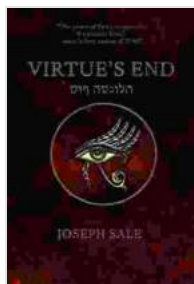


The Continuation of Spenser's Faerie Queene: A Literary Odyssey into Allegory and Romance



VIRTUE'S END: a continuation of Spenser's Faerie

Queene by Joseph Sale

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 3376 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 412 pages
Lending	: Enabled



Edmund Spenser's "The Faerie Queene," an epic allegorical masterpiece, has captivated readers for centuries with its enchanting world of knights, ladies, and mythical creatures. However, Spenser's untimely death in 1599 left his magnum opus incomplete, with only six of its twelve planned books published. The question of whether or not to continue the unfinished epic has been a subject of literary debate for generations.

In the centuries following Spenser's passing, several poets took up the daunting task of completing "The Faerie Queene." These continuations, though varied in style and execution, offer unique perspectives on Spenser's allegory and contribute to the rich tapestry of English literature.

The Literary Significance of the Continuation

The continuation of "The Faerie Queene" holds immense literary significance for several reasons:

- **Preservation of Spenser's Legacy:** By continuing Spenser's work, later poets ensured that his epic allegory would reach its intended completion, preserving his literary legacy for future generations.
- **Extension of Allegorical Interpretation:** The continuations explore new dimensions of Spenser's allegorical framework, expanding on the themes of virtue, love, and morality.
- **Influence on Romantic Poetry:** The continuation's emphasis on imagination, fantasy, and the power of love provided inspiration for the Romantic poets of the 19th century.

The Major Continuations

Among the most notable continuations of "The Faerie Queene" are:

- **Richard Barnfield (1598):** Barnfield's continuation was the first attempt to complete the epic. His work, "Cynthia," focuses on the virtue of chastity.
- **Giles Fletcher, the younger (1623):** Fletcher's "Christ's Victory and Triumph" shifts the focus of Spenser's allegory to the life and sacrifice of Christ.
- **Phineas Fletcher (1633):** Fletcher's "The Purple Island" explores the virtues of the human body as an allegory for the virtues of the soul.
- **Henry More (1689):** More's "The Platonick Song of the Soul" combines Platonism with Christian mysticism, creating a philosophical

and allegorical journey.

Themes and Motifs in the Continuation

The continuation of "The Faerie Queene" carries forward many of the themes and motifs found in Spenser's original work, including:

- **Allegory and Morality:** The continuations explore allegorical representations of virtues and vices, using characters and events to convey moral lessons.
- **Courtly Love and Romance:** The knights and ladies of the Faerie Queene continue to embody the ideals of courtly love and romantic adventure.
- **Imagination and Fantasy:** The continuations emphasize the power of imagination and the role of fantasy in shaping human experience.
- **Christian Symbolism:** Many of the continuations incorporate Christian symbolism and themes, exploring the relationship between faith and morality.

The Impact of the Continuation

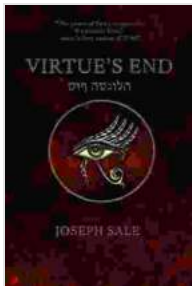
The continuation of "The Faerie Queene" had a profound impact on English literature, particularly on subsequent poets and writers:

- **Inspiration for Romantic Poets:** The continuation's emphasis on imagination and fantasy inspired Romantic poets such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Blake.
- **Influence on Victorian Literature:** The continuation's exploration of morality and faith resonated with Victorian writers such as Alfred, Lord

Tennyson and William Morris.

- **Enrichment of English Literary Tradition:** The continuation added to the richness and diversity of English literature, providing a unique perspective on the allegorical and romantic traditions.

The continuation of Edmund Spenser's "The Faerie Queene" is a literary odyssey that extends the allegorical and romantic vision of the original epic. Through the efforts of later poets, Spenser's unfinished masterpiece was brought to its intended completion, preserving his legacy and inspiring generations of readers. The continuations offer fresh perspectives on virtue, love, morality, and the power of imagination, contributing to the enduring significance of English literature.



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