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To Pessa

For French

W. H. Nicholas.

Headmaster.



Stories from the

Faerie Queene





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

STORIES FROM THE
FAERIE QUEENE
BY MARY MACLEOD

WITH INTRODUCTION BY
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DRAWINGS BY
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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.

Introduction

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

Introduction

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

Introduction

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 well-heads 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

Introduction

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 Poin 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 Poin. "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,

Introduction

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 reads 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

Introduction

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 aboard,
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 attri-

Introduction

butes, 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

Introduction

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 appraisal. 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."

Introduction

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."

Introduction

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 lost¹ may thus revive,
And steale from thee the meede of thy due merit,
That none durst ever whilest thou wast alive,
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

¹ Spenser thought that the latter Part or Parts of the “Squire's Tale” had actually been written but been lost—been “quite devoured” by “cursed eld,” and “brought to nought by little bits,” as he quaintly expresses it. But it may be taken as certain Chaucer left the tale as we have it, that is, “half told.” The closing lines of what we have are clearly unrevised. For some reason or another—trouble or sickness, or his growing infirmity—what would have been one of the most brilliant works of the Middle Ages was never completed, and, like “Christabel” and “Hyperion,” remains only a glorious fragment.

Introduction

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 letter 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 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,

Introduction

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 in the very birthplace and home of dreams, knights, ladies,

Introduction

monsters, wizards, and witches; all forms of good and evil throng 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. 1 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— | PAGE |
|---|------|
| THE COURT OF THE QUEEN | 1 |
| THE WOOD OF ERROR | 4 |
| THE KNIGHT DECEIVED BY THE MAGICIAN | 8 |
| THE KNIGHT FORSAKES UNA | 12 |
| HOLINESS FIGHTS FAITHLESS, AND MAKES FRIENDS WITH FALSE RELIGION | 15 |
| UNA AND THE LION | 17 |
| IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY | 23 |
| THE HOUSE OF PRIDE | 26 |
| THE BATTLE FOR THE SHIELD | 36 |
| UNA AND THE WOODLAND KNIGHT | 41 |
| THE FALSE PILGRIM | 43 |
| GIANT PRIDE | 47 |
| PRINCE ARTHUR | 50 |
| THE WONDROUS BUGLE AND THE MIGHTY SHIELD | 54 |
| THE KNIGHT WITH THE HEMPEN ROPE | 63 |

Contents

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| IN THE CAVE OF DESPAIR | 68 |
| HOW THE RED CROSS KNIGHT CAME TO THE HOUSE OF HOLINESS | 73 |
| THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING | 79 |
| THE LAST FIGHT | 84 |
| "EASE AFTER WAR" | 86 |
| | |
| THE GOOD SIR GUYON— | |
| SIR GUYON MEETS THE MAGICIAN | 92 |
| FRIEND OR FOE? | 96 |
| THE STORY OF THE KNIGHT AND THE LADY | 100 |
| THE THREE SISTERS | 104 |
| BRAGGADOCHIO | 108 |
| FURY'S CAPTIVE | 112 |
| THE ANGER OF FIRE | 116 |
| THE IDLE LAKE | 121 |
| THE REALM OF PLUTO | 127 |
| THE CAVE OF MAMMON | 132 |
| THE CHAMPION OF CHIVALRY | 139 |
| THE HOUSE OF TEMPERANCE | 144 |
| THE ROCK OF REPROACH AND THE WANDERING ISLANDS | 150 |
| SEA-MONSTERS AND LAND-MONSTERS | 156 |
| THE BOWER OF BLISS | 158 |
| | |
| THE LEGEND OF BRITOMART— | |
| HOW SIR GUYON MET A CHAMPION MIGHTIER THAN HIMSELF | 167 |
| HOW BRITOMART FOUGHT WITH SIX KNIGHTS | 172 |
| HOW IT FARED WITH BRITOMART IN CASTLE JOVOUS | 177 |
| HOW BRITOMART LOOKED INTO THE MAGIC MIRROR | 181 |
| HOW BRITOMART WENT TO THE CAVE OF THE MAGICIAN MERLIN | 186 |
| HOW BRITOMART SET FORTH ON HER QUEST | 192 |

Contents

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| HOW BRITOMART CAME TO THE CASTLE OF THE CHURL MALBECCO | 196 |
| HOW BRITOMART WALKED THROUGH FIRE | 200 |
| WHAT BRITOMART SAW IN THE ENCHANTED CHAMBER | 206 |
| HOW BRITOMART RESCUED A FAIR LADY FROM A WICKED ENCHANTER | 212 |
| WHAT STRANGE MEETINGS BEFELL ON THE WAY. | 217 |
| HOW SIR SATYRANE PROCLAIMED A GREAT TOURNA- MENT | 223 |
| WHAT BEFELL ON THE FIRST AND SECOND DAYS OF THE TOURNAMENT | 229 |
| HOW BRITOMART DID BATTLE FOR THE GOLDEN GIRDLE | 234 |
| HOW THE GOLDEN GIRDLE WAS AWARDED TO THE FALSE FLORIMELL | 239 |
| HOW SIR SCUDAMOUR CAME TO THE HOUSE OF CARE | 244 |
| HOW THE "SAVAGE KNIGHT" MET THE "KNIGHT WITH THE EBONY SPEAR" | 250 |
| HOW BRITOMART ENDED HER QUEST | 255 |
| THE SQUIRE OF LOW DEGREE— | |
| THE GIANT WITH FLAMING EYES | 260 |
| "FOR HIS FRIEND'S SAKE" | 268 |
| THE GIANT'S DAUGHTER | 274 |
| THE ADVENTURES OF SIR ARTEGALL— | |
| THE SWORD OF JUSTICE AND THE IRON MAN | 280 |
| THE ADVENTURE OF THE SARACEN'S BRIDGE | 286 |
| THE GIANT WITH THE SCALES | 290 |
| BORROWED PLUMES, AND THE FATE OF THE SNOWY LADY | 294 |
| HOW THE GOOD HORSE BRIGADORE KNEW HIS OWN MASTER | 301 |

Contents

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| THE ADVENTURE OF THE TWO BROTHERS AND THE COFFER | 305 |
| RADIGUND, QUEEN OF THE AMAZONS | 311 |
| HOW SIR ARTEGALL THREW AWAY HIS SWORD | 318 |
| THE HOUSE OF GUILF | 323 |
| THE BATTLE OF QUEEN RADIGUND AND BRITOMART | 331 |
| THE ADVENTURE OF THE DAMSEL, THE TWO KNIGHTS, AND THE SULTAN'S HORSES | 336 |
| THE ADVENTURE AT THE DEN OF DECEIT | 345 |
| THE ADVENTURE OF THE TYRANT GRANTORTO | 352 |
| SIR CALIDORE, KNIGHT OF COURTESY— | |
| THE QUEST OF THE BLATANT BEAST | 360 |
| THE PROUD DISCOURTEOUS KNIGHT | 369 |
| CORIDON AND PASTORELLA | 374 |
| IN THE BRIGANDS' DEN | 381 |
| THE BEAST WITH A THOUSAND TONGUES | 389 |





FRONTISPIECE— On the morning of the third day he slew the Dragon.

TITLE-PAGE.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| Heading to Introduction | vii |
| " Contents | xxi |
| " List of Illustrations | xxv |
| Arming the Knight | 1 |
| There rode into the city a fair lady | 3 |
| Rushing at his foe | 6 |
| At last they chanced to meet an old man | 9 |
| "The Lady Una has left you!" | 13 |
| Sleeping quietly in her bower | 14 |
| The two knights levelled their spears and rushed at each other | 16 |
| When she slept, he kept watch | 19 |
| He was afraid to go too near | 23 |
| Tearing off his helmet | 24 |
| With his sword he struck the lion | 25 |
| They saw in front of them a grand and beautiful building | 26 |

List of Illustrations

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| High above all sat the Queen | 29 |
| The coach was drawn by an ugly and ill-matched team | 33 |
| Duessa stole secretly to the lodging of the pagan knight | 37 |
| A poor, simple pilgrim | 45 |
| The Knight tried to seize his weapons | 48 |
| The Prince carried him out of the castle | 59 |
| They saw a knight galloping towards them | 65 |
| They came to the place where Despair had his dwelling | 69 |
| The third daughter, whose name was Love | 77 |
| It was called "The City of the Great King" | 81 |
| The Red Cross Knight and Una were betrothed | 87 |
| Sir Guyon and the Black Palmer | 92 |
| He saw marching to meet him a noble Knight | 93 |
| A beautiful lady sat alone, weeping bitterly | 97 |
| An end to all her sorrow | 103 |
| They came to a Castle on a rock near the sea | 105 |
| "Yield thyself my captive!" | 110 |
| A savage man beating a handsome youth | 113 |
| "There is now coming a knight of wondrous power" | 119 |
| "Lady, you have not done right to mislead me like this" | 123 |
| He began with trembling hands to pour them through a hole into the earth | 129 |
| "Behold what living eye has never seen before" | 135 |
| Watched over by a beautiful angel | 140 |
| The Knights soon drove them into confusion | 147 |
| The ferryman had to put forth all his strength and skill | 153 |
| A pack of wild beasts rushed forward | 159 |
| Acrasia tried to set herself free | 164 |
| Disguising themselves in poor clothes | 167 |
| Hurled from his horse | 169 |
| Britomart saw six knights | 173 |
| One of them shot a keen arrow at her | 179 |

List of Illustrations

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| Britomart looked well at the figure of this Knight | 184 |
| Deep in some work of wonder | 189 |
| Glaucé, taking down the armour, dressed her in it | 193 |
| The valiant stranger was a beautiful maiden | 198 |
| The flames parted on either side | 203 |
| He rode on a ravenous lion | 209 |
| Fastened to a brazen pillar | 214 |
| They presently saw two knights in armour | 219 |
| Feeding on the dead body of a milk-white palfrey | 225 |
| Both champions were felled to the ground | 231 |
| Smote him sorely on the visor | 237 |
| Britomart showed her lovely Amoret | 241 |
| They heard the sound of many iron hammers | 247 |
| Threatening to strike | 254 |
| At last she was obliged to leave him | 258 |
| The rescue of Amoret | 260 |
| A mighty man, riding on a dromedary | 265 |
| The Giant's daughter came one day in glee to the prison | 271 |
| He found Pœana playing on a rote | 275 |
| The Saracen's Bridge | 280 |
| Wild beasts . . . wrongfully oppressing others of their own kind | 283 |
| Sir Artégall gripped him fast by his iron collar | 288 |
| They beheld a giant on a rock, holding a pair of scales | 291 |
| Straightway the enchanted damsel vanished into nothing | 299 |
| He scourged him out of the court | 303 |
| "I helped to save her from the jaws of death" | 308 |
| In the midst of them he saw a Knight pinioned | 312 |
| He was dazzled with astonishment | 320 |
| She came to a window opening to the west | 326 |
| In the temple of Isis | 333 |
| The Sultan's horses, like hungry hounds, cruelly chased him | 342 |
| The noise of her weeping speedily brought forth the villain | 347 |

List of Illustrations

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| Artegall, with his sword Crysaor, swiftly cut off his head | 359 |
| Sir Calidore and the shepherds | 360 |
| A comely Squire, bound hand and foot to a tree | 363 |
| The Knight invited him to sit down beside them | 373 |
| He saw seated on a little hillock a beautiful maiden | 375 |
| The brigands made search to see who was slain | 383 |
| He threw his shield on him, and pinned him to the ground | 391 |



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

The Red Cross Knight

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.

The Court of the Queen



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 dented 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 Red Cross Knight

the helmet 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 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

The Wood of Error

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."

The Red Cross Knight

“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 *Falschood*, there were a thousand little ones, all

The Wood of Error

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

The Red Cross Knight

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.

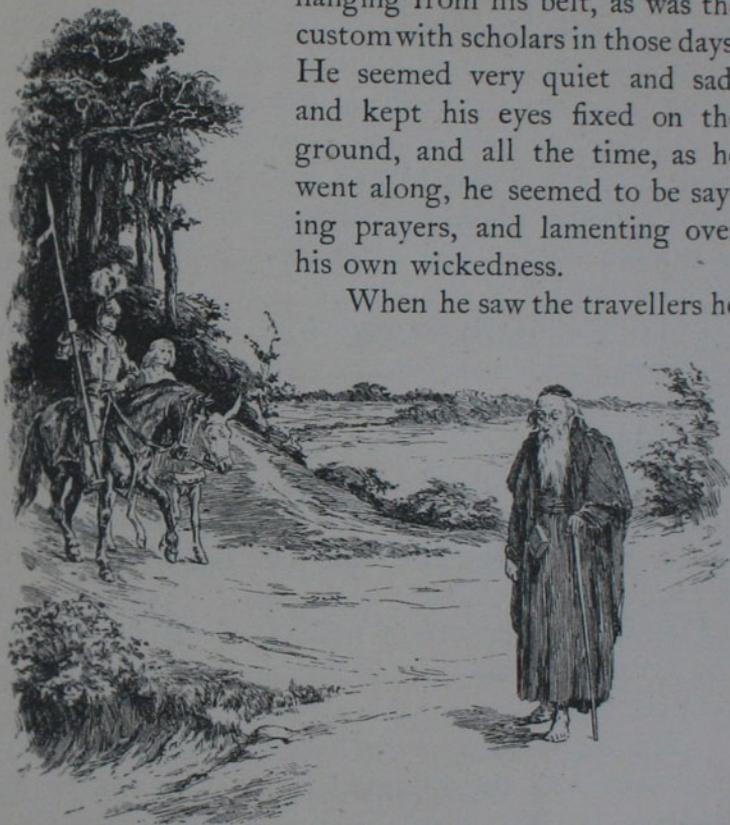
But now they were to fall into the power of a more dangerous and treacherous foe than even the hateful monster, Falsehood.

They had travelled a long way, and met with no fresh adventure, when at last they chanced to meet in

Knight deceived by the Magician

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

The Red Cross Knight

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.

Knight deceived by the Magician

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

The Red Cross Knight

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 man. "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

The Knight forsakes Una

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

The Red Cross Knight

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

Holiness fights Faithless

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

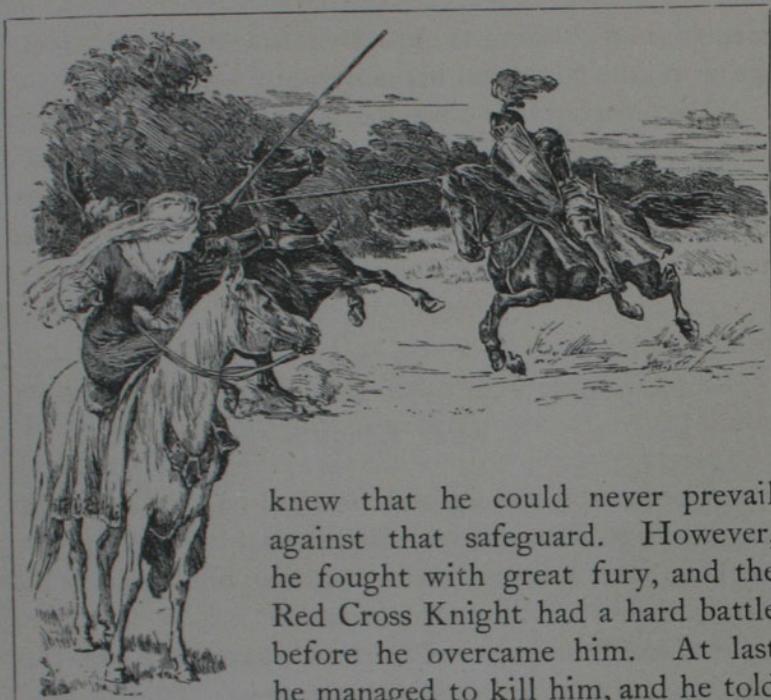
The true St. George, meanwhile, had wandered far away. Now that he had left the Lady Una, he had nothing but his own will to guide him, and he no longer followed any fixed purpose.

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

The Red Cross Knight



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

Una and the Lion

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

The Red Cross Knight

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 shined 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.¹

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

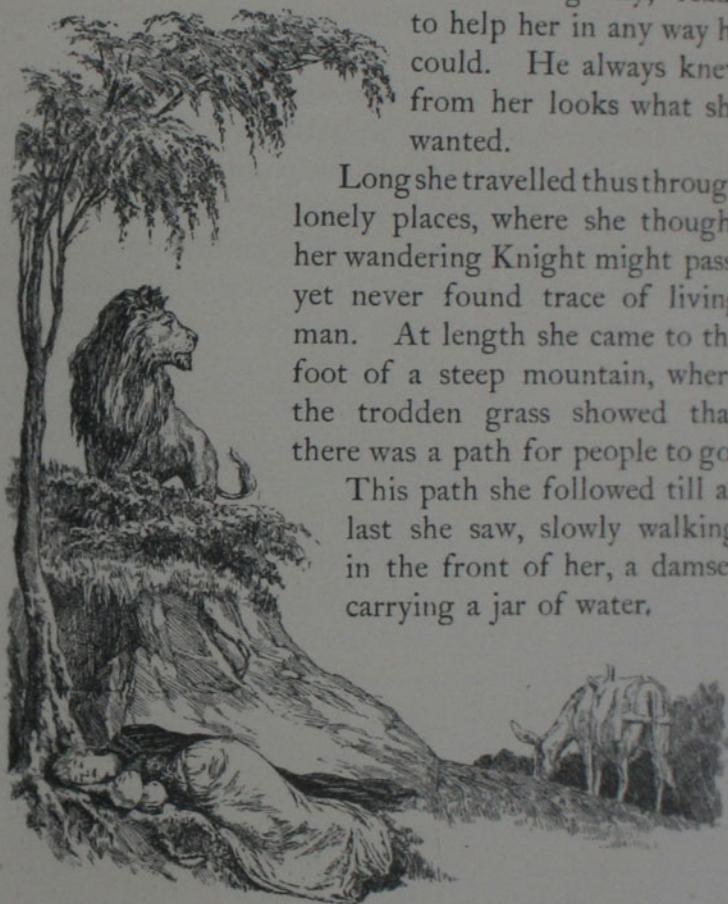
Sad to see her sorrow, he stood gazing at her; all his angry mood changed to compassion, till at last Una mounted her snowy palfrey and once more set out to seek her lost companion.

¹ The figure of the lion may be taken as the emblem of *Honour*, which always pays respect to *Truth*.

Una and the Lion

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.

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

The Red Cross Knight

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 she might come in; but, when no answer came to her request, the lion, with his strong claws, tore open the wicket-door and let her into the little hut. There she found the mother and daughter crouched up in a dark corner, nearly dead with fear.

The name of the poor old blind woman was *Superstition*. She tried to be good in a very mistaken way. She hid herself in her dark corner, and was quite content never to come out of it. When the beautiful Lady Una, who was all light and truth, came to the hut, the mother and daughter, instead of making her welcome, hated her, and would gladly have thrust her out.

Trying to soothe their needless dread, Una spoke gently to them, and begged that she might rest that night in their small cottage. To this they unwillingly agreed, and Una lay down with the faithful lion at her feet to keep watch. All night, instead of sleeping, she wept, still sorrowing for her lost Knight and longing for the morning.

In the middle of the night, when all the inmates

Una and the Lion

of the little cottage were asleep, there came a furious knocking at the door. This was a wicked thief, called "Kirkrapine," or *Church-robber*, whose custom it was to go about stealing ornaments from churches, and clothes from clergymen, and robbing the alms-boxes of the poor. He used to share his spoils with the daughter of the blind woman, and to-night he had come with a great sackful of stolen goods.

When he received no answer to his knocking, he got very angry indeed, and made a loud clamour at the door; but the women in the hut were too much afraid of the lion to rise and let him in. At last he burst open the door in a great rage and tried to enter, but the lion sprang upon him and tore him to pieces before he could even call for help. His terrified friends scarcely dared to weep or move in case they should share his fate.

When daylight came, Una rose and started again on her journey with the lion to seek the wandering Knight. As soon as they had left, the two frightened women came forth, and, finding Church-robber slain outside the cottage, they began to wail and lament; then they ran after Una, railing at her for being the cause of all their ill; they called after her evil wishes that mischief and misery might fall on her and follow her all the way, and that she might ever wander in endless error.

When they saw that their bad words were of no avail, they turned back, and there in the road they met a knight, clad in armour; but, though he looked such a grand warrior, it was really only the wicked

The Red Cross Knight

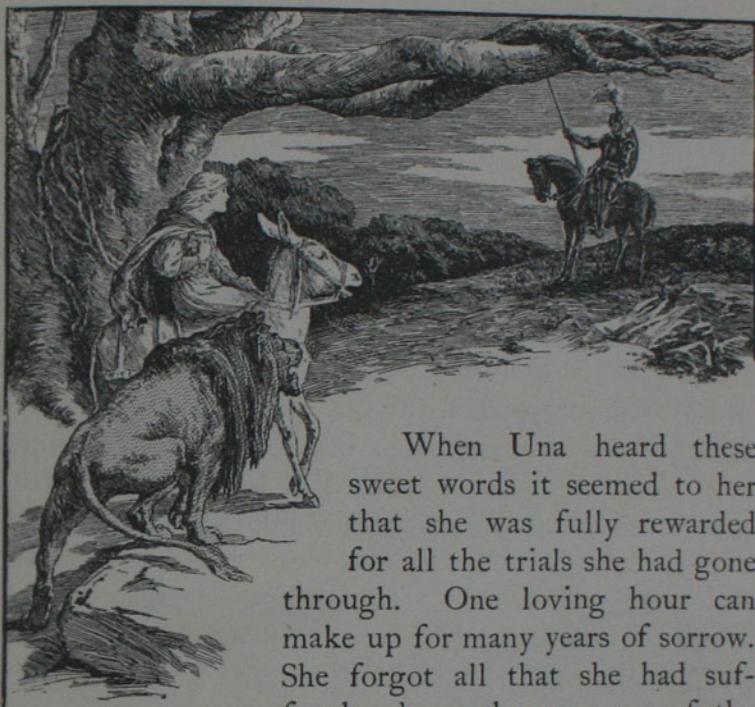
enchanter, Hypocrisy, who was seeking Una, in order to work her fresh trouble. When he saw the old woman, Superstition, he asked if she could give him any tidings of the lady. Therewith her passion broke out anew; she told him what had just happened, blaming Una as the cause of all her distress. Archimago pretended to condole with her, and then, finding out the direction in which Una had gone, he followed as quickly as possible.

Before long he came up to where Una was slowly travelling; but seeing the noble lion at her side, he was afraid to go too near, and turned away to a hill at a little distance. When Una saw him, she thought, from his shield and armour, that it was her own true knight, and she rode up to him, and spoke meekly, half-frightened.

“Ah, my lord,” she said, “where have you been so long out of my sight? I feared that you hated me, or that I had done something to displease you, and that made everything seem dark and cheerless. But welcome now, welcome!”

“My dearest lady,” said false Hypocrisy, “you must not think I could so shame knighthood as to desert you. But the truth is, the reason why I left you so long was to seek adventure in a strange place, where Archimago said there was a mighty robber, who worked much mischief to many people. Now he will trouble no one further. This is the good reason why I left you. Pray believe it, and accept my faithful service, for I have vowed to defend you by land and sea. Let your grief be over.”

In the Hands of the Enemy



When Una heard these sweet words it seemed to her that she was fully rewarded for all the trials she had gone through. One loving hour can make up for many years of sorrow. She forgot all that she had suffered; she spoke no more of the past. True love never looks back, but always forward. Before her stood her Knight, for whom she had toiled so sorely, and Una's heart was filled with joy.

In the Hands of the Enemy

Una and the Magician (who was disguised as the Red Cross Knight) had not gone far when they saw some one riding swiftly towards them. The new-comer was on a fleet horse, and was fully armed; his look was stern, cruel, and revengeful. On his shield in bold

The Red Cross Knight

letters was traced the name "Sans Loy," which means *Lawless*. He was one of the brothers of "Sans Foy," or Faithless, whom the real Red Cross Knight had slain, and he had made up his mind to avenge his brother's death.

When he saw the red cross graven on the shield which Hypocrisy carried, he thought that he had found the foe of whom he was in search, and, levelling his spear, he prepared for battle. Hypocrisy, who was a mean coward, and had never fought in his life, was nearly fainting with fear; but the Lady Una spoke such cheering words that he began to feel more hopeful. Lawless, however, rushed at him with such fury that he drove his lance right through the other's shield,



and bore him to the ground. Leaping from his horse, he ran towards him, meaning to kill him, and exclaiming, "Lo, this is the worthy reward of him that slew Faithless!"

Una begged the cruel knight to have pity on his fallen foe, but her words were of no avail. Tearing off

In the Hands of the Enemy

his helmet, Lawless would

have slain him at once, but he stopped in astonishment when, instead of the Red Cross Knight, he saw the face of Archimago. He knew well that crafty Hypocrisy was skilled in all forms



of deceit, but that he took care to shun fighting and brave deeds. Now, indeed, had Hypocrisy's guile met with a just punishment.

"Why, luckless Archimago, what is this?" cried Lawless. "What evil chance brought *you* here? Is it your fault, or my mistake, that I have wounded my friend instead of my foe?"

But the old Magician answered nothing; he lay still as if he were dying. So Lawless spent no more time over him, but went over to where Una waited, lost in amazement and sorely perplexed.

Her companion, whom she had imagined was her own true Knight, turned out to be nothing but an impostor, and she herself had fallen into the hands of a cruel enemy.

The Red Cross Knight

When the brave lion saw Lawless go up to Una and try to drag her roughly from her palfrey, full of kingly rage he rushed to protect her. He flew at Lawless and almost tore his shield to pieces with his sharp claws. But, alas! he could not overcome the warrior, for Lawless was one of the strongest men that ever wielded spear, and was well skilled in feats of arms. With his sharp sword he struck the lion, and the noble creature fell dead at his feet.

Poor Una, what was to become of her now? Her faithful guardian was gone, and she found herself the captive of a cruel foe. Lawless paid no heed to her tears and entreaties. Placing her on his own horse, he rode off with her; while her snow-white ass, not willing to forsake her, followed meekly at a distance.



The House of Pride

Now the Red Cross Knight, because of his lack of loyalty to Una, fell into much danger and difficulty. His first fault was in believing evil of her so readily, and leaving her forlorn; after that he was too easily beguiled by the pretended goodness and beauty of

The House of Pride

Duessa. All who fight in a good cause must beware of errors such as these. If matters do not go exactly as we wish, we must not lose heart and get impatient; even if we cannot understand what is happening, we must trust that all will be well. We must keep steadily to the one true aim set before us, or else, like the Red Cross Knight, we may be led astray by false things that are only pleasant in appearance, and have no real goodness.

Duessa and the Knight travelled for a long way, till at last they saw in front of them a grand and beautiful building. It seemed as if it were the house of some mighty Prince; a broad highway led up to it, all trodden bare by the feet of those who flocked thither. Great troops of people of all sorts and condition journeyed here, both by day and night. But few returned, unless they managed to escape, beggared and disgraced, when, ever afterwards, they lived a life of misery.

To this place Duessa guided the Red Cross Knight, for she was tired with the toilsome journey, and the day was nearly over.

It was a stately palace, built of smooth bricks, cunningly laid together without mortar. The walls were high, but neither strong nor thick, and they were covered with dazzling gold-foil. There were many lofty towers and picturesque galleries, with bright windows and delightful bowers; and on the top there was a dial to tell the time.

It was lovely to look at, and did much credit to the workman that designed it; but it was a great pity

The Red Cross Knight

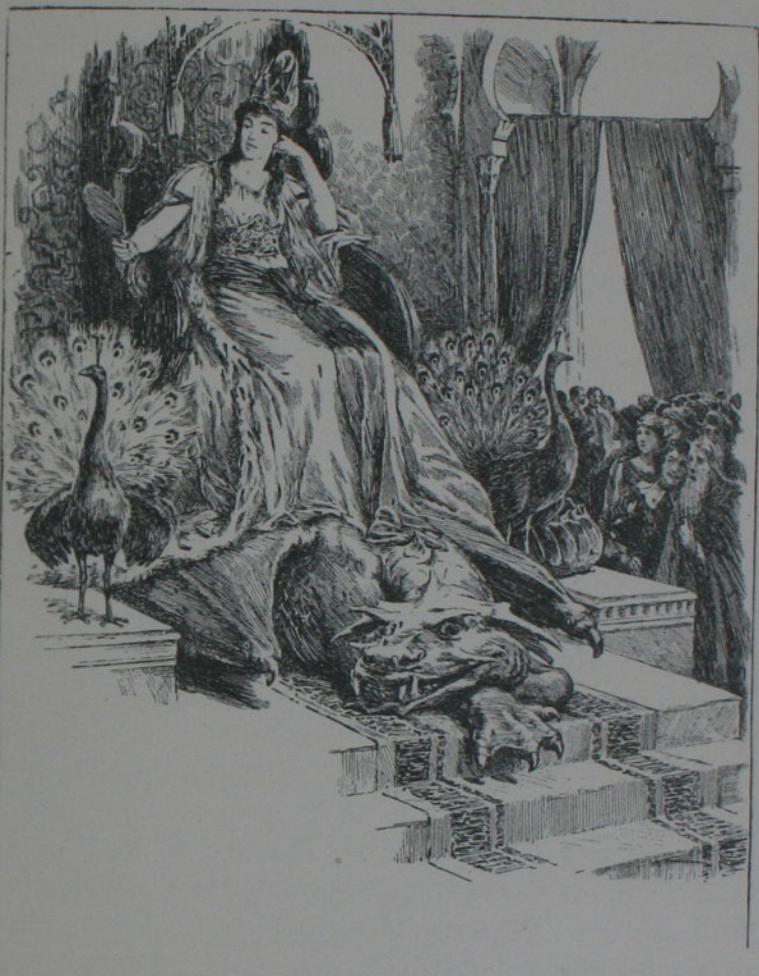
that so fair a building rested on so frail a foundation. For it was mounted high up on a sandy hill that kept shifting and falling away. Every breath of heaven made it shake; and all the back parts, that no one could see, were old and ruinous, though cunningly painted over.

Arrived here, Duessa and the Red Cross Knight passed in at once, for the gates stood wide open to all. They were in charge of a porter, called "Ill-come," who never denied entrance to any one. The hall inside was hung with costly tapestry and rich curtains. Numbers of people, rich and poor, were waiting here, in order to gain sight of the Lady of this wonderful place.

Duessa and the Knight passed through this crowd, who all gazed at them, and entered the Presence Chamber of the Queen.

What a dazzling sight met their eyes! Such a scene of splendour had never been known in the court of any living prince. A noble company of lords and ladies stood on every side, and made the place more beautiful with their presence.

High above all there was a cloth of state, and a rich throne as bright as the sun. On the throne, clad in royal robes, sat the Queen. Her garments were all glittering with gold and precious jewels; but so great was her beauty that it dimmed even the brightness of her throne. She sat there in princely state, shining like the sun. She hated and despised all lowly things of earth. Under her scornful feet lay a dreadful dragon, with a hideous tail. In her hand she held a mirror in which she often looked at her face; she took



“Lo! underneath her scornful feet was layne
A dreadful dragon with an hideous trayne;
And in her hand she held a mirrbour bright,
Wherein her face she often viewed fayne,
And in her self-loved semblance took delight.”

The House of Pride

great delight in her own appearance, for she was fairer than any living woman.

She was the daughter of grisly Pluto, King of Hades, and men called her proud Lucifera. She had crowned herself a queen, but she had no rightful kingdom at all, nor any possessions. The power which she had obtained she had usurped by wrong and tyranny. She ruled her realm not by laws, but by craft, and according to the advice of six old wizards, who with their bad counsels upheld her kingdom.

As soon as the Knight and Duessa came into the presence-chamber, an usher, by name *Vanity*, made room and prepared a passage for them, and brought them to the lowest stair of the high throne. Here they made a humble salute, and declared that they had come to see the Queen's royal state, and to prove if the wide report of her great splendour were true.

With scornful eyes, half unwilling to look so low, she thanked them disdainfully, and did not show them any courtesy worthy of a queen, scarcely even bidding them arise. The lords and ladies of the court, however, were all eager to appear well in the eyes of the strangers. They shook out their ruffles, and fluffed up their curls, and arranged their gay attire more trimly; and each one was jealous and spiteful of the others.

They did their best to entertain the Knight, and would gladly have made him one of their company. To Duessa, also, they were most polite and gracious, for formerly she had been well known in that court. But to the knightly eyes of the warrior all the glitter of the crowd seemed vain and worthless, and he thought

The Red Cross Knight

that it was unbecoming so great a queen to treat a strange knight with such scant courtesy.

Suddenly, Queen Lucifera rose from her throne, and called for her coach. Then all was bustle and confusion, every one rushing violently forth. Blazing with brightness she paced down the hall, like the sun dawning in the east. All the people thronging the hall thrust and pushed each other aside to gaze upon her. Her glorious appearance amazed the eyes of all men.

Her coach was adorned with gold and gay garlands, and was one of the most splendid carriages ever seen, but it was drawn by an ugly and ill-matched team. On every animal rode one of her evil Councillors, who was much like in nature to the creature that carried him.

The first of these, who guided all the rest, was *Idleness*, the nurse of Sin. He chose to ride a slothful ass; he looked always as if he were half asleep, and as if he did not know whether it were night or day. He shut himself away from all care, and shunned manly exercise, but if there were any mischief to be done he joined in it readily. The Queen was indeed badly served who had *Idleness* for her leading Councillor.

Next to him came *Gluttony*, riding on a pig; then *Self-indulgence* on a goat, *Avarice* on a camel, *Envy* on a wolf, and *Wrath* on a lion. Each in his own way was equally hideous and hateful.

As they went along, crowds of people came round, shouting for joy; always before them a foggy mist sprang up, covering all the land, and under their feet lay the dead bones of men who had wandered from the right path.



“ . . . This was drawne of six unequal beasts
On which her six sage Counsellours did ryde.”

The House of Pride

So forth they went in this goodly array to enjoy the fresh air, and to sport in the flowery meadows. Among the rest, next to the chariot, rode the false Duessa, but the good Knight kept far apart, not joining in the noisy mirth which seemed unbecoming a true warrior.

Having enjoyed themselves awhile in the pleasant fields, they returned to the stately palace. Here they found that a wandering knight had just arrived. On his shield, in red letters, was written the name "Sans Joy," which means *Joyless*, and he was the brother of *Faithless*, whom the Red Cross Knight had slain, and of *Lawless*, who had taken Una captive. He looked sullen and revengeful, as if he had in his mind bitter and angry thoughts.

When he saw the shield of his slain brother, Faithless, in the hands of the Red Cross Knight's page, he sprang at him and snatched it away. But the Knight had no mind to lose the trophy which he had won in battle, and, attacking him fiercely, he again got possession of it.

Thereupon they hastily began to prepare for battle, clashing their shields and shaking their swords in the air. But the Queen, on pain of her severe displeasure, commanded them to restrain their fury, saying that if either had a right to the shield, they should fight it out fairly the next day.

That night was passed in joy and gaiety, feasting and making merry in bower and hall. The steward of the court was *Gluttony*, who poured forth lavishly of his abundance to all; and then the chamberlain, *Sloth*, summoned them to rest.

The Red Cross Knight

The Battle for the Shield

That night, when every one slept, Duessa stole secretly to the lodgings of the pagan knight Joyless. She found him wide awake, restless, and troubled, busily devising how he might annoy his foe. To him she spoke many untrue words.

"Dear Joyless," she said, "I am so glad that you have come. I have passed many sad hours for the sake of Faithless, whom this traitor slew. He has treated me very cruelly, keeping me shut up in a dark cave; but now I will take shelter with you from his disdainful spite. To you belongs the inheritance of your brother, Faithless. Let him not be unavenged."

"Fair lady, grieve no more for past sorrows," said Joyless; "neither be afraid of present peril, for needless fear never profited any one, nor is it any good to lament over misfortunes that cannot be helped. Faithless is dead, his troubles are over; but I live, and I will avenge him."

"Oh, but I fear what may happen," she answered, "and the advantage is on his side."

"Why, lady, what advantage can there be when both fight alike?" asked Joyless.

"Yes, but he bears a charmed shield," said Duessa, "and also enchanted armour that no one can pierce. None can wound the man that wears them."

"Charmed or enchanted, I care not at all," said Joyless fiercely, "nor need you tell me anything more about them. But, fair lady, go back whence you came and

The Battle for the Shield

rest awhile. To-morrow I shall subdue the Red Cross Knight, and give you the heritage of dead Faithless."



"Wherever I am, my secret aid shall follow you," she answered, and then she left him.

At the first gleam of dawn the Red Cross Knight

The Red Cross Knight

sprang up and dressed himself for battle in his sun-bright armour. Forth he stepped into the hall, where there were many waiting to gaze at him, curious to know what fate was in store for the stranger knight. Many minstrels were there, making melody to drive away sadness; many singers that could tune their voices skilfully to harp and viol; many chroniclers that could tell old stories of love and war.

Soon after, came the pagan knight, Joyless, warily armed in woven mail. He looked sternly at the Red Cross Knight, who cared not at all how any living creature looked at him. Cups of wine were brought to the warriors, with dainty Eastern spices, and they both swore a solemn oath to observe faithfully the laws of just and fair fighting.

At last, with royal pomp, came the Queen. She was led to a railed-in space of the green field, and placed under a stately canopy. On the other side, full in all men's view, sat Duessa, and on a tree near was hung the shield of Faithless. Both Duessa and the shield were to be given to the victor.

A shrill trumpet bade them prepare for battle. The pagan knight was stout and strong, and his blows fell like great iron hammers. He fought for cruelty and vengeance. The Red Cross Knight was fierce, and full of youthful courage; he fought for praise and honour. So furious was their onslaught that sparks of fire flew from their shields, and deep marks were hewn in their helmets.

Thus they fought, the one for wrong, the other for right, and each tried to put his foe to shame. At last

The Battle for the Shield

Joyless chanced to look at his brother's shield which was hanging near. The sight of this doubled his anger, and he struck at his foe with such fury that the Knight reeled twice, and seemed likely to fall. To those who looked on, the end of the battle appeared doubtful, and false Duessa began to call loudly to Joyless,—

“Thine the shield, and I, and all!”

Directly the Red Cross Knight heard her voice he woke out of the faintness that had overcome him; his faith, which had grown weak, suddenly became strong, and he shook off the deadly cold that was creeping over him.

This time he attacked Joyless with such vigour that he brought him down upon his knees. Lifting his sword, he would have slain him, when suddenly a dark cloud fell between them. Joyless was seen no more; he had vanished! The Knight called aloud to him, but received no answer: his foe was completely hidden by the darkness.

Duessa rose hastily from her place, and ran to the Red Cross Knight, saying,—

“O noblest Knight, be angry no longer! Some evil power has covered your enemy with the cloud of night, and borne him away to the regions of darkness. The conquest is yours, I am yours, the shield and the glory are yours.”

Then the trumpets sounded, and running heralds made humble homage, and the shield, the cause of all the enmity, was brought to the Red Cross Knight. He went to the Queen, and, kneeling before her, offered her his service, which she accepted with thanks and much satisfaction, greatly praising his chivalry.

The Red Cross Knight

So they marched home, the Knight next the Queen, while all the people followed with great glee, shouting and clapping their hands. When they got to the palace the Knight was given gentle attendants and skilled doctors, for he had been badly hurt in the fight. His wounds were washed with wine, and oil, and healing herbs, and all the while lovely music was played round his bed to beguile him from grief and pain.

While this was happening, Duessa secretly left the palace, and stole away to the Kingdom of Darkness, which is ruled over by the Queen of Night. This queen was a friend of her own, and was always ready to help in any bad deeds. Duessa told her of what had befallen the pagan knight, Joyless, and persuaded her to carry him away to her own dominions. Here he was placed under the care of a wonderful doctor, who was able to cure people by magic, and Duessa hastened back to the House of Pride.

When she got there she was dismayed to find that the Red Cross Knight had already left, although he was not nearly healed from the wounds which he had received in battle.

The reason why he left was this. One day his servant, whose name you may remember was Prudence, came and told him that he had discovered in the palace a huge, deep dungeon, full of miserable prisoners. Hundreds of men and women were there, wailing and lamenting—grand lords and beautiful ladies, who, from foolish behaviour or love of idle pomp, had wasted their wealth and fallen into the power of the wicked Queen of Pride.

Una and the Woodland Knight

When the good Red Cross Knight heard this, he determined to stay no longer in such a place of peril.

Rising before dawn, he left by a small side door, for he knew that if he were seen he would be at once put to death. To him the place no more seemed beautiful; it filled him with horror and disgust. Riding under the castle wall, the way was strewn with hundreds of dead bodies of those who had perished miserably. Such was the dreadful sight of the House of Pride.

Una and the Woodland Knight

We left Una in a piteous plight, in the hands of a cruel enemy, the pagan knight Lawless.

Paying no heed to her tears and entreaties, he placed her on his horse, and rode off with her till he came to a great forest.

Una was almost in despair, for there seemed no hope of any rescue. But suddenly there came a wonderful way of deliverance.

In the midst of the thick wood Lawless halted to rest. This forest was inhabited by numbers of strange wild creatures, quite untaught, almost savages. Hearing Una's cries for help, they came flocking up to see what was the matter. Their fierce, rough appearance so frightened Lawless that he jumped on to his horse and rode away as fast as he could.

When the wild wood-folk came up they found Una sitting desolate and alone. They were amazed at such a strange sight, and pitied her sad condition.

The Red Cross Knight

They all stood astonished at her loveliness, and could not imagine how she had come there.

Una, for her part, was greatly terrified, not knowing whether some fresh danger awaited her. Half in fear, half in hope, she sat still in amazement. Seeing that she looked so sorrowful, the savages tried to show that they meant to be friendly. They smiled, and came forward gently, and kissed her feet. Then she guessed that their hearts were kind, and she arose fearlessly and went with them, no longer afraid of any evil.

Full of gladness, they led her along, shouting and singing and dancing round her, and strewing all the ground with green branches, as if she had been a queen. Thus they brought her to their chief, old Sylvanus.

When Sylvanus saw her, like the rest he was astonished at her beauty, for he had never seen anything so fair. Her fame spread through the forest, and all the other dwellers in it came to look at her. The Hamadryads, who live in the trees, and the Naiades, who live in the flowing fountains, all came flocking to see her lovely face. As for the woodlanders, henceforth they thought no one on earth fair but Una.

Glad at such good fortune, Una was quite contented to please the simple folk. She stayed a long while with them, to gather strength after her many troubles. During this time she did her best to teach them, but the poor things were so ignorant, it was almost impossible to make them understand the difference between right and wrong.

It chanced one day that a noble knight came to

The False Pilgrim

the forest to seek his kindred who dwelt there. He had won much glory in wars abroad, and distant lands were filled with his fame. He was honest, faithful, and true, though not very polished in manner, nor accustomed to a courtly life. His name was Sir Satyrane. He had been born and brought up in the forest, and his father had taught him nothing but to be utterly fearless. When he grew up, and could master everything in the forest, he went abroad to fight foreign foes, and his fame was soon carried through all lands. It was always his custom, after some time spent in labour and adventure, to return for a while to his native woods, and so it happened on this occasion that he came across Una.

The first time he saw her she was surrounded by the savages, whom she was trying to teach good and holy things. Sir Satyrane wondered at the wisdom which fell from her sweet lips, and when, later on, he saw her gentle and kindly deeds, he began to admire and love her. Although noble at heart, he had never had any one to teach him, but now he began to learn from Una faith and true religion.

The False Pilgrim

Una's thoughts were still fixed on the Red Cross Knight, and she was sorry to think of his perilous wandering. She was always sad at heart, and spent her time planning how to escape. At last she told her wish to Sir Satyrane, who, glad to please her in

The Red Cross Knight

any way, began to devise how he could help her to get free from the savage folk. One day, when Una was left alone, all the woodlanders having gone to pay court to their chief, old Sylvanus, she and Sir Satyrane rode away together. They went so fast and so carefully that no one could overtake them, and thus at last they came to the end of the forest, and out into the open plain.

Towards evening, after they had journeyed a long distance, they met a traveller. He seemed as if he were a poor, simple pilgrim; his clothes were dusty and travel-worn; his face brown and scorched with the sun; he leant upon a staff, and carried all his necessities in a scrip, or little bag, hanging behind.

Sir Satyrane asked if there were any tidings of new adventures, but the stranger had heard of none. Then Una began to ask if he knew anything about a knight who wore on his shield a red cross.

"Alas! dear lady," he replied, "I may well grieve to tell you the sad news! I have seen that knight with my own eyes, both alive and also dead."

When Una heard these cruel words she was filled with sorrow and dismay, and begged the pilgrim to tell her everything he knew.

Then he related how on that very morning he had seen two knights preparing for battle. One was a pagan, the other was the Red Cross Knight. They fought with great fury, and in the end the Red Cross Knight was slain.

This story was altogether false. The pretended pilgrim was no other than the wicked enchanter



“The knight, approaching nigh, of him inquired
Tidings of warre, and of adventures new.”

Giant Pride

Archimago, or *Hypocrisy*, in a fresh disguise. But Sir Satyrane and Una believed everything he told them.

“Where is this pagan now?” asked Satyrane.

“Not far from here,” replied the pilgrim; “I left him resting beside a fountain.”

Thereupon Sir Satyrane hastily marched off, and soon came to the place where he guessed that the other would be found. This pagan knight turned out to be Lawless, from whom, you may remember, Una had escaped in the forest, before she was found by the woodlanders. Sir Satyrane challenged Lawless to fight, and they were soon engaged in a fierce battle. Poor Una was so terrified at this new peril, and in such dread of Lawless, that she did not wait to see what the end would be, but fled far away as fast as she could.

Archimago had been watching everything from a secret hiding-place. Now, when he saw Una escaping, he quickly followed, for he hoped to be able to work her some further mischief.

Giant Pride

When Duessa found that the Red Cross Knight had left the palace of Queen Lucifera, she immediately set out in search of him. It was not long before she found him where he sat wearily by the side of a fountain to rest himself. He had taken off all his armour, and his steed was cropping the grass close by. It was pleasant in the cool shade, and the soft wind blew refreshingly

The Red Cross Knight



upon his forehead, while, in the trees above, numbers of singing birds delighted him with their sweet music.

Duessa at first pretended to be angry with the Knight for leaving her so unkindly, but they were soon good friends again. They stayed for some time

beside the fountain, where the green boughs sheltered them from the scorching heat.

But although it looked so lovely and tempting, the fountain near which they sat was an enchanted one. Whoever tasted its waters grew faint and feeble.

The Knight, not knowing this, stooped down to drink of the stream, which was as clear as crystal. Then

Giant Pride

all his strength turned to weakness, his courage melted away, and a deadly chill crept over him.

At first he scarcely noticed the change, for he had grown careless both of himself and of his fame. But suddenly he heard a dreadful sound—a loud bellowing which echoed through the wood. The earth seemed to shake with terror, and all the trees trembled. The Knight, astounded, started up, and tried to seize his weapons. But before he could put on his armour, or get his shield, his monstrous enemy came stalking into sight.

It was a hideous Giant, great and horrible. The ground groaned under him. He was taller than three of the tallest men put together. His name was Orgoglio, or *Pride*, and his father's name was *Ignorance*. He was puffed up with arrogance and conceit, and because he was so big and strong he despised every one else. He leant upon a gnarled oak, which he had torn up by its roots from the earth; it also served him as a weapon to dismay his foemen.

When he saw the Knight he advanced to him with dreadful fury. The latter, quite helpless, all in vain tried to prepare for battle. Disarmed, disgraced, inwardly dismayed, and faint in every limb, he could scarcely wield even his useless blade. The Giant aimed such a merciless stroke at him, that if it had touched him it would have crushed him to powder. But the Knight leapt lightly to one side, and thus escaped the blow. So great, however, was the wind that the club made in whirling through the air that the Knight was overthrown, and lay on the ground stunned.

When Giant Pride saw his enemy lying helpless, he

The Red Cross Knight

lifted up his club to kill him, but Duessa called to him to stay his hand.

“O great Orgoglio,” she cried, “spare him for my sake, and do not kill him. Now that he is vanquished make him your bond-slave, and, if you like, I will be your wife!”

Giant Pride was quite pleased with this arrangement, and, taking up the Red Cross Knight before he could awake from his swoon, he carried him hastily to his castle, and flung him, without pity, into a deep dungeon.

As for Duessa, from that day forth she was treated with the greatest honour. She was given gold and purple to wear, and a triple crown was placed upon her head, and every one had to obey her as if she were a queen. To make her more dreaded, Orgoglio gave her a hideous dragon to ride. This dragon had seven heads, with gleaming eyes, and its body seemed made of iron and brass. Everything good that came within its reach it swept away with a great long tail, and then trampled under foot.

All the people's hearts were filled with terror when they saw Duessa riding on her dragon.

Prince Arthur

When the Red Cross Knight was made captive by Giant Pride and carried away, Prudence, his servant, who had seen his master's fall, sorrowfully collected his forsaken possessions—his mighty armour, missing when most needed, his silver shield, now idle and masterless,

Prince Arthur

his sharp spear that had done good service in many a fray. With these he departed to tell his sad tale.

He had not gone far when he met Una, flying from the scene of battle, while Sir Satyrane hindered Lawless from pursuing her. When she saw Prudence carrying the armour of the Red Cross Knight, she guessed something terrible had happened, and fell to the ground as if she were dying of sorrow.

Unhappy Prudence would gladly have died himself, but he did his best to restore Una to life. When she had recovered she implored him to tell her what had occurred.

Then the dwarf told her everything that had taken place since they parted. How the crafty Archimago had deceived the Red Cross Knight by his wiles, and made him believe that Una had left him; how the Knight had slain Faithless and had taken pity on Duessa because of the false tales she told. Prudence also told Una all about the House of Pride and its perils; he described the fight which the Knight had with Joyless, and lastly, he told about the luckless conflict with the great Giant Pride, when the Knight was made captive, whether living or dead he knew not.

Una listened patiently, and bravely tried to master her sorrow, which almost broke her heart, for she dearly loved the Red Cross Knight, for whose sake she had borne so many troubles. At last she rose, quite resolved to find him, alive or dead. The dwarf pointed out the way by which Giant Pride had carried his prisoner, and Una started on her quest. Long she wandered, through woods and across valleys, high over hills, and low

The Red Cross Knight

among the dales, tossed by storms and beaten by the wind, but still keeping steadfast to her purpose.

At last she chanced by good fortune to meet a knight, marching with his squire. This knight was the most glorious she had ever seen. His glittering armour shone far off, like the glancing light of the brightest ray of sunshine; it covered him from top to toe, and left no place unguarded. Across his breast he wore a splendid belt, covered with jewels that sparkled like stars. Among the jewels was one of great value, which shone with such brilliancy that it amazed all who beheld it. Close to this jewel hung the knight's sword, in an ivory sheath, carved with curious devices. The hilt was of burnished gold, the handle of mother-of-pearl, and it was buckled on with a golden clasp.

The helmet of this knight was also of gold, and for crest it had a golden dragon with wings. On the top of all was a waving plume, decked with sprinkled pearls, which shook and danced in every little breath of wind.

The shield of the warrior was closely covered, and might never be seen by mortal eye. It was not made of steel nor of brass, but of one perfect and entire diamond. This had been hewn out of the adamant rock with mighty engines; no point of spear could ever pierce it, nor dint of sword break it asunder.

This shield the knight never showed to mortals, unless he wished to dismay some huge monster or to frighten large armies that fought unfairly against him. No magic arts nor enchanter's spell had any power against it. Everything that was not exactly what it seemed to be faded before it and fell to ruin.

Prince Arthur

The maker of the shield was supposed to be Merlin, a mighty magician; he made it with the sword and armour for this young prince when the latter first took to arms.

The name of the knight was Prince Arthur, type of all Virtue and Magnificence, and pattern of all true Knighthood.

His squire bore after him his spear of ebony wood; he was a gallant and noble youth, who managed his fiery steed with much skill and courage.

When Prince Arthur came near Una, he greeted her with much courtesy. By her unwilling answers he guessed that some secret sorrow was troubling her, and he hoped that his gentle and kindly words would persuade her to tell him the cause of her grief.

"What good will it do to speak of it?" said Una. "When I think of my sorrow it seems to me better to keep it hidden than to make it worse by speaking of it. Nothing in the world can lighten my misfortunes. My last comfort is to be left alone to weep for them."

"Ah, dear lady," said the gentle Knight, "I know well that your grief is great, for it makes me sad even to hear you speak of it. But let me entreat you to tell me what is troubling you. Misfortunes may be overcome by good advice, and wise counsel will lessen the worst injury. He who never tells of his hurts will never find help."

His words were so kind and reasonable that Una was soon persuaded to tell him her whole story. She began with the time when she had gone to the Court of Queen Gloriana to seek a champion to release her

The Red Cross Knight

parents from the horrible dragon, and ended with the account of how the Red Cross Knight had fallen a prey to Giant Pride, who now held him captive in a dark dungeon.

“Truly, lady, you have much cause to grieve,” said Prince Arthur when the story was finished. “But be of good cheer, and take comfort. Rest assured I will never forsake you until I have set free your captive Knight.”

His cheerful words revived Una’s drooping heart, and so they set forth on their journey, Prudence guiding them in the right way.

The Wondrous Bugle and the Mighty Shield

Badly indeed would it now have fared with the Red Cross Knight had it not been for the Lady Una. Even good people daily fall into sin and temptation, but as often as their own foolish pride or weakness leads them astray, so often will Divine love and care rescue them, if only they repent of their misdoings. Thus we see how Holiness, in the guise of the Red Cross Knight, was for a while cast down and defeated; yet in the end, because he truly repented, help was given him to fight again and conquer.

Prince Arthur and the Lady Una travelled till they came to a castle which was built very strong and high.

“Lo,” cried the dwarf, “yonder is the place where my unhappy master is held captive by that cruel tyrant!”

The Prince at once dismounted, and bade Una stay

The Wondrous Bugle

to see what would happen. He marched with his squire to the castle walls, where he found the gates shut fast. There was no warder to guard them, nor to answer to the call of any who came.

Then the squire took a small bugle which hung at his side with twisted gold and gay tassels. Wonderful stories were told about that bugle; every one trembled with dread at its shrill sound. It could easily be heard three miles off, and whenever it was blown it echoed three times. No false enchantment or deceitful snare could stand before the terror of that blast. No gate was so strong, no lock so firm and fast, but at that piercing noise it flew open or burst.

This was the bugle which Prince Arthur's squire blew before the gate of Giant Pride. Then the whole castle quaked, and every door flew open. The Giant himself, dismayed at the sound, came rushing forth in haste from an inner bower, to see what was the reason of this sudden uproar, and to discover who had dared to brave his power. After him came Duessa, riding on her dragon with the seven heads; every head had a crown on it, and a fiery tongue of flame.

When Prince Arthur saw Giant Pride, he took his mighty shield and flew at him fiercely; the Giant lifted up his club to smite him, but the Prince leaped to one side, and the weapon, missing him, buried itself with such force in the ground, that the Giant could not quickly pull it out again. Then with his sharp sword Prince Arthur struck at the Giant, and wounded him severely.

Duessa, seeing her companion's danger, urged forward her dragon to help him, but the brave squire sprang

The Red Cross Knight

in between it and the Prince, and with his drawn sword drove it back. Then the angry Duessa took a golden cup, which she always carried, and which was full of a secret poison. Those who drank of that cup either died, or else felt despair seize them. She lightly sprinkled the squire with the contents of this cup, and immediately his courage faded away, and he was filled with sudden dread. He fell down before the cruel dragon, who seized him with its claws, and nearly crushed the life out of him. He had no power nor will to stir.

When Prince Arthur saw what had happened, he left Giant Pride and turned against the dragon, for he was deeply grieved to see his beloved squire in such peril. He soon drove back the horrible creature, but now once again the Giant rushed at him with his club. This time the blow struck the Prince with such force, that it bore him to the ground. In the fall, his shield, that had been covered, lost by chance its veil, and flew open.

Then through the air flashed such a blazing brightness, that no eye could bear to look upon it. Giant Pride let fall the weapon with which he was just going to slay the Prince, and the dragon was struck blind, and tumbled on the ground.

“Oh, help, Orgoglio, help, or we all perish!” cried Duessa.

Gladly would Giant Pride have helped her, but all was in vain; when that light shone he had no power to hurt others, nor to defend himself; so Prince Arthur soon killed him.

When he was dead, his great body, that had seemed so big and strong, suddenly melted away, and nothing

The Wondrous Bugle

was left but what looked like the shrivelled skin of a broken balloon; for, after all, there was no real substance in him, but he was simply puffed out with emptiness and conceit, and his grand appearance was nothing but a sham.

So that was the end of Giant Pride.

When false Duessa saw the fall of Giant Pride she flung down her golden cup, and threw aside her crown, and fled away. But the squire followed, and soon took her prisoner. Telling him to keep safe guard on her, Prince Arthur boldly entered the Giant's Castle. Not a living creature could he spy; he called loudly, but no one answered; a solemn silence reigned everywhere, not a voice was to be heard, not a person seen, in bower or hall.

At last an old, old man, with beard as white as snow, came creeping along; he guided his feeble steps with a staff, for long ago his sight had failed. On his arm he bore a bunch of keys, all covered with rust. They were the keys of all the doors inside the castle; they were never used, but he still kept possession of them.

It was curious to see the way in which this old man walked, for always, as he went forward, he kept his wrinkled face turned back, as if he were trying to look behind. He was the keeper of the place, and the father of the dead Giant Pride; his name was *Ignorance*.

Prince Arthur, as was fitting, honoured his grey hair and gravity, and gently asked him where all the people were who used to live in that stately building. The old man softly answered him that he could not

The Red Cross Knight

tell. Again the Prince asked where was the Knight whom the Giant had taken captive?

"I cannot tell," said the old man.

Then the Prince asked which was the way into the castle, and again he got the same answer, "I cannot tell."

At first he thought the man was mocking him, and began to be much displeased. But presently, seeing that the poor old thing could not help his foolishness, he wisely calmed his anger. Going up to him he took the keys from his arm, and made an entrance for himself. He opened each door without the least difficulty; there was no one to challenge him, nor any bars to hinder his passage.

Inside the castle he found the whole place fitted up in the most splendid manner, decked with royal tapestry, and shining with gold, fit for the presence of the greatest prince. But all the floors were dirty, and strewn with ashes, for it was here that the wicked Giant Pride used to slay his unhappy victims.

Prince Arthur sought through every room, but nowhere could he find the Red Cross Knight. At last he came to an iron door, which was fast locked, but he found no key among the bunch to open it. In the door, however, there was a little grating, and through this the Prince called as loudly as he could, to know if there were any living person shut up there whom he could set free.

Then there came a hollow voice in answer. "Oh, who is that who brings to me the happy choice of death? Here I lie, dying every hour, yet still compelled



“Whome when his Lady saw, to him she ran
With basty joy: to see him made her glad,
And sad to view his visage pale and wan.”

The Wondrous Bugle

to live, bound in horrible darkness. Three months have come and gone since I beheld the light of day. Oh, welcome, you who bring true tidings of death."

When Prince Arthur heard these words his heart was so filled with pity and horror at any noble knight being thus shamefully treated, that, in his strength and indignation, he rent open the iron door. But entering, he found no floor; there was a deep descent, as dark as a pit, from which came up a horrible deadly smell.

Neither darkness, however, nor dirt, nor poisonous smell could turn the Prince from his purpose, and he went forward courageously. With great trouble and difficulty he found means to raise the captive, whose own limbs were too feeble to bear him, and then he carried him out of the castle.

What a mournful picture was now the Red Cross Knight! His dull, sunken eyes could not bear the unaccustomed light of the sun; his cheeks were thin and gaunt; his mighty arms, that had fought so often and so bravely, were nothing now but bones; all his strength was gone, and all his flesh shrunk up like a withered flower.

When Una saw Prince Arthur carrying the Red Cross Knight out of the castle she ran to them joyfully; it made her glad even to see the Knight, but she was full of sorrow at the sight of his pale, wan face, which had formerly been radiant with the glory of youth.

"My dearest lord," she cried, "what evil star has frowned on you and changed you thus? But welcome now, in weal or woe, my dear lord whom I have lost

The Red Cross Knight

too long! Fate, who has been our foe so long, will injure us no further, but shall pay penance with three-fold good for all these wrongs."

The unhappy man, dazed with misery, had no desire to speak of his troubles; his long-endured famine needed more relief.

"Fair lady," then said the victorious Prince, "things that were grievous to do or to bear it brings no pleasure to recall. The only good that comes from past danger is to make us wiser and more careful for the future. This day's example has deeply written this lesson on my heart—perfect happiness can never be lasting while we still live on earth.

"Henceforth, Sir Knight," he continued, "take to yourself your old strength, and master these mishaps by patience. Look where your foe lies vanquished, and the wicked woman, Duessa, the cause of all your misery, stands in your power, to let her live or die."

"To kill her would be to act unworthily," said Una, "and it would be a shame to avenge one's self on such a weak enemy. But take off her scarlet robe and let her fly!"

So they did as Una bade them. They took from Duessa all her finery—her royal robe, and purple cloak, and all the rich ornaments with which she was decked. And when this disguise was taken from her, they saw her as she really was—old, and ugly, and bad. She would no longer be able to deceive people by her pretended goodness, and youth, and beauty, for every one who saw her shrunk away in horror.

"Such," said Una, "is the face of Falsehood when

The Knight with Hempen Rope

its borrowed light is laid aside, and all its deceitfulness is made known.”

Thus, having taken from Duessa her power to work evil, they set her free to go where she pleased. She fled to a barren wilderness, where she lurked unseen in rocks and caves, for she always hated the light.

But Prince Arthur, and the Red Cross Knight, and fair Una stayed for awhile in the castle of Giant Pride, to rest themselves and to recover their strength. And here they found a goodly store of all that was dainty and rare.

The Knight with the Hempen Rope

When the two Knights and the Lady Una had rested awhile in the castle of Giant Pride, they set out again on their journey. Before they parted, Prince Arthur and the Red Cross Knight gave each other beautiful gifts—tokens of love and friendship. Prince Arthur gave a box of adamant, embossed with gold, and richly ornamented; in it were enclosed a few drops of a precious liquid of wonderful power, which would immediately heal any wound. In return the Red Cross Knight gave the Prince a Bible, all written with golden letters, rich and beautiful.

Thus they parted, Prince Arthur to go about his own work, and the Knight to fight the terrible Dragon that was laying waste the kingdom that belonged to Una's father and mother. But she, seeing how thin and ill her champion looked, and knowing that he was still weak and weary, would not hasten forward, nor

The Red Cross Knight

let him run the chance of any further fighting, until he had recovered his former strength.

As they travelled, they presently saw an armed knight galloping towards them. It seemed as though he were flying from a dreaded foe, or some other grisly thing. As he fled, his eyes kept looking backwards as if the object of his terror were pursuing him, and his horse flew as if it had wings to its feet.

When he came nearer they saw that his head was bare, his hair almost standing on end with fright, and his face very pale. Round his neck was a hempen rope, suiting ill with his glittering armour.

The Red Cross Knight rode up to him, but could scarcely prevail upon him to stop.

"Sir Knight," he said, "pray tell us who hath arrayed you like this, and from whom you are flying, for never saw I warrior in so unseemly a plight."

The stranger seemed dazed with fear, and at first answered nothing; but after the gentle Knight had spoken to him several times, at last he replied with faltering tongue, and trembling in every limb: "I beseech you, Sir Knight, do not stop me, for lo! he comes—he comes fast after me!"

With that he again tried to run away, but the Red Cross Knight prevented him, and tried to persuade him to say what was the matter.

"Am I really safe from him who would have forced me to die?" said the stranger. "May I tell my luckless story?"

"Fear nothing," said the Knight; "no danger is near now."



“So as they traveld, lo! they gan espy
An armed knight towards them gallop fast,
That seemed from some feared foe to fly,
Or other griesly tbing that him agbast.”

The Knight with Hempen Rope

Then the stranger told how he and another knight had lately been companions. The name of his friend was Sir Terwin. He was bold and brave, but because everything did not go exactly as he wished, he was not happy. One day when they were feeling very sad and comfortless, they met a man whose name was *Despair*. Greeting them in a friendly fashion, Despair soon contrived to find out from them what they were feeling, and then he went on to make the worst of everything. He told them there was no hope that things would get any better, and tried to persuade them to put an end to all further trouble by killing themselves. To Sir Terwin he lent a rusty knife, and to the other knight a rope. Sir Terwin, who was really very unhappy, killed himself at once; but Sir Trevisan, dismayed at the sight, fled fast away, with the rope still round his neck, half dead with fear.

“May you never hear the tempting speeches of Despair,” he ended.

“How could idle talking persuade a man to put an end to his life?” said the Red Cross Knight. He was ready to despise the danger, and he trusted in his own strength to withstand it.

“I know,” said the stranger, “for trial has lately taught me; nor would I go through the like again for the world’s wealth. His cunning, like sweetest honey, drops into the heart, and all else is forgotten. Before one knows it, all power is secretly stolen, and only weakness remains. Oh, sir, do not wish ever to meet with Despair.”

“Truly,” said the Red Cross Knight, “I shall

The Red Cross Knight

never rest till I have heard what the traitor has to say for himself. And, Sir Knight, I beg of you, as a favour, to guide me to his cabin."

"To do you a favour, I will ride back with you against my will," said Sir Trevisan; "but not for gold, nor for anything else will I remain with you when you arrive at the place. I would rather die than see his deadly face again."

In the Cave of Despair

Sir Trevisan and the Red Cross Knight soon came to the place where Despair had his dwelling. It was in a hollow cave, far underneath a craggy cliff, dark and dreary. On the top always perched a melancholy owl, shrieking his dismal note, which drove all cheerful birds far away. All around were dead and withered trees, on which no fruit nor leaf ever grew.

When they arrived, Sir Trevisan would have fled in terror, not daring to go near, but the Red Cross Knight forced him to stay, and soothed his fears.

They entered the gloomy cave, where they found a miserable man sitting on the ground, musing sullenly. He had greasy, unkempt locks, and dull and hollow eyes, and his cheeks were thin and shrunken, as if he never got enough to eat. His garment was nothing but rags, all patched, and pinned together with thorns. At his side lay the dead body of Sir Terwin, just as Sir Trevisan had told.

When the Red Cross Knight saw this sad sight, all



“ Ere long they come where that same wicked wight
His dwelling has, low in a hollow cave,
For underneath a craggy cliff ypyght,
Dark, doleful, dreary, like a greedy grave,
That still for carrion carcasses doth crave.”

In the Cave of Despair

his courage blazed up in the desire to avenge him, and he said to Despair, "Wretched man! you are the cause of this man's death. It is only just that you should pay the price of his life with your own."

"Why do you speak so rashly?" said Despair. "Does not justice teach that he should die who does not deserve to live? This man killed himself by his own wish. Is it unjust to give to each man his due? Or to let him die who hates to live longer? Or to let him die in peace who lives here in trouble? If a man travels by a weary, wandering way, and comes to a great flood between him and his wished-for home, is it not a gracious act to help him to pass over it? Foolish man! would you not help him to gain rest, who has long dwelt here in woe?"

Thus spoke Despair, and he said many beautiful and persuasive words concerning Death. And as the Red Cross Knight listened, all his courage and all his anger melted away, and it seemed to him that there would be no sweeter thing in the whole world than to lie down and be at rest.

"What is the good of living?" said Despair. "The longer you live the more sins you commit. All those great battles that you are so proud of winning, all this strife and bloodshed and revenge, which are praised now, hereafter you will be sorry for. Has not your evil life lasted long enough? He that hath once missed the right way, the farther he goes, the farther he goes wrong. Go no farther, then—stray no farther. Lie down here and take your rest. What has life to make men love it so? Fear, sickness, age, loss, labour,

The Red Cross Knight

sorrow, strife, pain, hunger, cold, and fickle fortune, all these, and a thousand more ills make life to be hated rather than loved. Wretched man! you indeed have the greatest need of death if you will truly judge your own conduct. Never did knight who dared warlike deeds meet with more luckless adventures. Think of the deep dungeon wherein you were lately shut up; how often then did you wish for death! Though by good luck you escaped from there, yet death would prevent any further mischance into which you may happen to fall."

Then Despair went on to speak to the Red Cross Knight of all his sins. He pointed out the many wrong things he had done, and said that he had been so faithless and wicked that there was no hope for him of any mercy or forgiveness. Rather than live longer and add to his sins, it would be better for him to die at once, and put an end to all.

The Knight was greatly moved by this speech, which pierced his heart like a sword. Too well he knew that it was all true. There came to his conscience such a vivid memory of all his wrongdoings that all his strength melted away, as if a spell had bewitched him. When Despair saw him waver and grow weak, and that his soul was deeply troubled, he tried all the harder to drive him to utter misery.

"Think of all your sins," he said. "God is very angry with you. You are not worthy to live. It is only just that you should die. Better kill yourself at once."

Then Despair went and fetched a dagger, sharp and keen, and gave it to the Red Cross Knight. Trembling

The House of Holiness

like an aspen-leaf, the Knight took it, and lifted up his hand to slay himself.

When Una saw this, she grew cold with horror, but, starting forward, she snatched the knife from his hand, and threw it to the ground, greatly enraged.

“Fie, fie, faint-hearted Knight!” she cried. “What is the meaning of this shameful strife? Is *this* the battle which you boasted you would fight with the horrible fiery Dragon? Come, come away, feeble and faithless man! Let no vain words deceive your manly heart, nor wicked thoughts dismay your brave spirit. Have you not a share in heavenly mercy? Why should you then despair who have been chosen to fight the good fight? If there is Justice, there is also Forgiveness, which soothes the anguish of remorse and blots out the record of sin. Arise, Sir Knight, arise and leave this evil place.”

So up he rose, and straightway left the cave. When Despair saw this, and that his guest would safely depart in spite of all his beguiling words, he took a rope and tried to hang himself. But though he had tried to kill himself a thousand times, he could never do so, until the last day comes when all evil things shall perish for ever.

How the Red Cross Knight came to the House of Holiness

The bravest man who boasts of bodily strength may often find his moral courage fail in the hour of temptation. If he gain the victory, let him not

The Red Cross Knight

ascribe it to his own skill, but rather to the grace of God.

From what had happened in the Cave of Despair, Una saw that her Knight had grown faint and feeble; his long imprisonment had wasted away all his strength, and he was still quite unfit to fight. Therefore she determined to bring him to a place where he might refresh himself, and recover from his late sad plight.

There was an ancient house not far away, renowned through all the world for its goodness and holy learning, so well was it guided and governed by a wise matron. Her only joy was to comfort those in trouble and to help the helpless poor. She was called Dame Celia — the “Heavenly Lady” — and she had three beautiful daughters, Fidelia (*Faith*), Speranza (*Hope*), and Charissa (*Love*).

Arrived at the House of Holiness, they found the door fast locked, for it was warily watched, night and day, for fear of many foes. But when they knocked, the porter straightway opened to them. He was an aged man, with grey hair and slow footsteps; his name was *Humility*. They passed in, stooping low, for the way he showed them was strait and narrow, even as all good things are hardest at the beginning. But when they had entered they saw a spacious court, very pleasant to walk in. Here they were met by a frank, honest-looking man, called *Zeal*, who gladly acted as their guide till they came to the hall.

The squire of the household received them, and made them welcome; his name was *Reverence*. He was very gentle, modest, and sincere, always treating

The House of Holiness

every one with the greatest kindness and courtesy, not from any pretended politeness, but because of his own good and sweet disposition.

He conducted them to the lady of the house, who was busied as usual in some good works. Directly Dame Celia saw Una, she knew who she was; her heart filled with joy, and she put her arms round her and kissed her.

“Oh, happy earth,” she cried, “whereon your innocent feet still tread! What good fortune has brought you this way, or did you wander here unknowingly? It is strange to see a knight-errant in this place, or any other man, for there are few who choose the narrow path or seek the right.”

Una replied that they had come to rest their weary limbs, and to see the lady herself, whose fame and praise had reached them.

Then Dame Celia entertained them with every courtesy she could think of, and nothing was lacking to show her generosity and wisdom. Whilst they were talking, two beautiful maidens came in; they were Faith and Hope, the daughters of the lady. Faith was arrayed all in lily-white, and her face shone like the light of the sun; in one hand she held a book. Her younger sister, Hope, was clad all in blue, and carried a silver anchor; her face was not as cheerful as Faith's, but it was very noble and steadfast.

Presently a servant, called *Obedience*, came and conducted the guests to their rooms, in order that they might rest awhile. Afterwards Una asked Faith if she would allow the Red Cross Knight to enter her school-

The Red Cross Knight

house, in order that he might share in her heavenly learning, and hear the divine wisdom of her words.

So the Knight went to school to learn of Faith, and many were the wondrous things she taught him. Now he saw in its true light all the error of his ways, and he began truly to repent of all his wrongdoings. The thought of them was so bitter, that he felt he was no longer worthy to live.

Then came Hope with sweet comfort, and bade him trust steadily and not lose heart. And Dame Celia, seeing how unhappy he was, sent to him a wonderful doctor, called *Patience*. Thanks to his skill and wisdom, and to the careful nursing of his attendant, *Repentance*, the Red Cross Knight presently recovered, and grew well and strong again.

After this Una took him one day to visit the third daughter, whose name was Love. She was so wonderfully beautiful and good that there were few on earth to compare with her. They found her in the midst of a group of happy children; she wore a yellow robe, and sat in an ivory chair, and at her side were two turtle-doves.

Una besought Love to let the Red Cross Knight learn of her whatever she could teach, and to this request Love gladly agreed. Then she began to instruct the Knight in all good things. She spoke to him of love and righteousness, and how to do well, and bade him shun all wrath and hatred, which are displeasing to God. And when she had well taught him this, she went on to show him the path to heaven.

The better to guide his weak and wandering steps,



“The Knight and Una entering fayre her greet,
And bid her joy of that her happy brood;
Who them requites with court’sies seeming meet,
And entertaynes with friendly cheerefull mood.”

The City of the Great King

she called an ancient matron, named *Mercy*, well known for her gracious and tender ways. Into her careful charge Love gave the Knight, to lead in the right path, so that he should never fall in all his journeying through the wide world, but come to the end in safety.

Then *Mercy*, taking the Knight by the hand, led him away by a narrow path; it was scattered with bushy thorns and ragged briars, but these she always cleared away before him, so that nothing might hinder his ready passage. And whenever his footsteps were cumbered, or began to falter and stray, she held him fast, and bore him up, so that he never fell.

The City of the Great King

Soon after leaving the House of Holiness, the Red Cross Knight and his guide, *Mercy*, came to a hospital by the wayside. Some bedesmen lived here, who had vowed all their life to the service of the King of Heaven, and who spent their days in doing good. Their gates were always open to weary travellers, and one of the brothers sat waiting to call in all poor and needy passers-by. Each of the brothers had a separate duty to perform. The first had to entertain travellers; the second, to give food to the needy; the third, clothing to those who had none; the fourth, to relieve prisoners and to redeem captives; the fifth, to comfort the sick and the dying; the sixth, to take charge of those who were dead, and to deck them with dainty

The Red Cross Knight

flowers; the seventh had to look after widows and orphans. Mercy was a great friend of theirs, and Love was the founder of their order.

They stayed at the hospital for some time, while the Knight was taught all kinds of good works. He was very quick at learning, and soon became so perfect that no cause of blame or rebuke could be found in him.

Leaving the hospital, he next came with his guide to a steep and high hill, on the top of which was a church, with a little hermitage close by. Here there dwelt an old man, called *Contemplation*. He spent all his days in prayer and meditation, never thinking of worldly business, but only of God and goodness. When he saw the travellers approaching, at first he felt vexed, for he thought they would distract his thoughts to earthly matters. But recognising Mercy, whom he loved and respected, he greeted them civilly, and asked why they had climbed that tedious height.

“For that same purpose which every living person should make his aim—the wish to go to Heaven,” replied Mercy. “Does not the path lead straight from here to that most glorious place which shines with ever-living light? The keys were given into your hands by Faith, who requires that you show the lovely city to this knight in accordance with his desire.”

Then Contemplation took the Red Cross Knight, and, after the latter had fasted awhile and prayed, he led him to the highest part of the hill.

From there he showed him a little path, steep and long, which led to a goodly city. The walls and



“From thence, far off he unto him did shew
A little path that was both steepe and long,
Which to a goodly Citty led his vew,
Whose wals and towres were builded high and strong
Of perle and precious stone that earthly tong
Cannot describe, nor wit of man can tell.”

The City of the Great King

towers were built very high and strong, of pearl and precious stones, more beautiful than tongue can tell. It was called "The City of the Great King," and in it dwelt eternal peace and happiness.

As the Knight stood gazing, he could see the blessed angels descending to and fro, and walking in the streets of the city, as friend walks with friend. At this he much wondered, and he began to ask what was the stately building that lifted its lofty towers so near the starry sky, and what unknown nation dwelt there.

"Fair Knight," said his companion, "that is Jerusalem—the New Jerusalem, which GOD has built for those to dwell in that are His chosen people, cleansed from sinful guilt by CHRIST, who died for the sins of the whole world. Now they are saints together in that city."

"Until now," said the Knight, "I thought that the city of Queen Gloriana, whence I come, was the fairest that might ever be seen. But now I know otherwise, for that great city yonder far surpasses it."

"Most true," said the holy man. "Yet for an earthly place the kingdom of Queen Gloriana is the fairest that eye can behold. And you, Sir Knight, have done good service by aiding a desolate and oppressed maiden. But when you have won a famous victory, and high amongst all knights have hung your shield, follow no more the pursuit of earthly conquest, for bloodshed and war bring sin and sorrow. Seek this path which I point out to you, for it will in the end bring you to Heaven. Go peaceably on your pilgrimage to the City of the Great King. A blessed

The Red Cross Knight

end is ordained for you. Amongst the saints you shall be a saint, the friend and patron of your own nation. Saint George you shall be called—'Saint George for merry England, the sign of Victory.'"

"O holy Sire!" said the Knight, "how can I requite you for all that you have done for me?"

His eyes were dazzled by the brightness of the glory at which he had been gazing, so that he could scarcely see the ground by which to return; so dark are earthly things compared with divine.

Thanking and rewarding the good man for all his trouble, the Red Cross Knight returned to Una, who was anxiously awaiting him. She received him with joy, and after he had rested a little, she bade him be mindful of the task still before him. So they took leave of Dame Celia and her three daughters, and once more set out on their journey.

The Last Fight

At last Una and the Knight came to Una's kingdom, where her parents were held captive, and all the land lay wasted by the terrible dragon. As they drew near their journey's end, Una began to cheer her companion with brave words.

"Dear Knight," she said, "who for my sake have suffered all these sorrows, may Heaven reward you for your weary toil! Now we have come to my own country, and the place where all our perils dwell. This is the haunt of the horrible monster, therefore

The Last Fight

be well on your guard and ready for the foe. Call up all your courage, and do better than you have ever done before, so that hereafter you shall be renowned above all knights on earth."

At this moment they heard a hideous roaring sound, which filled the air, and almost shook the solid ground. Soon they saw the dreadful dragon where he lay stretched on the sunny side of a great hill. Directly he caught sight of the glittering armour of the Knight, he quickly roused himself, and hastened towards them.

The Red Cross Knight bade Una go to a hill at some distance, from where she might behold the battle and be safe from danger. She had scarcely done so when the huge beast drew near, half flying, and half running in his haste.

He was a dreadful creature to look at, very big, covered with brazen scales like a coat of steel, which he clashed loudly as he came. He had two immense wings with which he could fly, and at the point of his great, knotted tail were two stings, sharper than the sharpest steel. Worse even than these, however, were his cruel claws, which tore to pieces everything that came within their clutches. He had three rows of iron teeth, and his eyes, blazing with wrath, sparkled like living fire.

Such was the terrible monster with whom the Red Cross Knight had now to do battle.

All day they fought; and when evening came, the Knight was quite worn out and almost defeated. As it chanced, however, close by was a spring, the waters of which possessed a wonderful gift of healing. The

The Red Cross Knight

Knight was driven backwards and fell into this well. The dragon clapped his wings in triumph, for he thought he had gained the victory. But so great was the power of the water in this well that although the Knight's own strength was utterly exhausted, yet he rose out of it refreshed and vigorous. The dawn of the next day found him stronger than ever, and ready for battle.

The name of the spring was called the Well of Life.

All through the second day the battle lasted, and again, when evening came, the Knight was almost defeated. But this night he rested under a beautiful tree laden with goodly fruit; the name of the tree was the Tree of Life. From it flowed, as from a well, a trickling stream of balm, a perfect cure for all ills, and whoever ate of its fruit attained to everlasting life.

The strength of the Red Cross Knight alone would never have been sufficient to overcome the terrible Dragon of Sin, but the water of the Well of Life, and the balm from the Tree of Life, gave him a power that nothing could resist.

On the morning of the third day he slew the dragon.

“Ease after War”

The sun had scarcely risen on the third day, when the watchman on the walls of the brazen tower saw the death of the dragon. He hastily called to the captive King and Queen, who, coming forth, ordered the tidings of peace and joy to be proclaimed through the whole land.



“ And to the Knight his daughter deare he tyde
With sacred rites and vowes for ever to abyde.

* * * * *
His owne two hands the holy knotts did knitt,
That none but death for ever can divide.”

“Ease after War”

Then all the trumpets sounded for victory, and the people came flocking as to a great feast, rejoicing at the fall of the cruel enemy, from whose bondage they were now free.

Forth from the castle came the King and Queen, attended by a noble company. In front marched a goodly band of brave young men, all able to wield arms, but who now bore laurel branches in sign of victory and peace. These they threw at the feet of the Red Cross Knight, and hailed him conqueror.

Then came beautiful maidens with garlands of flowers and timbrels; troops of merry children ran in front, dancing and singing to the sound of sweet music. When they reached the spot where Una stood, they bowed before her, and crowned her with a garland, so that she looked—as indeed she was—a queen.

The King gave goodly gifts of gold and ivory to his brave champion, and thanked him a thousand times for all that he had done. Then the Red Cross Knight and Una were brought in triumph to the palace; the trumpets and the clarions sounded, and all the people sang for joy, and strewed their garments in the way. At the palace everything was splendid and beautiful, as befitted a prince's court, and here a great feast was held.

The King and Queen made their guest tell them all the strange adventures and perils that had befallen him. They listened with much interest and pity to his story. Then said the King:—

“Dear son, great are the evils which you have borne, so that I know not whether most to praise or to pity you. Never has living man passed through a

The Red Cross Knight

sea of more deadly dangers. But since you have arrived safely at the shore, now let us think of ease and everlasting rest."

"Ah! dearest sovereign," replied the brave Knight, "I may not yet think of ease or rest. For by the vow which I made when I first took up arms, I plighted myself to return to Queen Gloriana, and to serve her in warlike ways for six years."

The King, when he heard this, was very sorry, but he knew that the vow must be kept.

"As soon as the six years are over," said he, "you shall return here and marry my daughter, the Lady Una. I proclaimed through the world that whoever killed the dragon should have my only daughter to be his wife, and should be made heir of my kingdom. Since you have won the reward by noble chivalry, lo! here I yield to you my daughter and my kingdom."

Then Una stepped forward, radiant as the morning star and fair as the flowers in May. She wore a garment of lily-white, that looked as if it were woven of silk and silver. The blazing brightness of her beauty and the glorious light of her sunshiny face can scarcely be told. Even her dear Knight, who had been with her every day, wondered at the sight.

So the Red Cross Knight and Una were betrothed. Every one, young and old, rejoiced, and a solemn feast was held through all the land. Now, indeed, the Knight thought himself happy. Whenever his eye beheld Una, his heart melted with joy; no wickedness nor envy could ever again harm their love.

Yet even in the midst of his happiness he re-

“Ease after War”

membered the vow he had made to return to Queen Gloriana. His work was not yet done, and at last the day came when he had to leave Una, and set forth again on his travels.

We know, however, that whatever new perils lay before him, he would be able to overcome them all by the help of his heavenly armour, and that in the end he would be restored to Una, to dwell happily with her for ever.



“The Good Sir Guyon”

Sir Guyon meets the Magician

ARCHIMAGO, the wicked magician, who had worked such mischief to Una and the Red Cross Knight, was very angry when he found that in the end all his evil wiles were defeated, and that the Knight and the lady were happily betrothed. He would willingly have brought more trouble on them, but he was powerless to do any harm to Una, for she was now safely restored to her own kingdom, and



“Upon the way him fortunèd to meete,
Faire marching underneath a shade hill,
A goodly knight, all armed in harness meete.”

Sir Guyon meets the Magician

living in the care of her father and mother. He therefore directed all his spite against the Knight, who had once more to set forth on his adventures, as he had promised Queen Gloriana to serve her faithfully for six years. At the end of that time he hoped to return and marry Una, and the King, her father, had made him heir to the throne.

Archimago, whose other name you may remember was *Hypocrisy*, set all his wits to work to see what harm he could do the Knight, for he knew that, after all the troubles he had fallen into, he would be more than usually careful. He kept laying snares for him, and placed spies wherever he went, but the Knight had now become so wise and wary that he always found out and shunned the danger. Archimago, however, still kept on hoping he should find some way to hurt him, and at last his opportunity came.

It happened, one day, that the enchanter saw marching to meet him a noble knight. The stranger was clad in shining armour and rode a splendid war-horse; his bearing was very stately, and his face, although calm and beautiful, was so stern and noble that all his friends loved him and his foes feared him. He was one of the chief knights of Queen Gloriana's court, a man of great honour and power in his native land. His name was Sir Guyon.

As the Red Cross Knight was known as the Champion of *Holiness*, so Sir Guyon was known as the Knight of *Temperance*.

With him now there was an aged palmer or pilgrim, clad in black; his hair was grey and he leant on a staff. To judge by his look he was a wise and grave old

Sir • Guyon

man, and he seemed to be acting as guide to the Knight, who carefully checked his prancing horse to keep pace with his slow footsteps.

The name of the black palmer was *Conscience*, and he went with Sir Guyon as his companion and adviser, somewhat in the same fashion as *Prudence* had gone as servant with the Red Cross Knight.

When Archimago saw Sir Guyon, he immediately stopped him, just as on a former occasion he had stopped the Red Cross Knight.

This time he had a fresh story to tell, which, of course, was perfectly false. He implored Sir Guyon to come to the help of a beautiful maiden, cruelly ill-treated by a rough knight, who had cut off her golden locks, and threatened to kill her with his sharp sword.

“What!” cried Sir Guyon, his gentle nature roused to indignation, “is the man still alive who could do such a deed?”

“He is alive, and boasts of it,” said wicked Hypocrisy. “Nor has any other knight yet punished him for it.”

“Take me to him at once,” said Sir Guyon.

“That I can easily do,” said Archimago. “I will show you where he is,” and he hurried off in high glee, because he thought that at last he had found a way of revenging himself on the Red Cross Knight.

Friend or Foe?

Archimago and Sir Guyon came presently to a place where a beautiful lady sat alone, with torn clothes and ruffled hair; she was weeping bitterly and wringing her

Friend or Foe?

hands, and when Sir Guyon asked her the cause of her grief, she said it was because she had been most cruelly treated by a rough knight.

This lady who seemed so good and gentle was, in



reality, no other than Duessa (or *Falsehood*), who had formerly led the Red Cross Knight into such trouble. Her old companion, Archimago, had found her wandering forlorn in the desert whither she had been banished

Sir Guyon

by Prince Arthur, and had again decked her out in fine clothes and ornaments, so that she might help him in his wicked schemes.

Her cunning quite deceived Sir Guyon, who believed everything she told him.

"Be comforted, fair lady," he said, "and tell me who did this, so that I can punish him at once."

"I do not know his name," she replied, "but he rode a dappled grey steed, and on his silver shield there was a red cross."

When Sir Guyon heard this he was amazed.

"I cannot think how that knight could have done such a deed," he said, "for I can say boldly he is a right good knight. I was present when he first took arms and started out to help the Lady Una, since when he has won great glory, as I have heard tell. Nevertheless, he shall be made to explain this, and if he cannot clear himself of all blame, be sure he shall be well punished."

Duessa was greatly pleased when she heard this, for now she hoped there would be a quarrel between the two knights.

Archimago then led Sir Guyon by an unknown way through woods and across mountains, till they came at last to a pleasant dale which lay between two hills. A little river ran through this valley, and by it sat a knight with his helmet unlaced, refreshing himself with the cool water after his long journey and hard work.

"Yonder is the man!" cried Archimago. "He has come here thinking to hide himself, but in vain, for you will soon make him repent of his cruelty."

Friend or Foe?

All success to you! We will stay here, and watch from a distance."

Archimago and Duessa left Sir Guyon, who immediately rushed forward to the attack. The stranger, seeing a knight hurrying so fiercely towards him, seized his own weapons, prepared for battle, and sprang to meet him. The two had almost met when Sir Guyon suddenly lowered his spear.

"Mercy, Sir Knight! Mercy!" he cried. "Pardon my rashness, that had almost led me to disgrace my honour by raising my weapon against the sacred badge on your shield."

When the Red Cross Knight, for he indeed it was, heard the other's voice, he knew him at once.

"Ah! dear Sir Guyon," he said, bowing courteously, "it is I rather who should be blamed. In my reckless haste I almost did violence to the image of Queen Gloriana which I now see inscribed on your shield. The fault is mine!"

So the two knights made friends, and talked very happily together, and Sir Guyon explained how he had been cheated by Archimago and Duessa, who had both now fled away. Then up came Guyon's guide, Conscience, and as soon as his eye fell on the Red Cross Knight, he knew him, for he had seen him at the court of Queen Gloriana.

"Joy be with you, and everlasting fame, for the great deeds you have done!" he cried. "Your glorious name is enrolled in the heavenly register, where you have won a seat among the saints. But we luckless mortals are only now beginning to run the race in which you

Sir Guyon

have gained such renown." Then to his master he said, "God grant you, Guyon, to end your work well, and bring your weary bark safely to the wished-for haven."

"Palmer," said the Red Cross Knight, "give the praise to GOD, to whom all honour is due, and who made my hand the organ of His might. Attribute nothing to me except a willing heart; for all that I did, I only did as I ought. But as for you, fair sir, whose turn it is now," he added to Guyon, "may you prosper as well as you can wish, and may we hear thrice happy tidings of you; for you are indeed worthy, both in courage and gentle manners."

Then the two Knights took leave of each other with much courtesy and goodwill. Sir Guyon went forward on his journey, still guided by the Black Palmer, who led him over hill and dale, pointing out the way with his staff, and by his wise judgment guarding his master from all dangers into which his own hasty nature might have made him fall.

The Story of the Knight and the Lady

After leaving Prince Arthur, Sir Guyon and the Black Palmer (or *Conscience*) travelled for some distance, fighting and winning many battles as they went, which brought much honour to the Knight.

But the chief adventure in Sir Guyon's life began in this way :

One day, passing through a forest, they heard sounds of bitter weeping and lamentation.

The Knight and the Lady

"If I cannot be revenged for all my misery," cried a voice, "at least nothing can prevent my dying. Come then, come soon, come, sweetest death! But, thou, my babe, who hast seen thy father's fall, long mayest thou live, and thrive better than thy unhappy parents. Live to bear witness that thy mother died for no fault of her own."

When Sir Guyon heard these piteous words, he dismounted, and rushed into the thicket, where he found a beautiful lady dying on the ground. In her arms there was a lovely baby, and the dead body of an armed knight lay close beside them.

Horried at the sight, Sir Guyon did all he could to restore the lady to life, but she begged him to leave her alone to die in peace; her sorrows, she said, were more than she could bear, and therefore she had tried to kill herself.

"Dear lady," said Sir Guyon, "all that I wish is to comfort you, and to bring you some relief, therefore tell me the cause of your misfortune."

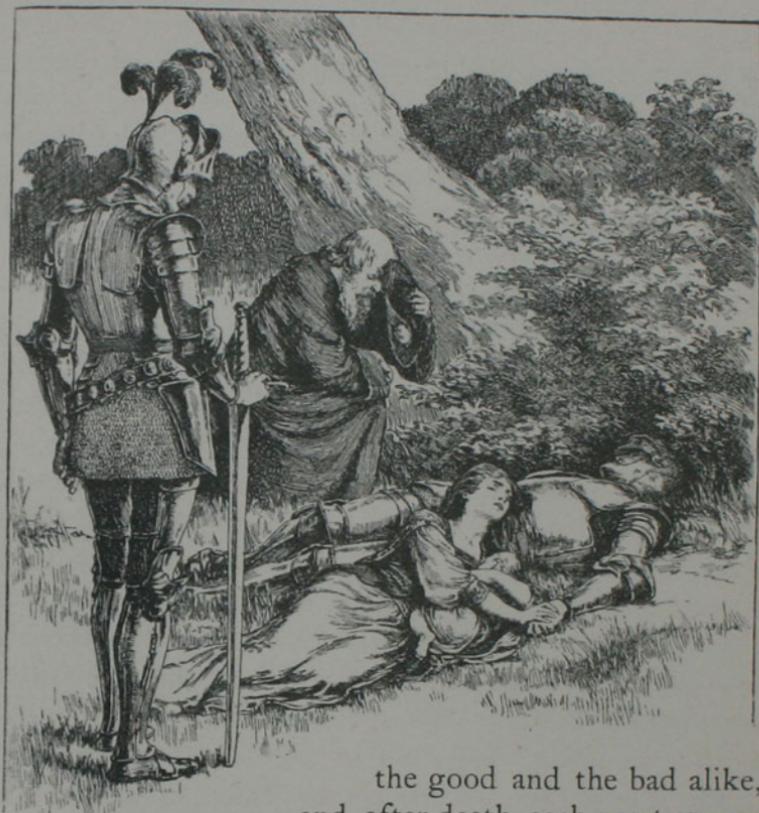
"Listen, then," she answered. "This dead man, the gentlest, bravest knight that ever lived, was my husband, the good Sir Mordant. One day he rode forth, as is the custom of knights, to seek adventures, and it chanced most unhappily he came to the place where the wicked Acrasia lives—Acrasia, the false enchantress, who has brought ruin on so many knights. Her dwelling is within a wandering island, in Perilous Gulf. Fair sir, if ever you travel there, shun the hateful place! I will tell you the name—it is called the *Bower of Bliss*. Acrasia's one aim in life is

Sir Guyon

Pleasure. In the Bower of Bliss nothing is thought of but eating and drinking, and every kind of luxury and extravagance. All those who come within it forget everything good and noble, and care for nothing but to amuse themselves. When my dear knight never returned to me, I set forth in search of him, and here I found him, a captive to the spells of Acrasia. At first he did not even know me; but by-and-by, with great care, I brought him back to a better state of mind, and persuaded him to leave the Bower of Bliss. But the wicked enchantress, angry at losing one of her victims, gave him a parting cup of poison, and stooping to drink at this well, he suddenly fell dead. When I saw this——” Here the lady’s own words failed, and, lying down as if to sleep, quiet death put an end to all her sorrow.

Sir Guyon felt such grief at what had happened that he could scarcely keep from weeping. Turning to the Palmer, he said: “Behold here this image of human life, when raging passion like a fierce tyrant robs reason of its proper sway. The strong it weakens, and the weak it fills with fury; the strong (like this Knight) fall soonest through excess of pleasure; the weak (like this Lady) through excess of grief. But Temperance with a golden rule can measure out a medium between the two, neither to be overcome by pleasure, nor to give way to despair. Thrice happy man who can tread evenly between them! But, since this wretched lady did wrong through grief, and not from wickedness, it is not for us to judge her. Let us give her an honourable burial. Death comes to all,

The Knight and the Lady



the good and the bad alike, and, after death, each must answer for his own deeds. But both alike should have a fitting burial.”

So Sir Guyon and the Black Palmer dug a grave under the cypress-trees, and here they tenderly placed the dead bodies of the Knight and the Lady, and bade them sleep in everlasting peace. And before they left the spot, Sir Guyon swore a solemn vow that he would avenge the hapless little orphan child for the death of his parents.

Sir Guyon

The Three Sisters

After the burial of the Knight and the Lady, Sir Guyon gave the little baby into the care of the Palmer, and, lading himself with the heavy armour of the dead Sir Mordant, the two started again on their journey. But when they came to the place where Sir Guyon had left his steed, with its golden saddle and costly trappings, they found, to their surprise and vexation, that it had quite disappeared. They were obliged, therefore, to go forward on foot.

By-and-by they came to a famous old Castle, built on a rock near the sea. In this castle lived three sisters, who were so different in character that they could never agree. The eldest and the youngest were always quarrelling, and they were both as disagreeable as possible to the middle sister. Elissa, the eldest, was very harsh and stern; she always looked discontented, and she despised every kind of pleasure or merriment. It was useless ever to attempt to make her smile; she was always frowning and scolding in a way not at all becoming to any gentle lady.

Perissa, the youngest sister, was just as bad in the other direction; she cared for nothing but amusement, and was so full of laughter and play that she forgot all rules of right and reason, and became quite thoughtless and silly. She spent all her time in eating, and drinking, and dressing herself up in fine clothes.

These two sisters showed the evil of two extremes; but the middle sister, Medina, or "*Golden Mean*," as



“. . . At last they to a Castle came,
Built on a rocke adjoyning to the seas.”

The Three Sisters

she was sometimes called, was the type of moderation, and all that was right and proper. She was sweet, and gracious, and womanly; not harsh and stern, like Elissa, nor yet heedless and silly, like Perissa. She dressed richly, but quietly, and her clothes suited her well: they were different alike from Elissa's stinginess and Perissa's extravagance.

When Medina saw Sir Guyon approaching the castle, she met him on the threshold, and led him in like an honoured guest. But her sisters were very angry when they heard of his arrival. There were two other visitors at the castle just then, and they also were very angry. Sir Hudibras was a friend of the eldest sister. He was very savage and sullen, slow-witted, but big and strong. Sans-loy, or *Lawless*, was the friend of the youngest sister. He was the same Lawless who had been so cruel to poor Una, and he was just as bold and unruly now as he had been then, and he never cared what wrong he did to any one.

These two hated each other, and were always quarrelling, but when they heard of the coming of the stranger knight, they both flew to attack him. On the way, however, they began fighting with each other, and, hearing the noise, Sir Guyon ran to try to stop them, whereupon they both turned upon him. The two sisters stood by, and encouraged them to go on fighting; but Medina ran in amongst them, and entreated them to stop. Her gentle words at last appeased their anger, and they laid down their weapons, and consented to make friends.

Then Medina invited them all to a feast, which

Sir Guyon

she had prepared in honour of Sir Guyon. Elissa and Perissa came very unwillingly, though they attempted to hide their grudging and envy under a pretence of cheerfulness. One sister thought the entertainment provided far too much, and the other sister thought it far too little. Elissa would scarcely speak or eat anything, while Perissa chattered and ate far more than was right or proper.

After the feast, Medina begged Sir Guyon to tell them the story of his adventures, and to say on what quest he was now bound.

Then Sir Guyon told them all about the court of the Faerie Queene, Gloriana, and how he had sworn service to her, and promised to go out into the world to fight every kind of evil. The task he had now in hand was to find out the wicked enchantress, Acrasia, and to destroy her dwelling, for she had done more bad deeds than could be told, and, among them, had brought about the deaths of the father and mother of the poor little baby he had taken under his care.

By the time Sir Guyon's tale was finished the night was far spent, and all the guests in the castle betook themselves to rest.

Braggadocchio

As soon as it was dawn, Sir Guyon arose, and, mindful of his appointed work, armed himself again for the journey.

The little baby whom he had rescued he entrusted

Braggadochio

to the tender care of Medina, entreating her to train him up as befitted his noble birth. Then, since his good steed had been stolen from him, he and the Palmer fared forward on foot.

It will be remembered that when Sir Guyon heard the cries for help of the Lady Amavia, he dismounted, and ran into the thicket, leaving his horse outside. While he was absent, there wandered that way an idle, worthless fellow, called Braggadochio. This was a man who never did anything great or good, but who was extremely vain and boastful, and always trying to make out that he was somebody grand. When he saw the beautiful horse with its golden saddle and rich trappings, and Sir Guyon's spear, he immediately took possession of them, and hurried away. He was so puffed up with self-conceit that he felt now as if he were really some noble knight, and he hoped that every one else would think the same of him. He determined to go first to court, where he thought such a gallant show would at once attract notice and gain him favour.

Braggadochio had never been trained in chivalry; he rode very badly, and could not manage Sir Guyon's splendid high-spirited horse in the least. He managed, however, to stick on somehow, and presently, seeing a man sitting on a bank by the roadside, and wishing to show off, he rode at him, pretending to aim at him with his spear. The silly fellow fell flat down with fear, crying out for mercy. Braggadochio was very proud and delighted at this, and shouted at him in a loud voice, "Die, or yield thyself my captive!" The man was so terrified that he promised at once to become

Sir Guyon

Braggadochio's servant. So the two went on together. They were excellently well suited, for both were vain, and false, and cowardly, while Braggadochio tried to get his own way by bluster, and his companion by cunning.



Trompart (or *Deceit*), for that was the man's name, speedily discovered the folly of his master. He was very wily-witted and well accustomed to every form of cunning trickery, and, to suit his own purpose, he flattered up Braggadochio, and did all he could to encourage his idle vanity.

Braggadochio

Presently, as the two went along, they met the wicked magician, Archimago (or *Hypocrisy*), who was now just as angry with Sir Guyon as he had been before with the Red Cross Knight. When he saw Braggadochio, he thought he had found a good opportunity to be revenged on both the knights, and, going up to him, he asked if he would be willing to fight them.

Braggadochio immediately pretended to fall into a great rage against them, and said he would slay them both. Then Archimago, seeing that he had no sword, warned him that he must arm himself with the very best weapons, for they were two of the mightiest warriors living.

“Silly old man!” said Braggadochio boastfully. “Stop giving advice. Isn’t one brave man enough, without sword or shield, to make an army quail? You little know what this right hand can do. Once, when I killed seven knights with one sword, I swore thenceforward never to wear a sword in battle again, unless it could be the one that the noblest knight on earth wears.”

“Good!” said the magician quickly; “that sword you shall have very shortly. For now the best and noblest knight alive is Prince Arthur, who lives in the land of the Faerie Queene. He has a sword that is like a flaming brand. I will undertake that, by my devices, this sword is found to-morrow at your side.”

At these words the boaster began to quake, for he could not think who it was that spoke like this. Then Archimago suddenly vanished, for the north wind, at his command, carried him away, lifting him high into the air.

Sir Guyon

Braggadocchio and Deceit looked all about, but could find no trace of him. Nearly dead with fright, they both fled, never turning to look round till, at last, they came to a green forest where they hid themselves. Even here fear followed them, and every trembling leaf and rustle of the wind made their hair stand on end.

Fury's Captive

As Sir Guyon and his guide, the Black Palmer, went on their way, they presently saw at some distance what seemed to be a great uproar and commotion. Hurrying near, they found a big savage man dragging along and beating a handsome youth. An ugly old woman followed them, shouting and railing, and urging the man not to let go the youth, but to treat him worse and worse.

The name of the bad man was *Fury*; the old woman was his mother, and was called *Occasion*. The youth was a young squire, named Phaon.

Fury had Phaon completely in his power, but in his blind and senseless rage he scarcely knew what he was about, and spent half his force in vain. He often struck wide of the mark, and frequently hurt himself unawares, like a bull rushing at random, not knowing where he hits and not caring whom he hurts.

When Sir Guyon saw the sad plight of the young squire, he ran to help him; but Fury grappled with the Knight and flung him to the ground. Sir Guyon sprang to his feet, and drew his sword, but, seeing this,



“A mad man, or that feigned mad to bee,
Drew by the haire along upon the grownd
A handsom stripling with great crueltee,
Whom sore he bett.”

Fury's Captive

the Palmer cried, "Not so, O Guyon; never think the monster can be mastered or destroyed in that fashion. He is not a foe to be wounded by steel or overthrown by strength. This cruel wretch is Fury, who works much woe and shame to knighthood. That old hag, his mother, is the cause of all his wrath and spite. Whoever will conquer Fury, must first get hold of Occasion and master her. When she is got rid of, or strongly withstood, Fury himself is easily managed. But she is very difficult to catch, for her hair hangs so thickly over her eyes, it is often impossible to know her, and when she has once slipped past, you can never overtake her."

When Sir Guyon heard this, he left Fury and went to catch Occasion. All happened as the Palmer said. Directly the wicked old woman was captured, and her angry tongue silenced, her son turned to fly. Sir Guyon followed, and soon made him prisoner; but even when bound in iron chains, Fury kept grinding and gnashing his teeth, shaking his copper-coloured locks, and threatening revenge.

Then Sir Guyon turned to the young squire, and asked him how he had fallen into the power of such a wretch.

Phaon said all his misfortunes arose from his giving way to wrath and jealousy. He had a dear friend, about whom malicious stories were told, and without waiting to find out whether or not they were true, he killed this friend in sudden anger. When he discovered that he had been misled, and that his friend was innocent, he was filled with grief, and swore to be revenged on the two people who had deceived him. To one he gave

Sir Guyon

a deadly draught of poison, and the other he was pursuing with a drawn sword, when he himself was overtaken by Fury, who completely mastered him.

"As long as I live," he ended, "I shall never get over the agony caused me by Grief and Fury."

"Squire," said Sir Guyon, "you have suffered much, but all your ills may be softened if you do not give way to such violence."

Then said the Palmer, "Wretched is the man who never learns to govern his passions. At first they are feeble and can be easily managed, but through lack of control they lead to fearful results. Fight against them while they are young, for when they get strong they do their best to overcome all the good in you. Ungoverned wrath, jealousy, and grief have been the cause of this squire's downfall."

"Unlucky Phaon," said Sir Guyon; "since you have fallen into trouble through your hot, impatient disposition, henceforth take heed, and govern your ways carefully, lest a worse evil come upon you."

While Sir Guyon spoke, they saw far off a man running towards them, whose flying feet went so fast that he was almost hidden in a cloud of dust.

The Anger of Fire

The man soon reached Sir Guyon and the Palmer, hot, panting, and breathless. He was a bold-looking fellow, not in the least abashed by Sir Guyon, but casting scornful glances at him.

The Anger of Fire

Behind his back he bore a brazen shield, which looked as if it belonged to some famous knight. On it was drawn the picture of a flaming fire, round which were the words "*Burnt, I do burn.*" In his hand the man carried two sharp and slender darts, tipped with poison.

When he came near, he said boldly to Guyon, "Sir Knight—if you be a knight—I advise you to leave this place at once, in case of further harm. If you choose to stay, you do so at your own peril!"

Sir Guyon wondered at the fellow's boldness, though he scorned his idle vanity. He asked him mildly why any harm should come to him if he remained.

"Because," replied the man, "there is now coming, and close at hand, a knight of wondrous power, who never yet met an enemy without doing him deadly harm, or frightening him dreadfully. You need not hope for any better fate, if you choose to stay."

"What is his name?" said Sir Guyon, "and where does he come from?"

"His name is Pyrocles, which means *the Anger of Fire*," was the answer, "and he is called so from his hot and cruel temper. He is the brother of Cymocles, which means *the Anger of the Sea-Waves*, for Cymocles is wild and revengeful. They are the sons of *Malice* and *Intemperance*. I am *Strife*, the servant of Pyrocles, and I find work for him to do and stir him up to mischief. Fly, therefore, from this dreadful place, or your foolhardiness may bring you into danger."

"Never mind about that," said Sir Guyon, "but tell me whither you are now bound. For it must be some great reason that makes you in such a hurry."

Sir Guyon

"My master has sent me to seek out Occasion," said Strife. "He is furious to fight, and woe betide the man who first falls in his way."

"You must be mad," said the Palmer, "to seek out Occasion and cause for strife. She comes unsought, and follows even when shunned. Happy the man who can keep away from her."

"Look," said Sir Guyon, "yonder she sits, bound. Take that message to your master."

At this Strife grew very angry, and seizing one of his darts, he hurled it at Sir Guyon. The Knight caught it on his shield, whereupon Strife fled away, and was soon lost to sight.

Not long after, Sir Guyon saw a fierce-looking knight riding swiftly towards him. His armour sparkled like fire, and his horse was bright red, and champed and chafed at his bit as his master spurred him roughly forward. This was Pyrocles.

Not waiting to speak, he furiously attacked Sir Guyon, but after a sharp battle he was utterly defeated, and obliged to beg for mercy.

This Sir Guyon courteously granted, and asked the reason why Pyrocles had attacked him so fiercely.

The knight replied it was because he heard that Sir Guyon had taken captive a poor old woman, and chained her up. He demanded that she and her son Fury should be set free.

"And is that all that has so sorely displeased you?" said Sir Guyon, smiling. "There they are; I hand them over to you."

Pyrocles, delighted, rushed to set free the captives,



“ He boldly spake, ‘ Sir Knight, if knight thou beë,
Abandon this forestalled place at erst,
For fear of further harme, I counsell thee,
Or bide the chaunce at thine owne jeopardie.’ ”

The Idle Lake

but they were scarcely untied before their rage and spite burst forth with double fury. They did everything they could to make Pyrocles and Sir Guyon fight again. They not only railed against Sir Guyon for being the conqueror, but also against Pyrocles for allowing himself to be conquered.

Sir Guyon stood apart and refused to be drawn into the quarrel; but Pyrocles could not help getting enraged, and he and Fury were soon in the midst of a terrible fight.

Seeing that Pyrocles was getting the worst of it, Sir Guyon would have gone to his help, but the Palmer held him back, and refused to let him interfere.

“No,” he said firmly, “it is idle for you to pity him. He has brought this trouble upon himself by his own folly and wilfulness, and he must now bear the punishment.”

So, as there was nothing more to be done, Sir Guyon and the Palmer started again on their journey.

The Idle Lake

In the course of their journey, Sir Guyon and the Palmer came at last to the shores of a great lake. The water of this lake was thick and sluggish, unmoved by any wind or tide. In the midst of it floated an island, a lovely plot of fertile land, set like a little nest among the wide waves. The island was full of dainty herbs and flowers, beautiful trees with spreading branches, and with birds singing sweetly on every branch. But

Sir Guyon

everything there—the flowers, the trees, and the singing birds—only served to tempt weak-minded people to be slothful and lazy. Lying on the soft grass in some shady dell, they forgot there was any such thing as work or duty, and cared for nothing but to sleep away the time in idle dreams.

Up to the present, Sir Guyon had only had to face adventures of a stern and painful kind, but now he was to be put to quite a different test. Would he fall a prey to the sloth and luxury of this island, or would he remain faithful to his knightly duty?

When Sir Guyon and his companion, Conscience, came to the shore of the lake, they saw, floating near, a little gondola, all decked with boughs. In the gondola sat a beautiful lady, amusing herself by singing and laughing loudly. She came at once when Guyon called, and offered to ferry him across the lake; but when the Knight was in the boat, she refused to let the Palmer get in, and neither money nor entreaties would induce her to take the old man with them. Sir Guyon was very unwilling to leave his guide behind, but he could not go back, for the boat, obeying the lady's wish, shot away more swiftly than a swallow flies. It needed no oar nor pilot to guide it, nor any sails to carry it with the wind; it knew how to go exactly where its owner wanted, and could save itself both from rocks and shoals.

The name of the lady in the gondola was Phædria; she was one of the servants of the wicked enchantress, Acrasia, whom Sir Guyon was now on his way to attack. She hoped that the beautiful island would entrap the



“But whenas Guyon of that land had sight,
He wist himselfe amisse, and angry said;
‘Ah, Dame! perdy ye have not doen me right,
Thus to mislead mee, whiles I you obaid:
Mee litle needed from my right way to have straid.’”

The Idle Lake

Knight, and make him delay his journey and forget his purpose.

On the way, as was her custom, she began joking and laughing loudly, thinking this would amuse her guest. Sir Guyon was so kind and courteous that he was quite ready to join in any real merriment; but when he saw his companion grow noisier and sillier every moment, he began to despise her and did not care to share her foolish attempts at fun. But she went on still in the same manner till at last they reached the island.

When Sir Guyon saw this land, he knew he was out of his way, and was very angry.

"Lady," he said, "you have not done right to me, to mislead me like this, when I trusted you. There was no need for me to have strayed from my right way."

"Fair sir," she said, "do not be angry. He who travels on the sea cannot command his way, nor order wind and weather at his pleasure. The sea is wide, and it is easy to stray on it; the wind is uncertain. But here you may rest awhile in safety, till the season serves to attempt a new passage. Better be safe in port than on a rough sea," she ended laughingly.

Sir Guyon was not at all pleased, but he checked his anger and stepped on shore. Phædria at once began to show off all the delights of the island, which grew in beauty wherever she went. The flowers sprang freshly, the trees burst into bud and early blossom, and a whole chorus of birds broke into song. And the lady, more sweetly than any bird on bough, would often sing with them, surpassing, as she easily could,

Sir Guyon

their native music with her skilful art. She strove, by every device in her power, so to charm Sir Guyon that he would forget all deeds of daring and his knightly duty.

But Sir Guyon was wise, and took care not to be carried away by these delights, though he would not seem so rude as to despise anything that a gentle lady did to give him pleasure. He spoke many times of his desire to leave, but she kept on making excuses to delay his journey.

Now it happened that Phædria had already allured to the island another knight. This was Cymocles, whose name means *the Anger of the Sea*. He was the brother of Pyrocles (*the Anger of Fire*), whom you may remember Sir Guyon had already fought and conquered. Cymocles had been sunk in a heavy sleep when Sir Guyon arrived, but when he woke up and discovered the new-comer, he flew at once into a furious rage, and rushed to attack him.

Sir Guyon, of course, was quite ready to defend himself, and Cymocles soon found that he had never before met such a powerful foe. The fight between them was so terrible that Phædria, overcome with pity and dismay, rushed forward, and implored them, for her sake, to stop. She blamed herself as the cause of all the mischief, and entreated them not to disgrace the name of knighthood by strife and cruelty, but to make peace and be friends.

So great is the power of gentle words to a brave and generous heart, that at her speech their rage began to relent. When all was over, Sir Guyon again begged

The Realm of Pluto

the lady to let him depart, and to give him passage to the opposite shore. She was now quite as glad as he was for him to go, for she saw that all her folly and vain delights were powerless to tempt him from his duty, and she did not want her selfish ease and pleasure to be troubled with terror and the clash of arms. So she bade him get into the little boat again, and soon conveyed him swiftly to the farther strand.

The Realm of Pluto

Sir Guyon having lost his trusty guide, who was left behind on the shore of the Idle Lake, had now to go on his way alone. At last he came to a gloomy glade, where the thick branches and shrubs shut away the daylight. There, lurking in the shade, he found a rude, savage man, very ugly and unpleasant-looking. His face was tanned with smoke, his eyes dull, his head and beard streaked with soot, his hands were coal-black, as if burnt at a smith's forge, and his nails were like claws.

His iron coat, all overgrown with rust, was lined with gold, which, though now darkened with dirt, seemed as if it had been formerly a work of rich and curious design. In his lap he counted over a mass of coin, feasting his eyes and his covetous wishes with the sight of his huge treasury. Round about on every side lay great heaps of gold, which could never be spent: some were the rough ore, others were beaten into great ingots and square wedges; some were

Sir Guyon

round plates, without mark of any kind, but most were stamped, and bore the ancient and curious inscription of some king or emperor.

As soon as the man saw Sir Guyon, he rose, in great haste and fright, to hide his mounds of treasure, and began with trembling hands to pour them through a wide hole into the earth. But Sir Guyon, though he was himself dismayed at the sight, sprang lightly forward to stop him.

“Who are you that live here in the desert, and hide away from people’s sight, and from their proper use, all these rich heaps of wealth?” he asked.

Looking at him with great disdain, the man replied, “You are very rash and heedless of yourself, Sir Knight, to come here to trouble me, and my heaps of treasure. I call myself ‘King of this world and worldlings’—Great Mammon—the greatest power on earth. Riches, renown, honour, estate, and all the goods of this world, for which men incessantly toil and moil, flow forth from me in abundance. If you will deign to serve and follow me, all these mountains of gold shall be at your command, and, if these will not suffice, you shall have ten times as much.”

“Mammon,” said the Knight, “your boast of kingship is in vain, and your bribe of golden wages is useless. Offer your gifts to those who covet such dazzling gain. It would ill befit me, who spend my days in deeds of daring and pursuit of honour, to pay any attention to the tempting baits with which you bewitch weak men. Any desire for worldly dross mixes badly with, and debases the true heroic spirit

The Realm of Pluto



which joys in fighting for crowns and kingdoms. Fair shields, gay steeds, bright armour are my delight. These are the riches fit for a venturous knight.”

Mammon went on trying to tempt the Knight with all sorts of alluring promises, but Sir Guyon stood firm. He pointed out the evils that had come through

Sir Guyon

riches, which he considered the root of all unquietness—first got with guile—then kept with dread, afterwards spent with pride and lavishness, and leaving behind them grief and heaviness. They were the cause of infinite mischief, strife and debate, bloodshed and bitterness, wrong-doing and covetousness, which noble hearts despise as dishonour. Innocent people were murdered, kings slain, great cities sacked and burnt, and other evils, too many to mention, were caused by riches.

“Son,” said Mammon at last, “let be your scorn, and leave the wrongs done in the old days to those who lived in them. You who live in these later times must work for wealth, and risk your life for gold. If you choose to use what I offer you, take what you please of all this abundance; if you don’t choose, you are free to refuse it, but do not afterwards blame the thing you have refused.”

“I do not choose to receive anything,” replied the Knight, “until I am sure that it has been well come by. How do I know but what you have got these goods by force or fraud from their rightful owners?”

“No eye has ever yet seen, nor tongue counted, nor hand handled them,” said Mammon. “I keep them safe hidden in a secret place. Come and see.”

Then Mammon led Sir Guyon through the thick covert, and found a dark way which no man could spy, that went deep down into the ground, and was compassed round with dread and horror. At length they came into a larger space, that stretched into a wide plain; a broad beaten highway ran across this, leading

The Realm of Pluto

straight to the grisly realm of Pluto, King of Wealth, and ruler of the Lower Regions.

It was indeed a horrible road. By the wayside sat fiendish Vengeance and turbulent Strife, one brandishing an iron whip, the other a knife, and both gnashing their teeth and threatening the lives of those who went by. On the other side, in one group, sat cruel Revenge and rancorous Spite, disloyal Treason and heart-burning Hate; but gnawing Jealousy sat alone out of their sight, biting his lips; and trembling Fear ran to and fro, finding no place where he might safely shroud himself. Lamenting Sorrow lay in the darkness, and Shame hid his ugly face from living eye. Over them always fluttered grim Horror, beating his iron wings, and after him flew owls and night-ravens, messengers of evil tidings, while a Harpy—a hideous bird of ill omen—sitting on a cliff near, sang a song of bitter sorrow that would have broken a heart of flint, and when it was ended flew swiftly after Horror.

All these lay before the gates of Pluto, and passing by, Sir Guyon and Mammon said nothing to them, but all the way wonder fed the eyes and filled the thoughts of Sir Guyon.

At last Mammon brought him to a little door that was next adjoining to the wide-open gate of Hades, and nothing parted them; there was only a little stride between them, dividing the House of Riches from the mouth of the Lower Regions.

Before the door sat self-consuming Care, keeping watch and ward, day and night, for fear lest Force or Fraud should break in, and steal the treasure he was

Sir Guyon

guarding. Nor would he allow Sleep once to come near, although his drowsy den was next.

Directly Mammon arrived, the door opened, and gave passage to him. Sir Guyon still kept following, for neither darkness nor danger could dismay him.

The Cave of Mammon

As soon as Mammon and Sir Guyon entered the House of Riches, the door immediately shut of itself, and from behind it leapt forth an ugly fiend, who followed them wherever they went. He kept an eager watch on Guyon, hoping that before long the Knight would lay a covetous hand on some of the treasures, in which case he was ready to tear him to pieces with his claws.

The form of the house inside was rude and strong, like a huge cave hewn out of the cliff; from cracks in the rough vault hung lumps of gold, and every rift was laden with rich metal, so that they seemed ready to fall in pieces, while high above all the spider spun her crafty web, smothered in smoke and clouds blacker than jet. The roof, and floor, and walls were all of gold, but covered with dust and hid in darkness, so that no one could see the colour of it; for the cheerful daylight never came inside that house, only a faint shadow of uncertain light, like a dying lamp. Nothing was to be seen but great iron chests and strong coffers, all barred with double bands of metal, so that no one could force them open by violence; but all the ground

The Cave of Mammon

was strewn with the bones of dead men, who had lost their lives in that place, and were now left there unburied.

They passed on, and Guyon spoke not a word till they came to an iron door, which opened to them of its own accord, and showed them such a store of riches as the eye of man had never seen before.

Then Mammon, turning to the warrior, said, "Behold here the world's happiness! Behold here the end at which all men aim, to be made rich! Such favour—to be happy—is now laid before you."

"I will not have your offered favour," said the Knight, "nor do I intend to be happy in that way. Before my eyes I place another happiness, another end. To those that take pleasure in them, I resign these base things. But I prefer to spend my fleeting hours in fighting and brave deeds, and would rather be lord over those who have riches than have them myself, and be their slave."

At that the fiend gnashed his teeth, and was angry because he was kept so long from his prey, for he thought that so glorious a bait would surely have tempted his guest. Had it done so, he would have snatched him away lighter than a dove in a falcon's claws.

But, when Mammon saw he had missed his object, he thought of another way to entrap the Knight unawares. He led him away into another room where there were a hundred furnaces burning fiercely. By every furnace were many evil spirits horrible to see, busily engaged in tending the fires, or working with

Sir Guyon

the molten metal. When they saw Guyon they all stood stock still to wonder at him, for they had never seen such a mortal before; he was almost afraid of their staring eyes and hideous figures.

"Behold what living eye has never seen before," said Mammon. "Here is the fountain of the world's good. If, therefore, you will be rich, be well advised and change your wilful mood, lest hereafter you may wish and not be able to have."

"Let it suffice that I refuse all your idle offers," said Guyon. "All that I need I have. Why should I covet more than I can use? Keep such vain show for your worldlings, but give me leave to follow my quest."

Mammon was much displeased, but he led him forward, to entice him further. He brought him through a dark and narrow way to a broad gate, built of beaten gold. The gate was open, but there stood in front of it a sturdy fellow, very bold and defiant-looking. In his right hand he held an iron club, but he himself seemed as if he were made of gold. His name was Disdain. When he saw Guyon he brandished his club, but Mammon bade him be still, and led his guest past him.

He took him into a large place, like some solemn temple; great golden pillars upheld the massive roof, and every pillar was decked with crowns and diadems, such as princes wore while reigning on earth. A crowd of people of every sort and nation were there assembled, all pressing with a great uproar to the upper part, where was placed a high throne. On it



“Behold thou Faeries sonne, with mortall eye,
That living eye before did never see :

* * * * *
Here is the fountaine of the worldes good :
Now, therefore, if thou wilt enriched bee,
Awise thee well, and change thy wilfull mood.”

The Cave of Mammon

sat a woman, clad in gorgeous robes of royalty. Her face seemed marvellously fair; her beauty threw such brightness round that all men could see it; it was not all her own, however, but was partly made up by art.

As she sat there, glittering, she held a great gold chain, the upper end of which reached high into heaven, and the other end deep down into the lower regions; and all the crowd around her pressed to catch hold of that chain, to climb aloft by it, and excel others.

The name of the chain was *Ambition*, and every link was a step of dignity. Some thought to raise themselves to a high place by riches, some by pushing, some by flattery, some by friends—and all by wrong ways, for those that were up themselves kept others low, and those that were low held tight hold of others, not letting them rise, while every one strove to throw down his companions.

When Guyon saw this he began to ask what all the crowd meant, and who was the lady that sat on the throne.

“That goodly person, round whom every one flocks, is my dear daughter,” said Mammon. “From her alone come honour and dignity, and this world’s happiness, for which all men struggle, but which few get. She is called *Philotime, the Love of Honour*, and she is the fairest lady in the world. Since you have found favour with me, I will make her your wife, if you like, that she may advance you, because of your work and just merits.”

“I thank you much, Mammon,” said the gentle Knight, “for offering me such favour, but I am only

Sir Guyon

a mortal, and, I know well, an unworthy match for such a wife. And, if I were not, yet is my troth plighted and my love declared to another lady, and to change one's love without cause is a disgrace to a knight."

Mammon was inwardly enraged, but, hiding his feelings, he led him away, through the grisly shadows, by a beaten path, into a garden well furnished with herbs and fruits of an unknown kind. They were not such as men gather from the fertile earth, sweet and of good taste, but deadly black, both leaf and flower. Here grew cypress and ebony, poppy and deadly nightshade, hemlock, and many other poisonous plants. The place was called the Garden of Proserpine. In the midst was a silver seat, under a thick arbour, and near by grew a great tree with spreading branches, laden with golden apples.

Mammon showed the Knight many wonders in the Garden of Proserpine, and tried to tempt him to sit in the silver seat, or to eat of the golden apples. If Guyon had done so, the horrible monster who waited behind would have pounced on him and torn him to pieces; but he was wary and took care not to yield to temptation, so the beguiler was cheated of his prey. But now he began to feel weak and ill for want of food and sleep, for three days had passed since he entered the cave. So he begged Mammon to guide him back to the surface of the earth by the way they had come. Mammon, though very unwilling, was forced to obey; but the change was too much for Guyon in his feeble state, and as soon as he came into the light, and began to breathe the fresh air, he fainted away.

The Champion of Chivalry

The Champion of Chivalry

During the time that Guyon stayed in the house of Mammon, the Palmer, whom the maid of the Idle Lake had refused to take in her boat, had found a passage in some other way. On his journey he came near the place where Guyon lay in a trance, and suddenly he heard a voice calling loud and clear, "Come hither, hither! Oh, come quickly!"

He hurried in the direction of the cry, which led him to the shady dell where Mammon had formerly counted his wealth. Here he found Guyon senseless on the ground, but watched over by a beautiful angel.

At first he was dismayed, but the angel bade him not be frightened, for that life and renewed vigour would soon come back to the Knight. He now handed him over to the charge of the Palmer, and bade him watch with care, for fresh evil was at hand.

Thus saying, the angel vanished, and the Palmer, turning to look at Guyon, was rejoiced to find a feeble glimmer of life in him, which he cherished tenderly.

At last there came that way two Pagan knights in shining armour, led by an old man, and with a light-footed page far in front, scattering mischief and enmity wherever he went. These were the two bad brothers, Pyrocles and Cymocles, the sons of Anger, guided by the false Archimago, while their servant, Atin (or *Strife*) stirred them up to quarrelling and vengeance.

When they came to the place where the Palmer sat watching over the sleeping body of the Knight, they

Sir Guyon

knew the latter at once, for they had both lately fought with him. They reviled the Palmer, and began



heaping abuse on Sir Guyon, whom they thought dead, and declared that they would strip him of his armour,

The Champion of Chivalry

which was much too good for such a worthless creature. The Palmer implored them not to do such a shameful and dishonourable deed, but his entreaties were in vain; one brother laid his hand on the shield, the other on the helmet, both fiercely eager to possess themselves of the spoil.

At this moment they saw coming towards them an armed knight of bold and lofty grace, whose squire bore after him an ebony spear and a covered shield. Well did the magician know him by his arms and bearing when he saw his prancing Libyan steed, and he cried to the brothers, "Rise quickly, and prepare yourselves for battle, for yonder comes the mightiest knight alive—Prince Arthur, the flower of grace and chivalry."

The brothers were so impressed that they started up and greedily prepared for battle. Pyrocles, who had lost his own weapons in the fight with Fury, snatched a sword from Archimago, although the latter warned him it was a magic sword, and would do no harm to Prince Arthur, for whom it had been made long ago, and who was its rightful owner. Pyrocles only laughed at the magician's warning, and having bound Guyon's shield to his wrist, he was ready for the fray.

By that time the stranger Knight had come near, and greeted them courteously. They returned no answer, but looked very disdainful, and then, turning to the Palmer, Prince Arthur noticed that at his feet lay an armed man, in whose dead face he read great nobility.

"Reverend sir," he said, "what great misfortune has befallen this Knight? Did he die a natural death, or did he fall by treason or by fight?"

Sir Guyon

“Not by one or the other,” said the Palmer; “but his senses are drowned in sleep, and these cruel foes have taken advantage of it to revenge their spite and rob him of his armour; but you, fair sir, whose honourable look promises hope of help, may I beseech you to take pity on his sad plight, and by your power protect him?”

“Palmer,” he said, “there is no knight so rude, I trust, as to do outrage to a sleeping spirit. Maybe, better reason will soften their rash revenge. Well-chosen words have a secret power in appeasing anger. If not, leave to me your Knight’s last defence.”

Then, turning to the brothers, he first tried what persuasion would do. He took for granted that their wrath was provoked by wrongs they had suffered, and did not challenge the right or justice of their actions; but, on behalf of the sleeping man, he entreated pardon for anything he might have done amiss.

To this gentle speech the brothers made rude and insulting answers, and Pyrocles, not waiting to set the Prince on guard, lifted high the magic sword, thinking to kill him. The faithful steel refused to harm its master, and swerved from the mark, but the blow was so furious it made man and horse reel. Prince Arthur was such a splendid rider that he did not fall from the saddle; but, full of anger, he cried fiercely—

“False traitor! you have broken the law of arms by striking a foe unchallenged, but you shall soon right bitterly taste the fruit of your treason, and feel the law which you have disgraced.”

The Champion of Chivalry

With that he levelled his spear at Pyrocles, and the two were soon engaged in a fiery battle. Cymocles rushed to his brother's aid, and they both fell on the Prince with terrific fury, so that he had hard work to defend himself. So mighty was his power that neither of his foes could stand against it; but whenever he smote at Pyrocles, the latter threw in front of him Guyon's shield, on which was portrayed the face of the Faerie Queene, and when he saw this, the Prince's hand relented, and he stayed the stroke, because of the love and loyalty he bore the picture. This often saved the Pagan knight from deadly harm, but at last Prince Arthur overcame and killed both him and his brother, while false Archimago and Strife fled fast away.

By this time Sir Guyon had awakened from his trance, and was much grieved when he found that his shield and sword had disappeared; but when he saw beside him his faithful companion, whom he had lost some days before, he was very glad. The Palmer was delighted to see him rise looking so well, and told him not to trouble about the loss of his weapons, for they would soon be restored to him. Then he told Guyon all that had happened, and how the strange Knight had fought for him with the two wicked brothers.

When he heard this, Sir Guyon was deeply touched, and felt all his heart fill with affection. Bowing to Prince Arthur with due reverence, as to the defender of his life, he said, "My lord, my liege, by whose most gracious aid I live this day and see my foes subdued, what reward would be sufficient to repay you for your great goodness, unless to be ever bound——"

Sir Guyon

But the Prince interrupted. "Fair sir, what need is there to reckon a good turn as a debt to be paid? Are not all knights bound by oath to withstand the power of the oppressor? It is sufficient that I have done my duty properly."

So they both found that a good deed is made gracious by kindness and courtesy.

The House of Temperance

After the Pagan brothers were conquered, and Prince Arthur had recovered his stolen sword and Guyon his lost shield, the two went on their way together, talking pleasantly as they journeyed along. When the sun was near setting they saw in the distance a goodly castle, placed near a river, in a pleasant valley. Thinking this place would do to spend the night in, they marched thither, but when they came near, and dismounted from their tired steeds, they found the gates barred and every fastening locked, as though for fear of foes. They thought this was done as an insult to them, to prevent their entrance, till the Squire blew his horn under the castle wall, which shook with the sound as if it would fall. Then a watchman quickly looked forth from the highest tower, and called loudly to the knights to ask what they required so rudely. They gently answered that they wished to enter.

"Fly, fly, good knights!" he said; "fly fast away if you love your lives, as it is right you should. Fly fast, and save yourselves from instant death. You

The House of Temperance

may not enter here, though we would most willingly let you in if only we could. But a thousand enemies rage round us, who have held the castle in siege for seven years, and many good knights who have sought to save us have been slain."

As he spoke, a thousand villains, with horrible outcry, swarmed around them from the adjoining rocks and caves—vile wretches, ragged, rude, and hideous, all threatening death, and all armed in a curious manner, some with unwieldy clubs, some with long spears, some with rusty knives, some with staves heated in the fire. They looked like wild bulls, staring with hollow eyes, and with stiff hair standing on end.

They assailed the Knights fiercely, and made them recoil, but when Prince Arthur and Sir Guyon charged again their strength began to fail, and they were unable to withstand them, for the champions broke on them with such might that they were forced to fly like scattered sheep before the rush of a lion and a tiger. The Knights with their shining blades soon broke their rude ranks, and drove them into confusion, hewing and slashing at them; and now, when faced boldly, they found that they were nothing but idle shadows, for, though they seemed bodies, they had really no substance.

When they had dispersed this troublesome rabble, Prince Arthur and Guyon came again to the castle gate, and begged entrance, where they had been refused before. The report of their danger and conflict having reached the ears of the lady who dwelt there, she came out with a goodly train of squires and ladies to bid them welcome.

Sir Guyon

The lady's name was Alma. She was as beautiful as it was possible to be, in the very flower of her youth, yet full of goodness and modesty. She was clad in a robe of lily-white, reaching from her shoulders to the ground; the long, loose train, embroidered with gold and pearls, was carried by two fair damsels. Her yellow-golden hair was trimly arranged, and she wore no head-dress except a garland of sweet roses.

She entertained the Knights nobly, and, when they had rested a little, they begged her, as a great favour, to show them over her castle. This she consented to do.

First she led them up to the castle wall, which was so high that no foe could climb it, and yet was both beautiful and fit for defence. It was not built of brick, nor yet of stone, sand, nor mortar, but of clay. The pity was that such goodly workmanship could not last longer, for it must soon turn back to earth.

Two gates were placed in this building, the one (*mouth*) by which all passed in far, excelling the other in workmanship. When it was locked, no one could pass through, and when it was opened no man could shut it. Within the barbican sat a porter (*the tongue*), day and night keeping watch and ward; nobody could go in or out of the gate without strict scrutiny. Utterers of secrets he debarred, babblers of folly, and those who told tales of wrong-doing; when cause required it, his alarm-bell might be heard far and wide, but never without occasion.

Round the porch on each side sat sixteen warders (*the teeth*), all in bright array; tall yeomen they



“But soone the knights with their bright=burning blades
Broke their rude troupes, and orders did confound,
Hewing and slashing at their idle shades;
For though they bodies seem, yet substaunce from them fades.”

The House of Temperance

seemed, of great strength, and were ranged ready for fight.

Alma then took the Knights over the rest of the castle, and showed them so many curious and beautiful things that their minds were filled with wonder, for they had never before seen so strange a sight. Presently she brought them back into a beautiful parlour (the *heart*), hung with rich tapestry, where sat a bevy of fair ladies (the *feelings, tastes, &c.*), amusing themselves in different ways. Some sang, some laughed, some played with straws, some sat idly at ease; but others could not bear to play—all amusement was annoyance to them. This one frowned, that one yawned, a third blushed for shame, another seemed envious or shy, while another gnawed a rush and looked sullen.

After that, Alma took her guests up to a stately turret (the *head*), in which two beacons (the *eyes*) gave light, and flamed continually, for they were most marvellously made of living fire, and set in silver sockets, covered with lids that could easily open and shut.

In this turret there were many rooms and places, but three chief ones, in which dwelt three honourable sages, who counselled fair Alma how to govern well. The first of these could foresee things to come; the second could best advise of things present; the third kept things past in memory, so that no time or occasion could arise which one or other of them could not deal with.

The first sat in the front of the house, so that nothing should hinder his coming to a conclusion

Sir Guyon

quickly; he made up his mind in advance, without listening to reason; he had a keen foresight, and an active brain that was never idle and never rested. His room held a collection of the oddest and queerest things ever seen or imagined. It was filled, too, with flies, that buzzed all about, confusing men's eyes and ears, with a sound like a swarm of bees. These were idle thoughts and fancies, dreams, visions, soothsayings, prophecies, &c., and all kinds of false tales and lies.

The second counsellor was a much older man. He spent all his time meditating over things that had really happened, and in studying law, art, science and philosophy, so that he had grown very wise indeed.

The third counsellor was a very, very aged man. His chamber seemed very ruinous and old, and was therefore at the back of the house, but the walls that upheld it were quite firm and strong. He was half blind, and looked feeble in body, but his mind was still vigorous. All things that had happened, however ancient they were, he faithfully recorded, so that nothing might be forgotten.

The names of Alma's three counsellors were Imagination, Judgment, and Memory.

The Rock of Reproach and the Wandering Islands

The next morning, before it was light, Sir Guyon, clad in his bright armour, and accompanied by the Palmer in his black dress, started once more on his journey to find the wicked enchantress, Acrasia, and the Bower

The Rock of Reproach

of Bliss. At the river ford, they found a ferryman, whom Alma had commanded to be there with his well-rigged boat. They went on board, and he immediately launched his bark, and Lady Alma's country was soon left far behind.

For two days they sailed without even seeing land; but on the morning of the third day, they heard, far away, a hideous roaring that filled them with terror, and they saw the surges rage so high, they feared to be drowned.

Then said the boatman, "Palmer, steer aright, and keep an even course, for we must needs pass yonder way. That is the Gulf of Greediness, which swallows up all it can devour, and is in a constant turmoil."

On the other side, stood a hideous rock of mighty magnet stone, whose craggy cliffs were dreadful to behold. Great jagged reefs ran out into the water, and threatened death to all who came near. Yet passers-by were unable to keep away, for trying to escape the devouring jaws of the Gulf of Greediness, they were dashed to pieces on the rock.

As they drew near this dreadful spot, the ferryman had to put forth all his strength and skill to row them past. On the one hand, they saw the horrible gulf, that looked as if it were sucking down all the sea into itself; and on the other hand, they saw the perilous rock, on whose sharp cliffs lay the ribs of many shattered vessels, together with the dead bodies of those who had recklessly flung themselves to destruction.

The name of the rock was the "Rock of Reproach." It was a dangerous and hateful place, to

Sir Guyon

which no fish nor fowl ever came, but only screaming sea-gulls and cormorants, who sat waiting on the cliff to prey on the unhappy wretches whose extravagant and thriftless living had brought them to ruin.

Sir Guyon and his companions passed by this dangerous spot in safety, and the ferryman rowed them briskly over the dancing billows.

At last, far off, they spied many islands floating on every side among the waves. Then said the Knight, "Lo, I see the land, so, Sir Palmer, direct your course to it."

"Not so," said the ferryman, "lest we unknowingly run into danger; for those same islands, which now and then appear, are not firm land, nor have they any certain abiding-place; they are straggling plots, which run to and fro in the wide waters, wherefore they are called the 'Wandering Islands,' and are to be shunned, for they have drawn many a traveller into danger and distress. Yet from far off, they seem very pleasant, both fair and fruitful, the ground spread with soft, green grass, and the tall trees covered with leaves, and decked with white and red blossoms that might well allure passers-by. But whoever once sets his foot on those islands can never recover it, but evermore wanders, uncertain and unsure."

Sir Guyon and the Palmer listened to their pilot, as seemed fitting, and they passed on their way.

"Now," said the cautious boatman, when they had left behind them the Wandering Islands (or, *listless idleness*), "we must be careful to take good heed of our safety here, for a perilous passage lies before us.



“Said then the Boteman, ‘Palmer, stere aright,
And keepe an even course; for yonder way
We needes must pas (God doe us well acquight).’”

The Rock of Reproach

There is a great quicksand, and a whirlpool of hidden danger ; therefore, Sir Palmer, keep a steady hand, for the narrow way lies between them."

Scarcely had he spoken, when near at hand they spied the quicksand ; it was almost covered with water, but they knew it at once by the waves round it and the discoloured sea. It was called the Quicksand of Unthriftiness.

Passing by, they saw a goodly ship, laden from far with precious merchandise, and well fitted as a ship could be, which through misadventure or carelessness had run herself into danger. The mariners and merchants, with much toil, laboured in vain to recover their prize and to save the rich wares from destruction, but neither toil nor trouble served to free her from the quicksand.

On the other side, they saw the dangerous pool that was called the Whirlpool of Decay, in which many had haplessly sunk, of whom no memory remained. The circling waters whirled round, like a restless wheel, eager to draw the boat into the outer limit of the labyrinth, and to drown the travellers. But the heedful ferryman rowed with all his might, so that they passed by in safety and left the dreaded danger behind.

Suddenly they saw in the midst of the ocean, the surging waters rise like a mountain, and the great sea puffed up, as though threatening to devour everything. The waves came rolling along, and the billows roared in fury, though there was not a breath of wind. At this, Sir Guyon, the Palmer, and the ferryman were greatly afraid, for they knew not what strange horror was approaching.

Sir Guyon

Sea-Monsters and Land-Monsters

Presently they saw a hideous crowd of huge sea-monsters, such as terrified any one to behold; every shape of ugliness and horror was there—water-snakes, and whales, and sword-fish, and hippopotamuses, and sharks, and every kind of sea-monster, and they came along in thousands, with a dreadful noise and a hollow, rumbling roar. No wonder the Knight was appalled, for, compared with these, all that we hold dreadful on earth were but a trifle.

“Fear nothing,” then said the Palmer, “for these creatures that look like monsters are not so in reality; they are only disguised into these fearful shapes by the wicked enchantress to terrify us, and to prevent our continuing our journey.”

Then, lifting up his magic staff, he smote the sea, which immediately became calm, and all the make-believe monsters fled to the bottom of the ocean.

Free from that danger, the travellers kept on their way, and as they went, they heard a pitiful cry, as of some one wailing and weeping. At last, on an island, they saw a beautiful maiden, who seemed in great sorrow, and who kept calling to them for help. Directly Guyon heard her, he bade the Palmer steer straight to her rescue; but the latter, knowing better, said, “Fair sir, do not be displeased if I disobey you, for it would be a bad thing to listen to her, for really there is nothing the matter; it is only a trick to entrap you.”

Sea and Land Monsters

The Knight was guided by his advice, and the ferryman held steadily straight on his course.

The next temptation they had to face was of a different kind. They came to a lovely bay, sheltered on the one side by a steep hill, and on the other by a high rock, so that between them was a still and pleasant haven. In this bay lived five mermaids, who could sing in the sweetest manner possible, but the only use they made of their skill in melody was to allure travellers, whom, when they had got hold of, they killed. So now to Guyon as he passed, they began to sing their sweetest tunes, greeting him as the mightiest knight that had ever fought in battle, and bidding him to turn his rudder into the quiet bay, where his storm-beaten vessel might safely ride.

“This is the port of rest from troublous toil,” they sang; “the world’s sweet inn from pain and wearisome turmoil.”

The rolling sea and the waves breaking on the rock mingled with their singing, and the wind whistled in harmony. The sound so delighted Guyon that he bade the boatman row slowly, to let him listen to their melody. But the Palmer wisely counselled him not to do this, and so they got safely past the danger, and soon after they saw, in the distance, the land to which they were directing their course.

Then suddenly a thick fog came down upon them, hiding the cheerful daylight, and making the whole world seem a confused mass. They were much dismayed at this, not knowing which way to steer in the darkness, and fearing that they would fall into some

Sir Guyon

hidden danger. To add to their confusion, they were attacked by a flock of horrible birds, which flew screaming round them, beating at them with their wicked wings—owls, and ravens, and bats, and screech-owls. Yet the travellers would not stay because of these, but went straight forward, the ferryman rowing, while the Palmer kept a firm hand on the rudder, till at last the weather began to clear, and the land showed plainly. Then the Palmer warned Sir Guyon to have his armour in readiness, for peril would soon assail him.

The Knight obeyed, and when the boat reached the shore, he and the Palmer stepped out, fully armed, and carefully prepared against every danger.

They had not gone far, before they heard a hideous bellowing, and a pack of wild beasts rushed forward as if to devour them. But when they came near, the Palmer lifted up his wonderful staff, and immediately they were quelled, and shrank back trembling.

Passing these, Sir Guyon and the Palmer soon came to the place the Knight was seeking—the object of his long and toilsome quest—the home of the wicked enchantress—the “Bower of Bliss.”

The Bower of Bliss

It was a lovely spot, a place adorned in the most perfect way by which art could imitate nature; everything sweet and pleasing, or that the daintiest fancy could devise, was gathered here in lavish profusion. A light fence enclosed it, and a rich ivory gate,



“ Ere long they heard an hideous bellowing
Of many beasts, that roared outrageously.

* * * * *

But soone as they approcht with deadly threat,
The Palmer over them his staffe upheld.”

The Bower of Bliss

wonderfully carven, stood open to all those that came thither.

In the porch sat a tall, handsome porter, whose looks were so pleasant that he seemed to entice travellers to him, but it was only to deceive them to their own ruin. He was the keeper of the garden, and his name was *Pleasure*. He was decked with flowers, and by his side was set a great bowl of wine, with which he pleased all new-comers. He offered it to Sir Guyon, but the latter refused his idle courtesy, and overthrew the bowl.

Passing through the gate, they beheld a large and spacious plain, strewn on every side with delights. The ground was covered with green grass, and made beautiful with all kinds of lovely flowers; the skies were always bright, and the air soft and balmy; no storm or frost ever came to harm the tender blossoms; neither scorching heat nor piercing cold to hurt those who dwelt therein.

Guyon wondered much at the loveliness of that sweet place, yet would not suffer any of its delights to allure him, but passed straight through, and still looked forward. Presently he came to a beautiful arbour, fashioned out of interlacing boughs and branches. This was arched over with a clustering vine, richly laden with bunches of luscious grapes—some were deep purple like the hyacinth—some like rubies, laughing red—some like emeralds, not yet well ripened, and there were others of burnished gold. They almost broke down the branches with their weight, and seemed to offer themselves to be freely gathered by the passers-by.

Sir Guyon

In the arbour sat a finely dressed lady; she held in her left hand a golden cup, and with her right hand she gathered the ripe fruit, and squeezed the juice of the grapes into the cup. It was her custom to give a draught of this wine to every stranger that passed, but when she offered it to Guyon to taste, he took the cup out of her hand, and flung it to the ground, so that it was broken and all the wine spilt. *Excess*, for that was the lady's name, was very angry at this, but she could not withstand the Knight, and was obliged to let him pass, and he went on, heedless of her displeasure.

Then before his eyes appeared a most lovely paradise, abounding in every sort of pleasure: rainbow-coloured flowers, lofty trees, shady dells, breezy mountains, rustling groves, crystal streams—it was impossible to tell which was art and which nature, they were so cunningly mingled; both combined made greater the beauty of the other, and adorned this garden with an endless variety.

In the midst of all, stood a fountain made of the most precious materials on earth, so pure and bright that one could see the silver flood running through every channel. It was wrought all over with curious carving, and above all was spread a trail of ivy of the purest gold, coloured like nature, so that any one who saw it would surely think it was real ivy. Numberless little streams continually welled out of this fountain, and formed a little lake, through the shallow water of which one could see the bottom, all paved with shining jasper.

The Bower of Bliss

Then at last Sir Guyon and the Palmer drew near to the "Bower of Bliss," so called by the foolish favourites of the wicked enchantress.

"Now, sir, consider well," said the Palmer, "for here is the end of all our travel. Here dwells Acrasia, whom we must surprise, or else she will slip away, and laugh at our attempt."

Soon they heard the most lovely melody, such as might never be heard on mortal ground. It was almost impossible to say what kind of music it was, for all that is pleasing to the ear there joined in harmony—the joyous singing of birds, angelic voices, silver-sounding instruments, murmuring waters, and the whispering wind; and through it all they heard the singing of one voice, sweeter than all the others.

But in spite of the lovely music heard on every side, Sir Guyon and the Palmer never left their path; they kept on through many groves and thickets, till at last they came in sight of the wicked enchantress herself. She lay, half-sleeping, on a bed of roses, clad in a veil of silk and silver; all round were many fair ladies and boys singing sweetly. Not far off was her last victim, a gallant-looking youth, over whom she had cast an evil spell. His brave sword and armour hung idly on a tree, and he lay sunk in a heavy slumber, forgetful of all the noble deeds in which he had once delighted.

Sir Guyon and the Palmer cautiously drew near, then suddenly rushed forward, and flung over Acrasia a net which the skilful Palmer had made for the occasion. All her attendants immediately fled in terror. Acrasia tried all her arts and crafty wiles to set herself

Sir Guyon

free, but in vain; the net was so cunningly woven, neither guile nor force could disentangle her.



Then Sir Guyon broke down without pity all the pleasant bowers, and the stately palace, and trampled down the gardens, and burnt the banqueting-hall, so that nothing was left of the beautiful place to tempt other people to ruin.

The Bower of Bliss

As for Acrasia, they led her away captive, bound with adamantine chains, for nothing else would keep her safe; and when they came back to the place where they had met the wild beasts, these again flew fiercely at them, as if they would rescue their mistress. But the Palmer soon pacified them.

Then Guyon asked what was the meaning of these beasts that lived there.

“These seeming beasts are really men whom the enchantress has thus transformed,” replied the Palmer. “Now they are turned into these hideous figures, in accordance with their bad and ugly minds.”

“A sad end of an ignoble life, and a mournful result of excess in pleasure,” said the Knight. “But, Palmer, if it may so please you, let them be returned to their former state.”

So the Palmer struck them with his staff, and immediately they were turned into men. Very queer and ill at ease they looked. Some were inwardly ashamed, and some were angry to see the Lady Acrasia captive. But one in particular, who had lately been a hog, Grill by name, loudly lamented, and abused the Knight for bringing him back from the shape of a hog into that of a man.

Then said Guyon, “See how low a man can sink, to forget so soon the excellence in which he was created, and to choose rather to be a beast without intelligence!”

“Worthless men delight in base things,” said the Palmer. “Let Grill be Grill, and have his hoggish mind. But let us depart hence, while wind and weather serve.”

Sir Guyon

So Sir Guyon, having overthrown the power of the wicked enchantress, went back to the house of Alma, where he had left Prince Arthur. The captive Acrasia he sent under a strong guard to the court of the Faerie Queene, to be presented to Queen Gloriana as a proof that he had accomplished his hard task; but he himself travelled forth with Prince Arthur, to make further trial of his strength and to seek fresh adventures.



The Legend of Britomart

How Sir Guyon met a Champion mightier
than himself

AFTER the capture of the wicked enchantress Acrasia, Prince Arthur and Sir Guyon travelled long and far together in all sorts of dangerous places. They met with many perilous adventures, which won them great glory and honour, for their aim was always to relieve the weak and oppressed, and to recover right for those who had suffered wrong.