

## *Cant. II.*

*Artegall heares of Florimell,  
Does with the Pagan fight:  
Him slaies, drownes Lady Momera,  
Does race her castle quight.*

[1]

**N**Ought is more honorable to a knight,  
Ne better doth beseeme braue cheualry,  
Then to defend the feeble in their right,  
And wrong redresse in such as wend awry.  
Whilome those great Heroes got thereby  
Their greatest glory, for their rightfull deedes,  
And place deserued with the Gods on hy.  
Herein the noblesse of this knight exceedes,  
Who now to perils great for iustice sake proceedes.

[2]

To which as he now was vpon the way,  
He chaunst to meet a Dwarfè in hasty course;  
Whom he requir'd his forward hast to stay,  
Till he of tidings mote with him discourse.  
Loth was the Dwarfè, yet did he stay perforce,  
And gan of sundry newes his store to tell,  
And to his memory they had recourse:  
But chiefly of the fairest *Florimell*,  
How she was found againe, and spousde to *Marinell*.

[3]

For this was *Dony*, *Florimels* owne Dwarfè,  
Whom hauing lost (as ye haue heard whyleare)  
And finding in the way the scattred scarfe,  
The fortune of her life long time did feare.  
But of her health when *Artegall* did heare,  
And safe returne, he was full inly glad,  
And askt him where, and when her bridale cheare  
Should be solemniz'd: for if time he had,  
He would be there, and honor to her spousall ad.

[4]

Within three daies (quoth she) as I do here,  
It will be at the Castle of the strond;

What time if naught me let, I will be there  
To doe her seruice, so as I am bond.  
But in my way a little here beyond  
A cursed cruell Sarazin doth wonne,  
That keepes a Bridges passage by strong hond,  
And many errant Knights hath there fordonne;  
That makes all men for feare that passage for to shonne.

[5]

What mister wight (quoth he) and how far hence  
Is he, that doth to trauellers such harmes?  
He is (said he) a man of great defence;  
Expert in battell and in deedes of armes;  
And more emboldned by the wicked charmes,  
With which his daughter doth him still support;  
Hauing great Lordships got and goodly farmes,  
Through strong oppression of his powre extort;  
By which he stil them holds, & keepes with strong effort.

[6]

And dayly he his wrongs encreaseth more,  
For neuer wight he lets to passe that way;  
Ouer his Bridge, albee he rich or poore,  
But he him makes his passage-penny pay:  
Else he doth hold him backe or beat away.  
Thereto he hath a groome of euill guise,  
Whose scalp is bare, that bondage doth bewray,  
Which pols and pils the poore in piteous wize;  
But he him selfe vppon the rich doth tyrannize.

[7]

His name is hight *Pollente*, rightly so  
For that he is so puissant and strong,  
That with his powre he all doth ouergo,  
And makes them subiect to his mighty wrong;  
And some by sleight he eke doth vnderfong.  
For on a Bridge he custometh to fight,  
Which is but narrow, but exceeding long;  
And in the same are many trap fals pight,  
Through which the rider downe doth fall through ouersight

[8]

And vnderneath the same a riuier flowes,

That is both swift and dangerous deepe withall;  
Into the which whom so he ouerthrowes,  
All destitute of helpe doth headlong fall,  
But he him selfe, through practise vsuall,  
Leapes forth into the floud, and there assaies  
His foe confused through his sodaine fall,  
That horse and man he equally dismaies,  
And either both them drownes, or trayterously slaies.

[9]

Then doth he take the spoile of them at will,  
And to his daughter brings, that dwels thereby:  
Who all that comes doth take, and therewith fill  
The coffers of her wicked treasury;  
Which she with wrongs hath heaped vp so hy,  
That many Princes she in wealth exceedes,  
And purchast all the countrey lying ny  
With the reueneue of her plenteous meedes,  
Her name is *Munera*, agreeing with her deedes.

[10]

Thereto she is full faire, and rich attired,  
With golden hands and siluer feete beside,  
That many Lords haue her to wife desired:  
But she them all despiseth for great pride.  
Now by my life (sayd he) and God to guide,  
None other way will I this day betake,  
But by that Bridge, whereas he doth abide:  
Therefore me thither lead. No more he spake,  
But thitherward forthright his ready way did make.

[11]

Vnto the place he came within a while,  
Where on the Bridge he ready armed saw  
The Sarazin, awayting for some spoile.  
Who as they to the passage gan to draw,  
A villaine to them came with scull all raw,  
That passage money did of them require,  
According to the custome of their law.  
To whom he aunswerd wroth, loe there thy hire;  
And with that word him strooke, that streight he did expire.

[12]

Which when the Pagan saw, he waxed wroth,  
And streight him selfe vnto the fight addrest,  
Ne was Sir *Artegall* behinde: so both  
Together ran with ready speares in rest.  
Right in the midst, whereas they brest to brest  
Should meete, a trap was letten downe to fall  
Into the flood; streight leapt the Carle vnblest,  
Well weening that his foe was falne withall:  
But he was well aware, and leapt before his fall.

[13]

There being both together in the flood,  
They each at other tyrannously flew;  
Ne ought the water cooled their whot blood,  
But rather in them kindled choler new.  
But there the Paynim, who that vse well knew  
To fight in water, great aduantage had,  
That oftentimes him nigh he ouerthrew:  
And eke the courser, whereuppon he rad,  
Could swim like to a fish, whiles he his backe bestrad.

[14]

Which oddes when as Sir *Artegall* espide,  
He saw no way, but close with him in hast;  
And to him driuing strongly downe the tide,  
Vppon his iron coller griped fast,  
That with the straint his wesand nigh he brast.  
There they together stroue and struggled long,  
Either the other from his steede to cast;  
Ne euer *Artegall* his griple strong  
For any thing wold slacke, but still vppon him hong.

[15]

As when a Dolphin and a Sele are met,  
In the wide champion of the Ocean plaine:  
With cruell chaufe their courages they whet,  
The maysterdome of each by force to gaine,  
And dreadfull battaile twixt them do darraine:  
They snuf, they snort, they bounce, they rage, they rore,  
That all the sea disturbed with their traine,  
Doth frie with fome aboute the surges hore.  
Such was betwixt these two the troublesome vprore.

[16]

So *Artegall* at length him forst forsake  
His horses backe, for dread of being drownd,  
And to his handy swimming him betake.  
Eftsoones him selfe he from his hold vnbownd,  
And then no ods at all in him he fownd:  
For *Artegall* in swimming skilfull was,  
And durst the depth of any water sownd.  
So ought each Knight, that vse of perill has,  
In swimming be expert through waters force to pas.

[17]

Then very doubtfull was the warres euent,  
Vncertaine whether had the better side.  
For both were skildin that experiment,  
And both in armes well traird and throughly tride.  
But *Art egall* was better breath'd beside,  
And towards th'end, grew greater in his might,  
That his faint foe no longer could abide  
His puissance, ne beare him selfe vpriight,  
But from the water to the land betooke his flight.

[18]

But *Artegall* pursewd him still so neare,  
With bright Chrysaor in his cruell hand,  
That as his head he gan a litle reare  
Aboue the brincke, to tread vpon the land,  
He smote it off, that tumbling on the strand  
It bit the earth for very fell despight,  
And gnashed with his teeth, as if he band  
High God, whose goodnesse he despaired quight,  
Or curst the hand, which did that vengeance on him dight

[19]

His corps was carried downe along the Lee,  
Whose waters with his filthy bloud it stayned:  
But his blasphemous head, that all might see,  
He pitcht vpon a pole on high ordayned;  
Where many years it afterwards remayned,  
To be a mirrour to all mighty men,  
In whose right hands great power is containd,  
That none of them the feeble ouerren,  
But alwaies doe their powre within iust compasse pen.

[20]

That done, vnto the Castle he did wend,  
In which the Paynims daughter did abide,  
Guarded of many which did her defend:  
Of whom he entrance sought, but was denide,  
And with reprochfull blasphemy defide,  
Beaten with stones downe from the battilment,  
That he was forced to withdraw aside;  
And bad his seruant *Talus* to inuent  
Which way he enter might, without endangerment.

[21]

Eftsoones his Page drew to the Castle gate,  
And with his iron flae at it let flie,  
That all the warders it did sore amate,  
The which erewhile spake so reprochfully,  
And made them stoupe, that looked earst so hie.  
Yet still he bet, and bounst vpon the dore,  
And thundred strokes thereon so hideouslie,  
That all the peece he shook from the flore,  
And filled all the house with feare and great vprore.

[22]

With noise whereof the Lady forth appeared  
Vpon the Castle wall, and when she saw  
The daungerous state, in which she stood, she feared  
The sad effect of her neare ouerthrow;  
And gan entreat that iron man below,  
To cease his outrage, and him faire besought,  
Sith neither force of stones which they did throw,  
Nor powr of charms, which she against him wrought,  
Might otherwise preuaile, or make him cease for ought.

[23]

But when as yet she saw him to proceede,  
Vnmou'd with praiers, or with piteous thought,  
She ment him to corrupt with goodly meede;  
And causede great sakes with endlesse riches fraught,  
Vnto the battilment to be vpbrought,  
And powred forth ouer the Castle wall,  
That she might win some time, though dearly bought  
Whilest he to gathering of the gold did fall.  
But he was nothing mou'd, nor tempted therewithall.

[24]

But still continu'd his assault the more,  
And layd on load with his huge yron flaile,  
That at the length he has yrent the dore,  
And made way for his maister to assaile.  
Who being entred, nought did then auaile  
For wight, against his powre them selues to reare:  
Each one did flie; their hearts began to faile,  
And hid them selues in corners here and there;  
And eke their dame halfe dead did hide her self for feare.

[25]

Long they her sought, yet no where could they finde her,  
That sure they ween'd she was escapt away:  
But *Talus*, that could like a limehound winde her,  
And all things secrete wisely could bewray,  
At length found out, whereas she hidden lay  
Vnder an heape of gold. Thence he her drew  
By the faire lockes, and fowly did array,  
Withouten pittie of her goodly hew,  
That *Artegall* him selfe her seemelesse plight did rew.

[26]

Yet for no pittie would he change the course  
Of Iustice, which in *Talus* hand did lye;  
Who rudely hayld her forth without remorse,  
Still holding vp her suppliant hands on hye,  
And kneeling at his feete submissiuelly.  
But he her suppliant hands, those hands of gold,  
And eke her feete, those feete of siluer trye,  
Which sought vnrighteousnesse, and iustice sold,  
Chopt off, and nayld on high, that all might the~ behold.

[27]

Her selfe then tooke he by the sclender wast,  
In vaine loud crying, and into the flood  
Ouer the Castle wall adowne her cast,  
And there her drowned in the durty mud:  
But the streame washt away her guilty blood.  
Thereafter all that mucky pelfe he tooke,  
The spoile of peoples euill gotten good,  
The which her sire had scrap't by hooke and crooke,  
And burning all to ashes, powr'd it downe the brooke.

[28]

And lastly all that Castle quite he rased,  
Euen from the sole of his foundation,  
And all the hewen stones thereof defaced,  
That there mote be no hope of reparation,  
Nor memory thereof to any nation.  
All which when *Talus* throughly had performed,  
Sir *Artegall* vndid the euill fashion,  
And wicked customes of that Bridge reformed.  
Which done, vnto his former iourney he returned.

[29]

In which they measur'd mickle weary way,  
Till that at length nigh to the sea they drew;  
By which as they did trauell on a day,  
They saw before them, far as they could vew,  
Full many people gathered in a crew;  
Whose great assembly they did much admire.  
For neuer there the like resort they knew.  
So towards them they coasted, to enquire  
What thing so many nations met, did there desire.

[30]

There they beheld a mighty Gyant stand  
Vpon a rocke, and holding forth on hie  
An huge great paire of ballance in his hand,  
With which he boasted in his surquedrie,  
That all the world he would weigh equallie,  
If ought he had the same to counterpoys.  
For want whereof he weighed vanity,  
And fild his ballaunce full of idle toys:  
Yet was admired much of fooles, women, and boys.

[31]

He sayd that he would all the earth vptake,  
And all the sea, deuided each from either:  
So would he of the fire one ballaunce make,  
And one of th'ayre, without or wind, or wether:  
Then would he ballaunce heauen and hell together,  
And all that did within them all containe;  
Of all whose weight, he would not misse a fether.  
And looke what surplus did of each remaine,  
He would to his owne part restore the same againe.

[32]

For why, he sayd they all vnequall were,  
And had encroched vppon others share,  
Like as the sea (which plaine he shewed there)  
Had worne the care, so did the fire the aire,  
So all the rest did others parts empaire.  
And so were realmes and nations run awry.  
All which he vndertooke for to repaire,  
In sort as they were formed aunciently;  
And all things would reduce vnto equality.

[33]

Therefore the vulgar did about him flocke,  
And cluster thicke vnto his leasings vaine,  
Like foolish flies about an hony crocke,  
In hope by him great benefite to gaine,  
And vncontrolled freedome to obtaine.  
All which when *Artegall* did see, and heare,  
How he mis-led the simple peoples traine,  
In sdeignfull wize he drew vnto him neare,  
And thus vnto him spake, without regard or feare.

[34]

Thou that presum'st to weigh the world anew,  
And all things to an equall to restore,  
In stead of right me seemes great wrong dost shew,  
And far aboute thy forces pitch to sore.  
For ere thou limit what is lesse or more  
In euery thing, thou oughtest first to know,  
What was the poyse of euery part of yore:  
And looke then how much it doth ouerflow,  
Or faile thereof, so much is more then iust to trow.

[35]

For at the first they all created were  
In goodly measure, by their Makers might,  
And weighed out in ballaunces so nere,  
That not a dram was missing of their right,  
The earth was in the middle centre pight,  
In which it doth immouable abide,  
Hemd in with waters like a wall in sight;  
And they with aire, that not a drop can slide:  
Al which the heauens containe, & in their courses guide.

[36]

Such heauenly iustice doth among them raine,  
That euery one doe know their certaine bound,  
In which they doe these many yeares remaine,  
And mongst them al no change hath yet beene found.  
But if thou now shouldst weigh them new in pound,  
We are not sure they would so long remaine:  
All change is perillous, and all chaunce vnsound.  
Therefore leaue off to weigh them all againe,  
Till we may be assur'd they shall their course retaine.

[37]

Thou foolishe Elfe (said then the Gyant wroth)  
Seest not, how badly all things present bee,  
And each estate quite out of order goth?  
The sea it selfe doest thou not plainely see  
Encroch vppon the land there vnder thee;  
And th'earth it selfe how daily its increast,  
By all that dying to it turned be.  
Were it not good that wrong were then surceast,  
And from the most, that some were giuen to the least?

[38]

Therefore I will throw downe these mountaines hie,  
And make them leuell with the lowly plaine:  
These towring rocks, which reach vnto the skie,  
I will thrust downe into the deepest maine,  
And as they were, them equalize againe.  
Tyrants that make men subiect to their law,  
I will suppress, that they no more may raine;  
And Lordings curbe, that commons ouer-aw;  
And all the wealth of rich men to the poore will draw.

[39]

Of things vnseene how canst thou deeme aright,  
Then answered the righteous *Artegall*,  
Sith thou misdeem'st so much of things in sight?  
What though the sea with waues continuall  
Doe eate the earth, it is no more at all:  
Ne is the earth the lesse, or loseth ought,  
For whatsoever from one place doth fall,  
Is with the tide vnto an other brought:  
For there is nothing lost, that may be found, if sought.

[40]

Likewise the earth is not augmented more,  
By all that dying into it doe fade.  
For of the earth they formed were of yore,  
How euer gay their blossome or their blade  
Doe flourish now, they into dust shall vade.  
What wrong then is it, if that when they die,  
They turne to that, whereof they first were made?  
All in the powre of their great Maker lie:  
All creatures must obey the voice of the most hie.

[41]

They liue, they die, like as he doth ordaine,  
Ne euer any asketh reason why.  
The hils doe not the lowly dales disdain;  
The dales doe not the lofty hils enuy.  
He maketh Kings to sit in souerainty;  
He maketh subiects to their powre obay;  
He pulleth downe, he setteth vp on hy;  
He giues to this, from that he takes away.  
For all we haue is his: what he list doe, he may.

[42]

What euer thing is done, by him is donne,  
Ne any may his mighty will withstand;  
Ne any may his soueraine power shonne,  
Ne loose that he hath bound with stedfast band.  
In vaine therefore doest thou now take in hand,  
To call to count, or weigh his workes anew,  
Whose counsels depth thou canst not vnderstand,  
Sith of things subiect to thy daily vew  
Thou doest not know the causes, nor their courses dew.

[43]

For take thy ballaunce, if thou be so wise,  
And weigh the winde, that vnder heauen doth blow;  
Or weigh the light, that in the East doth rise;  
Or weigh the thought, that fro~ mans mind doth flow.  
But if the weight of these thou canst not show,  
Weigh but one word which from thy lips doth fall.  
For how canst thou those greater secrets know,  
That doest not know the least thing of them all?  
Ill can he rule the great, that cannot reach the small.

[44]

Therewith the Gyant much abashed sayd;  
That he of little things made reckoning light,  
Yet the least word that euer could be layd  
Within his ballaunce, he could way aright.  
Which is (sayd he) more heauy then in weight,  
The right or wrong, the false or else the trew?  
He answered, that he would try it streight,  
So he the words into his ballaunce threw,  
But streight the winged words out of his ballaunce flew.

[45]

Wroth wext he then, and sayd, that words were light,  
Ne would within his ballaunce well abide.  
But he could iustly weigh the wrong or right.  
Well then, sayd *Artegall*, let it be tride.  
First in one ballance set the true aside.  
He did so first; and then the false he layd  
In th'other scale; but still it downe did slide,  
And by no meane could in the weight be stayd.  
For by no meanes the false will with the truth be wayd.

[46]

Now take the right likewise, sayd *Artegale*,  
And counterpeise the same with so much wrong.  
So first the right he put into one scale;  
And then the Gyant stroue with puissance strong  
To fill the other scale with so much wrong.  
But all the wrongs that he therein could lay,  
Might not it peise; yet did he labour long,  
And swat, and chauf'd, and proued euery way:  
Yet all the wrongs could not a litle right downe way.

[47]

Which when he saw, he greatly grew in rage,  
And almost would his balances haue broken:  
But *Artegall* him fairely gan asswage,  
And said; be not vpon thy balance wroken:  
For they doe nought but right or wrong betoken;  
But in the mind the doome of right must bee;  
And so likewise of words, the which be spoken,  
The eare must be the ballance, to decree  
And iudge, whether with truth or falshood they agree.

[48]

But set the truth and set the right aside,  
For they with wrong or falshood will not fare;  
And put two wrongs together to be tride,  
Or else two falses, of each equall share;  
And then together doe them both compare.  
For truth is one, and right is euer one.  
So did he, and then plaine it did appeare,  
Whether of them the greater were attone.  
But right sate in the middest of the beame alone.

[49]

But he the right from thence did thrust away,  
For it was not the right, which he did seeke;  
But rather stroue extremities to way,  
Th'one to diminish, th'other for to eeke.  
For of the meane he greatly did misleeke.  
Whom when so lewdly minded *Talus* found,  
Approching nigh vnto him cheeke by cheeke,  
He shouldered him from off the higher ground,  
And down the rock him throwing, in the sea him dround.

[50]

Like as a ship, whom cruell tempest driues  
Vpon a rocke with horrible dismay,  
Her shattered ribs in thousand peeces riuies,  
And spoyling all her geares and goodly ray,  
Does makes her selfe misfortunes piteous pray.  
So downe the cliffe the wretched Gyant tumbled;  
His battred ballances in peeces lay,  
His timbered bones all broken rudely rumbled,  
So was the high aspyring with huge ruine humbled.

[51]

That when the people, which had there about  
Long wayted, saw his sudden desolation,  
They gan to gather in tumultuous rout,  
And mutining, to stirre vp ciuill faction,  
For certaine losse of so great expectation.  
For well they hoped to haue got great good;  
And wondrous riches by his innouation.  
Therefore resolving to reuenge his blood,  
They rose in armes, and all in battell order stood.

[52]

Which lawlesse multitude him comming too  
In warlike wise, when *Artegall* did vew,  
He much was troubled, ne wist what to doo.  
For loth he was his noble hands t'embrew  
In the base blood of such a rascall crew;  
And otherwise, if that he should retire,  
He fear'd lest they with shame would him pursew.  
Therefore he *Talus* to them sent, t'inquire  
The cause of their array, and truce for to desire.

[53]

But soone as they him nigh approaching spide,  
They gan with all their weapons him assay,  
And rudely stroke at him on euery side:  
Yet nought they could him hurt, ne ought dismay.  
But when at them he with his flaile gan lay,  
He like a swarme of flyes them ouerthrew;  
Ne any of them durst come in his way,  
But here and there before his presence flew,  
And hid themselues in holes and bushes from his vew.

[54]

As when a Faulcon hath with nimble flight  
Flowne at a flush of Ducks, foreby the brooke,  
The trembling foule dismayd with dreadfull sight  
Of death, the which them almost ouertooke,  
Doe hide themselues from her astonying looke,  
Amongst the flags and couert round about.  
When *Talus* saw they all the field forsooke  
And none appear'd of all that raskall rout,  
To *Artegall* he turn'd, and went with him throughout.

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