

*Edmund Spenser, "Mutabilitie Cantos", from The Faerie Queene*

TWO CANTOS  
OF  
MVTABILITIE:

Which, both for Forme and Matter, appeare to be  
parcell of some following Booke of the  
FAERIE QUEENE,

(.)

VNDER THE LEGEND

OF

Constancie.

Neuer before imprinted.

**Cant. VI.**

Proud Change (not pleas'd, in mortall things,  
beneath the Moone, to raigne)  
Pretends, as well of Gods, as Men,  
to be the Soueraine.

W Hat man that sees the euer-whirling wheele  
Of Change, the which all mortall things doth sway,  
But that therby doth find, & plainly feele,  
How MVTABILITY in them doth play  
Her cruell sports, to many mens decay?  
Which that to all may better yet appeare,  
I will rehearse that whylome I heard say,  
How she at first her selfe began to reare,  
Gainst all the Gods, and th'empire sought from  
them to beare.

But first, here falleth fittest to vnfold  
Her antique race and linage ancient,  
As I haue found it registred of old,  
In Faery Land mongst records permanent:

She was, to weet, a daughter by descent  
Of those old Titans, that did whylome striue  
VVith Saturnes sonne for heauens regiment.  
Whom, though high loue of kingdome did depriue,  
Yet many of their stemme long after did suruiue.

And many of them, afterwards obtain'd  
Great power of loue, and high authority;  
As Hecat  , in whose almighty hand,  
He plac't all rule and principality,  
To be by her disposed diuersly,  
To Gods, and men, as she them list diuide:  
And drad Bellona, that doth sound on hie  
Warres and allarums vnto Nations wide,  
That makes both heauen & earth to tremble at her  
pride.

So likewise did this Titanesse aspire,  
Rule and dominion to her selfe to gaine;  
That as a Goddesse, men might her admire,  
And heavenly honours yield, as to them twaine.  
At first, on earth she sought it to obtaine;  
Where she such prooffe and sad examples shewed  
Of her great power, to many ones great paine,

That not men onely (whom she soone subdued)  
But eke all other creatures, her bad dooings rewed.

For, she the face of earthly things so changed,  
That all which Nature had establisht first  
In good estate, and in meet order ranged,  
She did pervert, and all their statutes burst:  
And all the worlds faire frame (which none yet  
durst

Of Gods or men to alter or misguide)  
She alter'd quite, and made them all accurst  
That God had blest; and did at first prouide  
In that still happy state for euer to abide.

Ne shee the lawes of Nature onely brake,  
But eke of Iustice, and of Policie;  
And wrong of right, and bad of good did make,  
And death for life exchanged foolishlie:  
Since which, all liuing wights haue learn'd to die,  
And all this world is woxen daily worse.  
Of pittious worke of MVTABILITIE!  
By which, we all are subiect to that curse,  
And death in stead of life haue sucked from our  
Nurse.

And now, when all the earth she thus had brought  
To her behest, and thrall'd to her might,  
She gan to cast in her ambitious thought,  
T'attempt the empire of the heauens hight,  
And Ioue himselfe to shoulder from his right.  
And first, she past the region of the ayre,  
And of the fire, whose substance thin and slight,  
Made no resistance, ne could her contraire,  
But ready passage to her pleasure did prepaire.

Thence, to the Circle of the Moone she clambe,  
Where Cynthia raignes in euerlasting glory,  
To whose bright shining palace straight she came,  
All fairely deckt with heauens goodly story:  
Whose siluer gates (by which there sate an hory  
Old aged Sire, with hower-glasse in hand,  
Hight Tyme) she entred, were he lief or sory:  
Ne staide till she the highest stage had scand,  
VVhere Cynthia did sit, that neuer still did stand.

Her sitting on an Iuory throne shee found,

Drawne of two steeds, th'one black, the other  
white,

Environd with tenne thousand starres around,  
That duly her attended day and night;  
And by her side, there ran her Page, that hight  
Vesper, whom we the Euening-starre intend:  
That with his Torche, still twinkling like twylight,  
Her lightened all the way where she should wend,  
And ioy to weary wandring trauailers did lend:

That when the hardy Titanesse beheld  
The goodly building of her Palace bright,  
Made of the heauens substance, and vp-held  
With thousand Crystall pillors of huge hight,  
Shee gan to burne in her ambitious spright,  
And t'envie her that in such glorie raigned.  
Eftsoones she cast by force and tortious might,  
Her to displace; and to her selfe to haue gained  
The kingdome of the Night, and waters by her  
wained.

Boldly she bid the Goddess downe descend,  
And let her selfe into that Ivory throne;  
For, shee her selfe more worthy thereof wend,  
And better able it to guide alone:  
Whether to men, whose fall she did bemone,  
Or vnto Gods, whose state she did maligne,  
Or to th'infernall Powers, her need giue lone  
Of her faire light, and bounty most benigne,  
Her selfe of all that rule shee deemed most  
condigne.

But shee that had to her that soueraigne seat  
By highest Ioue assign'd, therein to beare  
Nights burning lamp, regarded not her threat,  
Ne yielded ought for fauour or for feare;  
But with sterne countenance and disdainfull  
cheare,

Bending her horned browes, did put her back:  
And boldly blaming her for comming there,  
Bade her attonce from heauens coast to pack,  
Or at her perill bide the wrathfull Thunders wrack.

Yet nathemore the Giantesse forbare:  
But boldly preacing-on, raught forth her hand  
To pluck her downe perforce from off her chaire;

And there-with lifting vp her golden wand,  
Threatned to strike her if she did with-stand.  
Whereat the starres, which round about her blazed,  
And eke the Moones bright wagon, still did stand,  
All beeing with so bold attempt amazed,  
And on her vncouth habit and sterne looke still  
gazed.

Meane-while, the lower World, which nothing  
knew

Of all that chaunced here, was darkned quite;  
And eke the heauens, and all the heauenly crew  
Of happy wights, now vnpurvaide of light,  
Were much afraid, and wondred at that sight;  
Fearing least Chaos broken had his chaine,  
And brought againe on them eternall night:  
But chiefly Mercury, that next doth raigne,  
Ran forth in haste, vnto the king of Gods to plaine.

All ran together with a great out-cry,  
To Ioues faire Palace, fixt in heauens hight;  
And beating at his gates full earnestly,  
Gan call to him aloud with all their might,  
To know what meant that suddaine lack of light.  
The father of the Gods when this he heard,  
Was troubled much at their so strange affright,  
Doubting least Typhon were againe vprear'd,  
Or other his old foes, that once him sorely fear'd.

Eftsoones the sonne of Maia forth he sent  
Downe to the Circle of the Moone, to knowe  
The cause of this so strange astonishment,  
And why shee did her wonted course forslowe;  
And if that any were on earth belowe  
That did with charmes or Magick her molest,  
Him to attache, and downe to hell to throwe:  
But, if from heauen it were, then to arrest  
The Author, and him bring before his presence  
prest.

The wingd-foot God, so fast his plumes did beat,  
That soone he came where-as the Titanesse  
Was striuing with faire Cynthia for her seat:  
At whose strange sight, and haughty hardinesse,  
He wondred much, and feared her no lesse.  
Yet laying feare aside to doe his charge,

At last, he bade her (with bold stedfastnesse)  
Ceasse to molest the Moone to walke at large,  
Or come before high Ioue, her dooings to  
discharge.

And there-with-all, he on her shoulder laid  
His snaky-wreathed Mace, whose awfull power  
Doth make both Gods and hellish fiends affraid:  
Where-at the Titanesse did sternely lower,  
And stoutly answer'd, that in euill hower  
He from his Ioue such message to her brought,  
To bid her leaue faire Cynthias siluer bower;  
Sith shee his Ioue and him esteemed nought,  
No more then Cynthia's selfe; but all their  
kingdoms sought.

The Heauens Herald staid not to reply,  
But past away, his doings to relate  
Vnto his Lord; who now in th'highest sky,  
VVas placed in his principall Estate,  
VVith all the Gods about him congregate:  
To whom when Hermes had his message told,  
It did them all exceedingly amate,  
Saue Ioue; who, changing nought his count'nance  
bold,  
Did vnto them at length these speeches wise  
vnfold;

Harken to mee awhile yee heauenly Powers;  
Ye may remember since th'Earths cursed seed  
Sought to assaile the heauens eternall towers,  
And to vs all exceeding feare did breed:  
But how we then defeated all their deed,  
Yee all doe knowe, and them destroied quite;  
Yet not so quite, but that there did succeed  
An off-spring of their bloud, which did alite  
Vpon the fruitfull earth, which doth vs yet despite.

Of that bad seed is this bold woman bred,  
That now with bold presumption doth aspire  
To thrust faire Phoebe from her siluer bed,  
And eke our selues from heauens high Empire,  
If that her might were match to her desire:  
Wherefore, it now behoues vs to advise  
What way is best to driue her to retire;  
Whether by open force, or counsell wise,

Areed ye sonnes of God, as best ye can deuise.

So hauing said, he ceast; and with his brow  
(His black eye-brow, whose doomefull dreaded  
beck

Is wont to wield the world vnto his vow,  
And euen the highest Powers of heauen to check)  
Made signe to them in their degrees to speake:  
Who straight gan cast their counsell graue and  
wise.

Meane-while, th'Earths daughter, thogh she  
nought did reck

Of Hermes message; yet gan now advise,  
What course were best to take in this hot bold  
emprize.

Eftsoones she thus resolv'd; that whil'st the Gods  
(After returne of Hermes Embassie)  
Were troubled, and amongst themselues at ods,  
Before they could new counsels re-allie,  
To set vpon them in that extasie;  
And take what fortune time and place would lend:  
So, forth she rose, and through the purest sky  
To Ioues high Palace straight cast to ascend,  
To prosecute her plot: Good on-set boads good end.

Shee there arriuing, boldly in did pass;  
Where all the Gods she found in counsell close,  
All quite vnarm'd, as then their manner was.  
At sight of her they suddaine all arose,  
In great amaze, ne wist what way to chose.  
But Ioue, all fearelesse, forc't them to aby;  
And in his soueraine throne, gan straight dispose  
Himselfe more full of grace and Maiestie,  
That mote encheare his friends, & foes mote  
terrifie.

That, when the haughty Titanesse beheld,  
All were she fraught with pride and impudence,  
Yet with the sight thereof was almost queld;  
And inly quaking, seem'd as reft of sense,  
And voyd of speech in that drad audience;  
Vntill that Ioue himselfe, her selfe bespake:  
Speake thou fraile woman, speake with  
confidence,

Whence art thou, and what doost thou here now  
make?

What idle errand hast thou, earths mansion to  
forsake?

Shee, halfe confused with his great commaund,  
Yet gathering spirit of her natures pride,  
Him boldly answer'd thus to his demaund:  
I am a daughter, by the mothers side,  
Of her that is Grand-mother magnifide  
Of all the Gods, great Earth, great Chaos child:  
But by the fathers (be it not envide)  
I greater am in bloud (whereon I build)  
Then all the Gods, though wrongfully from heauen  
exil'd.

For, Titan (as ye all acknowledge must)  
Was Saturnes elder brother by birth-right;  
Both, sonnes of Vranus: but by vniust  
And guilefull meanes, through Corybantes slight,  
The younger thrust the elder from his right:  
Since which, thou Ioue, iniuriously hast held  
The Heauens rule from Titans sonnes by might;  
And them to hellish dungeons downe hast feld:  
Witnesse ye Heauens the truth of all that I haue  
teld.

Whil'st she thus spake, the Gods that gaue good  
eare

To her bold words, and marked well her grace,  
Beeing of stature tall as any there  
Of all the Gods, and beautifull of face,  
As any of the Goddesses in place,  
Stood all astonied, like a sort of Steeres;  
Mongst whom, some beast of strange & forraine  
race,

Vnwares is chaunc't, far straying from his peeres:  
So did their ghastly gaze bewray their hidden  
feares.

Till hauing pauz'd awhile, Ioue thus bespake;  
VVill neuer mortall thoughts ceasse to aspire,  
In this bold sort, to Heauen claime to make,  
And touch celestiall seates with earthly mire?  
I would haue thought, that bold Procrustes hire,  
Or Typhons fall, or proud Ixions paine,

Or great Prometheus, tasting of our ire,  
 Would haue suffiz'd, the rest for to restraine;  
 And warn'd all men by their example to refraine:

But now, this off-scum of that cursed fry,  
 Dare to renew the like bold enterprize,  
 And chalenge th'heritage of this our skie;  
 Whom what should hinder, but that we likewise  
 Should handle as the rest of her allies,  
 And thunder-driue to hell? With that, he shooke  
 His Nectar-deawed locks, with which the skyes  
 And all the world beneath for terror quooke,  
 And eft his burning levin-brond in hand he tooke.

But, when he looked on her louely face,  
 In which, faire beames of beauty did appeare,  
 That could the greatest wrath soone turne to grace  
 (Such sway doth beauty euen in Heauen beare)  
 He staide his hand: and hauing chang'd his cheare,  
 He thus againe in milder wise began;  
 But ah! if Gods should striue with flesh yfere,  
 Then shortly should the progeny of Man  
 Be rooted out, if Ioue should doe still what he can:

But thee faire Titans child, I rather weene,  
 Through some vaine error or inducement light,  
 To see that mortall eyes haue neuer seene;  
 Or through ensample of thy sisters might,  
 Bellona; whose great glory thou doost spight,  
 Since thou hast seene her dreadfull power belowe,  
 Mongst wretched men (dismaide with her affright)  
 To bandie Crownes, and Kingdomes to bestowe:  
 And sure thy worth, no lesse then hers doth seem  
 to showe.

But wote thou this, thou hardy Titanesse,  
 That not the worth of any liuing wight  
 May challenge ought in Heauens interesse;  
 Much lesse the Title of old Titans Right:  
 For, we by Conquest of our soueraigne might,  
 And by eternall doome of Fates decree,  
 Haue wonne the Empire of the Heauens bright;  
 Which to our selues we hold, and to whom wee  
 Shall worthy deeme partakers of our blisse to bee.

Then cease thy idle claime thou foolish gerle,

And seeke by grace and goodnesse to obtaine  
 That place from which by folly Titan fell;  
 There-to thou maist perhaps, if so thou faine  
 Haue Ioue thy gracious Lord and Soueraigne.  
 So, hauing said, she thus to him replide;  
 Ceasse Saturnes sonne, to seeke by proffers vaine  
 Of idle hopes t'allure mee to thy side,  
 For to betray my Right, before I haue it tride.

But thee, ô Ioue, no equall Iudge I deeme  
 Of my desert, or of my dewfull Right;  
 That in thine owne behalfe maist partiall seeme:  
 But to the highest him, that is behight  
 Father of Gods and men by equall might;  
 To weet, the God of Nature, I appeale.  
 There-at Ioue waxed wroth, and in his spright  
 Did inly grudge, yet did it well conceale;  
 And bade Dan Phoebus Scribe her Appellation  
 seale.

Eftsoones the time and place appointed were,  
 Where all, both heauenly Powers, & earthly  
 wights,  
 Before great Natures presence should appeare,  
 For triall of their Titles and best Rights:  
 That was, to weet, vpon the highest hights  
 Of Arlo-hill (Who knowes not Arlo-hill?)  
 That is the highest head (in all mens sights)  
 Of my old father Mole, whom Shepheards quill  
 Renowned hath with hymnes fit for a rurall skill.

And, were it not ill fitting for this file,  
 To sing of hilles & woods, mongst warres &  
 Knights,

I would abate the sternenesse of my stile,  
 Mongst these sterne stounds to mingle soft  
 delights;

And tell how Arlo through Dianaes spights  
 (Beeing of old the best and fairest Hill  
 That was in all this holy-Islands hights)  
 Was made the most vnpleasant, and most ill.  
 Meane while, ô Clio, lend Calliope thy quill.

Whylome, when IRELAND florished in fame  
 Of wealths and goodnesse, far aboute the rest  
 Of all that beare the British Islands name,

The Gods then vs'd (for pleasure and for rest)  
 Oft to resort there-to, when seem'd them best:  
 But none of all there-in more pleasure found,  
 Then Cynthia; that is soueraine Queene profest  
 Of woods and forrests, which therein abound,  
 Sprinkled with wholsom waters, more the[m] most  
 on ground.

But mongst them all, as fittest for her game,  
 Either for chace of beasts with hound or boawe,  
 Or for to shroude in shade from Phoebus flame,  
 Or bathe in fountaines that doe freshly flowe,  
 Or from high hilles, or from the dales belowe,  
 She chose this Arlo; where shee did resort  
 With all her Nymphes enanged on a rowe,  
 With whom the woody Gods did oft consort:  
 For, with the Nymphes, the Satyres loue to play &  
 sport.

Amongst the which, there was a Nymph that hight  
 Molanna; daughter of old father Mole,  
 And sister vnto Mulla, faire and bright:  
 Vnto whose bed false Bregog whylome stole,  
 That Shepheard Colin dearely did condole,  
 And made her lucklesse loues well knowne to be.  
 But this Molanna, were she not so shole,  
 Were no lesse faire and beautifull then shee:  
 Yet as she is, a fairer flood may no man see.

For, first, she springs out of two marble Rocks,  
 On which, a groue of Oakes high mounted growes,  
 That as a girlond seemes to deck the locks  
 Of som faire Bride, brought forth with pompous  
 shoues  
 Out of her bowre, that many flowers strowes:  
 So, through the flowry Dales she tumbling downe,  
 Through many woods, and shady coverts flowes  
 (That on each side her siluer channell crowne)  
 Till to the Plaine she come, whose Valleys shee  
 doth drowne.

In her sweet streames, Diana vsed oft  
 (After her sweatie chace and toilesome play)  
 To bathe her selfe; and after, on the soft  
 And downy grasse, her dainty limbes to lay  
 In couert shade, where none behold her may:

For, much she hated sight of liuing eye.  
 Foolish God Faunus, though full many a day  
 He saw her clad, yet longed foolishly  
 To see her naked mongst her Nymphes in priuity.

No way he found to compasse his desire,  
 But to corrupt Molanna, this her maid,  
 Her to discouer for some secret hire:  
 So, her with flattering words he first assaid;  
 And after, pleasing gifts for her purvaid,  
 Queene-apples, and red Cherries from the tree,  
 VVith which he her allured and betraid,  
 To tell what time he might her Lady see  
 When she her selfe did bathe, that he might secret  
 bee.

There-to hee promist, if shee would him pleasure  
 With this small boone, to quit her with a better;  
 To weet, that where-as shee had out of measure  
 Long lov'd the Fanchin, who by nought did set her,  
 That he would vndertake, for this to get her  
 To be his Loue, and of him liked well:  
 Besides all which, he vow'd to be her debter  
 For many moe good turnes then he would tell;  
 The least of which, this little pleasure should  
 excell.

The simple maid did yield to him anone;  
 And eft him placed where he close might view  
 That neuer any saw, saue onely one;  
 VVho, for his hire to so foole-hardy dew,  
 Was of his hounds devour'd in Hunters hew.  
 Tho, as her manner was on sunny day,  
 Diana, with her Nymphes about her, drew  
 To this sweet spring; where, doffing her array,  
 She bath'd her louely limbes, for Ioue a likely pray.

There Faunus saw that pleased much his eye,  
 And made his hart to tickle in his brest,  
 That for great ioy of some-what he did spy,  
 He could him not containe in silent rest;  
 But breaking forth in laughter, loud profest  
 His foolish thought. O foolish Faune indeed,  
 That couldst not hold thy selfe so hidden blest,  
 But wouldest needs thine owne conceit areed.  
 Babblers vnworthy been of so diuine a meed.

The Goddesse, all abashed with that noise,  
 In haste forth started from the guilty brooke;  
 And running straight where-as she heard his voice,  
 Enclos'd the bush about, and there him tooke,  
 Like darred Larke; not daring vp to looke  
 On her whose sight before so much he sought.  
 Thence, forth they drew him by the hornes, &  
 shooke  
 Nigh all to peeces, that they left him nought;  
 And then into the open light they forth him  
 brought.

Like as an huswife, that with busie care  
 Thinks of her Dairie to make wondrous gaine,  
 Finding where-as some wicked beast vnware  
 That breakes into her Dayr'house, there doth  
 draine  
 Her creaming pannes, and frustrate all her paine;  
 Hath in some snare or gin set close behind,  
 Entrapped him, and caught into her traine,  
 Then thinks what punishment were best assign'd,  
 And thousand deathes deuise in her vengefull  
 mind:

So did Diana and her maydens all  
 Vse silly Faunus, now within their baile:  
 They mocke and scorne him, and him foule  
 miscall;  
 Some by the nose him pluckt, some by the taile,  
 And by his goatish beard some did him haile:  
 Yet he (poore soule) with patience all did beare;  
 For, nought against their wils might countervaille:  
 Ne ought he said what euer he did heare;  
 But hanging downe his head, did like a Mome  
 appeare.

At length, when they had flouted him their fill,  
 They gan to cast what penance him to giue.  
 Some would haue gelt him, but that same would  
 spill  
 The Wood-gods breed, which must for euer liue:  
 Others would through the riuer him haue driue,  
 And ducked deepe: but that seem'd penance light;  
 But most agreed and did this sentence giue,  
 Him in Deares skin to clad; & in that plight,

To hunt him with their hounds, him selfe saue how  
 hee might.

But Cynthia's selfe, more angry then the rest,  
 Thought not enough, to punish him in sport,  
 And of her shame to make a gamesome iest;  
 But gan examine him in straighter sort,  
 Which of her Nymphes, or other close consort,  
 Him thither brought, and her to him betraid?  
 He, much affeard, to her confessed short,  
 That 'twas Molanna which her so bewraid.  
 Then all attonce their hands vpon Molanna laid.

But him (according as they had decreed)  
 With a Deeres-skin they couered, and then chast  
 With all their hounds that after him did speed;  
 But he more speedy, from them fled more fast  
 Then any Deere: so sore him dread aghast.  
 They after follow'd all with shrill out-cry,  
 Shouting as they the heauens would haue brast:  
 That all the woods and dales where he did flie,  
 Did ring againe, and loud reeccho to the skie.

So they him follow'd till they weary were;  
 When, back returning to Molann' againe,  
 They, by commaund'ment of Diana, there  
 Her whelm'd with stones. Yet Faunus (for her  
 paine)  
 Of her beloued Fanchin did obtaine,  
 That her he would receiue vnto his bed.  
 So now her waues passe through a pleasant Plaine,  
 Till with the Fanchin she her selfe doe wed,  
 And (both combin'd) themselues in one faire riuer  
 spred.

Nath'lesse, Diana, full of indignation,  
 Thence-forth abandond her delicious brooke;  
 In whose sweet streame, before that bad occasion,  
 So much delight to bathe her limbes she tooke:  
 Ne onely her, but also quite forsooke  
 All those faire forrests about Arlo hid,  
 And all that Mountaine, which doth over-looke  
 The richest champion that may else be rid,  
 And the faire Shure, in which are thousand  
 Salmons bred.

Them all, and all that she so deare did way,  
 Thence-forth she left; and parting from the place,  
 There-on an heauy haplesse curse did lay,  
 To weet, that Wolues, where she was wont to  
 space,  
 Should harbour'd be, and all those Woods deface,  
 And Thieues should rob and spoile that Coast  
 around.  
 Since which, those Woods, and all that goodly  
 Chase,  
 Doth to this day with Wolues and Thieues abound:  
 Which too-too true that lands in-dwellers since  
 haue fou[n]d.

### Cant. VII.

Pealing, from Ioue, to Natur's Bar,  
 bold Alteration pleades  
 Large Euidence: but Nature soone  
 her righteous Doome arades.

A H! whither doost thou now thou greater Muse  
 Me from these woods & pleasing forrests bring?  
 And my fraile spirit (that dooth oft refuse  
 This too high flight, vnfit for her weake wing)  
 Lift vp aloft, to tell of heauens King  
 (Thy soueraine Sire) his fortunate successe,  
 And victory, in bigger noates to sing,  
 Which he obtain'd against that Titanesse,  
 That him of heauens Empire sought to dispossesse.

Yet sith I needs must follow thy behest,  
 Doe thou my weaker wit with skill inspire,  
 Fit for this turne ; and in my sable brest  
 Kindle fresh sparks of that immortall fire,  
 Which learned minds inflameth with desire  
 Of heauenly things: for, who but thou alone,  
 That art yborne of heauen and heauenly Sire,  
 Can tell things doen in heauen so long ygone:  
 So farre past memory of man that may be knowne.

Now, at the time that was before agreed,  
 The Gods assembled all on Arlo hill;  
 As well those that are sprung of heauenly seed,

As those that all the other world doe fill,  
 And rule both sea and land vnto their will:  
 Onely th'infernall Powers might not appeare;  
 Aswell for horror of their count'naunce ill,  
 As for th'vnruely fiends which they did feare;  
 Yet Pluto and Proserpina were present there.

And thither also came all other creatures,  
 What-euer life or motion doe retaine,  
 According to their sundry kinds of features;  
 That Arlo scarsly could them all containe;  
 So full they filled euery hill and Plaine:  
 And had not Natures Sergeant (that is Order)  
 Them well disposed by his busie paine,  
 And raunged farre abroad in euery border,  
 They would haue caused much confusion and  
 disorder.

Then forth issewed (great goddesse) great dame  
 Nature,  
 With goodly port and gracious Maiesty;  
 Being far greater and more tall of stature  
 Then any of the gods or Powers on hie:  
 Yet certes by her face and physnomy,  
 Whether she man or woman inly were,  
 That could not any creature well descry:  
 For, with a veile that wimpled euery where,  
 Her head and face was hid, that mote to none  
 appeare

That some doe say was so by skill deuized,  
 To hide the terror of her vncouth hew,  
 From mortall eyes that should be sore agrized;  
 For that her face did like a Lion shew,  
 That eye of wight could not indure to view:  
 But others tell that it so beautious was,  
 And round about such beames of splendor threw,  
 That it the Sunne a thousand times did pass,  
 Ne could be seene, but like an image in a glass.

That well may seemen true: for, well I weene  
 That this same day, when she on Arlo sat,  
 Her garment was so bright and wondrous sheene,  
 That my fraile wit cannot deuize to what  
 I to compare, nor finde like stuffe to that,



As those three sacred Saints, though else most wise,

Yet on mount Thabor quite their wits forgot,  
When they their glorious Lord in strange disguise  
Transfigur'd sawe; his garments so did daze their eyes.

In a fayre Plaine vpon an equall Hill,  
She placed was in a pauilion;  
Not such as Craftes-men by their idle skill  
Are wont for Princes states to fashion:  
But th'earth her self of her owne motion,  
Out of her fruitfull bosome made to growe  
Most dainty trees; that, shooting vp anon,  
Did seeme to bow their bloosming heads full lowe,  
For homage vnto her, and like a throne did shew.

So hard it is for any liuing wight,  
All her array and vestiments to tell,  
That old Dan Geffrey (in whose gentle spright  
The pure well head of Poesie did dwell)  
In his Foules parley durst not with it mel,  
But it transferd to Alane, who he thought  
Had in his Plaint of kindes describ'd it well:  
Which who will read set forth so as it ought,  
Go seek he out that Alane where he may be sought.

And all the earth far vnderneath her feete  
Was dight with flowres, that voluntary grew  
Out of the ground, and sent forth odours sweet;  
Tenne thousand mores of sundry sent and hew,  
That might delight the smell, or please the view:  
The which, the Nymphes, from all the brooks  
thereby  
Had gathered, which they at her foot-stoole threw;  
That richer seem'd then any tapestry,  
That Princes bowres adorne with painted imagery.

And Mole himselfe, to honour her the more,  
Did deck himself in freshest faire attire,  
And his high head, that seemeth alwaies hore  
With hardned frosts of former winters ire,  
He with an Oaken girlond now did tire,  
As if the loue of some new Nymph late seene,  
Had in him kindled youthfull fresh desire,  
And made him change his gray attire to greene;

Ah gentle Mole! such ioyance hath thee well  
beseene.

Was neuer so great ioyance since the day,  
That all the gods whylome assembled were,  
On Hæmus hill in their diuine array,  
To celebrate the solemne bridall cheare,  
Twixt Peleus, and dame Thetis pointed there;  
Where Phoebus self, that god of Poets hight,  
They say did sing the spousall hymne full cleere,  
That all the gods were rausht with delight  
Of his celestiall song, & Musicks wondrous might.

This great Grandmother of all creatures bred  
Great Nature, euer young yet full of eld,  
Still moouing, yet vnmoued from her sted;  
Vnseene of any, yet of all beheld;  
Thus sitting in her throne as I haue teld,  
Before her came dame Mutabilitie;  
And being lowe before her presence feld,  
With meek obaysance and humilitie,  
Thus gan her plaintif Plea, with words to amplifie;

To thee ô greatest goddesse, onely great,  
An humble suppliant loe, I lowely fly  
Seeking for Right, which I of thee entreat;  
Who Right to all dost deale indifferently,  
Damning all Wrong and tortious Iniurie,  
Which any of thy creatures doe to other  
(Oppressing them with power, vnequally)  
Sith of them all thou art the equall mother,  
And knittest each to each, as brother vnto brother.

To thee therefore of this same Ioue I plaine,  
And of his fellow gods that faine to be,  
That challenge to themselues the whole worlds  
raign;

Of which, the greatest part is due to me,  
And heauen it selfe by heritage in Fee:  
For, heauen and earth I both alike do deeme,  
Sith heauen and earth are both alike to thee;  
And, gods no more then men thou doest esteeme:  
For, euen the gods to thee, as men to gods do  
seeme.

Then weigh, ô soueraigne goddesse, by what right

These gods do claime the worlds whole souerainty;  
 And that is onely dew vnto thy might  
 Arrogate to themselues ambitiously:  
 As for the gods owne principality,  
 Which Ioue vsurpes vniustly; that to be  
 My heritage, Ioue's self cannot deny,  
 From my great Grandsire Titan, vnto mee,  
 Deriv'd by dew descent; as is well knowne to thee.

Yet mauger Ioue, and all his gods beside,  
 I doe possesse the worlds most regiment;  
 As, if ye please it into parts diuide,  
 And euery parts inholders to conuent,  
 Shall to your eyes appeare incontinent.  
 And first, the Earth (great mother of vs all)  
 That only seems vnmov'd and permanent,  
 And vnto Mutability not thrall;  
 Yet is she chang'd in part, and eeke in generall.

For, all that from her springs, and is ybredde,  
 How-euer fayre it flourish for a time,  
 Yet see we soone decay; and, being dead  
 To turne again vnto their earthly slime:  
 Yet, out of their decay and mortall crime,  
 We daily see new creatures to arize;  
 And of their Winter spring another Prime,  
 Vnlike in forme, and chang'd by strange disguise:  
 So turne they still about, and change in restlesse  
 wise.

As for her tenants; that is, man and beasts,  
 The beasts we daily see massacred dy,  
 As thralls and vassalls vnto mens beheasts:  
 And men themselues doe change continually,  
 From youth to eld, from wealth to pouerty,  
 From good to bad, from bad to worst of all.  
 Ne doe their bodies only flit and fly:  
 But eeke their minds (which they immortall call)  
 Still change and vary thoughts, as new occasions  
 fall.

Ne is the water in more constant case;  
 Whether those same on high, or these belowe.  
 For, th'Ocean moueth stil, from place to place;  
 And euery Riuer still doth ebbe and flowe:  
 Ne any Lake, that seems most still and slowe,

Ne Poole so small, that can his smoothnesse holde,  
 When any winde doth vnder heauen blowe;  
 With which, the clouds are also tost and roll'd;  
 Now like great Hills; &, streight, like sluces, them  
 vnfold.

So likewise are all watry liuing wights  
 Still tost, and turned, with continuall change  
 Neuer abyding in their stedfast plights.  
 The fish, still floting, doe at randon range,  
 And neuer rest; but euermore exchange  
 Their dwelling places, as the streames them carrie:  
 Ne haue the watry foules a certaine grange,  
 Wherein to rest, ne in one stead do tarry;  
 But flitting still doe flie, and still their places vary.

Next is the Ayre: which who feeles not by sense  
 (For, of all sense it is the middle meane)  
 To flit still? and, with subtile influence  
 Of his thin spirit, all creatures to maintaine,  
 In state of life? O weake life! that does leane  
 On thing so tickle as th'vnsteady ayre;  
 Which euery howre is chang'd, and altdred cleane  
 With euery blast that bloweth fowle or faire:  
 The faire doth it prolong; the fowle doth it impaire.

Therein the changes infinite beholde,  
 Which to her creatures euery minute chaunce;  
 Now, boyling hot: streight, friezing deadly cold:  
 Now, faire sun-shine, that makes all skip and  
 daunce:  
 Streight, bitter storms and balefull countenance,  
 That makes them all to shiuer and to shake:  
 Rayne, hayle, and snowe do pay them sad  
 penance,  
 And dreadfull thunder-claps (that make them  
 quake)  
 With flames & flashing lights that thousand  
 changes make.

Last is the fire: which, though it liue for euer,  
 Ne can be quenched quite; yet, euery day,  
 Wee see his parts, so soone as they do seuer,  
 To lose their heat, and shortly to decay;  
 So, makes himself his owne consuming pray.  
 Ne any liuing creatures doth he breed:

But all, that are of others bredd, doth slay;  
 And, with their death, his cruell life dooth feed;  
 Nought leauing, but their barren ashes, without  
 seede.

Thus, all these fower (the which the ground-work  
 bee

Of all the world, and of all liuing wights)  
 To thousand sorts of Change we subiect see:  
 Yet are they chang'd (by other wondrous slights)  
 Into themselues, and lose their natue might;  
 The Fire to Aire, and th'Ayre to Water sheere,  
 And Water into Earth : yet Water fights  
 With Fire, and Aire with Earth approaching neere:  
 Yet all are in one body, and as one appeare.

So, in them all raignes Mutabilitie;  
 How-euer these, that Gods themselues do call,  
 Of them doe claime the rule and souerainty:  
 As, Vesta, of the fire æthereall;  
 Vulcan, of this, with vs so vsuall;  
 Ops, of the earth; and Iuno of the Ayre;  
 Neptune, of Seas; and Nymphes, of Riuers all.  
 For, all those Riuers to me subiect are:  
 And all the rest, which they vsurp, be all my share.

Which to approuen true, as I haue told,  
 Vouchsafe, ô goddesse, to thy presence call  
 The rest which doe the world in being hold:  
 As, times and seasons of the yeare that fall:  
 Of all the which, demand in generall,  
 Or iudge thy selfe, by verdit of thine eye,  
 Whether to me they are not subiect all.  
 Nature did yeeld thereto; and by-and-by,  
 Bade Order call them all, before her Maiesty.

So, forth issew'd the Seasons of the yeare;  
 First, lusty Spring, all dight in leaues of flowres  
 That freshly budded and new bloosmes did beare  
 (In which a thousand birds had built their bowres  
 That sweetly sung, to call forth Paramours):  
 And in his hand a iauelin he did beare,  
 And on his head (as fit for warlike stoures)  
 A guilt engrauen morion he did weare;  
 That as some did him loue, so others did him feare.

Then came the iolly Sommer, being dight  
 In a thin silken cassock coloured greene,  
 That was vnlynd all, to be more light:  
 And on his head a girlond well beseene  
 He wore, from which as he had chauffed been  
 The sweat did drop; and in his hand he bore  
 A boawe and shaftes, as he in forrest greene  
 Had hunted late the Libbard or the Bore,  
 And now would bathe his limbes, with labor  
 heated sore.

Then came the Autumne all in yellow clad,  
 As though he ioyed in his plentious store,  
 Laden with fruits that made him laugh, full glad  
 That he had banisht hunger, which to-fore  
 Had by the belly oft him pinched sore.  
 Vpon his head a wreath that was enrold  
 With eares of corne, of euery sort he bore:  
 And in his hand a sickle he did holde,  
 To reape the ripened fruits the which the earth had  
 yold.

Lastly, came Winter cloathed all in frize,  
 Chattering his teeth for cold that did him chill,  
 Whil'st on his hoary beard his breath did freese;  
 And the dull drops that from his purpled bill  
 As from a limbeck did adown distill.  
 In his right hand a tipped staffe he held,  
 With which his feeble steps he stayed still:  
 For, he was faint with cold, and weak with eld;  
 That scarce his loosed limbes he hable was to weld.

These, marching softly, thus in order went,  
 And after them, the Monthes all riding came;  
 First, sturdy March with brows full sternly bent,  
 And armed strongly, rode vpon a Ram,  
 The same which ouer Hellespontus swam:  
 Yet in his hand a spade he also hent,  
 And in a bag all sorts of seeds ysame,  
 Which on the earth he strowed as he went,  
 And fild her womb with fruitfull hope of  
 nourishment.

Next came fresh Aprill full of lustyhed,  
 And wanton as a Kid whose horne new buds:  
 Vpon a Bull he rode, the same which led

Europa floting through th'Argolick fluds:  
 His hornes were gilden all with golden studs  
 And garnished with garlonds goodly dight  
 Of all the fairest flowres and freshest buds  
 Which th'earth brings forth, and wet he seem'd in  
 sight

With waues, through which he waded for his loues  
 delight.

Then came faire May, the fayrest mayd on ground,  
 Deckt all with dainties of her seasons pryde,  
 And throwing flowres out of her lap around:  
 Vpon two brethrens shoulders she did ride,  
 The twinnes of Leda; which on eyther side  
 Supported her like to their soueraine Queene.  
 Lord! how all creatures laught, when her they  
 spide,

And leapt and daunc't as they had raiisht beene!  
 And Cupid selfe about her fluttred all in greene.

And after her, came iolly Iune, arrayd  
 All in greene leaues, as he a Player were;  
 Yet in his time, he wrought as well as playd,  
 That by his plough-yrons mote right well appeare:  
 Vpon a Crab he rode, that him did beare  
 With crooked crawling steps an vncouth pase,  
 And backward yode, as Bargemen wont to fare  
 Bending their force contrary to their face,  
 Like that vngracious crew which faines demurest  
 grace.

Then came hot Iuly boyling like to fire,  
 That all his garments he had cast away:  
 Vpon a Lyon raging yet with ire  
 He boldly rode and made him to obay:  
 It was the beast that whylome did forray  
 The Nemaean forrest, till th'Amphytrionide  
 Him slew, and with his hide did him array;  
 Behinde his back a sithe, and by his side  
 Vnder his belt he bore a sickle circling wide.

The sixt was August, being rich arrayd  
 In garment all of gold downe to the ground:  
 Yet rode he not, but led a louely Mayd  
 Forth by the lilly hand, the which was cround  
 With eares of corne, and full her hand was found;

That was the righteous Virgin, which of old  
 Liv'd here on earth, and plenty made abound;  
 But, after Wrong was lov'd and Iustice solde,  
 She left th'vnrighteous world and was to heauen  
 extold.

Next him, September marched eeke on foote;  
 Yet was he heauy laden with the spoyle  
 Of haruests riches, which he made his boot,  
 And him enrich with bounty of the soyle:  
 In his one hand, as fit for haruests toyle,  
 He held a knife-hook; and in th'other hand  
 A paire of waights, with which he did assoyle  
 Both more and lesse, where it in doubt did stand,  
 And equall gaue to each as Iustice duly scann'd.

Then came October full of merry glee:  
 For, yet his noule was totty of the must,  
 Which he was treading in the wine-fats see,  
 And of the ioyous oyle, whose gentle gust  
 Made him so frolick and so full of lust:  
 Vpon a dreadfull Scorpion he did ride,  
 The same which by Dianaes doom vniust  
 Slew great Orion: and eeke by his side  
 He had his ploughing share, and coulter ready tyde.

Next was Nouember, he full grosse and fat,  
 As fed with lard, and that right well might seeme;  
 For, he had been a fatting hogs of late,  
 That yet his browes with sweat, did reek and  
 steem,

And yet the season was full sharp and breem;  
 In planting eeke he took no small delight:  
 Whereon he rode, not easie was to deeme;  
 For it a dreadfull Centaure was in sight,  
 The seed of Saturne, and faire Nais, Chiron hight,

And after him, came next the chill December:  
 Yet he through merry feasting which he made,  
 And great bonfires, did not the cold remember;  
 His Sauours birth his mind so much did glad:  
 Vpon a shaggy-bearded Goat he rode,  
 The same wherewith Dan Ioue in tender yeares,  
 They say, was nourisht by th'I[d]ocean mayd;  
 And in his hand a broad deepe boawle he beares;

Of which, he freely drinks an health to all his  
peeres.

Then came old Ianuary, wrapped well  
In many weeds to keep the cold away;  
Yet did he quake and quiuer like to quell,  
And blowe his nayles to warme them if he may:  
For, they were numbd with holding all the day  
An hatchet keene, with which he felled wood,  
And from the trees did lop the needlesse spray:  
Vpon an huge great Earth-pot steane he stood;  
From whose wide mouth, there flowed forth the  
Romane flood.

And lastly, came cold February, sitting  
In an old wagon, for he could not ride;  
Drawne of two fishes for the season fitting,  
Which through the flood before did softly slyde  
And swim away: yet had he by his side  
His plough and harnesse fit to till the ground,  
And tooles to prune the trees, before the pride  
Of hasting Prime did make them burgein round:  
So past the twelue Months forth, & their dew  
places found.

And after these, there came the Day, and Night,  
Riding together both with equall pace,  
Th'one on a Palfrey blacke, the other white;  
But Night had couered her vncomely face  
With a blacke veile, and held in hand a mace,  
On top whereof the moon and stars were pight,  
And sleep and darknesse round about did trace:  
But Day did beare, vpon his scepters hight,  
The goodly Sun, encompassed all with beames bright.

Then came the Howres, faire daughters of high  
Ioue,  
And timely Night, the which were all endewed  
With wondrous beauty fit to kindle loue;  
But they were Virgins all, and loue eschewed,  
That might forslack the charge to them fore-  
shewed  
By mighty Ioue; who did them Porters make  
Of heauens gate (whence all the gods issued)  
Which they did dayly watch, and nightly wake  
By euen turnes, ne euer did their charge forsake.

And after all came Life, and lastly Death;  
Death with most grim and griesly visage seene,  
Yet is he nought but parting of the breath;  
Ne ought to see, but like a shade to weene,  
Vnbodied, vnsoul'd, vnheard, vnseene.  
But Life was like a faire young lusty boy,  
Such as they faine Dan Cupid to haue beene,  
Full of delightfull health and liuely ioy.  
Deckt all with flowres, and wings of gold fit to  
employ.

When these were past, thus gan the Titanesse;  
Lo, mighty mother, now be iudge and say,  
Whether in all thy creatures more or lesse  
CHANGE doth not raign & beare the greatest  
sway:

For, who sees not, that Time on all doth pray?  
But Times do change and moue continually.  
So nothing here long standeth in one stay:  
Wherefore, this lower world who can deny  
But to be subiect still to Mutabilitie?

Then thus gan Ioue; Right true it is, that these  
And all things else that vnder heauen dwell  
Are chaung'd of Time, who doth them all disseise  
Of being : But, who is it (to me tell)  
That Time himselfe doth moue and still compell  
To keepe his course? Is not that namely wee  
Which poure that vertue from our heauenly cell,  
That moues them all, and makes them changed be?  
So them we gods doe rule, and in them also thee.

To whom, thus Mutability: The things  
Which we see not how they are mov'd and swayd,  
Ye may attribute to your selues as Kings,  
And say they by your secret powre are made:  
But what we see not, who shall vs perswade?  
But were they so, as ye them faine to be,  
Mov'd by your might, and ordred by your ayde;  
Yet what if I can proue, that euen yee  
Your selues are likewise chang'd, and subiect vnto  
mee?

And first, concerning her that is the first,  
Euen you faire Cynthia, whom so much ye make

Ioues dearest darling, she was bred and nurst  
 On Cynthus hill, whence she her name did take:  
 Then is she mortall borne, how-so ye crake;  
 Besides, her face and countenance euery day  
 We changed see, and sundry forms partake,  
 Now hornd, now roud, now bright, now brown &  
 gray:  
 So that as changefull as the Moone men vse to say.

Next, Mercury, who though he lesse appeare  
 To change his hew, and alwayes seeme as one;  
 Yet, he his course doth altar euery yeare,  
 And is of late far out of order gone:  
 So Venus eeke, that goodly Paragone,  
 Though faire all night, yet is she darke all day;  
 And Phoebus self, who lightsome is alone,  
 Yet is he oft eclipsed by the way,  
 And fills the darkned world with terror and dismay.

Now Mars that valiant man is changed most:  
 For, he some times so far runs out of square,  
 That he his way doth seem quite to haue lost,  
 And cleane without his vsuall sphere to fare;  
 That euen these Star-gazers stonisht are  
 At sight thereof, and damne their lying bookes:  
 So likewise, grim Sir Saturne oft doth spare  
 His sterne aspect, and calme his crabbed looks:  
 So many turning cranks these haue, so many  
 crookes.

But you Dan Ioue, that only constant are,  
 And King of all the rest, as ye do clame,  
 Are you not subiect eeke to this misfare?  
 Then let me aske you this withouten blame,  
 Where were ye borne? some say in Crete by name,  
 Others in Thebes, and others other-where;  
 But wheresoeuer they comment the same,  
 They all consent that ye begotten were,  
 And borne here in this world, ne other can appeare.

Then are ye mortall borne, and thrall to me,  
 Vnlesse the kingdome of the sky yee make  
 Immortall, and vnchangeable to bee;  
 Besides, that power and vertue which ye spake,  
 That ye here worke, doth many changes take,  
 And your owne natures change: for, each of you

That vertue haue, or this, or that to make,  
 Is checkt and changed from his nature trew,  
 By others opposition or obliquid view.

Besides, the sundry motions of your Spheares,  
 So sundry waies and fashions as clerkes faine,  
 Some in short space, and some in longer yeares;  
 What is the same but alteration plaine?  
 Onely the starrie skie doth still remaine:  
 Yet do the Starres and Signes therein still moue,  
 And euen it self is mov'd, as wizards saine.  
 But all that moueth, doth mutation loue:  
 Therefore both you and them to me I subiect proue.

Then since within this wide great Vniuerse  
 Nothing doth firme and permanent appeare,  
 But all things tost and turned by transuerse:  
 What then should let, but I aloft should reare  
 My Trophee, and from all, the triumph beare?  
 Now iudge then (O thou greatest goddesses trew!)  
 According as thy selfe doest see and heare,  
 And vnto me addoom that is my dew;  
 That is the rule of all, all being rul'd by you.

So hauing ended, silence long ensewed,  
 Ne Nature to or fro spake for a space,  
 But with firme eyes affixt, the ground still viewed.  
 Meane while, all creatures, looking in her face,  
 Expecting th'end of this so doubtfull case,  
 Did hang in long suspence what would ensew,  
 To whether side should fall the soueraigne place:  
 At length, she looking vp with chearefull view,  
 The silence brake, and gaue her doome in speeches  
 few.

I well consider all that ye haue sayd,  
 And find that all things stedfastnes doe hate  
 And changed be: yet being rightly wayd  
 They are not changed from their first estate;  
 But by their change their being doe dilate:  
 And turning to themselues at length againe,  
 Doe worke their owne perfection so by fate:  
 Then ouer them Change doth not rule and raigne;  
 But they raigne ouer change, and doe their states  
 maintaine.

Cease therefore daughter further to aspire,  
 And thee content thus to be rul'd by me:  
 For thy decay thou seekst by thy desire;  
 But time shall come that all shall changed bee,  
 And from thenceforth, none no more change shall  
 see.

So was the Titaness put downe and whist,  
 And Ioue confirm'd in his imperiall see.  
 Then was that whole assembly quite dismiss,  
 And Natur's selfe did vanish, whither no man wist.

### **The VIII. Canto, vnperfite.**

W Hen I bethinke me on that speech whyleare,  
 Of Mutability, and well it way:  
 Me seemes, that though she all vnworthy were  
 Of the Heav'ns Rule ; yet very sooth to say,  
 In all things else she beares the greatest sway.  
 Which makes me loath this state of life so tickle,  
 And loue of things so vaine to cast away;  
 Whose flowring pride, so fading and so fickle,  
 Short Time shall soon cut down with his  
 consuming sickle.

Then gin I thinke on that which Nature sayd,  
 Of that same time when no more Change shall be,  
 But stedfast rest of all things firmly stayd  
 Vpon the pillours of Eternity,  
 That is contrayr to Mutabilitie:  
 For, all that moueth, doth in Change delight:  
 But thence-forth all shall rest eternally  
 With Him that is the God of Sabbaoth hight:  
 O thou great Sabbaoth God, graunt me that  
 Sabaoths sight.

FINIS