

**GIORDANO BRUNO:
HIS LIFE, THOUGHT,
AND MARTYRDOM**

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Giordano Bruno: His Life, Thought, and Martyrdom by William Boultong

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WILLIAM BOULTING

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MARTYRDOM

BY

WILLIAM BOULTING

AUTHOR OF "TASSO AND HIS TIMES"

"ÆNEAS SYLVICUS," ETC.

"To love Truth for Truth's sake is the principal part of human perfection in this world, and the seed-plot of all other virtues."—LOCKE.

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PREFACE

THE life of Bruno has been written in English more than once, and he has had many excellent commentators. No one can now write about him without availing himself very largely of the solid and scholarly work done by Tocco, Fiorentino, Berti, Brunnhofer, McIntyre and others. The apology for the appearance of the present work must be that some facts, unrecorded in England, have come to light of late years, and also that a few usual, almost unavoidable inaccuracies require correction. Moreover, I have tried to follow the development of Bruno's thoughts in the order in which he declared them; and, on one or two points, I find myself compelled to differ from the conclusions of this or the other commentator.

Most of Bruno's works have been published in the editions of Wagner, Lagarde, and Gfrörer, well edited for their day. Different libraries contain different editions, when any are to be found in them. Even the British Museum, although it possesses a fine collection of rare, original impressions, does not contain all the volumes of the complete State Edition, and lacks that one which contains the works which were discovered in manuscript. To give the paging of any particular edition might therefore prove less convenient than the plan I have adopted of giving those indications for reference which are supplied by the subdivisions of the works themselves, except in the case of the published manuscripts.

Those who wish to verify a reference will thereby readily do so and may discover that reading the context is not a wholly unprofitable task. I have given minuter detail as to other works from which I have drawn or which throw light on the subject-matter.

W. B.

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GIORDANO BRUNO

CHAPTER I

BIRTH AND PARENTAGE—BOYHOOD

A TRAVELLER, curious to try the local line which runs eastward from Naples, after journeying a few meandering miles through a generous and beautiful country-side, will find his train halting at the little city of Nola. Should he descend, he would not come across anything strikingly picturesque or architecturally memorable. There are few vestiges of the remote past; even the mediæval cathedral is a restoration. On an eminence, a ruined fortress still dominates *Campagna Felice*—"the happy fields"—as the inhabitants call their plain; and, as of old time, the vineyards are lavish in the production of "mangiaguerra," a thick black wine. The sky is very lucid; the air sweet and soft; the eye may range over the rich and varied plain to Monte Somma (which hides Vesuvius) and to other guardian hills.

Outside the walls of Nola there stood in the mid 16th century, Cicala, a hamlet of "four or five houses, none of them too imposing;"¹ and here, in 1548,² there was born to a soldier in the service of the Spanish masters of Naples, one Gioan Bruno and his wife, a man child. The

¹ Bruno, G; *Spaccio della bestia trionfante*, *Dial. I. iij.*

² Berti, D; *G. B. da Nola, sua vita e sua dottrina*, 1889, *App.*, *Doc. vij.*—Auvray, L; *Mem. d. l. Soc. d. P. histoire de Paris et de P. Ile de France*, t. xxvij, p. 288 sqq., sub 7th December.