tation of Lord Burleigh from the stigma of having intercepted the bounty of his sovereign to the author of the Fairy Queen. Mr. Malone has also made it appear, that Queen Elizabeth had no poet-laureate ; an appointment which was supposed to have been held by Spenser. In the sonnets annexed to the poem, is one to his new patron, “ the right noble and valorous knight, Sir Walter Raleigh ;” but Spenser does not forget to shed a grateful tear to the memory of Sidney. There is a sonnet addressed to the Countess of Pembroke, the darling sister of that accomplished person, for whose amusement he wrote his Arcadia. With mournful dignity, the poet acknowledges to the coun tess his many obligations to

that most heroicke spirit,

The heauens pride, the glory of our daies.

During his absence in Ireland, to which kingdom he re­turned after the publication of the Fairy Queen, was printed a collection of Spenser's minor pieces, entitled, “ Corn plaints: containing sundrie small Poemes of the Worlds Va nitie. Whereof the next page maketh mention. By Ed.Sp.” Lond. 1591, 4to. This production was followed by Daph noida, an elegy on the death of Douglas Howard, daughter of Henry Lord Howard. It is dated January 1, 1591—2. About this period, he is supposed to have paid a visit to his native country; after which a considerable space intervenes un­marked by incidents.

Being no longer a pennyless rhymster, Spenser now wooed a kinder mistress than Rosalind. The lady, whose name is unknown, became his wife in 1594. The progress of this successful courtship is traced in his Amoretti, or Sonnets. In 1595 appeared the pastoral of “ Colin Clout’s come home again.” The dedication of this production is erroneously dated 1591, as Mr. Todd satisfactorily proves. It is dedicated to Sir Walter Raleigh, who is introduced as the Shepherd of the Ocean. In 1596, he published four Hymns. He informs the Countess of Cumberland and the Countess of Warwick, to whom they are inscribed, that the two latter, composed in his riper years, and treating of heavenly love and beauty, were designed to atone for the two for mer, which were written in the heyday of his blood, and of which the subjects are sensual desire and earthly grace. In the same year were produced the fourth, fifth, and sixth books of the Fairy Queen. Of that magnificent poem, two additional imperfect cantos are all that can be found. Our limits prohibit the discussion of the question, whether the remaining six books, which would have completed the design, were destroyed by fire during the Irish rebellion, or left unfinished. Nor is there much utility in transcribing a long list of poems no longer extant, which are sup posed to have shared their fate. In the course of this year, Spenser presented his *View of the State of Ireland* to the queen ; but, for reasons not very clearly explained, that performance was not printed until thirty-five years after the author’s death.

In a letter from Queen Elizabeth to the Irish govern ment, dated September 30, 1598, which was discovered by Mr. Malone, Spenser is recommended to be sheriff of Cork. A royal recommendation is generally equivalent to a command; but the rebellion of Tyrone put a period to all the poet’s hopes of dignity and emolument. To escape the fury of the insurgents, he abandoned his house in Kilcolman, leaving behind him one of his children, who had been forgotten in the terror of the moment. Having removed every thing else that it contained, the miscreants set fire to the building, and left the infant to perish in the flames. Spen­

ser did not long survive these multiplied calamities. On the 16th of January 1598—9, soon after his arrival in Eng land, he died at an inn in King Street, Westminster. The expenses of his funeral were defrayed by the unfortunate Earl of Essex, who buried him in Westminster Abbey, near the remains of Chaucer; a spot on which he had always de sired to take his last repose.@@1

Spenser left two sons, Sylvanus and Peregrine. Hugo lin, the son of the latter, was restored to his grandfather’s estate by Charles II.; but, adhering to the infatuated successor of that monarch, he was outlawed, after the revolu­tion, for high treason. The lands of the outlaw, however, were bestowed upon his cousin William, the son of Sylva nus, through the interest of Mr. Montague, afterwards Earl of Halifax. William Spenser was presented to the notice of Montague by Congreve. “ The family of the Spensers,” says Gibbon, “ has been illustrated and enriched by the trophies of Marlborough, but I exhort them to consider the Fairy Queen as the most precious jewel in their coronet.”

Of Spenser’s personal character, we are in a great measure left to form our opinion from his works. Both the tendency and details of these are highly favourable to virtue ; and the many chaplets he threw upon the hearse of Sidney prove that he cherished the memory of his benefactor with pious care. It is easy to imagine gratitude allied to every other noble quality, and it is mere misanthropy to question the sincerity of tears that fall to those who can give no more ; for it is vain to seek

pensions from the tomb,

Or laurels from the dust.

There is, however, a dark spot on the fame of Spenser. From some original documents preserved in the Rolls Office at Dublin, it appears that the murder of his infant, his own ruin, despair, and death, are to be traced to his cupidity ; for the outrage that was the immediate cause of these disasters, was perpetrated less from the hopes of plunder than the desire of vengeance for some unjust and oppressive at tempts to add to his possessions.@@2 Injustice and oppression were so habitual with the English settlers in Ireland, that it was not easy for Spenser to escape the general contamination.

This great poet is far from being a favourite of the *ge­neral* readers of modern times, who demand something of a more stimulating nature than the lives and adventures of the cardinal virtues. Indeed, to have made an interminable allegory interesting to thousands, must be allowed to be one of the greatest efforts of genius. This Spenser has accomplished ; and his pages, if not devoured with trembling eagerness, are always perused with wonder, and often with delight, by the great majority of those whose suffrage is of any value. It has been urged that Arthur, the hero of the poem, instead of achieving the principal adventures, acts only as an auxiliary to others, and that either his character, or those of the twelve worthies, might with great propriety have been expunged ; that the allegory often de generates into mere description, without any occult meaning; and that the *ottava rima* of Tasso and Ariosto, with the addition of an Alexandrine, is a measure which is little adapted to the genius of the English language. There is however little rashness in predicting that the Fairy Queen will last as long as the English language itself.

An edition of Spenser’s Works, with a glossary and a life of the author, and an essay on allegorical poetry, was pub­lished by John Hughes. Lond. 1715, 6 vols. 12mo. The Fairy Queen, with an exact collation of the two original

@@@1 Ben Jonson, in his Conversations with Drummond, stated, " that the Irish having rob’d Spenser’s goods and burnt his house and a little child new born, be and his wyf escaped ; and after, be died for lake of bread in King Street, and refused twenty pieces sent to him by my Lord of Essex, and said, 'He was sorrie be bad no time to spend them.’”

@@@’ Hardiman’s Irish Minstrelsy, or Bardic Remains of lreland, vol. i. p. 320. Loπd. 1881, 2 vols. 8vo.