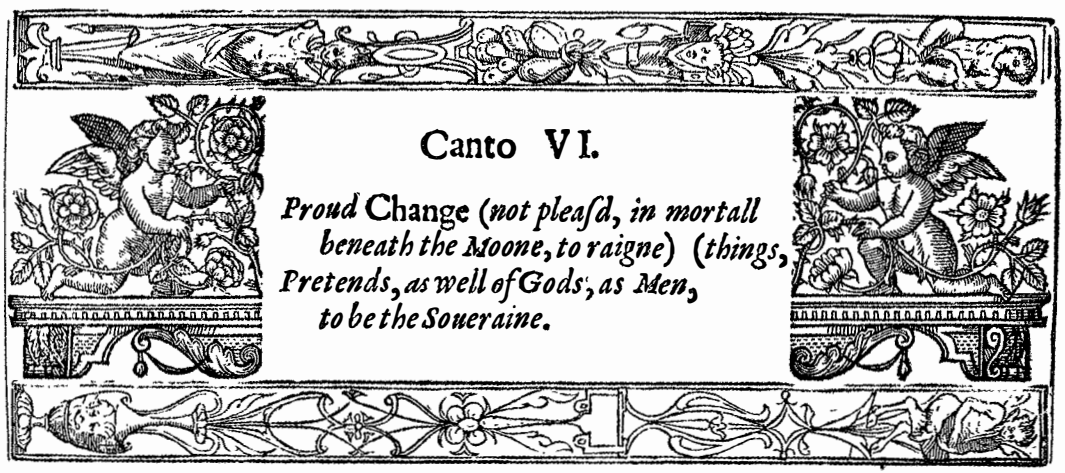
TWO CANTOS OF *MVTABILITIE*:

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

(··)

VNDER THE LEGEND OF *Conſtancie*.

Neuer before imprinted.



1

WHat man that sees the euer-whirling wheele
Of *Change*, the which all mortall things doth sway,
But that therby doth find, and 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.

Book VII Canto vi

Argument

1 Change: i.e. Mutabilitie. **2 beneath the Moone**: the appearance of a new star in Nov. 1572 – see I iii 16.1–3*n* – challenged the traditional Renaissance cosmology that only the sublunary realm was subject to change. See Meyer 1984:118–19. **3 Pretends**: claims.

Stanza 1

1–2 Mutabilitie's **wheele** is usually fortune's, as at V x 20.7–8. See 'Fortune' and 'mutability' in the *SEnc.* **sway**: rule. **5 decay**: downfall. **7 rehearse**: relate.

2

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
With *Saturnes* sonne for heauens regiment.
Whom, though high *Ioue* of kingdome did depriue,
Yet many of their stemme long after did surviue.

3

And many of them, afterwards obtain'd
Great power of *Ioue*, and high authority;
As *Hecaté*, 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 and earth to tremble at her pride.

4

So likewise did this *Titanesse* aspire,
Rule and dominion to her selfe to gaine;
That as a Goddesse, men might her admire,
And heauenly honours yield, as to them twaine.
And first, on earth she sought it to obtaine;
Where she such proofe and sad examples shewed
Of her great power, to many ones great paine,
That not men onely (whom she soone subdewed)
But eke all other creatures, her bad dooings rewed.

5

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.

6

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.
O pittious worke of *MVTABILITIE*!
By which, we all are subiect to that curse,
And death in stead of life haue sucked from our Nurse.

7

And now, when all the earth she thus had brought
To her behest, and thralled to her might,
She gan to cast in her ambitious thought,
T'attempt th'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.

8

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 liefe or sory:
Ne staide till she the highest stage had scand,
Where *Cynthia* did sit, that neuer still did stand.

Stanza 2

4 records permanent: i.e. the 'antique rolles' (I proem 2.4) which are not subject to mutability. **5–9** On the war between the **Titans** and **Ioue**, who is **Saturnes sonne**, see III vii 47.3–5*n*. **regiment**: rule; kingdom. **stemme**: stock.

Stanza 3

3 Hecaté: an infernal deity; see I i 43.3*n*. **7–9 Bellona**: the Roman goddess of war; see III ix 22.1*n*. For her powers, see 32.4–8 below. S. calls her one of the Titans because he assumes, in *Bellay* 200, that she was du Bellay's 'la sœur du grand Typhée'; noted Lotspeich 1932.

Stanza 4

1 Titanesse: coined by S. from the Gk Τιτανίς. **3 admire**: wonder at. **4 twaine**: i.e. Hecaté and Bellona.

Stanza 5

3 estate: state. **4 pervert**: overturn. **statutes**: decrees. **5 frame**: applied to the heavens, earth, and universe regarded as structures fashioned by God (*OED* 7). **9 still**: ever, continually.

Stanza 6

2 **Policie**: government; the art of prudent statecraft. **5** Change is usually seen to be a consequence of the 'fall' (11.5) of Adam and Eve but here becomes its cause; see Weatherby 1994:155–56. **6** As V proem 1.7–9. **9 our Nurse**: i.e. Nature (5.2), 'nurse of every living thing' (*Daph* 337).

Stanza 7

3 cast: resolve. **4–5** She imitates the Titans who sought 'To scale the skyes, and put *Ioue* from his right' (III vii 47.5). **attempt**: attack, assault. **6–7** In the hierarchical order of the four elements above the earth (omitting water), **ayre** is the middle region; the region of **fire** is next under the moon; and beyond is 'the purest sky' (23.7) of the empyrean which mortals may not enter. See *HL* 78–91. **8 contraire**: oppose.

Stanzas 8–10

Details of the 'bright shining palace' with its 'siluer gates' and of the enthroned deity surrounded by attendants are taken from Ovid's story, in *Met.* 2.1–328, of Phaethon's similarly proud ascent into the heavens; noted Cumming 1931:243–45. **glory** at 8.2 and 10.6 is a code word, like the name Gloriana, to refer to Elizabeth, as Christian 1993:210 notes.

9
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:

10
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.

11
Boldly she bid the Goddesse 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.

12
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 countenaunce 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.

13
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.
Where-at 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.

Stanza 8
1 Circle: sphere. **4 story**: 'any work of pictorial or sculptural art containing figures' (*OED* sb.[1] 8); referring here to the constellations. **5–7 Tyme** belongs here because the moon marks the boundary between the temporal and eternal worlds. **liefe or sory**: willing or unwilling. **8 stage**: celestial station or 'seat' (12.1). **scand**: climbed. **9** Referring to the moon's continual waxing and waning: **sit** as she is always enthroned in authority, and yet she **neuer still did stand** or remain; i.e. she is ever-moving.

Stanza 9
2 The black and white steeds refer to the two phases of the moon, as in Boccaccio 1976:4.16; and to an emblem of the moon itself, as in Conti 1616:3.17. Since Elizabeth was commonly praised as Diana or Cynthia, **black** and **white** allude to her personal colours; see I i 4*n*. **6 Vesper**: or Hesperus, the evening star, as at III iv 51.6–9. **intend**: call.

Stanza 10
7–9 tortious: wrongful, illegal. The phrase is linked to the common legal formula, *vi et armis*, for trespass to a person and territory; noted Parkin-Speer 1992:500. **to her selfe**: in contrast to sharing her power at 4.4. Her ambition extends to all kingdoms by 18.9. **kingdome of the Night**: 'The moone and the starres . . . gouerne the night' (Ps. 136.9). **wained**: drawn (sugg. Zitner 1968), possibly alluding to the moon's wain or chariot and referring to the moon's control over the tides; or 'diminished', alluding to the moon's waning.

Stanza 11
3 wend: weened, i.e. thought. **5–8** Referring to the three aspects of the moon: Diana on earth, Luna in heaven, and Hecate in hell. **maligne**: envy; regard with malice. **lone | Of her faire light**: when not visible in the sky, the moon was thought to shine in hell. **9 condigne**: worthy.

Stanza 12
5 cheare: aspect. **6 horned browes**: interpreting the horned moon as bending her brows in anger. As an iconographical detail of Isis as the moon, see V vii 4.5–7. **8 heauens coast**: as the moon marks heaven's boundary. **9 Thunders wrack**: the destruction or vengeance of Jupiter Tonans.

Stanza 13
2 raught: reached. **3 perforce**: forcibly. **chaire**: the symbol of power. **4** At V vii 7.5, the white wand is a symbol of royal power. It may be **golden** here to indicate that Mutabilitie's power derives from Mammon; cf. Philotime's golden chain of ambition at II vii 46.2. **7 still did stand**: cf. 8.9, and Josh. 10.13: 'and the moone stode stil'.

14

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 chiefely *Mercury*, that next doth raigne,
Ran forth in haste, vnto the king of Gods to plaine.

15

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.

16

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.

17

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.

18

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.

19

The Heauens Herald staid not to reply,
But past away, his doings to relate
Vnto his Lord; who now in th'highest sky,
Was placed in his principall Estate,
With 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;

20

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.

Stanza 14

1–5 Alluding to the lunar eclipse of 14 April 1595, according to Meyer 1984:125, who suggests that the 100 minutes of the total eclipse corresponds to the 100 lines from 12.6 to 23.6. **vnpurvaide**: unprovided. **6–7** As Mutabilitie is 'great *Chaos* child' (26.6), and Chaos is associated with 'hatefull darknes' (III vi 36.7). **chaine**: the 'inuiolable bands' by which the 'Almightie maker' binds the elements (IV x 35.3–4). **8–9 Mercury** or '*Hermes*' (19.6), the messenger of the gods, is identified with the planet of that name, which is **next** because its sphere is next beyond the moon's in the Ptolemaic system. On S.'s use of the classical motif of the celestial messenger's descent from heaven, see Greene 1963:314–27. **plaine**: complain.

Stanza 15

1–2 All ran together: referring to the near conjunction of Mars and Venus with Jove in his **faire Palace** (the zodiacal sign of Pisces) during the 1594 eclipse, as Meyer 1984:124 notes. **8–9 Doubting**: fearing. **Typhon**, or Typhœus; see VI vi 10–12*n*. **fear'd**: frightened, made afraid; or feared him, as 20.4.

Stanza 16

1 the sonne of Maia: Mercury. **4 forslowe**: delay. **6** Cf. I vii 34.8–9. **7 attache**: seize. **9 prest**: promptly.

Stanza 17

4 hardinesse: boldness; effrontery. **8** . . . from moving abroad. **9 discharge**: clear from the charge; justify.

Stanza 18

2–3 snaky-wreathed Mace: on Mercury's caduceus and its powers, see II xii 41.1–3*n* and IV iii 42.1–7*n*.

Stanza 19

4 Estate: his position of state in the assembly or senate of the gods, cf. 'his soueraine throne' (24.7). **7 amate**: confound.

Stanza 20

The story is told in Ovid, *Met.* 1.151–62. **2 since**: the time when. **th'Earths cursed seed**: the giants, whose assault on the Olympians is linked with that of the Titans; see 2.5–9. **9 which** may refer to the earth, though Ovid refers to the new race of giants as *contemptrix superum*.

21
Of that bad seed is this bold woman bred,
That now with bold presumption doth aspire
To thrust faire *Phœbe* 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.

22
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
Of *Hermes* message; yet gan now advise, (did reck
What course were best to take in this hot bold emprize.

23
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.

24
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, and foes mote terrifie.

25
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?

26
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.

27
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.

Stanza 21
3 Phœbe: the moon as the sister of Phœbus Apollo. **6 advise**: consider. **9 Areed**: declare.

Stanza 22
2–4 A traditional description of Jove; e.g. his 'blacklidded eye' in *Mother Hubberd* 1228, derives from Homer, *Iliad* 1.528. **beck**: nod of command. **wield**: direct, sway. **vow**: desire. **6 cast**: deliver. **9 emprize**: enterprise.

Stanza 23
4 re-allie: rally, form again. **5 extasie**: confused state of astonishment. Mutabilitie's ambition to replace them adds its etymological sense, 'withdrawn from their proper place'. **7–8 purest sky**: the empyrean, beyond the *primum mobile.* She takes the path of Juno at I iv 17.7, and of Cybele at IV xi 28.3. **9** Proverbial: Smith 51.

Stanza 24
5 amaze: bewilderment; panic. **6 aby**: remain.

Stanza 25
5 audience: with the legal sense, judicial hearing to consider her claims. **7 fraile**: a frequent epithet throughout the poem for the mortal state, but only here addressed specifically to a female character. It may extend to all women, as in Hamlet's complaint, 'Frailty, thy name is woman'. As an expression of Elizabethan misogyny, see Berleth 1995:37–38. **8 make**: intend; want.

Stanza 26
5–6 Earth is called the mother of the gods by Boccaccio 1976:1.8, as Lotspeich 1932 notes. As the offspring of **Chaos**, see III vi 36.3–9*n*. **magnifide**: extolled. **7 envide**: begrudged.

Stanza 27
This less familiar account of how Saturn gained Titan's throne is found in Conti 1616:6.20, as Lotspeich 1932 notes. **Titan** was persuaded to abdicate his throne by his younger brother, **Saturn**, who promised to devour his own male children so that, lacking any descendants, Titan and his issue would succeed him. The infant **Ioue** escaped by the **slight** or cunning device of the **Corybantes** who beat their shields to drown his birth-cries, tricking Saturn into devouring instead a stone wrapped in swaddling-clothes. In the more familiar account, Saturn devoured his children because of the prophecy that one of them would displace him. See 'Jove' in the *SEnc.* **6 iniuriously**: wrongfully.

28
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 and forraine race,
Vnwares is chaunc't, far straying from his peeres:
So did their ghastly gaze bewray their hidden feares.

29
Till hauing pauz'd awhile, *Ioue* thus bespake;
Will 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:

30
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.

31
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:

32
But thee faire *Titans* child, I rather weene,
Through some vaine errour 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.

33
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 soueraine 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.

Stanza 28
5 in place: present. **6–9** An astonishing simile even though applied to pagan gods. **Steeres** implies their impotence, as at IV vi 37.4–5. **sort**: herd.

Stanza 29
5–9 Jove names those whom he punished for rebellion against his rule: for **Typhon**, see 15.8–9; for **Ixion**, see I v 35.1–2; for **Prometheus**, see II x 70.5–9. He adds **Procrustes** whom Theseus punished by treating him as he treated his victims, which was to fit them to a bed by stretching or lopping off their limbs. This action and the epithet, **bold**, are provoked by Mutabilitie's boldness in seeking 'To thrust faire *Phœbe* from her siluer bed' (21.3). **mortall** and **earthly** remind Mutabilitie of her maternal ancestry. **hire**: reward, i.e. punishment.

Stanza 30
1 Mutabilitie is the **off-scum** or dross; **fry**, the brood of Titans. **3 chalenge**: lay claim to. **6–9** S. invokes the opening episode of the major classical poem on mutability, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 151–81: angered by the attempt of the giants to invade heaven, Jove consults with the other gods. His angry shaking of his locks moves the land, sea, and sky, and he threatens to destroy the human race with a bolt of lightning (**levin-brond**). **eft**: afterwards.

Stanza 31
7–9 Cf. Gen. 6.3: 'The Lord said, My Spirit shal not alway striue with man, because he is but flesh'. **with flesh yfere**: i.e. against flesh.

Stanza 32
5 Bellona: see 3.7–9*n*. **spight**: feel annoyed at; envy. **7 with her affright**: through fear of her.

Stanza 33
3 May claim any legal right or title to heaven. **5–9** The doctrine that 'all is the conqueror's' is invoked by Irenius in *View* 9 to justify England's right to rule Ireland, and here by Jove to answer Mutabilitie's charge at 27.6–7 that he inherited his kingdom wrongfully. Jove adds that he inherited it also by **Fates decree**, referring to the prophecy – see 27*n* – that Saturn would be deposed by one of his sons, namely, himself.

34

Then ceasse 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 gratious 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.

35

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* wexed wroth, and in his spright
Did inly grudge, yet did it well conceale;
And bade *Dan Phœbus* Scribe her Appellation seale.

36

Eftsoones the time and place appointed were,
Where all, both heauenly Powers, and 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
Renowmed hath with hymnes fit for a rurall skill.

37

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

38

Whylome, when *IRELAND* florished in fame
Of wealths and goodnesse, far aboue 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 then most on ground.

Stanza 34

1 gerle: to remind her of her inferior sex and age. On the sexual politics implicit in their conflict, see Laws 1992:25–29. **foolish**: links her with Titan's folly. **7 Saturnes sonne**: to remind him of her superior right by the laws of primogeniture, though the many OT examples of a younger son triumphing over the elder undercuts her claim. **9 tride**: i.e. by legal trial.

Stanza 35

1–3 equall: impartial. She appeals to the common law maxim that one may not be a judge in one's own case, as Parkin-Speer 1992:501 notes. **4–6** Being androgynous, Nature may appear later as feminine. **by equall might**: i.e. ruling equally over gods and men. **9 Dan Phœbus Scribe**: i.e. Apollo. Apparently his role as secretary of the gods was invented by S., and since he soon appears in his traditional role as the 'god of Poets' (vii 12.6), S. may be patterning Apollo's career on his own. **Appellation**: appeal to a higher court.

Stanza 36

6–9 The question may be rhetorical, like the parallel question, 'who knowes not *Colin Clout*?' at VI x 16.4 (and see *n*); or perhaps witty in prompting a rhetorical question in response: 'Apart from a small circle of friends, who could possibly know that Arlo Hill is S.'s name for Galtymore, the highest peak of the Galtee mountains, about 30 km north-east of his residence at Kilcolman Castle, esp. since he transfers to the mountain the name of the glen of Aherlow, a notorious haunt of rebels, beneath?' Or it may be defiant: readers ought to know that S. is the shepherd who praises the Mole in *Colin Clout* 104–05 as 'that mountain gray | That walls the Northside of *Armulla* dale', aka the Awbeg valley. See 'Arlo Hill' in the *SEnc.* As the setting marks S.'s double stance as an exile from England and home-maker in Ireland, see Lupton 1990 and 1993:10. Joyce 1911:96 suggests that the **Mole** refers here to the entire range, including the Galtys and the Ballyhoura Mountains.

Stanza 37

1 file: thread (Lat. *filum*) or course of the story, referring to the 'records' of 2.4. The poet imitates Calidore who left wars and knights to live 'in hils, in woods, in dales' (VI x 3.6). **4 stounds**: conflicts. **7 this holy-Island**: in *View* 92, Irenius notes that Ireland has been called '*Banno* or *Sacra Insula*, taking *sacra* for *accursed*'. Diana's curse is pronounced at 55.3. **8 the most vnpleasant**: cf. 'fowle *Arlo*' (*As* 96). See Coughlan 1996:326–28. **9** Deliberately ambiguous: either Calliope (the muse of epic) takes the place held until now by Clio (the muse of history) to tell the story, or she lends her powers to Clio to tell the story herself. See Roche 1989:185. Cf. the reference at vii 1.1 to 'thou greater Muse'. Such ambiguity prepares for the poet's witty reversal of intent.

Stanza 38

1–3 '[I]t is certain that Ireland hath had the use of letters very anciently, and long before England' (*View* 40). **7 Cynthia**: the preferred name for the moon, as at 8.2, etc., but referring here to the moon's role on earth as Diana, the virgin goddess of the forest.

39

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 *Phœbus* 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 enranged on a rowe,
With whom the woody Gods did oft consort:
For, with the Nymphes, the Satyres loue to play and sport.

40

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.

41

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 showes
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 Valleyes shee doth drowne.

42

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.

43

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,
With 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.

Stanza 39

1–6 The syntax is clarified if lines 2–5 are read as a parenthetical catalogue, as Zitner 1968 proposes. More simply, Diana chose **Arlo** over all other **hilles** and **dales** as a place to hunt, rest, and bathe. **7** As Diana's nymphs are seen sitting 'in a rew' at III vi 17.4.

Stanzas 40–41

Joyce 1911:101 concludes that S. describes the rivers with such exactness and detail that he must have written from personal knowledge.

Stanza 40

2 Molanna: S.'s name for the Behanna by combining it with Mole. See 'Fanchin, Molanna' in the *SEnc*. **3–6** S. tells the story of the union of these rivers in *Colin Clout* 104–55. On *Mulla*, see IV xi 41.9, and 'Bregog, Mulla' in the *SEnc*. **bed**: the pun is repeated at 53.6. **false Bregog**: 'So hight because of this deceitfull traine, | Which he with *Mulla* wroght to win delight' (*Colin Clout* 118–19). The Irish name signifies 'deceitful' (Joyce 1911:111). **dearely did condole**: keenly or lovingly bewailed. **7 shole**: shallow.

Stanza 41

2 a groue of Oakes may have crowned the rocks out of which the Behanna rises, as Joyce 1911:103 conjectures, but it is cited because the oak being 'sole king of forrests all' (I i 8.8) was associated with Cynthia as 'soueraine Queene profest | Of woods and forrests' (38.7–8 above). Its bridal garland heralds Molanna's marriage when she reaches the plain at 53.7–9. **4 pompous**: magnificent, ceremonious.

Stanzas 42–53

S. conflates three Ovidian stories of metamorphosis – Actaeon's accidental sight of the naked Diana (*Met.* 3.155–252); Diana's banishment of the pregnant Callisto (*Met.* 2.463–65), though only punishment for betrayal is common; and the union of the brook Alpheus with the nymph Arethusa (*Met.* 5.572–641) – into an etiological story of how Ireland was reduced to a waste land. Also he uses Ovid, *Fasti* 2.267–538, which tells how Faunus was ridiculed when he attempted to rape Omphale (see Ringler 1965–66), and may have used Irish folktale (see R. Smith 1935). The questions arising from this amalgam as they involve the *topos* of the sight of a numinous woman are examined by Krier 1990:241–50. On S.'s use of Ovid in this episode, see Holahan 1976:246–62. On his use of the myth of Actaeon, see 'Actaeon' in the *SEnc*; on its allegorical interpretation in relation to Faunus, see Hall 1995.

Stanza 42

1–6 For the grotto where Diana was surprised by Venus, see III vi 17–18. **7–9** On Faunus, see II ii 7.5*n*. He is **Foolish** by nature: in his note to Virgil, *Aen.* 7.47, Servius relates the name to Fatuus, 'the foolish one'; noted Nelson 1963:300.

Stanza 43

3 discouer: reveal. **5 purvaid**: provided. **6** Apples are traditionally associated with temptation (see 'apples' in the *SEnc*), as are cherries. **Queene-apples**: a variety noted for its size and redness.

44
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.

45
The simple maid did yield to him anone;
And eft him placed where he close might view
That neuer any saw, saue onely one;
Who, 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.

46
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. A 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.

47
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, and shooke
Nigh all to peeces, that they left him nought;
And then into the open light they forth him brought.

48
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 thinkes what punishment were best assign'd,
And thousand deathes deuiseth in her vengefull mind:

49
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 countervaile:
Ne ought he said what euer he did heare;
But hanging downe his head, did like a Mome appeare.

Stanza 44
1–5 Faunus's desire to see Diana naked prompts an unprecedented sequence of 'a' and 'b' feminine rhymes, as C. Burrow 1993:143 notes. **quit**: requite. **Fanchin**: the Funsheon which joins the Molanna; called the 'Funchin' in *Colin Clout* 301 but the spelling here links him etymologically with Faunus; sugg. J.C. Smith, Spenser 1912:653. **set**: esteem. **8 good turnes**: fancifully referring to delightful bends into which he would lead the river.

Stanza 45
1 anone: instantly; soon. **2 close**: secretly; close-up. **3** The **one** is Actaeon. Faunus is also like Mutabilitie, the 'foolish gerle' (34.1) who sought 'To see that mortall eyes haue neuer seene' (32.3). **4** Who as a reward due to one so fool-hardy. **5** . . . in the shape of a deer to be hunted. **9 likely**: likable, proper.

Stanza 46
2 tickle: be thrilled. **3 some-what**: some thing, in the bawdy sense. **5** Cf. Lust's loud 'grenning laughter' at IV vii 24.9 as he carries off Amoret as his spoil. **6–9** The poet's surprising intrusion into his narrative shows that he still fumes over Calidore's similar failure to contain himself. **conceit**: thought; also personal vanity or pride, since only one before him had seen Diana naked. **areed**: make known.

Stanza 47
2 guilty brooke: Molanna, the 'sweet spring' (45.8) in which Diana was bathing, is now guilty of betraying her. **5 Like darred Larke**: referring to the practice of capturing larks by paralysing them by the sight of some glittering object. The simile sets up a verbal echo – one who dared to look now does not dare to look – that extends into 'Dairie' and 'Dayr'house' in the next stanza, as Harrison 1956:71 notes. **8 nought**: good for nothing.

Stanza 48
7 traine: snare.

Stanza 49
2 baile: power, custody. **3 miscall**: revile. **9 Mome**: dolt; specifically, Momus 'whose propertie it is . . . with curious eyes to beholde the doynges of other' (T. Cooper 1565).

50

At length, when they had flouted him their fill,
They gan to cast what penaunce 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 penaunce light;
But most agreed and did this sentence giue,
Him in Deares skin to clad; and in that plight,
To hunt him with their hounds, him selfe saue how hee might.

51

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.

52

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.

53

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.

54

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 champian that may else be rid,
And the faire *Shure*, in which are thousand Salmons bred.

55

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 found.

Stanza 50

2 cast: consider. **3–4** To punish Faunus by having him **gelt**, i.e. gelded by losing his own 'some-what' (46.3), would be appropriate but would **spill**, i.e. destroy, the species. **8 plight**: attire; condition, state. **9 their hounds**: in contrast to the hunter Actaeon who, transformed into a stag, became the hunted, and was torn apart by his own hounds. S. follows Conti 1616:6.24 in having the voyeur only clad in a deer skin, but while Actaeon in Conti's version is mauled by his dogs, Faunus is only chased. Guilt for his act is transferred to Molanna and through her to Arlo Hill and Ireland.

Stanza 51

4 in straighter sort: more strictly. **5 close consort**: secret confederate. **7 short**: soon. **8 bewraid**: betrayed.

Stanza 52

5 I.e. he is terrified of what he sorely dreaded, namely, being devoured.

Stanza 53

4 whelm'd: overwhelmed. The story explains why the river is 'so shole' (40.7). As Joyce 1911:104 notes, during winter floods the river brings down large quantities of stones and gravel from its mountain source. In *Colin Clout* 149–55, Bregog is similarly punished.

Stanza 54

8–9 champian: champaign, open country, referring to the vale of Aherlow in County Tipperary. **else be rid**: anywhere else be seen.

Stanza 55

1 way: value. **4 space**: walk. **7 Chase**: hunting-ground. **8** In *Colin Clout* 318–19, S. laments that wolves and outlaws infect Ireland. He is himself one of **that lands in-dwellers** in being 'an inhabitant' or 'a sojourner' (*OED* b) in Ireland. There may be a topical reference: Elizabeth withdrew the English forces in 1598 after they were routed in Tyrone's rebellion; or more generally to the desolation in Ireland brought by her policies, as Norbrook 1984:152 suggests.

Canto VII.

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

1

AH! whither doost thou now thou greater Muse
Me from these woods and 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.

2

Yet sith I needs must follow thy behest,
Doe thou my weaker wit with skill inspire,
Fit for this turne; and in my feeble 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.

3

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'vnruly fiends which they did feare;
Yet *Pluto* and *Proserpina* were present there.

4

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.

Book VII Canto vii

Argument
1 Pealing: appealing. **2 bold Alteration**: Mutabilitie is named 'Proud *Change*' at vi Arg. **3 Large**: extensive, copious. **soone**: to note her deliberation at 57.1–3, 8. **4 areads**: declares.

Stanza 1
1 thou greater Muse: Calliope, possibly Clio (see vi 37.9*n*). She is not named because she assumes the role of Urania in revealing 'heauenly things' (2.6); see Roche 1989:186. **greater**: very great. **5–9** Nature's verdict, but not her judgement, is revealed before the trial begins. **Lift** has imperative force rather than simply acknowledging the muse's power. **Thy soueraine Sire**: Jove; see I xi 5.6–9*n*. **bigger**: louder. In *SC Oct.* 46, 'bigger notes' refers to the poet's heroic song.

Stanza 2
2 weaker: too weak, as he allows at I proem 2.2. **3 turne**: task. **4** Referring to remnants of God's image in the fallen state; cf. *HL* 107. **8–9** As the muse invoked at IV xi 10.1–2 is the offspring of Jove and Memory.

Stanza 3
The Gods are invoked in their order: first the heavenly gods; then those of **the other world**, i.e. the earth, such as the nymphs, dryads, and nereids who 'haue the sea in charge to them assinde' (IV xi 52.2); and finally **th'infernall Powers** represented by Pluto, who was once a heavenly god, and by his consort Proserpina who is connected with the earth through her mother Ceres, the last two being the only named gods, as Thomsen 1994:456 notes in arguing the influence on the Mutabilitie Cantos of Claudian, *De Raptu Proserpinae*. **8** Referring either to the fiends held in fear by the infernal powers or to the heavenly and earthly powers that fear them. Cf. vi 15.9.

Stanza 4
As in Chaucer, *Parl. Fowls*, birds of every kind assemble to fill all the space, and Nature herself, sitting on a hill of flowers, orders her creatures. S. calls it an 'assembly' at 59.8, after its title, *Assemble of Fowles*, in Thynne's 1561 edition; noted Hieatt 1975a:19–24. **6–9** As Nature first established earthly things 'in meet order ranged' (vi 5.3).

Stanzas 5–6
For the extended tradition that informs S.'s vision of Nature, appearing here as 'the God of Nature' (vi 35.6), see 'Nature' in the *SEnc*, and Weatherby 1996a:245–53. Her veiled androgyny relates her to Venus at IV x 41.6–9.

5
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.

6
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.

7
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
It to compare, nor finde like stuffe to that,
As those three sacred *Saints*, though else most wise,
Yet on mount *Thabor* quite their wits forgat,
When they their glorious Lord in strange disguise
Transfigur'd sawe; his garments so did daze their eyes.

8
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.

9
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.

10
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.

Stanza 5
5 physnomy: countenance. **8 wimpled**: covered.

Stanza 6
2 vncouth hew: strange form. **3 agrized**: terrified. **4** As Una whose face 'As the great eye of heauen shyned bright', and who is attended by a lion whose look 'her [Abessa] cast in deadly hew' (I iii 4.7, 11.9). **6** These **others** include, notably, Jean de Meun, *Roman de la Rose* 16230–48. **7–9** As Wisdom is 'the brightnes of the euerlasting light, the vndefiled mirroure of the maiestie of God' (Wisdom 7.26); cf. 2 Cor. 3.18.

Stanza 7
1 That: i.e. what 'others tell' (6.6). **2 sat**: i.e. in judgement. **3 sheene**: shining. **4–9 those three sacred Saints** are Peter, James, and John who on **mount Thabor** first saw Jesus in his divinity so transfigured that 'his face did shine as the sunne, and his clothes were as white as the light' (Matt. 17.2). On the significance of the simile in the seventh stanza of the seventh canto of the seventh book, see Weatherby 1994:90. **quite their wits forgat**: as Peter 'knewe not what he said' (Mark 9.6). What N. Frye 1990a:183 cites as the one biblical image in the Mutabilitie Cantos – there is another: the balancing reference to Christ's birth at 41.4 – is chosen because **Transfigur'd** renders μετεμορφώθη in the Gk text; because the transfiguration, unlike the resurrection, is a mountain-top epiphany, which suggests the highest order of nature; and because it represents the identity of the Word as the person of Christ with the Word as the Bible. For the claim that Nature is an image of God, Lewis 1967:15 cites Nicholas of Cusa; Weatherby 76–94 cites the Greek Church Fathers; and Harvey in a letter to S. cites 'the olde Philosophers' who refer to God as 'very Nature selfe . . . *Natura Naturans*' (Spenser 1912:617).

Stanza 8
1 equall: level-topped. **4 states**: the throne of state with its canopy; cf. Jove 'in his principall Estate' at vi 19.4. **5 of her owne motion**: i.e. spontaneously, 'voluntary' (10.2). **7 anon**: straightway.

Stanza 9
Since the stanza interrupts the narrative, Padelford, *Var* 6.478, suggests that it belongs after 7. **3–6** At IV ii 32.8, Chaucer is described as the 'well of English vndefyled'. **Poesie**: the poet's 'skill, or Crafte of making' (Jonson 1925–52:8.636) rather than poetry itself. **old** is Chaucer's epithet in *SC*, Epistle. S.'s point is that even Chaucer in *Parl. Fowls* 316–18 chooses not to **mel**, i.e. meddle, with the matter but defers to **Alane**. See 'Alanus de Insulis' in the *SEnc.* **7 Plaint of kindes**: properly, *Plaint of kinde*, as in Chaucer. Since the work remained in manuscript, it is unlikely that S. would have read it (though see Quilligan 1983:162); hence the tone of exasperation in 9.

Stanza 10
1–3 Spontaneous flowering in honour of the gods is a common classical motif. **4 mores**: roots. Perhaps used poetically for 'plant', as *OED* suggests; but in this fertile earth, root and flower are one.

11

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.

12

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 *Phœbus* self, that god of Poets hight,
They say did sing the spousall hymne full cleere,
That all the gods were rauisht with delight
Of his celestiall song, and Musicks wondrous might.

13

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;

14

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.

15

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.

Stanza 11

5 From the 'groue of Oakes' at vi 41.2. **tire**: adorn his head. **8 gray**: as in *Colin Clout* 104. **9** . . . well becomes you.

Stanza 12

At the marriage of **Peleus** and **Thetis**, Ate incited the quarrel that led to the fall of Troy; see II vii 55.4–9. The marriage was the occasion of the birth of the Graces (see VI x 22); but chiefly, as N. Frye 1963:85–86 notes, Jove was 'confirm'd in his imperiall see' (59.7) by removing the threat to his power from a son of Thetis, and it led to his reconciliation with Prometheus, the originator of the elves and fays (II x 70–71). **3 Hæmus hill**: 'a great mountain in Thrace, in height vi miles' (T. Cooper 1565), which S. associates with Jove's battle against the giants at III ix 22. Traditionally, it took place on Mount Pelion. If the change is not intentional, S. may have been misled by Ovid's account of Peleus's seduction of Thetis which opens: *Est sinus Haemoniae* (*Met.* 11.229), as Upton 1758 conjectures. **4 solemne**: sacred, holy. **5 pointed**: appointed.

Stanza 13

2–4 Three notable paradoxes: 1. 'old yet young' or the 'Old Woman and Girl' topos, which is traced by Curtius 1953:101–05, is particularly appropriate to Nature; 2. 'moving yet unmoved' is associated with the god of nature by Boethius, *De Consol. Phil.* 3 Met. 9.3: 'thow that duellest thiselve ay stedefast and stable, and yevest alle othere thynges to ben meved' (tr. Chaucer); 3. 'unseen yet seen' relates God whom 'no man [shall] se . . . and liue' (Exod. 33.20) to nature, for 'the inuisible things of him . . . are seene by the creation of the worlde' (Rom. 1.20). **Still**: a term used almost obsessively in the canto to indicate that Mutabilitie understands movement but not its relation to stillness, as Kermode 1965:226 notes. See also Anderson 1996:133–34. **7 feld**: having fallen. **9 to amplifie**: 'to make more impressive' through rhetorical figures, as Tuve 1947:90 suggests.

Stanzas 14–26

In her formal 'plaintif Plea' (13.9), Mutabilitie shows how the four elements in their traditional order – earth (17–19), water (20–21), air (22–23), and fire (24) – are subject to change both in themselves and, through transmutation, into each other (25). On their stable yet constantly changing system of contrarieties and agreements, see 'cosmogony' in the *SEnc.* She concludes her case by claiming that her rule extends to their heavenly counterparts (26). Their revised order in this stanza allows a final stress on water, the traditional emblem of change. See 26.4–7*n*, and 'elements' in the *SEnc.* While her arguments are too common to attribute to any specific source, they are esp. close to Ovid, *Met.* 15 in Golding's tr., as Taylor 1985:18–20 demonstrates.

Stanza 14

1 Mutabilitie concludes her defence with a similar address to 'thou greatest goddesse trew' (56.6) in order to set Nature above Jove, and also herself as one 'greater . . . | Then all the Gods' (vi 26.8–9). **4 indifferently**: impartially. **7–9** Despite her obeisance to Nature as **onely great**, Mutabilitie, like the Giant with the Scales, 'all things would reduce vnto equality' (V ii 32.9). Hence **vnequally**: unfairly, implying that all should be treated as equal. **equall mother**: unlike Jove whom she rejects as 'no equall Iudge' at vi 35.1.

Stanza 15

1 plaine: complain. **2–3** Cf. her claim at 26.2. **faine**: pretend. **challenge**: claim. **4** By claiming only **the greatest part** rather than **the whole worlds raign**, she excludes the lower world ruled by Pluto and Proserpina to which she properly belongs. **5 Fee**: absolute possession.

16

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 knowen to thee.

17

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.

18

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.

19

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.

20

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; and, streight, like sluces, them vnfold.

21

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.

22

Next is the Ayre: which who feeles not by sense
(For, of all sense it is the middle meane)
To flit still? and, with subtill 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 altred cleane
With euery blast that bloweth fowle or faire:
The faire doth it prolong; the fowle doth it impaire.

Stanza 16

3 And what is due only . . . **5 principality**: sovereignty. **8–9** As she claims at vi 27.1–5.

Stanza 17

2 most regiment: chief rule. **4 inholders**: inhabitants, with the implication that they 'doe the world in being hold' (27.3). **conuent**: assemble. **5 incontinent**: immediately. **6–9 great mother** is earth's traditional epithet as *omniparens*; see I vii 9.1*n*. **only**: alone. It also modifies **seems**.

Stanza 18

1–4 The giant uses this argument at V ii 37.6–7, and is answered by Artegall at 40.1–5. **5 mortall crime**: sin of mortality, i.e. death and corruption; or, from Lat. *crimen*, judgement and sentence (of death). **6** On abiogenesis, see I i 21.6–9*n*. **7 Prime**: spring.

Stanza 19

1 tenants: as her address is directed to mortals – shown by the use of 'we' in 18.3, 6, 24.3, 25.3 – the term reminds us that life is only loaned, not held in freehold. **8** As *HL* 103: 'man, that breathes . . . [an] immortall mynd'.

Stanza 20

2 Following Gen. 1.7 on the waters under and above the firmament.

Stanza 21

4 still floting: continually swimming. **7 certaine grange**: fixed dwelling-place.

Stanza 22

2 middle meane: as the intermediary between the senses and what is perceived. Not **all** because air was not considered the means of touch or taste, as A. Fowler 1970:59*n*1 observes. **3 influence**: in the etymological sense, literally 'flowing'. **5–9** On the need of air to 'feed' the vital spirits, see 'psychology' in the *SEnc.* **tickle**: changeable.

23
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 and flashing lights that thousand changes make.

24
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.

25
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 natiue mights;
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.

26
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.

27
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.

28
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.

Stanza 23
The three regions of air are listed in ascending order: the lowest (3–4) produces heat and cold alternately; the middle (5–8) produces storms; the highest (9), which is next to the region of fire, produces comets or blazing stars. These regions with their effect on mortal creatures are treated by du Bartas 1979:1.2.411–64. **2 minute**: the smallest unit of time in the sixteenth century. 7 **penance**: because the seasons punish mortals for Adam and Eve's sin.

Stanza 24
According to traditional Elizabethan cosmology, the 'natiue seat' (II xi 32.6) of the sublunary region of fire was situated above the region of air and therefore apart from 'vsuall' fire (26.5), i.e. fire as we know it. See 'fire' in the *SEnc.* By the late sixteenth century it was known that contrary to Mutabilitie's claim in 1–2, 'The Element of fire is quite put out' (Donne, 'The First Anniversary' 206).

Stanza 25
4–6 slights: devices. **Into themselues**, i.e. one into another, with only fire not replenished. On such transmutation, see Heninger 1974:160–66; on the resultant discord, see *HL* 78–84. **sheere**: bright, clear.

Stanza 26
4–7 Vesta, the Roman goddess of the hearth and hence of fire, is linked with the sphere of sublunary fire; **Vulcan** is the god of fire as we know it on earth; **Ops**, or Rhea, is the goddess of the earth; and **Iuno** is the goddess of the air, the element in which we live.

Stanza 27
1 approuen: prove; suggesting 'sanction'. **6 verdit**: the spelling suggests the etymology, 'to speak true'. **8 by-and-by**: immediately; one by one in order (*OED* 1): cf. 'in order went' (32.1).

Stanzas 28–31
Mutabilitie's pageant begins with the seasons as the largest measurement of the year but also because Jove's defeat of Saturn, who had usurped the rule of her ancestor Titan, ended the timeless golden age. Now time governs the seasons in their change, as described by Ovid, *Met.* 1.113–18. See 'time' in the *SEnc.*

Stanza 28
This experiment in employing only two rhymes serves to introduce the notion of a cycle. See 44.2*n*. **2 lusty**: vigorous. **7–9 stoures**: encounters. **guilt**: gilded. **morion**: a helmet worn by the warlike Minerva in *Muiopotmos* 322. Since it lacks a beaver or visor, it leaves the face open to glances of love or hate.

29
Then came the iolly *Sommer*, being dight
In a thin silken cassock coloured greene,
That was vnlyned 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.

30
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.

31
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 scarse his loosed limbes he hable was to weld.

32
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.

33
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.

Stanza 29
5 chauffed: heated. **8** The **Bore** is cited as the traditional object of the hunt but the **Libbard** (leopard) is sometimes, as here, just a leopard.

Stanza 30
7 corne: grain. **9 yold**: yielded.

Stanza 31
1 frize: coarse woollen cloth. The pun is reinforced by the rhyme. **4–5 bill**: nose. **limbeck**: alembic, the 'beak' of an alchemist's still. Linden 1996:93 notes that this description of alchemists was a current joke. **7 stayed still**: always supported. **9 loosed**: weakened. **weld**: i.e. wield, move.

Stanzas 32–43
Each month represents the age of human life appropriate to its time of year and in a role appropriate to its agricultural labour. Most carry a tool associated with sowing or harvesting. Since they pass more quickly than the seasons, they ride rather than walk, except for August, September, and January. (February does not ride but is driven.) Each is associated with the zodiacal sign or 'house' occupied by the sun during its month. (On the signs, see V proem 5–6.) Except for June, September, and February, each is associated with a classical myth. Each is allotted a whole stanza, except March, which begins at line 3, possibly because it is the third month in the popular Julian calendar used in the *SC*; see Cooke 1995. February loses the final line because it is the shortest month. On the iconographical tradition that informs this pageant, see Ruskin, *Stones of Venice* 2.7.52, the illustrations to the *SC* in the *SEnc* (esp. fig. 1), and Heninger 1977:110–15; and on S.'s adaptation of it, see S. Hawkins 1961:88–98. On their processional form, see 'pageants' in the *SEnc*. Instead of showing only random change, being summoned by Order, they demonstrate repeated cyclical order, an irony noted by Hawkins 90.

Stanza 32
1–2 softly: slowly, as do the seasons. Appropriately, March's stanza opens with **marching**. **3 First**: because 'the yeare beginneth in March', as E.K. explains in the 'General Argument' to the *SC*. **sturdy**: stern, surly. **4–5 armed strongly**: befitting the month of Mars, and the season spring at 28.7–9. **rode vpon a Ram**: Jove disguised as a ram bore Helle in flight from her stepmother until she fell into the water that now bears her name (see V proem 5.6–7); here the zodiacal sign Aries which is associated with the fruitfulness of spring. **7 ysame**: together.

Stanza 33
3–4 Jove, disguised as a bull, carried Europa on his back over the sea; cf. III xi 30.6–9. Here the zodiacal sign Taurus, an identification made by Ovid, *Fasti* 5.617. **Argolick**: the gulf of Argolis. **5–8** In Ovid, *Met.* 2.856, 867–68, the bull's horns, which are 'More cleare . . . than is the Christall stone', are offered 'with flowers to be drest' (tr. Golding). **golden studs** suggest stars. **freshest buds** allude to the traditional etymology of April, from Lat. *aperire*, to open, referring to the time when buds open, as shown in the woodcut to *SC Apr.* **wet**: referring to April showers, as Ruskin observes.

34

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 rauisht beene!
And *Cupid* selfe about her fluttred all in greene.

35

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.

36

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 Nemæan 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.

37

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.

38

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 enricht 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.

39

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 frollick 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.

Stanza 34

1 faire May: the epithet and name prepare for her personification and the play upon her name. **2 pryde**: most flourishing state. **4–6 twinnes of Leda**: Castor and Pollux; here the zodiacal sign Gemini. They are so named in order to stress Jove's amorous exploits: he seduced Leda in the disguise of a swan; see III xi 32. May rides on their shoulders because Gemini 'hath mastry in mans body, of the shoulders, armes, and handes' (Bartholomaeus 1582:8.12). **7–8** Suggesting the festivities of May-day about the may-pole.

Stanza 35

2 greene leaues: the attire of an actor appearing as the wild or savage man. **5–7 Crab**: the zodiacal sign Cancer in which the sun begins to move backwards. **7–9** Those who out of excessive politeness walk backwards as they leave a room are like rowers who face opposite to the direction they are moving. They feign grace but are **vngracious**, i.e. devoid of grace.

Stanza 36

2 As Summer appears naked in Ovid, *Met.* 2.28. **3–4** As Wrath rides upon a lion at I iv 33.2. **5–7** The Nemean lion was slain by Hercules as the first of his labours (see II v 31.1–5); here the zodiacal sign Leo. **th'Amphytrionide**: an epithet of Hercules because he was the reputed son of Amphitryon, so called here because his real father was Jove (see III xi 33.6–9). The associative links are noteworthy: July, who has taken off his garments because he is hot and appears on a raging lion, suggests Hercules raging in death when he sought to take off his burning garment. **8–9** He both reaps and mows, as Ruskin notices.

Stanza 37

1–2 August is appropriately august in the sense of Lat. *augustus*, consecrated, venerable. **4–9 the righteous Virgin**: Astræa, the goddess of Justice, here seen as Virgo, August's zodiacal sign; see V i 5.4*n*. In *Mother Hubberd* 1–8, she leaves the earth to return to heaven in this month. She was associated with Ceres and therefore with corn; on her flight and stellification, see V i 11. **extold**: raised.

Stanza 38

1 September walks because he bears the scales of the Virgin who also walks, and marks their measured pace. **3 boot**: booty. **7 waights**: scales; the zodiacal sign Libra. See V i 11.8–9. **assoyle**: solve or determine. **9 equall**: what was equitable. **scann'd**: judged.

Stanza 39

2 For his head was always tipsy with new wine. **3 wine-fats see**: the sea of liquor in the wine vats. **4 gust**: taste. **6–8** By one account, Diana sent a scorpion to kill Orion because he had boasted that he could kill any earthly creature; here the zodiacal sign **Scorpio**. See II ii 46.1–3.

40

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.

41

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 Sauiours 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'*Idæan* mayd;
And in his hand a broad deepe boawle he beares;
Of which, he freely drinks an health to all his peeres.

42

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 (floud.

43

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, and their dew places found.

44

And after these, there came the *Day*, and *Night*,
Riding together both with equall pase,
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, encompast all with beames bright.

45

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.

Stanza 40

5 breem: rough, stormy; 'chill, bitter' (E.K. on *SC Feb.* 43). **7–9** November's zodiacal sign is Sagittarius, the Archer who on earth was a centaur; here named **Chiron**, as in Conti 1616:4.12. **Nais**: 'a nymphe of the water' (T. Cooper 1565); at III xi 43.7, she is named '*Philliras*' (Philyra). Since Chiron was reputed to be either the son of Saturn and Philyra or the son of Magnes and Nais, who he is **not easie was to deeme**.

Stanza 41

4 His Sauiours birth: cf II x 50.2–7. This second reference to Christ in the Mutabilitie Cantos – see 7.4–9*n* – links the nativity to the transfiguration as epiphanies that comprehend his double nature, and comes, appropriately, in a stanza that begins in the 365th line of the canto (including the Arg.), as Walls notes in an unpublished paper. **5–7** December's zodiacal sign is Capricorn, identified with the goat whose milk fed the infant Jove when he was tended by **th'Idæan mayd**, Amalthea, a nymph on Mount Ida. The connection is made by Conti 1616:7.7. Jove's birth implies the renewal of the months which celebrate his later deeds.

Stanza 42

3 like to quell: as if he were perishing. **8 steane**: jar, urn; here the zodiacal sign Aquarius, the water-bearer. **9 the Romane floud** should be the Tiber, which, in *Bellay* 114–20, appears 'full of Saturnlike awe' leaning on a pot from which pours a flood associated with Rome's corruption. Zitner 1968 suggests that S. recalls *Rome* 178–80: the overflowing Tiber washes away Rome's pride. Of the months, only January is said to stand, possibly referring to his role of ushering in the year.

Stanza 43

3 The **two fishes** represent the zodiacal sign Pisces, a suitable symol for Lent, as Renwick 1923 notes. **4–5** This **flood** is the water flowing from Aquarius's urn.

Stanza 44

1–2 Day, and Night ride as a pair to illustrate the seasonal balancing of diurnal and nocturnal hours about the equinoxes, as A. Fowler 1964:232 notes. Their balance is demonstrated by the single pair of rhymes in the stanza. **3–5** Cf. Night at I v 20. The **mace** brings sleep, as at I iv 44.6. **7 trace**: go.

Stanza 45

On **the Howres**, or Horae, who mark the rising and setting of the planets, see Hieatt 1960:33–38, 111–13. In *Epith* 99, as here, they are daughters of 'Day [i.e. Jove] and Night' who allot the seasons, and 'by the Poets are fained to be the Guardians of Heaven's gates' (*Entertainment at Elvetham*, 1591, in Nichols 1823:3.108). Traditionally, like the Litæ at V ix 31, they are daughters of Jove and Themis. **1–2 high**:

46

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.

47

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 and 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*?

48

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.

49

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?

50

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 round, now bright, now brown and gray:
So that *as changefull as the Moone* men vse to say.

51

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 *Phœbus* self, who lightsome is alone,
Yet is he oft eclipsed by the way,
And fills the darkned world with terror and dismay.

---

empyrean, eternal, in contrast to **timely**: temporal, belonging to time. **5 forslack**: cause the neglect of. **fore-shewed**: showed beforehand, ordained. **8–9 wake**: guard. **euen turnes** suggests regular movement in a circle.

Stanza 46

1 lastly Death: significantly, however, Time's pageant concludes with the celebration of Life even as Day follows Night in 44. See 'Life and Death' in the *SEnc*. Heberle 1987 notes that the ambiguity of the line – either death follows life or life follows death – indicates that both are integral to a larger natural process. **5** This brilliant example of asyndeton, i.e. the omission of grammatical connections between words, which here share the same prefix, is made memorable by the two introductory iambs of **Vnbodied** and by being placed as the stanza's central line.

Stanza 47

5 As does 'wicked *Tyme*' in the garden of Adonis at III vi 39–41. S.'s phrase stands as a succinct final statement of a theme that haunts the poem: *tempus edax rerum*. See V iv 8.1 and VI iv 31.7–9*n*.

Stanza 48

1–4 Cf. *View* 45: 'time working alteration of all things'; for the proverb, see Smith 770. Bulger 1994:128 interprets **Ioue** as the World Soul confronted by disorder and change. **disseise**: deprive wrongfully. **5 still**: always; referring to Mutabilitie's use of the term at 47.9. **6 namely**: above all, alone. **7 vertue**: power, influence.

Stanza 49

1–5 Mutabilitie is answered by her allusion to 2 Cor. 4.18: 'the things which are not sene, are eternal'.

Stanzas 50–53

Mutabilitie's review of the seven planets in the order of their distance from the earth follows the Ptolemaic system except that Jove usurps Saturn's role as the last. The planetary week recalls the week of creation, which proves her undoing for it invokes God's control over time, as A. Fowler 1964:233 notes. See also Grimm 1986:30–31.

Stanza 50

1 the first in being closest to the earth. **2 you**: 'yon', sugg. Birch 1751, for Cynthia is not addressed, as Jove is at 53.1. **3–4 Ioues dearest darling**: this slander of the virgin Diana – Jove is her father – is without classical warrant. She is seen 'on *Cynthus* greene' at II iii 31.2; her birth is described at II xii 13. **5 crake**: boast. **8 brown**: dark.

Stanza 51

4 of late: apparently referring to some recent confirmation of Mercury's notorious eccentricity, e.g. in du Bartas 1979:2.4.2.966–68. See V proem 8.8–9*n*. **8 by the way**: in his course.

52
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 lookes:
So many turning cranks these haue, so many crookes.

53
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.

54
Then are ye mortall borne, and thrall to me,
Vnlesse the kingdome of the sky yee make
Immortall, and vnchangeable to be;
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.

55
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.

56
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 (ô thou greatest goddesse 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.

57
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.

Stanza 52
1 As V proem 8.8: 'most is *Mars* amisse of all the rest'. **4 without**: outside. The planets were assumed to be embedded in a sphere whose rolling caused their motion. **7–8** Saturn's baleful influence is modified by its conjunction with other planets. **aspect**: punning on the astrological sense. **9 cranks**: winding paths, apparently referring to Saturn's irregularities in the Ptolemaic system; or to the imagined turnings of his aspect compared to the faster-moving planets (the moon's 28 days and Saturn's 30 years), as Mutabilitie's **oft** suggests; see Eade 1984b:3–5. **turning**: alluding to his name.

Stanza 53
3 misfare: going astray. **5–9** The conflicting traditions of Jove's birthplace are noted by Conti 1616:2.1, who concludes that there can be no certainty. **comment**: devise.

Stanza 54
1–6 Mutabilitie's **Vnlesse** undoes her case by invoking a higher kingdom which is **vnchangeable**. Her claim that a god's nature changes applies to her, for the time will come when 'none no more change shall see' (59.5). **which ye spake**: at 48.6–8. **6–9** The power and influence (**vertue**) of a planet is affected by its position relative to the other planets, being either opposite (and then **checkt**) or oblique (and then **changed**). **obliquid** is a S. coinage used only here.

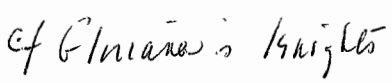
Stanza 55
2 clerkes: scholars. **4 alteration**: which she personifies in the Arg. **5 the starrie skie**: the crystalline sphere of fixed stars which encloses the seven concentric spheres of the planets. **doth still remaine**: remains constant. Mutabilitie's repeated use of **still** now reaches a climax: the stars, the zodiacal signs, and the sphere move **still**, i.e. continually. She refers to the precession of the equinoxes; see V proem 4.6–9*n*.

Stanza 56
2 That nothing is **permanent** caps her opening claim that the earth 'only seems vnmov'd and permanent' (17.7). **3** Her claim that all things are **turned by transuerse**, i.e. 'turned awry', points to the etymology of **Vniuerse**: 'one turning' (Lat. *unus* + *versus*), allowing Nature to invoke the notion of things 'all turning', i.e. 'turning to themselues at length againe' (58.6), i.e. turning-to-one. Cf. II xii 34.8–9. In Petrarch, *Trionfi*, accordingly, the **triumph** of time leads to the triumph of eternity. **4–5** Mutabilitie fulfils her ambition to rival her sister Bellona in power (vi 32.4–5). **let**: prevent. **8** Ironically, she invokes judgement against herself: she receives her due but not in the way she expects. **addoom**: judge.

Stanza 57
2 to or fro: for or against the question. **4** In effect, Nature's veil is removed by the clarity of her final judgement. **5 Expecting**: awaiting. **7 whether**: which.

58

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.



59

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 dismist,
And *Natur's* selfe did vanish, whither no man wist.

Stanza 58

2 find: also in the legal sense (*OED* 17), 'deliver a verdict'. **3–7 first estate** refers to the original (unfallen) state, so that change either leads to **perfection** (as III vi 3.9) or returns to it. In changing, things **dilate**, i.e. expand as they fulfil their natures, showing that change is not random but purposeful (see N. Frye 1990b:160–61), acting in accord with the Pauline concept of sowing a natural body to raise a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15.36–44). It is not circular, then, but spiral in returning creation to its beginning but at a higher level. The complexity of the term **dilate** and its importance in the poem are explored by P.A. Parker 1979:54–64. Nature's verdict finally answers Despaire's claim that 'strong necessitie, | . . . holds the world in his still chaunging state' (I ix 42.6–7).

Stanza 59

1 daughter: Nature claims as her own one who claimed at vi 26.4–6 to be the daughter of Chaos. **further**: further than the earth; or, 'any longer'. **2 me**: placed emphatically here, though Mutabilitie has allowed that Nature 'is the rule of all' (56.9). **3 decay**: downfall. **4–5** 'Beholde, I shewe you a secret thing . . . we shal all be changed . . . when this corruptible hathe put on incorruption, and this mortal hathe put on immortalitie, then shal be broght to passe the saying that is written, Death is swallowed vp into victorie' (1 Cor. 15.51, 54). **6 put downe**: also literally, below the moon. **whist**: silenced. **7** While Jove's sovereign power in his see (throne) is confirmed, it remains subordinate to Nature's authority.

The VIII. Canto, vnperfite.

1

WHen 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.

2

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 firmely 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 that great Sabbaoth God, graunt me that Sabaoths sight.

FINIS.

Book VII Canto viii

Traditional number symbolism would seem to determine the numbering of the Mutabilitie Cantos: 6 on Mutabilitie's reign in the world; 7 on Nature's control over it; and 8 on redemption from it. See A. Fowler 1964:58 and Weatherby 1994:88–89.

Title

vnperfite: imperfect.

Stanza 1

6–7 loath: implying also 'reluctant', as Berger 1988:269 suggests. **9 Short Time**: brief, referring primarily to cyclical or planetary time in contrast to eternity, as Hieatt 1960:56–59 argues.

Stanza 2

3–4 The apt echo of the concluding lines of *Theatre*, *sonn* 1 – 'So I knowing the worldes unstedfastnesse, | Sith onely God surmountes the force of tyme, | In God alone do stay my confidence' – is noted by Prescott 1996:144–45. **5 contrayr**: the opposite of. **6** Even in this stanza, which is meant to complement Mutabilitie's 'speech' with what **Nature sayd**, S. recalls Mutabilitie's claim at vii 55.8, which Nature endorsed at 58.2. 7–9 Alluding to the announcement of the Seventh Angel: 'that time shulde be no more' (Rev. 10.6). S. is responding to the voice heard by John that told him to 'seale vp those things which the seuen thondres haue spoken, and write them not', which the Geneva Bible glosses: 'there is no nede to write more for the vnderstanding of Gods children'. Nor is there for him. The distinction between 'Sabaoth' as 'hostes' (in Rom. 9.29) and 'Sabbath' as 'rest' was first noticed by Upton 1758. The second is esp. appropriate because 'Elizabeth' signifies 'Peace of the Lord, or Quiet Rest of the Lord' (W. Camden 1984:83); see Hamilton 1973:110. S. prays for the sight of the Lord on the last day: both for the sight of the host, the body of the redeemed, and for his place of rest after the six days of creating the six books of the *FQ*.