

his degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1572, three years after his admission to Pembroke Hall. In 1576 he was made a Master of Arts, after which he went to the north, when the great event of a poet's life befell him. He fell in love, but was rejected by the object of his affection. The poet recorded his sorrow in the *Shepherd's Calendar*. On the advice and invitation of an old college friend he came south, and was soon introduced to Sir Philip Sidney, the very ideal of English manhood, to whom the "*Calendar*" was dedicated. Pastoral poetry was the fashion of the age, and Spenser's work was well received. Meantime Sidney had introduced his friend to Lord Leicester, Queen Elizabeth's all-powerful favorite; and in 1580 he was appointed Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, which was at this time in a very troubled condition. Through the influence of powerful friends Spenser received the appointment to several additional offices, all small indeed, but still tending to his advancement, and adding to his income. In 1586 he received a grant of more than 3000 acres of land, together with Kilcolman Castle. Here in this home, amid rustic scenery that appealed strongly to the finer feelings of our poet, he was destined to dwell for nearly the whole of the remainder of his life. It was here that he finished the first three books of his *Faerie Queen*—it was here that he was visited by his old friend Sir Walter Raleigh, who induced Spenser to go to England to publish the work. He did so, and the reception of the poem was all that the poet could desire; he was already known by his *Shepherd's Calendar*, but this was something far beyond it. England had nothing at all in her literature that could equal it. Queen Elizabeth fully appreciated the poet, and bestowed on him a pension. Now appeared a collection of his minor poems. On his return to Kilcolman Castle he wrote "*Colin Clout's Come Home Again*." In 1594 Spenser was married to an Irish lady living in his neighborhood, and the wedding was celebrated by him in his *Epithalamion*, "the most perfect of all his poems, and the most beautiful of all bridal songs." In 1595 appeared his elegy on the death of Sidney, the *Prothalamion* and the three last books of the *Faerie Queen*. This poem was to consist of twelve books, but the remaining six were never finished, or, if completed, were lost when Kilcolman was attacked by the rebels. Spenser was now raised to the acme of his fame. In October, 1599, the Irish uprising took place; Kilcolman Castle was attacked and burned, but Spenser and his wife and two children escaped, although their infant child, left behind by some accident, is said to have perished in the flames. Spenser returned to England, a