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THE
WORKS
OF THE
ENGLISH POETS.


WITH
PREFACES,
BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,
BY
SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

Re-edited,
WITH NEW BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL MATTER,
BY J. AIKIN, M.D.

VOL. III.

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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
EDMUND SPENSER.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

FROM
THE TEXT OF J. UPTON.

WITH A
PREFACE, BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,
BY J. AIKIN, M.D.

VOL. III.

C O N T E N T S

OF THE

THIRD VOLUME.

THE FAERY QUEENE.

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THE THIRDE BOOKE OF
THE FAERY QUEENE.

CANTO V.

Prince Arthur hears of Florimell :
Three fosters Timias wound ;
Belpheobe findes him almost dead,
And reareth out of sownd.

I.

WONDER it is to see in diverse mindes
How diversly Love doth his pageaunts play,
And shewes his powre in variable kindes :
The baser wit, whose ydle thoughts alway
Are wont to cleave unto the lowly clay,
It stirreth up to sensuall desire,
And in lewd slouth to wast his carelesse day :
But in brave sprite it kindles goodly fire,
That to all high desert and honour doth aspire.

II.

Ne suffereth it uncomely idlenesse
In his free thought to build her sluggish nest :
Ne suffereth it thought of ungentlenesse
Ever to creepe into his noble brest ;
But to the highest and the worthiest
Lifteth it up, that els would lowly fall :
It lettes not fall, it lettes it not to rest :
It lettes not scarce this prince to breath at all,
But to his first poursuit him forward still doth call.

III.

Who long time wandred through the forest wyde
 To finde some issue thence, till that at last
 He met a dwarfe, that seemed terrifyde
 With some late perill which he hardly past,
 Or other accident which him aghast ;
 Of whom he asked, whence he lately came,
 And whether now he traveled so fast :
 For sore he swat, and ronning through that same
 Thicke forest was bescracht, and both his feet nigh
 lame.

IV.

Panting for breath, and almost out of hart,
 The dwarfe him answerd, “ Sir, ill mote I stay
 To tell the same : I lately did depart
 From faery court, where I have many a day
 Served a gentle lady of great sway
 And high accompt throughout all elfin land,
 Who lately left the same, and tooke this way :
 Her now I seeke, and if ye understand
 Which way she fared hath, good sir, teil out of hand.”

V.

“ What mister wight,” saide he, “ and how arayd ?”
 “ Royally clad,” quoth he, “ in cloth of gold,
 As meetest may beseme a noble mayd ;
 Her faire lockes in rich circlet be enrold,
 A fayrer wight did never sunne behold ;
 And on a palfrey rydes more white then snow,
 Yet she herselfe is whiter manifold ;
 The surest signe, whereby ye may her know,
 Is, that she is the fairest wight alive, I trow.”

VI.

“ Now certes swaine,” saide he, “ such one I weene,
 Fast flying through this forest from her fo,
 A foule ill-favoured foster, I have seene ;
 Herselfe (well as I might) I reskewd tho,
 But could not stay ; so fast she did foregoe,
 Carried away with wings of speedy feare.”

“ Ah dearest God,” quoth he, “ that is great woe,
 And wondrous ruth to all that shall it heare :
 But can ye read, sir, how I may her finde, or where?”

VII.

“ Perdy me lever were to weeten that,”
 Saide he, “ then ransome of the richest knight,
 Or all the good that ever yet I gat :
 But froward frotune, and too forward night,
 Such happinesse did (maulgre) to me spight,
 And fro me reft both life and light attone.
 But, dwarfe, aread, what is that lady bright
 That through this forrest wandreth thus alone ?
 For of her errour straunge I have great ruth and mone.”

VIII.

“ That ladie is,” quoth he, “ whereso she bee,
 The bountiest virgin and most debonaire
 That ever living eye, I weene, did see :
 Lives none this day that may with her compare
 In stedfast chastitie and vertue rare,
 (The goodly ornaments of beauty bright)
 And is ycleped Florimell the fayre,
 Faire Florimell belov'd of many a knight,
 Yet she loves none but one, that Marinell is hight :

IX.

“ A sea-nymphes sonne, that Marinell is hight,
 Of my deare dame is loved dearely well ;
 In other none but him she sets delight ;
 All her delight is set on Marinell ;
 But he sets nought at all by Florimell :
 For ladies love his mother long ygoe
 Did him (they say) forwarne through sacred spell :
 But fame now flies, that of a forreine foe
 He is yslaine, which is the ground of all our woe.

X.

“ Five daies there be since he (they say) was slaine ;
 And fowre since Florimell the court forwent,
 And vowed never to returne againe,
 Till him alive or dead she did invent.
 Therefore, faire sir, for love of knighthood gent
 And honour of trew ladies, if ye may
 By your good counsell or bold hardiment,
 Or succour her, or me direct the way ;
 Do one or other good, I you most humbly pray :

XI.

“ So may ye gaine to you full great renowne
 Of all good ladies through the worlde so wide,
 And haply in her hart finde highest rowme
 Of whom ye seeke to be most magnifide :
 At least eternall meede shall you abide.” [take,
 To whom the prince ; “ Dwarfes, comfort to thee
 For till thou tidings learne what her betide,
 I here avow thee never to forsake :
 Ill weares he armes, that nill them use for ladies sake.”

XII.

So with the dwarfe he back retourn'd againe,
 To seeke his lady where he mote her finde ;
 But by the way he greatly gan complaine
 The want of his good squire late left behinde,
 For whom he wondrous pensive grew in minde,
 For doubt of daunger which mote him betide ;
 For him he loved above all mankinde,
 Having him trew and faithfull ever tride,
 And bold, as ever squire that waited by knights side :

XIII.

Who all this while full hardly was assayd
 Of deadly daunger which to him betidd :
 For whiles his lord pursewd that noble mayd,
 After that foster fowle he fiercely ridd,
 To bene avenged of the shame he did
 To that faire damzell : him he chaced long
 Through the thicke woods wherein he would have
 hid
 His shamefull head from his avengement strong ;
 And oft him threatned death for his outrageous wrong.

XIV.

Nathlesse the villein sped himselfe so well,
 Whether through swiftnesse of his speedie beast,
 Or knowledge of those woods where he did dwell,
 That shortly he from daunger was releast,
 And out of sight escaped at the least ;
 Yet not escaped from the dew reward
 Of his bad deedes, which daily he increast,
 Ne ceased not, till him oppressed hard
 The heavie plague that for such leachours is prepard.

XV.

For soone as he was vanisht out of sight,
 His coward courage gan emboldned bee,
 And cast t' avenge him of that fowle despight
 Which he had borne of his bold enimee :
 Tho to his brethren came, (for they were three
 Ungratious children of one gracelesse syre)
 And unto them complayned, how that he
 Had used beene of that foole-hardie squyre :
 So them with bitter words he stird to bloodie yre.

XVI.

Forthwith themselves with their sad instruments
 Of spoyle and murder they gan arme bylive,
 And with him foorth into the forrest went,
 To wreake the wrath, which he did earst revive
 In their sterne breasts, on him which late did drive
 Their brother to reproch and shamefull flight :
 For they had vow'd that never he alive
 Out of that forest should escape their might :
 Vile rancour their rude harts had fild with such de-
 spight.

XVII.

Within that wood there was a covert glade,
 Foreby a narrow foord, to them well knowne,
 Through which it was unceath for wight to wade,
 And now by fortune it was overflowne :
 By that same way they knew that squyre unknowne
 Mote algates passe ; forthy themselves they set
 There in await, with thicke woods over-growne,
 And all the while their malice they did whet
 With cruell threats his passage through the ford to let.

XVIII.

It fortun'd, as they devized had,
 The gentle squire came ryding that same way,
 Unweeting of their wile and treason bad,
 And through the ford to passen did assay:
 But that fierce foster, which late fled away,
 Stoutly fourth stepping on the further shore,
 Him boldly bad his passage there to stay,
 Till he had made amends, and full restore
 For all the damage which he had him doen afore.

XIX.

With that, at him a quiv'ring dart he threw,
 With so fell force and villeinous despite
 That through his haberieon the forkehead flew,
 And through the linked mayles empierced quite,
 But had no powre in his soft flesh to bite:
 That stroke the hardy squire did sore displease,
 But more that him he could not come to smite;
 For by no meanes the high banke he could sease,
 But labour'd long in that deepe ford with vaine disease.

XX.

And still the foster with his long bore-speare
 Him kept from landing at his wished will:
 Anone one sent out of the thicket neare
 A cruell shaft headed with deadly ill,
 And fethered with an unlucky quill;
 The wicked steele stayd not, till it did light
 In his left thigh, and deepely did it thrill:
 Exceeding grieffe that wound in him empight;
 But more that with his foes he could not come to
 fight.

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