

period is graced above all others with the name of Edmund Spenser, the "poet's poet," the fault in whose poetry, if it can be called a fault, is its continued sweetness. I have, time and again, striven hard to carefully read the works of this noted man, and, while I decline to accept McAulay as an infallible guide in all he has to say, I must admit that his views of Spenser suit me remarkably well. I never could get through the *Faerie Queene*, and having failed in several attempts to do so, I feel the task to be a hopeless one. At first it is pleasant—too pleasant. Its very sweetness (perhaps I should say its poetry), its rhythm, cloy, and, to an ordinary mortal like myself, becomes wearisome. Until I had read a few books of Spenser, I fear I never quite appreciated the children of Israel's objection to manna. The fact was it was too good for them. Their taste was not sufficiently pure, or sufficiently educated, for it, and they rebelled against food they did not know how to appreciate. I must confess that while I can see and recognize the genius of Spenser, his poetry is too good for me. Having none of the poetic instinct in my composition, I must remain a stranger to those delights, which finer natures feel in his works, unquestionably beautiful though they are. Had I been an Israelite, I would most surely have tired of manna. Milk and honey would become nauseous to me. So with the poetry of Spenser. It is sweet, good, pure, beautiful, but to me it is wearisome. In addition to poetry, Spenser also wrote a somewhat lengthy report, in prose, on the state of Ireland, which may be of interest at the present time to the curious and to those interested in the Irish question of to-day.

Besides Spenser, we have, in this age, Sir Philip Sydney, — brave soldier, able statesman, sweet poet—Fairfax, Marlowe, Sir Walter Raleigh, George Herbert, Chapman, the great translator of Homer and Hesiod, and Shakespeare in his non-dramatic works.