and the rest who live like us stand on our feet without falling, it can only be because the very nature of things has changed, as often happens. Or perhaps it is a special miracle, by which God sustains us for some merit in our past, against all human counsel. Or it could be his patience, which perhaps awaits our repentance – if this does not follow in the end, do not doubt that his wrath, which advances slowly to its vengeance, holds in store for us torment so much the heavier as to make full amends for its delay.

But since we ought not only to flee from evil deeds, however much they appear to go unpunished, but also to strive to make amends for them by doing good, and since I recognize that I myself am a part, albeit a small one, of the same city of which Dante Alighieri was a

very great one (considering his deserts, his nobility and his virtue), I share, like every other citizen, the general debt to his honour. Although I am inadequate for so great a task, I will myself attempt to do according to my limited ability what the city herself ought to have done towards him with magnificence, but has not. It will not be with a statue or a grand funeral, which is a custom we no longer observe, and which is beyond my powers, but with words, which are poor for so great an enterprise. This is what I have, and this is what I will give, in case foreign peoples should be able to say that his fatherland had been equally unthankful, both generally and individually, to so great a poet. And I shall write – in a light and humble style, because my wit provides me with nothing more exalted, and in our Florentine idiom, so that it may not depart from what he used in the greater part of his works – of those things concerning himself about which he kept an appropriate silence, such as the nobleness of his origins, his life, his studies and his character. Then I will gather together the works he composed, by which he has rendered himself so illustrious among future generations that my words will perhaps darken him more than brighten him, although this is not my intention or desire. I am content always, in this and in every other thing, to be corrected by those wiser than myself wherever I have spoken wrongly. In order that this may not occur, I humbly pray for Him who drew Dante to His vision, as we know, by what appears to be such a steep ascent, to give His present aid and guidance to my wit and to my weak hand.

2

Dante's Birth and Education

FLORENCE, noblest amongst all the cities of Italy, had her beginning from the Romans, according to the ancient histories and the current general opinion. And in the process of time she grew so much, and was so filled with people and with noble citizens, that she began to be regarded by all around not only as a city but as a power. Although it remains uncertain what the cause of the change to so great a beginning was – whether it was adversity of fortune, the ill favour of heaven or the deserts of the citizens – it is certain that after just a few centuries, Attila, that most cruel king of the Vandals and general devastator of almost all Italy,* having first slain or scattered all or the greater part of those citizens who by nobility of blood or by some other condition were of any fame, reduced the city to ashes and ruins. She is thought to have remained in this condition for more than three hundred years. After this time, the Roman Empire had been transferred, not without cause, from Greece to Gaul, and Charles the Great, then the most clement sovereign of the French, was raised to the imperial exaltation. After enduring many toils, he turned his imperial mind to the rebuilding of the desolated city – motivated, I take it, by the divine spirit. And although he kept the city within a narrow circuit of walls, he had it rebuilt as much as possible after the likeness of Rome, by the same people who had been its first founders, and gathered within it whatever small remnant might be found of the descendants of the ancient exiles.

But amongst the other new inhabitants – perhaps as regulator of the rebuilding, assigner of the houses and streets and giver of needful laws to the new people – there came from Rome, as report tells, a most noble member of the house of the Frangipani, in the prime of life, whom everyone called Eliseo. When he had accomplished the main purpose for which he had come, drawn by love of the city newly regulated by himself, or by the pleasantness of the site – which

perhaps he saw that Heaven must look kindly on in the future – or by whatever cause it may have been, he became a permanent citizen, and left behind him a numerous and worthy family of children and descendants. They, abandoning the ancient surname of their ancestors, took as their patronymic the name of the family's founder, and all called themselves the Elisei. As age succeeded age and one descended from another, in the family there was born and lived, among others, a knight, remarkable for his valiance in arms and his wisdom, whose name was Cacciaguida. In his youth he was given by his parents, as his bride, a maiden from the Aldighieri family of Ferrara, esteemed for her beauty, character and the nobility of her blood. He lived with her for some years, and had children with her. Whatever the others may have been called, it pleased her to remember the name of her own forebears with one of them, as women often love to do, and she called him Aldighieri, although the name survived, in a form corrupted by dropping this letter "d", as Alighieri. This man's worth was the cause of his descendants dropping the title degli Elisei, and taking the surname degli Alighieri, which still remains to this day. There descended from him certain children, and grandchildren, and grandchildren's children, and it came to pass that, in the reign of the Emperor Frederick II, one of them was born whose name was Alighieri, and who was destined to become illustrious rather by the son he was to have than by himself. His wife, when pregnant, and not far off from the time of her delivery, saw in a dream how remarkable the fruit of her womb would be; although it was not then understood by her or by any other, now it is obvious to everyone, because of what has happened since.

The gentle lady dreamt that she was under a tall laurel tree in a green meadow by the side of a clear spring, and there she felt herself give birth to a son, who, in the shortest space of time, feeding only on the berries which fell from the laurel tree, and the waters of the clear spring, seemed to grow up into a shepherd, and strove with all his power to have the leaves of that tree whose fruit had nourished him; and as he struggled for this, he seemed to fall, and when he rose again, she saw he was no longer a man, but had become a peacock. At this event, such great amazement laid hold of her that her sleep broke. Soon the due time came for her labour, and she gave birth to a son, who, it was agreed with his father, was given the name Dante

(the Giver); and rightly so, because, as will be seen later, the issue was most perfectly consonant with his name. This was that Dante who is the subject of this present discourse. This was that Dante granted by the special grace of God to our age. This was that Dante who was first to open the way for the return of the Muses, banished from Italy. It was he who revealed the glory of the Florentine idiom. It was he who brought under the rule of due numbers every beauty of the vernacular speech. It was he who may be truly said to have brought back dead poetry to life. All of which things, when duly considered, show that he could not rightly have borne any other name but Dante.

This singular glory of Italy was born in our city, when the Roman throne was made vacant by the death of the above-mentioned Frederick* in the year of the saving Incarnation of the King of the Universe 1265, while Pope Urban IV was sitting in the chair of St Peter.* He was received into a paternal house on which Fortune smiled – “smiled”, I mean, according to the quality of the world at that time. But however that may have been then, I will leave aside all mention of his infancy – in which many signs of the glory of his genius appeared – and will say that from the beginning of his boyhood, when he had already learnt the first elements of letters, he did not give himself up, after the fashion of the nobles of today, to childish fun and leisure, lounging in his mother’s lap; instead he gave up his whole boyhood, in his own city, to unbroken study of the liberal arts, and became incredibly expert in them.

And as his mind and genius ripened with his years, he did not incline himself to those studies that bring material gain, which everyone in general now rushes to, but to a praiseworthy desire for everlasting fame. Scorning those riches that are only transitory, he fully devoted himself to the aim of having full knowledge of the fictions of the poets, and the exposition of these by the rules of art. In this exercise he became the closest intimate of Virgil, of Horace, of Ovid, of Statius and of every other famous poet, not only loving to know them, but also in lofty verse striving to imitate them – even as his works, which we shall speak of later in their own time, make manifest. And perceiving that the works of the poet are not vain and silly fables or marvels, as many witless ones suppose, but have concealed within them the sweetest truths of historical or philosophical truth, so that the full conceptions of the poets may not

be wholly had without history and moral and natural philosophy, he duly divided his time – striving to master history by himself, and philosophy under diverse teachers, not without long study or toil. And enamoured by the sweetness of knowing the truth of the things locked up by Heaven, and finding nothing else in his life more dear, he completely abandoned all the cares of this world, and devoted himself entirely to this; and in order that no part of philosophy should be left unscrutinized by him, he plunged with keen intellect into the profoundest depths of theology. The result was not much different from the intention – for, thinking nothing of heat or cold, of vigils or of fasts, nor any other bodily vexation, he reached by uninterrupted study to such knowledge of the Divine Essence and the other angelic intelligences as may be encompassed here by human intellect. And as it was at diverse ages that he studied and learnt the diverse sciences, so likewise it was at diverse places of study that he mastered them under diverse teachers.

The first elements, as above set forth, he got in his own native city; and from there, as to a place richer in such food, he went to Bologna; and when getting towards old age he went to Paris, where more than once, in disputations, he gave proof of the loftiness of his genius with such glory to himself that, even when the tale is told now, those who hear it marvel. And by such numerous studies he rightly earned the loftiest of titles – while he lived, some called him “poet”, some “philosopher”, and many “theologian”. But because victory is more glorious in proportion as the might of the conquered enemy is the greater, I see it as fitting to explain how out of such a surging and tempestuous a sea, tossed now this way and now that, victorious alike over the waves and the adverse winds, he won the safe port of those most illustrious titles.

3

Dante's Love of Beatrice and his Marriage

STUDIES, AND ESPECIALLY THOSE of speculation, to which our Dante, as already shown, entirely surrendered himself, tend to demand solitude, liberty from anxiety and tranquillity of mind. Instead of this liberty and quiet, almost from the beginning of his life up to the day of his death, Dante experienced the most fierce and unbearable passion of love; there was also his wife, his family and civic cares, and his exile and poverty (to say nothing of more special cares which these inevitably bring in their train). I think it right to describe these things each on their own, in order that their weight may be more fully apparent.

In that season in which the sweetness of Heaven reclothes the earth with its adornments, making her smile with a variety of flowers mingled among green leaves, it was the custom both of men and women in our city to hold festivals, each in their own district, gathering together their own friends. It happened that Folco Portinari,* amongst the rest, a man in those days much honoured among the citizens, had gathered his neighbours around him, to have a feast with them in his house on the first day of May. Now among them was that Alighieri already spoken of; and there Dante, whose ninth year had not yet ended, had accompanied him (even as little lads tend to go about with their fathers, especially to places of festivity). And here, mingling with the others of his age – for in the house of the festival there were many of them, boys and girls – the first tables being served, he abandoned himself with the rest to children's sports, as much as his small years allowed him to. There was amongst the throng of young ones a little daughter of Folco, whose name was Bice (though he himself always called her by her original name, Beatrice), whose age was some eight years; very gracious after her childish fashion, and very gentle and charming in her ways, and of manners and speech far more sedate and modest

than her small age required; and besides this the features of her face were very delicate, most excellently arranged, and full not only with beauty but with such purity and graciousness that she was held by many to be a kind of little angel. She then, such as I am painting her, or maybe far more beautiful yet, appeared before the eyes of Dante at this festival, not I suppose for the first time, but for the first time with power to enamour him; and he, child as he still was, received her fair visage into his heart with such affection that, from that day onwards, never so long as he lived was he parted from it. What hour this may have been no one knows; but (whether it was because of the likeness of their disposition or character, or a special influence of the heavens, or, as is known to happen at festivals, the sweetness of music, and the general exhilaration, and the delicacy of the food and the wines, which can make the minds of even mature men, as well as youths, expand and grow ready to be lightly caught by anything that pleases) it certainly happened that Dante in his childish years became the most fervent servant of Love. But leaving aside all talk of his boyish experiences, I say that the amorous flames multiplied with his age to such an extent that nothing else could give him pleasure or repose or comfort except for seeing her. So leaving all other affairs, he would go with the greatest solicitude wherever he might expect to see her, as if he would get from her face and from her eyes all his happiness and his entire consolation.

O senseless judgement of lovers! Who else but they would think to reduce the flames by piling on the fuel? How many and how bitter were the thoughts, the sighs, the tears and the other most grievous affections which afterwards, as life advanced, were endured by him by reason of his love, he himself in part explained in his *Vita nuova*; therefore I do not wish to recount them at more length. This much alone I would not pass over without comment – that according to his writing, and according to others to whom his desire was known, this was a most chaste love; there never did appear, either in look or word or sign, any wanton appetite, either in the lover or in the thing he loved. No small marvel to the present world, from which all chaste delight has so fled away, and which is so accustomed to having the object of its desire ready to comply with its lust, before its mind is well made up to love it, that he who should love in any other way, being a thing so rare, has come to be a miracle. If such love

could for such a long time trouble his food, his sleep and all other manner of repose, what an adversary must we not suppose it to have been to his sacred studies and his genius. Surely no small one! Yet there are many who would understand it to have been the stimulator to this very thing, arguing from what he wrote so beautifully, in the Florentine idiom and in rhyme, in praise of the lady of his love, to express his ardours and his amorous conceits. But I cannot agree with this without affirming that ornate discourse is the supreme part of every science, which is not true.

As everyone may plainly see there is nothing enduring in this world; and if there is a thing easily affected with change, that thing is our human life. A little too much heat or cold in our composition – to say nothing of the infinity of other accidents that may happen – may readily lead us from existence to non-existence; neither is gentility, wealth, youth or any other worldly dignity protected from this. Dante had to learn of the weight of this universal law by another's death sooner than his own. The beautiful Beatrice was almost at the end of her twenty-fourth year when, as pleased Him who has all power, she left the anguish of this world, and went her way to that glory which her deserts had prepared for her. At this departure Dante was left in such grief, such affliction, such tears, that many of those nearest to him, whether relatives or friends, looked for them to have no other end except for death; and this they thought must come soon, seeing that he would not listen to any comfort or consolation that was offered him. The days were like the nights, and the nights were like the days; and not an hour of them passed without wailings and sighs and a great quantity of tears. His eyes were like two copious fountains of welling water, so much that most people marvelled where he got enough moisture for his weeping. But, even as we see likewise that all things are reduced and perish on process of time, it came about after some months that Dante seemed able, without tears, to remember that Beatrice was dead, and with sounder judgement, as grief started to give way to reason, to apprehend that neither weeping, nor sighing, nor anything else could return his lost lady to him. For this reason, with more patience, he set himself to endure having lost her presence, and it was not long after he had abandoned his tears, before his sighs as well, which were already near to their end, began in great part to go their way without return.

Now, because of his weeping, and because of the affliction of his heart within him, and because of his paying no attention to himself, he had become in appearance almost a savage thing – gaunt and unshaven, and almost utterly transformed from that which he had been before – so much so that his appearance inevitably moved the compassion not only of his friends, but of everyone else who saw it. Although he allowed himself to be seen only a little, while this tearful life lasted, by any except his friends, this compassion, together with fear of even worse to come, put his relatives in mind of his comfort. So when they saw his tears were somewhat eased, and found that his chest was not troubled any more by burning sighs, they began once again to ply the forlorn man with the consolations that had so long been lost on him. He, though he had obstinately closed his ears against them all up to that hour, now began not only to open them slightly, but even to listen gladly to whatever might be said with respect to his comforting. Perceiving this, his relatives, hoping not only to draw him altogether out of his sorrows, but even to bring him into happiness, discussed the idea of giving him a wife – in order that, just as his lost lady had been the cause of his sadness, so might the newly gained one be a cause of happiness. And having found a girl who was suitable for his station, they revealed their intention to him with such arguments as they deemed most persuasive. And, not to dwell on every detail, after intense discussions their arguments were successful, and he was married shortly afterwards.*

O blind souls, clouded intellects, vain purposes of so many mortals, how counter to your intentions in so many things are the results that follow – and for the most part not without reason! What man would take someone who felt excessively hot in the sweet air of Italy to the burning sands of Libya to cool him, or from the isle of Cyprus to the eternal shades of the Rhodopaeian mountains* to find warmth? What physician would set about expelling acute fever by means of fire, or a chill in the marrow of the bones with ice or with snow? Certainly not a single one – unless it was one who would think of mitigating the tribulations of love with a bride. Those who think of doing this do not know the nature of love, or how it makes every other passion feed its own. In vain is help or advice drawn up against its might, if it has taken firm root in the heart of him who has loved for long. Just as in the beginning the smallest resistance is of help, so in due course even

the strongest will tend many times to result in hurt. But it is time to return to our subject, and for the time being concede that there may be things which have power to make men forget the pains of love.

What has someone done when, in order to draw me out of one oppressive thought, he has plunged me into a thousand greater and more oppressive? Truly nothing else except, by adding that harm which he has inflicted on me, made me long to return to that from which he has taken me. And this we see happen to most of those who in their blindness marry in order to escape from sorrows, or are induced to marry by others who would draw them out from them. And they do not perceive that they have often made one tangle into a thousand, until experience teaches them, but then they cannot turn back, however sorry they are. His relatives and friends gave Dante a wife, so that his tears for Beatrice might come to an end; but I know not whether – though the tears passed away, or rather perhaps, had already passed – the amorous flame left because of this; yet I do not believe it. But, even if it had been quenched, many fresh burdens, yet more grievous, came to take its place.

He had been accustomed, keeping vigil at his sacred studies, to discourse whenever he wanted with emperors, with kings, with all other most exalted princes, to dispute with philosophers, to delight himself with most pleasing poets, and, by listening to the anguish of others, to mitigate his own. Now he was only able to do this as much as his lady decided, and whenever she wanted him to withdraw from such illustrious companionship, he had to bestow himself on female chatter, which, if he did not want to increase his woes, he had to not only endure but praise. He who was accustomed, when weary of the vulgar herd, to withdraw into some solitary place, and there consider in his speculations what spirit moves the heaven, the source of life to the animals that are on earth, what are the causes of things, or to rehearse some rare invention, or compose some poem, which will make him though dead yet live by fame amongst future generations – he must now not only leave these sweet contemplations as often as the whim seizes his new lady, but must submit to company poorly suited to such matters. He, who was accustomed to laugh, to weep, to sing, to sigh as he desired, as sweet or bitter emotions pierced him, now does not dare to – for he must render an account to his lady not only of greater affairs but of every little sigh, explaining what started

it, where it came from and where it went – for she takes happiness as evidence of love for another, and sadness of hatred for herself.

Oh weariness beyond imagining of having to live and hold conversation, and finally grow old and die, with such a suspicious animal! I will make no mention of the extraordinary and pressing cares which must be borne by those who are not used to them, especially in our city – I mean, all those clothes and ornaments, and the rooms crammed with curious superfluities that women convince themselves are necessary to an elegant existence; manservants and maidservants, nurses and chambermaids, and all those gifts and presents that relatives must give to the new brides, to make them believe that they love them; nor will I make mention of many other things following upon these, which free men never know before, but rather move on to certain things from which there is no escape. Who doubts that there will be a general judgement on whether his wife is beautiful or not? And if she is said to be beautiful, who doubts that she will straight away have a crowd of lovers who will most pertinaciously besiege her unstable mind, one with his good looks, and one with his noble birth, and one with marvellous flattery, and one with gifts, and one with pleasant ways? And that which many desire shall scarce be defended against everyone; and women's chastity need only be overtaken once to make them infamous and their husbands miserable for ever. But if, by the misfortune of him who brings her home, she is ugly to look at – well, it is plain to see that men often quickly grow tired of even the most beautiful of women, and what are we then supposed to think of the others, except that not only they themselves, but every place in which they are likely to be found by those who must have them forever with them, will be detested? And this is the source of their anger; and there is no beast more cruel than an angry woman. And no man may live his life in safety when he has committed himself to any woman who thinks she has good cause to be angry with him. And they all think so.

What shall I say of their ways? If I would show how greatly they all run counter to the peace and repose of men, I would have to extend my discourse to an all-too-long harangue; so let me be content to speak of one of these ways, common to almost all. They imagine that even the lowliest servant can keep his place by behaving well, but will be cast out for the opposite. For this reason they believe that if they

themselves behave well, theirs is no better than a servile lot – for they only feel that they are ladies when they misbehave, and do not come to the bad end that servants do. Why should I go on pointing out that which all the world knows? I judge it better to hold my tongue than to give offence to lovely woman by my speech. Who doesn't know that trial is first made by the buyer before the purchase of any other thing, except for his wife – in case she should displease him before he brings her home? The man who takes a wife must have her not as he would choose, but as Fortune gives her to him. And if these things above be true (as those who have tried know), we may think what miseries those rooms hide, which from outside are reputed places of delight to those without eyes which can pierce through walls. Of course I do not affirm that these things happened to Dante, for I do not know it. Though it is true that – whether suchlike things or others were the cause – once when he had parted from her, who had been given him as a consolation in his sufferings, he would never go where she was, or allow her to come to where he was, although he was the father of several children by her. But let no one suppose from the things said above that I would conclude men ought not to take wives. On the contrary, I much commend it, but not for everyone. Let philosophers leave marrying to wealthy fools, to noblemen and peasants, and let them take their delight with Philosophy, who is a far better bride than any other.