

Jurgen: A Comedy of Justice

James Branch Cabell

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Jurgen, A Comedy of Justice is a 1919 fantasy book by James Branch Cabell - the eighth among some fiftytwo books written by this author - which gained fame (or notoriety, in the view of some) shortly after its publication. The eponymous hero, who considers himself a "monstrous clever fellow", embarks on a journey through ever more fantastic realms, even to hell and heaven. Everywhere he goes, he winds up seducing the local women, even the Devil's wife. James Branch Cabell (April 14, 1879 - May 5, 1958) was an American author of fantasy fiction and belles lettres. Cabell was born and lived most of his life in Richmond, Virginia; though he wintered in Florida until the death of his first wife in 1949, and eventually retired there. Cabell was born into an affluent and well-connected Virginian family. While Cabell's surname is often mispronounced "Ka-BELL", he himself pronounced it "CAB-ble". To remind an editor of the correct pronunciation, Cabell composed this rhyme: "Tell the rabble my name is Cabell." His father, Robert Gamble Cabell II (1847–1922), was a physician, and his mother, Anne Harris (1859–1915), was the daughter of Col. and Mrs James R. Branch. Cabell's paternal great-grandfather, William H. Cabell, was governor of Virginia from 1805 to 1808. Cabell was the oldest of three boys — his brothers were Robert Gamble Cabell III (1881–1968) and John Lottier Cabell (1883–1946). His parents separated and were later divorced in 1907. He matriculated to the College of William and Mary in 1894 at the age of fifteen and graduated in 1898. While an undergraduate, Cabell taught French and Greek at the College. According to his close friend and fellow author Ellen Glasgow, Cabell developed a friendship with a professor at the college which was considered by some to be "too intimate" and as a result Cabell was dismissed, although he was subsequently readmitted and finished his degree.[2] He worked from 1898 to 1900 as a newspaper reporter in New York City, but returned to Richmond in 1901, where he worked several months on the staff of the Richmond News.



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