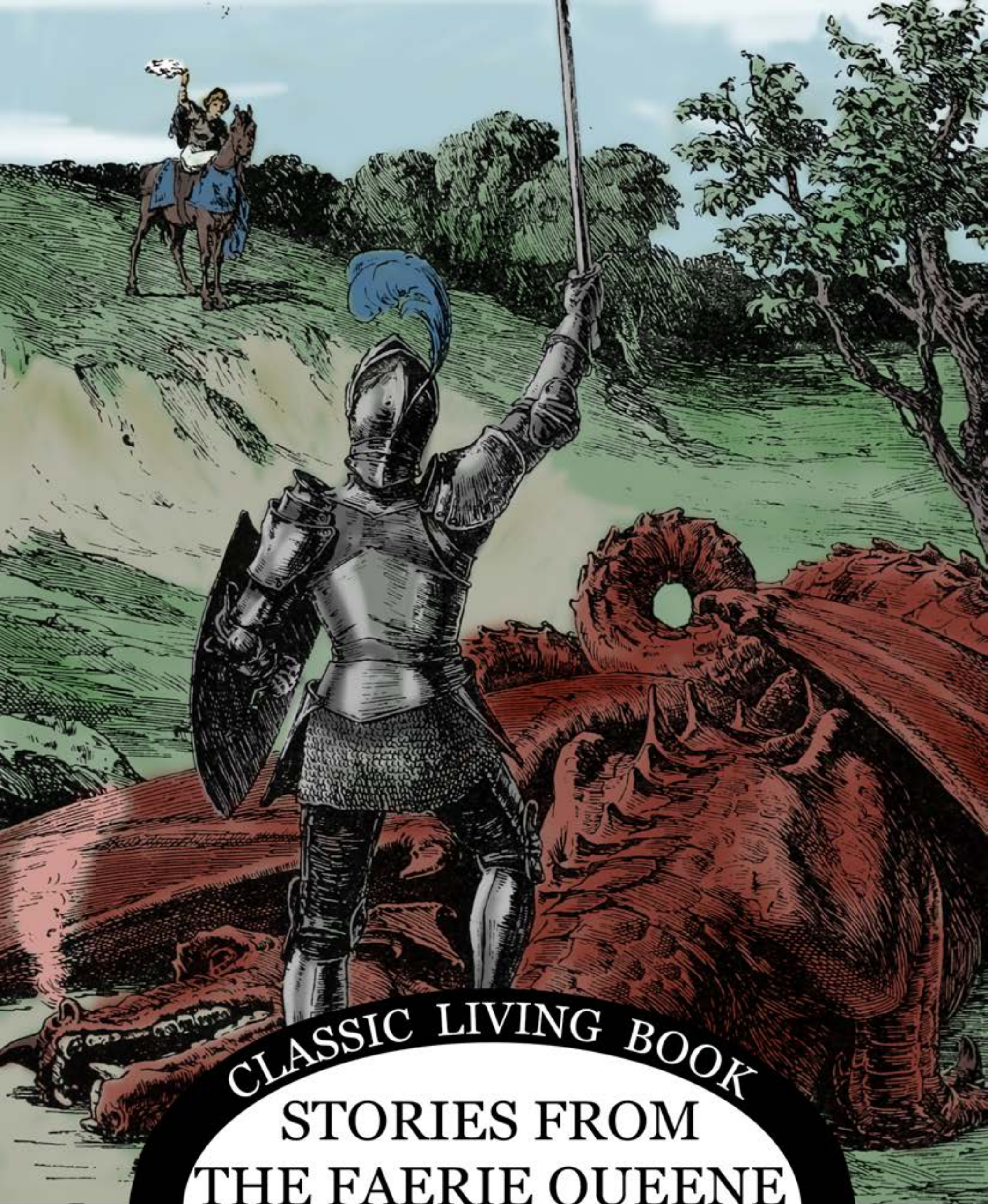

CLASSIC LIVING BOOK

STORIES FROM THE FAERIE QUEENE

Mary MacLeod

COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

"She nigher drew, and saw that joyous end:
Then God she praysd, and thankt her faithfull knight
That had atchievde so great a conquest by his might."

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Stories from the Faerie Queene

by Mary Macleod

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This edition published 2021
by Living Book Press
Copyright © Living Book Press, 2021

First Published in 1916.

ISBN: 978-1-922619-40-2 (hardcover)
978-1-922619-41-9 (softcover)

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A catalogue record for this book is available from the National Library of Australia

> And being dead in vain yet many strive.
> Ne dare I like; but through infusion swete
> Of thine own Spirit which doth in me survive,
> I follow here the footing of thy feete,
> But with thy meaning so I may the rather meete."

But it can scarcely be allowed either that he follows the footing of his master's feet, or that he caught the breath of his master's spirit. There are "diversities of operations"; and Spenser's method and manner were not those of Chaucer, however sincere the allegiance he professed, and however sincere his intentions to tread in his footsteps and march along the same road. He wanted some gifts and some habits that are necessary for the perfect story-teller—gifts and habits which Chaucer, by nature or by discipline, possessed in a high degree, such as humour, concentration, realism. The very structure of "The Faerie Queene" is defective. It begins in the middle—at its opening it takes us *in medias res*, seemingly in accordance with the precedent of the *Iliad* or of the *Æneid*, but only seemingly, for both Homer and Virgil very soon finish the explanation of their opening initial scenes, and their readers know where they are, But the first six books of "The Faerie Queene" are very slightly connected together; and what the connection is meant to be we learn only from the later of the poet to Sir Walter Raleigh, which it was thought well to print with the first three books, no doubt in consequence of some complaints of obscurity and disattachment. This letter is significantly described as "expounding his" (the author's) "whole intention in the course of this work," and as "hereunto annexed, for that it giveth great light to the reader for the better understanding." Certainly a story ought not to require a prose appendix to set forth its arrangement and its purpose, even if only a fourth of it is completed. The exact correlation of eleven books was to remain unrevealed till the Twelfth Book appeared. In fact, had the poem ever been completed, we should have had to begin its perusal at the end! Thus "The Faerie Queene," as has often been remarked, lacks unity and cohesion. It is not so much

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Introduction

THE object of this volume is to excite interest in one of the greatest poems of English literature, which for all its greatness is but little read and known—to excite this interest not only in young persons who are not yet able to read "The Faerie Queene," with its archaisms of language, its distant ways and habits of life and thought, its exquisite melodies that only a cultivated ear can catch and appreciate, but also in adults, who, not from the lack of ability, but because they shrink from a little effort, suffer the loss of such high and refined literary pleasure as the perusal of Spenser's masterpiece can certainly give. Assuredly, when all that cavillers can say or do is said and done, "The Faerie Queene " is deservedly called one of the greatest poems of English literature. From the high place it took, and took with acclamation, when it first appeared, it has, in fact, never been deposed. It has many defects and imperfections, such as the crudest and most commonplace critic can discover, and has

discovered with much self-complacency; but it has beauties and perfections that such critics very often fail to see; and, so far as the status of "The Faerie Queene" is concerned, it is enough for the ordinary reader to grasp the significant fact that Spenser has won specially for himself the famous title of "the poets' poet." Ever since his star appeared above the horizon, wise men from all parts have come to worship it; and amongst these devotees fellow-poets have thronged with a wonderful enthusiasm. In one point all the poetic schools of England have agreed together, viz., in admiration for Spenser. From Milton and Wordsworth on the one hand to Dryden and Pope—from the one extreme of English poetry to the other—has prevailed a perpetual reverence for Spenser. The lights in his temple, so to speak, have never been extinguished-never have there been wanting offerers of incense and of praise; and, to repeat in other words what has already been said, as it is what we wish to specially emphasise, amidst this faithful congregation have been many who already had or were some day to have temples of their own. We recognise amongst its members not only the great poets already mentioned, but many others of the divine brotherhood, some at least of whom rank with the greatest, such as Keats, Shelley, Sidney, Gray, Byron, the Fletchers, Henry More, Raleigh, Thomson, not to name Beattie, Shenstone, Warton, Barnefield, Peele, Campbell, Drayton, Cowley, Prior, Akenside, Roden Noel. To this long but by no means exhaustive list might be added many of high eminence in other departments of literature and of life, as Gibbon, Mackintosh, Hazlitt, Craik, Lowell, Ruskin, R. W. Church, and a hundred more.

Now, of course, the acceptance of a poet is and must be finally due to his own intrinsic merits. No amount of testimonials from ever so highly distinguished persons will make a writer permanently popular if he cannot make himself so-if his own works do not make him so. Of testimonials there is very naturally considerable distrust—very naturally, when we notice what

second-rate penmen have been and are cried up to the skies. But in the present case the character of the testifiers is to be carefully considered; and, secondly, not only their words but their actions are to be taken into account. Many of our greatest poets have praised Spenser not only in formal phrases, but practically and decisively, by surrendering themselves to his influence, by sitting at his feet, by taking hints and suggestions from him. He has been their master not merely nominally but actually, and with obvious results. If all traces of Spenser's fascination and power could be removed from subsequent English literature, that literature would be a very different thing from what it is: there would be strange breaks and blanks in many a volume, hiatuses in many a line, an altered turning of many a sentence, a modification of many a conception and fancy. And we are convinced that the more Spenser is studied the more remarkable will his dominance and his dominion be found to be. To quote lines that have been quoted before in this connection—

> "Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
> Repairing, in their urns draw golden light."

"The Faerie Queene " is one of the great wellheads of English poetry; or, in other words, Spenser's Faerie Land has been and is a favourite haunt of all our highest poetic spirits.

And yet it is incontrovertible that this poem is very little known as a whole to most people. Everybody is familiar with the story of Una and the Lion, and with two or three stanzas of singular beauty in other parts of "The Faerie Queen," because these occur in most or all books of selections: in every anthology occur those fairest flowers. But the world at large is content to know no more. The size of the poem appals it. "A big book is a big evil," it thinks, and it shudders at the idea of perusing the six twelve-cantoed books in which Spenser's genius expressed itself—expressed itself only in an incomplete and fragmentary fashion, for many more books formed part of his enormous

design. "Of the persons who read the first canto," says Macaulay in a famous Essay, "not one in ten reaches the end of the First Book, and not one in a hundred perseveres to the end of the poem. Very few and very weary are those who are in at the death of the Blatant Beast. If the last six books, which are said (without any authority) to have been destroyed in Ireland, had been preserved, we doubt whether any heart less stout than that of a commentator would have held out to the end." And Macaulay speaks truly as well as wittily. He is as accurate as Poins when Prince Hal asks him what he would think if the Prince wept because the King his father was sick. "I would think thee a most princely hypocrite," replies Poins. "It would be every man's thought," says the Prince: "and thou art a blessed fellow to think as every man thinks. Never a man's thought in the world keeps the roadway better than thine." Even so is Macaulay "a blessed fellow to think as every man thinks," and no doubt his blessedness in this respect is one of the characteristics—by no means the only one—that account for his widespread popularity. He not only states that people do not read "The Faerie Queen," but he shows that he himself, voracious reader—helluo librorum—as he was, had not done so, or had done so very carelessly; for, alas! the Blatant Beast, as at all events every student of the present volume will know, does not die; Sir Calidore only suppresses him for a time; he but temporarily ties and binds him in an iron chain, "and makes him follow him like a fearful dog;" and one day long afterwards the beast got loose again—

"Ne ever could by any, more be brought
 Into like bands, ne maystred any more,
 Albe that, long time after Calidore,
 The good Sir Pelleas him tooke in hand, p. xii
 And after him Sir Lamoracke of yore,
 And all his brethren borne in Britaine land
Yet none of them could ever bring him into band.

"So now he raungeth through the world againe,
And rageth sore in each degree and state
Ne any is that may him now restraine,
He growen is so great and strong of late,
Barking and biting all that him doe bate,
Albe they worthy blame, or clear of crime
Ne spareth he most learned wits to rate,
Ne spareth he the gentle Poets rime;
But rends without regard of person or of time."

And Spenser goes on to declare that even his "homely verse of many meanest" cannot hope to escape "his venemous despite;" for, in his own day, as often since, Spenser by no means found favour with everybody. Clearly even Macaulay's memory of the close of "The Faerie Queene" was sufficiently hazy. But even Milton, to whom Spenser was so congenial a spirit, and whom he acknowledged as his "poetical father," on one occasion at least forgets the details of the Spenserian story. When insisting in the Areopagitica that true virtue is not "a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary," but a virtue that has been tried and tested, he remarks that this " was the reason why our sage and serious poet Spenser, whom I dare be known to think a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas, describing true temperance under the person of Guion, brings him in with his Palmer through the cave of Mammon and the bower of earthly bliss, that he may see, and know, and yet abstain." But the Palmer was not with Sir Guyon in the Cave of Mammon, Phædria having declined to ferry him over to her floating island. See "The Faerie Queene," ii. 6, 19:—

"Himselfe (Sir Guyon) she tooke aboord,
But the Black Palmer suffred still to stond,
Ne would for price or prayers once affoord
To ferry that old man over the perlous foord.

"Guyon was loath to leave his guide behind,
Yet being entred might not back retyre;
For the flitt barke, obeying to her mind,

> Forth launched quickly as she did desire,
> Ne gave him leave to bid that aged sire
> Adieu."

So Macaulay's lapse must not be regarded too severely, though, as may be seen, much more prominence is given by Spenser to the fact that the Blatant Beast was not killed, than to the absence of the Palmer from Guyon's side in Mammon's House. It seems probable, indeed, that Macaulay mixed up the fate of the Dragon in the eleventh canto of the First Book with that of the Blatant Beast in the twelfth of the Sixth. But we mention these things only to prevent any surprise at the general ignorance of Spenser, when such a confirmed book-lover as Macaulay, and such a devoted Spenserian as Milton, are found tripping in their allusions to his greatest work.

Now this ignorance, however explicable, is, we think, to be regretted. A poet of such splendid attributes, and with such a choice company of followers, surely deserves to be better known than he is by "the general reader"; and we trust that this volume may be of service in making the stories of "The Faerie Queene " more familiar, and so in tempting the general reader to turn to Spenser's own version of them, and to appreciate his amazing affluence of language, of melody, and of fancy.

Clearly, Spenser does not appeal to everybody at first; we mean that to enjoy him fully needs some little effort to begin with—some distinct effort to put ourselves in communication with him, so to speak; for he is far away from us in many respects. His costume and his accent are very different from ours. He does not seem to be of us or of our world. "His soul" is "like a star": it dwells "apart." We have, it would appear at first sight, nothing in common with him: he moves all alone in a separate sphere—he is not of our flesh and blood. What strikes us at first sight is a certain artificiality and elaborateness, as we think. We cannot put ourselves on confidential terms with him; he is too stately and *point devise.* His art rather asserts than conceals itself

to persons who merely glance at him. But these impressions will be largely or altogether removed, *if the reader will really read "The Faerie Queene."* He will no longer think of its author as a mere phrase-monger, or only a dainty melodist, or the master of a superfine style. He will find himself in communion with a man of high intellect, of a noble nature—of great attraction, not only for his humanism, but for his humanity. To Spenser, Wordsworth's lines in "A Poet's Epitaph" may be applied with particular and profound truth

> "He is retired as noontide dew,
> Or fountain in a noonday grove;
> And you must love him ere to you
> He will seem worthy of your love."

The very opulence of Spenser's genius stands in the way of his due appraisement. There can scarcely be a doubt that if he could have restrained the redundant stream of his poetry, he might have been more worthily recognised. Had he written less, he would have been praised more; as it is, with many readers, *mole ruit sua:* they are overpowered and bewildered by the immense flood. The waters of Helicon seem a torrent deluge. We say his popularity would have been greater, if he could have restrained and controlled this amazing outflow; but, after all, we must take our great poets as we find them. In this very abundance, as in other ways, Spenser was a child of his age, and we must accept him with all his faults as well as with all his excellences. Both faults and excellences are closely inter-connected. *Il a les défauts de ses qualités.*

He said that Chaucer was his poetical master, and more than once he mentions Chaucer with the most generous admiration:—

> "Dan Chaucer, well of English undefyled,
> On Fames eternal beadroll worthy to be fyled."

> "That old Dan Geffrey, in whose gentle spright
> The pure well head of Poesie did dwell."

And Chaucer too may be said to suffer from a very plethora of wealth. Chaucer is apt to be superabundant; but yet he was a model of self-restraint as compared with Spenser. One cannot say in this case, "Like master, like man," or, "Like father, like son." Their geniuses are entirely different—a fact which makes Spenser's devotion to Chaucer all the more noticeable and interesting; and the art of the one is in sharp contrast with the art of the other. Chaucer is a masterly tale-teller: no one in all English poetry equals him in this faculty; he is as supreme in it as Shakespeare in the department of the drama. In his tales Chaucer is, "without o'erflowing, full." The conditions under which they were told beneficially bounded and limited them. Each is multum in parvo. They are very wonders of compression, and yet produce no sense of confinement or excision. Spenser could not possibly have set before himself a better exemplar; but yet he so set him in vain. The contrast between the two poets, considered merely as narrators or story-tellers, is vividly exhibited in the third canto of the Fourth Book of "The Faerie Queene," where, after a reverent obeisance to his great predecessor, he attempts to tell the other half of the half-told story.

> "Of Cambuscan bold,
> Of Camball and of Algarsife,
> And who had Canace to wife,
> That owned the virtuous ring and glass,
> And of the wondrous horse of brass,
> On which the Tartar king did ride."

It is not without some misgiving that he adventures on such a daring task:—

> "Then pardon, O most sacred happie Spirit

> That I thy labours lost[1] may thus revive,
> And steale from thee the meede of thy due merit,
> That none durst ever whilest thou wast alive,

1

one large and glorious mansion as a group of mansions. To use the metaphor of Professor Craik, to whom many subsequent writers on Spenser have been so considerably indebted, and often without any at all adequate acknowledgment, it is a street of fine houses, or, to use another metaphor of Professor Craik's, which also has been freely adopted by other critics, it is in parts a kind of wilderness—a wilderness of wonderful beauty and wealth, in. which it is a delight to wander, but yet a wilderness with paths and tracks dimly and faintly marked, often scarcely to be discerned.

Such was the abundance of Spenser's fancy, and so various and extensive was his learning, that he wrote, it would seem, with an amazing facility, never checked by any paucities of either knowledge or ideas. His pen could scarcely keep pace with his imagination. His material he drew from all accessible sources—from the Greek and Latin classics (his sympathetic acquaintance with Plato is one of his distinctions), from the Italian poets (not only from Ariosto and Tasso, but Berni, Boiardo, Pulci, and others), from the old Romances of Chivalry (especially the Arthurian in Malory's famous rendering, Bevis of Southampton, Amadis de Gaul), from what there was of modern English literature (above all, Chaucer's works, but also Hawes and other minor writers) and of modern French literature (especially Marot), from contemporary history (all the great personages of his time are brought before us in his pages): but all these diverse elements he combines and assimilates in his own fashion, and forms into a compound quite unique, and highly characteristic both of the hour and of the man. No wonder if the modern reader is at first somewhat perplexed and confused; no wonder if he often loses the thread of the story, and fails to comprehend such an astonishing prodigality of incident and of personification. Figure after figure flits before his eyes—the cry is still "They come"; one seems to be n the very birthplace and home of dreams, knights, ladies, monsters, wizards, and witches; all forms of good and evil throng

of salvation and the sword of the SPIRIT, which is the word of GOD."

And when the stranger had put off his own rough clothes and was clad in this armour, straightway he seemed the goodliest man in all that company, and the Lady Una was well pleased with her champion; and, because of the red cross which he wore on his breastplate and on his silver shield, henceforth he was known always as "the Red Cross Knight." But his real name was *Holiness*, and the name of the lady for whom he was to do battle was *Truth*.

So these two rode forth into the world together, while a little way behind followed their faithful attendant, *Prudence*. And now you shall hear some of the adventures that befell the Red Cross Knight and his two companions.

The Wood of Error

The first adventure happened in this way. Scarcely had the Red Cross Knight and the Lady Una started on their journey when the sky suddenly became overcast, and a great storm of rain beat down upon the earth. Looking about for shelter, they

by in quick succession, and we are apt to forget who is who and what is what. Probably some candid good-natured friend complained to Spenser of this complicatedness, which is certainly at its worst in the Third and Fourth Books; and in a certain passage in the Sixth he makes some sort of defence of himself for what might seem divisions or aberrations in the story of Sir Calidore. He compares himself to a ship that, by reason of counter-winds and tides, fails to go straight to its destination, but yet makes for it, and does not lose its compass; see VI. xii. I and 2.

We are sure that for all young readers such a version of Spenser's stories as is given in this volume may be truly serviceable in preparing them for the study of the poem itself. And with some older readers too—and it is to them this Introduction is mainly addressed—we would fain hope this volume may find a hearty welcome, as providing them with a clue to what seems an intricate maze. What we should like to picture to ourselves is young and old reading these stories together, and the elder students selecting for their own benefit, and for the benefit of the younger, a few stanzas here and there from "The Faerie Queene" by way of illustration. Of course we do not make this humble suggestion to the initiated, but to those—and their name is Legion—who at present know nothing or next to nothing of what is certainly one of the masterpieces of English literature.

JOHN W. HALES.

The Red Cross Knight

"Right faithful true he was in deed and word"

The Court of the Queen

ONCE upon a time, in the days when there were still such things as giants and dragons, there lived a great Queen. She reigned over a rich and beautiful country, and because she was good and noble every one loved her, and tried also to be good. Her court was the most splendid one in the world, for all her knights were brave and gallant, and each one thought only of what heroic things he could do, and how best he could serve his royal lady.

The name of the Queen was Gloriana, and each of her twelve chief knights was known as the Champion of some virtue. Thus Sir Guyon was the representative of *Temperance*, Sir Artegall of *Justice*, Sir Calidore of *Courtesy*, and others took up the cause of *Friendship*, *Constancy*, and so on.

Every year the Queen held a great feast, which lasted twelve days. Once, on the first day of the feast, a stranger in poor clothes came to the court, and, falling before the Queen, begged a favour of her. It was always the custom at these feasts that the Queen should refuse nothing that was asked, so she bade the stranger say what it was he wished. Then he besought that, if any cause arose which called for knightly aid, the adventure might be entrusted to him.

When the Queen had given her promise he stood quietly

on one side, and did not try to mix with the other guests who were feasting at the splendid tables. Although he was so brave, he was very gentle and modest, and he had never yet proved his valour in fight, therefore he did not think himself worthy of a place among the knights who had already won for themselves honour and renown.

Soon after this there rode into the city a fair lady on a white ass. Behind her came her servant, a dwarf, leading a warlike horse that bore the armour of a knight. The face of the lady was lovely, but it was very sorrowful.

Making her way to the palace, she fell before Queen Gloriana, and implored her help. She said that her name was Una; she was the daughter of a king and queen who formerly ruled over a mighty country; but, many years ago, a huge dragon came and wasted all the land, and shut the king and queen up in a brazen castle, from which they might never come out. The Lady Una therefore besought Queen Gloriana to grant her one of her knights to fight and kill this terrible dragon.

Then the stranger sprang forward, and reminded the Queen of the promise she had given. At first she was unwilling to consent, for the Knight was young, and, moreover, he had no armour of his own to fight with.

Then said the Lady Una to him, "Will you wear the armour that I bring you, for unless you do you will never succeed in the enterprise, nor kill the horrible monster of Evil? The armour is not new, it is scratched and dinted with many a hard-fought battle, but if you wear it rightly no armour that ever was made will serve you so well."

Then the stranger bade them bring the armour and put it on him, and Una said, "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet

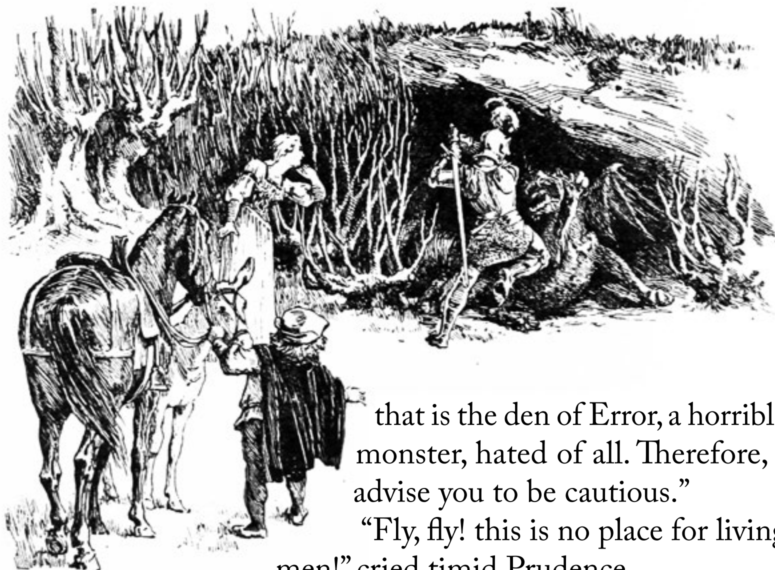
saw, not far away, a shady grove, which seemed just what they wanted. The trees here had great spreading branches, which grew so thickly overhead that no light could pierce the covering of leaves. Through this wood wide paths and alleys, well trodden, led in all directions. It seemed a truly pleasant place, and a safe shelter against the tempest, so they entered in at once.

At first, as they roamed along the winding paths they found nothing but pleasure. Deeper and deeper into the heart of the wood they went, hearing with joy the sweet singing of the birds, and filled with wonder to see so many different kinds of beautiful trees clustered in one spot. But by-and-by, when the storm was over and they wished to go forward on their journey, they found, to their sorrow, that they had lost their way. It was impossible to remember by which path they had come; every way now seemed strange and unknown. Here and there they wandered, backwards and forwards; there were so many turnings to be seen, so many paths, they knew not which to take to lead them out of the wood.

In this perplexity, at last they determined to go straight forward until they found some end, either in or out of the wood. Choosing for this purpose one of the broadest and most trodden paths, they came presently, in the thickest part of the wood, to a hollow cave. Then the Red Cross Knight dismounted from his steed, and gave his spear to the dwarf to hold.

"Take heed," said the Lady Una, "lest you too rashly provoke mischief. This is a wild and unknown place, and peril is often without show. Hold back, therefore, till you know further if there is any danger hidden there."

"Ah, lady," said the Knight, "it were shame to go backward for fear of a hidden danger. Virtue herself gives light to lead through any darkness." "Yes," said Una; "but I know better than you the peril of this place, though now it is too late to bid you go back like a coward. Yet wisdom warns you to stay your steps, before you are forced to retreat. This is the Wandering Wood, and



that is the den of Error, a horrible monster, hated of all. Therefore, I advise you to be cautious."

"Fly, fly! this is no place for living men!" cried timid Prudence.

But the young Knight was full of eagerness and fiery courage, and nothing could stop him. Forth to the darksome hole he went, and looked in. His glittering armour made a little light, by which he could plainly see the ugly monster. Such a great, horrible thing it was, something like a snake, with a long tail twisted in knots, with stings all over it. And near this wicked big creature, whose other name was Falsehood, there were a thousand little ones, varying in shape, but every one bad and ugly; for you may be quite sure that wherever one of this horrible race is found, there will always be many others of the same family lurking near.

When the light shone into the cave all the little creatures fled to hide themselves, and the big parent Falsehood rushed out of her den in terror. But when she saw the shining armour of the Knight she tried to turn back, for she hated light as her deadliest foe, and she was always accustomed to live in darkness, where she could neither see plainly nor be seen.

When the Knight saw that she was trying to escape, he sprang after her as fierce as a lion, and then the great fight began.

Though he strove valiantly, yet he was in sore peril, for suddenly the cunning creature flung her huge tail round and round him, so that he could stir neither hand nor foot.

Then the Lady Una cried out, to encourage him, "Now, now, Sir Knight, show what you are! Add faith unto your force, and be not faint! Kill her, or else she will surely kill you."

With that, fresh strength and courage came to the Knight. Gathering all his force, he got one hand free, and gripped the creature by the throat with so much pain that she was soon compelled to loosen her wicked hold. Then, seeing that she could not hope to conquer in this way, she suddenly tried to stifle the Knight by flinging over him a flood of poison. This made the Knight retreat a moment; then she called to her aid all the horrid little creeping and crawling monsters that he had seen before, and many others of the same kind, or worse. These came swarming and buzzing round the Knight like a cloud of teasing gnats, and tormented and confused him with their feeble stings. Enraged at this fresh attack, he made up his mind to end the matter one way or another, and, rushing at his foe, he killed her with one stroke of his sword.

Then Lady Una, who, from a distance, had watched all that passed, came near in haste to greet his victory.

"Fair Knight," she said, "born under happy star! You are well worthy of that armour in which this day you have won great glory, and proved your strength against a strong enemy. This is your first battle. I pray that you will win many others in like manner."

The Knight deceived by the Magician

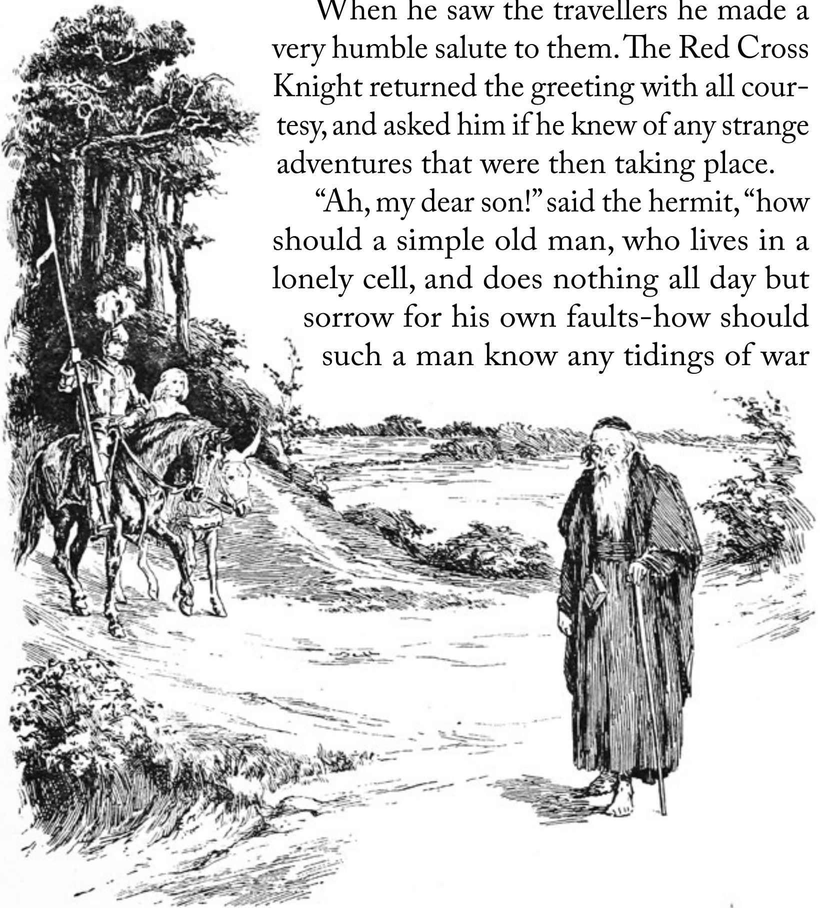
After his victory over Falsehood, the Red Cross Knight again mounted his steed, and he and the Lady Una went on their way. Keeping carefully to one path, and turning neither to the right hand nor the left, at last they found themselves safely out of the Wood of Error.

But now they were to fall into the power of a more dangerous and treacherous foe than even the hateful monster, Falsehood.

They had travelled a long way, and met with no fresh adventure, when at last they chanced to meet in the road an old man. He looked very wise and good. He was dressed in a long black gown, like a hermit, and had bare feet and a grey beard; he had a book hanging from his belt, as was the custom with scholars in those days. He seemed very quiet and sad, and kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and all the time, as he went along, he seemed to be saying prayers, and lamenting over his own wickedness.

When he saw the travellers he made a very humble salute to them. The Red Cross Knight returned the greeting with all courtesy, and asked him if he knew of any strange adventures that were then taking place.

"Ah, my dear son!" said the hermit, "how should a simple old man, who lives in a lonely cell, and does nothing all day but sorrow for his own faults-how should such a man know any tidings of war



or worldly trouble? It is not fitting for me to meddle with such matters. But, if indeed you desire to hear about danger and evil near at hand, I can tell you about a strange man who wastes all the surrounding country."

"That," said the Knight, "is what I chiefly ask about, and I will reward you well if you will guide me to the place where he dwells. For it is a disgrace to knighthood that such a creature should be allowed to live so long."

"His dwelling is far away from here, in the midst of a barren wilderness," answered the old man. "No living person may ever pass it without great danger and difficulty."

"Now," said the Lady Una, "night is drawing near, and I know well that you are wearied with your former fight. Therefore, take rest, and with the new day begin new work."

"You have been well advised, Sir Knight," said the old man. "Day is now spent; therefore take up your abode with me for this night."

The travellers were well content to do this, so they went with the apparently good old man to his home.

It was a little lowly hermitage, down in a dale by the side of a forest, far from the beaten track of travellers. A small chapel was built near, and close by a crystal stream gently welled forth from a never-failing fountain. Arrived at the house, they neither expected nor found any entertainment; but rest was what they chiefly needed, and they were well satisfied, for the noblest mind is always the best contented. The old man had a good store of pleasing words, and knew well how to fit his talk to suit his visitors. The evening passed pleasantly, and then the hermit conducted his guests to the lodgings where they were to spend the night.

But when they were safely asleep a horrid change came over the old man, for in reality he was not good at all, although he pretended to be so. His heart was full of hatred, malice, and deceit. He called himself Archimago, which means a "Great Magician," but his real name was *Hypocrisy*. He knew that as

long as Holiness and Truth kept together, no great harm could come to either of them; so he determined to do everything in his power to separate them. For this purpose he got out all his books of magic, and set to work to devise cunning schemes and spells. He was so clever and wily that he could deceive people much better and wiser than himself. He also had at his bidding many bad little spirits, who ran about and did his messages; these he used to help his friends and frighten his enemies, and he had the power of making them take any shape he wished.

Choosing out two of the worst of these, he sent one on a message to King Morpheus, who rules over the Land of Sleep. He bade him bring back with him a bad, false dream, which Archimago then carried to the sleeping Knight. So cunningly did he contrive the matter, that when the Knight awoke the next morning he never knew that it had only been a dream, but believed that all the things he had seen in his sleep had really happened.

In the meanwhile, Archimago dressed up the other bad spirit to look like Una, so that at a little distance it was impossible to tell any difference in the two figures. He knew that the only way to part Holiness and Truth was to make Holiness believe by some means that Truth was not as good as she appeared to be. He knew also that the Red Cross Knight would believe nothing against the Lady Una except what he saw with his own eyes. Therefore he laid his plans with the greatest care and guile.

Now we shall see how he succeeded in his wicked endeavour.

The Knight forsakes Una

The next morning at daybreak the Knight awoke, sad and unrested after the unpleasant dreams that had come to him in the night. He did not know he had been asleep; he thought the things that troubled him had really happened.

It was scarcely dawn when Archimago rushed up to him in a state of pretended sorrow and indignation.

"The Lady Una has left you," said this wicked mail. "She is not good as she pretends to be. She cares nothing at all for you, nor for the noble work on which you are bound, and she does not mean to go any farther with you on your toilsome journey."

The Red Cross Knight started up in anger. This was like his dream, and he knew not what was true nor what was false.

"Come," said Archimago, "see for yourself."

He pointed to a figure in the distance whom the Knight took to be Una. Then, indeed, he was forced to believe what the wicked magician told him. He now took for granted that Una had been deceiving him all along, and had seized this moment to escape.

He forgot all her real sweetness and goodness and beauty; he only thought how false and unkind she was. He was filled with anger, and he never paused a moment to reflect if there could be any possibility of mistake. Calling his servant, he bade him bring his horse at once, and then these two immediately set forth again on their journey.

Here the Red Cross Knight was wrong, and we shall see presently into what perils and misfortunes he fell because of his hasty want of faith. If he had had a little patience he would soon

have discovered that the figure he saw was only a dressed-up imitation. The real Lady Una all this time was sleeping quietly in her own bower.

When she awoke and found that her two companions had fled in the night and left her alone behind, she was filled with grief and dismay. She could not understand why they should do such a thing. Mounting her white ass, she rode after them with all the speed she could, but the Knight had urged on his steed so fast it was almost useless to try to follow. Yet she never stayed to rest her weary limbs, but went on seeking them over hill and dale, and through wood and plain, sorely grieved in her tender heart that the one she loved best should leave her with such ungentle discourtesy.

When the wicked Archimago saw that his cunning schemes had succeeded so well he was greatly pleased, and set to work to devise fresh mischief. It was Una whom he chiefly hated, and he took great pleasure in her many troubles, for hypocrisy always hates real goodness. He had the power of turning himself into any shape he chose—sometimes he would be a fowl, sometimes a fish, now like a fox, now like a dragon. On the present occasion, to suit his evil purpose, it seemed best to him to put on the appearance of the good knight whom he had so cruelly beguiled.

Therefore, Hypocrisy dressed himself up in imitation armour with a silver shield and everything exactly like the Red Cross Knight. When he sat upon his fiery charger he looked such a splendid warrior you would have thought it was St. George himself.

Holiness fights Faithless, and makes Friends with False Religion

The true St. George, meanwhile, had wandered far away. Now that he had left the Lady Una, he bad nothing but his own will to guide him, and he no longer followed any fixed purpose.

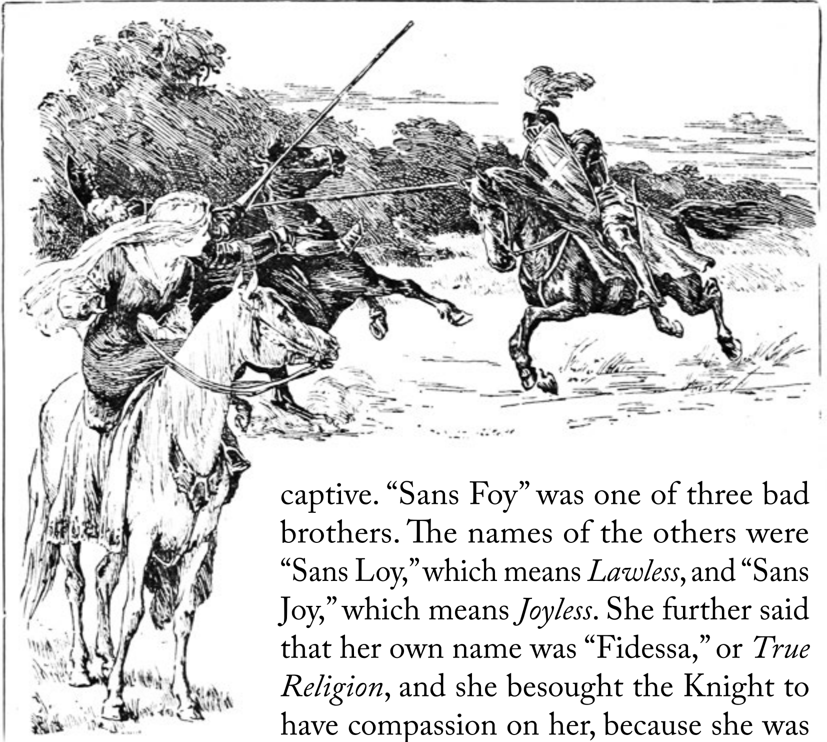
Presently he saw coming to meet him another warrior, fully armed. He was a great, rough fellow, who cared nothing for GOD or man; across his shield, in gay letters, was written "Sans Foy," which means Faithless.

He had with him a companion, a handsome lady, dressed all in scarlet, trimmed with gold and rich pearls. She rode a beautiful palfrey, with gay trappings, and little gold bells tinkled on her bridle. The two came along laughing and talking, but when the lady saw the Red Cross Knight, she left off her mirth at once, and bade her companion attack him.

Then the two knights levelled their spears, and rushed at each other. But when Faithless saw the red cross graven on the breastplate of the other, he knew that he could never prevail against that safeguard. However, he fought with great fury, and the Red Cross Knight had a hard battle before he overcame him. At last he managed to kill him, and he told his servant to carry away the shield of Faithless in token of victory.

When the lady saw her champion fall, she fled in terror; but the Red Cross Knight hurried after her, and bade her stay, telling her that she had nothing now to fear. His brave and gentle heart was full of pity to see her in so great distress, and he asked her to tell him who she was, and who was the man that had been with her.

Melting into tears, she then told him the following sad story:— She said that she was the daughter of an emperor, and had been engaged to marry a wise and good prince. Before the wedding-day, however, the prince fell into the hands of his foes, and was cruelly slain. She went out to look for his dead body, and in the course of her wandering met the Saracen knight, who took her



captive. "Sans Foy" was one of three bad brothers. The names of the others were "Sans Loy," which means *Lawless*, and "Sans Joy," which means *Joyless*. She further said that her own name was "Fidessa," or *True Religion*, and she besought the Knight to have compassion on her, because she was so friendless and unhappy.

"Fair lady," said the Knight, "a heart of flint would grieve to hear of your sorrows. But henceforth rest safely assured that you have found a new friend to help you, and lost an old foe to hurt you. A new friend is better than an old foe."

Then the seemingly simple maiden pretended to look comforted, and the two rode on happily together.

But what the lady had told about herself was quite untrue. Her name was not "Fidessa" at all, but "Duessa," which means *False Religion*. If Una had still been with the Knight, he would never have been led astray; but when he parted from her he had nothing but his own feelings to guide him. He still meant to do right, but he was deceived by his false companion, who brought him into much trouble and danger.

Una and the Lion

All this while the Lady Una, lonely and forsaken, was roaming in search of her lost Knight. How sad was her fate! She, a King's daughter, so beautiful, so faithful, so true, who had done no wrong either in word or deed, was left sorrowful and deserted because of the cunning wiles of a wicked enchanter. Fearing nothing, she sought the Red Cross Knight through woods and lonely wilderness, but no tidings of him ever came to her.

One day, being weary, she alighted from her steed, and lay down on the grass to rest. It was in the midst of a thicket, far from the sight of any traveller. She lifted her veil, and put aside the black cloak which always covered her dress.

> "Her angel's face,
> As the great eye of Heaven shinèd bright,
> And made a sunshine in the shady place."

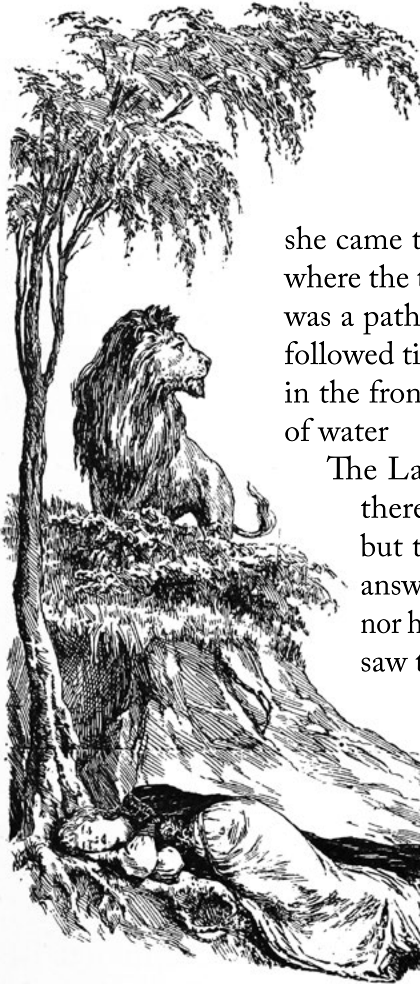
Suddenly, out of the wood there rushed a fierce lion, who, seeing Una, sprang at her to devour her; but, when he came nearer, he was amazed at the sight of her loveliness, and all his rage turned to pity. Instead of tearing her to pieces, he kissed her weary feet and licked her lily hand as if he knew how innocent and wronged she was.[2]

When Una saw the gentleness of this kingly creature, she could not help weeping.

Sad to see her sorrow, he stood gazing at her; all his angry mood changed to compassion, till at last Una mounted her snowy palfrey and once more set out to seek her lost companion.

The lion would not leave her desolate, but went with her as a strong guard and as a faithful companion. When she slept he kept watch, and when she waked he waited diligently, ready to help her in any way he could. He always knew from her looks what she wanted.

2 The figure of the lion may be taken as the emblem of Honour, which always pays respect to Truth.



Long she travelled thus through lonely places, where she thought her wandering Knight might pass, yet never found trace of living man. At length she came to the foot of a steep mountain, where the trodden grass showed that there was a path for people to go. This path she followed till at last she saw, slowly walking in the front of her, a damsel carrying a jar of water

The Lady Una called to her to ask if there were any dwelling-place near, but the rough-looking girl made no answer; she seemed not able to speak, nor hear, nor understand. But when she saw the lion standing beside her, she threw down her pitcher with sudden fear and fled away. Never before in that land had she seen the face of a fair lady, and the sight of the lion filled her with terror. Fast away she fled, and never looked behind till she came at last to her home, where her blind mother sat all day in darkness. Too frightened to speak, she caught hold of her mother with trembling hands, while the poor old woman, full of fear, ran to shut the door of their house.

By this time the weary Lady Una had arrived, and asked if