

Canto VI.

*Guyon is of immodest Merth,
led into loose desire,
Fights with Cymochles, whiles his bro-
ther burnes in furious fire.*

[1]

A Harder lesson, to learne Continnence
In ioyous pleasure, then in grieuous paine:
For sweetnes doth allure the weaker sence
So strongly, that vneathes it can refraine
From that, which feeble nature couets faire;
But grieffe and wrath, that be her enemies,
And foes of life, she better can restraine;
Yet vertue vauntes in both their victories,
And *Guyon* in them all shewes goodly maisteries.

[2]

Whom bold *Cymochles* traauiling to find,
With cruell purpose bent to wreake on him
The wrath, which *Atin* kindled in his mind,
Came to a riuer, by whose vtmost brim
Wayting to passe, he saw whereas did swim
A long the shore, as swift as glaunce of eye,
A litle Gondelay, bedecked trim
With boughes and arbours wouen cunningly,
That like a litle forrest seemed outwardly.

[3]

And therein sate a Ladie fresh and faire,
Making sweet solace to her selfe alone;
Sometimes she sung, as loud as larke in aire,
Sometimes she laught, that nigh her breth was gone,
Yet was there not with her else any one,
That might to her moue cause of meriment:
Matter of merth enough, though there were none
She could deuise, and thousand waies inuent,
To feede her foolish humour, and vaine iolliment.

[4]

Which when farre off *Chymochles* heard, and saw,
He loudly cald to such, as were a bord,

The little barke vnto the shore to draw,
And him to ferrie ouer that deepe ford:
The merry marriner vnto his word
Soone hearkned, and her painted bote streightway
Turnd to the shore, where that same warlike Lord
She in receiu'd; but *Atin* by no way
She would admit, albe the knight her much did pray.

[5]

Eftsoones her shallow ship away did slide,
More swift, then swallow sheres the liquid skie,
Withouten oare or Pilot it to guide,
Or winged canuas with the wind to flie,
Only she turn'd a pin, and by and by
It cut away vpon the yielding waue,
Ne cared she her course for to apply:
For it was taught the way, which she would haue,
And both from rocks and flats it selfe could wisely saue:

[6]

And all the way, the wanton Damzell found
New merth, her passenger to entertaine:
For she in pleasant purpose did abound,
And greatly ioyed merry tales to faine,
Of which a store-house did with her remaine,
Yet seemed, nothing well they her became;
For, all her words she drownd with laughter vaine,
And wanted grace in vt'ring of the same,
That turned all her pleasance to a scoffing game.

[7]

And other whiles vaine toyes she would deuize,
As her fantasticke wit did most delight,
Sometimes her head she fondly would aguize
With gaudie girlonds, or fresh flowrets dight
About her necke, or rings of rushes plight;
Sometimes to doe him laugh, she would assay
To laugh at shaking of the leaues light,
Or to behold the water worke, and play
About her litle frigot, therein making way.

[8]

Her light behaiour, and loose dalliaunce

Gaue wondrous great contentment to the knight,
That of his way he had no souenance,
Nor care of vow'd reuenge, and cruell fight,
But to weake wench did yeeld his martiall might.
So easie was to quench his flamed mind
With one sweet drop of sensuall delight,
So easie is, t'appease the stormie wind
Of malice in the calme of pleasant womankind.

[9]

Diuerse discourses in their way they spent,
Mongst which *Cymochles* of her questioned,
Both what she was, and what that vsage ment,
Which in her cot she daily practised.
Vaine man (said she) that wouldest be reckoned
A straunger in thy home, and ignoraunt
Of *Phaedria* (for so my name is red)
Of *Phaedria*, thine owne fellow seruaunt;
For thou to serue *Acrasia* thy selfe doest vaunt.

[10]

In this wide Inland sea, that hight by name
The *Idle lake*, my wandring ship I row,
That knowes her port, and thither sailes by ayme,
Ne care, ne feare I, how the wind doe blow,
Or whether swift I wend, or whether slow:
Both slow and swift alike do serue my tourne,
Ne swelling *Neptune*, ne loud thundring *Ioue*
Can chaunge my cheare, or make me euer mourne;
My litle boat can safely passe this perilous bourne.

[11]

Whiles thus she talked, and whiles thus she toyd,
They were farre past the passage, which he spake,
And come vnto an Island, waste and voyd,
That floted in the midst of that great lake,
There her small Gondelay her port did make,
And that gay paire issuing on the shore
Disburnd her. Their way they forward take
Into the land that lay them faire before,
Whose pleasance she him shew'd, and plentiful great store.

[12]

It was a chosen plot of fertile land,
Emongst wide waues set, like a litle nest,
As if it had by Natures cunning hand,
Beene choisely picked out from all the rest,
And laid forth for ensample of the best:
No daintie flowre or herbe, that growes on ground,
No arboret with painted blossoms drest,
And smelling sweet, but there it might be found
To bud out faire, and her sweet smels throw all around.

[13]

No tree, whose braunches did not brauely spring;
No braunch, whereon a fine bird did not sit:
No bird, but did her shrill notes sweetly sing;
No song but did containe a louely dit:
Trees, branches, birds, and songs were framed fit,
For to allure fraile mind to carelesse ease.
Carelesse the man soone woxe, and his weake wit
Was overcome of thing, that did him please;
So pleased, did his wrathfull purpose faire appease.

[14]

Thus when she had his eyes and senses fed
With false delights, and fild with pleasures vaine,
Into a shady dale she soft him led,
And layd him downe vpon a grassie plaine;
And her sweet selfe without dread, or disdain,
She set beside, laying his head disarm'd
In her loose lap, it softly to sustaine,
Where soone he slumbred, fearing not be harm'd,
The whiles with a loud lay she thus him sweetly charm'd.

[15]

Behold, ô man, that toilesome paines doest take
The flowres, the fields, and all that pleasant growes,
How they themselues doe thine ensample make,
Whiles nothing enuious nature them forth throwes
Out of her fruitfull lap; how, no man knowes,
They spring, they bud, they blossome fresh and faire,
And deck the world with their rich pompous showes;
Yet no man for them taketh paines or care,
Yet no man to them can his carefull paines compare.

[16]

The lilly, Ladie of the flowring field,
The Flowre-deluce, her louely Paramoure,
Bid thee to them thy fruitlesse labours yield,
And soone leaue off this toylesome wearie stoure;
Loe loe how braue she decks her bounteous boure,
With silken curtens and gold couerlets,
Therein to shrowd her sumptuous Belamoure,
Yet neither spinnes nor cardes, ne cares nor frets,
But to her mother Nature all her care she lets.

[17]

Why then dost thou, ô man, that of them all
Art Lord, and eke of nature Soueraine,
Wilfully make thy selfe a wretched thrall,
And wast thy ioyous houres in needlesse paine,
Seeking for daunger and aduentures vaine?
What bootes it all to haue, and nothing vse?
Who shall him rew, that swimming in the maine,
Will die for thirst, and water doth refuse?
Refuse such fruitlesse toile, and present pleasures chuse.

[18]

By this she had him lulled fast a sleepe,
That of no worldly thing he care did take;
Then she with liquors strong his eyes did steepe;
That nothing should him hastily awake:
So she him left, and did her selfe betake
Vnto her boat againe, with which she cleft
The slouthfull waue of that great griesly lake;
Soone she that Island farre behind her left,
And now is come to that same place, where first she weft.

[19]

By this time was the worthy *Guyon* brought
Vnto the other side of that wide strond,
Where she was rowing, and for passage sought:
Him needed not long call, she soone to hond
Her ferry brought, where him she byding fond,
With his sad guide; himselfe she tooke a boord,
But the *Blacke Palmer* suffred still to stond,
Ne would for price, or prayers once affoord,
To ferry that old man ouer the perlous foord.

[20]

Guyon was loath to leaue his guide behind,
Yet being entred, might not backe retyre;
For, the flit barke, obeying to her mind,
Forth launched quickly, as she did desire,
Ne gaue him leaue to bid that aged sire
Adieu, but nimbly ran her wonted course
Through the dull billowes thicke as troubled mire,
Whom neither wind out of their seat could forse,
Nor timely tides did driue out of their sluggish sourse.

[21]

And by the way, as was her wonted guize,
Her merry fit she freshly gan to reare,
And did of ioy and iollitie deuize,
Her selfe to cherish, and her guest to cheare:
The knight was courteous, and did not forbear
Her honest merth and pleasaunce to partake;
But when he saw her toy, and gibe, and geare,
And passe the bonds of modest merimake,
Her dalliance he despisd, and follies did forsake.

[22]

Yet she still followed her former stile,
And said, and did all that mote him delight,
Till they arriued in that pleasant Ile,
Where sleeping late she left her other knight.
But when as *Guyon* of that land had sight,
He wist himselfe amisse, and angry said;
Ah Dame, perdie ye haue not doen me right,
Thus to mislead me, whiles I you obaid:
Me litle needed from my right way to haue straid.

[23]

Faire Sir (quoth she) be not displeasd at all;
Who fares on sea, may not commaund his way,
Ne wind and weather at his pleasure call:
The sea is wide, and easie for to stray;
The wind vnstable, and doth neuer stay.
But here a while ye may in safety rest,
Till season serue new passage to assay;
Better safe port, then be in seas distrest.
Therewith she laught, and did her earnest end in iest.

[24]

But he halfe discontent, mote nathelless
Himselfe appease, and issewed forth on shore:
The ioyes whereof, and happie fruitfulnessse,
Such as he saw she gan him lay before,
And all though pleasant, yet she made much more:
The fields did laugh, the flowres did freshly spring,
The trees did bud, and earely blossomes bore,
And all the quire of birds did sweetly sing,
And told that gardins pleasures in their caroling.

[25]

And she more sweet, then any bird on bough,
Would oftentimes emongst them beare a part,
And striue to passe (as she could well enough)
Their natiue musicke by her skilfull art:
So did she all, that might his constant hart
Withdraw from thought of warlike enterprize,
And drowne in dissolute delights apart,
Where noyse of armes, or vew of martiall guise
Might not reuiue desire of knightly exercize.

[26]

But he was wise, and warie of her will,
And euer held his hand vpon his hart:
Yet would not seeme so rude, and thewed ill,
As to despise so courteous seeming part,
That gentle Ladie did to him impart,
But fairely tempring fond desire subdewd,
And euer her desired to depart.
She list not heare, but her disports poursewd,
And euer bad him stay, till time the tide renewd.

[27]

And now by this, *Cymochles* howre was spent,
That he awoke out of his idle dreme,
And shaking off his drowsie dreriment,
Gan him auize, how ill did him beseeme,
In slouthfull sleepe his molten hart to steme,
And quench the brond of his conceiued ire.
Tho vp he started, stird with shame extreme,
Ne staid for his Damzell to inquire,
But marched to the strond, there passage to require.

[28]

And in the way he with Sir *Guyon* met,
Accompanyde with *Phaedria* the faire:
Eftsoones he gan to rage, and inly fret,
Crying, Let be that Ladie debonaire,
Thou recreant knight, and soone thy selfe prepaire
To battell, if thou meane her loue to gaine:
Loe, loe alreadie, how the fowles in aire
Doe flocke, awaiting shortly to obtaine
Thy carcasse for their pray, the guerdon of thy paine.

[29]

And therewithall he fiercely at him flew,
And with importance outrage him assayld;
Who soone prepard to field, his sword forth drew,
And him with equall value counteruayld:
Their mighty strokes their haberieons dismayld,
And naked made each others manly spalles;
The mortall steele despiteously entayld
Deepe in their flesh, quite through the yron walles,
That a large purple streme adown their giambeux falles.

[30]

Cymochles, that had neuer met before,
So puissant foe, with enuious despight
His proud presumed force increased more,
Disdeigning to be held so long in fight;
Sir *Guyon* grudging not so much his might,
As those vnknightly raylings, which he spoke,
With wrathfull fire his courage kindled bright,
Thereof deusing shortly to be wroke,
And doubling all his powres, redoubled euery stroke.

[31]

Both of them high attonce their hands enhaunst,
And both attonce their huge, blowes downe did sway;
Cymochles sword on *Guyons* shield yglauunst,
And thereof nigh one quarter sheard away;
But *Guyons* angry blade so fierce did play
On th'others helmet, which as *Titan* shone,
That quite it cloue his plumed crest in tway,
And bared all his head vnto the bone;
Wherewith astonisht, still he stood, as senselesse stone.

[32]

Still as he stood, faire *Phaedria*, that beheld
That deadly daunger, soone atweene them ran;
And at their feet her selfe most humbly feld,
Crying with pitteous voice, and count'nance wan;
Ah well away, most noble Lords, how can
Your cruell eyes endure so pitteous sight,
To shed your liues on ground? wo worth the man,
That first did teach the cursed steele to bight
In his owne flesh, and make way to the liuing spright.

[33]

If euer loue of Ladie did empierce
Your yron brestes, or pittie could find place,
Withhold your bloudie hands from battell fierce,
And sith for me ye fight, to me this grace
Both yeeld, to stay your deadly strife a space.
They stayd a while: and forth she gan proceed:
Most wretched woman, and of wicked race,
That am the author of this hainous deed,
And cause of death betweene two doughtie knights doe breed.

[34]

But if for me ye fight, or me will serue,
Not this rude kind of battell, nor these armes
Are meet, the which doe men in bale to sterue,
And dolefull sorrow heape with deadly harmes:
Such cruell game my scarmoges disarmes:
Another warre, and other weapons I
Doe loue, where loue does giue his sweet alarmes,
Without bloudshed, and where the enemy
Does yeeld vnto his foe a pleasant victory.

[35]

Debatefull strife, and cruell enmitie
The famous name of knighthood fowly shent;
But louely peace, and gentle amitie,
And in Amours the passing houres to spend,
The mightie martiall hands doe most commend;
Of loue they euer greater glory bore,
Then of their armes: *Mars* is *Cupidoes* frend,
And is for *Venus* loues renownmed more,
Then all his wars and spoiles, the which he did of yore.

[36]

Therewith she sweetly smyld. They, though full bent,
To proue extremities of bloudie fight,
Yet at her speach their rages gan relent,
And calme the sea of their tempestuous spight,
Such powre haue pleasing words: such is the might
Of courteous clemencie in gentle hart.
Now after all was ceast, the Faerie knight
Besought that Damzell suffer him depart,
And yield him readie passage to that other part.

[37]

She no lesse glad, then he desirous was
Of his departure thence; for of her ioy
And vaine delight she saw he light did pas,
A foe of folly and immodest toy,
Still solemne sad, or still disdainfull coy,
Delighting all in armes and cruell warre,
That her sweet peace and pleasures did annoy,
Troubled with terrour and vnquiet iarre,
That she well pleased was thence to amoue him farre.

[38]

Tho him she brought aboard, and her swift bote
Forthwith directed to that further strand;
The which on the dull waues did lightly flote
And soone arriued on the shallow sand,
Where gladsome *Guyon* salied forth to land,
And to that Damzell thanks gaue for reward.
Vpon that shore he spied *Atin* stand,
Thereby his maister left, when late he far'd
In *Phaedrias* flit barke ouer that perlous shard.

[39]

Well could he him remember, sith of late
He with *Pyrrhochles* sharp debatement made;
Streight gan he him reuile, and bitter rate,
As shepherds curre, that in darke euenings shade
Hath tracted forth some saluage beastes trade;
Vile Miscreant (said he) whither doest thou flie
The shame and death, which will thee soone inuade?
What coward hand shall doe thee next to die,
That art thus fously fled from famousemie?

[40]

With that he stiffely shooke his steelehead dart:
But sober *Guyon*, hearing him so raile,
Though somewhat moued in his mightie hart,
Yet with strong reason maistred passion fraile,
And passed fairely forth. He turning taile,
Backe to the strond retyrd, and there still stayd,
Awaiting passage, which him late did faile;
The whiles *Cymochles* with that wanton mayd
The hastie heat of his auowd reuenge delayd.

[41]

Whylest there the varlet stood, he saw from farre
An armed knight, that towards him fast ran:
He ran on foot, as if in lucklesse warre
His forlorne steed from him the victour wan;
He seemed breathlesse, hartlesse, faint, and wan,
And all his armour sprinckled was with bloud,
And soyld with durtie gore, that no man can
Discerne the hew thereof. He neuer stood,
But bent his hastie course towards the idle flood.

[42]

The varlet saw, when to the flood he came,
How without stop or stay he fiercely lept,
And deepe him selfe beduked in the same,
That in the lake his loftie crest was steept,
Ne of his safetie seemed care he kept,
But with his raging armes hee rudely flasht,
The waues about, and all his armour swept,
That all the bloud and filth away was washt,
Yet still he bet the water, and the billowes dasht.

[43]

Atin drew nigh, to weet what it mote bee;
For much he wondred at that vncouth sight;
Whom should he, but his owne deare Lord, there see,
His owne deare Lord *Pyrrhochles*, in sad plight,
Readie to drowne himselfe for fell despight.
Harrow now out, and well away, he cryde,
What dismall day hath lent this cursed light,
To see my Lord so deadly damnifyde
Pyrrhochles, ô *Pyrrhochles*, what is thee betyde?

[44]

I burne, I burne, I burne, then loud he cryde,
O how I burne with implacable fire,
Yet nought can quench mine inly flaming syde
Nor sea of licour cold, nor lake of mire,
Nothing but death can doe me to respire.
Ah be it (said he) from *Pyrrhochles* farre
After pursewing death once to require,
Or think, that ought those puissant hands may marre:
Death is for wretches borne vnder vnhappye starre.

[45]

Perdie, then is it fit for me (said he)
That am, I weene, most wretched man aliue,
But in flames, yet no flames can I see,
And dying daily, daily yet reuiue:
O *Atin*, helpe to me last death to giue.
The varlet at his plaint was grieu'd so sore,
That his deepe wounded hart in two did riue,
And his owne health remembering now no more,
Did follow that ensample, which he blam'd afore.

[46]

Into the lake he lept, his Lord to ayd,
(So Loue the dread of daunger doth despise)
And of him catching hold him strongly stayd
From drowning. But more happye he, then wise
Of that seas nature did him not auise.
The waues thereof so slow and sluggish were,
Engrost with mud, which did them foule agrise,
That euery weightie thing they did vpbeare,
Ne ought mote euer sinke downe to the bottome there.

[47]

Whiles thus they struggled in that idle waue,
And stroue in vaine, the one himselfe to drowne,
The other both from drowning for to saue;
Lo, to that shore one in an auncient gowne,
Whose hoarie locks great grautie did crowne,
Holding in hand a goodly arming sword,
By fortune came, led with the troublous sowne:
Where drenched deepe he found in that dull ford
The carefull seruant, striuing with his raging Lord.

[48]

Him *Atin* spying, knew right well of yore,
And loudly cald, Helpe helpe, ô *Archimage*;
To saue my Lord, in wretched plight forlore;
Helpe with thy hand, or with thy counsell sage:
Weake hands, but counsell is most strong in age.
Him when the old man saw, he wondred sore,
To see *Pyrrhochles* there so rudely rage:
Yet sithens helpe, he saw, he needed more
Then pittie, he in hast approached to the shore,

[49]

And cald, *Pyrrhochles*, what is this, I see?
What hellish furie hath at earst thee hent?
Furious euer I thee knew to bee,
Yet neuer in this straunge astonishment.
These flames, these flames (he cryde) do me torment.
What flames (quoth he) when I thee present see,
In daunger rather to be drent, then brent?
Harrow, the flames, which me consume (said hee)
Ne can be quencht, within my secret bowels bee.

[50]

That cursed man, that cruell feend of hell,
Furor, oh *Furor*, hath me thus bedight:
His deadly wounds within my liuers swell,
And his hot fire burnes in mine entrails bright,
Kindled through his infernall brond of spight,
Sith late with him I batteil vaine would boste;
That now I weene *Ioues* dreaded thunder light
Does scorch not halfè so sore, nor damned ghoste
In flaming *Phlegeton* does not so felly roste.

[51]

Which when as *Archimago* heard, his grieffe
He knew right well, and him attonce disarmd:
Then searcht his secret wounds, and made a priefe
Of euerie place, that was with brusing harmd,
Or with the hidden fire too inly warmd.
Which done, he balmes and herbes thereto applyde,
And euemore with mighty spels them charmd,
That in short space he has them qualifyde,

And him restor'd to health, that would haue algates dyde.

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