

authors. The ceremony became later allied with the universities of Europe, where the degree of *poet-laureate* was conferred on the student who gave satisfactory proofs of scholarship in grammar, including poetry and rhetoric. It is difficult to determine just when and how the office of poet-laureate was first established in England. Warton, in his *History of English Poetry*, speaks of a certain John Kay, who bore the title of King's versifier to Edward IV, and to whom was paid a yearly stipend of one hundred shillings. But though Kay styled himself "hys humble poete laureate," he was nothing more than "a graduated rhetorician employed in the service of the King." Chaucer's royal pension is no indication that the formal title of poet-laureate existed in his time. Indeed, it is only from the days of Spenser that we may trace an almost unbroken line of official poets-laureate. He held the position from 1591 to 1599. His successors have been: Samuel Daniel, 1599 to 1619; Ben Jonson, 1619 to 1637; a vacancy of 23 years then occurred; Sir Wm. Davenant, 1660 to 1668; John Dryden, 1670 to 1689; Thomas Shadwell, 1689 to 1692; Nahum Tate, 1692 to 1715; Nicholas Rowe, 1715 to 1718; Lawrence Eusden, 1718 to 1730; Colley Cibber, 1730 to 1757; Wm. Whitehead, 1757 to 1785; Thomas Warton, 1785 to 1790; Henry Pie, 1790 to 1813; Robert Southey, 1813 to 1843; William Wordsworth, 1843 to 1850; Alfred Tennyson, 1850 to 1892; Alfred Austin, 1896. A glance at this list of names proves that there are no traditions of literary greatness clustering about the English laureateship. Spenser, Johnson, Dryden, Southey, Wordsworth and Tennyson have taken a place in our literature. The remaining ten are not names to conjure with.

15—I have never been able to understand the enthusiasm that the name and fame of Alexandre Dumas, fils, have been able to arouse, even among intelligent, well-meaning, Christian men and women. The amount of gushing sentimentality that has been written of him since his death would lead one to believe that he was the great moral and intellectual giant of the age; whereas his influence in every line has been distinctly pernicious and subversive. Honor in men and purity in

women, the ideals to which even this end-of-the-century generation clings, were for him either non-existent or mere shams and by-words. Dumas' absolute want of reverence for women, while it was a sad commentary on the condition of his own heart, proved him entirely unfit for the role he attempted to play. Had he confined his scoffing cynicism within the limits of decency, there would have been less cause for scandal and offence. When he wrote "Pooh-pooh, a woman marries a man because she likes him, or doesn't marry him, if she does not; that's the beginning and the end of their analysis. . . . What is more farcial than the institution called marriage? Women regard it as a liberator. It prefixes "Madame" to their name, and takes them away from papa and mama, of whom they are no doubt very fond, but whom they are delighted to leave," Mr. Dumas might be dismissed with the remark that he evidenced very little regard for his own mother. But in his attack on her whom Christians consider as the sublimest exemplar of womankind, he unnecessarily outraged the most sacred feelings of the vast body of men. In his prefatory letter to the anonymous pamphlet "*Le Retour du Christ*," Dumas wrote as follows of the Blessed Virgin: "I think that without Mary, Christianity would have triumphed more rapidly; it is she who embarrasses it. She shall never be my intermediary between my God and myself." The same spirit of blatant free-thought urged him to pen the following directions for his funeral: "No priests, no soldiers, no speeches." He was taken at his word, and his burial at Père Lachaise resembled the putting out of sight of a museum-favorite or circus-attraction.

16—Dean Harris has an article in the Christmas number of Walsh's Magazine, which for force and elegance of style, energy of expression, extent of knowledge and rare depth of thought is not surpassed by anything we have seen in recent magazine literature. The Dean is not unknown in the field of Canadian letters, but this article leads us to remark that we are only too little acquainted with him. Of course it is too much to expect that a priest actively engaged in the ministry and having the charge of souls should