

All these and many more are poetically wrought out, for the most part, in accordance with direct Christian teaching.

The reader will by this time have gained a fair idea of *The Faerie Queene*, since this whole essay may be viewed as a critique based upon results. We have attempted a summing-up, necessarily brief, and will offer in conclusion some specific appreciations.

Spenser has been charged with lack of humour, generally by those who have never read him, but who prefer buffoonery to serious progress, at all events. Yet *The Faerie Queene* contains a reasonable amount of humour, appropriately interspersed throughout the poem. The Renaissance spirit and Spenser's innate kindliness forbade hard Puritanism. What more could one desire than the laughable description of the "raskall rabble's" fear at the sight of the dead dragon; or the demure gravity of the poet's address to the Queen at the beginning of Book Two? The second and third cantos of this book have many such passages; for example, such a picture as that of Trompart grovelling before Braggadocchio, is ludicrous enough:—

"The seely man, seeing him ryde so ranck
And ayme at him, fell flat to ground for feare,
And crying, "Mercy," loud, his pitious hands gan reare."

In Canto Five, when Pyrochles is at last overcome by Sir Guyon, the poet humourously avouches that

"Such homage till that instant never learned hee."

Book Four, Canto Five, contains much light English fun. In the Fifth Book, Radigund's death would have 'deprived her mother of a daughter.' In Canto Nine, Guile bears a 'great wyde net,'

"With which he seldom fished at the brooke,
But used to fish for fools on the dry shore,
Of which he in faire weather wont to take great store."

For a final example, Canto Four of the last book shows us how Calepine

"Catching up in hand a ragged stone
Which lay thereby (so fortune him did ayde)
Upon him ran, and thrust it all attone
Into his gaping throte, that made him grone