

different from that which might be expected from one who should enthusiastically and unreservedly acquiesce in the superstitions of his time. But who, in the first place, can vouch for the exact truth of the anecdote, or of the words which Sacchetti places in Giotto's mouth. Giotto, no doubt, was far from yielding implicit faith to the claims of monks to sanctity. He had had occasion to observe their weaknesses. The immorality of many amongst the clergy was probably quite as well known to him as to his cotemporaries, and he could jest where jesting was permitted; but that he had a sense of the greatness of Christian truth is shown in his works; and no one who admits that a poet can only develop or express the highest aspirations of which the human mind is capable, when he is himself convinced of, and imbued with, the greatness of his theme, will fail to perceive that, without a profound conviction and a deep sense of the truth in his subject, Giotto could not have produced the noble works which afford to posterity the means of judging his genius and his talent.

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